

## Unemployment anxiety of last year college students

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### Abstract

The negative effects of anxiety on people, such as lack of self-confidence, deterioration of sleep order and social relations skills, feeling of failure, have been stated in many scientific studies. Youth unemployment is very high in the World and Turkey. The aim of this study was to determine the anxiety levels of the last year university students in sports science education. The research was carried out using quantitative research method. A total of 226 students from the School of Physical Education and Sports (fourth grade) of Kastamonu University participated in the study. In the research, Unemployment Anxiety Scale consisting of 5 sub-dimensions and 21 items was used as a measurement tool. In addition, it was observed that there was no statistical difference between men and women, but according to the variable of education department, it was determined that students of the sports management department have higher levels of unemployment anxiety.

**Keywords:** Anxiety, college, student, unemployment, job, future-anxiety.

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## 1. Introduction

Anxiety is a particular state of emotion, with fear and anxiety that may or may not be associated with a clearly distinguishable stimulus, normally expressed as a biological stimulus that prepares the individual to take action to respond to a potential threat to danger (Aydin, 2017). Anxiety is very common among university students and is associated with negative effects on mental, emotional and physical health (Schneiderman, Ironson & Siegel, 2005). Anxiety has significant negative effects on individuals and is thought to have potential for depression (Lee et al., 2003). In addition, anxiety can create a social outburst, unlike an individual phenomenon, through its negative effects. The negative effects of anxiety on people, such as lack of self-confidence, deterioration of sleep order and social relations skills, feeling of failure, have been stated in many scientific studies (Bernal-Morales, Rodríguez-Landa & Pulido-Criollo, 2015; Kicir, 2017; Mills, Karagiannis & Zulch, 2014; Pascoe, Hetrick & Parker, 2019; Renard, Suarez, Levin & Rivarola, 2005; Shell and Buell, 2019; Wilt Oehlberg & Revelle, 2011; Young, Sandman & Craske, 2019).

Stressful life styles of young people begin before taking the university exam and continue throughout the university life. Besides, youth unemployment is very high both in the World and Turkey. In some occasions, this is because of the increase in young people's stress (Dursun & Aytac, 2009). People want to work to provide their basic needs. Having a job not only provides the basic needs of people, but also helps people to gain self-esteem (Linn, Sandifer & Stein, 1985). The concern that university students may have in terms of finding employment after graduation is important (Sasmaz Atacocugu & Zelyurt, 2017; Tasgin, Bozgeyikli & Bogazliyan, 2017).

Increasing the number of universities in Turkey in recent years has led to increase in the number of graduates. This situation causes young people to compete with a large number of people about their employment and uncertainty in their future plans (Kutlu, Cetinbakis & Kutlu, 2019; Ustun, 2018). Employment opportunities in Turkey compared to the scope of the OECD countries, 20% is worse (Dereli & Kabatas, 2009). Besides, higher education graduates are expected to have better jobs and earnings than non-higher education graduates. In the literature, it can be seen that many research studies have conceptualised their research on the job demands and unemployment status of university (college) students (Bakker, Hakanen, Demerouti & Xanthopoulou, 2007; Birkollu & Ekizoglu, 2016; Charoensukmongkol, 2014; Engur, Kiremitci & Boz 2019; Jimenez, Rodriguez & Carrillo, 2019).

Unemployment is a situation that makes life difficult, especially for young people and creates despair for their future. In determining the future of countries, the presence of people who feel good and hopeful for the future is positively important. It is only possible to expect people who do not worry about unemployment and feel safe to ensure creative and impressive developments. In this sense, it is important for young people to have a job and feel safe for themselves both individually and socially. The aim of this study was to determine the anxiety levels of the last year university students in sports science education. A total of four different hypotheses are presented in the study.

### Hypothesis 1

There is a relationship between the university students' special field of study (Sport Management, Coaching Education and Physical Education Teacher) and unemployment anxiety.

### Hypothesis 2

There is a relationship between university students' gender and unemployment anxiety.

### Hypothesis 3

There is a relationship between university students' work experience and unemployment anxiety.

## Hypothesis 4

There is a relationship between university students' ages and unemployment anxiety.

## **2. Method**

### **2.1. Participants**

The research was carried out using quantitative research method. A total of 226 students from the School of Physical Education and Sports (fourth grade) of Kastamonu University participated in the study. As a sampling method, simple random sampling method was preferred.

**Table 1. Demographic information of participants**

	<b>Groups</b>	<b>n</b>	<b>%</b>
Age (Mean)	22.73	226	100
Gender/Sex	Man	154	68.1
	Woman	72	31.9
Grade/Class	4	226	100
Department	Sports Management	98	43.4
	Coach Education	80	35.4
	Physical Teacher Education (P.E.T.E)	48	21.2
Job Experience	Yes	188	83.2
	No	38	16.8
Total		226	

### **2.2. Data collection tool**

In the research, Unemployment Anxiety Scale consisting of 5 sub-dimensions and 21 items, created by Demir (2016) was used as a measurement tool. High average score of the scale indicates the high level of unemployment anxiety. Data collection tool was a self-report scale with 5 Likerts. Data collection was carried out via Google Forms. Expressions in the scale, I fully agree "5 points (5.00–4.20)", I agree "4 points (4.19–3.40)", I am undecided "3 points (3.39–2.60)", disagree "2 points (2.59–1.80)", I strongly disagree The  $n-1/n$  formula was used to determine the score ranges ( $5-1/5 = 4/5 = 0.80$ ).

### **2.3. Data collection and analysis**

According to the obtained kurtosis and skewness values, the data were found to be normally distributed and parametric test methods were used. The reliability value of the research data was tested with Cronbach Alpha value and it was found 0.88 for the whole scale. The study was conducted following the Declaration of Helsinki (1964). Confirmatory factor analysis method was used for the validity of the data. Confirmatory factor analysis method was used also for the validity of the data. As a result of the confirmatory factor analysis, the fit indices of the data were determined to be sufficient ( $\chi^2/SD$ , 2.45; RMSEA, 0.61; SMRM, .59; NFI, 0.90; CFI, 0.90; GFI, 0.91; AGFI, 0.89; PGFI, 0.68).

## **3. Results**

According to the data obtained from the research, unemployment anxiety of the participants was determined at a moderate high level ( $\bar{X} = 3.51$ ). In addition, according to the data of the researchers, it was determined that the highest sub-dimension in the scope of job anxiety was the Lack of Employment. In addition, according to the participants, the sub-dimension with the lowest average in terms of employment anxiety was determined as the discrimination sub-dimension.

**Table 2. Unemployment anxiety scores of participants and skewness-kurtosis values**

Sub-Dimensions	$\bar{X}$	Std. Deviation	Skewness	Kurtosis
Lack of Employment	4.07	0.819	-0,948	0,902
Desperation	3.72	0.966	-0,786	0,341
Discrimination	2.58	1.19	0,349	-0,977
Inexperience	3.25	1.18	-0,203	-0,950
Personel Inability	2.91	1.11	0,238	-0,678
Total	3.51	0.704	-0,203	0,298

When the unemployment anxiety was analysed according to the gender variable of the participants, it was found that the average of male participants in the size of Personnel Inability sub-dimension was statistically higher than the female participants [ $t(226) = 2.60, p < 0.05$ ]. In addition to these results, when the total scale scores were examined, it was found that the average scores of male participants were higher than the average scores of female participants although there was no statistical difference.

**Table 3. T-test results of participants according to gender variable**

Sub-Dimensions	Gender/Sex	n	$\bar{X}$	Ss	p	Difference
Lack of employment	Man	154	4.07	0.81	0.990	
	Woman	72	4.07	0.83		
Desperation	Man	154	3.69	1.02	0.625	
	Woman	72	3.76	0.83		
Discrimination	Man	154	2.63	1.24	0.380	
	Woman	72	2.48	1.08		
Inexperience	Man	154	3.31	1.21	0.270	
	Woman	72	3.12	1.09		
Personnel inability	Man	154	3.04	1.15	0.010	1>2
	Woman	72	2.63	0.98		
Total	Man	154	3.54	0.73	0.350	
	Woman	72	3.45	0.64		

$p < 0.05$ .

In the research, the unemployment anxiety of the participants was evaluated within the scope of having work experience before. In the total score, unemployment anxiety of the participants who had a previous job was determined at a lower level compared to the participants who did not have previous work experience.

**Table 4. T-test results of participants according to job experience variable**

Sub-dimensions	Job Experience	n	$\bar{X}$	Ss	p	Difference
Lack of Employment	Yes	188	4.08	0.82	0.724	-
	No	38	4.03	0.77		

Desperation	Yes	188	3.72	1.01	0.941	-
	No	38	3.71	0.75		
Discrimination	Yes	188	2.60	1.17	0.653	-
	No	38	2.50	1.32		
Inexperience	Yes	188	3.26	1.17	0.831	-
	No	38	3.21	1.21		
Personnel Inability	Yes	188	2.91	1.11	0.856	-
	No	38	2.94	1.11		
Total	Yes	188	3.52	0.70	0.862	-
	No	38	3.48	0.71		

$p < 0.05$ .

As a result of the analysis made according to the variable of the department in which the participants were trained, a statistically significant difference was detected in all sub-dimensions except for the discrimination dimension. As a result of the analyses, it was determined that the average scores of the sports management students in the Lack of Employment and Desperation sub-dimensions were statistically higher than the students of the physical education and sports teaching department.

In addition, the average scores of sports management students and coaching education students in the sub-dimensions of inexperience and Personnel Inability and total score were determined higher than physical education and teaching students.

**Table 5. ANOVA results of the participants according to department variables**

Sub-Dimensions	Department	n	$\bar{X}$	Ss	p	Difference
Lack of Employment	Sports Management	98	4.22	.73	0.004	1>2
	Coaching Educaiton	80	3.83	.90		
	P.E.T.E	48	4.18	.76		
Desperation	Sports Management	98	3.96	.79	0.001	1>2
	Coaching Educaiton	80	3.42	1.13		
	P.E.T.E	48	3.68	.85		
Discrimination	Sports Management	98	2.78	1.18	0.066	-
	Coaching Educaiton	80	2.49	1.26		
	P.E.T.E	48	2.33	1.02		
Inexperience	Sports Management	98	3.58	1.05	0.001	1>2,3
	Coaching Educaiton	80	3.07	1.31		
	P.E.T.E	48	2.88	1.02		
Personal Inability	Sports Management	98	3.03	1.12	0.003	1,2>3
	Coaching Educaiton	80	3.05	1.17		
	P.E.T.E	48	2.43	.84		
Total	Sports Management	98	3.71	.66	0.001	1>2,3
	Coaching Educaiton	80	3.34	.78		
	P.E.T.E	48	3.38	.52		

$p < 0.05$ .

According to the latest analysis, the relationship between the participants' age variable and unemployment anxieties was examined [ $F(2,223) = 5.64;7.71;2.75;7.67;5.91;7.30, p < 0.05$ ]. As a result of the Pearson correlation analysis, a low negative correlation was found between the age variable of the participants and unemployment anxiety.

**Table 6. Perason correlation analysis between participants' age variable and sub-dimensions and total score**

	Age	1	2	3	4	5	Total	
Total	Pearson Correlation	1	0.789**	0.810**	0.706**	0.809**	0.323**	-0.062
	Sig. (2-tailed)		0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.355
	N	226	226	226	226	226	226	226
Lack of Employment	Pearson Correlation	0.789**	1	0.671**	0.338**	0.494**	-0.134*	-0.,046
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000		0.000	0.000	0.000	0.044	0.488
	N	226	226	226	226	226	226	226
Desperation	Pearson Correlation	0.810**	0.671**	1	0.412**	0.614**	0.019	-0.037
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000	0.000		0.000	0.000	0.771	0.578
	N	226	226	226	226	226	226	226
Discrimination	Pearson Correlation	0.706**	0.338**	0.412**	1	0.525**	0.352**	-0.037
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000	0.000	0.000		0.000	0.000	0.581
	N	226	226	226	226	226	226	226
Inexperience	Pearson Correlation	0.809**	0.494**	0.614**	0.525**	1	0.277**	-0.,095
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000		0.000	0.155
	N	226	226	226	226	226	226	226
Personal Inability	Pearson Correlation	0.323**	-0.134*	0.019	0.352**	0.277**	1	0.000
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000	0.044	0.771	0.000	0.000		0.995
	N	226	226	226	226	226	226	226
Age	Pearson Correlation	-0.062	-0.046	-0.037	-0.037	-0.095	0.000	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.355	0.488	0.578	0.581	0.155	0.995	
	N	226	226	226	226	226	226	226

#### 4. Discussion and conclusion and recommendations

According to the results of the research, the unemployment anxiety of the participants was determined as medium-high. The research conducted by Yun-Fei (2008) examined the unemployment anxiety and the pressure felt by the Chinese university students. According to the results of the research, it has been determined that the unemployment of university students and university graduates has become a striking problem and students feel career pressure and anxiety. In the research carried out by Ersoy-Kart and Erdost (2008), unemployment anxiety of college students who were educated in the field of social sciences was examined. According to the results of the research, it was stated that the unemployment concerns of the participating students who are about to graduate are at a very high level. In the research conducted by Turgut, Gokyurek & Yenel. (2004), the expectations of university students receiving sports education were examined. According to the results of the research, it was stated that 72.3% of the participant students experienced employment anxiety after graduation. When the research studies in the related field are examined, it is seen that unemployment anxiety levels of college students are generally high. The reason for this situation may be that the population of the world is dropping and the level of competition rises, the need for work force decreases with the development of technology and the reliability of the country's economies decreases. As a result of the analyses, the highest sub-dimension related to unemployment anxiety was identified as the lack of employment and the lowest sub-dimension was discrimination. In this context, it can be said that the biggest problem of the participant students is the insufficient job opportunities. In addition, it is seen that the participant students think that they will not experience any discrimination in finding a job.

Within the research, the difference between the departments of the university students who received sports education was determined. As a result of the analysis, unemployment anxiety of university students who are in the sports management department was determined at a higher level than the students of other departments. As a reason for this situation, it is considered that there is an employment problem arising from the importance given to the sports management profession and the awareness about the profession of sport manager. In the study conducted by Tekin and Filiz

(2008), the average score of the students studying in the coaching education department was 4.98, while the average score of the students studying in the sports management department was 6.90. In this sense, it can be stated that there is a similarity between the results of this research and the results of Tekin and Filiz. As a result of the analysis, it was determined that the students who had the lowest unemployment anxiety were the students of physical education and sports department. The reason for this situation may be that the participants in this scope have high chances of finding a job in both private and public schools. With these results, it is seen that hypothesis 2 has been proved.

The results of the analysis revealed that there was a difference between male and female participants only in terms of personal inability sub-dimension in favour of male participants. Although unemployment anxiety of female and male participants did not show a statistically significant difference in the total score average, it was found that male unemployment anxiety was higher than female participants. It can be stated that the reason for this situation is due to the higher social and cultural men's job prospects and responsibilities. Dursun and Aytac (2009), according to the results of the research examining the unemployment anxiety of university students, anxiety levels of female university students were determined higher than male university students. In this context, it is seen that there is a difference between this research and the results of the research conducted by Dursun and Aytac. The reason for this situation can be said that there are more than one faculty students in the research conducted by Dursun and Aytac. In the study conducted by Forret, Sullivan & Mainiero (2010), unemployment and gender were investigated and it was stated that the unemployment status of men was perceived as a greater stress and pressure than women according to the research results. In this sense, it is seen that there is a partial similarity between this research and the results of the research conducted by Forret et al. General research results differ. These differences are thought to be related to the perceptions of societies about male and female sciences. With these results, it is seen that hypothesis 2 has been partially proved.

According to the results obtained, there was no statistically significant difference in the work experience of the participants in all sub-dimensions and in the total score. In the total score, unemployment anxiety of the participants with previous work experience was determined at a higher level than the participants who did not have previous work experience. The reason for these results can be said that the participants who had previous work experience have high awareness about the work environment and the difficulty of finding a job in the future. It is seen that the results of the research are generally related to the results of individuals who have previous work experience have less unemployment anxiety (Dursun & Aytac, 2009). In this sense, it is seen that there is a difference between the results of this research and the results of the most of other research. With these results, it was found that hypothesis 3 was not an accurate hypothesis.

In the study, the relationship between the age variable of the participants and unemployment anxieties was examined. As a result of the analyses, a low level of negative effect was found between the ages of the participating students and their unemployment anxiety. In other words, it was found that unemployment anxiety decreased at a low level with the increase of the age of the students and the participants. It can be said that the reason for this situation is that older participants have more work environments and are related to their self-confidence. In the study conducted by Etcı, Cicek & Kilic (2019), unemployment anxiety of university students was examined and according to the results of the research, no statistically significant difference was found between the age of the participants and unemployment anxiety.

## 5. Conclusion

As a result, according to the research results, the unemployment anxiety of the participants was found to be at medium-high level. In addition, it was observed that there was no statistical difference between men and women, but according to the variable of education department, it was determined that students of the sports management department have higher levels of unemployment anxiety. It was determined that having previous work experience of the participants did not have a significant

effect on unemployment anxiety and there was a low level of negative relationship between the participant ages and unemployment anxiety. With these results, it is seen that hypothesis 2 has been partially proved.

## 6. Limitations and recommendations

The research was carried out on fourth grade students who are about to graduate. One of the limitations of the research is that students who are educated in other classes are not included in the research. In addition, the research was carried out only with university students studying sports. A research is planned for future processes, where students from other faculties will be included and compared with university students studying sports. It is thought that researches that will be carried out by associating unemployment anxiety of university students with sports education with different variables will add value to this field.

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