



RESEARCH ARTICLE

ANALYSING OF EMPLOYMENT EXPECTATIONS OF SOCIAL WORK STUDENTS IN TERMS OF SOME VARIABLES

***Dr. Nuray Gökçek Karaca and Dr. Erol Karaca**

Department of Social Work, Faculty of Health Sciences, Anadolu University

ARTICLE INFO

Article History:

Received 06th, September 2015
Received in revised form
29th, October 2015
Accepted 18th, November 2015
Published online 30th, December 2015

Keywords:

Employment,
Employment Expectation,
Social Work and
Social Work Students.

ABSTRACT

This study aims to analyze employment expectations of social work students in Turkey. To that general objective, the study tries to examine whether employment expectations of social work students meaningfully differentiate depending on gender, age, university, compatibility with the profession in terms of personal characteristics and satisfaction of professional choice. The data was collected through "Employment Expectation Questionnaire" consisting of two sections, developed by researchers to determine the employment expectations of social work students. The first part of EEQ includes 13 open and close-ended questions related to demographic and personal information of social work students. The second part of EEQ includes 18 statements related to employment expectations of social workers on a 5-point Likert-type scale. EEQ was applied to 692 social work students from Anadolu University Faculty of Health Sciences, Hacettepe University Faculty of Economics and Administrative Sciences, Selcuk University Faculty of Health Sciences and Yalova University Faculty of Economics and Administrative Sciences, in 2014. The data analyzed was used by item analysis and factor analysis. Consequently, the findings from this study revealed that the scale is valid and reliable. The level of employment expectation of social work students is found as very high. Besides these findings, social work students' agreement level to employment expectation statements also varies in terms of age and each university that students attend.

INTRODUCTION

Employment expectancy includes topics such as employment opportunities provided to individuals who are above a certain level and type of education, the income that the graduates will receive, the content of the roles they will be playing in production and the mobility that their educational characteristics will provide. In other words, employment expectancy is about the characteristics of the occupation and that skills, talents and tendencies that young people graduated from a certain institute of education and will apply for occupations. There are some expectations about their occupations after graduation and also about the period that they will be seeking employment in the minds of the young people who are studying in the institutes of education (Ünal, 1990: 103). The university students must have valid and realistic information about the occupations they will be performing and this is just as important as the information they will be receiving and the success they will be showing. Mobility and career advancement possibilities are just as important in this decision as much as the economic benefits that the occupation will provide. In reality, all of these decisions are paralleled with the decision-making process when entering the university. Expenses undertaken and expected benefits are compared with each other during the decision process for education. This theory forms the nucleus of the theory of human capital and it specifies that the decision for education is an investment decision.

**Corresponding author: Dr. Nuray Gökçek Karaca,
Department of Social Work, Faculty of Health Sciences, Anadolu
University*

If the individual has considerations such as being respectable or self-development with the university education, the expectation of employment will change. An individual's expectation of employment also changes depending on his/her inherited social capital, in other words, family history (Coleman, 1991: 3; Croll, 2004: 412). As a matter of fact, it is known that many professions in Turkey, especially social service/ social work fields that have good opportunities for employment in these final years, are preferred due to this fact. Indeed, increased opportunities for employment for social workers (and some other profession categories), in the context of European Union acquis, means that there is an increased demand for Social Work departments. Despite this, there are no researches to be found on the field of employment expectation and social work students' employment expectations.

The main objective of this research is to determine employment expectations of social work students. In accordance with this purpose, it was tried to answer the following questions:

- What are the employment expectations of social work students?
- Do employment expectations of social work students vary according to gender?
- Do employment expectations of social work students vary according to age?
- Do employment expectations of social work students vary according to the attended university?

- Do employment expectations of social work students vary according to compatibility with the profession in terms of personal characteristics?
- Do employment expectations of social work students vary according to satisfaction of professional choice?

It is expected to provide a data source and to give directions to provide necessary conditions in terms of effective execution of social work profession and to provide employment policies for social work graduates in this study. Also, it is hoped that this study will contribute to the existing national and international literature on this subject.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

This study contains both qualitative and quantitative research methods. The quantitative research method to be used in the study involves "survey". A quantitative method based on the previous researches in this field was adopted as well. The qualitative research methods to be used in the study involve "in-depth interview".

Sample

This research aims to determine employment expectations of social work students by focusing mainly on the same social work department in different provinces of Turkey. The participants were selected randomly from four universities in Turkey in 2014. The study was carried out with 710 social work students, who formed the study group, via face-to-face surveys. 18 surveys were excluded from analysis, as they had not been filled up in compliance with the instructions. Thus, data acquired from 692 surveys were included in the analysis. Of participants, 11.70% (n=81) were from Anadolu University Faculty of Health Sciences, 37.57% (n=260) were from Hacettepe University Faculty of Economics and Administrative Sciences, 24.86 (n=172) were from Selçuk University Faculty of Health Sciences, 25.87 (n=179) were from Yalova University Faculty of Economics and Administrative Sciences. Four hundred-sixty-six participants (567.30%) were female and the remaining two hundred-twenty-six (32.70%) were male. Almost all of the participants (n=677) were between ages 18 to 24. The remaining fifteen participants were above age 25.

Data Collection

The data were collected through "Employment Expectation Questionnaire" consisting of two sections, developed by researchers to determine the employment expectations of social work students. The first part of EEQ includes 13 open and close-ended questions related to demographic and personal information of social work students. The second part of EEQ includes 18 statements related to employment expectations of social workers on a 5-point Likert-type scale consisting of 5 choices, from 1 = Strongly Disagree to 3 = Strongly Agree. In the first stage of the development of EEQ, the literature on employment, employment opportunities and post-employment training process were investigated.

Then, the scale on the employment and employment expectations were reviewed. As a result of literature search, 18 written problem expressions were obtained. In this way, the prepared scale examined by an expert in terms of language.

The views of a group of field specialists working in universities were taken for content validity. In line with the reported opinions, the EEQ has been given as final form.

Procedure

The following techniques were used to achieve the goal of the research:

- The research data was analyzed with factor analysis by using the statistical package SPSS. Factor analysis was conducted in order to check the construct validity of the scale. A scale with 16 items consisting of the four factors was developed as a result of the factor analysis. Factor analysis is a statistical data reduction technique used to find latent variables or factors among observed variables. In other words, if research data contain many variables, factor analysis can be used to reduce the number of variables. With factor analysis, a small number of factors can be produced, which are capable of explaining the observed variance in a larger number of variables. The reduced factors can also be used for further analysis (Baykul 2000; Büyüköztürk, 2002). Reliability coefficients were calculated by applying Cronbach α for each subscale, determined as a result of varimax rotation and for the whole scale.
- Factors are named for the meanings that items include. The first factor is named "Knowledge about Employment Methods". The second factor, named "Confidence in Academic Qualifications", consists of 3 items. The third factor, named "Confidence in Social Networks and Non-educational Qualifications", consists of 3 items. Finally, the fourth factor, named "Confidence in the Education Institution and Relations", consists of 2 items.
- The correlation between item points of EEQ and total points of EEQ were calculated with Item-Total Correlation Coefficient technique. Item total correlation coefficient higher than .20 is considered in order to be included in the scale (Büyüköztürk, 2002; Tavşancıl & Keser, 2002).
- Employment expectations of social work students were evaluated by using of median and mod on the basis of the whole scale.
- Independent-samples t test was utilized in order to determine whether the employment expectations of social work students varied according to gender and satisfaction of professional choice or not. One way anova was utilized in order to determine whether the employment expectations of social work students varied according to university or not. As a result of the Anova analysis, LSD Multiple Comparisons Test was used to compare group averages.
- The significance level for all analysis in this research was taken as .05. Higher levels of significances were noted in the relevant tables.

RESULTS

What Are Employment Expectations of the Social Work Students?

Descriptive statistics pertaining to employment expectations of the social work students included in the study are given in Table 1.

Table 1. Employment Expectation Levels of the Social Work Students

Statements on Employment Expectancy	Median	Mod
1. I believe that I can find a job easily after I graduate from the social work department.	4.00	4.00
2. I believe that the education I am receiving in the Social work department is not enough for me to be employed.	4.00	4.00
3. I believe that I will definitely find a job after I graduate from the social work department.	4.00	4.00
4. While I have no doubt about finding a job, I believe that the university that I am graduating makes things difficult.	4.00	4.00
5. While I have no doubt about finding a job, I believe that knowing a foreign language at a high level makes easy to be employed.	4.00	4.00
6. While I have no doubt about finding a job, I believe that effective usage of internet and computer make it easy to be employed.	4.00	4.00
7. While I have no doubt about to find a job, I believe having “social networks” make it easy to be employed.	4.00	4.00
8. I believe that benefiting from newspaper ads are not efficient to find a job in social work field.	3.00	3.00
9. I believe that friend or family advices are not efficient to be employed in social work field.	3.00	4.00
10. I believe that the most efficient way to be employed in the social work field is applying directly to institutions/establishments that employ social workers.	4.00	4.00
11. I believe that applying to İŞKUR is beneficial to find a job in social work field.	3.00	3.00
12. I believe that Private Employment Offices are efficient to find a job in social work field.	3.00	3.00
13. I believe that using online employment websites are beneficial to find a job in social work field.	3.00	3.00
14. I believe that I can find a job with higher salary than market average.	3.00	3.00
15. I believe that I will be employed within one year after my graduation.	4.00	4.00
16. While I have no doubt about finding a job, I believe that a good level of academic competency makes it easy to find a job.	4.00	4.00

Table 2. Results of Independent Sample Test According to Gender

	Levene’s Test For Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
	F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
								Lower	Upper
Equal Variances assumed	.715	.398	3.011	688	.003	1.49073	.49505	.51874	2.46272
Equal variances not assumed			3.004	443.195	.003	1.49073	.49631	.51532	2.46614

Table 3. Results of One-Way Anova According to Age

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	290.503	2	145.252	3.890	.021
Within Groups	25727.559	689	37.340		
Total	26018.062	691			

Table 4. Results of One-Way Anova According to the Attended University

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	623.634	3	207.878	5.6432	.001
Within Groups	253.94	688	36.911		
Total	26018.062	691			

Table 5. Results of Independent Sample Test According To Compatibility With The Profession In Terms Of Personal Characteristics

	Levene’s Test For Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
	F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
								Lower	Upper
Equal Variances assumed	4.173	.041	4.842	690	.000	3.59674	.74285	2.13822	5.05525
Equal variances not assumed			4.197	85.577	.000	3.59674	.85696	1.89303	5.30044

Table 6. Results of Independent Sample Test According to Satisfaction of Preferred Department

	Levene’s Test For Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
	F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
								Lower	Upper
Equal Variances assumed	1.206	.273	6.208	684	.000	4.60611	.74193	3.14938	6.06285
Equal variances not assumed			5.703	86.393	.000	4.60611	.80763	3.00070	6.21153

As it is seen in Table 1, levels of agreement of the social work students' employment statements in EES were high. It can be said that this research finding shows parallelism with research findings obtained in the studies by CanbeyÖzgüler, GökçekKaraca and Karaca (2011) and Demir (2010). Indeed, it is noted that in research; the university students have high rates of agreement on the statements about employment expectancies. In general, there is no difference between the social work students included in the study in terms of levels of agreement with employment expectation statements. According to Table 1, three expectation statements that social work students agree most are as follows:

- "I believe that I can find a job easily after I graduate from the social work department"
- "While I have not doubt about finding a job, I believe that effective usage of internet and computer make it easy to be employed"
- "While I have no doubt about to find a job, I believe having "social networks" make it easy to be employed".

According to Table 1, three expectation expressions that social work students agree least are as follows:

- "I believe that I can find a job with higher salary than market average"
- "I believe that friend or family advices are not efficient to be employed in social work field".
- "I believe that benefiting from newspaper ads are not efficient to find a job in social work field".

It is not surprising, if one considers the matter with the data from the Table 1 that employment expectancy statement the social work department students who are included in this research agreed mostly on the statement: "I believe that I can find a job easily after I graduate from the social work department" and the statement that has been agreed to the least: "I believe that benefiting from newspaper ads are not efficient to find a job in social work field". As all stated by the findings of this research, social work department students choose the social work department with the awareness that social work department will help them to get the profession they desire and the department will help them to become social workers.

As it is known, social work students are employed generally in the public sector and the organizations and institutions within the bodies of Ministry of Family and Social Policies and The Ministry of Health, and, they are employed through interviews after applying to the mentioned ministries with their KPSS (Public Personnel Selection Examination) scores. With this fact taken into consideration, it is no surprise that students placed into service departments think that social networks are very effective to be employed and newspaper ads are very ineffective.

Do employment expectations of social work students vary according to gender?

One aspect of our analysis was whether or not the employment expectations of social work students varied according to gender (N=464, M=53.35, SD=6.09 for female social work students and N=228, M=5.86, SD=6.13 for male social work students). The results of independent-samples t test showed that there was a significant difference between the male and female social

work students' employment expectations. According to the results, the employment expectations of female social work students were significantly higher than the employment expectations of male social work students. These results revealed gender is an important factor affecting employment expectations of social work students.

Do employment expectations of social work students vary according to age?

When creating the age categories for the social service department students, Super's (1963) age categories for occupation selection were taken as basis. According to Super, ages between 14 and 25 is called "Exploratory Stage" and in this age, the individual gets to know his/her interests, skills and values and develops his/her individuality. This stage generally includes the ages between 14 and 18 and the young individual examines occupations while keeping the occupation's level and field in mind, and he/she chooses one among many others. In this stage, the young individual orients towards many occupations fields, but it is not expected of him/her to make a final decision yet.

The age distribution of the students who have been included in the research shows that 44 of them are between 14-18 years old, 633 of them are between 19 and 24 and 15 of them are 25 or older. This result shows that most of the social service department students (91.47%) belong to the age groups that can make more realistic decisions. It was also examined whether or not the employment expectations of social work students varied according to their age.

As it is seen in Table 3, One-Way ANOVA revealed significant difference among the groups. According to results of LSD Multiple Comparisons Test applied to find out which of the groups have the most difference between them, it was noted that the social services students who belong to the 14-18 age group have significantly higher employment expectancy than the 19-24 group. These results revealed that age is an important factor affecting employment expectations of social work students.

Do employment expectations of social work students vary according to the Attended University?

It was also identified that the employment expectations of social work students varied according to their universities. When the attended universities of social work department students who are included in this research are examined, 81 social work students were from Anadolu University Faculty of Health Sciences, 260 social work students were from Hacettepe University Faculty of Economics and Administrative Sciences, 172 social work students were from Selçuk University Faculty of Health Sciences and 179 social work students were from Yalova University Faculty of Economics and Administrative Sciences. As it is seen Table 4, the results of One-Way ANOVA showed that there was significant difference among groups. When LSD Multiple Comparisons Test was applied to determine which of the university student groups have the maximal difference between them, it was noted that Anadolu University, Hacettepe University and Selçuk University students have higher expectancy of employment than the students of the Yalova University. According the data, university is an important factor affecting employment expectations of social work students.

Table 7. Results of Independent Sample Test According to Wishes to Change Department

	Levene's Test For Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
	F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2- tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
								Lower	Upper
Equal Variances assumed	3.145	.0477	-3.557	683	.000	-1.95911	.55075	-3.04047	-.87774
Equal variances not assumed			-3.372	243528	.000	-1.95911	.58107	-3.10367	-.81455

Do employment expectations of social work students vary according to the compatibility with the profession in terms of personal characteristics?

One aspect of our analysis was whether or not the employment expectations of social work students vary according to compatibility with the profession in terms of personal characteristics. When students were categorized according to the distribution of whether the student finds his/her personality fitting to the social service occupation or not, it was noted that 618 of the students find their current department fitting and 74 students do not find social work department fitting. As it is seen in Table 5, the results of independent-samples t test show that the difference between students who find social work department compatible to their personality and the students who don't find social work department not compatible to their personality is meaningful. According to results, the employment expectancy of the students who find social work department compatible to their personality are higher than the students who do not find social work department compatible to their personality. These results show that the department that the students currently study is an important factor that affects the student's expectancy of employment.

Do employment expectations of social work students vary according to satisfaction of professional choices that students prefer?

One aspect of our analysis was whether or not the employment expectations of social work students vary according to satisfaction of professional choices that students prefer within the attended department. When the distribution to the satisfactions of attended department of social work students are examined; 616 of students are satisfied with the preferred department that they attend and 76 of them are not satisfied with the preferred department. It was noted that 616 of the students are satisfied with their current selected department, and 76 of the students are not satisfied with their current selected department. As it is seen in Table 6, the results of independent-samples t test showed that there was no significant difference between the students who are satisfied with their selection of current department and the students who are not satisfied with their selection of current department according to the results, satisfaction with preferred department that students attend is not an important factor affecting employment expectations of social work students.

Do employment expectations of social work students vary according to satisfaction with wishes to change the attended department?

One aspect of our analysis was whether or not the employment expectations of social work students varied according to the

wishes to change the attended department. When the distribution of wishes to change the attended department were examined; 165 of social work students are evaluated as "willing to change their current department", 527 of them are "not willing to change their current department". It was noted that 165 students are willing to change their current department while 527 of the students are not willing to change their current department. The results of independent-samples t test showed that there was no significant difference between employment expectations of the students who are willing to change the attended department and the students who are not willing to change the attended department. According to the results, wish to change the attended department is not an important factor affecting employment expectations of social work students.

Conclusion and Discussion

According to findings and interpretations of the research, which checks the social work department student's employment expectancies and examines their employment expectancies according to some variables by using Employment Expectancy, following results have been categorized:

- It is noted that the social work department students have a very high rate of agreement to the employment expectancy statements, and, among these statements, the students agree with the "choosing the desired occupation" statement relatively higher while they agree with the "finding a job" statement relatively lower.
- According to findings of the research, the student's expectancy of employment shows a meaningful difference between their satisfactions of department choices. Thus students who are satisfied with their choices have high agreement rates for the employment expectancy statements than those who are not satisfied with their choices. Up to these results, higher employment expectancy means higher levels of satisfaction with the occupation choices.
- Costly, there have been increases in demand for social work experts/ social workers in our country due to new employment strategies and social policies made according to European Union acquis, and, despite the fact that, the employment expectancy of the social work department students are still not higher than the students who study in different fields such as engineering, economics and education. This situation presents the fact that some strategic must be developed increase the employment expectancies of the social work department students.

The results gathered within the scope of this research shows that the scale is valid and reliable for the data gathered from the studied group. The application of this scale on groups outside the scope of this research, repeating the validity and

reliability analyses and the comparison of these analyses is very important in the context of determining the validity of the factor structure. Therefore, this research must be repeated by applying the Expectancy of Employment Scale (EES) to social work students who are in different universities and faculties, and the results of these researches must be compared to the results of this research.

This research's aim was to determine the factors that affect the employment expectancies of the social work department students and proving to be a source for data and a factor of guidance for:

- The State's education policies,
- The State's social policies,
- The State's employment policies,
- Universities' demands for opening new programs and their relationship with their alumni.

The research is also expected to be a great addition to national and international literature and to researches who work on choice of profession and employment expectancy fields.

Acknowledgement

"This study was supported by Anadolu University Scientific Research Projects Commission under the grant no: 1306S259".

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