

Üniversite Seçimini Etkileyen Faktörler: Üniversite 1. Sınıf Öğrencileri Üzerine Bir Araştırma

Factors Affecting University Choice: A Study on University Freshman Students

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study is to investigate the factors that affect students' university choice in the university/major selection period. The data was obtained via a questionnaire developed by the researchers and applied to sample of participants comprising the 630 freshman students enrolled in two different universities located in north-west part of Turkey. This study was framed within quantitative paradigm. Descriptive survey designs were used to describe the factors that affect freshman' university preferences. The questionnaire called "Factors Affecting University Choice Scale" explained 59.58 % of total variance along with six dimensions. As a result of the study, it was found that the most important factors affecting students' preferences were 'future expectation for career' and 'quality and popularity of education given by universities' dimensions, while the least effective dimension was 'familiarities of cities and having familiars in cities'. It was found that students who had 'low level' social economic status give less importance to 'quality and popularity of education given by universities' than any other students. Another result which is supposed to be important is that as the students' university entrance exam scores increase, they give less importance to the dimensions that are effective in the university preferences.

Keywords: Freshmen's, university choice, university quality, university preference.

ÖZ

Bu çalışma öğrencilerin üniversite tercih dönemlerinde seçimlerini etkileyen faktörleri araştırmak amacıyla gerçekleştirilmiştir. Araştırma verileri, bu çalışma kapsamında araştırmacılar tarafından geliştirilen ölçeğin, Türkiye'nin kuzey-batısında yer alan iki farklı devlet üniversitesinde 1. sınıfta öğrenim görmekte olan 630 öğrenciye uygulanması ile elde edilmiştir. Bu çalışmada nicel araştırma yöntemlerinden betimsel tarama modeli kullanılmıştır. Araştırmada kullanılan "Üniversite Tercihlerini Etkileyen Faktörler Ölçeği"ne ilişkin yapılan açıklayıcı faktör analizi sonuçlarına göre ölçeğin altı alt-boyuttan oluştuğu ve toplam varyansın % 59.58'ini açıkladığı belirlenmiştir. Araştırma sonucunda, öğrencilerin üniversite tercihlerini etkileyen en önemli faktörlerin "gelecek kariyer beklentileri" ve "üniversitelerin eğitim kalitesi ve popülerliği" olduğu ortaya çıkmıştır. Öte yandan "şehrin tanındık olması ve şehirde tanındıkların olması" altboyutunun üniversite tercihlerinde en az etkili altboyut olduğu sonucunda ulaşılmıştır. Ayrıca, sosyo-ekonomik açıdan 'düşük' grupta olan öğrencilerin "üniversitelerin eğitim kalitesi ve popülerliği"ne diğer öğrencilerden daha az önem verdiği görülmüştür. Son olarak, önemli olduğu düşünülen bir diğer sonuç ise; öğrencilerin üniversite giriş sınavı puanları arttıkça, üniversite tercihlerinde etkili olan özellikler daha az önemsemeleri olmuştur.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Üniversite tercihi, öğrenci seçme sınavı, üniversiteye giriş.

INTRODUCTION

Choosing a university and deciding on a major are one of the most important milestones in every person's life since they shape people's future careers, and thus they have a great impact on their whole life. In addition, choosing a suitable major or university affects students' enthusiasm and commitment to study. That is, students who choose their major without considering their priorities may lose their learning motivation; they may face difficulties in succeeding the courses and finding a desirable job. Therefore, investigating the factors that affect students' university preferences is essential to guide them for more appropriate decisions and thus to ensure the students' future pleasantness and success.

As in some other countries, such as China, Iran and Spain (Helms, 2008); in Turkey students who want to study at a university have to take a university entrance exam. Students are placed to universities and departments by the scores that they get from this university entrance exam. Since there has been an increasing demand for higher education in recent years in Turkey, the number of students who take the university entrance exam increases year by year. To illustrate; 2.256.422 students sat for the examination in 2016. However, 19,5 % of these students were already enrolled in a higher education program, and 8,87 % of them had already graduated from a higher education program (OSYM, 2016). It can be claimed that in total nearly 1/3 of the participants of this exam -as mentioned in the first paragraph- were not satisfied with the university or department that they studied then or they had studied before. They wanted to change their department or university and they ended up in taking the exam again. It is thought that one of the main reasons for this situation is related to students' university choice process. Students are given 24 choices of department and university after the university entrance exam. This period may become tough and complicated for most students since there are many things to take into consideration. Therefore, when students make their choices, they can be affected by various factors which will be discussed in this paper, as well.

Secondly, exploring factors that influence students' university choices has great importance for educational institutions since they try to attract more and more students in today's competitive higher education world. One of the main reasons for this competition among the universities is the increasing number of higher education institutions in recent years. To give an example in the context of Turkey, there were 27 universities in 1982 in Turkey. 50 universities were founded between 1982 and 2005. The number of universities increased especially by year of 2006, and it was reported that there were 175 universities -104 of them were state universities and 71 of them were foundation universities- in Turkey in 2013 (Çetinsaya, 2014). The most recent data show that the number of universities has reached 183 in total; 112 of them are state universities, and 71 of them are foundation universities. Therefore, universities also need to know the factors that affect students' choices to implement the strategies to improve their conditions and services and to become a more preferred educational institution by the most successful prospective students.

In the literature there are many factors suggested by researchers. Chapman (1981) developed a model which suggests that university choice is influenced by a set of students' characteristics (which can be called as internal factors), as well as a series of external influences. Students' characteristics can be stated as follows: socioeconomic status; aptitude; level of educational aspiration/expectation; and high school performance. External influences can be grouped into three general categories: the influence of significant persons such as friends, parents and teachers; the fixed characteristics of the institution such as location, cost; and the institution's own efforts to communicate with prospective students such as campus visit, advertisement. In another study conducted by Martin and Dixon (1991), it was concluded that external factors are more influential than internal factors in students' university choices.

McDonnell (1995) suggested that students give importance to eight significant factors when they choose a college. These are academic reputation, campus size, geographical

location, availability of scholarships, availability of desired majors, social atmosphere, student population, and admission rules/criteria. Similarly, Zuker (2006) reported seven factors some of which are exactly the same as with the factors stated in McDonnell's study. These seven factors are as follows: academic environment, size of the university, location of the university, majors offered to students, social environment, extracurricular activities and cost. Hooley and Lynch (1981) put forward six different factors which are; availability of the academic program, geographical location, prestige of the university, distance from hometown and family, establishment date of the university (old/new), family members and teachers' advice.

Gorman (1976) suggested a distinction between the factors affecting students' university choices. He labelled a group of factors as uncontrollable factors (i.e. location, natural beauties) since it is impossible for any institution to change or improve the conditions in this group. On the other hand, there are controllable factors such as education quality and academic reputation which can be achieved and ensured by following the required actions. In addition, as a result of his study Gorman concluded that location and size were the most important factors, whereas reputation for academic quality came in second place. It is interesting that location -which is an uncontrollable factor for institutions- is one of the most important factors for students in their choices.

Liên, Hòa, Anh (2015) suggested four groups of factors which are often in common in most research. These groups of factors are as follows; students' personal characteristics, characteristics of the university, influence from other people, and communicative effort from the university. Firstly, students' own interests, abilities and socio-economic status have significant impact on students' decision. Secondly, academic reputation and prestige of a university together with availability of high-qualified majors which address students' needs and interests play an important role in their choices. Thirdly, as for the influence of significant persons, parents take the first place for several reasons, especially for financial support. Peers, relatives and teachers are also other important people affecting students' university choices. Fourthly, university's attempts to inform and attract prospective students in various channels (i.e. university website, brochures, campus visit, and consultancy from the university counselor) have significant influence on students' choice of university.

Hanson, Norman and Williams (1998) claim that during the university choice period students attach particular importance to the reputation of the university and its educational quality. They also suggested some other factors such as variety and quality of facilities and majors offered to students; the social atmosphere of the campus; quality of teaching personnel and distance from students' families. Mazzarol and Soutar (2002) found similar results in a study conducted in Australian universities. They suggested that quality and reputation of the university and recognition of the certificates were the most important factors for those students.

As for the studies conducted in Turkey, Tatar and Oktay (2006) found that students' university entrance exam scores are the most important factor that influence their choice. They claimed that students may have had the idea that they would like to attend to any program for which their university entrance exam score was adequate. Another finding of this study suggested that students gave a lot of importance to the possibility of finding a job with a decent salary when they graduated. In addition, Baltacı, Üngüren, Avsallı and Demirel (2012) made a study on students studying tourism. They reported that 40 % of the students chose tourism just because their university exam score was adequate for it, 14 % of them stated they had no other alternatives, and 14 % of them asserted they were influenced by significant persons. Researchers also concluded that students who make their university choice unconsciously do not feel contented with the program they study, and they get pessimistic about their future. Even though all the participants of this study were tourism students, the findings also suggest significant indications for general student population. These results indicate that most Turkish students do not strive after their dream university or department if

they had any, instead they just settle for any program which could provide them possibility of finding a job after graduation. Similarly, Kurt (2013) reported that attending to desired university and major is an important factor only for idealistic students. He also concluded that students' family members, city-where the university is located-, and the university entrance exam score were the most important factors affecting students' choices. Akar (2012) found that the most important factor affecting students' university choices was academic reputation and prestige of the universities. According to the results of the same study, location of the university comes in the second place. It was concluded that students tend to choose universities which are close to their families. Also, it was found that students' choices are affected by various sources of information such as website of the university; parents, peers and teachers. Amca (2011) suggested four different factors as follows: the possibility of employment after graduation, graduation degree, tuition fee and cost, living conditions in the city where the university is located.

It can be seen that there are both quite similar and varied factors emerging from studies conducted at different periods, and in different countries which have quite different university admission processes. Literature review suggests that most students from different countries give importance to the academic reputation, prestige and quality of the university. Also location and city where the university is located seem to be a highly important factor since most students want to attend to universities which are close to their families or in big cities which have a lot of things to offer to them rather than universities in distant and small cities. It is understood that students are affected by significant persons such as parents, friends and teachers, as well as various sources of information such as website of the university, brochures and campus visits. Finally, cost, living conditions and campus facilities are other common factors in the findings of the studies mentioned before. When it comes to differences between the findings, it can be suggested that studies in Turkey revealed that university entrance exam score and possibility of employment after graduation have great importance on students' choices.

In this study, it is aimed to investigate both the common and different factors which were suggested by previous researches. The questionnaire, which was developed in the light of the literature review for this study, consisted of items that can be divided into six categories. These categories are as follows; students' future and career expectations, living conditions of campus and city, quality and prestige of the university, influence of significant persons, information obtained from various sources, being in a familiar city.

This study was guided by two research questions as follows:

1) How important are i) students' future and career expectations, ii) living conditions of campus and city, iii) quality and prestige of the university, iv) influence of significant persons, v) information obtained from various sources, vi) being in a familiar city in freshmen's university choices?

2) Do the importances of factors on freshmen's university choices differ according to demographic variables such as gender, class time, type of graduated high school, major, social-economic status and centralized university exam scores?

METHOD

2.1. Research Design

This study was framed within quantitative paradigm. A descriptive survey design was used to describe factors that affect freshmen's university selection. "A descriptive survey involves asking the same set of questions (often prepared in the form of a written questionnaire) of a large number of individuals either by mail, by telephone, or in person" and the advantage of

survey research is that it has the potential to provide a great deal of information obtained from a large sample of individuals (Fraenkel, Wallen, & Hyun, 2011. p. 13).

2.2. Participants

Data was collected as paper-based in spring semester of 2017 academic year from 630 freshman students enrolled to two different universities located at north-west part of Turkey. Participants were informed about the aims of the study and how to fill out the questionnaire. Then, volunteered students participated to the study. Demographic information of the participants is shown in Table 1.

Table 1. Demographic Variables of Participants

Variable	Level	N	%
Gender	1. Female	330	52,4
	2. Male	300	47,6
	3. Total	630	100
Education Type	1. Daytime Education	387	61,4
	2. Evening Education	243	38,6
	3. Total	630	100
Graduated High School Type	1. Science	21	3,3
	2. Anatolian	371	58,9
	3. Vocational	103	16,3
	4. Religious Vocational	55	8,7
	5. Private	76	12,1
	6. No Response	4	0,1
	7. Total	630	100
Type of Faculty Enrolled	1. Education	132	21,0
	2. Faculty of Science and Literature	99	15,7
	3. Engineering	227	36,0
	4. Faculty of Economics and Administrative Sciences	172	27,3
	5. Total	630	100
Self-Reported Socio-Economic Status	1. Lowest	28	4,4
	2. Low	88	14,0
	3. Middle	397	63,0
	4. High	71	11,3
	5. Highest	13	2,1
	6. No Response	33	5,2
	7. Total	630	100

As shown in Table 1, general characteristics of participant freshman were as followed: Female student were more than male students, daytime education student were more than evening students, engineering students were dominant than rest of the faculties whereas majority of students were evaluated their self in middle social economic status.

2.3. Data Collection Tools

Factors Affecting University Choice (FAUC) Scale was developed by researchers to manage aim of this research. Items were created firstly by requesting 30 volunteer students to write a composition about their university choices. In addition to that, literature review and area experts were used to develop the draft scale. The draft scale included 47 items with 5-point Likert-scale response options as followed: ‘Unimportant’, ‘of little important’, ‘moderately important’, ‘important’, and very important’. The items included topics related to quality

perception and popularity of university, location of university, facilities of university, centralized university examination scores, expectations of families and social environment.

2.4. Validity and Reliability of the Instrument

Factor analyses were used to validate FAUC Scale. Researchers applied Exploratory Factor Analyses (EFA) to examine the underlying dimensionality of the item set. Additionally, KMO and Bartlett's tests were used to verify the data's appropriateness for AFA and whether the data was sufficient (Worthington, & Whittaker, 2006). Analyses revealed that KMO was ,906 and Bartlett test was significant (.000) which means that data is sufficient and appropriate for EFA. EFA results showed that FAUC Scale included six dimensions. Table 2 included name of the dimensions, example items, explained variance and reliability coefficient.

Table 2. Results of EFA Dimensions, Example Items, Explained Variance And Reliability Coefficient

Dimensions	Items Number	Example Item / statement	Factor Loadings Ranged Between	Total Number of Items	Explained Variance	Reliability coefficient.
1) Future expectation for career	33 35	a profession with a status personal and intellectual life development	,66 - ,75	7	14,42	,88
2) Campus and city facilities of universities	23 17	the campus has possibilities for housing (dormitory, hostel, apartment, etc.) housing possibilities in the city where they live (state dormitory, private dormitory, hostel etc.)	,54 - ,76	7	12,71	,86
3) Quality and popularity of education given by universities	3 2	having famous / important / well-known academicians brand image is positive (high popularity)	,60 - ,72	6	11,63	,83
4)Expectation / demand of family members and social environment	43	suggestions / requests from family members	,44 - ,78	4	8,44	,73
5) Knowledge about universities and visitation	46	the information got from the media (tv, radio, internet, facebook, etc.)	,55 - ,63	4	6,44	,71
6) Familiarities of cities and having familiars in cities	20	it's a city I've seen and known before	,54 - ,84	3	5,94	,66
Composite Scale			,44 - ,84	31	59,58	,911

2.5. Data Analysis

The skewness index (-0.63) and the kurtosis index (0.60) of FAUC points ranged between -1 and 1, the range that is considered excellent (George & Mallery, 2001). These results indicated that it was appropriate to use parametric statistic procedures to analyze the data. The data was analyzed using SPSS (Version 20). Percentages and frequencies were used to analyze demographic variables. Mean and standard deviation were used to describe importance of factors that affect students' university choice. Independent samples t-test was used to compare students' opinions according to gender and class time. ANOVA was used to compare mean value of freshman students' university choice according to graduated high school, faculty of enrolled, socio-economic level in terms of dimensions of FAUC scale. Spearman Brown correlation was used to describe the relationship between students' socio-economic status and the level of importance the students give to the factors affecting their university choices. Pearson correlation techniques were used to describe the relationship between students' centralized university examination scores and level of importance that the students give to the factors affecting their university choices.

FINDINGS

The findings of descriptive statistics of the factors affecting students' university choice were given in Table 3.

Table 3. Descriptive Statistics of the Factors Affecting Students' University Choice

Dimensions	\bar{X}	sd
1) Future expectation for career	4,05	,80
2) Campus and city facilities of universities	3,47	,89
3) Quality and popularity of education given by universities	3,62	,85
4) Expectation / demand of family members and social environment	2,97	,88
5) Knowledge about universities and visitation	2,78	,91
6) Familiarities of cities and having familiars in cities	2,68	1,06

As it can be seen from Table 3, when the descriptive statistics of the factors affecting university students' choice are examined, it is seen that while the most important factors affecting students' choice are "future expectation for career" ($\bar{X} = 4,05$) and "quality and popularity of education given by universities" ($\bar{X} = 3,47$); the least effective factor is "familiarities of cities and having familiars in cities" ($\bar{X} = 2,68$).

The results of the t-test analysis on the comparison of the perceptions related to the importance given to the factors influencing their choice according to their gender in the university choice of the university students were given in Table 4.

Table 4. t-test Results in Terms of Gender

Dimensions	Level	N	\bar{X}	S	sd	t	p																				
1) Future expectation for career	Female	330	4,18	,78	628	4,10	,000																				
	Male	300	3,92	,79				2) Campus and city facilities of universities	Female	330	3,62	,81	588,1	4,28	,000	Male	300	3,31	,96	5) Knowledge about universities and visitation	Female	330	2,89	,85	588,2	3,18	,002
2) Campus and city facilities of universities	Female	330	3,62	,81	588,1	4,28	,000																				
	Male	300	3,31	,96				5) Knowledge about universities and visitation	Female	330	2,89	,85	588,2	3,18	,002	Male	300	2,66	,96								
5) Knowledge about universities and visitation	Female	330	2,89	,85	588,2	3,18	,002																				
	Male	300	2,66	,96																							

As seen in Table 4, there are significant differences in the three dimensions of the measuring instrument that affected the preferences of university students with six dimensions (p

< ,05). According to this; it was found that female students give more importance than males in ‘future expectation for career’ [$t_{(628)} = 4,10$; $p = ,000$]; ‘campus and city facilities of universities’ [$t_{(588,1)} = 4,28$; $p = ,000$]; and ‘knowledge about universities and visitation’ [$t_{(588,2)} = 3,18$; $p = ,002$] dimensions. There was no significant difference in “quality and popularity of education given by universities”, “expectation / demand of family members and social environment” and “familiarities of cities and having familiars in cities’ dimensions according to gender.

The results of t-test analysis on the comparison of the perceptions related to the importance given to the factors influencing university students’ preferences in their university choice in terms of class time (daytime and evening) are given in Table 5.

Table 5. t-test Results in Terms of Class Time

Dimensions	Level	N	\bar{X}	S	sd	t	p																																												
1) Future expectation for career	Daytime	387	4,11	,76	628	2,34	,020																																												
	Evening	243	3,96	,84				2) Campus and city facilities of universities	Daytime	387	3,54	,84	458,6	2,24	,026	Evening	243	3,37	,97	4)Expectation / demand of family members and social environment	Daytime	387	2,90	,82	453,5	-2,46	,014	Evening	243	3,08	,96	5)Knowledge about universities and visitation	Daytime	387	2,69	,85	461,6	-2,88	,004	Evening	243	2,91	,98	6) Familiarities of cities and having familiars in cities	Daytime	387	2,59	1,02	628	-2,51	,012
2) Campus and city facilities of universities	Daytime	387	3,54	,84	458,6	2,24	,026																																												
	Evening	243	3,37	,97				4)Expectation / demand of family members and social environment	Daytime	387	2,90	,82	453,5	-2,46	,014	Evening	243	3,08	,96	5)Knowledge about universities and visitation	Daytime	387	2,69	,85	461,6	-2,88	,004	Evening	243	2,91	,98	6) Familiarities of cities and having familiars in cities	Daytime	387	2,59	1,02	628	-2,51	,012	Evening	243	2,81	1,10								
4)Expectation / demand of family members and social environment	Daytime	387	2,90	,82	453,5	-2,46	,014																																												
	Evening	243	3,08	,96				5)Knowledge about universities and visitation	Daytime	387	2,69	,85	461,6	-2,88	,004	Evening	243	2,91	,98	6) Familiarities of cities and having familiars in cities	Daytime	387	2,59	1,02	628	-2,51	,012	Evening	243	2,81	1,10																				
5)Knowledge about universities and visitation	Daytime	387	2,69	,85	461,6	-2,88	,004																																												
	Evening	243	2,91	,98				6) Familiarities of cities and having familiars in cities	Daytime	387	2,59	1,02	628	-2,51	,012	Evening	243	2,81	1,10																																
6) Familiarities of cities and having familiars in cities	Daytime	387	2,59	1,02	628	-2,51	,012																																												
	Evening	243	2,81	1,10																																															

As seen in Table 5, there are significant differences in five dimensions of the scale ($p < ,05$). According to this; it was found that daytime students give more importance than evening students to ‘future expectation for career’ [$t_{(628)} = 2,34$; $p = ,020$] and ‘campus and city facilities of universities’ [$t_{(458,6)} = 2,24$; $p = ,026$] dimensions; however, evening students give more importance than daytime students to ‘expectation / demand of family members and social environment’ [$t_{(453,5)} = 2,46$; $p = ,014$], ‘knowledge about universities and visitations’ [$t_{(461,6)} = 2,88$; $p = ,004$] and ‘familiarities of cities and having familiars in cities’ [$t_{(658)} = 2,51$; $p = ,012$] dimensions.

Kruskal Wallis test was used to compare the university choice in terms of high school types students graduated from. It was found that there was a significant difference in the dimension of ‘quality and popularity of education given by universities’ [$X^2_{(4)} = 10,90$; $p = ,028$]. In the binary comparisons made by the U test; it was found that in their university choice, graduates of science and social sciences high school give less importance to ‘quality and popularity of education given by universities’ than Anatolia ($U = 2786,5$ $p = .028$) and vocational high school graduates ($U = 727,5$ $p = .018$) ; on the other hand, vocational high school graduates give more importance than religious vocational ($U = 2274$ $p = .041$) and private high school ($U = 3231$ $p = .046$) graduates.

The results of One-Way Anova analysis on the comparison of the perceptions related to the importance given to the factors influencing university students’ preferences in their university choice in terms of the faculties they are attending are given in Table 6.

Table 6. One-Way Anova Results in Terms of Participants' Faculties

Dimension	Faculty	n	M	SD	Sum of Squ.	df	Mean Squ.	F	Difference
2) Campus and city facilitations of universities	1) Education	132	3,58	,75					
	2) Humanities	99	3,62	,86	17,10	3	5,70	7,26	3<1,2,4
	3) Engineering	227	3,25	,94	491,47	626	,78		
	4) Finance	172	3,59	,92	508,58	629			
	5) Total	630	3,47	,89					
3) Quality and popularity of education given by universities	1) Education	132	3,36	,72					
	2) Humanities	99	3,59	,89	12,668	3	4,22	6,04	1 < 3, 4
	3) Engineering	227	3,74	,83	437,31	626	,69		
	4) Finance	172	3,68	,88	449,98	629			
	5) Total	630	3,62	,84					
5) Knowledge about universities and visitations	1) Education	132	2,63	,86					
	2) Humanities	99	2,89	,84	14,63	3	4,87	5,99	4 > 1, 3
	3) Engineering	227	2,66	,92	509,45	626	,81		
	4) Finance	172	2,98	,93	524,09	629			
	5) Total	630	2,78	,91					
6) Familiarities of cities and having familiars in cities	1) Education	132	2,41	,96					
	2) Humanities	99	2,59	1,05	19,44	3	6,48	5,89	4 > 1
	3) Engineering	227	2,69	1,08	688,19	626	1,09		
	4) Finance	172	2,91	1,05	707,63	629			
	5) Total	630	2,68	1,06					

As seen in Table 6, there are differences in four dimensions of the scale ($p < .05$). It was found that engineering students give less importance to ‘campus and city facilitations’ than other students [$F(3, 629) = 7.26, p < .05$]; the students of education faculty give less importance to “quality and popularity of education given by universities” than engineering and finance faculty students [$F(3, 629) = 6.04, p < .05$]; the students of finance give more importance to “knowledge about universities and visitations” than education and engineering faculty students [$F(3, 629) = 5.99, p < .05$], and also to “familiarities of cities and having familiars in cities” than education faculty students [$F(3, 629) = 5.90, p < .05$].

The relationship between the dimensions affecting university students’ choice and students’ self-reported socio-economic status (SES) is given in Table 7.

Table 7. Spearman Brown Correlation between Socio-Economic Status and of FAUC Scale

		SES	1) Future expectation for career	2) Campus and city facilities of universities	3) Quality and popularity of education given by universities	4) Expectation / demand of family members and social environment	5) Knowledge about universities and visitation	6) Familiarities of cities and having familiars in cities
Spearman's rho	Correlation Coe.	1,000	-,003	-,086*	,147**	,071	,030	,114**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.	,581	,149	,002	,254	,460	,050
	N	396	396	396	396	396	396	396

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

* . Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

As it is seen in Table 7, it was found that there is a low positive correlation between SES and a factor 'quality and popularity of education given by universities' ($r_s = .147, p < .01$) and 'familiarities of cities and having familiars in cities' ($r_s = .114, p < .01$); however, in 'campus and city facilitations' dimension ($r_s = -.86, p < .05$) there was a low negative correlation. According to this; it can be found that as the SES increases, even at low levels, the importance given to 'quality and popularity of education given by universities' and 'familiarities of cities and having familiars in cities' increases, but the importance given to 'campus and city facilitations' decreases. In Table 7, related to the variables in Table 6, the results of One-Way Anova analysis on the comparison of importance given to the factors influencing university students' choice with SES were given.

In the Kruskal Wallis test to compare the university preferences of the students in terms of self-reported SES level, it was found that there was a significant difference in the dimension of, 'quality and popularity of education given by universities' [$X^2_{(4)} = 15,92; p = .003$]. Also, in the binary comparisons made by the U test; it was found that the students had 'low level' SES give less importance to 'quality and popularity of education given by universities' than the ones who had 'midlevel' ($U = 3930,5, p = .009$) and 'high level' ($U = 573, p = .001$) and 'the highest level' ($U = 92,5, p = .011$) SES. On the other hand, it was found that the students had 'high level' SES give more importance to 'quality and popularity of education given by universities' than the ones who had 'low level' ($U = 2458, p = .021$) and 'midlevel' ($U = 11888,5, p = .035$) SES.

Results of the Pearson Correlation analysis conducted to determine the relationship between the centralized university entrance examination score and the dimensions that affect students' university choice is given in Table 8.

Table 8. Pearson Correlation Results Between Centralised University Entrance Examination Score (CUEES) and Dimensions of FAUC Scale

	CUEES	1) Future expectation for career	2) Campus and city facilities of universities	3) Quality and popularity of education given by universities	4) Expectation / demand of family members and social environment	5) Knowledge about universities and visitation	6) Familiarities of cities and having familiars in cities
Pearson Correlation	1	,034	-,124**	,027	-,129**	-,166**	-,167**
Sig. (2-tailed)		,397	,002	,508	,001	,000	,000
N	614	614	614	614	614	614	614

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).
 * . Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

As can be seen from Table 8, there is a significant negative correlation at a low level with the CUEES and the dimensions of 'campus and city facilities of universities' ($r = -.124, n = 614, p = .002$); 'expectation / demand of family members and social environment' ($r = -.129, n = 614, p = .001$); ($r = -.167, n = 614, p = .000$) and 'familiarities of cities and having familiars in cities' ($r = -.167, n = 614, p = .000$). As a result, it was found out that the higher the entrance scores to the university, the lower the level, the lower the university students have given to the dimensions that are effective in the university choice.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

At the beginning of the findings section of this research, it has been revealed that in the students' choice of university in Turkey; beside the students' expectations regarding the future and career perception, quality of education given by universities and their popularity are also important elements. It can be said that in the preferences of high school graduate students for university, having a job and careers about the future and besides the quality perceptions of the universities will be important for them. It has been revealed that young people who have received university education in a developing country like Turkey are expecting from their education to give them a hopeful future, a career and a job ownership. In a survey conducted by the Turkish Grand National Assembly Research Center in 2015, the unemployment rate among university graduates in Turkey, which was 7% in 2000 and 12.4% in 2014, is higher than the rate of high schools and their equivalents' graduates unemployment rate (ARMER, 2015). So this situation gives an idea of why future college students' choice and career expectations may be important Under the assumption that the quality and the popularity of the education provided by the universities will make it easier for students to find work under free market conditions, they open the way for students to attach importance to quality and popularity in university choice. On the other hand, it has emerged that knowing the cities they prefer to be in the university, or having a familiar person in the city have the least influence / importance in their choice. This leads to the conclusion that the level of consciousness and awareness is higher in students' choice. Indeed, as a result of university placement in 2017, a total of 214,430 quotas, including 50,817 bachelor and associate degree 163,613 were found to be vacant in programs with very limited employment opportunities (www.sporx.com). Similar to the results of this study, Wiese, Heerden and Jordaan (2010) -in their study conducted at six South African Universities with 1241 participants- found that when students choose a college, quality of teaching and employment prospects are the most important and the second most important factors respectively. In addition, their study shows that having friends or siblings attending the same university is the least important factor in students' university choice. Freshman students at the University of South Australia also ranked career preparation as the most important factor on their choice of university (Martin, 1994). Özcan (2015) conducted a research on 1112 senior high school students from seven different regions of Turkey and found that they give great importance to career prospect. Also, he found that the least important factors for these students are demand of family members and social environment, and being close to family. McDuff (2007) states that quality is a highly significant factor affecting students' college choice and that students in the US accept large tuition fees to get a higher quality education. It can be argued that quality of education gives rise to academic reputation and it leads to create a positive image of the institution and it increases the students' expectations for future career prospects. All in all they play quite important role in students' university choice (Arpan et al., 2003; Baker, & Brown, 2007; Beswick, 1989; Briggs, 2006; Cosser et al., 2002; Hannukainen, 2008; Isherwood, 1991; Kelling et al., 2007; Maringe, 2006; Moogan et al., 2003; MORI, 2002; Mourad, 2011; Özcan, 2015; Soo, & Elliot, 2008; Soutar, & Turner, 2002; Veloutsou et al., 2004;).

In the three dimensions of Factors Affecting University Choice (FAUC) Scale, which consists of six dimensions, it has been revealed that girls give more importance than boys in the dimensions of the future expectation for career, the facilities offered by the university campus and the city and information they have about the university and their visits. These results show that girls have higher perceptions of career prospects for the future than boys. Assuming that the Turkish society has a relatively traditional structure and that girls have a high level of commitment to their families, it can be said that girls' giving more importance to university campus and facilities of the university's city more than boys is an expected result. Similarly, Wiese, Heerden and Jordaan (2010) put forward that females give more importance to quality of teaching and employment prospects than males do. Also, they found that females give more importance to on-campus housing while they give less importance to social life on

campus. In addition to that, Özcan (2015) found quite similar results in respect of differences between genders. He reached the conclusion that females give more importance to the image of the institution and opportunities provided by the institution, whereas males give more importance to having friends and sports facilities in the campus. Dunnett et al. (2012) and Shank et al. (1998) stated that females give more importance to being close to their families and academic prestige of the colleges. On the other hand, Filter (2010) indicated that gender does not have a significant effect on students' university choice.

It was revealed that when choosing a university, daytime students compared to evening students give more importance to the future prospects for careers and the opportunities offered by the city and university campuses. This can be explained like that daytime students compared to evening students have the higher level of university settling scores. On the other hand, it was found that 'family and social expectations, knowledge about universities and familiarity with the city' dimensions have more importance for evening students than daytime students. It is possible to evaluate daytime students who have a higher score in CUEES than evening students give more importance to preference of career and future expectancy in their choice; on the other hand, evening students give importance to family and social information as well as the information and friendship about the universities and city.

It has been revealed that education faculty students when compared to engineering, faculty of economics and administrative students give less importance to quality and popularity of education given in university in their university choice. In official statistics of Ministry of National Education in Turkey (MEB, 2016), the number of teachers working in private schools were 122.452 against 918.044 teachers working in public schools from preschool to higher education. As seen, 13.3% of the workforce in the education sector is constituted by teachers working in private schools and the majority of employment in the education sector is constituted by public schools. When the Turkish education sector is evaluated in the context of the labor market, public schools have a reasonable starting salary and almost lifetime employment guarantee, so they are preferred by teacher candidates. It is possible to say that in the acceptance of teachers for public schools, the degree and quality of education given by the university have not been taken into account, and almost all diplomas are considered equal, so the education faculty students do not pay enough attention to the quality and popularity of the education given in university choice. However, when it is thought that the majority of engineering and faculty of economics and administrative students are working in the private sector rather than in the public sector, and the quality and popularity of the universities they choose to attend are seriously affecting their job finding, so it is a possible outcome that students are expected to attach importance to the quality of education. It has also been found that engineering faculty students pay less attention to the facilities of the city and university that they prefer, compared to other faculty students. It can be said that engineering faculty students are in a more mechanical way of thinking because of their dominance of mathematics, which leads to the quality of the education given by the university, rather than the possibilities that the city and the university campus is more important for them. Akar (2012) found that students of Economics and Administrative Science give the utmost importance to academic reputation and prestige of the universities. He also found that location of the university comes in the second place. Polat (2011) carried out a study with 290 students enrolled in 7 different programs at Faculty of Education. He found that the factors influencing students' university choices are the physical conditions of the university, which is followed by the city where the university is located and the university's socio-cultural facilities. Tatar and Oktay (2006) carried out a study with 51 second year students studying in the Department of Chemistry Education of Kazim Karabekir Education Faculty, in Ataturk University, in Turkey. They found that students' university entrance exam scores are the most significant determinant of their choices. They claimed that students consent to attend to any program for which their university entrance exam score was adequate. Another finding of this study

suggested that students pay particular attention to the possibility of finding a job with a decent salary after graduation.

Another result of this research is that statistically meaningful and positive relation has emerged between self-reported SES of students and their university choice. According to this, it is possible to say that in the choice of university, students with high SES level when compared to students with the middle and lower SES levels, it is an expected / probable outcome of the quality of the education given by the university and the popularity of the university are more important. Students' self-reported SES or family income which is the most important determinant of SES is found to be significant on students' college choice in many studies (Rehberg, 1967; Chapman, 1981; Hearn, 1984; Heller, 1997). Chapman (1981) states SES can affect students' university choice in quite different ways. Students with varied socioeconomic status not only study at colleges at different rates, but also they distribute differently across types of universities. In addition, SES affects students' educational aspirations and expectations, both of which are related to college choice (Rehberg, 1967). So, it can be argued that students with higher SES usually have high expectations and dreams, so they give more importance to choose four-year colleges with a good quality of education while the other students may consent to choose two-year vocational schools.

Finally, there is a negative relationship between the students' CUEES and importance that they give for university choice. Interestingly, according to this result, as the scores from CUEES increase, even it is at a low level, it is possible to reach the result that the importance given to the university choice decreases.

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GENİŞLETİLMİŞ ÖZET

Giriş

Araştırmanın amacı üniversite birinci sınıf öğrencilerinin, üniversite tercihlerini yapar iken dikkat ettikleri ve önem verdikleri unsurların betimlenmesi ve bunların çeşitli demografik değişkenler ile ilişkisinin ortaya konulmasıdır. Bu kapsamda üniversite öğrencilerinin tercihleri ve bunları etkileyen faktörler anlaşılırsa, üniversite yönetimlerinin de bunları dikkate alarak nitelikli öğrenci akışını sağlamları ve böylece yükseköğretim politika yapıcılarına öneriler sunulması mümkün olabilecektir. Buradan hareketle bu araştırma kapsamında şu sorulara yanıt aranmıştır?

1) Üniversite birinci sınıf öğrencileri, üniversite tercihlerini yapar iken; i) üniversitelerin kalitesi ve popülaritesi, ii) üniversitelerin coğrafi lokasyonları, iii) üniversitelerin sahip oldukları olanaklar, iv) üniversiteye giriş puanı (LYS-YGS), v) ailenin ve çevrenin beklentileri ne kadar etkili / önemli olmuştur?

2) Üniversite birinci sınıf öğrencilerinin, üniversite tercihlerini yapar iken tercihlerine verdikleri önem, onların cinsiyetleri, mezun oldukları lise türü, akademik alanları, sosyo-ekonomik düzeyleri (SED) ve LYS-YGS puanlarına göre anlamlı şekilde farklılaşmakta mıdır?

Yöntem

Araştırma nicel yöntemlerden tarama modelindedir. Tarama araştırmaları (sıklıkla önceden yazılmış çeşitli formlardaki) soruların çok sayıda katılımcıya, e-posta, telefon veya yüz-yüze sorulmak suretiyle büyük bir bilgi verisi elde edilmesini sağlayan araştırmalardır (Fraenkel, Wallen ve Hyunn, 2011, s.13). Veriler 2017 yılı bahar döneminde üniversite birinci sınıf öğrencisi olan Doğu Marmara bölgesindeki iki farklı üniversiteden 630 katılımcıdan elde edilen veriler ile toplanmıştır. Araştırmaya katılanların yarısından fazlası kadın, I. Öğretim öğrencisi olup, büyük çoğunluk Anadolu lisesi mezunudur. Bunun yanında katılımcılar Eğitim, Fen Edebiyat, Mühendislik ve İktisadi ve İdari Bilimler öğrencisi olup, SED beş şekilde (çok yüksek, yüksek, orta, düşük, çok düşük) sorulduğu bir durumda öğrencilerin büyük çoğunluğunun orta SED'de oldukları ortaya çıkmıştır.

Araştırmacılar tarafından Üniversite Tercihlerini Etkileyen Faktörler (ÜTEF) isimli ölçek araştırmacılar tarafından geliştirilmiştir. 47 Maddeden oluşan taslak ölçek 5'li Likert şeklinde olup cevap seçenekleri ise 'hiç önemli değil', 'az önemli', 'orta düzeyde önemli', 'büyük ölçüde önemli', 'çok önemli' şeklindedir. Yapılan Açıklayıcı Faktör Analizi'nde (AFA) KMO değeri .91 ve Bartlett testi ise anlamlı çıkmıştır (.000) bu sonuçlar sonuçların faktör analiz yapmak için uygun olduğunu göstermiştir. Son yapılan faktör analizinde ölçek altı boyuttan oluşmakta olup;

bir ve ikinci boyutta 7, üçüncü boyutta 6, dört ve beşinci boyutlarda 4 ve altıncı boyutta 3 olmak üzere toplam 31 maddeden oluşmuştur. Boyutların açıkladığı toplam varyans % 78.1 olarak oldukça yüksek çıkmıştır. Ölçeğin faktör yük değerleri .44 ile .84 arasında değişmiştir. Ölçeğin Cronbach's Alpha iç tutarlılık güvenilirlik katsayısı ise .91 şeklinde ortaya çıkmıştır.

Bulgular

Üniversite öğrencilerinin tercihlerini etkileyen faktörlere ilişkin betimsel istatistikler incelendiğinde, öğrencilerin tercihlerini etkileyen en önemli unsurların 'gelecek için kariyer beklentisi' ($\bar{X} = 4,05$) ve 'üniversitelerin verdiği eğitimin kalitesi ve popülaritesi' ($\bar{X} = 3,47$) isimli boyutlar iken; en az etkili olan unsurun / boyutun ise 'tercih yapılan şehirlerin tanınması veya tanıdıkların mevcudiyeti' ($\bar{X} = 2,68$) isimli boyut olduğu ortaya çıkmıştır. Altı boyuttan oluşan üniversite öğrencilerinin tercihlerini etkileyen ölçme aracının üç boyutunda cinsiyete göre anlamlı farklılık ortaya çıkmıştır ($p < ,05$). Buna göre, 'gelecek için kariyer beklentisi' [$t(628) = 4,10; p = ,000$]; 'üniversite kampüsünün ve şehrin sundukları olanaklar' [$t(588,1) = 4,28; p = ,000$]; ve 'üniversite hakkında sahip olunan bilgi ve ziyaretler' [$t(588,2) = 3,18; p = ,002$] boyutlarında kadın öğrencilerin erkek öğrencilere göre daha yüksek düzeyde önem verdikleri ortaya çıkmıştır. Altı boyuttan oluşan üniversite öğrencilerinin tercihlerini etkileyen ölçme aracının beş boyutunda öğretim türüne göre anlamlı farklılık ortaya çıkmıştır ($p < ,05$). Buna göre 'gelecek için kariyer beklentisi' [$t(628) = 2,34; p = ,020$] ve 'üniversite kampüsünün ve şehrin sundukları olanaklar' [$t(458,6) = 2,24; p = ,026$] boyutlarına I. öğretim öğrencilerinin II. öğretim öğrencilerine oranla; 'aile bireylerinin ve sosyal çevrenin beklentileri' [$t(453,5) = 2,46; p = ,014$], 'üniversite hakkında sahip olunan bilgi ve ziyaretler' [$t(461,6) = 2,88; p = ,004$] ve 'üniversite hakkında sahip olunan bilgi ve ziyaretler' [$t(658) = 2,51; p = ,012$] boyutlarına ise II. öğretim öğrencilerinin I. öğretim öğrencilerine oranla daha fazla önem verdikleri ortaya çıkmıştır. 'Üniversitelerin verdiği eğitimin kalitesi ve popülaritesi' boyutunda lise mezuniyet türüne göre anlamlı farklılık olduğu ortaya çıkmıştır [$X^2_{(4)} = 10,90; p = ,028$]. U testi ile yapılan ikili karşılaştırmalarda, Fen ve sosyal bilimler lisesi mezunlarının üniversite tercihlerinde Anadolu ($U = 2786,5 p = .028$) ve meslek lisesi ($U = 727,5 p = .018$) mezunlarına oranla daha az önem verdikleri; meslek lisesi mezunlarının ise imam-hatip lisesi ($U = 2274 p = .041$) ve özel lise mezunlarına ($U = 3231 p = .046$) oranla daha fazla önem verdikleri ortaya çıkmıştır. Mühendislik fakültesi öğrencilerinin 'üniversite kampüsünün ve şehrin sundukları olanaklar'a diğer fakültelere göre daha az [$F(3, 629) = 7.26, p < .05$]; eğitim fakültesi öğrencilerinin, 'üniversitelerin verdiği eğitimin kalitesi ve popülaritesi'ne mühendislik ve iktisadi ve idari bilimler fakültesi öğrencilerine oranla daha az [$F(3, 629) = 6.04, p < .05$]; iktisadi ve idari bilimler fakültesi öğrencilerinin 'üniversite hakkında sahip olunan bilgi ve ziyaretler'e eğitim ve mühendislik fakültesi öğrencilerine oranla [$F(3, 629) = 5.99, p < .05$], 'tercih yapılan şehirlerin tanınması veya tanıdıkların mevcudiyeti'ne ise eğitim fakültesi öğrencilerine oranla [$F(3, 629) = 5.90, p < .05$] daha fazla önem verdikleri ortaya çıkmıştır. SED ile öğrencilerin üniversite tercihlerinde etkili olan boyutlardan 'üniversitelerin verdiği eğitimin kalitesi ve popülaritesi' ($r_s = .147, p < .01$) ve 'tercih yapılan şehirlerin tanınması veya tanıdıkların mevcudiyeti' ($r_s = .114, p < .01$) arasında düşük düzeyde pozitif yönlü anlamlı bir ilişki; 'üniversite kampüsünün ve şehrin sundukları olanaklar' boyutuyla ise ($r_s = -.86, p < .05$) düşük düzeyde negatif yönlü anlamlı ilişki ortaya çıkmıştır.

Sonuç ve Tartışma

Bu çalışmada kapsamında elde edilen sonuçların başında, Türkiye'de öğrencilerin üniversite tercihlerinde geleceğe ilişkin beklentileri ve kariyer algısının yanında üniversitelerin verdiği eğitimin kalitesi ve popülaritesinin de önemli bir unsur olduğu ortaya çıkmıştır. Lise mezunu öğrencilerin üniversite tercihlerinde geleceğe ilişkin iş ve kariyer sahibi olmanın ve bunun yanında üniversitelerin kalite algılarının tercihlerde önemli çıkması beklenen olası bir sonuç olduğu söylenebilir. Türkiye gibi gelişmekte olan bir ülkede üniversite eğitim alan

gençlerin, alacakları eğitimin kendilerine umutlu bir gelecek, kariyer sunması ve iş sahibi yapması konusunda beklenti içerisinde oldukları ortaya çıkmıştır.

Altı boyuttan oluşan ÜTEF'in üç boyutunda, kariyer için gelecek beklentisi, üniversite kampüsünün ve şehrin sunduğu olanaklar ile üniversite hakkında sahip olunan bilgi ve ziyaret boyutlarında, kızların erkeklere oranla daha fazla önem verdikleri ortaya çıkmıştır. Bu sonuçlardan kızların, erkeklere oranla, gelecek için kariyer beklentisi algısının daha yüksek olduğu ortaya çıkmıştır. Bunun yanında Türk toplumunun görece geleneksel bir yapıya sahip olduğu ve kızların ailerine bağlılık düzeyinin yüksek olduğu varsayıldığında, kızların erkelere oranla, tercihlerinde üniversite kampüsünün ve üniversitenin bulunduğu şehrin olanaklarının daha fazla önem vermelerinin beklenen olası bir sonuç olduğu söylenebilir.

Bu araştırma kapsamında elde edilen diğer bir sonuç ise, öğrencilerin kendi beyanları ile doğrudan ölçülen SED'leri ile üniversite tercihleri arasında istatistiksel olarak anlamlı ve pozitif yönlü ilişkinin ortaya çıkmış olmasıdır. Buna göre, SED'i yüksek olan üniversite öğrencilerinin tercihlerinde, SED'i orta ve düşük olanlara oranla, üniversite tarafından verilen eğitimin kalitesine ve üniversitenin popülaritesine daha fazla önem verdiklerine ilişkin sonucun, beklenen / olası bir durum olduğunu söylemek mümkündür.