



ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT, PERFECTIONISM AND SOCIAL SUPPORT AS PREDICTORS OF TEST ANXIETY

SINAV KAYGISININ YORDAYICILARI OLARAK AKADEMİK BAŞARI, MÜKEMMELİYETÇİLİK VE SOSYAL DESTEK

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ABSTRACT: This study examined likelihood of high school students' gender, levels of academic achievement, perfectionism and perceived social support in predicting their degree of test anxiety. Participants were 505 students from high schools in the Ankara metropolitan area. The Test Anxiety Inventory, Multidimensional Perfectionism Scale and Perceived Social Support Scale-R were used for data collection. In addition, the Personal Information Form (PIF) was given to the participants to obtain demographic information. Regression analysis was used for data analysis. Significant relationships were found between test anxiety; and perfectionism, social support and academic achievement. Stepwise regression analysis showed that perfectionism, gender, academic achievement, perceived support from friends and support from teachers significantly contributed to the variance in test anxiety. Findings were discussed in accordance with the existing literature and implications for researchers and practitioners were articulated.

Keywords: test anxiety, academic achievement, perfectionism, social support.

ÖZET: Bu çalışmada lise öğrencilerinin cinsiyetlerinin, akademik başarılarının, mükemmeliyetçilik düzeylerinin, algıladıkları sosyal desteğin sınav kaygısı düzeylerini yordama olasılığı incelenmiştir. Çalışmanın örneklemini Ankara ili merkez ilçelerinde bulunan ve genel liselerde öğrenim gören 505 öğrenci oluşturmuştur. Veri toplama araçları olarak, öğrencilerin sınava ilişkin kaygılarını belirlemek amacıyla Sınav Kaygısı Envanteri, mükemmeliyetçilik düzeylerini belirlemek amacıyla Çok Boyutlu Mükemmeliyetçilik Ölçeği; aile, arkadaş ve öğretmenlerinden algıladıkları sosyal destek düzeylerini belirlemek amacıyla Algılanan Sosyal Destek Ölçeği-R ve demografik değişkenlere ilişkin olarak da Kişisel Bilgi Formu (KBF) uygulanmıştır. Araştırmanın bağımsız değişkenler arası ilişki ve bu değişkenlerin sınav kaygısını ne derece yordadığı aşamalı regresyon analizi tekniği kullanılarak incelenmiştir. Araştırma sonucunda sınav kaygısı, mükemmeliyetçilik, sosyal destek ve akademik başarı değişkenleri arasında manidar ilişkiler saptanmış ve aşamalı regresyon sonucunda sınav kaygısına ilişkin varyansa katkıları bakımından mükemmeliyetçilik, akademik başarı, arkadaşlardan ve öğretmenlerden algılanan sosyal destek ve cinsiyet değişkenlerinin sınav kaygısının önemli yordayıcıları olduğu bulunmuştur. Elde edilen bu bulgular alan yazındaki ilgili araştırmalar kapsamında tartışılarak alandaki araştırmacı ve uygulamacılara yönelik öneriler sunulmuştur.

Anahtar sözcükler: sınav kaygısı, akademik başarı, mükemmeliyetçilik, sosyal destek.

1. INTRODUCTION

Children are frequently tested throughout their years of schooling. This emphasis on testing leads to high expectations and pressures from schools and parents (McDonald 2001). Exams are important aspects of lives of the youth in today's societies. They have significant implications in shaping young people's future. Exams can particularly be stressful if they affect individuals' career choices and future opportunities (Peleg-Popko 2004).

Test anxiety is a significant issue for students. Individuals with test anxiety have lower thresholds for anxiety when they are being evaluated. These students perceive such experiences as threatening and hold low self-efficacy regarding the task at hand. In the literature, test anxiety is commonly defined as an undesirable state consisting of experiencing tension, worry and over stimulation of the central nervous system when one's performance is being evaluated (Ergene 2003).

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Various factors could potentially contribute to the occurrence of test anxiety. Although almost any situation involving evaluation of one's performance could elicit some degree of distress, individuals' previous experiences and factors that could affect their perceptions and thoughts about the situation at hand could determine their reaction to a testing experience (McDonald 2001).

Literature involves studies that have investigated a host of variables with respect to test anxiety. Social support (Orpen, 1996; Sarason, 1981), academic achievement (Başarıır 1990; Burns 2004; Hancock 2001; Hembree 1988; Hong & Karstensson 2002; Musch ve Bröder 1999; Sansgiry Bhosle ve Dutta 2005; Shermis ve Lombard 1998; Yıldırım 2000), family relationships (Peleg-Popko & Klingman 2002; Peleg-Popko 2002), perfectionism (Bieling, Israeli, Smith & Antony 2003), study skills (Beidel, Turner & Taylor-Ferreira 1999) and locus of control (Balcı 1997; Moore 2006) are only several of these variables.

Researchers who studied gender and test anxiety often found female students' test anxiety levels higher than their male counterparts (Benson & Bandales & Hutchinson 1994; Lussier 1996; Sowa & Lafleur 1986; Cited in. Hong & Karstensson 2002; Hembree 1988; Moore 2006). Again, Hong and Karstensson (2002) found female students scoring higher on test anxiety than males. Working with a high school sample, Aysan, Thompson and Hamarat (2001) also found higher degrees of test anxiety in females.

Peleg-Popko (2002) looked into children's anxiety levels and their family interactions. Findings showed that anxiety levels of children had significant negative relationships with; communication in the family, degree of support for personal growth, and survival of the family system.

There are also studies showing links between test anxiety and academic achievement. Hembree (1988) did a meta-analysis on test anxiety and academic achievement and concluded that test anxiety leads to lower academic achievement. Likewise, working with an adolescent sample, Yıldırım (2000) found a significant negative relationship between test anxiety and achievement and test anxiety significantly predicting the latter. Hancock (2001) also reports that students with test anxiety have lower academic performance. Likewise, Sansgiry, Bhosle and Dutta (2005) found a significant negative relationship between test anxiety and academic achievement. Bieling, Israeli, Smith and Antony, (2003) report a significant relationship between perfectionism and individuals' negative feelings about examinations.

In Turkish educational system, students go through a highly challenging process of testing which starts early in elementary education and ends with the extremely competitive university entrance exams taken in senior year of high school or after graduation. For instance, at the end of 8th grade, students take a national exam for placement in quality high schools (i.e., science and Anatolian high schools). Starting from their first year in high school, along with attending schools, students often take private lessons to increase their chances in getting into a college program. Because of the extremely competitive nature of the exam and high expectations of families and friends, adolescents work exceptionally hard to be able to make it to college (Yıldırım 2004a). These challenging process leads to test anxiety in a considerable number of these students. Burns (2004) asserts that exams can have remarkable impacts on students if their performance will determine their placement to a school or whether they will have to repeat a course. Similarly, McDonald (2001) claims that there is an increase in the prevalence of test anxiety.

In selecting variables of the study, the strenuous testing circumstances of Turkey and findings of previous studies were taken into account. There is such extreme emphasis on success and achievement throughout the elementary and high school education in Turkey. The repeated national examinations in the end of 8th and 11th grades lead to considerably heavy expectations of families, teachers and schools. It is commonly known and acknowledged that families' expectations are often highly perfectionistic. Since support is a significant buffer to distress, students are highly in need of support from their families, friends and teachers through their challenging preparation for these exams. Therefore, this study inquired as to what degree perfectionism, social support and academic achievement predict high school students' levels of test anxiety. This inquiry was not only an attempt

to contribute to literature on test anxiety but also to provide empirical evidence that can guide students with test anxiety as well as their families and counselors.

1.1. The Problem

This study attempted to answer the following research question “do gender, academic achievement, perfectionism and perceived social support significantly predict high school students’ levels of test anxiety”? The following specific questions were addressed in answering this general question: (1) What are relationships of test anxiety to perfectionism, academic achievement and social support? (2) (a) How much of test anxiety does the combination of perfectionism, academic achievement, perceived support (from family, friend and teacher) and gender predict? (b) To what degree do these variables predict students’ test anxiety? (c) What is the variables’ order of significance in predicting test anxiety?

2. METHOD

2.1. Participants

Participants of the study were 505 (56 % females; 44% males) randomly selected high school students in Ankara Metropolitan area during the academic year of 2005-2006. Their distribution to grade levels was as follows; 26% 9th, 42% 10th and 32% were 11th grade students.

2.2. Data Collection Materials

2.2.1. Test Anxiety Inventory (TAI)

The test Anxiety Inventory (TAI) was originally developed by Spielberg (1980). Its adaptation to Turkish was done by Öner (1990). The TAI is a 5-point Likert type scale. Internal consistency and homogeneity coefficient for the original form of the inventory was .92 and item-total correlation coefficient was .60. Test retest and the Pearson product moment correlation coefficients ranged between .62 and .81. Relationships between scores on the TAI and those on measures of anxiety and personality were examined. The TAI had positive correlations with trait anxiety (.48), prior to testing state anxiety (.51), anxiety scale of the MMPI (.27-.46) and with issues on the student problem check list (.27-.60). It had moderate-negative correlations with self-concept (-.31-.56). KR-20 formula was used to determine internal consistency and homogeneity of the items. These coefficients ranged between .73 and .89 (Öner 1990). Given this evidence on psychometric properties of the inventory, its use for assessing test anxiety of high school students was considered justifiable.

2.2.2. Multidimensional Perfectionism Scale (MPS)

The Multidimensional Perfectionism Scale (MPS) was used to measure perfectionism in high school students. The scale was originally developed by Frost, Marten, Lahart and Rosenblate (1990). Its adaptation to Turkish was done by Özbay and Taşdemir (2003). The MPS is a 5-point Likert type scale consisting of 35 items. Similar with its original form, factor analysis with its Turkish form resulted in 6 factors: Organization, Doubts of Actions, Parental Criticism, Concern over Mistakes, Parental Expectations and Personal Standards. These factors accounted for 47.8% of the total variance. Internal consistency coefficients for the scale and subscales ranged between .63 and .87. The Cronbach alpha reliability coefficient was .83 and split-half reliability coefficient was .80 (Özbay & Taşdemir 2003).

2.2.3. Perceived Social Support Scale-Revised (PSSS-R)

The PSSS-R was used to measure students perceived social support from family, friends and teachers. The scale was developed and revised by Yıldırım (2004b). It is a 3-point Likert type scale with 50 items and subscales of; family support (FS), support from friends (SFF) and support from teachers (SFT). Cronbach alpha reliability coefficients for the scale and subscales were as follows: .93, .94 for FS, .91 for SFF, and .93 for SFT. Test re-test reliability coefficients were .91, .89, .86 and .86

for the scale, FS, SFF and SFT respectively. Construct validity was tested using principal component analysis. The FS subscale had three factors (attentiveness and emotional support; advice giving, approval); SFF had one and the SFT had two factors (emotional support; advice giving and approval). Scores on the scale and those on each subscale were significantly correlated with scores on Beck Depression Inventory and Daily Hassles Scale (Yıldırım 2004b).

2.2.4. The Personal Information Form (PIF)

In order to gather demographic information such as students' gender, grade levels, education level of their parents and monthly income of their family, participants were given the Personal Information Form.

2.3. Data Collection

Questionnaires were given to students in their regular class meetings-in groups- during the April of the 2005-2006 academic year. Data collection from various schools took about two weeks. Students were informed about the survey and how to fill them up if they chose to do so. Any questions they raised about the study were answered prior to distributing the survey packet. Participation was voluntary. Completion of the surveys took about 20 minutes. Information on students' academic achievement was obtained from their school administrators.

2.4. Data Analysis

Data analysis was done by SPSS software packet. Stepwise regression analysis was used to determine whether students' levels of perfectionism, perceived social support (from family, friends and teachers), gender and demographic variables about their families significantly predicted the outcome variable of test anxiety. The study used .05 as the significance level.

3. RESULTS

In presenting the results, first correlations between the outcome variable (test anxiety) and the independent variables (academic achievement, perfectionism, perceived social support from family, friend and teachers) are illustrated in Table-1. Then results of stepwise regression analysis using test anxiety as the outcome variable are being introduced (Table-2).

As shown in Table-1 test anxiety had a significant positive relationship with perfectionism; significant negative relationships with perceived support social support (family, friends and teachers) and academic achievement. Perfectionism had a significant negative correlation with support from friends and family, and academic achievement. No significant correlations were found between: perfectionism and support from teachers; academic achievement and support.

Table-1: Pearson Correlation Coefficients Between Test Anxiety and; Perfectionism, Social Support, Academic Achievement and Gender

	test anx.	perfect.	fs	sft	sff	achiev.
Test anx.	1					
Perfect.	,317**	1				
Fs	-,155**	-,114**	1			
Sft	-,120*	,044	,243**	1		
Sff	-,167**	-,185**	,213**	,204**	1	
Achiev.	-,229**	-,108*	,163**	,026	,056	1

* $p < .05$

** $p < .01$

The regression model using test anxiety as the outcome variable was significant. As illustrated in Table-2 since family support did not significantly predict test anxiety, it was not included in the model. The table also shows that only perfectionism had a significant positive relationship with test anxiety. On the other hand, support from friends (SFF), support from teachers (SFT), academic achievement and gender had significant negative relationships with test anxiety. Perfectionism, gender, SFF, SFT and academic achievement accounted for an approximate 27% of the variance in test anxiety ($R=0.521$, $R^2=0.272$, $p<.001$).

Table-2. Results of Stepwise Regression Analysis-Test Anxiety Being The Outcome Variable

Model	Un-standardized coefficients		Standardized coefficients Beta	t	Correlations		R	R ²
	B	Std Err.						
1. (Constant) Perfect.	18,999 ,225	3,607 ,031	,317	5,268* 7,251*	3317	,317	,317 ^a	,101
2. (Constant) Perfect. Gender	25,752 ,235 -5,554	3,709 ,030 1,011	,332 -234	6,943* 7,790* -5,493*	,339 -246	,331 -233	,394 ^b	,155
3. (Constant) Perfect. Gender Achiev.	39,116 ,217 -7,128 -3,186	4,129 ,029 1,001 ,498	,306 -300 -271	9,474* 7,462* -7,118* -6,393*	,326 -313 -284	,304 -290 -261	,472 ^c	,223
4. (Constant) Perfect. Gender Achiev. SFF	59,509 ,193 -8,158 -3,300 -4,462	6,080 ,029 1,008 ,489 ,103	,273 -343 -280 -188	9,788* 6,679* -8,095* -6,746* -4,494*	,296 -351 -298 -204	,267 -324 -270 -180	,505 ^d	,256
5. (Constant) Perfect. Gender Achiev. SFF SFT	62,918 ,202 -8,420 3,238 -3,397 -1,176	6,112 ,029 1,001 ,485 ,104 ,055	,285 -354 -275 -161 -132	10,295* 7,010* -8,441* -6,681* -3,829* -3,226**	,309 -363 -296 -175 -148	,277 -363 -296 -175 -148	,521 ^e	,272

Outcome variable: Test anxiety

* $p<.001$ ** $p<.01$

a: Predictors (constant), perfectionism,

b: Predictors (constant), perfectionism, gender,

c: Predictors (constant), perfectionism, gender, academic achievement,

d: Predictors (constant), perfectionism, gender, academic achievement, SFF.

e: Predictors (constant), perfectionism, gender, academic achievement, SFF., SFT.

As illustrated in Table-2 the stepwise regression analysis was conducted in five steps. First, perfectionism was entered in the model which resulted in a Beta coefficient of 0.317. Perfectionism accounted for approximately 10% of the variance in test anxiety ($R=0.317$, $R^2=0.101$).

Second step of the regression analysis involved entering gender into the regression equation along with perfectionism. Perfectionism had a Beta value of 0.332 and gender had -0.234 . The respective t values for each of these variables were as follows; $t=7.790$ and $t=-5.493$. Perfectionism and gender accounted for approximately 16% of variance in the outcome variable ($R=0.394$, $R^2=0.155$).

Third step of the regression analysis consisted of entering academic achievement to the model along with perfectionism and gender. These independent variables accounted for 22% of the variance in test anxiety ($R=0.472$, $R^2=0.223$). Beta values for perfectionism, gender and academic achievement were; 0.306, -0.300 , and -0.271 respectively. The t values corresponding to each of the three independent variables were significant.

In the fourth step of the regression analysis, support from friends (SFF) was entered to the model along in addition to perfectionism, gender and academic achievement. When the rest of variables were constant, these four variables accounted for approximately 26% of the variance in test anxiety ($R=0.505$, $R^2=0.256$). Beta coefficients for perfectionism, gender, academic achievement and support from friends were 0,273, -0.343 , -0.280 and -0.188 respectively. All four variables had significant t values.

In the fifth and last step of the regression analysis support from teachers was entered to the model (SFT) in addition to the four variables used in the previous model. These set of variables accounted for approximately 27% of the variance in test anxiety ($R=0.521$, $R^2=0.272$). Perfectionism, gender, academic achievement, support from friends and support from teachers had the following respective Beta values; 0.285, -0.354 , -0.275 , -0.161 , and -0.132 . All the five independent variables in this model had significant t values.

Considering R^2 and t values of the independent variables used in the stepwise regression analysis, their order of significance was as follows; perfectionism, gender, academic achievement, support from friends and support from teachers. On the other, family support (FS) did not significantly predict high school students' test anxiety.

4. DISCUSSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Results showed significant relationships between test anxiety; and perfectionism, social support and academic achievement. More specifically, high school students' levels of test anxiety increased as their levels of perfectionism increased and their perceived support from friends and teachers decreased. Interventions aiming at improving students' social support networks and eliminating their perfectionistic attitudes and beliefs could alleviate their test anxieties. This can only be possible with satisfactory collaboration between schools and parents.

The stepwise regression analysis revealed that five of the independent variables were significant predictors of test anxiety. In other words, perfectionism and test anxiety levels of high school students had a significant positive relationship while academic achievement, perceived support from friends and perceived support from teachers had significant negative relationships to their levels of test anxiety. Moreover, gender was a significant variable in predicting test anxiety. Perfectionism, academic achievement, support from friends, support from teachers and gender predicted 27% of the variance in students test anxiety. The variables' order of significance was as follows; perfectionism, gender, academic achievement, support from friends, and support from teachers.

Findings regarding perfectionism are parallel to those by Bieling, Israeli, Smith and Antony (2003) who also found a significant relationship between test anxiety and perfectionism. Besser (2005) reports that along with its link to test anxiety, perfectionism is also associated with adjustment difficulties, suicide and eating disorders. Accordingly, intervention such as psycho-educational

programs can be designed to target students' perfectionistic beliefs and attitudes. Furthermore, considering families' influences on students' perfectionism, school counseling services could work closely with families in order to lessen their contributions to the debilitating perfectionism in adolescents. Literature has limited work regarding interventions with perfectionism. Further work is needed to test efficacy of interventions programs on adolescents' perfectionistic stance as they go through the extremely stressful preparation process for national exams in Turkey. Such work is particularly essential considering the extremely competitive nature of these exams. Likewise, studies can further examine factors associated with perfectionism in these students. Enrichment of existing literature on perfectionism can indeed guide efforts of counselors, educators and families in easing the exam preparation process for high school students.

An important finding of this study was that gender significantly predicted students' test anxiety. In fact, of the five independent variables, gender was the second significant one. This finding is consistent with those of previous studies cited in the literature on test anxiety and gender (Aysan, Thompson & Hamarat 2001; Hembree 1988; Hong & Karstensson 2002; Moore 2006; Yıldırım 2000). A feminist interpretation of higher female scores on test anxiety would be that perhaps female students have more to lose if they do not succeed in their pursuit of education. This might be particularly so for traditional and patriarchal subcultures. Investigating factors contributing to females' higher levels of test anxiety could have significant contribution to efforts toward improving girls' schooling in Turkey.

Similar with findings of Fincham, Hokoda, Sanders (1989) and Yıldırım (2000), results of this study found that academic achievement significantly predicted students' test anxiety. Hembree (1988) indicates that test anxiety leads to lower academic performance. Students with lower academic achievement indicated higher levels of test anxiety. In other words, as their academic achievement level increase their risk for test anxiety decreases. Given that achievement was a significant variable predicting test anxiety, educators can focus on ways in which they can promote achievement. Particularly, by working on students' time management, effective study skills, and motivations, guidance services can contribute to improving achievement. Schools and families can collaboratively work on eliminating obstacles to academic achievement.

Following these three variables, perceived support from friends was the fourth significant variable contributing to students' test anxiety. Students with greater levels of support from friends reported lower levels of test anxiety. Literature on social support from friends reports links between support of friends with academic achievement and test anxiety (Malecki & Elliott 1999; Yıldırım 2006). In addition to this empirical evidence, considering importance of peers in adolescents lives and functioning, work targeting improving communication and peer support can not only help with adolescents' test anxiety but also other aspects of their functioning alike.

The last contributing variable to the model was support from teachers. In other words, perceived support from teachers was significantly predicting of test anxiety. Students with higher levels of support from teachers reported lower test anxiety. This finding indicates importance of teachers' attitudes toward students. Continuing education programs with teachers can improve their insights about their contributions to students test anxiety.

Intervention work with students' test anxiety should consider their social support network and perfectionistic tendencies. Such work should particularly be mindful to the needs of female students. School counseling services can benefit from such findings by specifically targeting factors associated with test anxiety. Given that existing exams are due to economic conditions of a given country and that a small number of students taking national exams in fact enter further educational institutions, interventions with test anxiety are essential for the wellbeing of children and adolescents. Future studies can extend their work to other populations facing highly challenging exams. For example, Turkish high school graduates and elementary education students are under similar pressures of exams as high school students. Considering that contemporary education strives toward more egalitarian and student-centered schools, a focus on preventive efforts on the part of educators and school counselors are as important as alleviating the existing distress and anxiety stemming from continual testing cultures of the contemporary educational systems.

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GENİŞLETİLMİŞ ÖZET

Çocuklar eğitim sistemine girdiklerinde sık bir şekilde sınava tabi tutulmaktadırlar. Bunun sonucunda da daha iyi bir performans göstermeleri için anne-babalarının ve okulun beklenti ve baskısıyla karşılaşmaktadırlar. Sınavlar öğrencilerin yaşamlarının önemli bir parçasını oluşturmaktadır. Sınavlardan elde edilen sonuçlar öğrencilerin gelecekteki yaşantılarının şekillenmesinde etkili olabilir. Bu durum, özellikle sınav sonuçları, geleceğe ilişkin fırsatlar ve mesleki kararlar üzerinde etkili olacağı zaman, ergenlerin yaşamlarında önemli bir stres kaynağıdır. Sınav kaygısı öğrenciler için ciddi bir problemdir. Sınav kaygısı yaşayan bireylerin değerlendirme durumlarında kaygı eşiklerinin düşük olduğu belirtilmektedir. Bu durumdaki öğrenciler kendilerine yönelik tehdit algılama eğilimindedirler ve bu öğrencilerin öz-yeterlik algıları düşük düzeydedir. Sınav kaygısı ile ilgili literatürde yaygın bir şekilde kabul edilen tanıma göre sınav kaygısı; başarının değerlendirildiği durumlarda, bireyde gerginlik ve endişe duyguları yaratan ve merkezi sinir sisteminin uyarılmasına neden olan istenmeyen bir durumdur. Sınav kaygısının oluşmasında potansiyel etkisi olabilecek birçok etken bulunmaktadır. Bütün değerlendirme durumları bazı duygusal tepkilere yol açsa da, bireyin geçmişteki deneyimleri ve birçok faktör tarafından etkilenen düşünceleri, bir sınav durumunda gösterilecek olan tepkiyi şekillendirmektedir. Literatürde sınav kaygısı ile birlikte ele alınan birçok değişkene rastlamak mümkündür. Bunlardan bazıları sosyal destek, akademik başarı, aile ilişkileri, mükemmeliyetçilik, çalışma becerileri, denetim odağı değişkenleridir.

Bu çalışmada ele alınan değişkenler, yoğun sınav temposunun olduğu ülkemiz koşullarında birbirleri ile ilişki içinde olduğu düşünülen değişkenlerdir. Öğrenciler başarı odaklı bir anlayışla yetiştirilmekte ve hem aileler hem de öğretmenler, öğrencilerden büyük başarılar beklemektedirler. Özellikle ailelerin, sınavlar konusunda çocuklarından oldukça büyük beklentilere sahip oldukları hatta mükemmeliyetçi bir tavır takındıkları bilinmektedir. Bu koşullar altında sınavlara ve geleceğe hazırlanan öğrencilerin ailelerinden, öğretmenlerinden ve arkadaşlarından aldıkları sosyal destek de oldukça önemlidir. Bu nedenle çalışmanın amacı, lise öğrencilerinin mükemmeliyetçilik, sosyal destek ve akademik başarılarının sınav kaygı düzeylerini ne derece yordadığını incelemektir. Bunun yanı sıra, sınav kaygısı yaşayan öğrenciler ve onların aileleri ile çalışan psikolojik danışmanlara destek olmak ve ışık tutmak amaçlanmaktadır. Buradan hareketle çalışmada “cinsiyet, akademik başarı, mükemmeliyetçilik, algılanan sosyal destek değişkenleri sınav kaygısını anlamlı olarak yordamakta mıdır?” sorusuna yanıt aranmıştır. Bu soruya dayalı olarak araştırmanın alt problemleri şöyle belirlenmiştir: (1) Sınav kaygısı, mükemmeliyetçilik, akademik başarı ve sosyal destek arasında nasıl bir ilişki vardır? (2) Mükemmeliyetçilik, akademik başarı, aile, arkadaş, öğretmen desteği ve cinsiyet değişkenleri, (a) Birlikte sınav kaygısının ne kadarını yordamaktadır? (b) Bu değişkenlerin öğrencilerin sınav kaygılarını yordamadaki güçleri nedir? (c) Bu değişkenlerin sınav kaygısını yordamadaki önem sırası nedir?

Çalışmanın örneklemini Ankara ili merkez ilçelerinde bulunan ve genel liselerde öğrenim gören 505 öğrenci oluşturmuştur. Veri toplama araçları olarak, öğrencilerin sınava ilişkin kaygılarını belirlemek amacıyla Sınav Kaygısı Envanteri, mükemmeliyetçilik düzeylerini belirlemek amacıyla Çok Boyutlu Mükemmeliyetçilik Ölçeği; aile, arkadaş ve öğretmenlerinden algıladıkları sosyal destek düzeylerini belirlemek amacıyla Algılanan Sosyal Destek Ölçeği-R ve demografik değişkenlere ilişkin olarak da Kişisel Bilgi Formu (KBF) uygulanmıştır.

Elde edilen verilerin analizi için SPSS paket programı kullanılmıştır. Araştırmada öğrencilere ve anne-babalarına ait demografik değişkenler ile öğrencilerin mükemmeliyetçilik ve aile-öğretmen-arkadaşlarından algıladıkları sosyal destek düzeylerinin, sınav kaygısını ne derece yordadığı aşamalı (stepwise) regresyon analizi tekniği kullanılarak incelenmiştir. Araştırmada hata payının üst sınırı .05 olarak alınmıştır.

“Mükemmeliyetçilik”, “akademik başarı”, “cinsiyet”, “ARD” ve “ÖĞD” değişkenlerine ilişkin regresyon katsayıları, R^2 ve t-değerleri incelendiğinde, lise öğrencilerinin sınav kaygılarını birinci sırada “mükemmeliyetçilik”, ikinci sırada “cinsiyet”, üçüncü sırada “akademik başarı”, dördüncü sırada “ARD”, beşinci ve son sırada ise “ÖĞD” değişkenlerinin manidar olarak yordadıkları

saptanmıştır. Buna karşın “aile desteği” (AİD) değişkeninin lise öğrencilerinin sınav kaygılarını yordayıcı bir etkisinin olmadığı görülmektedir. Araştırmadan elde edilen bulgulara göre, sınav kaygısı, mükemmeliyetçilik, sosyal destek ve akademik başarı değişkenleri arasında manidar ilişkiler saptanmıştır. Buna göre, öğrencilerin mükemmeliyetçilik düzeyleri arttıkça; arkadaş ve öğretmenlerinden algıladıkları sosyal destek ve akademik başarıları azaldıkça yaşadıkları sınav kaygısı artmaktadır. Bu bağlamda öğrencilerin yaşadıkları sınav kaygısını azaltmak amacıyla sosyal destek sistemlerini güçlendirmeye ve mükemmeliyetçilik eğilimlerini azaltmaya yönelik psiko-eğitsel programların geliştirilmesinin ve bu çerçevede okul- aile arasındaki işbirliğinin sağlanmasının önemli olduğu düşünülmektedir.

Aşamalı regresyon sonucunda sınav kaygısına ilişkin varyansa katkıları bakımından beş değişkenin önemli yordayıcı olduğu bulunmuştur. Bu çerçevede elde edilen bulgulara göre, lise öğrencilerinin mükemmeliyetçilik düzeyleri, öğrencilerin sınav kaygısını pozitif yönde; akademik başarıları, arkadaşlarından ve öğretmenlerinden algıladıkları sosyal destek ise negatif yönde ve manidar olarak yordamaktadır. Ayrıca “cinsiyet” değişkeni de sınav kaygısının önemli bir yordayıcısı olarak bulunmuştur. Mükemmeliyetçilik, akademik başarı, arkadaş desteği, öğretmen desteği ve cinsiyet değişkenlerinin birlikte sınav kaygısının %27’sini yordadığı sonucu ortaya konmuştur. Elde edilen bulgular çerçevesinde lise öğrencilerinin sınav kaygılarını birinci sırada mükemmeliyetçilik, ikinci sırada cinsiyet, üçüncü sırada akademik başarı, dördüncü sırada arkadaş desteği, beşinci sırada ise öğretmen desteği değişkenlerinin yordadığı görülmüştür.

Araştırmadan elde edilen sonuçlardan yola çıkarak öğrencilerin sınav kaygısını önlemeye yönelik olarak yapılacak çalışmalarda mükemmeliyetçilik eğilimlerinin ve sosyal desteğin dikkate alınması ve önleme programlarının bunlara göre düzenlenmesi önerilebilir. Ayrıca okullarda çalışan psikolojik danışman ve öğretmenlerin bu yordayıcı değişkenler çerçevesinde öğrencilerine sınav kaygıları ile baş etmede yardımcı olabilecekleri düşünülmektedir. Bu çalışma liseye devam eden öğrenciler üzerinde yapılmıştır ve buna benzer olarak yapılacak çalışmalarda ilköğretim öğrencileri ile çalışılabilir. Araştırmadan elde edilen sonuçların özellikle okullarda yapılacak önleme çalışmalarına yol göstereceği ve bu açıdan eğitim ve psikolojik danışma ve rehberlik analına katkı sağlayacağı düşünülmektedir.