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THE EFFECT OF MEDIA LITERACY ON THE CHOICE OF PROFESSION IN HEALTH SCIENCES STUDENTS

ABSTRACT

In this study was aimed to determine affect the choice of profession, career selection qualifications and the effect of media literacy on the choice of profession in health sciences students. The descriptive and cross-sectional research was carried out on a University Faculty of Medicine, Faculty of Dentistry, Nursing Department, Nutrition and Dietetics Department, Physiotherapy and Rehabilitation Department, Health Management Department undergraduate programs. The students who accepted to participate constituted the sample group. "Student Identification Form", "Media Literacy Scale" and "The Scale of Occupational Choice Capability" were applied. While 91.9% of the participants chose the section "willingly" and "interest" factor was the most important factor in. While 0.9% of the students stated they used the Internet "very rarely", 91% stated they used it "every day", and it was found they used the Internet 4.77±4.31 hours per day. A positive and significant relationship was found between the students' scores from " The Scale of Occupational Choice Capability" and "Media Literacy Scale" and this relationship was found to be weakly. These age groups should be provided with the necessary public and social support during the career selection periods and to improve media literacy.

Keywords: Media, Media Literacy, Occupational Choice Capability, Health Science, Health Science Students

1. INTRODUCTION

The dizzying developments in science and technology starting with the 20th century have led to the emergence of new technologies. Technological developments have provided speed and ease of access to information while bringing different aspects to communication. With the rapid communication network, communication has ranged from the inter-personal dimension to the mass dimension in which everyone instantly becomes aware of an event that is happening anywhere in the world. These means of communication of today are defined as "media". Media is referred to as any kind of printed or digital means such as television, the Internet, newspapers, books, radios, etc. covering all media that contain and transmit information [1 and 2]. Media has important functions such as informing the society, protecting and developing cultural values, socializing, creating public opinion, entertaining, educating and publicizing [2]. While media tools are becoming an important force with increasing usage areas, the accuracy of the information they provide to the broad masses, the resulting information pollution, affecting people in a wrong way and guiding them negatively are issues that need to be emphasized [3]. The Center for Media Literacy (CML) defines media literacy as a 21st century education approach that provides access to,

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analyze, evaluate and produce messages in various forms, from books to video and the Internet, as well as developing inquiry and self-expression skills which are a requirement for citizens in democracy [4]. The main objectives in media literacy include getting people to read the messages conveyed by the media correctly, explaining to the people that the world presented by the media may not be real and making them realize that the media also have a managing function [3].

Among the factors that primarily are thought to affect the choice of profession, demographic elements such as age of occupation choice, age groups, gender, place of residence can be listed as well as the personality structure consisting of the individual's value and belief systems [5]. In one study, 5 factors affecting the choice of profession were reached which are professional knowledge and skills, high earnings and responsibility expectation, status expectation, family and education environment and the structural features of the profession. When choosing a profession, individuals in the 17-20 age range representing the Z generation are more under the influence of the family and education environment compared to other age groups. Obtaining professional knowledge and skills for individuals between the ages of 21-25 representing the Y-generation who wanted to ascend rapidly and gain-oriented and high earnings and responsibility expectation for the individuals between the ages of 26-39 were effective factors in choosing a profession. Structural features of the profession such as flexible working conditions, suitability for independent work and being a profession based on trust are more important for individuals aged 40 and over who are of generation X attaching great importance to flexible working hours and work life balance [6, 7 and 8]. In this study, it was aimed to determine affect the choice of profession, career selection qualifications and the effect of media literacy on the choice of profession in health sciences students.

2. RESEARCH SIGNIFICANCE

It is quite important for health sciences students who will serve an important group after graduation to consciously choose the profession that has "human" at its center, to recognize the profession correctly and to realize their responsibilities. Nowadays, the media can consciously or unconsciously influence individuals of all ages and cause them to lead uncertain road maps, especially among young people. In this study, it was aimed to determine the factors that affect the choice of profession, career selection qualifications and the effect of *media literacy* that can easily affect individuals of all ages today on the choice of profession in health sciences students.

3. MATERIAL AND METHODS

3.1. The Study of Sampling

The descriptive and cross-sectional research was conducted on students who attended Beykent University Faculty of Medicine, Faculty of Dentistry, Department of Nursing, Department of Nutrition and Dietetics, Physiotherapy and Rehabilitation Department and Health Management Department undergraduate programs.

3.2. Participants

The universe of the study consisted of 450 students. The sample selection was not made in the study and volunteering was taken as basis, and the health students who accepted to participate constituted the sample group. For this study different health departments' students (n=111) accepted to participate.

3.3. Materials Used

A structured "Student Identification Form" which included socio-demographic characteristics, "Media Literacy Scale" and "the Scale of Occupational Choice Capability" were applied to the students.

- **Student Identification Form:** It is a structured student identification form that is a structured by scanning the relevant the literature. In this form, there are a total of 14 questions, including 9 questions about the socio-demographic characteristics and Internet usage status of the students and 5 questions about their thoughts about the occupations they have chosen.
- **Media Literacy Scale:** Media Literacy Scale is a 5-point Likert-type scale developed by Karaman and Karataş in 2009 to determine the media literacy levels of individuals. Media Literacy Scale, which consists of 17 items, is scored between 1-5. The scale is scored as "1=never", "2=rarely", "3=sometimes", "4=often" and "5=always". With this scoring method, the highest score that can be obtained from the scale is 85, and the lowest score is 17. A high score indicates that people are aware of the messages coming from the media, that they have the ability to look at these messages critically and direct themselves about the content and have the ability to react by analyzing the contents of the messages. The Media Literacy Scale consists of 3 sub-dimensions: to have knowledge, to be able to analyze/generate reaction and to judge/to see implicit messages. The Cronbach's alpha reliability coefficient was found to be "0.840" for 17 items of the scale [9].
- **The Scale of Occupational Choice Capability:** It was developed by Fuat Vurucu in 2010. The scale includes 11 5-point Likert-type questions that influence the choice of profession and reflect professional perceptions. In the Scale of Occupational Choice Capability, the "Likert Type" five-point rating scale, consisting of "Strongly disagree", "Agree to some extent", "Agree", "Mostly agree" and "Strongly agree" was used. In the scale assessment, 1 point "Strongly disagree" numerical limit being 1.00–1.79, 2 points "Agree to some extent" numerical limit being 1.80–2.59, 3 points "Agree" numerical limit being 2.60–3.39, 4 points "Mostly agree" numerical limit being 3.40–4.19, 5 points "Strongly agree" numerical limit being 4.20-5.00 are calculated. The Cronbach's alpha reliability coefficient was found to be "0.841" for 11 items of the scale [10].

3.4. Data Evaluation

The data obtained in this study were analyzed using IBM SPSS Statistics 22 program. For statistical analyses, NCSS (Number Cruncher Statistical System) 2007 (Kaysville, Utah, USA) program was used. While evaluating the study data, descriptive statistical methods (Mean, Standard Deviation, Median, Frequency, Ratio, Minimum, Maximum) were employed while the distribution of the data were evaluated by Shapiro-Wilk Test. Kruskall Wallis Test was used for comparison of the three groups that did not show normal distribution of the quantitative data, and Mann-Whitney U Test was used for comparison of the two groups. Significance was evaluated at the levels of $p<0.01$ and $p<0.05$.

4. FINDINGS

The ages of the students ranged between 18 and 24 and the mean age was 19.80±1.12. 18% were students of the department of nutrition and dietetics, 8.1% were from physiotherapy department, 9% were from health management department, 54.1% of the students were from the nursing department, and 10.8% were students of medical and dental faculties.

While 0.9% of the students stated that they used the Internet "very rarely", 91% stated that they used it "every day", and was found that the participants used the Internet for an average of 4.77±4.31 hours per day. Although the students from each year of study participated in the study, the majority of the students (56.8%) consisted of 1st year students. It was observed that, the parents of the students were mostly graduated from primary school (42.3%/29.7%). Family economic status of the students was found to be moderate (60%) (Table 1).

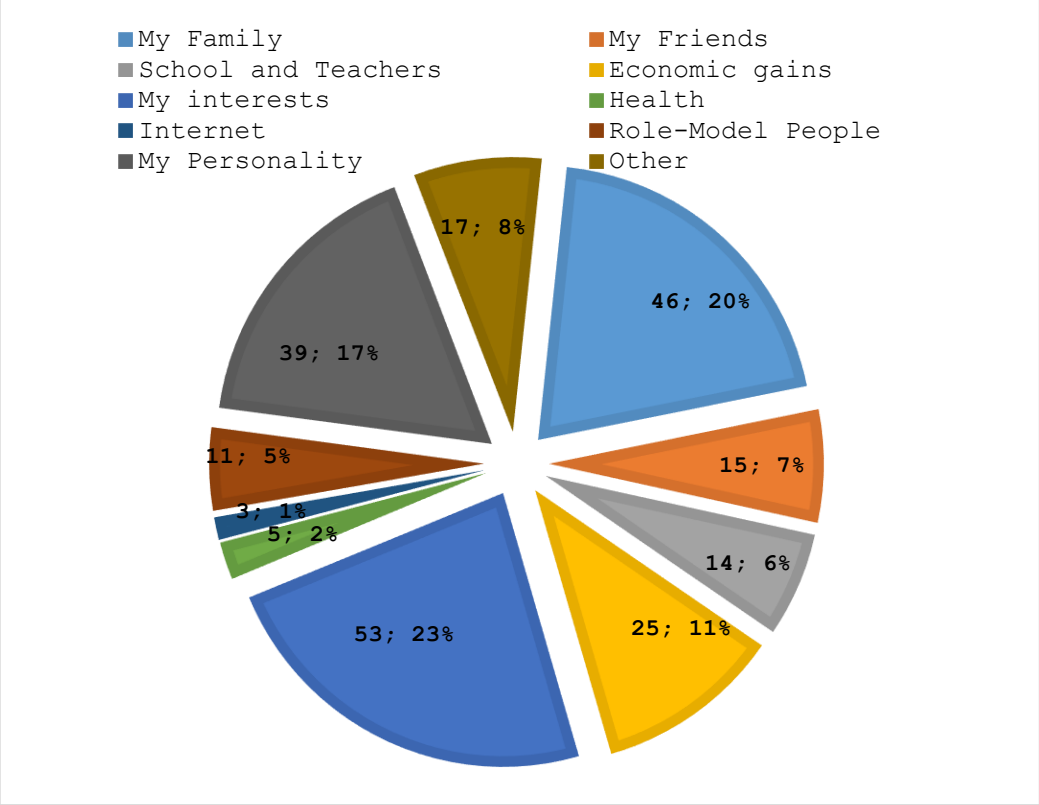
Table 1. Distribution of students according to socio-demographic characteristics

Characteristics		Mean±SD	Min-Max	Median
Age		19.80±1.12	18-24	20.00
		N	%	
Sex	Male	25	22.5	
	Female	86	77.5	
Internet Usage	Occasionally	5	4.5	
	Every Other Day	4	3.6	
	Every Day	101	91.0	
Mother's Educational Level	Primary School	47	42.3	
	Secondary School	24	21.6	
	High School	24	21.6	
	University	16	14.4	
Father's Educational Level	Primary School	33	29.7	
	Secondary School	28	25.2	
	High School	26	23.4	
	University	24	21.6	
Family Economic Status	Low	4	3.6	
	Moderate	67	**60.4**	
	Good	36	32.4	
	High	4	3.6	
Characteristics		Mean±SD	Min-Max	Median
Daily Internet Usage				
Hours		4.77±4.31	**1-24**	**4.00**

91.9% of the students stated that they "willingly preferred" the department they studied. 44.1% (n=49) of the participating group totally loved the department they chose, 0.9% (n=1) did not like it at all, 9% (n=10) liked it a little, 19.8% (n=22) loved it, 26.1% (n=29) stated that they mostly liked it. Of the students, 44.1% and 73.9% (n=82) stated that they had a model figure in their profession. It was determined that 52.3% (n=58) of the participants thought to definitely advance in their profession, 6.3% (n=7) thought it to some extent, and 23.4% (n=26) did not even consider advancing in the profession at all (Graphic 1).

Graphic 1. Students' perceptions of their professions

In their occupational choice, 20.2% (n=46) were affected by family, 23.2% (n=53) were influenced by their interests, 6.6% (n=15) by friends, 6.1% (n=14) by schools and teachers, 11% (n=25) by economic gain, 2.2% (n=5) by their health, 1.3% (n=3) by the Internet, 4.8% (n=11) by their role-models, 17.1% (n=39) by their the personality traits. While 91.9% of the participants voluntarily preferred the department they currently attended, the "family" and "interest" factors were found to be the most important factors in department choice (Graphic 2).



Graphic 2. Distribution of variables affecting occupational choice

In this research, it was determined that sex, age, department, family income, parental education and frequency of internet use did not affect media literacy levels and occupational choice capability ($p>0.05$) and no difference was found between departments ($p>0.05$). A positive and significant relationship was found between the students' scores from "the Scale of Occupational Choice Capability" and "Media Literacy Scale" scores ($p<0.001$), and this relationship was found to be weakly significant ($r=0.356$, $p<0.001$) (Table 2).

Table 2. Relationship between media literacy scale and the scale of occupational choice capability

Analysis	The Scale of Occupational Choice Capability	
Media Literacy Scale	**r**	0.356
	p	0.001**

Table 3. The mean scores of the participants' levels of media literacy and occupational choice capability n=111

Media Literacy Levels	**Mean±SD**
Nutrition and Dietetics	3.89±0.95
Dentistry and Medicine	3.93±0.61
Physiotherapy	3.48±0.71
Nursing	3.98±0.80
Healthcare Management	4.35±0.53
The Scale of Occupational Choice Capability	**Mean±SD**
Nutrition and Dietetics	3.69±0.96
Dentistry and Medicine	3.78±0.72
Physiotherapy	3.22±0.94
Nursing	3.60±0.95
Healthcare Management	3.03±0.97

Media Literacy Levels and the Scale of Occupational Choice Capability Scale mean scores of the students who participated in the study are shown in Table 3. According to the table, the mean score of the nutrition-dietetics department was 3.89±0.95, the mean score of the dentistry and medical faculty was 3.93±0.61, the mean score of the Physical Therapy Rehabilitation department was 3.48±0.71, the mean score of the nursing department was 3.98±0.80, and the mean score of the health management department was 4.35±0.53. According to the same table The mean score of the Department of Nutrition-Dietetics from the Scale of Occupational Choice Capability was 3.68±0.96, the mean score of the Dentistry and Medicine Faculty was 3.79±0.72, the mean score of the Department of Physiotherapy and Rehabilitation was 3.22±0.94 in, the mean score of the Department of Nursing was 3.60±0.95, and the mean score of the Health Management Department was 3.03±0.97 (Table 3).

In this research, the relationship between media literacy and occupational choice capability regarding their perception of their profession was examined. In the study, a significant relationship was identified between the "Scale of Occupational Choice Capability" scores of those who "willingly" chose their department $p<0.01$, those who had a "model figure" in the profession $p<0.05$, those participants who "planned to advance" in their career after graduation p 0.001, those who "strongly agreed" with loving the profession and those who "strongly disagree" with the idea of changing the profession $p<0.01$ (Table 4). No relationship was found between media literacy level and these variables (Table 4).

Table 4. In Participants' professional perceptions relationship between media literacy and occupational choice capability level n=111

Willingly Choosing the Department to Study					
Media Literacy	Yes	102	67.21±12.864	31-85(68)	0.436
	No	9	67.89±21.038	33-85(77)	
Occupational Choice Capability	Yes	102	40.32±9.532	16-55(42)	0.001**
	No	9	25.56±9.914	16-48(22)	
[a]Mann Whitney U Test * p<0.05 ** p<0.001					
Having a Model Figure in Occupational Choice					
Media Literacy	No	29	64.76±11.044	34-85(65)	0.055
	Yes	82	68.15±14.314	31-85(70.5)	
Occupational Choice Capability	No	29	34.55±11.249	16-53(33)	0.013*
	Yes	82	40.74±9.559	16-55(42)	
[a]Mann Whitney U Test * p<0.05 ** p<0.001					
Planning to Advance in the Profession					
Media Literacy	Strongly Disagree	58	66.83±13.462	31-85(68)	0.360
	Agree to Some Extent	7	72.71±9.827	61-85(69)	
	Agree	11	64±16.976	34-85(67)	
	Mostly Agree	9	61.33±14.534	33-77(66)	
	Strongly Agree	26	70.19±12.49	34-85(71.5)	
Occupational Choice Capability	Strongly Disagree	58	40.62±9.232	16-55(42)	0.009 **
	Agree to Some Extent	7	33.86±13.993	20-53(29)	
	Agree	11	28.55±9.832	16-49(31)	
	Mostly Agree	9	38.89±9.918	22-53(41)	
	Strongly Agree	26	41.77±9.471	22-55(42.5)	
[b]Kruskall-Wallis * p<0.05 ** p<0.001					
Loving the Profession					
Media Literacy	Agree to Some Extent	11	67.45±19.32	33-85(73)	0.129
	Agree	22	63.5±12.82	34-85(64)	
	Mostly Agree	29	65.79±11.878	31-83(68)	
	Strongly Agree	49	69.78±13.259	34-85(73)	
Occupational Choice Capability	Agree to Some Extent	11	27.09±10.977	16-55(26)	0.001**
	Agree	22	35.05±11.445	16-55(34)	
	Mostly Agree	29	41.17±7.583	22-53(41)	
	Strongly Agree	49	42.45±8.634	22-55(45)	
[b]Kruskall-Wallis * p<0.05 ** p<0.001					
Occupation Change Status					
Media Literacy	Strongly Disagree	82	67.96±12.905	31-85(68)	0.739
	Agree to Some Extent	26	65.12±16.053	33-85(68)	
	Agree	3	66.67±9.074	60-77(63)	
Occupational Choice Capability	Strongly Disagree	82	41.04±9.581	16-55(42)	0.007 **
	Agree to Some Extent	26	33.27±10.96	17-52(31.5)	
	Agree	3	37.67±8.083	29-45(39)	
[b]Kruskall-Wallis * p<0.05 ** p<0.001					

5. DISCUSSIONS

Professions, which are an important part of the social system, have assumed important functions for both society and the individual from the past to the present [11]. Health care professionals are defined as the paid and unpaid persons who work in health care fields, and who are exposed to many environmental risks to provide care to patients [12]. Although these employees in health care are recognized as working in different disciplines, their main goal is to help the patient return to his/her well-being again. The main health care fields are

Physiotherapy and Rehabilitation, Medicine, Dentistry, Nursing, Nutrition and Dietetics and Health Management. Universities train professional members of these disciplines in the field of health. It is very important that health sciences students who will serve an important group after graduation choose their profession consciously and be able to comprehend the principles of the profession correctly. The media, which makes itself felt day by day in every aspect of our lives, has taken its place today as an important virtual actor, especially over the children and young people of the developing world, as in all social areas. In this study, factors affecting health sciences students' choice of profession and the effect of media literacy on choice of profession, which easily affects individuals of all ages, were investigated.

A high proportion (91.9%) of the health science students who participated in the study were found to have willingly preferred their profession, they were seen to have role models in the profession, and they liked their profession after they learned about the profession and aim to advance in this profession. In the study, the relationship between participants who "willingly" chose the department they study ($p<0.01$), those who "had" a role model in the profession ($p<0.05$), those who "think about advancing in profession" after graduation ($p<0.01$), those who "totally agree" with the status of liking their profession, those who "never" thought of changing their profession ($p<0.01$), and the "scores of competency level of profession selection scale" was significant. According to this result, it can be said that positive perceptions about the profession positively affect the profession selection competency and help the student to choose their profession more consciously.

The participants' profession selection competency scale scores were examined, and the scores of all groups were determined to be more than "3.00". It was determined that mean profession selection competency scale score was the highest for the students of Faculty of Medicine and Dentistry with 3.78±0.72, which was followed by the students of the Department of Nutrition-Dietetics with (3.69±0.96) and Nursing with (3.60±0.95), respectively. The result of the study is similar to that of Vurucu. In the study conducted by Vurucu (2010), 80% of the students stated that they liked their profession and wanted to improve themselves in their profession; and at the end of this study, profession selection competency were found to be at the level of "3.00".

When the factors affecting students' choice of occupation were examined, it was observed that higher rates of "interest in the profession by the participant" (23%), and "family"(20%) had an effect. In other studies, similar to this result, it was also reported that the family was effective in choosing the profession department [13, 14 and 15]. Contrary to popular belief, the effect of media on the choice of profession was lower as (3%). In the study, it was observed that gender, age, department studied, family income level, parents' education level and frequency of internet use did not affect the proficiency of students in choosing a profession ($p>0.05$). The results of the study are similar to those of Banaz, 2017 and Semiz, 2013, but they differ from the studies indicating that socio-demographic characteristics affect the choice of profession [16].

The term social media is a common term for websites that enable users to communicate and access online information by providing them with the opportunity to share their thoughts, interests and information [17]. In this study, students' social media usage habits were examined. It was determined that a high percentage of the participants (91%) used the media every day and stayed on the internet for an average of 4.77±4.31 hours/day. When the literature was examined, it was observed that in a study conducted in two different universities, students used internet for "3" hours or more, and this rate was 21.9% and 20.3% [18]. In our

study, although it was noteworthy that the internet usage rates were similar to the results of other studies, the rate of daily internet use was significantly higher than that of other recent studies [19, 20 and 21]. The study examined the students' media literacy levels, and determined that health management students had the highest level with 4.35±0.53, nursing department students with (3.98±0.80), and Faculty of Dentistry and Medicine with 3.93±0.61, respectively. Since 1-2.33 is reported as "low level of Media Literacy", 2.33-3.67 as "medium level of Media Literacy", and 3.67-5.00 as "high level of Media Literacy" in the media literacy scale assessment, in general, the departments' media literacy levels were found to be high level and to be positive and conscious media literate. The results of this level are the same as the results of the research investigating the media literacy levels of university students. Although it was found that gender, educational level and income status of the students affected their media literacy levels, in our study, no significant relationship was found between the socio-demographic characteristics of the students and the media literacy scale scores [22].

There was a positive and significant relationship between the students' "profession selection competency scale" scores and their "media literacy level" scores ($p<0.001$), and this relationship was found to be significant at a low level. Although students' level of media literacy affects their competency level of profession selection, this effect can be interpreted as low ($r=0.356$, $p<0.001$). Although there is a significant relationship between the two scales in the study, it is noteworthy that the relationship between the two scales is weak.

6. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Today, even though the media consciously or unconsciously affects individuals of all ages, it should be noted that the most affected segment is children and young people. As a result of our research, it was seen that health sciences students use the media very often like the whole society. It is known that the media affects the choice of profession, as in every subject. Although, in the study there was a positive and significant relationship between the participants' media literacy levels and profession selection competency, contrary to expectations this relationship was weak. In this study, it was observed that the level of media literacy and the level of profession selection competency did not differ according to socio-demographic characteristics. In the study, it was found that the biggest influence on the choice of profession was the interest the profession and family factors.

Media can mislead young people in choosing a profession, as in any other issue. It is important for health sciences students who will serve an important group after graduation, to grasp their professions and the media correctly. For this reason, these age groups should be given the necessary public and social support during career selection periods and professional duties and responsibilities should be taught.

All health disciplines students need to increase their knowledge and skills in choosing the right media content. At this point, it is important to develop media and health literacy of students. It will be useful to add the media lessons to the high school and undergraduate curricula, for the students to be trained as health sciences students with the knowledge and competencies required by the age as in all fields and to develop their right Media Literacy.

ETHICS COMMITTEE APPROVAL

Ethics committee approval was received for this study from Clinical Research Ethics Committee of University of Health Sciences Istanbul Training and Research Hospital (Decision No:1947; Date:09/08/2019).

LIMITATION

The participants were from only at Beykent University. Data were collected only from the university. Therefore, the findings from the study are limited for this school.

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PEER-REVIEW

Externally peer-reviewed.

AUTHOR CONTRIBUTIONS

Concept-H.D.D., Design-H.D.D., Supervision-H.D.D., Ç.B., Materials-Ç.B., H.D.D., Data Collection and/or Processing- H.D.D., Ç.B., Review- H.D.D., Ç.B., Writing- H.D.D., Ç.B., Critical -Review-H.D.D.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

No conflict of interest was declared by the authors.

FINANCIAL DISCLOSURE

The authors declared that this study hasn't received no financial support.

NOTICE

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