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Investigation of career goal discrepancy of individuals who are preparing for PVTC exams and their reasons for preference

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ABSTRACT

In this research, it is aimed to examine the career goal discrepancies of individuals preparing for the physical course and oral interviews organized by the Police Vocational Training Center and the reasons for their orientation to the police profession through a mixed research approach. The research was carried out with a total of 212 candidates, 137 (64.6%) female and 75 (35.4%) male, who were preparing for the Police Vocational Training Center Examinations (PVTC) in the 27th Term of 2020–2021, in 29 different cities in Turkey. The data in the quantitative part of this study were obtained with the "Personal Information Form" prepared by the researchers and the "Career Goal Discrepancies Scale" consisting of 12 items developed by Creed and Hood (2015) and adapted into Turkish by Yam, Alkın, and Bartur (2020). Qualitative data were obtained with a "semi-structured interview form" prepared by the researchers. As a result of the research, it can be said that certain variables differentiate the career goal discrepancies, and that the participants prefer PVTC interviews instead of the career steps of the department of education, and the reason for this is the difficulty of being appointed in their own department and the desire to work in government positions.

Keywords: Police, Exam, Career goal discrepancies, Reasons for preference

INTRODUCTION

Due to the education system in Türkiye, the fact that the school success scores at each stage are effective during the determination of the next school, makes the school success scores in the current education period important (Polat, 2017). In this process, which starts with primary school and continues until university, choosing high school, choosing a university, exam anxiety is a painful period in which individuals have to cope with these problems in order to shape their future. Anxiety begins with the choice of university that individuals have made in order to get a good education before entering the university, and during their education life at the university, multiple factors such as the city where they studied, their socio-economic status, housing problem, social relations play an active role on the anxiety levels of the students.

In the last years of school life, the biggest source of anxiety for university students is the concern for the future,

and in connection with this, worry of having a job, in other words "unemployment anxiety" (Dursun & Aytaç, 2009). Career is a concept that defines an individual's lifelong pursuits and the roles s/he plays throughout his/her life. The career determination and decision-making process, which usually covers high school or university years, is an issue that should be emphasized because it is also related to the rest of life (Sharf, 2017). Young people who cannot gain their economic power have to continue to live dependent on their families, cannot establish an independent life, and despair about the future (Ersoy & Erdost 2008). As a result of this hopelessness, discrepancy occurs in career goals of university students due to their future anxiety. Career goal is where the individual wants to be in his/her future business life, that is, it can be said that the individual's route in the business world (Özden, 2007). Career goal discrepancy is defined as the incompatibility and discrepancy that occurs between the career goals that the person wants to see him/herself in the future and career goals s/he wants to reach and the current career level s/he is in (Carver & Scheier, 1990;



Higgins, 1987). The career goals that individuals have determined and whether these goals are attainable or not is an important situation in terms of career goal discrepancy that may occur. It is because high school and university students who experience discrepancy about career goals may have difficulties in their career plan and may feel negative emotions (anxiety, sense of failure, burnout, inadequacy) (Anderson & Mounts, 2012; Kerpelman, et al., 1997; Williams et al., 2000).

Unemployment and employment are among the most important problems of developed and developing countries. The unemployment problem, which has become widespread with the globalization of the world, also significantly affects the young population who have just graduated from the university. The main purpose of university education is to make the personnel who will work in the relevant sectors ready for the business world by training them specific to their fields. In our country, the increase in the number of universities and accordingly, the rapid increase in the number of graduates cause the graduates to compete with each other in finding a job. Just in this process, the orientation to the policing profession, which seems to be the guarantee profession of today, and which individuals look at as a shortcut profession, has also increased considerably in consequence of the decrease in employment as a result of the increase in the number of graduates with the increase in the number of universities in our country and the negative effects of the virus on the markets and employers, with the Covid 19 pandemic that started in 2020. It is known that individuals preparing for PVTC Physical Course and Oral Interviews have already graduated from associate and undergraduate degrees. The reasons why individuals preparing for PVTC want to prepare for the police profession instead of the career goals of the department they studied at the university have also been a matter of curiosity for us. Therefore, in this study, it is aimed to examine the career goal discrepancy of individuals who are prepared for the PVTC physical course and oral interviews and their reasons for preferring the policing profession. Within the scope of the research, answers to the following questions are sought:

- 1. What level is the career goal discrepancy of the individuals who are preparing for the PVTC physical course and oral interviews?
- 2. What are the reasons for individuals preparing for the police profession to turn to the police profession instead of the career steps of the associate and undergraduate departments from which they graduated?

METHOD

In this study, convergent parallel (simultaneous diversification) methodology (Giannaki, 2005; Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011) was used, which is one of the mixed research models that ensures that the results obtained from different methods and designs are close to each other or support each other. In this design, quantitative and qualitative

data are collected simultaneously at one stage of the research. Usually, the results of the two methods are considered together in the interpretation stage (Creswell, 2009).

Study Group

The research was carried out on a total of 212 candidates, 137 (64.6%) female and 75 (35.4%) male, selected by simple random sampling method, who were preparing for the Police Vocational Training Center Examinations in 29 different provinces in Turkey in the 27th term of 2020-2021. The descriptive analysis of the study group is given in Table 1.

Data Collection

The data in the quantitative part of this study were obtained with the "Personal Information Form" prepared by the researchers and the "Career Goal Discrepancy Scale" consisting of 12 items developed by Creed and Hood (2015) and adapted into Turkish by Yam, Alkın, and Bartur (2020). The data obtained in the study were collected through Google forms, and the career goal discrepancy scale was used in addition to the personal information form in the study. Regarding this search, from the Gazi University Ethics Committee dated 21.01.2022 and 77082166-604.01.02 / E. Ethics committee approval was obtained based on the letter numbered 271047.

Career Goal Discrepancy Scale

The original form of the scale developed by Creed & Hood (2015) consists of one dimension and 12 items. The scale was prepared in a seven-point Likert type. There is no reverse item in the scale. The scale was adapted to Turkish by making validity and reliability analyses by Yam, Alkın, and Barut (2020). In the current study, the internal reliability coefficient for the Career goal discrepancy scale was determined as .91.

In the qualitative part of the study, a "semi-structured interview form" was included, which gave the researcher the opportunity to obtain more detailed information about the reasons for preferring the police profession. The questionnaire consists of 6 questions aiming at descriptive analysis. Details on the analysis of the data are included in the findings section.

Data Analysis

Since it was determined that the data showed normal distribution, parametric tests were applied. Descriptive statistics, independent sample T-test, one-way analysis of variance ANOVA and post hoc tests were used. Descriptive analyses for the participants are shown in table 1.

RESULTS

In this part of the research, there are quantitative data in Tables 1-9 and findings for qualitative analysis in tables 10-12.

Most of the participants consists of people who were mostly female (64.6%), from other cities (33.0%), had undergraduate education (61.8%), had academic average



between 2.51-3.00 (49.1%), had moderate income level (56.1%), received mostly family support (93.9%) and stated that they would still prefer to be a policeman (72.2%) (Table 1).

Table 1. Percentage and frequency distributions for the study group

N=(212)	Variable	f	%
Gender -	Male	75	35.4
Gender	Female	137	64.6
_	Ankara	69	32.5
City -	İstanbul	33	15.6
City	Antalya	40	18.9
	Other	70	33.0
Educational laval	Associate's Degree	81	38.2
Educational level -	Bachelor's degree	131	61.8
	2.01 - 2.50	38	17.9
Academie average	2.51-3.00	104	49.1
Academic average -	3.01-3.50	58	27.4
-	3.50 and above	12	5.7
Income level	Low	93	43.9
income ievei	Moderate	119	56.1
Catting family support	Yes	199	93.9
Getting family support	No	13	6.1
The state of still	Yes	153	72.2
preferring to be policeman	No	59	27.8

It was observed that the participants exhibited career goal discrepancy below the average (27.45±11.01). Since the kurtosis skewness values were determined in the direction of the normal distribution of the data, the analyses were carried out with parametric tests (Table 2).

Table 2. Arithmetic mean, standard deviation and kurtosis skewness values for the career goal discrepancy scale

N=(212)	Min.	Max.	χ¯	Skewness	Kurtosis
Career goal discrepancy	12.00	57.00	27.45	0.469	-0.540

Participants' career goal discrepancy does not differ according to gender. However, although there was no significant difference, it was determined that male participants exhibited higher career goal discrepancy than female participants (Table 3).

Table 3. Independent sample T-Test results between career goal discrepancy scale and gender variable

N=(212)	Gender	n	х¯	sd	t	р
Career goal	Male	75	29.00	12.37	1 512	0 122
discrepancy	Female	137	26.61	10.15	1.513	0.132
p<0.05						

As a result of the analysis made between career goal discrepancy and the city they live in, it was determined that the participants' city and career goal discrepancy differed. Intra-group differences were determined according to the findings obtained from post hoc tests. Accordingly, it was determined that there was a career discrepancy in favour of the participants from other cities regarding the significant

difference between the participants living in other cities and those living in Ankara and Antalya (Table 4).

Table 4. One-way analysis of variance ANOVA test results between career goal discrepancy and city of residence

N=(212)	City of residence	n	х̄	sd	F	р
	Ankara	69 ²	24.10	10.39		
Career goal	İstanbul	33	26.84	12.49	4 222	0.000*
discrepancy	Antalya	40 ³	26.22	9.31	0.332	0.000
	Other	70¹	31.75	10.60		

p <0.05* 1>2>3>

The independent sample t-test results between the education level of the sample group in the study and the career goal discrepancy scale indicate that there is no significant difference between the education level and career goal discrepancy. However, although there is no significant difference, it is seen that undergraduate students exhibit higher career goal discrepancy (Table 5).

Table 5. Independent sample T-Test results between career goal discrepancy scale and education level variable

N=(212)	Educational level	n	χ̄	sd	t	р
Career goal	Associate's degree	81	26.58	11.12		
discrepancy	. 90		28.00		-0.911	0.363

p < 0.05*

As a result of the analysis between the academic averages of the participants and the career goal discrepancy, there was no significant difference between the academic average and career goal discrepancy.

Table 6. Independent sample T-Test results between career goal discrepancy and academic mean variable

N=(212)	Academic Average	n	χ̄	sd	t	р
•	2.01-2.50	38	28.00	10.04		
Caraar gool	2.51-3.00	104	27.84	10.92		0.045*
Career goal - discrepancy -	3.01-3.50	58	26.06	11.54	2.017	
uisci eparicy	3.51 and above	12	29.08	12.85	-	

p <0.05*

Independent sample T-test findings between income level and career goal discrepancy indicate that participants who have low-income level show higher career goal discrepancy (Table 7).

Table 7. Independent sample T-Test results between career goal discrepancy scale and income level variable

N=(212)	Income level	n	χ¯	sd	t	р
Career goal	Low	93	29.17	11.04	2 017	0.045*
discrepancy	Moderate	119	26.11	10.85	2.01/	0.045*
p <0.05*	•			•		

When the family support variable, which examines the status of getting family support in determining the career goals of



the participants, it was determined that it did not significantly change the career goal discrepancy (Table 8).

Table 8. Independent sample T-Test results between career goal discrepancy scale and getting family support variable

N=(212)	Getting family support	n	хī	ss	t	р
Career goal	Yes	199	27.11	10.66	1 777	0.077
discrepancy	No	13	32.69	15.05	-1.777	0.077
p <0.05						

The independent sample T-Test results of the study group between the state of still preferring to be policeman and career goal discrepancy show that they revealed a significant level of career goal discrepancy in favour of those who answered no. Therefore, it was determined that the career goal discrepancy of those who said they would not prefer to be a policeman was higher than those who said they would still prefer to be a policeman. In this part of the research, qualitative findings obtained in line with the answers given to the study questions are included (Table 9).

Table 9. Independent sample T-Test results between the career goal discrepancy scale and the variable of still preferring to be policeman

N=(212)	The state of still preferring to be policeman	n	x̄	sd	t	р
Career goal	Yes	153	25.07	9.93	F 40F	0.000*
discrepancy	No	59	33.64	11.37	-5.405	0.000*
- · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · ·						

p < 0.05*

In Table 10, when the findings regarding the reasons for preferring the department of education are examined, it is seen that the majority of the participants made their choices due to interests and predispositions (f=56), the high opportunity to find a job (f=40), due to pressure and demands (f=36), and being their dream department (f=29). In addition, the education they have received in secondary education (f=18) and their desire to have a bachelor's degree (f=17) are also the reasons for preferring the departments.

Table 10. Findings on the reasons for preferring the department of education

Answer categories		Sample statements
Interests and predisposition	f=56	"I preferred it because it covers the courses within my field of interest."
Job opportunity	f=40	(P29).
Pressure and request	f=36	"I preferred this department to find a job easily when I graduated." (P107).
Dream and love	f=29	"I can say that I preferred this
Education received in secondary education	f=18	department because of the pressure of my family" (P32). "It was a department that I dreamed
Having a bachelor's degree	f=17	of since I was little and I preferred it fondly." (P46). "I preferred it because I studied this department in high school, too" (P170). "I made my choice with the approach that just getting a university degree is enough." (P68)

In Table 11, when the findings regarding the employment opportunities of the department of education are examined, it is understood that the majority of the participants see insufficient employment opportunities in the private sector (f=144) and government sector (f=20) in general, while a small number of participants see their departments as sufficient (f=21) in terms of job opportunities.

Table 11. Findings regarding the employment opportunities of the department of education

Sample statements			
Sufficient f=21 Insufficient in government sector to the job opportunities, but unfortunately things did not go as I wanted." (P56). "I think it's sufficient, if I can't get a job or be appointed, it's my problem." (P21). "There are jobs in the private sector, albeit with low wages, but unfortunately it is almost impossible to find a job in the	Answer categories		Sample statements
Insufficient in government sector unfortunately things did not go as I wanted." (P56). "I think it's sufficient, if I can't get a job or be appointed, it's my problem." (P21). "There are jobs in the private sector, albeit with low wages, but unfortunately it is almost impossible to find a job in the	Insufficient	f=144	"I preferred this department due
government sector I wanted." (P56). "I think it's sufficient, if I can't get a job or be appointed, it's my problem." (P21). "There are jobs in the private sector, albeit with low wages, but unfortunately it is almost impossible to find a job in the	Sufficient	f=21	to the job opportunities, but
		f=20	I wanted." (P56). "I think it's sufficient, if I can't get a job or be appointed, it's my problem." (P21). "There are jobs in the private sector, albeit with low wages, but unfortunately it is almost impossible to find a job in the

In Table 12, when the findings regarding the reasons for preferring the PVTC physical course interviews instead of the career steps of their department of education are examined, it was determined that the participants wanted to participate in the PVTC physical course interviews to become a policeman for reasons such as difficulty in appointment in the department (f=82), desire to work in government sector (f=50), desire to be a policeman (f=44) and sufficient salary (f=18).

Table 12. Findings on the reasons for preferring the PVTC physical course interviews instead of the career steps of the department of education

Answer categories		Sample statements
Difficulty in appointment in the department	f=82	"I can't be appointed as a teacher; I'm preparing to be a policeman because maybe my
Desire to work in government sector	f=50	destiny is here" (P96). "Because it's a lifetime job and I
Desire to be a policeman	f=44	want to secure myself" (P140). "it's my dream since I was little and
Sufficient salary	f=18	I love it" (P88).
Difficulty in appointment in the department	f=82	"Because they give very good wages in Turkey conditions" (P46).

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

In this research, PVTC examined the career goal discrepancy of individuals who were preparing for the physical course and oral interviews and the reasons for orientation to the police profession. It was observed that the participants exhibited career goal discrepancy below the average (27.45±11.01). Therefore, it can be stated that they are relatively successful in reaching the goals they set in their careers. At the same time, it was determined that career goal discrepancy did not change according to gender, but the findings obtained indicate that although there is no significant difference, male participants exhibit higher career



goal discrepancy than female participants (Tablo 2). This is similar to the results of Bacanlı et al. (2013) studies. In Öztemel's (2012) study on career indecision, it was determined that male students had higher career indecision than female students. Gökbaraz's (2021) study also shows that male students experience career goal discrepancy. This situation also coincides with Esmer's finding that according to the Turkish values atlas published in 2012, three out of every four people agree with the statement "the head of the family should be male". It is thought that the hasty decisions of boys as a result of more intervention and pressure from the society compared to girls in the decision-making process for their career goals will be effective in directing them to a profession they will not want in the future.

As a result of the analysis made between income level and career goal discrepancy, it was revealed that the participants who stated that they had a low-income level showed higher career goal discrepancy (Table 6). Contrary to these findings, Aktaş & Şahin's (2019) study, which examined the career indecision of university students during their career process, concluded that socioeconomic level did not statistically significantly differentiate career indecision.

Yes (72,16%) answer to the question "If you were going to have a career related to your department, would you still prefer the police profession" (Table 8) is thought to be related to the conclusion of the study by Arslan & Olgun (2009) on the police profession that the academic staff and students see the police profession as a respectable and prestigious profession.

In Table 10, when the findings regarding the reasons for preferring their department of education are examined, it is seen that the majority of the participants made their choices due to interests and predispositions (f=56), the high opportunity to find a job (f=40), due to pressure and demands (f=36), and being their dream department (f=29). In addition, the education they have received in secondary education (f=18) and their desire to have a bachelor's degree (f=17) are also the reasons for preferring the departments. In the study by Atlı & Gür (2019), it was revealed that in terms of the ideal job characteristics which high school students look for, the three most important characteristics are, respectively, "it should have a good income" stated by 201 (23.5%) students, "it should make me happy" stated by 186 (21.8%) students, and "it should be easy and comfortable" stated by 118 (13.8%) students, and the reasons why students prefer the departments they are currently graduated from show similarity.

When the findings regarding the employment opportunities of their department of education are examined, the students think that the employment opportunities of the department they study are insufficient (f=144). Compared to the results in Table 10, this reveals that the participants do not have enough information about the job opportunities of the departments or they have a shallow knowledge while making their choices.

When the findings regarding the reasons for preferring the PVTC physical course interviews instead of the career steps of their department of education are examined, it was concluded that the participants wanted to participate in the PVTC physical course interviews to become a policeman for reasons such as difficulty in appointment due to their department of education (f=82), desire to work in government sector (f=50), desire to be a policeman (f=44) and sufficient salary (f=18). With this result, the lack of employment opportunity in the department they study and their desire to become a civil servant with state assurance also coincide with the studies of Atlı & Gür (2019). It is considered that the police profession has a higher probability of being appointed compared to other professions.

As a result of the research, although there is no significant difference in career goal discrepancy according to gender, it is seen that men exhibit higher career goal discrepancy than women. It is seen that the participants with low-income level show higher career goal discrepancy. It was concluded that there was no significant difference between career goal discrepancy and variable of getting family support. On the other hand, it was revealed that the "difficulty of being appointed due to their department of education and the desire to work in government sector" outweighed the fact that the participants preferred the PVTC physical course interviews instead of the career steps of their department of education. It was concluded that the participants still want to prefer the profession of police instead of the career opportunities of the department they graduated from. In Kılıç's (2013) study, it was concluded that university graduate police officers could not internalize the police profession and wanted to leave the police profession within the opportunity and possibilities.

When the results of the current research are evaluated in general, the results of the investigation of career goal discrepancy of individuals preparing for PVTC examinations according to gender, education level and income level have contributed to the literature. In the qualitative part of the research, it was revealed why individuals who are already associate degree and undergraduate graduates do not want to do their own profession, what obstacles are in front of them in doing their 2-year and 4-year department profession, and why they prefer the police profession. As a result of the research, it can be said that certain variables differentiate career goal discrepancy, and that the participants prefer PVTC interviews instead of the career steps of their department of education, and the reason for this is the difficulty of being appointed in their own department and the desire to work in government sector.

COMPLIANCE WITH ETHICAL STANDARDS

Authors' Contributions

Authors contributed equally to this paper.



Conflict of Interest

No potential conflict of interest was reported by the authors.

Ethical Approval

This study was approved by the Gazi University Ethics Committee (Approval date: 21.01.2022, Approval No: 77082166-604.01.02, Approval letter no: 271047)

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