

Relationship Between Professional Beliefs and Future Anxiety Levels of Physical Education and Sports Teacher Candidates: The Case of Adıyaman Province

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ABSTRACT

Purpose: The aim of this study is to examine the relationship between the professional beliefs of physical education and sports teacher candidates and their levels of future anxiety.

Method: The study group consisted of 173 preservice physical education and sports teachers enrolled in the Physical Education and Sports Teaching Program at Adıyaman University during the 2024–2025 academic year. Research data were collected through the Belief Scale toward the Physical Education and Sports Teaching Profession, the Future Anxiety Scale for University Students, and the Personal Information Form, and analyses were carried out using SPSS 26. Independent-samples t-tests and one-way ANOVA were used for group comparisons, with Bonferroni or Tamhane's T2 post hoc tests as appropriate. Pearson correlation analysis was used to examine relationships among scale scores.

Results: The mean professional belief score was 5.97 ± 1.08 and the mean future anxiety score was 2.54 ± 0.71 . Total professional belief and total future anxiety were not significantly correlated ($r = -.106$, $p = .165$). Professional belief differed significantly by maternal employment status (total score and both subdimensions), while Love of Profession was higher among participants with professional experience. Future-anxiety outcomes differed significantly by age, grade level, GPA, place of residence, maternal education, and licensed-athlete status in the total score and/or relevant subdimensions. No significant differences in total future anxiety were found according to gender, family income, sport type, coaching-certificate status, or professional experience.

Conclusion: In this sample, total professional belief and total future anxiety were not significantly related. Future-anxiety outcomes varied across selected demographic and sports-related characteristics, whereas professional belief differed for fewer characteristics. Because the study was cross-sectional and correlational, causal or protective effects cannot be inferred.

Keywords: Physical Education and Sports, Professional Belief, Teacher Candidate, Future Anxiety

ÖZET

Beden Eğitimi ve Spor Öğretmeni Adaylarının Mesleki İnançları İle Gelecek Kaygı Düzeyleri Arasındaki İlişki: Adıyaman İli Örneği

Amaç: Bu araştırmanın amacı beden eğitimi ve spor öğretmeni adaylarının mesleki inançları ile gelecek kaygı düzeyleri arasındaki ilişkiyi incelemektir.

Yöntem: Araştırmanın çalışma grubu 2024–2025 eğitim-öğretim yılında Adıyaman Üniversitesi Spor Bilimleri Fakültesi Beden Eğitimi ve Spor Öğretmenliği Programı'nda öğrenim gören 173 öğretmen adayından oluşmaktadır. Veriler Beden Eğitimi ve Spor

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Öğretmenliği Mesleğine Yönelik İnanç Ölçeği, Üniversite Öğrencilerinde Gelecek Kaygısı Ölçeği ve Kişisel Bilgi Formu ile toplanmış; analizler SPSS 26 ile gerçekleştirilmiştir. İkili grup karşılaştırmalarında bağımsız örneklem t testi, ikiden fazla grup karşılaştırmalarında tek yönlü varyans analizi kullanılmış; gerekli durumlarda Bonferroni veya Tamhane's T2 post hoc testleri uygulanmıştır. Ölçek puanları arasındaki ilişkiler Pearson korelasyon analiziyle incelenmiştir.

Bulgular: Mesleki inanç puanı $5,97 \pm 1,08$, gelecek kaygısı puanı $2,54 \pm 0,71$ olarak bulunmuştur. Toplam mesleki inanç ile toplam gelecek kaygısı arasında anlamlı ilişki saptanmamıştır ($r = -,106$; $p = ,165$). Mesleki inanç puanları anne çalışma durumuna göre toplam puan ve iki alt boyutta; mesleki deneyime göre ise Meslek Aşk alt boyutunda anlamlı farklılık göstermiştir. Gelecek kaygısı sonuçları yaş, sınıf düzeyi, GNO, yerleşim yeri, anne eğitim düzeyi ve lisanslı sporculuk durumuna göre toplam puan ve/veya ilgili alt boyutlarda anlamlı farklılık göstermiştir. Cinsiyet, aile geliri, spor dalı türü, antrenörlük belgesi ve mesleki deneyime göre toplam gelecek kaygısında anlamlı farklılık bulunmamıştır.

Sonuç: Bu örnekleme toplam mesleki inanç ile toplam gelecek kaygısı arasında anlamlı ilişki saptanmamıştır. Gelecek kaygısı bazı demografik ve sporla ilişkili özelliklere göre farklılaşırken, mesleki inanç daha sınırlı sayıda özellikte farklılaşmıştır. Araştırmanın kesitsel-korelasyonel tasarımı nedeniyle koruyucu veya nedensel bir etki çıkarımı yapılamaz.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Beden Eğitimi ve Spor, Mesleki İnanç, Öğretmen Adayı, Gelecek Kaygısı

INTRODUCTION

Physical education and sports are among the important components of the education system, not only for improving individuals' physical competence but also for promoting healthy lifestyle behaviors, strengthening social skills, and supporting multidimensional development (Sevim, 2002; Marshall & Hardman, 2000; Bailey, 2006). Within this process, physical education and sports teachers are not merely practitioners responsible for conducting physical activities; they also play an important role as professional educators who support students' cognitive, affective, and social development. Therefore, understanding teacher candidates' perceptions, attitudes, and beliefs regarding the profession is important for the quality of teacher education processes. Teaching is a professional field that requires specialized knowledge and professional training and is directly influenced by social, cultural, scientific, and technological changes (Koehler et al., 2013).

It has been stated that teachers' professional behaviors are shaped not only by the knowledge and skills they possess but also by the beliefs they develop toward their profession. Professional beliefs constitute important cognitive and affective structures that determine how individuals evaluate their profession, the extent to which they develop commitment to it, and their expectations regarding their careers (Erden, 1998; Dündar, 2014). In this context, positive professional beliefs among teacher candidates are considered to support their motivation, professional goals, and willingness to continue in the teaching

profession. The fact that factors such as the desire to work with children, the intention to contribute to society, ethical values, social interaction, and intellectual satisfaction influence career choice also demonstrates the multidimensional nature of professional beliefs (Mori, 1965, as cited in Uğraş & Dindar, 2019; Watt & Richardson, 2012a). However, the professional development of teacher candidates should not be evaluated solely through positive beliefs toward the profession. Today, economic uncertainty, limited employment opportunities, the increasing number of graduates, and difficulties in predicting future career prospects can significantly affect university students' perceptions of the future. Future anxiety is characterized by uncertainty, worry, and negative expectations regarding possible adverse situations in the future and has been associated with variables such as life satisfaction, academic motivation, and career orientation (Zaleski, 1996). Particularly among teacher candidates, uncertainty regarding appointment processes, job security, and the future of the profession has been reported as one of the main factors that may increase anxiety (Bayram & Pala, 2025; Gülay Ogelman & Göktaş, 2026).

Anxiety is known to be associated with negative expectations about the future, fear of failure, hopelessness, and perceived loss of control (Dilmaç, 2011; Mineka & Zinbarg, 2006). The transition from student life to professional life represents a critical period during which such concerns may become more visible. Especially for students approaching graduation, uncertainties related to finding employment, achieving economic independence, and attaining career goals may constitute significant sources of stress (Jung et al., 2025; Matarnah & Altrawneh, 2014). This suggests that teacher candidates may experience anxiety about their future even when they hold positive evaluations of the teaching profession. In Türkiye, the expansion of access to higher education and the increasing number of graduates have intensified competition for employment among university graduates. The possibility of being unable to work in one's field of education is considered an important issue affecting young people's career planning and psychological well-being (Dursun & Aytaç, 2009; Koç et al., 2024). This situation is also relevant for students in sport sciences. On the one hand, physical education and sports teacher candidates develop ideals, values, and expectations regarding the teaching profession; on the other hand, they face external conditions such as post-graduation employment, appointment processes, and economic security. Indeed, previous studies indicate that the professional beliefs of sport sciences students and their concerns about finding employment may be associated with their career planning processes (Yılmaz & Caz, 2022; Yurtsızoğlu & Gül, 2023).

At this point, examining the relationship between professional beliefs and future anxiety becomes particularly important. Although strong professional beliefs are assumed to support professional motivation and commitment, it remains unclear how these beliefs are associated with future anxiety arising from external factors such as employment uncertainty and economic conditions. A limited number of studies conducted with teacher candidates suggest that stronger professional beliefs may be associated with lower perceptions of uncertainty regarding the future (Sakallı & Kerkez, 2023). Nevertheless, the limited number of studies that jointly examine professional beliefs and future anxiety, particularly among physical education and sports teacher candidates, indicates the need for a more detailed investigation of this relationship. Accordingly, the primary hypothesis (H1) was that overall professional belief would be significantly associated with overall future anxiety. Secondary exploratory analyses examined associations among the subdimensions and differences in professional-belief and future-anxiety scores according to gender, age, grade level, GPA, place of residence, family income, parental education and occupation, licensed-athlete status, sport type, coaching-certificate status, and professional experience. The study is expected to contribute to a more comprehensive understanding of teacher candidates' professional development and future-related concerns and to provide a data-based framework for developing practices related to career development, professional commitment, and future planning within teacher education programs.

METHODS

Research Design

This study employed a quantitative research approach and adopted a correlational survey design to examine the relationship between two or more variables. The correlational survey model has been defined as a research design aimed at determining the existence and/or degree of covariation among two or more variables (Karasar, 2023). Within this framework, data obtained through measurement instruments are analyzed using appropriate statistical techniques, and the relationships identified between the variables are quantitatively evaluated and interpreted (Creswell, 2014).

Participants

The target population of the study consisted of 230 preservice teachers enrolled in the Faculty of Sports Sciences at Adıyaman University during the 2024–2025 academic year. The population included students enrolled in the Department of Physical Education and Sports Teaching as well as students from other departments of the Faculty of Sports Sciences who

were receiving pedagogical formation training and were therefore eligible for the teaching profession. The inclusion criteria were being enrolled in one of these groups during the study period, voluntarily agreeing to participate in the study, and completing the data collection instruments. Students who did not meet these criteria or submitted incomplete questionnaires were excluded from the study. Participants were recruited using convenience sampling, a non-probability sampling method based on the accessibility and willingness of individuals to participate (Etikan et al., 2016). Of the 230 eligible preservice teachers, 173 voluntarily participated in the study, corresponding to a response rate of 75.2%. The final study group consisted of 72 women and 101 men. In accordance with the ethics committee application submitted for the study, data were collected between January 2 and June 30, 2025.

Data Collection Methods and Tools

Data were collected using a 14-item Personal Information Form developed by the researchers, the Belief Scale toward the Physical Education and Sports Teaching Profession, and the Future Anxiety Scale for University Students. The Personal Information Form included all demographic, academic, and sport-related variables examined in the study: gender, age, grade level, grade point average (GPA), place of residence, family income, mother's education, father's education, mother's occupation, father's occupation, licensed-athlete status, sport type, coaching-certificate status, and professional-experience status. All 14 variables were included in the analyses, and none of the items in the Personal Information Form were omitted. Age, GPA, place of residence, and family income were collected using predefined categories. Where categories contained relatively small numbers of participants, conceptually adjacent categories were combined for inferential analyses, as described in the Data Analysis section. Professional belief was assessed using the Turkish version of the Belief Scale toward the Physical Education and Sports Teaching Profession adapted by Doğru, Kamuk, and Yılmaz (2019) from the original scale developed by Fan et al. (2018). The Turkish version consists of 12 items and two six-item subdimensions: Love of Profession (Meslek Aşk; items 1–6) and Value of Physical Education and Sports (Beden Eğitimi ve Sporun Değeri; items 7–12). Items are rated on a 7-point Likert-type scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree). The scale contains no negatively worded or reverse-scored items. Raw total scores may range from 12 to 84, with higher scores indicating stronger professional beliefs. In the present study, mean item scores were used for reporting the total scale and subdimension scores. Cronbach's alpha coefficients in the present sample were .909 for the total scale, .901 for Love of Profession, and .815 for Value of Physical Education and Sports. Future anxiety was assessed using the Future Anxiety Scale for

University Students developed by Geylani and Çiriş Yıldız (2022). The scale consists of 19 items and two subdimensions: Fear of the Future (13 items) and Hopelessness about the Future (6 items). Items are rated on a 5-point Likert-type scale ranging from 1 (never) to 5 (always). Items 2, 4, 6, 8, 10, and 12 are reverse scored. Raw total scores may range from 19 to 95, with higher scores indicating greater future anxiety. In the present study, mean item scores were used for reporting the total scale and subdimension scores. Cronbach's alpha coefficients in the present sample were .875 for the total scale, .903 for Fear of the Future, and .820 for Hopelessness about the Future.

Procedure and Ethical Considerations

Ethical approval was obtained from the Adıyaman University Social and Human Sciences Ethics Committee before data collection (meeting date: December 20, 2024; decision no. 163). Following ethical approval and the necessary institutional permissions, data were collected face-to-face between January 2 and June 30, 2025. Before administration of the questionnaires, participants were informed about the purpose of the study, the voluntary nature of participation, and the use of the collected data for scientific purposes. Informed consent was obtained prior to participation, and only individuals who voluntarily agreed to participate were included. No directly identifying information, such as names or student identification numbers, was included in the research dataset; the data were treated confidentially and analyzed and reported only in aggregate form. Questionnaires that were incomplete or not completed in accordance with the data-collection procedure were excluded from the analysis.

Data Analysis

Data from 173 participants were analyzed using IBM SPSS Statistics 26. Descriptive statistics, including frequencies, percentages, means, and standard deviations, were calculated. Independent-samples t-tests were used for comparisons between two groups, while one-way ANOVA was used for comparisons involving more than two groups. Depending on the homogeneity of variances, Bonferroni or Tamhane's T2 post hoc tests were applied. Pearson correlation analysis was performed to examine relationships between the scales, and Cronbach's alpha coefficients were calculated to assess reliability. Statistical significance was set at $p < .05$.

RESULTS

This section presents the findings and interpretations of the statistical analyses conducted within the scope of the study.

Table 1. Findings on the Demographic Characteristics of the Participants (n = 173)

Variable	Category	n	%
Gender	Female	72	41.6
	Male	101	58.4
Age	18–20 years	42	24.3
	21–23 years	103	59.5
	24 years and above	28	16.2
Grade Level	1st year	31	17.9
	2nd year	27	15.6
	3rd year	43	24.9
	4th year	72	41.6
GPA	2.00–2.50	16	9.2
	2.51–3.00	74	42.8
	3.01 and above	83	48.0
Place of Residence	Province/City	127	73.4
	District/Village	46	26.6
Family Income	TRY 20,000 and below	45	26.0
	TRY 20,001–30,000	52	30.1
	TRY 30,001–40,000	25	14.5
	TRY 40,001 and above	51	29.5
Mother's Education Level	Literate/ Illiterate	55	31.8
	Primary school	44	25.4
	Middle school	38	22.0
	High school and above	36	20.8
Father's Education Level	Literate/Iliterate	26	15.0
	Primary school	38	22.0
	Middle school	54	31.2
	High school and above	55	31.8
Mother's Occupation	Not employed	146	84.4
	Employed	27	15.6
Father's Occupation	Not employed	23	13.3
	Worker	28	16.2
	Civil servant	24	13.9
	Self-employed	31	17.9
	Retired	48	27.7
	Other	19	11.0
Licensed Athlete Status	Yes	121	69.9
	No	52	30.1
Type of Sports	Individual sports	71	41.0
	Team sports	102	59.0
Coaching Certificate	Yes	40	23.1
	No	133	76.9
Professional Experience	Yes	116	67.1
	No	57	32.9

GPA = Grade Point Average; TRY = Turkish lira.

The majority of the participants were male, aged 21–23 years, and in their fourth year of study. GPA values were predominantly concentrated between 2.51 and 3.50. Most participants resided in a province/city, while the most frequently reported family income range was TRY 20,001–30,000. Regarding parental characteristics, 20.8% of mothers and 31.8% of fathers had a high school education or higher, while 15.6% of mothers and 86.7% of fathers were employed. In terms of sports background, most participants were licensed athletes, participated in team sports, and had professional experience, whereas approximately one-quarter held a coaching certificate.

Table 2. Descriptive Statistics and Reliability Coefficients for the Scales and Subdimensions Used in the Study (n = 173)

Scale / Subdimension	$\bar{X}$	SD	Min	Max	Cronbach's α
Belief Scale toward the Physical Education and Sports Teaching Profession	5,97	1,08	3,17	7,00	0,909
Love of Profession	5,83	1,32	2,50	7,00	0,901
Value of Physical Education and Sports	6,10	1,04	3,00	7,00	0,815
Future Anxiety Scale for University Students	2,54	0,71	1,00	4,53	0,875
Fear of the Future	2,64	0,87	1,00	5,00	0,903
Hopelessness about the Future	2,32	0,91	1,00	5,00	0,820

Participants were found to have high levels of belief toward the physical education and sports teaching profession ($\bar{x} = 5.97 \pm 1.08$), whereas their future anxiety levels were low to moderate ($\bar{x} = 2.54 \pm 0.71$). Cronbach's alpha coefficients for the scales and their subdimensions ranged from .815 to .909, indicating a high level of reliability for the measurement instruments used in the study (Nunnally, 1978, as cited in Bellibaş et al., 2019).

Table 3. Comparison of Scale and Subdimension Scores by Gender, Age, Grade Level, and Grade Point Average (GPA) (N = 173)

Variable	Love of Profession	Value of Physical Education and Sports	Belief Scale toward the Physical Education and Sports Teaching Profession	Fear of the Future	Hopelessness about the Future	Future Anxiety Scale
	$\bar{X} \pm SD$	$\bar{X} \pm SD$	$\bar{X} \pm SD$	$\bar{X} \pm SD$	$\bar{X} \pm SD$	$\bar{X} \pm SD$
Gender						
Female(n=72)	5,84±1,31	6,13±1,07	5,99±1,08	2,79±0,76	2,26±0,88	2,62±0,62
Male(n=101)	5,83±1,34	6,07±1,03	5,95±1,09	2,53±0,94	2,36±0,94	2,48±0,76
t/p	0,077/0,938	0,344/0,732	0,212/0,832	1,877/0,062	-0,717/0,474	1,326/0,187
Age						
18-20 years (n=42)	5,90±1,36	6,08±1,12	5,99±1,13	2,36±0,76b	2,12±0,95	2,28±0,66b
21-23 years (n=103)	5,72±1,35	6,09±1,04	5,91±1,10	2,76±0,90a	2,37±0,91	2,64±0,73a
24 years and above (n=28)	6,14±1,13	6,15±0,96	6,15±0,98	2,60±0,86	2,41±0,86	2,54±0,63
F/p	1,190/0,307	0,041/0,960	0,555/0,575	3,247/0,041*	1,368/0,257	3,865/0,023*

Grade Level						
1st year (n=31)	5,89±1,34	6,21±1,02	6,05±1,07	2,27±0,92b	1,95±0,93b	2,17±0,82b
2nd year (n=27)	5,27±1,71	5,76±1,25	5,52±1,34	2,46±0,74	2,81±1,14a	2,57±0,49
3rd year (n=43)	6,10±1,18	6,19±1,09	6,15±1,07	2,95±1,00a	2,22±0,81b	2,72±0,74a
4th year (n=72)	5,86±1,19	6,12±0,93	5,99±0,97	2,68±0,75	2,35±0,79	2,57±0,66a
F/p	2,304/0,079	1,204/0,310	2,073/0,106	4,352/0,006*	4,796/0,003*	4,078/0,008*
GPA						
2.00-2.50 (n=16)	5,77±1,65	6,05±1,13	5,91±1,34	2,02±0,91b	2,26±1,05	2,10±0,81b
2.51-3.00 (n=74)	5,89±1,30	6,07±1,19	5,98±1,20	2,62±0,90a	2,43±1,02	2,56±0,71
3.01 and above (n=83)	5,79±1,29	6,13±0,89	5,96±0,93	2,78±0,80a	2,22±0,77	2,60±0,67a
F/p	0,127/0,881	0,082/0,921	0,027/0,973	5,254/0,006*	1,022/0,362	3,533/0,031*

GPA: Grade Point Average; a, b: indicate mean differences between groups (a = highest mean).; F: One-way ANOVA; t: Independent-samples t-test; p < .05.

No significant differences were observed in the Belief Scale toward the Physical Education and Sports Teaching Profession or its subdimensions according to gender, age, grade level, or GPA ($p > .05$). In contrast, significant differences were found in Future Anxiety and Fear of the Future scores across age and GPA groups ($p < .05$). Participants aged 21–23 reported higher Future Anxiety and Fear of the Future scores than those aged 18–20. Similarly, participants with a GPA of 2.51 or higher had greater Fear of the Future scores than those with a GPA of 2.00–2.50, while those with a GPA of 3.01 or higher had greater Future Anxiety scores than those in the 2.00–2.50 GPA group. Significant differences were also identified across grade levels for Future Anxiety and its subdimensions ($p < .05$). Third-year students reported higher Fear of the Future scores than first-year students, whereas second-year students had higher Hopelessness about the Future scores than first- and third-year students. In addition, Future Anxiety scores were higher among third- and fourth-year students than among first-year students.

Table 4. Comparison of Scale and Subdimension Scores According to Sociodemographic Characteristics (N = 173)

Variable	Love of Profession	Value of Physical Education and Sports	Belief Scale toward the Physical Education and Sports Teaching Profession	Fear of the Future	Hopelessness about the Future	Future Anxiety Scale
	$\bar{X} \pm SD$	$\bar{X} \pm SD$	$\bar{X} \pm SD$	$\bar{X} \pm SD$	$\bar{X} \pm SD$	$\bar{X} \pm SD$
Place of Residence						
City (n=127)	5,81±1,32	6,08±1,03	5,95±1,07	2,62±0,90	2,23±0,88	2,50±0,76
District/Village (n=46)	5,89±1,35	6,13±1,07	6,01±1,13	2,69±0,81	2,55±0,97	2,65±0,54
t/p	-0,346/0,730	-0,278/0,781	-0,345/0,731	-0,471/0,638	-2,087/0,038*	-1,448/0,151
Family Income						
20.000 TL and below (n=45)	5,89±1,32	5,92±1,10	5,90±1,14	2,68±0,78	2,53±0,86	2,63±0,59
20.001-30.000 TL (n=52)	5,85±1,27	6,23±1,06	6,04±1,08	2,71±1,01	2,28±0,95	2,57±0,77
30.001-40.000 TL (n=25)	5,53±1,44	6,15±0,93	5,84±1,09	2,54±0,68	2,39±1,09	2,49±0,54
40.001 TL and above (n=51)	5,92±1,35	6,09±1,03	6,00±1,06	2,58±0,91	2,13±0,79	2,44±0,81
F/p	0,542/0,654	0,762/0,517	0,263/0,852	0,345/0,792	1,619/0,187	0,706/0,550

Mother's Education Level						
Literate/Illiterate (n=55)	6,02±1,29	6,09±1,09	6,06±1,10	2,73±0,73	2,47±0,96a	2,65±0,62
Primary School(n=44)	5,90±1,19	6,06±0,95	5,98±0,96	2,69±0,86	2,43±0,81	2,61±0,70
Middle School(n=38)	5,96±1,23	6,41±0,83	6,19±0,96	2,53±0,91	1,92±0,73b	2,34±0,70
High School and Above(n=36)	5,33±1,54	5,81±1,22	5,57±1,26	2,55±1,05	2,36±1,05	2,49±0,83
F/p	2,285/0,081	2,097/0,103	2,272/0,082	0,561/0,641	3,339/0,021*	1,663/0,177
Father's Education Level						
Literate/Illiterate(n=26)	6,06±1,31	6,28±1,13	6,17±1,17	2,60±0,69	2,54±1,10	2,58±0,62
Primary School(n=38)	5,81±1,31	6,15±0,93	5,98±1,00	2,73±0,79	2,26±0,77	2,58±0,68
Middle School(n=54)	5,85±1,31	6,13±0,96	5,99±1,03	2,60±0,97	2,24±0,91	2,49±0,74
High School and Above(n=55)	5,72±1,37	5,94±1,15	5,83±1,16	2,63±0,92	2,32±0,92	2,53±0,76
F/p	0,393/0,758	0,729/0,536	0,595/0,619	0,189/0,904	0,717/0,543	0,180/0,910
Mother's Occupation						
Not Employed(n=146)	5,96±1,24	6,18±0,98	6,07±1,02	2,68±0,87	2,34±0,90	2,57±0,71
Employed(n=27)	5,16±1,55	5,63±1,26	5,40±1,26	2,40±0,88	2,19±0,99	2,33±0,66
t/p	2,532/0,016*	2,162/0,038*	2,626/0,013*	1,556/0,122	0,771/0,442	1,627/0,105
Father's Occupation						
Not Employed(n=23)	5,42±1,58	5,71±1,32	5,57±1,35	2,76±0,63	2,74±0,95	2,75±0,45
Worker(n=28)	6,13±1,27	6,49±0,84	6,31±0,97	2,57±0,68	2,18±0,91	2,45±0,66
Civil Servant(n=24)	5,72±1,39	6,04±0,99	5,88±1,03	2,70±1,07	2,36±0,95	2,59±0,91
Self-Employed(n=31)	5,95±1,11	5,99±1,21	5,97±1,09	2,61±0,96	2,31±0,93	2,51±0,72
Retired(n=48)	5,82±1,33	6,20±0,86	6,01±1,01	2,59±0,97	2,32±0,93	2,50±0,75
Other(n=19)	5,89±1,32	5,96±1,04	5,93±1,10	2,69±0,83	1,95±0,61	2,46±0,69
F/p	0,825/0,534	1,700/0,137	1,251/0,288	0,190/0,966	1,774/0,121	0,605/0,696

TL: Turkish Lira

GPA: Grade Point Average

a, b: indicate mean differences between groups (a = highest mean).

F: One-way ANOVA; t: Independent-samples t-test; p < .05.

No significant differences were found in belief toward the physical education and sports teaching profession according to place of residence, family income, parental education, or father's occupation ($p > .05$). However, participants whose mothers were not employed had significantly higher belief scores and subdimension scores than those whose mothers were employed ($p < .05$). Future Anxiety and Fear of the Future scores did not differ significantly across sociodemographic variables ($p > .05$). In contrast, Hopelessness about the Future differed significantly by place of residence and maternal education ($p < .05$), with higher scores among participants living in districts/villages and those whose mothers were literate/illiterate compared with their respective reference groups.

Table 5. Comparison of Scale and Subdimension Scores by Sports-Related and Professional Characteristics (N = 173)

Variable	Love of Profession	Value of Physical Education and Sports	Belief Scale toward the Physical Education and Sports Teaching Profession	Fear of the Future	Hopelessness about the Future	Future Anxiety Scale
	$\bar{X} \pm SD$	$\bar{X} \pm SD$	$\bar{X} \pm SD$	$\bar{X} \pm SD$	$\bar{X} \pm SD$	$\bar{X} \pm SD$
Licensed Athlete Status						
Yes(n=121)	5,78±1,38	6,06±1,09	5,92±1,15	2,56±0,94	2,32±0,98	2,49±0,76
No(n=52)	5,95±1,19	6,17±0,93	6,06±0,92	2,82±0,67	2,31±0,75	2,65±0,57
t/p	- 0,798/0,427	-0,668/0,505	-0,830/0,408	-1,997/0,048*	0,087/0,931	-1,605/0,111
Type of Sport						
Individual sports(n=71)	5,90±1,26	6,23±0,97	6,07±1,02	2,62±0,92	2,18±0,95	2,48±0,70
Team sports(n=102)	5,79±1,37	6,00±1,09	5,90±1,12	2,65±0,85	2,41±0,88	2,57±0,72
t/p	0,563/0,574	1,402/0,163	1,016/0,311	-0,181/0,857	-1,633/0,104	-0,812/0,418
Coaching Certificate Status						
Yes(n=40)	5,77±1,37	5,99±1,19	5,88±1,15	2,73±0,92	2,25±0,89	2,58±0,69
No(n=133)	5,85±1,31	6,13±1,00	5,99±1,07	2,61±0,86	2,33±0,92	2,52±0,72
t/p	- 0,340/0,734	-0,730/0,466	-0,558/0,578	0,776/0,439	-0,487/0,627	0,455/0,650
Professional Experience Status						
Yes(n=116)	6,00±1,25	6,14±1,04	6,07±1,06	2,63±0,92	2,23±0,90	2,51±0,76
No(n=57)	5,49±1,41	6,02±1,05	5,75±1,11	2,65±0,78	2,48±0,92	2,60±0,60
t/p	2,344/0,021*	0,705/0,482	1,818/0,071	-0,168/0,867	-1,690/0,093	-0,895/0,372

a, b: indicate mean differences between groups (a = highest mean).

F: One-way ANOVA; t: Independent-samples t-test; p < .05.

No significant differences were observed in belief toward the physical education and sports teaching profession according to licensed athlete status, sport type, or coaching certificate status ($p > .05$). However, participants with professional experience had significantly higher Love of Profession scores than those without such experience ($p < .05$).

Future Anxiety and its subdimensions did not differ significantly by sport type, coaching certificate status, or professional experience ($p > .05$). However, non-licensed athletes reported significantly higher Fear of the Future scores than licensed athletes ($p < .05$).

Table 6. Pearson Correlation Analysis Results for the Relationships Among the Scales and Subdimension Scores (N = 173)

Variable	Love of Profession	Value of Physical Education and Sports	Belief Scale toward the Physical Education and Sports Teaching Profession	Fear of the Future	Hopelessness about the Future	Future Anxiety Scale
Love of Profession	r 1	0,678	0,936	-0,021	-0,137	-0,074
	p	0,000*	0,000*	0,779	0,072	0,335
Value of Physical Education and Sports	r	1	0,894	-0,050	-0,209	-0,127
	p		0,000*	0,511	0,006*	0,096
Belief Scale toward the Physical Education and Sports Teaching Profession	r		1	-0,037	-0,184	-0,106
	p			0,627	0,016*	0,165
Fear of the Future	r			1	0,182	0,917
	p				0,016*	0,000*
Hopelessness about the Future	r				1	0,560
	p					0,000*
Future Anxiety Scale	r					1
	p					

r: Pearson correlation coefficient; *p* < .05.

Significant positive correlations were observed among the Belief Scale toward the Physical Education and Sports Teaching Profession and its subdimensions, as well as among the Future Anxiety Scale for University Students and its subdimensions ($p < .05$). However, no statistically significant relationship was found between overall belief toward the physical education and sports teaching profession and overall future anxiety ($p > .05$).

DISCUSSION and CONCLUSION

This study examined the relationship between professional beliefs and future anxiety among preservice physical education and sports teachers and whether these variables differed according to selected demographic characteristics. The findings showed high levels of professional belief ($\bar{X} = 5.97$), including high scores for Love of Profession ($\bar{X} = 5.83$) and Value of Physical Education and Sports ($\bar{X} = 6.10$). These findings are consistent with previous studies reporting positive attitudes and strong professional beliefs among preservice

physical education teachers (Korucuk & Havadar, 2022; Sakallı & Kerkez, 2023; Üzüm & Alıncak, 2019). Positive associations between professional attitudes and self-efficacy have also been reported (Seçkin & Başbay, 2013), while Abbasoğlu and Öncü (2013) similarly identified favorable attitudes toward the teaching profession. Overall, the findings suggest that preservice teachers strongly value both the teaching profession and the role of physical education and sports.

Among preservice physical education and sports teachers, the mean Future Anxiety score was 2.54 ± 0.71 , while Fear of the Future and Hopelessness about the Future scores were 2.64 ± 0.87 and 2.32 ± 0.91 , respectively, indicating low-to-moderate future anxiety. Similar findings were reported by Geylani and Çiriş Yıldız (2022), Aşantugrul (2024), and Araç Ilgar and Cihan (2019), who linked future anxiety to career planning, employment prospects, economic conditions, and life goals. In contrast, Şanlı Kula and Saraç (2016) reported high employment-related anxiety, while Aydın (2025) highlighted anxiety arising from examination uncertainty and pressure. Overall, strong professional beliefs may help limit future anxiety despite concerns about teacher appointments, employment opportunities, and professional competition.

No significant gender differences were found in professional beliefs or future anxiety scores ($p > .05$), suggesting that gender was not a determining factor in these variables. This finding is consistent with studies reporting no gender differences in professional beliefs (Akyürek et al., 2025; Zambak et al., 2025), although Çapri and Çelikkaleli (2008) and Yılmaz (2020) reported significant differences. Similarly, the absence of gender differences in future anxiety supports the findings of Asan (2023), Demirbaş et al. (2023), and Oral Kara et al. (2020). In contrast, higher anxiety among female students has been reported in some studies (Debowska et al., 2022; Guskowska & Bodasińska, 2023), while Bolat and Çelik (2024) found significant gender differences among preservice physical education and sports teachers. These inconsistencies may reflect differences in samples, measurement tools, and sociocultural contexts.

Professional beliefs did not differ significantly across age groups ($p > .05$), consistent with Akyürek et al. (2025), although Zambak et al. (2025) reported age-related differences. In contrast, significant differences were found in Fear of the Future and total Future Anxiety, with participants aged 21–23 scoring higher than those aged 18–20. This finding supports studies showing that future anxiety increases as students approach graduation and face greater uncertainty regarding employment, career planning, and professional responsibilities.

(Boğazlıyan & Avşaroğlu, 2024; Dalmış et al., 2025; Dikici et al., 2026). Chen and Zeng (2021) similarly emphasized the role of uncertainty in employment anxiety and the protective effect of career planning. Overall, age was not associated with professional beliefs but was related to higher future anxiety among students closer to graduation.

Professional belief scores remained comparable across grade levels, with no significant differences observed in either the total score or its subdimensions ($p > .05$). This result is consistent with Akyürek et al. (2025) and Zambak et al. (2025), whereas Aslan (2020) and Yılmaz (2020) reported significant grade-level differences. In contrast, Future Anxiety and its subdimensions differed significantly by grade level ($p < .05$), with higher anxiety generally observed among upper-year students. This finding suggests that future-related concerns intensify as students approach graduation and face teacher appointment and employment processes. Similar results were reported by Aydın (2025), Kabak (2025), and Gülay Ogelman and Göktaş (2026), while Asan (2023) found no significant grade-level differences in employment anxiety. Taken together, professional beliefs remained relatively stable across grade levels, whereas future anxiety tended to increase as graduation approached.

Academic achievement did not significantly differentiate professional belief scores or their subdimensions ($p > .05$), suggesting that professional beliefs remained relatively stable across GPA levels. This finding is consistent with Yılmaz (2020), although Abbasoğlu and Öncü (2013) reported significant differences, while Awadalla et al. (2020) showed that associations between academic performance and psychological well-being may not be linear. In contrast, significant differences were observed in Fear of the Future and total Future Anxiety ($p < .05$), with higher anxiety generally reported by participants with higher GPAs. This finding supports Metin and Alıncak (2025) and Çiçek Gümüş et al. (2025), who emphasized the roles of appointment anxiety, career expectations, and economic uncertainty. However, Asan (2023) found no association between academic achievement and employment anxiety, whereas Wang et al. (2023) reported greater anxiety among students with lower academic performance. This pattern indicates that higher academic achievement does not necessarily reduce future anxiety and may intensify concerns due to increased career expectations, competitive employment conditions, and uncertainty surrounding teacher appointments.

Professional beliefs showed little variation across place of residence, family income, parental education, and father's occupation ($p > .05$), supporting Yılmaz (2020) and studies emphasizing intrinsic motivation, professional values, and teacher identity (Adıgüzel &

Karagöl, 2022; Puklek Levpušek & Depolli Steiner, 2025). This pattern is also compatible with the FIT-Choice framework, which highlights intrinsic and altruistic career motives (Watt & Richardson, 2007; Watt et al., 2012b). Although family support may influence career choice (See et al., 2022), the higher professional belief scores among participants whose mothers were not employed should be interpreted cautiously. Future Anxiety and Fear of the Future likewise showed no significant differences across most sociodemographic variables, consistent with evidence linking future anxiety to employment concerns, academic pressure, economic uncertainty, and psychological resources (Dalmış et al., 2025; Oral Kara et al., 2020). By contrast, Hopelessness about the Future was higher among participants living in districts/villages and those with lower maternal education, which may reflect inequalities in educational and career opportunities. Similar associations have been reported by Yu et al. (2022), Kaygısız Ertuğ (2025), and Oral Kara et al. (2020). Taken as a whole, sociodemographic characteristics appear to have limited influence on general future anxiety, whereas hopelessness may be more sensitive to place of residence and maternal education.

Sports-related background variables, including licensed athlete status, sport type, and coaching certificate status, were not associated with significant differences in professional beliefs ($p > .05$). This finding is consistent with Yılmaz (2020) and supports the view that professional beliefs may depend more on professional commitment, teacher identity, perceived competence, and the value attributed to physical education (Aslan, 2020; Fan et al., 2018). However, participants with professional experience reported higher Love of Profession scores, suggesting that field-based experiences may strengthen professional identity and commitment (Amorim & Ribeiro-Silva, 2025; Anwar et al., 2025). By contrast, Yıldız et al. (2017) reported that sports participation may influence attitudes toward teaching. For future anxiety, sport type, coaching certificate status, and professional experience showed no significant effects, whereas non-licensed athletes reported higher Fear of the Future scores ($p < .05$). This may reflect the psychological benefits of regular sport participation (Huang et al., 2024) and the protective role of psychological resilience (Dalmış et al., 2025). Nevertheless, future anxiety is also shaped by career expectations, employment opportunities, and economic uncertainty (Kwak et al., 2025; Yang et al., 2025), while competitive stress may increase psychological distress among athletes (Knowles et al., 2021; Rice et al., 2016). Viewed together, sporting experience may reduce some aspects of future-related fear, but professional beliefs and future anxiety remain multidimensional constructs.

Correlation analyses revealed significant positive relationships among the dimensions of professional belief and future anxiety, although the strength of these relationships varied (Alpaslan et al., 2023; Başdal & Özen, 2025; Awadalla et al., 2020; Dalmış et al., 2025; Gökkaya & Erten, 2024). Higher scores on the Value of Physical Education and Sports dimension and overall professional belief were also associated with lower hopelessness about the future. However, these associations were weak and did not remain statistically significant after correction for multiple correlations; therefore, they should be interpreted cautiously. Furthermore, overall professional belief was not significantly associated with total future anxiety, suggesting that professional commitment alone may not be sufficient to reduce concerns related to employment, teacher appointments, economic uncertainty, and career planning (Polatcan, 2020; Tanır & Yılmaz, 2023; Zhao et al., 2022). Accordingly, strengthening professional beliefs may be complemented by career counseling, employment guidance, and resilience-enhancing support (Alkar & Altın Yöntem, 2025; Bayram & Pala, 2025; Yang et al., 2025).

In conclusion, preservice physical education and sports teachers demonstrated relatively high levels of professional belief and low-to-moderate levels of future anxiety. Professional belief and future anxiety appeared to function as relatively independent constructs, indicating that strong commitment to the teaching profession does not necessarily reduce concerns related to employment, appointment procedures, and career uncertainty. While professional beliefs remained largely stable across demographic and sports-related variables, future anxiety varied according to age, grade level, GPA, and licensed athlete status. These findings highlight the importance of supporting preservice teachers not only in strengthening professional identity and commitment, but also through career counseling, employment guidance, and psychological support aimed at managing future-related uncertainty.

Suggestions

Based on the findings, the following recommendations are proposed:

- Teacher education programs should strengthen professional commitment, sense of belonging, and positive beliefs toward teaching through practice-based training and school experience.
- Since professional belief was not significantly associated with future anxiety, interventions should also focus on career planning, employment opportunities, professional guidance, and career counseling.

- Career and professional development support should be made broadly available to preservice physical education and sports teachers, while additional support may be targeted to groups reporting higher future anxiety.
- Future studies should examine variables such as self-efficacy, psychological resilience, career adaptability, hope, perceived employability, career decision-making self-efficacy, and social support.
- Similar studies should be conducted across different universities and sociocultural contexts to improve the generalizability of the findings.
- Qualitative and mixed-method studies are recommended to explore the individual and environmental factors underlying professional beliefs and future anxiety in greater depth.

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