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Examination of Hopelessness Levels of Communication Faculty Students in the Context of Future Anxiety: A Single-Center Study

İletişim Fakültesi Öğrencilerinin Umutsuzluk Düzeylerinin Gelecek Kaygısı Bağlamında İncelenmesi: Tek Merkezli Bir Çalışma

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Abstract

Aim: This study aims to examine the hopelessness levels of communication faculty students and the influencing factors. The research employed a descriptive quantitative design.

Method: Data were collected using a socio-demographic form, questions regarding the educational period, and the Beck Hopelessness Scale (BHS).

Findings: Findings revealed that participants' BHS total and sub-dimension scores were generally above average. Significant differences were identified between BHS scores and variables including perceived economic status, future-related motivation, post-graduation planning, and participation in extracurricular activities.

Conclusion: To enable communication students to cope with future uncertainties, providing effective communication strategies and out-of-class learning experiences is essential. These results suggest that students require more support during career planning processes. Furthermore, identifying the specific factors affecting students' hopelessness levels remains crucial for developing targeted interventions.

Keywords

Future Anxiety, Hopelessness, Communication Faculty, Beck Hopelessness Scale, Economic Conditions

ETHICAL STATEMENT: Ethical approval for the study was obtained from the Social Sciences, Science, and Engineering Ethics Committee of Giresun University on May 11, 2022, under the decision number 22/018.

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Öz

Amaç: Bu çalışma, iletişim fakültesi öğrencilerinin umutsuzluk düzeylerini ve etkileyen faktörleri incelemeyi amaçlamaktadır. Araştırma, nicel araştırma yöntemlerinden tanımlayıcı tasarımda planlanmıştır.

Yöntem: Veriler; sosyo-demografik form, eğitim dönemine yönelik sorular ve Beck Umutsuzluk Ölçeği (BUÖ) kullanılarak toplanmıştır.

Bulgular: Bulgular katılımcıların BUÖ toplam ve alt boyut puanlarının genel olarak ortalamasının üzerinde olduğunu göstermiştir. Ekonomik durum algısı, geleceğe yönelik motivasyon, mezuniyet sonrası planlama ve okul dışı aktivitelere katılım değişkenleri ile BUÖ puanları arasında anlamlı farklar saptanmıştır.

Sonuç: İletişim öğrencilerinin gelecekteki belirsizliklerle başa çıkabilmeleri için etkili iletişim stratejileri ve ders dışı öğrenme deneyimleri kazanmaları esastır. Bu sonuçlar, öğrencilerin kariyer planlama süreçlerinde daha fazla desteklenmeleri gerektiğini göstermektedir. Ayrıca, öğrencilerin umutsuzluk düzeylerini etkileyen faktörlerin belirlenmesi, hedefe yönelik müdahaleler geliştirilmesi açısından kritik önem taşımaktadır.

Anahtar Kelimeler

Gelecek Kaygısı, Umutsuzluk, İletişim Fakültesi, Beck Umutsuzluk Ölçeği, Ekonomik durum

Introduction

From a societal perspective, academic achievement and holding a university degree are considered important elements that shape an individual's future. In traditional thinking, being a university graduate is described as a "golden bracelet(a valuable skill/profession)." This situation results particularly in parents directing their children toward the university entrance exam with the aim of securing their career paths, regardless of the children's abilities and areas of interest. Consequently, students are often placed in a department solely based on their exam scores, without having a specific career goal or academic purpose. Individual competencies and goals become limited to merely obtaining an undergraduate degree. This type of systematic pressure manifests itself especially through the transmission of parents' anxiety about the future to their children starting from primary school years, continues throughout their educational life, and becomes more pronounced toward the end of their education.

Throughout their lives, individuals are in a continuous learning process. This learning process begins with the family and continues through school and socialization. Throughout school life, individuals try to achieve a certain level of academic success in order to complete their education. The anxiety of achieving academic success may be at higher levels in some individuals and at lower levels in others. There are many factors that affect academic achievement. Academic achievement can be influenced by the student receiving the education, the school providing the education, and the student's family. The factors originating from the student are classified as self-efficacy perception, student motivation, self-esteem, and study habits, with self-efficacy perception appearing to have a greater influence. School-related factors include attitude toward the lesson, school culture, learning behaviors, and the school principal's leadership, with attitude toward the lesson ranking first in effect size. Family-related factors include the family's attitudes and behaviors, socio-economic level, the educational level of the mother and father, and the family's involvement in education, among which the family's attitudes and behaviors rank first in effect size (Sarier, 2016:618).

Future anxiety and hopelessness are not synonymous terms. Future anxiety refers to the state of uncertainty and worry individuals feel regarding their future living conditions, career opportunities, and overall life satisfaction. Hopelessness, on the other hand, reflects an intense state of pessimism. However, the study focuses on future anxiety and the associated level of hopelessness. For this reason, these concepts are at times used interchangeably and together. University students' levels of hopelessness increase as they approach graduation. A study shows that the total hopelessness score average of fourth-year students is higher than that of first-year students (Bozkur, Kiran & Cengiz, 2020:6). The factors influencing this level of anxiety are closely related to economic conditions, the student's self-development throughout their academic period, and the clarification of their goals for after graduation. In a study examining the relationship between career adaptability and unemployment anxiety, it was shown that students with high career adaptability had lower career stress (Demirtaş & Kara, 2022:29). This indicates that career uncertainties may negatively affect individuals' professional development processes.

Future anxiety and the resulting hopelessness are among the factors that affect individuals' professional development processes. Examining university students' levels of hopelessness provides information about important factors that directly influence these students' communication skills, social interactions, and professional development. Understanding the uncertainties and perceptions of communication faculty students regarding the future, how they develop their communication strategies, and their professional competencies is important in order to develop solution-oriented strategies.

From this perspective, the aim of the study is to reveal the levels of hopelessness about the future among communication faculty students and the factors associated with these levels of hopelessness. The findings obtained

as a result of the research will allow for a better understanding of the level of hopelessness that affects student success and will contribute to providing more appropriate psychological and academic support to students within educational processes.

Future Anxiety

Uncertainty is a fundamental factor that negatively impacts psychological well-being. Humans inherently seek to reduce uncertainty; when this remains unachievable, anxiety levels typically escalate. From the perspective of university students, the first two years of studies are generally spent adapting to the new environment, while the idea of graduation starts to take shape in the third year and future anxiety becomes more pronounced in the final year. A study conducted by Aydın & Tiryaki (2017, p.718) found that first-year students had lower levels of constant anxiety, while general anxiety levels were higher among students in upper classes.

Future anxiety is characterized by a state of uncertainty, fear, and worry regarding distant personal goals (Zaleski, 1996, p. 165). Every individual's level of future-related anxiety can vary from time to time. This variability depends on the uncertainties they face, their circumstances, and their level of awareness regarding their competencies. Anxiety levels in individuals should remain at a manageable level. Excessive anxiety can create situations with potentially adverse outcomes for individuals (Zaleski, 1996, p.165). When this anxiety becomes chronic and the individual perceives a lack of agency or positive outcomes, it often transitions into hopelessness. In this context, hopelessness stands as a significant risk factor within the construct of future anxiety (Dikec et al., 2023). Although these terms are distinct, they are deeply interconnected: persistent future anxiety frequently acts as a precursor to hopelessness. On the other hand, manageable anxiety can transform into a factor that contributes to an individual's motivation. By implementing appropriate interventions, students' levels of hopelessness can be reduced. A study by Dinç & Çınar (2019, p. 22) found that cognitive-behavioral approaches increased students' positive attitudes toward the future and their confidence in their abilities. Therefore, addressing the decrease in motivation and the increase in anxiety through targeted efforts can positively influence students' academic success.

Hopelessness can also affect the professional development of communication faculty students. Setting career goals in the field of communication and taking the necessary steps to achieve these goals can help reduce students' future anxiety. However, the challenges and uncertainties encountered in this process may negatively affect students' motivation. A study demonstrated that perceived future employability has a negative and significant impact on hopelessness (Gökkaya & Erten, 2024). Uncertainty about career opportunities can increase anxiety levels. Additionally, Galliera's (2024) research highlights the importance of methods developed to ensure effective message dissemination in communication networks, which are crucial for improving communication skills. Such methods can help students enhance their communication skills and reduce their future-related anxieties.

Communication faculty students experience various social and cultural interactions throughout their educational journey. These interactions are critically important for improving students' communication skills. To ensure that the quality of these interactions is not affected by uncertainties and anxieties about the future, it may be beneficial for faculty administrations to develop appropriate strategies. Indeed, Rosenblatt & Lindell (2021) emphasized in their study that effective faculty-student communication could reduce students' course-related anxieties and increase their persistence. High levels of hopelessness due to future anxiety emerge as a significant factor that affects students' academic success and social interactions.

Factors Affecting Hopelessness

Studies on hopelessness have attempted to reveal how this state manifests in terms of various variables. Although the variable of gender is included in many studies, one study found that men had higher hopelessness scores than women (Lima, Veloso, Lira, Silva, Rocha, & Conceição, 2021; Gürgül & Şeker, 2022; Koçeroğlu, Karaduman, Durmuş & Ünlü, 2024). In another study examining the factors associated with depressive symptoms and hopelessness among nursing students, it was found that women had higher levels of hopelessness (Çunkuş, Karaatlı, Adana & Arslantaş, 2021). In Yalçın's (2022) study on unemployment and hopelessness among university students, although the differences were not very high, women were found to have higher levels of hopelessness. Research also shows that perceived economic status can influence the level of hopelessness. In another study conducted on students, it was observed that as the economic status of families decreased, hopelessness levels increased (Demirel & Üngüren, 2024). Although there is a difference between socio-demographic variables and hopelessness levels, it appears that different results have been reached in each study.

Similarly, students' academic achievements are affected by their levels of hopelessness. In a study examining the correlation between academic achievement, life purpose, and hopelessness among final-year medical students, a

negative relationship was found between hopelessness and academic performance (Butt, et al. 2022). In the study by Akdamar & Kızılkaya (2022), which investigated the relationship between academic procrastination tendencies, hopelessness levels, and academic achievements of university students, a positive relationship was revealed between academic procrastination and hopelessness levels. According to the cross-sectional study conducted by Lima et al. (2021) to identify factors associated with hopelessness among university students, it was found that as hopelessness levels increased, academic performance decreased. While research revealed that future anxiety has a negative effect on academic performance (Çelik, 2025), this impact is closely linked to heightened levels of hopelessness. Similarly, in the study by Çunkuş et al. (2021), those who reported low course achievement had higher levels of hopelessness. Although there are many factors affecting students' academic success, research indicates that the level of hopelessness should not be overlooked.

It is thought that the future-related anxieties of communication faculty students create significant differences in their communication skills and social interactions by increasing their hopelessness. These factors may negatively affect students' academic success and professional development. This study aims to describe the level of hopelessness among communication faculty students – within the context of future anxiety- in terms of variables such as gender, parental education, having a plan after graduation, and participation in extracurricular activities for personal development.

Methods

The aim of the study is to reveal the levels of hopelessness about the future among communication faculty students and the factors associated with these levels of hopelessness. The research was planned as a descriptive design, one of the quantitative research methods. Relationship-seeking designs are conducted to reveal relationships between variables and to determine whether the suggested relationships by the researcher actually exist (Bahçivan, 2011, p.105). The following research questions were addressed in the study:

Research Hypotheses

H1; Female students have a higher level of hopelessness than male students.
H2 There is a significant difference in mean hopelessness scores based on the variables of parental education, number of siblings, family type, and place of residence.

H3; As perceived economic status increases, the level of hopelessness decreases.
H4 There is a significant difference in mean hopelessness scores based on students' responses regarding the impact of future anxiety on motivation.

H5; There is a significant difference in mean hopelessness scores based on the responses provided to the question regarding post-graduation plans.

H6; There is a significant difference in mean hopelessness scores based on the responses provided to the question regarding participation in activities for personal development.

Population and Sample

The study population consisted of students enrolled in the Faculty of Communication at a public university (N=966). A non-probability convenience sampling method was employed for the study. Convenience sampling is a non-random sampling technique where the researcher obtains data by selecting individuals who are easily accessible (Neuman, 2014:321). Although this method does not strictly require a formal power analysis for universal generalizability, the targeted sample size (n=244) meets the minimum requirements for the planned statistical analyses and provides sufficient statistical power to examine the primary relationships between the variables. Data were collected via face-to-face surveys. To compensate for potential data loss or incomplete responses, recruitment exceeded the initial target, resulting in 248 valid questionnaires (n=248) being included in the final analysis.

Data Collection Tools and Methodology

The data for the study were collected face-to-face using a questionnaire developed by the researcher and the "Beck Hopelessness Scale" (BHS), which was validated and tested for reliability by Durak & Palabiyıkoğlu (1994). The scale measures individuals' levels of hopefulness regarding the future.

The BHS consists of 20 items and is scored by assigning "0" for yes responses and "1" for no responses. The scale uses reverse scoring for certain items; specifically, items 1, 3, 5, 6, 8, 10, 13, 15, and 19 are reverse-coded. Higher mean scores indicate higher levels of hopelessness. The scale includes the following factors: items 1, 3, 7, 11, and 18 measure "Feelings and expectations about the future"; items 2, 4, 9, 12, 14, 16, 17, and 20 measure "Loss of

motivation”; and items 5, 6, 8, 10, 13, 15, and 19 measure “Hope.” The scale’s reliability was reported as Cronbach’s $\alpha = 0.86$ and it has been shown to validly measure hopelessness in normal groups (Durak & Palabıyıkoglu, 1993). Erdemir (2018;15) states in his study that, in cases where a scale previously validated for Turkey is used, it may be acceptable to perform only reliability analyses. Therefore, no additional validity or reliability study was conducted for the scale in the present study. Erdemir (2018;15) states that although it is recommended to test the validity of the scale as a precaution, in cases where a scale previously validated for Turkey is used, only reliability analyses may be considered acceptable. Based on the current study’s data, the reliability test yielded a Cronbach’s alpha of 0.867.

Data Analysis

For data analysis, the questionnaire responses were entered into the SPSS program. The raw data were reviewed and reorganized according to the scale scoring system. The scale is scored by assigning 0 points for “yes” responses and 1 point for “no” responses. However, the responses to items 1, 3, 5, 6, 8, 10, 13, 15, and 19 were reverse-coded during analysis. Next, a normality test was conducted to examine whether the data were normally distributed. According to Tabachnick and Fidell (2019), skewness and kurtosis values between +1.5 and -1.5 indicate that the data show a normal distribution. Based on this criterion, the data were found to be normally distributed. After conducting descriptive statistics, an independent samples t-test was performed. However, the Kruskal-Wallis test was applied for variables that violated normality assumptions or where the intra-group numerical distribution failed to meet parametric test assumptions; subsequently, the Post-Hoc Dunn test was performed to identify the source of significant differences.

Limitations of the Study

The primary limitation of this study is that the sample was drawn from a single institution, which limits the generalizability of the findings to the entire student population in Turkey. Instead, this research provides a foundational dataset that can serve as a baseline for future multi-center studies. Furthermore, certain demographic categories, particularly the “literate only” level in parental education, had limited representation due to the overall increase in education levels in society. Consequently, the results related to these specific sub-groups should be interpreted with caution.

Results

In this section, the statistics of the data obtained as a result of the analyses are presented.

Upon analyzing the socio-demographic data of the participants, it was observed that 59.3% (147) were female and 40.7% (101) were male. Regarding the question about perceived economic status, 7.3% of participants rated their economic status as poor, 62.9% (156) as normal, and 29.8% (74) as good. When asked about their mother’s education level, 7.7% (19) stated literate, 44.4% (110) primary school, 25.4% (63) secondary school, 19.4% (48) high school, and 3.2% (8) university or higher. For their father’s education level, 2.4% (6) stated literate, 26.2% (65) primary school, 35.9% (89) secondary school, 29.4% (73) high school, and 6% (15) university or higher. Regarding the number of siblings, 4.4% (11) reported being an only child, 28.6% (71) had two siblings, 35.5% (88) had three siblings, and 31.5% (78) had four or more siblings. In terms of family type, 69.8% (173) identified as having a nuclear family, while 30.2% (75) described their family as traditional. Finally, for the place of residence, 32.7% (81) indicated living in a metropolitan city, 19.4% (48) in a city center, 34.3% (85) in a town, and 13.7% (34) in a village (Table 1).

Table 1. Descriptive Data of Socio-Demographic Variables (n=248)

Variables	n	%	
Gender	Female	147	59.3
	Male	101	40.7
Perceived Economic Status	Poor	18	7.3
	Normal	156	62.9
	Good	74	29.8
Mother’s Education Level	Literate	19	7.7
	Primary School	110	44.4
	Secondary School	63	25.4
	High School	48	19.4
	University and above	8	3.2

Table 1. Continue

Variables		n	%
Father's Education Level	Literate	6	2.4
	Primary School	65	26.2
	Secondary School	89	35.9
	High School	73	29.4
	University and above	15	6.0
Number of Siblings	Only child	11	4.4
	Two	71	28.6
	Three	88	35.5
	Four or more	78	31.5
Family Type	Nuclear Family	173	69.8
	Traditional Family	75	30.2
Place of Residence	Metropolitan City	81	32.7
	City Center	48	19.4
	Town	85	34.3
	Village	34	13.7

Table 2 provides details about the participants' educational period. According to the data, 32.7% (81) of the participants were in their first year, 32.3% (80) in their second year, 14.9% (37) in their third year, and 20.2% (50) in their fourth year. Participants were also asked about the order of their university preference for the communication faculty. It was found that 65.7% (163) selected it as their 1st to 5th choice, 22.2% (55) as their 6th to 10th choice, 6.9% (17) as their 11th to 15th choice, 4.0% (10) as their 16th to 20th choice, and 1.2% (3) as their 21st or later choice. Regarding the question, "Does future anxiety affect your motivation?" 84.7% (210) responded "yes," while 15.3% answered "no." When asked if they had a plan for after graduation, 71.0% (176) said "yes," while 29.0% (72) said "no." Finally, participants were asked whether they participated in extracurricular activities to enhance their personal development. It was found that 46.8% (116) answered "yes," and 53.2% (132) answered "no."

Table 2. Descriptive Statistics of Participants' Educational Period Information

Variables		n	%
Year of Study	First Year	81	32.7
	Second Year	80	32.3
	Third Year	37	14.9
	Fourth Year	50	20.2
Program Preference Order	1st to 5th Preference	163	65.7
	6th to 10th Preference	55	22.2
	11th to 15th Preference	17	6.9
	16th to 20th Preference	10	4.0
	21st and above	3	1.2
Does future anxiety affect your motivation?	Yes	210	84.7
	No	38	15.3
Do you have a plan for after graduation?	Yes	176	71.0
	No	72	29.0
Have you participated in extracurricular activities for personal development?	Yes	116	46.8
	No	132	53.2

No significant difference was observed between the participants' mean total BHS scores or sub-factor scores and the variables of gender ($p > .062$), maternal and paternal education levels ($p > .110$; $p > .803$), number of siblings ($p > .928$), family type ($p > .724$), and place of residence ($p > .436$). However, a significant difference was identified between the participants' perceived economic status and the mean scores for the total BHS ($p < .007$), as well as the sub-factors

of feelings and expectations about the future ($p < .003$), loss of motivation $p < .006$, and hope ($p < .001$) (Table 3). Kruskal-Wallis analysis was performed to identify the groups responsible for the significant differences between perceived economic status and the total BHS scores and its sub-dimensions. Following the pairwise comparisons (post-hoc Dunn's test) conducted to determine the source of the difference, it was found that students who defined their economic status as 'good' (c) exhibited significantly higher levels of hopelessness across all dimensions compared to those who defined it as 'poor'.

Table 3. Significance Levels of Socio-Demographic Variables with BHS Total and Subscale Scores (n=248)

Variable		Feelings and expectations about the Future Score				Motivation Loss Score			Hope Score			BHS Total Score		
		n	$\bar{x} \pm SD$	Median	KW=11.470 $p < .003$ df=2 c>a	$\bar{x} \pm SD$	Median	KW=10.154 $p < .006$ df=2 c>a	$\bar{x} \pm SD$	Median	KW=13.676 $P < .001$ sd=2 c>a	$\bar{x} \pm SD$	Median Rank	KW=9.884 $p < .007$ df=2 c>a
Perceived Economic Status:	Poor ^a	18	2.16±1.38	3		4.00±2.0	5		3.44±2.00	4		9.61±4.87	12.50	
	Normal ^b	156	2.69±1.56	3		4.89±1.91	5		4.17±1.92	4		11.75±4.73	12.50	
	Good ^c	74	3.20±1.55	4	5.37±2.20	6	4.82±2.01	5	13.10±5.24	14				

KW: Non-parametrik Kruskal Wallis analizi

The participants' information regarding their academic term and the analysis results of the BHS total and subscale scores are presented in Table 4. The analyses showed that there were no significant differences between class level and faculty preference order and the BHS total and subscale scores. It was found that the variables "Does future anxiety affect your motivation?" and "Do you have plans for after graduation?" had a significant difference on the BHS total score and subscale scores (except for the feelings and expectations about the future subscale) ($p < .001$). Finally, the variable "Have you participated in extracurricular activities for personal development?" was found to have a significant difference on the BHS total score ($p < .011$), the Loss of Motivation subscale score ($p < .012$), and the Hope subscale score ($p < .016$).

Table 4. Significance Levels of Participants' Educational Period Information with BHS Total and Subscale Scores (n=248)

Variables		n	Feelings and expectations about the Future Score		Motivation Loss Score		Hope Score		BHS Total Score	
			$\bar{x} \pm SD$	p	$\bar{x} \pm SD$	p	$\bar{x} \pm SD$	p	$\bar{x} \pm SD$	p
Year of Study (Class)	First Year	81	3.03±1.61	.457**	5.48±1.76	.067**	4.69±1.96	.069**	13.20±4.71	.068**
	Second Year	80	2.70±1.62		4.72±2.03		4.00±1.90		11.42±5.01	
	Third Year	37	2.67±1.54		4.62±2.11		4.00±1.91		11.29±4.92	
	Fourth Year	50	2.70±1.43		4.80±2.27		4.00±2.04		11.5±5.11	
Order of Program Preference	1st to 5th Preference	163	2.89±1.56	.560**	5.12±2.00	.339**	4.37±1.99	.322**	12.39±4.93	.338**
	6th to 10th Preference	55	2.80±1.33		4.87±2.04		4.01±1.71		11.69±4.41	
	11th to 15th Preference	17	2.23±1.88		4.17±2.00		3.41±2.18		9.82±5.67	
	16th to 20th Preference	10	2.50±1.84		4.40±2.27		4.30±2.16		11.20±5.95	
	21st and above	3	2.33±2.51		5.00±3.00		4.33±3.05		11.66±8.50	
Does Future Anxiety Affect Motivation?	Yes	210	2.65±1.54	.001*	4.72±2.00	.001*	4.06±1.92	.002*	11.43±4.83	.001*
	No	38	3.65±1.43		6.34±1.64		5.13±1.98		15.13±4.55	
Do You Have a Plan for After Graduation?	Yes	176	3.21±1.46	.001*	5.44±1.89	.001*	4.73±1.79	.001*	13.39±4.47	.001*
	No	72	1.81±1.38		3.80±1.91		2.98±1.81		8.61±4.47	
Participation in Extracurricular Activities	Yes	116	3.00±1.54	0.69*	5.30±2.03	.016*	4.56±2.04	.012*	12.86±4.76	.010*
	No	132	2.63±1.58		4.68±2.00		3.93±1.96		11.25±5.03	

*Independent Sample t-test
** One Way Anova

Discussion and Conclusion

Within the scope of the study, the hopelessness levels of communication faculty students were examined. In the research, questions that were thought to reflect the educational term were asked along with socio-demographic questions considered to potentially create differences in students' hopelessness levels. It was observed that the participants' Beck Hopelessness Scale (BHS) and sub-dimension scores were generally above the average.

The hypothesis that female students have a higher level of hopelessness than male students (H_1) was accepted; however, it was observed that the scores of both groups were above the average. Nevertheless, no significant difference was found between gender and BHS. In the study, hypothesis H_2 was rejected. There is no significant difference between the mean total BHS scores and the variables of parental education level, number of siblings in the family, family type, and place of residence. A significant difference was identified between perceived economic status and the mean scores of the total BHS and its sub-dimensions. The average hopelessness score of those who responded positively to the perceived economic status question was higher than that of the other groups. This result does not support the studies in the literature stating that as economic status improves, the level of hopelessness decreases (Bekircan & Okanlı, 2023; Siyahtaş & Çavuşoğlu, 2021; Ömür & Seçgin, 2024). With this result, hypothesis H_3 was rejected. This situation can be explained by the difference in individuals' interpretation of their perceived economic status. From the perspective of university students, factors such as the anxiety of maintaining current standards, higher expectations for the future, or the competitive pressure imposed by their social environment may explain the high levels of hopelessness among individuals who perceive their economic status as 'good.' Furthermore, it should be noted that as this study was conducted with a single-center and limited sample group, this result is not a generalization but a finding specific to this particular sample.

A significant difference was also found between the variables of believing that future anxiety affects motivation, having a plan after graduation, and participating in self-improvement activities, and the the mean scores of the total BHS. No significant difference was found between the sub-dimension of feeling future anxiety and the variable of participating in self-improvement activities. While the study's H_4 , H_5 , and H_6 hypotheses were accepted, when looking at the participants' average scores, those who answered "yes" to the questions of whether it affects your motivation, whether you have a plan after graduation, and whether you participate in extracurricular activities to improve yourself also had high average BHS scores. This situation can be explained by the fact that despite the participants taking initiatives for themselves, maintaining high motivation, or making plans after graduation, their levels of anxiety about the future are high, which may be due to the high number of graduating students and insufficient employment rates in the field

The findings indicate a significant difference between the hopelessness levels of communication faculty students and their belief that future anxiety affects motivation. The fact that students who answered "yes" and "no" to the question "Does future anxiety affect your motivation?" had significantly higher total BHS scores suggests that students experience uncertainty regarding their professional future. A similar finding was reported by Kızılkaya & Akdamar (2022:218), who identified a positive relationship between future anxiety and academic procrastination. It is noted that students with lower levels of hopelessness tend to exhibit less academic procrastination. Based on these findings, efforts aimed at increasing motivation levels could positively impact students' academic success. However, it should not be overlooked that other conditions affecting this situation are also significant factors. Similarly, participants were asked whether they had plans after graduation, and it was determined that those who answered "yes/no" also had total BHS scores above the average. Uncertainty is one of the important factors that increases individuals' anxiety levels (Karaköse, 2022). It can be said that the absence of specific future plans among participants increases their level of hopelessness. However, explaining this situation solely with uncertainty does not account for the fact that those who answered "yes" also had total BHS scores above the average and that the scores remained high despite this. Considering this result, it is important that communication faculty students receive more support in their career planning processes, and measures to reduce their hopelessness levels should be identified..

Communication is an important tool that helps individuals develop their ability to express emotions, strengthen social bonds, and produce solutions to the problems they face. The finding that "participation in extracurricular activities for personal development" reduces hopelessness levels indicates that social and cultural activities supporting communication skills play a critical role in this process. The findings obtained from this single-center study may provide researchers with insights for future studies, suggesting that prioritizing practical training and social activities within faculties of communication could enhance students' motivation and their hope for the future. Furthermore, it may bring to the fore an approach aimed at ensuring that students in the field of communication gain experience through extracurricular learning methods, alongside effective communication strategies, to cope with future uncertainties.

Students studying in the field of communication should gain experience not only through effective communication strategies but also through extracurricular learning approaches to cope with future uncertainties. Extracurricular learning, as an important component of the educational process, emerges as an approach that enriches and reinforces students' learning experiences. This form of learning goes beyond traditional classroom settings, enabling students to interact with the real world and gain experience in diverse learning environments.

Although this study was conducted with a single-center and limited sample, the findings are valuable in providing insights for researchers and practitioners aimed at reducing the levels of hopelessness that affect students' future anxiety. For students, experiencing academic knowledge beyond the classroom consolidates learning at both individual and group levels, contributing positively to their educational processes. Out of class learning plays a significant role in developing 21st-century competencies, which encompass the skills necessary for individuals to participate effectively in the knowledge society (OECD, 2025). In this context, out of class learning activities have an indispensable role in enhancing students' critical thinking, problem-solving, collaboration, and communication skills (Grant, 2025; Dianita & Tiarani, 2023).

Educational institutions are now required to adopt approaches that support students' learning beyond the classroom and foster the development of 21st-century competencies, while also aiming to reduce levels of hopelessness. In this way, students can be better supported in achieving successful academic and professional lives. Expanding academic counseling services, organizing career planning workshops, and encouraging participation in activities that strengthen communication skills are important steps to reduce students' hopelessness levels.

It is recommended that researchers focus on studies that are multicentered with high participation and that examine and implement factors aimed at reducing hopelessness levels, setting both individual and institutional goals, and preparing students for the realities of life.

Declaration

Ethical Approval: Ethical approval for the study was obtained from the Social Sciences, Science, and Engineering Ethics Committee of Giresun University on May 11, 2022, under the decision number 22/018. Additionally, participants were informed about the study, and their voluntary participation in the survey was ensured.

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Özet

Bu çalışmanın amacı bir devlet üniversitesinin iletişim fakültesi öğrencilerinin umutsuzluk düzeyleri ve etkileyen faktörleri değerlendirmektir. Araştırma nicel araştırma tasarımlarından tanımlayıcı tasarımlar şeklinde planlanmıştır. Araştırmada; iletişim fakültesi öğrencilerinin umutsuzluk düzeylerinin incelenmesi amaçlanmıştır. Araştırmanın evrenini bir devlet üniversitesinin İletişim Fakültesine kayıtlı öğrenciler oluşturmaktadır (N=966). Araştırmada olasılıklı olmayan kolayda örnekleme yöntemi kullanılmıştır. Bu yöntem evrensel genellenebilirlik için kesin bir resmi güç analizi

gerektirmese de, hedeflenen örneklem büyüklüğü (n=244), planlanan istatistiksel analizler için minimum gereklilikleri karşılamakta ve değişkenler arasındaki temel ilişkileri incelemek için yeterli istatistiksel gücü sağlamaktadır. Veriler yüz yüze anketler aracılığıyla toplanmıştır. Potansiyel veri kaybını veya eksik yanıtları telafi etmek amacıyla, başlangıçtaki hedefin üzerinde bir katılım sağlanmış ve sonuç olarak 248 geçerli anket (n=248) nihai analize dahil edilmiştir. Araştırmanın örneklem hesaplamasının sınırlı bir evren üzerinden yapılmış olması nedeniyle, sonuçlar, Türkiye genelini temsil etmemekte, spesifik bir fakülte üzerinden gelecek çalışmalara temel oluşturabilecek bir veri sunmaktadır. Ayrıca veri toplama sürecince bazı kategoriler (anne-baba eğitiminde okur-yazarlık kategorisi) toplumun eğitim düzeyindeki artış nedeniyle sınırlı kalmıştır. Bu durumlar çalışmanın sınırlılığını oluşturmaktadır.

Çalışmanın verileri araştırmacı tarafından oluşturulan anket formu ve "Beck Umutsuzluk Ölçeği" (BUÖ) kullanılarak toplanmıştır. Ölçek bireylerin geleceğe yönelik umut düzeylerini ölçmektedir. BUÖ toplam 20 sorudan oluşmakta ve ortalama puanı en yüksek olanın umutsuzluk düzeyi yüksek olarak nitelendirilmektedir. Çalışma verileri ile yapılan güvenilirlik testi sonuçlarına göre cronbach alpha değeri 0,867 olarak tespit edilmiştir. Veriler normallik testine tabi tutulmuş ve verilerin normal dağılım gösterdiği görülmüştür. Tanımlayıcı istatistik analizlerinin ardından, bağımsız örneklem t-testi uygulanmıştır. Ancak, normallik varsayımlarını ihlal eden veya grup içi sayısal dağılımın parametrik test varsayımlarını karşılamadığı değişkenler için Kruskal-Wallis testi uygulanmış; sonrasında ise anlamlı farkların kaynağını belirlemek amacıyla Post-Hoc Dunn testi gerçekleştirilmiştir.

Katılımcıların Beck Umutsuzluk Ölçeği (BUÖ) ve alt boyut puanlarının genel olarak ortalamasının üzerinde olduğu görülmüştür. Kadın öğrencilerin erkek öğrencilere göre umutsuzluk düzeyinin daha yüksek olduğu görülmekle birlikte, her iki grubunda puanlarının ortalamasının üzerinde olduğu görülmüştür. Bununla birlikte cinsiyet ve BHO arasında anlamlı bir fark tespit edilmemiştir. Anne-baba eğitim durumu, ailedeki kardeş sayısı ve aile tipi, yaşanan yer ile BHO toplam puan ortalamaları arasında anlamlı bir fark yoktur. Ekonomik durum algısı ile BHO toplam puanı ve alt boyut puanları arasında anlamlı bir fark olduğu tespit edilmiştir. Bu durum, bireylerin ekonomik durum algısındaki yorum farkı ile açıklanabilir. Üniversite öğrencileri açısından bakıldığında ise ekonomik durumunu iyi olarak ifade eden bireylerin mevcut standartları koruma kaygısı, gelecekte beklenenlerinin daha yüksek olması veya içinde buldukları sosyal çevrenin getirdiği rekabetçi baskı gibi nedenler umutsuzluk düzeylerinin yüksekliğini açıklayabilir. Çalışmanın tek merkezli ve kısıtlı bir örneklem grubu ile gerçekleştirilmiş olması bu sonucun genelleme değil, örneklem grubu özelinde bir bulgu olduğunu da ayrıca ifade etmek gerekmektedir.

Gelecek kaygısının motivasyona etkisi olduğunu düşünme, mezuniyet sonrası için plan yapma ve kendini geliştirmeye yönelik etkinliklere katılma değişkenleri BHO toplam puan ortalaması arasında da anlamlı bir fark olduğu görülmüştür. Gelecek kaygısı hissetme alt boyutu ile kendini geliştirmeye yönelik etkinliklere katılma değişkeni ile anlamlı olarak fark tespit edilmemiştir. Katılımcıların ortalama puanlarına bakıldığında motivasyonunuzu etkiler mi sorusuna, mezuniyet sonrası için planınız var mı ve kendinizi geliştirmek için okul dışı aktivitelere katılır mısınız sorusuna evet yanıtı verenlerin de BHO puan ortalamaları yüksek çıkmıştır. Bu durum katılımcıların, kendileri için girişimlerde bulunma, motivasyonlarını yüksek tutma ya da mezuniyet sonrası plan yapmalarına rağmen gelecek ile ilgili kaygı düzeylerinin yüksek olması, mezun olan öğrenci sayısının yüksek olması ve alanda istihdam oranlarının yetersizliği ile açıklanabilir.

Çalışma her ne kadar tek merkezli ve kısıtlı bir örneklem üzerinden yürütülmüş olsa da elde edilen bulgular, öğrencilerin gelecek kaygılarını etkileyen umutsuzluk düzeylerini düşürmeye yönelik olarak gerçekleştirilebilecek çalışmalar için araştırmacılara ve uygulayıcılara fikir sunması açısından değerlidir. Öğrenciler açısından eğitim kurumu içerisinde elde edilen akademik bilginin okul dışında deneyimlenmesi, öğrencilerin hem bireysel hem de grup düzeyinde öğrenmelerini pekiştirmekte ve öğrenme süreçlerine olumlu katkılar sunabilecektir. Araştırmacılara, umutsuzluk düzeylerinin düşürülmesini amaçlayan gerek bireysel gerekse kurumsal hedefleri ortaya koyan, öğrencileri yaşamın gerçeklerine hazırlayan faktörlerin incelenemediği ve uygulanabildiği, çok merkezli katılımı fazla olan çalışmalara yönelim yapılması önerilir.