UNIVERSITY QUALITY AS A PREDICTOR OF PERCEIVED FUTURE EMPLOYABILITY OF SENIOR UNIVERSITY STUDENTS

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ABSTRACT

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Today, the increase number of universities and leads to transformation in higher education, so it aroused questions regarding graduate employability and university quality. In this study, the goal is to examine the relationship among senior students' perceptions of quality at university and their future employability. University quality and future employability responses with senior students' GPA, work experience, gender, and socioeconomic status are analyzed. This study has been conducted via correlational model, and sample of the study with 628 senior students from Canakkale, Kocaeli, and Balıkesir Universities. Data collection of the study has been carried out by using Turkish adaptations of Higher Education Performance Scale, Perceived Future Employability Scale, and demographic information questionnaire. The result of the study indicates that perceived university quality predicts students' future employability perceptions. In addition, academic achievement, gender, SES, and work experience status of students has predicted both their employability and quality perceptions. In conclusion, senior students' university quality and future employability responses prove that there is a positive relationship among them. Therefore, higher education leaders should consider the relationship between higher education quality and employability of students, and they should work toward more quality in education for increasing graduate employability.

Keywords: graduate employability, university quality, Turkish higher education, higher education policy, university students' perception.

ÖZ

ÜNİVERSİTE SON SINIF ÖĞRENCİLERİNİN ALGILANAN GELECEK İSTİHDAM EDİLEBİLİRLİĞİNİN YORDAYICISI OLARAK ÜNİVERSİTE KALİTESİ

KAYLAN, Buse
Yüksek Lisans, Eğitim Bilimleri, Eğitim Yönetimi ve Planlaması Bölümü
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Günümüzde üniversite sayısının artması ve üniversite diplomasına olan talebin artması, yükseköğretimde dönüşüme yol açarak, mezun istihdam edilebilirliği ve üniversite kalitesi konusunda soru işaretleri uyandırmıştır. Bu çalışma, son sınıf öğrencilerinin üniversite kalitesi algıları ile gelecekteki istihdam edilebilirlikleri arasındaki ilişkiyi incelemeyi amaçlamıştır. Üniversite kalitesi ve gelecekteki istihdam edilebilirlik tepkileri söz konusu öğrencilerin genel not ortalaması, iş deneyimi, cinsiyeti ve sosyoekonomik durumu ile analiz edilmiştir. İlişkisel modele göre yürütülen bu çalışmanın örneklemini Çanakkale, Kocaeli ve Balıkesir Üniversitelerinden 628 son sınıf öğrencisi oluşturmuştur. Araştırmanın verileri, Yükseköğretim Performans Ölçeği ve Algılanan Gelecek İstihdam Edilebilirlik Ölçeği'nin Türkçe uyarlamaları, ve demografik bilgi anketi kullanılarak gerçekleştirilmiştir. Araştırmanın sonuçları, algılanan üniversite kalitesinin öğrencilerin gelecekteki istihdam edilebilirlik algılarını yordadığını göstermiştir. Buna ek olarak, öğrencilerin akademik başarıları, cinsiyetleri, sosyoekonomik durumları ve iş deneyimi durumları hem istihdam edilebilirlik hem de kalite algılarını yordamaktadır. Sonuç olarak, son sınıf öğrencilerinin üniversite kalitesi ve gelecekteki istihdam edilebilirlik yanıtları, aralarında pozitif bir ilişki olduğunu göstermiştir. Böylece yükseköğretim liderlerinin kalite ve mezun istihdam edilebilirliği ilişkisini göz önünde bulundurarak, eğitimde kalite konusu üzerinde daha fazla çalışmaları mezun istihdam edilebilirliğini artırma konusunda önemli olacaktır.

Anahtar kelimeler: mezun istihdam edilebilirliği, üniversite kalitesi, Türkiye yükseköğretimi, yükseköğretim politikası, üniversite öğrencilerinin algıları.

To my dear grandparents Sevim and Hasan who always love and trust me,

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To my dear uncle Gökhan who lives our hearts, rest in peace,

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AMOS	Analysis of Moments Structures
CFA	Confirmatory Factor Analysis
CFI	Comparative Fit Index
CI	Confidence Interval
COVID-19	Coronavirus Disease 2019
HEdPERF	Higher Education Performance Scale
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
SD	Standard Deviation
SPSS	Statistical Package for the Social Sciences
SRMR	Standardized Root Mean Square Residual
PFES	Perceived Future Employability Scale
THEC	Turkish Higher Education Council
THEQC	Turkish Higher Education Quality Council
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
VIF	Variance Inflation Factor

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

In this chapter, background of the study, statement of the problem, purpose of the study, significance of the study, research question and hypothesis of the study, and definition of the terms are clarified.

1.1 Background of the Study

After World War II, in 1950s, the world was in great transformation. When it was comparing with the previous centuries; in this era, there have happened to rapid transformation in the areas of technology, industry, economy, and politics. Rising of technological developments in defense industry in World War II proceeded in the following years, but some countries turned this technology into other fields, such as telecommunication, informatics, production, and finance (Ryan, 2021). In this context, spreading of the globalization caused a new trend in international economic affairs, rather than national economy, around the world (Green, 2006). With the changing trends in economy and industry, different needs for workforce have occurred because of the shift to knowledge-based economy and increasing technology integration into almost all sectors (Svarc & Dabic, 2017). Also, governments concentrated on research and development studies for keeping up with this accelerated transformation and global economy trend around the world (Czarl & Belovecz, 2007).

Within this scope, higher education field has also been closely influenced by evolving economic and industrial trends. With strengthening relationship between university and industry, universities are considered as remarkable with their economic contributions to

the community more than before (Demain, 2001). From the higher education perspective, this era led to pressure on universities in terms of contributing to the society, and in addition to their teaching and research functions, 'Third Mission' has been apparent (Compagnucci & Spigarelli, 2020). Third mission mainly involves contributing to the society with transferring knowledge and technology (Agasisti et al., 2019). In 1963, the Robbins Report, the report of the Committee on Higher Education in the United Kingdom, stated purposes of the higher education. In this report, importance of university education in terms of its crucial role on general division of labor had been underlined (The Robbins Report, 1963). Similarly, college system became widespread in the USA, in 1950s because of growing relationship between university and industry, so vocational training and future demands of human power found place in the curricula. In addition to universities' qualified human capital and their influence on the workforce, research functions have also been another bridge between university and society. With dominancy of knowledge-based market economy and developing technology, research studies in STEM area and vocational training of the university have been focal points (Bear & Skorton, 2018). Conducting academic research may cause to economic development by leading to entrepreneurship opportunities, and this kind of relationships can be defined as mutualist in terms of its financial feedback of the university and socioeconomic contribution to the society. In addition to traditional importance of universities as being research and teaching centers, their community engagement and mutualist relationship with society evolved to marketization of the university.

Besides universities' contributions to the community, at the individual level, they provide people with social and economic welfare as well (Uysal & Aydemir, 2016). University graduation promotes people's social mobility and contributes to them to have a greater level of income (Mok, 2015; Uysal & Aydemir, 2016) For that reason, the demand of university education has getting bigger, and there has been expansion in higher education institutions and university enrollment rates after 1990s. According to UNESCO Institute for Statistics (2021), tertiary education enrollment rate was 13.62% in 1990 while it reaches 40.24% in 2020 around the world. Rapid growth in university population in those years aroused questions about massification of the universities. According to Altbach (2012), massification in higher education causes lowering the standards because students cannot access to best quality, so there is more diversified table

in the higher education system. Also, massification in higher education creates problems such as funding, organization, and governance (Trow, 2000). Therefore, quality of university education has been discussed more loudly than before. For the European countries, Bologna Declaration has been the first formal step for quality assurance system in higher education. Bologna Declaration mainly aims at ensuring high and equal standards for European universities and increasing their competitiveness around the world, and it was signed by 29 European countries on June 19th, 1999 (EHEA, 2022). Following years, Bologna Process has a growing body, and today, it has reached to 47 members. Turkey is the full member of the Bologna Process since 2001. Although Bologna membership and collaboration of Turkey has been easier than many other countries, mainly two issues need to be highlighted, which were lifelong learning and quality assurance (Tekeli, 2003). Due to fulfilling requirements about Bologna Process, Turkish Higher Education Council (THEC) and university committees worked together. However, THEC did not prepare any strategic planning about existing higher education system until 2005. In 2005, the report, which was presented to the President, rectors, and THEC members, indicated the major problems in the higher education system. These problems were summarized such as quality concerns in higher education, lack of faculty members, and shortcoming in university numbers for meeting demand (Uysal & Aydemir, 2016). Among these issues, meeting university demand has been one of the most significant issues people studied on. Although university members and THEC have great concerns on quality and substructural development for this rapid growth in university numbers, universities started to spread over Turkey in a short time. While 76 universities continued to provide higher education in 2002, this number reached to 207 in 2021 (THEC, 2021). Following that, graduate size has also increased in 30 years. Although growing of the university population is a remarkable improvement in terms of their accessibility and research and development, accessing to similar standards gets harder for university students. Students from different universities may not have equal opportunities for accessing to educational sources during their education periods. However, providing qualified education and supplying well-equipped education setting should be prerequisite for the quality of university. Correspondingly, prestige, preferability and funding resources of universities are also parallel to the quality phenomenon. In Turkey, on the other hand, the quality range among universities causes inequality in the learning outcomes.

Besides, the quality concerns in higher education and huge body of university graduates create another question mark in terms of capability of handling this qualified human power. Although there is a positive trend between education and youth employment, today, with growing population of university graduates, graduate employment is one of the issues to be emphasized for almost all countries. In the USA, when tertiary education graduate unemployment rate had been 1.7% in 2000, it reached 4.8% in 2020 (Statista, 2022). In Europe, the unemployment of tertiary education graduates has been reported as being 15.1% in 2021 (Eurostat, 2022). Unfortunately, the table is getting worse while looking at Turkey's data; the unemployment rate rises with involving university graduates. Each year after 2019, there have been more than 1 million people graduating from universities in Turkey (TUIK, 2020). According to the ISKUR data (2020), graduate unemployment in Turkey doubled since 2016 to 2021. In 2016, there were 489.000 registered unemployed university graduates when it comes 2021, this number exceeds to one million (ISKUR, 2020). According to Bora (2015), until 1990s in Turkey, university degree meant employment for graduates; but in today's Turkey, massification of universities led to losing validity of this description. Especially, the low and middle-class families' children who get university degree and become white collar employee have particular importance in this context (Bora & Erdogan, 2015). However, rapid increase in graduate population from different universities creates inequality among graduates. While some university graduates may be employed in a short time, some others may face challenges in the employment process, and they have to look for a job about their profession for a long time, or they might start to work on temporal jobs (Erdogan, 2021). Although bachelor's degree diploma still provides an advantage for employment than getting high school diploma, unemployment rate among university graduates has peaked especially with COVID-19 pandemic. Besides, employment policies and external factors like job fields, and employment rates, university education plays a significant role for employability of graduates. However, there are two points to be emphasized here; firstly, the issue of employment is liability of governments, and second one is that employability is not an exact way of the employment. Knight and Yorke (2006) defined employability as individual's higher chances to be employed by having competencies in 'generic' and 'core' skills. Universities, as being academic and intellectual institutions, provide these competencies for the students (Harvey & Green, 2001), and they already provide specification in vocational areas, so employability outcomes have been located into the

quality standards of universities. Therefore, the students' encouragement for acquiring employability qualifications in their university education is discussed in this study. At that point, development of the quality of universities and its guidance from students' schools to their work areas can be defined as the crucial ways of encouraging employability.

To sum up, the issue of graduate employability in Turkey is getting worse year by year. Although the number of universities meets demand of getting a diploma, students may experience opportunity disparity throughout their university period and after graduation years. Quality differences matter has been increasing among universities. Furthermore, there is a rising trend among university graduates, so many graduates, who think that their diploma is not enough for their employability, tend to attend certificate courses, and some other vocational trainings (Aygul, 2018). In this point of view, university students' perceptions on their university education quality and their employability efficacies are questioned. Therefore, observing expected future employability of senior university students contributes to the field in terms of understanding its relationship with university quality and other demographic values.

1.2. Statement of the Problem

Unemployment of graduates is a multidimensional problem, and it contains many aspects and factors which have impact on employment such as personal factors, institutional factors, market situations, existing policies, and economic fluctuations, etc. (Akerlof, et al., 1986; Blanchflower, et al.1994; Lindbeck, et al., 1988). With time and/or contextual differences, some of these aspects may have more impact on people's employability and their employment status. For that reason, resolving the main reason under the graduate unemployment is crucial for the problem statement of the study.

Last 15 years, university graduate unemployment rate rises tenfold in Turkey, and it reaches to 25.6 percentage (ISKUR, 2019). Existing studies showed that graduate employment policies, skills mismatch, compensation policies, massification in higher education, increasing number of university graduates, low level contribution of university for supporting employability among graduates, and passive employment policies are at

the front row about graduate unemployment issue in Turkey (Adiguzel, 2021; Apaydin, 2018; Asci, 2019; Durak & Kaya, 2014; Ergun, 2021; Gur, 2016; Ozoglu, 2016; Suna, 2020). In addition to this, growing body of university graduates in each year faced with similar obstacles to be employed. While problems about graduate unemployment still existed, the number of graduates also grows apace in each year. Also, there is imbalance between increasing number of graduates and level of employment related to study fields of these graduates, so being employed in their occupation gets harder and harder for them. In addition to their occupational disadvantages, graduates encounter inequality of opportunities during their university years. Some university students get a chance for practicing their theoretical knowledge with extensive sources, and similarly, they can access to academic support easier than their peers. On the other hand, some others struggle for meeting their sheltering needs because of deficiency in university's dormitories. In these circumstances, academic attainment of students and their employability competencies are limited correspondingly (Azar, 2010; Bicer, 2018).

Definition of 'qualified' for the labor market is also transforming in time (Dogur & Mecik, 2021). After all, employers' expectations of the related jobs and job descriptions are reshaped. This transformation explains why education and employment relationship does not only assure social security for labor power, but it also covers raising individuals as being 'employable' despite of the changing needs of society and the market (Kosar, 2015). At that point, the collaboration of university, industry and government plays crucial role for both individuals and the market (Kurt & Yavuz, 2013). Especially in the last decade, universities' interactional positions with both industry and government have been strengthened in Turkey. Research and development studies, supporting to start-ups, TUBITAK projects, internship opportunities, and cooperation with the companies exemplify this interaction (Temel, 2019). These kinds of interactions can be defined as mutual relationships for both universities and the industry. In that case, the university provides employment opportunities to the students, and it can utilize technologic substructures of the industry, and so, the industry can naturally profit the research and development studies of the university.

Universities' educational and pedagogical practices and their effectiveness on students' self-development are significant for encouraging their employability. In addition to that,

Harvey (2001) indicated that employability conception shifted from individual acquisitions to the institutional achievement. Indeed, university education can be described as junction point of individual and institutional sides of employability. Higher education promotes individual competencies by facilitating to get lifelong learning, multi-tasking thinking skills, social skills, and subject knowledge, etc. In fact, it also brings graduate identity as a result of its institutional identity or reputation (Harvey, 2001).

Qualified university education and its impact on student development have been pushing factors on individual's choices. As a result of that, escalating competition in higher education field led to focus on graduate employment as a manner of institutional quality of universities (Blackmore, 2016). Smith (2018) stated that employability is a strategic direction for the competition in higher education. Since, employability outcomes take advantage to universities for income generation, knowledge exchange, status, reputation, and responsive provision (Blackmore et al. 2016). Therefore, enhancing employability properties in both individual and institutional levels has been vital for progress of university quality and prestige. In addition to that, developing employability competencies of students is significant for investigating graduate unemployment problem. University students as being future graduates are subject of the graduate employability phenomenon, and they constitute the huge part of the university community. Hence, ensuring an understanding about relationship between students' university quality and future employability perceptions is problematized in this study frame.

1.3 Purpose of the Study

The aim of this study is to examine the university quality perceptions of senior students as a predictor of their graduate employability perceptions. Additionally, perceptions of senior students about their university education quality and its influence on their future employability perceptions are discussed. Another purpose of the study is investigating the demographic characteristics of the students with their employability and quality perceptions.

Furthermore, the graduate employability of students is analyzed with some demographic variables of the participants. Demographic variables of the sample are specified as GPA,

gender, socioeconomic status, and work experience. In that case, importance of university quality is conceptualized from employability framework of university students.

1.4 Significance of the Study

Morley (2010) indicated that government, academy, and industry boundaries have been loosening and they are reformulated day by day, so the purpose of higher education tends to be defined as corporate interests. In that case, gaining employability competencies by university students, and getting advantageous position in labor market compared to other university graduates are significant performance indicators for academic competition among universities. While strengthening their position in the industry and enhancing their preferability among their future rivals, university services are improved for meeting needs of their members and qualifying their future graduates. However, massification in higher education causes to lower the standards in universities as a result of the limited funding and inequality in opportunities. Accordingly, raising competitive graduates for the labor market is getting difficult, so graduate employability issue is one of the obvious obstacles for quality in higher education.

From the university students' perspective, there is a rising stress about after graduation process. Existing studies showed that university students and graduates complain about graduate employment issue, and they tend to think that 'did I get university diploma in vain?', and 'university education had a big financial difficulty for my family, and I cannot get back of this load' (Bora & Erdogan, 2015; Erdogan, 2021). In addition to that, graduates continue to their get a-job journey while studying for exams, getting certificates and additional courses at the same time. This long process is corrosive, and it creates disappointment, hopelessness, and anger on young generation (Kicir, 2017). According to Korkmazer (2020), students' anxiety on their academic life starts from primary school to their university education, and in their last year in the university, this anxiety peaks with unemployment fear. Senior students, therefore, more tend to question their employability, and search for job opportunities before their graduation (Kicir, 2017). Unfortunately, this pessimist picture about graduate employability has not been examined by the university quality frame. Therefore, this study is pioneering in the higher education literature in

terms of both its findings and research design approach about university quality and graduate employability perceptions.

This research contributes to the literature for investigating relationship between perceived university quality and perceived employability of university students from three different cities in Turkey. Findings of the study shed lights on perceived graduate employability among senior university students and its relationship with university quality pattern, so it provides a framework about graduate employability studies in Turkey. In that way, significance of developing internal and external quality assurance mechanisms and focusing on graduate employability are commonly conceptualized. Conceptualizing students' perceptions
about their employability and university education is significant for enhancing quality culture in universities and recruiting graduate employability issue, because students are subjects of the issue as dealing with inequalities in opportunities and unemployment after the graduation. Therefore, reflecting their perceptions with the related data is vital for making their voice heard, and awaking policy makers, and other university members.

1.5 Research Question and Hypothesis

This study has conducted on a research question and hypothesizes related to the research question. According to that, main research question of the study is 'How well does perceived university quality predict perceived university employability after controlling the demographic characteristics of the senior students?' Also, sub research question and hypothesis of the study are mentioned at the below.

Sub Research Question: Is there any significant relationship between the perceived quality of university, and perceived future employability among senior university students?
Hypothesis: There is a significant relationship between perceived future employability of senior university students and perceived quality of university.

1.6 Definitions of Graduate Employability and Quality in Higher Education

Perceived employability: the individual's perception of his or her possibilities of obtaining and maintaining employment (Vanhercke et al., 2014). Operationally, employability would be measured by Perceived Future Employability Scale (PFES).

Perceived quality: consumers' judgment about an entity's services containing overall excellence or superiority (Snoj et al., 2004). Operationally, university quality would be measured by Higher Education Performance Scale (HEdPERF).

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

In this chapter, the literature subjects about higher education in Turkey, graduate employability, university quality, and theoretical framework of the study are stated.

2.1 Higher Education in Turkey

In Turkey, higher education system has had long history of nearly 250 years since the establishment of Darülfünun; so it has contained many milestones before and after the establishment of the Republic, such as educational organizations and reforms in Tanzimat era, making the fields of engineering, health, and law under university education, and 1933 university reform (Tekeli, 2010). In the current higher education system, there are especially two crucial points which are close to each other. First one is that the policy of increasing number of universities in Anatolia, and second one is Turkey's participation in the Bologna Process. University quality and employability terms in higher education system of Turkey have started to be discussed formally since that time like some other European countries. In addition to that, examining of these two points is essential for conceptualizing quality in university education and graduate employability.

Firstly, higher education system in Turkey has been in a transformation with the motto of 'one university in every city'. In 2000s, this policy continued to be carried out by establishing public universities in addition to private ones (Yalcintas & Akkaya, 2019). Basically, it led every town to have a university, so it has promoted academic, cultural, and economic reconstruction. Despite this policy weren't mentioned in the strategic planning or formal reports, it has been systematically conducted with changing governments in years. It also causes that university population has been increasing in different cities in Anatolia day by day. Since the middle of 2000s, the growth in

university numbers led to the rise in the number of departments and their capacities, and university graduation in Turkey. ‘One university in every city’ policy, in terms of its outcomes, intersects with various fields such as economy, urbanization, employment, and cultural development. However, it has been criticized that it has not been approached from educational perspective adequately (Bora, 2015; Gul & Gul, 2014; Tekeli, 2010; Uysal & Aydemir, 2016; Yalcintas & Akkaya, 2019). The rise in the number of higher education institutions and graduates also means increase in the number of university students, and need for academic staff. When it comes to 2020s, the massification of the system became more apparent than before with growing bodies of graduated students and inadequate number of academic members. Therefore, having access to similar educational standards for university students is getting harder. Similarly, some university programs have been fulfilled while some other programs have limited capacities for students and labor market’s demand. This disequilibrium among university choices causes to aggregation among graduate students from specific study fields and universities. In that case, gap between educational standards of the universities and employability of graduate students gets bigger.

Secondly, Turkey’s participation in the Bologna Process in 2002 has been a significant step for processing the quality in Turkey’s higher education. Bologna Process is a European reform which aimed to establish European Higher Education Area (EHEA) by facilitating students and staff mobility, so one of its purposes is to strengthen European universities in terms of their high standards and attractiveness (European Commission, 2022). Furthermore, the Bologna Declaration can be described as the first written agreement among European countries which highlighted employability of university students. Additionally, employability was the key issue of this declaration (Sin & Neave, 2016). After Bologna Process participation, systematic alterations of the higher education system and formal steps about quality in universities has begun as well. Universities have been supported to establish their inner quality assurance mechanisms, and a unit was constituted in the Turkish Higher Education Council (THEC) as an external quality mechanism. After that, Turkish Higher Education Quality Council (THEQC) was established as an autonomous structure for quality assurance in 2015. By this way, strategic planning about external quality assurance of universities have been conducted by THEQC. In this process, Turkey’s Higher Education System has been liable to the key

objectives of Bologna Process within the context of accommodation of European field of Higher Education to support the university development.

In 2015, Bologna Process implementation report stated six main key objectives. These goals were (1) regulations in degree systems, (2) enhancing internal and external quality assurance systems, (3) supporting social dimension, (4) lifelong learning, (5) effective outcomes and employability, (6) internalization and mobility (Bologna Process, 2015). Congruently to the previous reports about Bologna Process Implementation, titles of quality assurance, degree systems, employability, student mobility and internalization, and lifelong learning have had enough attention (Bologna Process, 2005; 2007; 2009; 2012). Turkey, as a member, shaped its higher education system around these objectives in addition to the local needs (Uysal & Aydemir, 2016).

2000s, for Turkey's Higher Education, can be defined as the midpoint for its quick growth and implementation of reforms about education quality. Moreover, when examining today's most common and problematic sides of the higher education system, roots of them may have stemmed from those years. In the years of 2000s, there was an increasing number of universities around Turkey, while the quality system was trying to improve in higher education system. While doing that, consistency in the system was one of the key objectives. Statistical data of the higher education in those years indicated that the number of universities was 76 in 2002. Today, it reaches to 207 (THEC, 2021). By this huge increase in 2000s, the number of university students corresponded to 1.8 million (Koksal & Yurtseven, 2018), meanwhile in 2020, this number reached to 8.3 million (THEC, 2021). When comparing this number to whole Turkey population, it estimates that approximately each 10 out of 100 people were registered in a program in the universities. As a result of this progress, university graduate numbers have reached to 10 million with increasing from 5.5 percentage to 13.9 percentage in 11 years (TUIK, 2021). TUIK (2019) data showed that graduate unemployment has been doubled in the last three years, and there are almost one million graduates unemployed. In 2005, unemployment rate among university graduates was 10.6 percentage, while looking 2020 data, graduate unemployment rate reached to 12.6 percentage.

In the recent years, the rapid growth in higher education aroused questions about the quality of university education and graduate employability in Turkey. Even so, it would

not be right to say that graduate employment is a responsibility of universities. Unvan (2010) indicated that higher education plays significant role for students' gaining lifelong learning abilities and developing them for effective implementation to their work life when they are employed. Meanwhile, removing obstacles about graduate employment is a governmental responsibility. Furthermore, universities should provide an equal chance for everyone who meets the conditions and wants to get university education; so restricting capacities and trying to decrease graduate numbers are not the solution of enhancing graduate employability (Unvan, 2010). It is understood that graduates' employment situation of the universities is not representative case of the employability of their students because getting employed and ability to achieve related job tasks when got employed are different terms. Getting employed of graduated students is responsibility of the government while the employability is the responsibility of the universities. For that reason, university education quality is crucial for enhancing students' lifelong learning skills and supporting their employability potential. Therefore, the main issue about the graduate employability is that students' access to similar higher educational standards from different universities; so, massification in higher education is one of the obstacles of this situation. From another perspective, undoubtedly, increasing number of university and university graduates contribute to intellectual and economic development of Turkey and university towns.

Due to quick growth, need for infrastructural equipment in universities, in terms of both academic human capital, instructional and social services of the university, also increased rapidly. Meeting these needs created an unfair competition among universities which are old-new and private-public because of inequality problems in sourcing. Therefore, inequality gap between universities have been more obvious than before with increasing number of universities and limited sourcing. Due to some universities' advantageous positions in terms of their reputation, academic staff, curriculum, equipment, industry relations, and services, quality and effectiveness issue has started to be discussed. According to URAP (2021) Academic Performance Report, Hacettepe University, Middle East Technical University (METU), Istanbul Technical University, Istanbul University, and Koc University have been in the top ten. Similarly, in 2022, World University Rankings of QS indicated its annual report that Koc, Sabanci, METU, Bilkent and Bogazici University have been assessed as high-performance universities in Turkey.

Although academic performance assessment or rankings of universities may not be absolute or fair way to evaluate university's quality, they provide statistical data about university outputs or its performance in the light of the same assessment criteria. Therefore, same university names became more prominent than others in existent performance criteria. Although this table is similar with many other worldwide ranking tables in terms of being same universities at the first rows, the primary concern specific to Turkey context is the huge gap between first and last rows of the table. As mentioned above, the aim of enhancing quality in universities is that providing university students access to higher and equal educational standards in their universities, so supporting their intellectual facilities, lifelong learning, and employability capabilities.

In conclusion, the quality of the university plays significant role for graduate employability among students, and their school-to-work transition. As mentioned, quantitatively growth in universities creates inequality among students in terms of accessing to equal standards and leads to higher number of advantaged and disadvantaged university graduates. Thus, the strength of academic, social, and career services which are obtained by university and well-founded university-industry connection make differences among students in terms of their employability in the labor market. Graduate employability of university graduates is one of the crucial issues deepening in years both in Turkey and global perspective. At that point, understanding quality of university education and employability relationship from students' perspective would be helpful for enhancing university development and constituting of higher and equal standards among universities.

2.2 Graduate Employability

Employability term is difficult to define simply in the literature. With changing trends in economy, education and labor market, employability definition has involved different dynamics in it. The prominent ones of these definitions focus on individuals' skills, capabilities, characteristics, and achievements. Knight and Yorke (2003) defined employability as "set of achievements, understandings and personal attributes that make individuals more likely to gain employment and be successful in their chosen occupations". Another approach to employability indicated that "employability is the capability to move self-sufficiently within the labor market to realize potential through

sustainable employment." (Hillage & Pollard, 1998). According to Brown (2003), employability is defined as "the relative chances of finding and maintaining different kinds of employment.". At that point, it should be indicated that employability and employment are not the same phenomenon in terms of their meanings. Employment, on the other hand, is defined as "the fact of someone being paid to work for a company or organization." (Cambridge, 2022). Although individuals can have employability facilities, they may not get a job, so employability is not a direct way of the employment because there are many other factors influencing employment of the individuals like policies, job choices, job security, labor market, etc. Therefore, employability aims at rising possibility to be employed.

Historically, employability phenomenon has been studied since the beginning of the 20th century, but it has been addressed as composed of knowledge and abilities of individuals for being able to get a job during economic turmoil era around the world at the end of the 1970s (Guilbert et al., 2016). Then, gradually, job diversification and growing needs of expert employees for the market led to focus on qualifications which made people to be employable. It is surely beyond doubt that being employable does not contain only expertise in occupational field, it also comprises self and career management qualifications. For that reason, with the employability trends in the market, higher education institutions, which raise specialist people in various occupational field, has shifted their focus on career education and 'good learning' besides their curricular activities (Knight & Yorke, 2003). Harvey (2001) indicated that the higher education institution provides employability-development opportunities which enable the graduates to develop their `employability' for the job opportunities. However, he also added that there are other factors which have impact on recruitment procedures of graduates such as individuals' previous experience, extracurricular activities, their career intentions and networks, and the quality and availability of the employability experience, etc. Although higher education institutions cannot control overall process as governmental policies, labor-market, and employment rate, etc. about employability outcomes, they can provide supportive steps for promoting graduates' employability. According to Teichler (2000), higher education provides with individual's employment opportunities. Enhancing lifelong learning, higher order thinking skills, and vocational training have been associated with employability facilities of universities (Heijden & Heijden, 2006).

Moreover, existing studies showed that developed curriculum -focuses to improve transferable and generic skills of students-, career services, work experience opportunities, extra-curricular activities, and enhancing project-based learning are described as some of the elements for promoting graduate employability of students in the university frame (Bennet, 1999; Knight & Yorke, 2002; Rae, 2007; Dacre Pool & Sewell, 2007).

Graduate employability is defined as a set of achievements, understandings and personal attributes that make graduate more likely to gain the job (Yorke, 2003). Similarly, Hillage and Pollard (1998) described graduate employability as knowledge, skills and attributes that graduates are expected to be able to demonstrate they have acquired in higher education. In the higher education level, set of achievements or attributes among graduates mainly contains reflective thinking, scholarship, moral citizenship, and lifelong learning (Steur, Jansen & Hofman, 2012). In addition to that, they are related with higher order thinking skills in Bloom's taxonomy (Anderson, Krathwohl & Bloom, 2001). According to Yorke (2003), existing studies about employability have contained absolute and relative dimensions; and absolute dimension refers to characteristics of individuals while relative ones are related to labor market. Similarly, graduate employability approaches have been related with various dynamics in the literature such as education of the individual, institutional factors, labor market, self-management, career planning, etc. In addition to that, there is a theoretical uncertainty about the dimensions which enhance graduate employability, and the literature refers these attributes as 'core', 'common', 'transferable', 'key', and 'generic' skills (Yorke, 2003). These terms and their contents have been varied in accordance with particular approach, so they have been discussed within their concepts in the following parts.

As mentioned, employability concept in higher education comes from 20th century, and career development concepts had been more popular in universities than previous times. Therefore, Law and Watts's (1977) DOTS Model has been the main theoretical approach about career planning development in higher education, and it can be assumed as the beginning point of graduate employability approaches. This model indicated that career services of higher education institutions should be designed to support students' Decision learning, Opportunity awareness, Transition learning, and Self-awareness as four stages

(Law & Watts, 1977). The DOTS Model has still been used for career services of many universities because it provides clear understanding and short-cuts about career planning of students. Even if it is a popular model for development of career services of universities, it did not directly refer to graduate employability phenomenon because it had been built on student and university interaction rather than containing external or individual factors.

Moreover, Hillage and Pollard (1998) indicated four elements to graduate employability. First one of these elements is 'employability assets', and it contains individuals' knowledge and skills. Another one is 'deployment' which is related to career planning and management skills. Third element is 'presentation', and that represents how people show their attributes for getting the job. The last one is 'personal and external factors' as labor market situation and current opportunities for getting a job (Hillage & Pollard, 1998). This approach consists of different dynamics and their relations with each other and employability of individuals; and it brings to contextual factors into employability approach besides its related variables.

Graduate employability in higher education frame is discussed with five elements in Bennett's (1999) course provision model. These five elements are disciplinary content knowledge, disciplinary skills, workplace awareness, workplace experience, and generic skills. All these elements are related with each other directly and indirectly, and generic skills is located as the core part of the other four elements, and it has been related with others directly. Generic skills represent transferable skills from any discipline to different contexts (Bennet, 1999) such as time management, adaptability, planning communication, etc. Therefore, generic skills have been the key part of the model because Bennett (1999) indicated that study fields of students have been differed in terms of their disciplinary context, and some fields may have generic skills as their core skills such as using communication skills in drama. In addition to generic skills, disciplinary content knowledge and disciplinary skills may be defined as acquired elements for school to work transition and facilitators for other two elements as workplace awareness and workplace experience. Workplace awareness and experience are defined as employability elements from the market perspective, and they contain both disciplinary knowledge, psychological and logical qualifications of individuals for sustainability of workplace.

Knight and Yorke's (2003) USEM Model of employability has been one of the most well-known approaches to graduate employability. The USEM Model comprises four broad and interrelated concepts about employability (Yorke & Knight, 2003). The USEM represents these four concepts' first letters, and these are Understanding, Skills, Efficacy beliefs, and Meta-cognition. According to this model, 'understanding' is defined as knowledge, and it has been represented as key outcome of higher education by Yorke and Knight (2003). 'Skills' are kind of adaptability of individuals to different settings, and their achievements. As understood that, 'understanding' and 'skills' are significant components of graduate employability, but 'efficacy beliefs' and personal qualities are other determinant factors in this approach. Even individuals have higher level of understanding and skills of getting employed, their personal circumstances have also an impact on their employability such as their psychological situation. Last one is 'metacognition' of the students about employability. Meta-cognition is defined as "awareness or analysis of one's own learning or thinking processes" (Merriam-Webster, 2022), so it is assumed that students' awareness about their potential for being able to get a job creates their metacognition on employability. Meta-cognition is discussed as crucial concept of this model because it also represents willingness to lifelong learning in students' professional life (Yorke & Knight, 2003).

Another model about graduate employability is 'key to employability model' (Dacre Pool & Sewell, 2007). This model contains five main components about employability such as career development learning, experience, degree subject knowledge, generic skills, and emotional intelligence. Pool and Sewell (2007) indicated that students' reflection of these five components result in their higher levels of self-efficacy, self-esteem, and self-confidence, so their employability. In this model, degree subject knowledge is defined as core component. It contains students' specification in a related field and gaining a degree with higher qualification. Generic skills, similar within the Bennett's model (1999), represents specific skills to relevant subject, and imagination, adaptability, time management, working in a team, communication skills are described as some of the generic skills which are expected by the employers (Pool & Sewell, 2007). Emotional intelligence is defined as the capacity for recognizing our own feelings (Goleman, 1998). From the employability perspective, it is described as soft skills, and it is related with

motivation, and emotional knowledge. Career development learning basically contains supporting students' awareness in terms of planning their career improvement such as job interview simulations, CV planning courses, etc. Lastly, work experience is described as another component of graduate employability. Students' volunteer, part-time and/or full-time jobs are assessed as work experience of them, and they have an impact on their future employability. Key to employability model provides micro and detailed perspective to graduate employability of students, and it comprises significant personal components for rising individuals' employability. However, from the macro perspective, institutional roles, both university and the market perspective, social background of individuals, and policy level employability have not been mentioned.

Teichler (2016) has provided different perspective than previous self-theories of the employability. In his theory, graduate employability has been discussed as institutional phenomenon, so he indicated the employability role of universities. According to Teichler (2016), employability has been a complex term in terms of its coverage, and it could be defined as both individuals' acquisitions for achieving work tasks or their performances for other spheres of life. At that point, higher education institutions with its teaching and learning facilities promote people for desirable competence, so high performance on the work-related tasks is rewarded by employment (Teichler, 2016). Therefore, the main issue is for understanding the success of higher education institutions about employability which is related with 'good graduate work' or 'employment success' (Teichler, 2020).

Holmes (2013) discussed graduate employability from both micro and macro perspectives. For that reason, his study provides broader perspective about graduate employability phenomenon. He stated that there are two main aspects about graduate employability studies. First one is that studies focused on variables as gender, ethnicity, degree classification, salary earned, and subject discipline while examining graduate employability. Secondly, role of higher education and its association with employability are discussed about graduate employability. Universities, as living organisms, have micro and macro level roles in the society. Governmental bodies, labor market, and inter-governmental agencies represent universities' macro level relations. From the university perspective, these mutualistic relationships contain supplying qualified human capital to the market. From the government and market perspective, university funding and

supporting research activities in policy and economic level can be defined as university-market relationship.

In his study, Holmes (2013) discussed graduate employability with three competing approaches as possessive, positioning, and processual. Possessive approach (human capital) involves 'set of achievements and attributes of individuals. Positioning approach (social capital) is associated with social positioning theory, and it is based on -directly or indirectly- influence of social class on employment outcomes such as family or class background of individuals. Then, processual approach (career self-management) focused on the process of school to work transition among graduates and developing graduate identity. For that reason, university education and its services play crucial role on graduate employability and school to work transition. From the employer-graduate employee perspective, higher education contributions have significant value for individual's employability (Andrews & Higson, 2008). Moreover, Clarke (2018) in her integrated model stated that perceived employability is related with individual's employability with labor market effect as shown in Figure 1. In this study, therefore, data of senior students' perceived employability has been collected with perceived future employability scale (PFES) improved by Gunawan (2019).

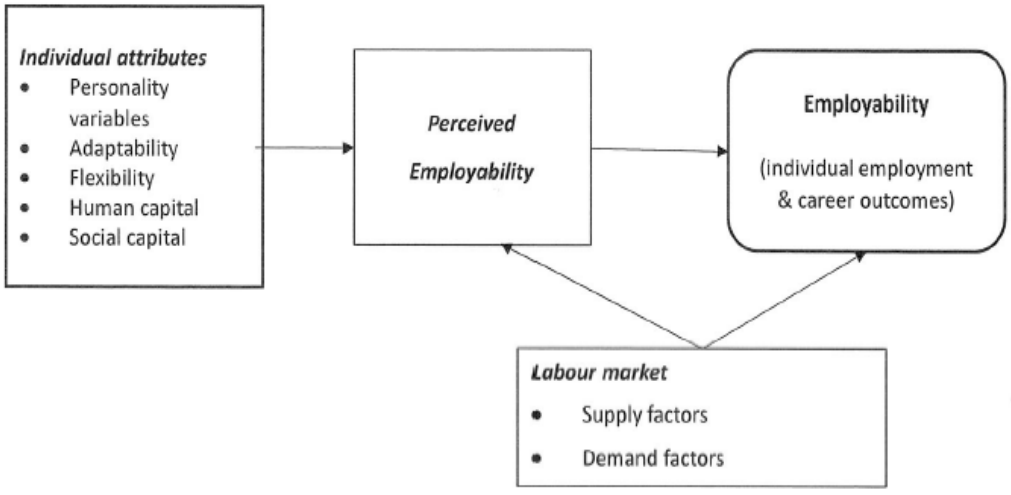

Figure 1 *Integrated Model of Perceived Employability. Source: Clarke, 2018*

Gunawan (2019) argued that existent perceived employability studies involving people who were already in work (e.g., Berntson & Marklund, 2007; Rothwell & Arnold, 2007), or they were designed to measure current employability in young adults rather than their perceptions of future employability after completing their education (e.g., Pool et al., 2014; Rothwell et al., 2009). However, he indicated in his study that 'perceived future employability is the representation of young adults' occupational self after they have completed their study and/or training' (Gunawan, 2019), so his scale has been rooted from future selves' theory (Markus & Nurius, 1986). Therefore, while positive image of future employability outcomes associated high engagement with goal-oriented behaviors, negative outcomes represent low engagement about them (Gunawan, 2019). In addition to that, university commitment of students is examined as a factor of future employability.

Perceived future employability scale contains six dimensions such as skills, accumulated experiences, personal characteristics, networks, labor market knowledge, and reputation of educational institution attended. Therefore, it has been suitable scale for understanding from many dimensions in Holmes's (2013) model. It can be understood that these six dimensions refer to human and social capital dimensions of the model. Also, reputation of educational institution dimension is associated with students' perceptions about university quality. Although university reputation may not directly refer to higher quality perception among students, students' positive experiences about the services and higher performance outcomes about university are described as factors which may provide reputation for the institution in short and long terms. Also, students' having work experience or not is a related factor for their labor market knowledge, so Gunawan's scale (2019) has been matched with this study's objectives in terms of understanding perceived future employability of senior students.

Furthermore, graduate employability tends to be related with higher education mainly, but existent studies showed that it is also related with demographic values, extra-curricular activities of individuals and contextual factors. Socioeconomic status, networking, work experience, and studying field of the graduates are some of the other factors which also have an impact on graduate employability. Studies show that socioeconomic status of individuals has no direct influence on graduate employability (Holmes, 2001; Okay-Somerville & Scholarios, 2015), but it has impact on individuals' accessing to extra-

curricular activities and networking; so improving their career development and employability. Similarly, work experience is a factor that increases the probability of employment for graduates (Spence, 1973; Davies,2000). In addition to that, part-time jobs and voluntary work are also described as acquiring understanding of the labor market (Harvey, Locke & Morey 2002). The studies show that subject of the study is another factor about graduate employability. According to Harvey (2001), some institutions have higher employment rates because they specialize in areas which have good rates, such as pharmacy, computer science, mathematics. Likewise, departments or study field of students can be described as another factor which influence the graduate employability of students.

To sum up, there are many studies about graduate employability in the literature from various disciplines. These studies have different starting points in terms of examining employability like labor market focus as supply-demand sides, self-efficacy perspective, networking behaviors, etc. Thus, university and university education are crucial elements about graduate employability for each approach. In this research context, due to providing micro and macro perspectives about graduate employability, Holmes's (2013) competing approaches on employability theory and Clarke's (2018) integrated model to Holmes's theory have been significant in terms of their comprehensiveness as involving institutional, individual, and labor market factors. In the light of that, Gunawan's perceived future employability scale (2019) has involved these micro and macro perspectives in terms of its subdimensions, and it has been an effective instrument for senior university students in terms of their student status and age group. In addition to that, it has university factor into the future employability, so it's related with university quality variable in the study.

2.3 Quality in Higher Education

In its lexical meaning, quality is defined as how good or bad something is (Merriam-Webster, 2022). Quality is business-based concept in terms of its historical development, so its definition is mainly focused on customer satisfaction and 'good' production. However, in higher education field, it is harder to define and assess quality than other sectors because of its plural and complex structure. Also, many elements about the quality are continuous discussion issues in terms of their suitability to higher education field as

defining and assessing inputs, outputs, customer, supplier, product, services, and production process.

The main and popular approach about definitions of higher education quality is that Harvey and Green's (1993) study about five interrelated categories of quality. These are exceptional, perfection, fitness for purpose, value for money, and transformation descriptions of the quality. Exceptional is based on traditional view of the quality, and it refers to excellence and advanced academic achievement in higher education institutions. Perfection definition of the quality focuses on meeting the process requirements with no defect. Value for money approach defines the quality as an investment, accountability view of higher education is focus point of this approach. The last one, transformation discusses quality of higher education as changing process for the institution (Harvey & Green, 1993). Harvey and Green's (1993) approach provide broader perspective about defining quality in higher education, and it can be described as the first step of transforming quality term into higher education field even it has based on managerial perspectives rather than pedagogical context. Also, quality refers to different meanings in higher education because of its various members, roles, and complex relations. Strikanthan and Dalrymple (2005) indicated four members of higher education and their quality perspectives based on Harvey and Green's (1993) quality definitions. According to their study, there are four main stakeholders in higher education, and these are providers (funding bodies), users of product (students), users of outputs (employers), and the employees of the sector (faculty members and administration personnel). From the providers' perspective, quality refers to 'value for money', so they focus on return of their investment. Students, users of products, define quality as 'excellence' because they tend to take advantage of their career prospects. When looking at users of outputs or employers of the system, quality is identified as 'fitness for purpose', and there should be matching with roles and functions. Lastly, the employees of the sector, who are faculty members and administrative staff, quality refers to 'perfection', and there should be an enhanced job satisfaction. It is understood that quality definition may differ from member to member in higher education, and that explains why quality is hard to define and assess in higher education by only a perspective.

Tam (2001) indicated that quality has multi-meanings for higher education because of its plural and complex structure. Similarly, Barnett (1994) discussed about four dominant concepts about higher education and their definitions of quality. First of these concepts is 'higher education as the production of qualified manpower', and this conception identifies quality with students' ability to succeed in the world of work; so students are regarded as products of the organization. Secondly, quality concept is based on 'higher education as a training for a research career'. From this dimension, quality is assessed with research facilities of the organization rather than students' achievement. Another concept is 'higher education as the efficient management of teaching profession', and this tends to identify quality as efficiency about performance and costs in instructional facilities. Lastly, quality focuses on 'higher education as a matter of extending life chances', and student demands, as potential 'consumers' become dominant in this concept (Barnett, 1994). As understood that there are different inputs, outcomes and quality definitions related to this variety in higher education. Therefore, defining roles and members, and identifying production, before clarifying quality, has been crucial for higher education field.

Although defining quality provides a basis for assessment of it, development of quality assessment criteria in higher education is based on business approach. One of the main approaches about quality assessment is that Parasuraman, Zeithaml and Berry's (1985) ten dimensions about assessing quality. These dimensions are tangibles, reliability, responsiveness, communication, credibility, security, competence, courtesy, understanding the customer, and access. While looking briefly contents of these dimensions, tangibles are physical qualifications of the services, and reliability refers to trustworthiness about service process. Responsiveness is related to customers' needs and expectations, and communication focuses on informing to customers and understanding them. Credibility is based on trustworthiness of the service provider, and security focuses on decreasing risks or doubt. Competence is defined as service providers' capability for delivering the service, and courtesy refers to personnel's positive approach to customers. Understanding the customer contains customers' needs and expectations and service provider's quick response to these expectations. However, it is hard to say that these dimensions met needs of higher education quality assessment because of its customer approach and lack of flexibility to adaptation of educational context.

Following studies about quality assessment in higher education tend to change this customer frame, and they added to different dimensions for understanding quality. For instance, Bemowski (1991) indicated that students' feelings about their educational experience is significant pattern as well as their skill acquirements. In that way, student experience in higher education has been the focus point for quality assessment, so non-academic aspects such as management process, student affairs, etc. have been more important than before. Moreover, Ruben's (1995) three dimensions of quality in higher education has been helpful guide for quality assessment. These dimensions have been stated as academic, administrative and relationship quality. Academic quality contains instructional and research-based outcomes, and administrative quality focuses on institutional systems, processes, and information flow of the organization. Lastly, relationship quality is based on members' relations, which means strength of their cooperation and collaboration, and service orientation (Ruben, 1995). Therefore, existent quality management systems in higher education like TQM (Total Quality Management), CQI (Continuous Quality Improvement), and QCI (Quality and Communication Improvement) are based on improvement and assessment of these three dimensions.

Traditionally, university possess three main functions such as teaching and learning, research, and community services. Quality assurance mechanisms basically assess the university quality based on these three functions. Besides university members' self-assessment reports about the quality, statistical data are analyzed such as curriculum objectives, student size, number of publications, citation numbers, etc. This is used as a way of university performance indicators. Today, performance-based assessments of quality determine wide range from funding to university reputation in national and international level. As being different than the business sector, quality concerns in higher education are based on academics, management, competitiveness, operational efficiency, productivity,

service orientation and cost effectiveness (Ruben, 1995). In addition to that, quality of the institution cannot be completely determined by short-term facilities, so it takes time for sustainability of the quality. According to Ruben (1995), quality is provided by a process, and there are many steps and participants for enhancing quality in higher education. Firstly, quality of university education is experienced by key constituencies of the

university as students, parents, employers. Then, these positive experiences create public image and reputation of the university by media or word-of-mouth, so this image influences individual decisions about attending this organization or not, support or not, recommend or not, etc. At the end, this process creates a loop about quality of the university. Besides that, external quality assurance bodies create competition among universities in terms of their development and preferability.

Being liable to specific standards about quality leads to compete among universities to enhance these standards and improve their organizational image. For example, Bologna process is one of these external quality assurance bodies for enhancing attractiveness and competitiveness of European higher education (EUA, 2010). Also, there are many other private bodies for assessing quality of universities and ordering them subject to specific standards. Although some of these systems are criticized in terms of their lack of comprehensiveness about assessing quality for different university contexts, their popularity for creating organizational image is incontrovertible. Another point is that external quality assurance mechanisms can be described as one of the bridges between university and community because it gathers university functions with society's needs or expectations.

As mentioned before, students are one of the key components of the university. Also, they can be described as intersection of university and community relation because they are existent part of the society as a university member, and they would be part of the society and/or the market after graduation. However, the other inner members of the university have been researchers and/or employees of the organization. For that reason, students' experiences and expectations have been crucial for improving university quality in terms of reflecting society's needs. Therefore, universities, the locations of conducting research and teaching facilities, are also places of students' expertizing in different disciplines and getting vocational education. According to Morley (2001), boundaries among universities, government and market have become indistinct in years, so the purpose of higher education has been determined by corporate interests. Then, universities' roles of producing new workers have become more apparent than before (Morley, 2001). However, this point of view has been criticized in terms of its inconsistency with idea of university as being place of producing knowledge, and Cote and Allahar (2011) stated

that there should be separated job training and higher education because this complexity causes being pseudo vocationalism of higher education. Even so, graduate employability of students, and their career advantages are still a criteria for quality assessment, and booster factor for university attractiveness and prestige. In addition to that, employment of graduate students is not a mission of the university but providing students to higher order thinking skills and lifelong learning constitutes the university's main facilities. In that way, directly or indirectly, its quality in teaching and learning, researching functions and its opportunities lead to students' employability facilities, so they can achieve related job tasks when they are employed. In his model, Firdaus (2006) indicated that commercial competition in economy is one of the driven forces for higher education. Moreover, universities' focus on their students' experiences in addition to society values and academic standards, accreditation and performance indicators of teaching and research (Firdaus, 2006). However, he argued that existent measurements as SERVQUAL (Parasuraman et al., 1988) and SERVPERF (Cronin & Taylor, 1992) about university quality did not represent comprehensive perceived quality approach about university. Firdaus's higher education performance-only scale (2005) has been prepared by analyzing strong and weak sides of SERVQUAL and SERVPERF, so it provides authentic and comprehensive measurement about perceived university quality. Higher Education Performance Only Scale (HEdPERF), Firdaus (2005) discussed higher education institutions quality with six dimensions. These six dimensions are non-academic aspects, academic aspects, reputation, access, program issues, and understanding, and they are based on performance indicators of the institution. In addition to assessing service quality of the university, it focuses on students' experience and their access to related facilities rather than measuring only services for them. As being different from other quality measurements, HEdPERF provides reputation, access, and program issues aspects, so it can be more related with graduate employability patterns which is used in this study. University quality and its reputation are defined as significant factors in Holmes's graduate employability model (2013) as social capital of individuals. Besides that, acquiring generic skills, and getting vocational education can be added to both human and social capital dimensions. At that point, HEdPERF Scale provides students' perceptions about university education, and accessing to them. Thus, university's performance and students' assessments about this performance are important for students' higher education process effectiveness. For that reason, graduates' employability, as one of the outcomes

of the university production, is related with students' academic and non-academic process at the university and how and what university services are provided. As mentioned in the literature part, university and higher education quality are defined as crucial steps about graduate employability, so senior students' perceptions about university quality which they attend have been expected to show parallelism with their own assessments about employability.

While looking at Perceived Future Employability Scale (PFES) and HEdPERF Scale relationship in this frame, it can be asserted that they feed each other based on the research problem. HEdPERF represents numeric data that students' general perceptions about university performance under six dimensions, and PFES data comprise the students' future employability perception levels with six factors. In the light of that, HEdPERF value supports PFES value in terms of the theoretical frame of this research. As mentioned, there is a significant relationship between university quality and reputation and graduate employability (Parasuraman, 1985; Holmes, 2013; Clarke, 2018; Harvey, 2001). Therefore, students' perceptions about university quality which they attend, and their perceptions about future employability can be related because university is described as the most important factor as determining of individual's career (Bennett, 1999; Harvey, 2001). In the HEdPERF scale, there are some aspects which are not directly related with employability variable such as academic, non-academic aspects, access and/or program issues. However, these dimensions create that university education effectiveness among students, so they indirectly have an impact on graduate employability. In addition to that, positive student experience leads to increase university reputation and its preferability for both labor market and future students at the university, so six dimensions are inseparable for understanding university quality and its influence on graduate employability among students.

Consequently, graduate employability among universities is one of the distinctive examples about the quality concept. Explosion of higher education in the last 30 years leads to higher enrollment and graduate levels, so quality concept is associated with elitism and inequality in higher education (Lorbeer, 2020). In years, with increasing attainment to higher education, quality issue is reconsidered in the literature from different perspectives as criticizing customer approach, ranking issues, quality-quantity

conflict, massification in higher education, graduate employability, etc. (Mok, 2016; Parasuraman, Zeithaml, & Berry, 1994; Radford & Raaheim, 1997; Raan, 2005). According to Knight (2001), good quality in higher education is related with good jobs or employability among graduates. Similarly, in the literature, employability concerns are directly associated with quality concerns of the university (Harvey, 1993; Morley, 2001; Little, 2010; Holmes, 2013). Employability of graduates is one of the outcomes of universities, and enhancing this facility plays an important role on quality of the institution. Related with that, in this study, graduate employability perceptions of senior students have been examined in Holmes's theory of graduate employability (2013) via using Gunawan's perceived future employability scale (PFES) (2019), and in this frame, students' quality perceptions about their universities have been measured by Firdaus's (2005) HEdPERF scale as a correlational factor for graduate employability of them. While analyzing quality approaches in the literature, HEdPERF scale has been determined as the most comprehensive questionnaire in terms of involving employability and reputation subdimensions. Therefore, it has been associated with PFES for significant results. Thus, employability and quality relationship can be defined as process which feed each other.

2.4 Summary

Graduate employability has been related with skills, efficacy beliefs, social and academic background, meta-cognition, content knowledge, work experience, etc. in the literature (Hillage & Pollard, 1998; Bennett, 1999; Yorke & Knight, 2003; Dacre, Pool & Sewell, 2007). In Holmes's study (2013), there is comprehensive approach to graduate employability, so three dimensions of graduate employability are indicated as social capital, human capital, and individual behaviors. In that case, higher education takes place in social capital dimension, and it effects graduate employability of individuals (Holmes, 2013).

Its roles on community services as being provider of qualified human power have been determinant factors for university's quality assessments. Therefore, quality of university education, and enhancement of students about their career prospects have influenced both university's prestige and employability of its graduates (Barnett, 1994; Ruben, 1999; Morley, 2001). It can be understood that graduate employability and university quality are

two interrelated phenomena while they have various and complex dynamics to be determined. Another point is that university students form the core part of these two phenomena. Thus, examining students' approach to university quality as a predictor of their graduate employability relationship has been significant.

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

This chapter involves that research design, population and sampling, instrumentation, procedures, and data analysis of the study.

3.1 Research Design

The present study is designed as correlational research. Predictor variables of the research are perceived university quality, and some demographic characteristics such as gender, socioeconomic status, GPA, and work experience while the criterion variable is perceived future employability of senior university students.

Theoretical framework of the research is rooted from Holmes's (2013) graduate employability model, and Firdaus's (2006) higher education performance approach. At the literature part, these two approaches have been given in detail. Literature about graduate employability mainly focused three factors as individual, contextual, and market perspectives. According to theoretical framework of this study, there are many independent variables are appointed. These are described as demographic characteristics of the sample, individual behaviors about career management, and contextual and labor market factors about employability.

Firstly, demographic characteristics of the sample can be described as independent variables of the study. Gender, socioeconomic status, GPA levels of students, differences in their work experiences, study field variety of the sample represents demographic characteristics of them, and they can impact on the study's findings.

For that reason, data analysis has been conducted with demographic characteristics of the sample, so findings about these variables in terms of relationship between the research variables are presented, and gender, socioeconomic status (SES), GPA, and work experience status of participants are given as controlling variables of the study. However, socioeconomic status data items were determined by using TUIK's 2021 report. According to that, at the beginning of 2021, minimum wage was 2.324 TL, so below of 2.000 TL has been defined as low socioeconomic status in this research. Socioeconomic status of participants categorized with using the SES group variables; A, B, C, C2, D, and E, and yearly income of families was considered respected to TUIK (2021) data. Also, possible variations among sample subjects' demographic characteristics represent population variations. Existing studies indicated that networking behaviors have significant impact on career management, but when coming to graduate employability, students tend to focus their graduation rather than networking (Greenbank & Hepworth, 2008). Moreover, students indicated that they have enough time for networking after their graduation (Caldwell & Cattermole, 2015). For that reason, in graduate employability frame, networking aspect can be described as after-graduation rather than current impact factor. As mentioned, graduate employability is described with three perspectives as human capital, social capital, and individual behaviors. However, Okay-Somerville and Scholarios (2015) indicated that social capital has no direct significant impact on graduate employability. Although some other studies indicated direct or indirect influence of social class on employability (Holmes, 2013; Clarke, 2018), university graduation of the individuals is defined as one of the elements of their social capital.

Secondly, individual behaviors are defined as another independent variable of this study. Even individual behaviors are significant for people's career management, this aspect does not only relate with graduate employability because it is more comprehensive aspect in employability literature (Fugate & Kinicki, 2008). Also, university is a place that provides career management opportunities for students, and university education and its quality can be described as one of the elements for developing individual behaviors about career planning (Harvey, 2001). Moreover, in this study with PFES, participants' individual behaviors about career planning were also included with some aspects.

Lastly, contextual factors are defined as one of the independent variables of the study, and these can be summarized as politic, economic, and global perspectives. At that point, however, employment and employability have different meanings. When employable refers to capability to be employed (Merriam-Webster, 2022), employment is defined as a state of being employed (Merriam-Webster, 2022). Therefore, contextual factors can be mainly related with employment. Employability, however, can be described as a self-perspective about employment. Aim of the study is not examining students' employment, so main point is that understanding students' future employability perspective. Even contextual factors influence students' self-assessment about employability, PFES contains many aspects of these factors as economic, and policy based.

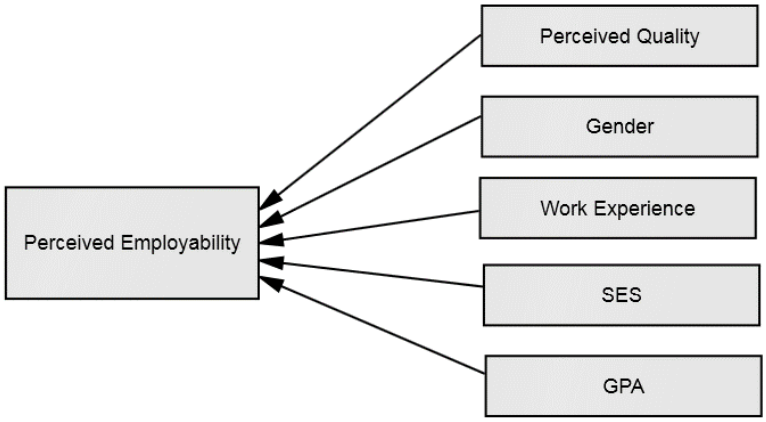

Figure 2 *Regression Model of the Study*

3.2 Population and Sampling

Target population of the study is all senior university students, who enrolled universities in Turkey, and accessible population of the study is defined as senior university students from Balikesir, Canakkale 18 Mart, and Kocaeli Universities. In Marmara region, Balikesir, Canakkale 18 Mart, and Kocaeli Universities are selected as sample. There are two main reasons for choosing these universities. At first, all of them established in 1992, so they have similar historical background. In that way, time disadvantages among sample universities were eliminated.

Moreover, rankings of universities in Turkey were examined according to URAP Report (2019). According to that, both Kocaeli, Canakkale and Balikesir Universities located in the middle, so sampling of the study was shaped around this idea for balancing the sample. Secondly, sample universities were carrying out hybrid education model rather than distance education. Data collection of this study was conducted right after the pandemic term as both online and face-to-face, and some of the universities continue their education as distance. For that reason, sample accessibility has been at the front row while sampling. Therefore, convenience sampling method has been applied for defining sample of the study.

Kocaeli University (KOU) was established in 1992. There are 18 faculties, four institutes, 16 vocational schools. In 2022, there were 36.258 students who attended bachelor programs, 2.497 academic staff, and 3.400 administrative staff. According to performance report of KOU (2021), findings of satisfaction survey of students showed that the item of "promotion and orientation about job options after graduation" got the lowest point by students. The same report indicated that graduates from KOU has 82 percentage of self-efficacy about their professional competencies. In addition to that, graduates' employability perceptions given as above 80 percentage of satisfaction. While looking graduate employment outcome of KOU, 6555 graduates were employed in 2020, and this number reached 7641 in 2021 (KOU, 2021). Strategic planning of KOU highlighted to enhancing internal quality assurance mechanisms, and cooperation with Turkish Higher Education Quality Council (THEQC) (KOU, 2021). Furthermore, KOU has been located as 37th university in the list of Turkey's university ranking in the light of 2018 – 2019 data of the URAP (URAP, 2019).

Balikesir University (BAUN) was established in 1992. There are 14 faculties, four institutes, and 12 vocational schools. In 2017-2018 semester, Balıkesir University has 37.259 students according to its website information. 2020 – 2024 Strategic report of Balikesir University (BAUN) stated that faculty members have 48 percentage of dissatisfaction about graduates' communication and relationship with their employers (BAUN, 2020). Also, BAUN indicated that the massification in higher education in Turkey may be a threat about employment of their graduates in the future. Related with

that, raising competitive graduates about employment has stated as a need for the university, and enhancing employability and raising qualified graduates has been other goals of BAUN in the report (BAUN, 2020). According to URAP 2018 – 2019 data about universities in Turkey, Balikesir University has 66th university among 157 universities.

Canakkale 18 Mart University (COMU) was established in 1992. There are 18 faculties, and 13 vocational schools. In 2021, COMU has 41.370 students. In its website, COMU shared results of their university members' satisfaction surveys. According to these results, COMU students mainly defined their university education quality as 'good (3)' from 5-point Likert scale (COMU, 2022). Similarly, in other questions about university quality and satisfaction about university services, students tended to evaluate them as 'good (3)'. Strategic report of COMU (2021) indicated that there is an unemployment threat of graduate students. Also, loosening relationship between university and graduates defined another issue about COMU. Then, growing body of students has described as a crucial point because this issue creates demand for academic staff, and deficiency in academic staff has negative impact on education quality in the university (COMU, 2021). In addition to that, lack of participation into the quality assurance activities has underlined as a threat of quality of the university. URAP statistics about university ranking in Turkey showed that COMU is 46th university among 157 universities according to 2019 data (URAP, 2019).

Table 1
Descriptive Statistics of the Sample

Variables		Frequency	Percent
University	Kocaeli University	267	75.6
	Canakkale University	321	42.5
	Balikesir University	40	6.4
Gender	Female	475	75.6
	Men	153	24.4
Study Field	Engineering	136	21.7
	Educational Sciences	426	67.8
	Economics and Adm.	24	3.8
	Social Sciences	32	5.1
	Physical Sciences	10	1.6
Work Experience	Having	248	39.5
	Having not	380	60.5
Socioeconomic Status	Low	148	23.6
	Moderate	213	33.9
	High	267	42.5
Total		628	100

Demographic characteristics of the sample were analyzed for understanding their relationship with the employability and quality perceptions. This study was conducted with 628 senior university students from Kocaeli, Canakkale 18th March, and Balikesir Universities. While looking distribution of participants among universities, 321 participants are senior students at the Canakkale 18th March University, 267 participants from Kocaeli University, and 40 participants from Balikesir University. Moreover, distribution among gender of participants showed that 475 female and 153 men senior students participated this research. Besides that, this study conducted with senior students from various faculties in universities. These faculties classified as study fields of participants, so five categories were formed as engineering, educational sciences, economics and administrative sciences, social sciences, and physical sciences. According to that, there are 136 participants from engineering field, 426 participants from educational sciences, 24 participants from economics and administrative sciences, 32

participants from social sciences, and 10 participants from physical sciences. Furthermore, participants have been questioned whether they have a work experience except their compulsory internship or not, and 248 senior students have got a work experience while 380 of them have not. Socioeconomic status of participants was measured with the question of their families' monthly income. In the light of that, there were 148 participants from the group of low socioeconomic status, 213 participants from the moderate socioeconomic status group, and 267 participants from the group of high socioeconomic status. Table 1 showed that the demographic characteristics of the participants. Then, participants' responses on higher education quality and their employability are explained in detail respect to the categorical variables.

3.3 Instrumentation

3.3.1 Demographic Information Questionnaire

Demographic information questionnaire contains 3 short answer and 4 multiple choice questions about gender, university, study field, monthly family income, GPA, and work experience of participants.

3.3.2 Perceived Future Employability Scale (PFES)

Perceived Future Employability Scale (PFES) was developed by Gunavan in 2019. PFES was designed as a self-report which aimed to measure young adults' perceptions about their future employability levels. The six-points Likert scale consists of 24-items about six dimensions of future employability as future appraised skills, accumulated experiences, personal characteristics, networks, labor market knowledge, and reputation of educational institution attended. In the scale, higher data value shows that young adults' readiness for work life, and positive attitudes towards their career planning (Alkın, Korkmaz & Celik, 2019). Turkish adaptation of the Perceived Future Employability Scale (PFES) has been developed by Alkın, Korkmaz and Celik in 2019. In this adaptation, 24-items and six dimensions was used. For examining validity and reliability of the scale, Explanatory Factor Analysis (EFA) and Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA)

were applied. While looking results of the validity and reliability of the scale, total variances of 24-items were measured as 0.8. Cronbach Alpha internal consistency

coefficients range from .82 to .95, and the study indicated that obtained value provided adequate level for reliability of the scale. Moreover, item analysis performed to examine the item discrimination of the PFES, it presented that the correlation between the item-total score varied between .41 and .83, so these values were described as suitable for discrimination index of the study (Alkın, Korkmaz & Celik, 2019).

3.3.2.1 Confirmatory Factor Analysis for Perceived Future Employability Scale

Firstly, Mahalonobis distances were measured for detecting multivariate outliers, 47 outliers were detected above critical $\chi 2$ values of 42.98 for $df = 24$, $p < 0.01$. Furthermore, univariate, and multivariate normality assumptions have been checked. For univariate normality, skewness and kurtosis values, Kolmogorov-Smirnov and Shapiro-Wilk tests, histograms, and Q-Q plots have been checked (Kline, 2011). For multivariate normality check, Mardia's test conducted, and significant result was assessed ($p = 0.00$), and violation of the assumption has detected. Therefore, bootstrapping has performed to handle the influence of nonnormality (Bollen & Stine, 1992) and CFAs has run via 2000 bootstrapped samples. For assessing linearity and homoscedasticity, bivariate scatterplots have analyzed, and they did not include great deviations. Then, multicollinearity has been examined through the inspection of bivariate correlations among scale items. Multicollinearity did not be found, and the values did not be located above 0.90 (Field, 2009). Furthermore, VIF and tolerance values were controlled. VIF values were between 3.00 and 4.01 as being acceptable limits (lower than 4) and tolerance values also varied between the acceptable range 0.29 and 0.33 (larger than 0.20). In that way, assumptions of multicollinearity were validated.

3.3.2.2 CFA Results for PFES

Since normality assumptions were violated, the model was tested with 2000 bootstrapped samples at 95% confidence interval. Initial CFA results indicated a poor fitting model with a significant chi- square ($\chi 2$ (22) = 1317.16, p = 0.00), CFI = 0.92, TLI = 0.91, RMSEA = 0.09, and SRMR = 0.05.

Table 2
CFA Results for Models of Perceived Future Employability Scale

Model	$\chi 2$	*df*	CFI	TLI	SRMR	RMSEA
Initial Model	1317.16	22	.92	.91	.05	.09
Modified Model	985.38	19	.95	.94	.05	.07

After the modification indices have been controlled, item pairs with the highest error covariance were allowed to covary (ε6-ε7, ε15-ε16). Final CFA results showed significant chi-square *($\chi 2$* (19) = 985.38 p = 0.00) again with improved fit indices: the comparative fit index CFI = 0.95, TLI = 0.94, RMSEA = 0.07 and SRMR = 0.05. At the Table 2, goodness-of-fit indicators have been showed. Results of the analysis indicated a mediocre fit based on the cut-offs TLI $\geq$ .90 and RMSEA $\leq$ .08 proposed by Browne and Cudeck (1992) and Hu and Bentler (1999). The Cronbach Alpha coefficient showed excellent reliability as α = 0.96 because this value is located between 0.91 and 1.00, and this range shows excellent reliability according to Konting (2009).

3.3.3 Higher Education Performance (HEdPERF)

Higher Education Performance (HEdPERF) has been developed by Firdaus in 2005 for measuring students' perceived quality level of universities. HEdPERF scale consists of 41 items with seven-point Likert scale, and 13 of these items were adapted from SERPERF which is performance-based scale on university quality. In addition to that, HEdPERF scale includes six dimensions as non-academic aspects, academic aspects, reputation, access, program issues, and understanding (Firdaus, 2005). In the scale, higher data value represents high performance-based quality in the institution.

The HEdPERF transformed to Turkish by Bektas and Akman in 2013. In its Turkish adaptation, 46 items would be used with five-point Likert scale. Validity and reliability of the scale was measured by Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) and Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA). The scale's six sub-dimensions are measured as 0.63 of the total variances. In the study, the Cronbach's Alpha value was found to be 0.911, and this value indicated reliability of the scale as higher than 0.70 value. Also, Cronbach's Alpha values calculated for the internal consistency of the factors were found to be 0.924, 0.807, 0.822, 0.741, 0.710 and 0.700, respectively. Then, CFA of the study showed that Critic N value was measured as 227.01, and this value was considered an indication of adequate model fit (Bektas & Akman, 2013).

3.3.3.1 Confirmatory Factor Analysis for Higher Education Performance Scale

At the beginning, Mahalonobis distances were measured for detecting multivariate outliers, 42 outliers were detected above the critical $\chi 2$ value of 1541.36 for $df = 46$, $p < 0.01$. In addition to that, univariate, and multivariate normality assumptions have been controlled. Skewness and Kurtosis values, Kolmogorov-Smirnov and Shapiro-Wilk tests, histograms, and Q-Q plots have been assessed (Kline, 2011). Multivariate normality check has been controlled by using Mardia's test, and significant result has been found ($p = 0.00$), so violation of the assumption detected. For that reason, bootstrapping has been used to deal with the impact of non-normality (Bollen & Stine, 1992) and CFAs conducted with 2000 bootstrapped samples. For assessing linearity and homoscedasticity assumptions, bivariate scatterplots have been checked, and there were no great deviations. Finally, multicollinearity has been controlled through the inspection of bivariate correlations between the scale factors, and multicollinearity did not conclude, because of no exceeding the value of 0.90 (Field, 2009). Besides that, VIF and tolerance values have been checked. VIF values located between 1.28 and 4.01 as being into the related limits (Lower than 4) and tolerance values were also between the cut-off points as 0.26 and 0.63 (larger than 0.20). In that way, assumptions of multicollinearity have been assessed.

3.3.3.2 CFA Results for HEdPERF

Since normality assumptions were violated, the model was tested with 2000 bootstrapped samples at 95% confidence interval. Initial CFA results indicated a poor fitting model with a significant chi-square (χ^2 (43) = 1541.36, p = 0.00), CFI = 0.87, TLI = 0.87, RMSEA = 0.08, and SRMR = 0.05. After the modification indices were checked, item pairs with the highest error co-variance were allowed to covary (ε22-ε23, ε4-ε8, ε11-ε13, ε43-ε44, ε12-ε15). Final CFA results showed significant chi-square (χ^2 (38) = 1341.31, p = 0.00) again with improved fit indices: the comparative fit index CFI = 0.91, TLI = 0.90, RMSEA = 0.07 and SRMR = 0.45. Goodness-of-fit indicators have been presented at the Table 3. Therefore, the results showed that it is mediocre fit based on the cut-offs stated by Browne and Cudeck (1992) and Hu and Bentler (1999) as being TLI $\geq$ .90 and RMSEA $\leq$ .08. According to Konting (2009), values between 0.91 and 1.00 for The Cronbach Alpha coefficient showed excellent reliability. Thus, The Cronbach Alpha coefficient of this analysis was indicated as excellent reliability as α = 0.96.

Table 3
CFA Results for Model of Higher Education Performance Scale

Model	χ^2	*df*	CFI	TLI	SRMR	RMSEA
Initial Model	1541.36	43	.87	.87	.05	.08
Modified Model	1341.31	38	.91	.90	.45	.07

3.4 Data Collection Procedures

The sample of the study were identified via convenience sampling method from Balikesir, Canakkale, and Kocaeli universities' senior students. After defining sample and getting permissions from ethical council, and related universities' committees for data collection, participants were informed about the study via university visits, and their university e-mail address. Announcements of the study via e-mail addresses of the participants were provided by faculty members and faculty secretaries. The study is based on volunteer participations of the participants, so if they were volunteer to participating to the study, they attended to the online survey. Correspondingly, at the university visits, researcher

informed to the participants about the study, and volunteer participation were preserved. There is no deception of the subjects about the study and the procedure. In the data collection process, Kocaeli and Canakkale Universities were visited, and face-to-face data collection were conducted. Data from Balikesir University were collected as online by using METU Survey. In addition to that, sending e-mail to sample universities' students clubs, and social media accounts have been used for reaching the target sample. Online and face-to-face data collection were conducted. Data have been collected via university Higher Education Performance Scale (HEdPERF), Perceived Future Employability Scale (PFES) from participants with demographic information questionnaire included university, study field, gender, work experience, SES, and GPA information. For preventing confusion about individual's data among these two instruments, data collection would be designed as one survey composed of HEdPERF, PFES, and demographic information questionnaire. Data have been collected anonyms, so subject confidentiality has been preserved.

3.5 Data Analysis

Data was analyzed by using SPSS 26 and SPSS AMOS. For preliminary analysis of the study, normality of each variable and outliers of the sample have controlled. Therefore, data have prepared for the analysis of the study. Demographic characteristics of the sample have been analyzed as descriptive statistics by calculating mean, standard deviation, and frequencies. In addition to that, validity, and reliability of the PFE and HEDPERF scales which used in the study were presented by using confirmatory factor analysis (CFA).

Main data analysis of the study was conducted using two separate hierarchical regression analysis. Firstly, quality data have been analyzed with demographic characteristics of the sample with the regression models. Secondly, perceived employability data with both quality data and demographic characteristics of the sample have been analyzed via hierarchical regression models because of examining relationship among perceived employability, quality, and other independent variables.

3.6 Limitations of the Study

Possible limitations of the study are described as generalizability and lack of qualitative analysis about the phenomenon. Firstly, the study has been conducted with three universities from Marmara region, so generalizability of the study is limited with there. However, choosing three universities from different cities in Marmara presents variability in data set. In that way, sample can be more representator for the population. Secondly, lack of qualitative analysis about the phenomenon is defined as limitation of the study. This study is conducted as correlational research design, so data were collected as quantitatively. Although participants perceptions and approaches did not be presented in the study, statistical analysis and correlational relationship among graduate employability and its predictor variables have given. For future studies, qualitative analysis of given variables contributes to the field in terms of understanding university members' perceptions about quality and employability.

This study aimed that examining relationship between future graduate employability of senior students and their university quality perception, so this is pioneering study in terms of focusing employability and university quality relationship. Related with that, one of the limitations of the study is that limited sources about relevant literature. Although there are studies about employability and university association, there is lack of study about impact of university quality on graduate employability of students. Therefore, limited sources about theoretical framework of the study can be stated as one of the limitations of the study.

Moreover, this study has been conducted by using quantitative research design, and scales and questionnaire have been used for data collection. For that reason, students' responses have been limited by their choices rather than their voices. At that point, conducting this study by using qualitative design would provide broader perspective about university quality and graduate employability relationship. For example, some subject students stated that their campus location is different than central campus, so they answered related items respect to this situation. Besides that, many subject students have been excited for conducting this study, and they stated that make students' voice heard about university quality and employability relationship.

CHAPTER 4

RESULTS

This chapter presents the results of descriptive and inferential statistics of the study. After giving descriptive statistics of the data. Preliminary analysis of the study is given for preparing the data to hierarchical regression analysis. The main data analysis of the study is presented as two different multiple regression analysis.

4.1 Descriptive Statistics and Correlational Matrix of Employability and Quality Perceptions of Participants

Descriptive statistics were used for describing demographic characteristics of the sample and it also provides a framework about inferential statistics of the study.

Table 4
Descriptive Statistics of Outcome and Predictor Variables

Variables	*M*	*SD*	Possible Range	Actual Range
Outcome Variable				
Perceived Employability	4.45	.32	1 - 6	1 - 6
Predictor Variable				
Perceived Quality	3.36	.11	1 - 5	1 -5

As presented at the Table 4, senior students showed moderately high responses about their university quality (M = 3.36, SD = 0.11). Similarly, participants' perceived employability responses were higher than average of the range (M = 4.45, SD = 0.32). While considering that there were different ranges about the variables, both the quality

and employability perceptions showed moderately high values. Therefore, participant students have positive attitudes toward their university quality and future employability.

Table 5

Pearson Correlation Matrix of Employability Perceptions

Variables	1	2	3	4
1.Employability	-			
2.Quality	.53*	-		
3. Work Experience	.11*	.03	-	
4. GPA	.04	.07	.01	-

$p<0.05$*
r= ±.10 small effect, ±.30 medium effect, ±.50 large effect (Field, 2009)

At the Table 5, correlation matrix of employability perceptions with other independent variables (Quality, work experience, and GPA) were given. Therefore, strong, and positive relationship between employability and quality perceptions among participant students were found. Likewise, work experience of students showed positive correlation with employability perceptions of students. However, results of correlation analysis of quality perceptions showed no significant correlation with independent variables.

4.2 Hierarchical Multiple Regression Analysis

Multiple hierarchical regression analysis was used for examining predictor and outcome variables of the study. Hierarchical regression is a statistical method to be used for analyzing importance of a group of predictor variables on outcome variable of the study (Field, 2009). Aim of the study has been defined as investigating relationship between senior students' perceptions of university quality and their employability perceptions, and perceived quality has examined in terms of its predictive role on employability perceptions. Due to controlling independent variables, this study was conducted via hierarchical regression analysis models. In addition to that, two dependent variables were analyzed in the study, so two regression analysis were conducted. In that way, they were also analyzed in terms of their impacts on quality and employability perceptions.

Before conducting hierarchical regression analysis, assumptions of absence of outliers, independence of errors, normality of residuals, absence of multicollinearity, and linearity and homoscedasticity of residuals were assessed (Field, 2009). Then, hierarchical regression analysis was performed as a two-step model with quality and employability perceptions. For quality perception, demographic characteristics of participants as gender, GPA, SES, and work experience were analyzed via using multiple regression model. For the employability perceptions, hierarchical regression has been conducted. At the first step of the model, gender, GPA, SES, and work experience of students entered to the model, and at the step 2, perceived quality data entered the existing model. In that way, contribution of the predictor variables on the quality and employability perceptions could be analyzed separately.

Although quality, employability and GPA data of participants were continuous, gender, SES, and work experience variables were defined as categorical variables. Therefore, gender, SES, and work experience data were defined as dummy variables in the study, and gender of participants was coded as 1 = female, and 2 = male. For work experience variable, experience status of students was also coded as 1 = experienced, and 2 = non-experienced. Lastly, socioeconomic status of participants was coded as 1 = low, and 2 = moderate, and 3 = high socioeconomic status.

4.2.1 Assumption Checks for the Quality Perceptions

Assumptions of hierarchical regression analysis were checked separately for each analysis. As mentioned at the previous part, these assumptions are absence of outliers and multicollinearity, normality, linearity, and homoscedasticity of residuals, and independence of errors (Pallant, 2010). Firstly, absence of outliers' assumption was controlled for perceived quality variable. In the light of that,histograms and P-P plots were checked for controlling univariate outliers and Mahalanobis Distance, Leverage, Cook's Distance, DFBeta values were detected for the multivariate outliers. According to the Mahalanobis distance results, no outliers were detected for the critical $\chi 2$ value of 81.40 for $df = 46$, $p < 0.001$. Also, maximum value of Mahalanobis distance was measured as 18.20, and cut-off points of Mahal. value was defined as under 18.80 (Etherington, 2021). While examining Cook's distance, this value indicated 0.04. Cut-off point of maximum value of Cook's distance is 1, so outliers of the analysis fitted to the

hierarchical regression. For evaluating normality of residuals, histograms and P-P Plots of residuals were analyzed. As showed at the Figure 2 and Figure 3, dependent variable of the study has been normal distribution, so the assumption of normality of residuals was assessed. While evaluating linearity and homoscedasticity of residuals assumptions, regression and scatter plots were checked. In the distribution of the points, no pattern was found in the graph at the Figure 4. Therefore, related assumption was assessed (Field, 2009). While analyzing partial regression plot for checking the assumption of linearity of residuals, no major deviation was found as shown at the Figure 5.

For assessing the assumption of absence of multicollinearity, tolerance, and VIF values were controlled, and bivariate correlations were conducted. Allen (1997) indicated that strong correlation among the variables (i.e., $r > .90$) may cause multicollinearity problem. Yet, analysis results showed that no strong correlation among variables were detected. Besides that, Tolerance value of the analysis was varied between .94 and 1. Reference values for preventing multicollinearity in the analysis defined as higher than .10 (Pallant, 2010). Therefore, multicollinearity assumption did not violate the analysis. Similarly, variance inflation factor (VIF) was measured between 1.00 and 1.06 area, and cut-off point of VIF was defined at the below of 10 (Pallant, 2010). Furthermore, independence of errors assumption was checked by conducting Durbin-Watson analysis. This value should be located among 1 and 3 and, it measured as 1.82. In that way, the related assumption assessed.

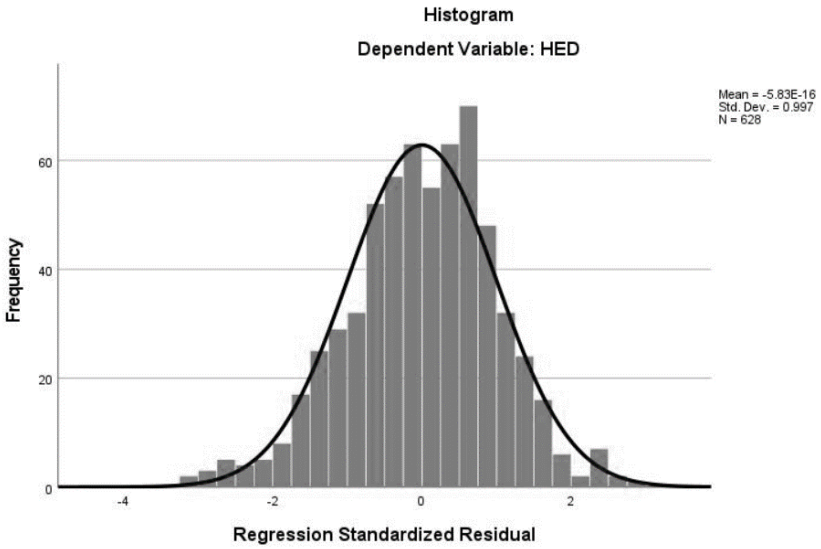

Figure 3 *Histogram for Perceived Quality*

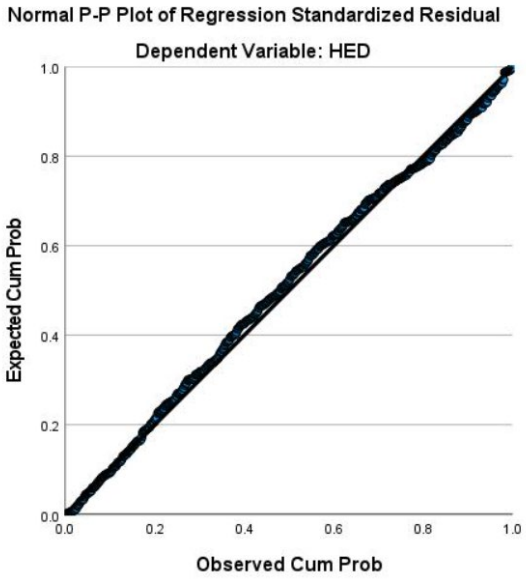

Figure 4 *P-P Plot for Perceived Quality*

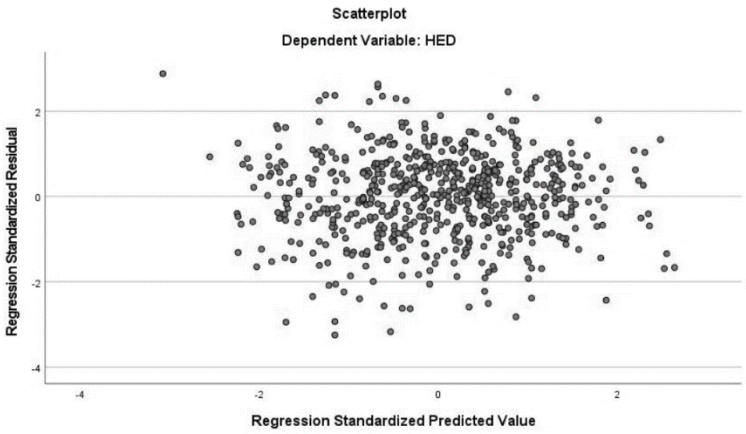

Figure 5 *Scatter Plot for Perceived Quality*

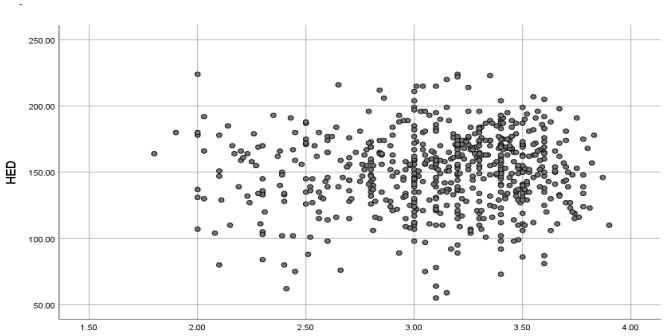

Figure 6 *Partial Regression Plot for Perceived Quality*

4.2.2 Results of Multiple Regression Analysis Result of Perceived Quality

Multiple regression analysis of perceived quality was conducted with the related independent variables of the study. All demographic characteristics of the sample as gender, GPA, socioeconomic status (SES) and work experience were analyzed with multiple regression. Results of the analysis indicated that gender, GPA, SES, and work experience variables have significantly predictor role on senior students' quality perceptions ($F(4, 623) = 1.61$, $p < 0.05$), and this step was explained 1% variances of the model. Multiple regression analysis results for perceived quality were shown in Table 6.

Table 6
Results of Multiple Regression Analysis Results of Perceived Quality

Variables	*B*	*SE B*	β	R^2	ΔR^2
				.01*	.00*
Gender	-.88	2.72	-.01		
GPA	5.04	2.75	.08		
Work Experience	1.54	2.35	.03		
SES	-1.90	1.23	-.06		

*p<0.05

4.2.3 Assumption Checks for the Employability Perceptions

Assumptions of hierarchical regression analysis for employability perceptions were checked before the main analysis. Absence of outliers and multicollinearity, normality, linearity and homoscedasticity of residuals, and independence of errors were controlled as assumptions of the analysis (Pallant, 2010).

First of all, absence of outliers was controlled for perceived employability variable. Thus, histograms and P-P plots were controlled for checking univariate outliers. In addition to that, Mahalanobis Distance, Leverage, Cook's Distance, DFBeta values were controlled for the multivariate outliers. Mahalanobis distance results indicated that no outliers were assessed for the critical $\chi 2$ value of 49.73 for $df = 23$, $p < .001$. Also, Maximum value of Mahalanobis distance was measured as 18.20, and cut-off points of Mahal. value was defined as under 18.80 (Etherington, 2021). While examining Cook's distance, this value indicated .04. Cut-off point of maximum value of Cook's distance is 1, so outliers of the analysis fitted to the hierarchical regression. For evaluating normality of residuals, histograms and P-P Plots of residuals were controlled. As showed at the Figure 6 and Figure 7, dependent variable of the study was normally distributed, so the assumption of normality of residuals was yielded. For checking linearity and homoscedasticity of residuals assumptions, regression and scatter plots were controlled. While looking distribution of the points, there is no pattern in the graph as seen at the Figure 8. In the

light of that, related assumption was assessed (Field, 2009). Lastly, partial regression plot was checked for the assumption of linearity of residuals, there was no major deviation as shown at the Figure 9.

Assumption of absence of multicollinearity were checked by controlling tolerance, and VIF values, and bivariate correlations were analyzed. As mentioned at the previous part, strong correlation among the variables (i.e., $r > 0.90$) may led to multicollinearity problem (Allen, 1997). On the other hand, there was no strong correlation between the variables. Moreover, tolerance value of the analysis was varied between 0.94 and 1.00 Reference values for preventing multicollinearity in the analysis defined as higher than 0.10 (Pallant, 2010). In that way, multicollinearity assumption did not violate the analysis. Similarly, variance inflation factor (VIF) was measured between 1.00 and 1.06 area, and cut-off point of VIF was defined at the below of 10 (Pallant, 2010). Finally, independence of errors assumption was checked by conducting Durbin-Watson analysis. This value should be located between the values of 1 and 3 and, it was measured as 1.71. In that way, the related assumption assessed.

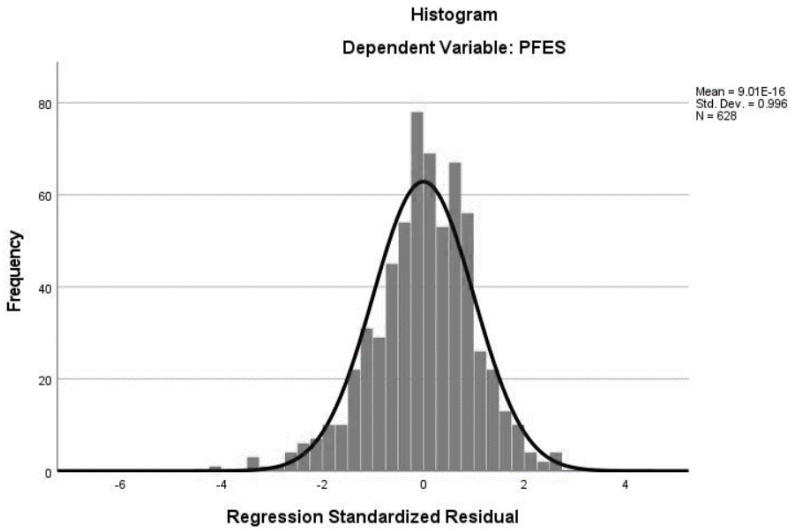

Figure 7 *Histogram for Perceived Employability*

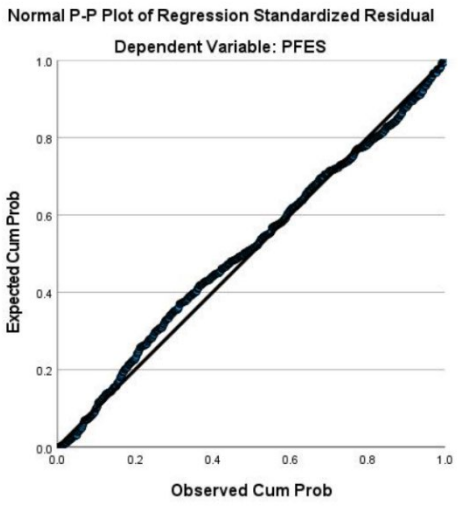

Figure 8 *P-P Plot for Perceived Employability*

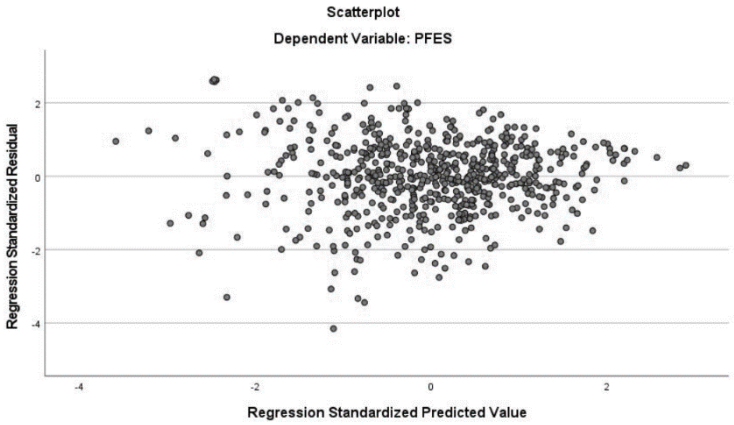

Figure 9 *Scatter Plot for Perceived Employability*

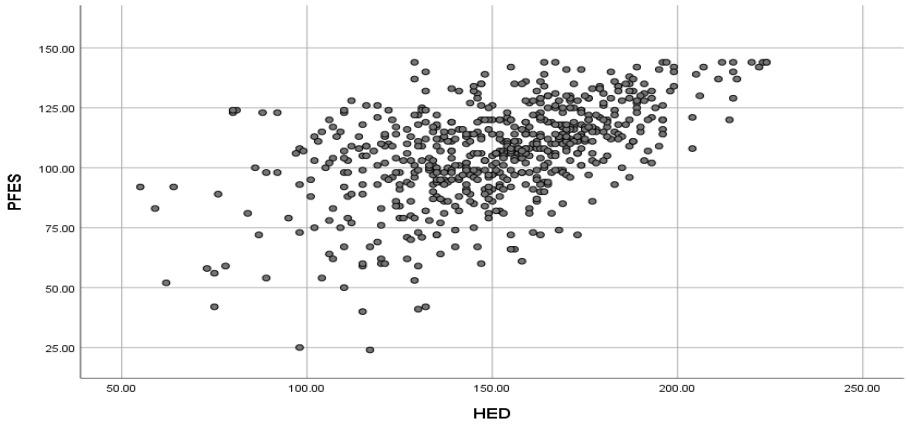

Figure 10 *Partial Regression Plot for Perceived Employability*

4.2.4 Results of Hierarchical Regression Analysis Result of Perceived Employability

Hierarchical regression analysis for perceived employability was conducted in two steps. At the first step, gender, GPA, SES, and work experience of participants of the sample were entered. At the step 2, perceived quality was added to the first model.

As presented at the Table 6, at the step 1, demographic characteristics of the sample played predictor role on perceived employability ($F(4, 623) = 3.78$, $p < 0.05$). Also, 2% of variances were explained with gender, GPA, SES, and work experience of senior students ($t(627) = 15.01$, $p = 0.00$). At the step 1, gender, and work experience variables significantly predict students' employability perceptions. According to that, female senior students show higher employability perceptions ($M = 4.46$, $SD = 0.31$) than the male students ($M = 4.41$, $SD = 0.33$). Then, senior students who have work experience ($M = 4.49$, $SD = 0.29$) showed more positive employability perceptions than their no-experienced peers ($M = 4.40$, $SD = 0.31$). Moreover, step 2 of the hierarchical regression analysis indicated that quality perceptions of participants, after controlling for the effects of demographics, predicted to the employability perceptions of them ($F(5, 622) = 53.94$, $p < 0.05$). Besides that, 30% variances were explained with the unique contribution of perceived quality ($t(628) = 15.77$, $p = 0.00$). In addition to that, positive b value of quality perceptions indicated that there is positive relationship among quality and employability perceptions of senior students.

Table 7
Results of Hierarchical Regression Analysis for Perceived Employability

Step and Variable		*B*	*SE B*	*β*	R^2	ΔR^2
Step 1					.02*	.02*
	Gender	-4.83	1.91	-.10*		
	GPA	1.16	1.93	.02		
	Work Experience	-5.02	1.64	-.12*		
	SES	.36	.74	.02		
Step 2					.	
	Quality	.38	.02	.53*		
Total					.30*	.30*

*p<0.05

4.3 Summary of the Findings

Data analysis of the study indicated that the hypothesis of the study have been supported. According to hierarchical regression results of perceived employability, positive and significant relationship between quality and employability perceptions were found with the demographic characteristics of the sample ($F(5, 622) = 53.94$, $p < 0.05$). In this relationship, perceived quality has predictor role on perceived employability perception of the participants, and 30% of variances were explained with the predictor of quality perception on the employability perceptions ($t(628) = 15.77$, $p = 0.00$). Demographic characteristics of the sample without perceived quality variable were explained 2% of variances on the perceived employability ($t(627) = 15.01$, $p = 0.00$).

While analyzing perceived quality with controlling demographic characteristics of the sample, GPA, gender, SES and work experience of students predicted the quality perceptions of students ($F(4, 623) = 1.61$, $p < 0.05$). Although these four variables have no direct relationship with perceived quality one by one, the model which comprises gender, GPA, SES, and work experience, significantly predicted to perceived quality, and %1 of variances was explained.

CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSION & CONCLUSION

In this chapter, results of the study are discussed in relation to the theoretical framework and relevant literature about the university quality and graduate employability of students in the Turkish higher education frame. Besides that, implications of the study are given in this chapter with recommendations for future studies.

5.1 Discussion of the Findings

Employment of individuals is an indicator of economic development of a country, and it shows that how the countries use their human power in the market efficiently (Bozdaglıoglu, 2008). Similarly, unemployment can be described as a negative intervention to the economic growth for the countries. Furthermore, if unemployment could not be controlled by the policies, it may lead to fluctuations in both economic and social aspects of the society. From people's perspective, they need to be employed for living on their lives. Accordingly, the right of employment is preserved by the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UHDR) in article 23:1, so the right of employment is stated as 'everyone has the right to work, to free choice of employment, to just and favorable conditions of work and to protection against unemployment' (UHDR, 1948). In that case, every aspect of the society possesses their own roles and responsibilities about employment, and the main role about citizens' employment is left to the policy makers (Stirati, 2012). Yet, employment is not one-sided concept because it relates to many aspects like government, labor market, and individuals, and each of them hold their own expectations and capabilities about the employment. Therefore, exemplifying all aspects and finding a compromise among them are not easy-to-solve.

Furthermore, employment of graduates creates another dimension of the employment issue. Graduates are simultaneously being part of the society, university, and the future member of the labor market, so they can be described in the intersection of employment issue. Universities, in addition to their academic functions, provide people to professional and vocational competencies, and they contribute to graduate identity (Hinchliffe & Jolly, 2010). For the individuals, therefore, getting university degree is a way of accessing to more economic and social welfare (Johnson, 1973). Therefore, higher education tends to be seen as a solution of unemployment (Kiraz & Kurul, 2018). Despite there is a positive relationship between degree of education and employment of individuals (Bagci, 2018), university diploma is not the direct mean to be employed. Especially today, graduate unemployment is defined as one of the significant problems both in Turkey and in the global perspective (Durak & Kaya, 2014). In Turkey, existing studies indicate that there are many reasons behind graduate unemployment, and these can be summarized as deficiency in employment policies, incoherency between supply and demand of some occupations, skills mismatch, and massification in higher education (Arslan & Solak, 2020; Ay, 2012; Onal, 2012; Ozer & Suna, 2020).

First of all, employment policies play crucial role in graduate unemployment. Unemployment is a significant issue in Turkey from 1960s, and with the financial crisis in 2001, this issue comes to the light more devastatingly than before (Ay, 2012). Today, with increasing population and neo-liberal economy policies, economic growth does not create employment opportunities (Ay, 2012). Moreover, changes in sectoral distribution of the employment, rural depopulation, and lack of female participation to the labor market led to fluctuations in employment policies, and they have triggered the unemployment (Boztepe, 2007; Dayioglu & Ercan, 2010; Tunali, 2003). In addition to that, increasing taxes for employment, interruption of the production and inflation, and lowering to labor costs are defined as some of the problematic employment policies which cause economic problems in Turkey (Onaran, 2002; Ilkkaracan ve Yorukoglu, 2004). Also, issues in educational policies were also related with employment policies (Ay, 2012). According to Gur (2016), explosion in university numbers beyond control has a negative impact on the employment policies in Turkey, so problems or deficiencies in the policies from the education field are considered as related with employment policies.

Therefore, issues in employment policies in Turkey are related with unemployment of graduates directly and indirectly.

Secondly, imbalance between supply and demand of labor power is another factor for unemployment issue in Turkey (Arslan & Solak, 2020). In other words, some professions deal with unemployment harder than other fields in Turkey. Unemployment of teachers are the most noticeable example about this issue. Each year, exceeding 100.000 people graduate from education faculties (YOK, 2020), and there were 500.000 teachers who still wait to be employed (ISKUR, 2020). However, in 2022, only 19.969 teachers were appointed to public schools (MEB, 2022). At that point, while many teachers have still been unemployed for years, capacities of education faculties are also rising (YOK, 2021). Thus, growing of labor power for some fields exceeds the demand of them, and this disequilibrium touched to the graduate unemployment as exemplifying for teachers. For both policy makers and higher education field, analyzing supply and demand of the labor power is significant for graduate employment (Gokce, 2014). In that case, cooperation and participation among members are crucial for determining precaution of the graduate unemployment.

Thirdly, skills mismatch between graduates and labor market is stated as another factor on graduate unemployment (Sahin, 2021). Skills mismatch is defined as 'the sub-optimal use of an individual's skills in their occupation' (OECD, 2021). According to Sahin (2021), 54% of businesses cannot access qualified workforce which they look for. Besides that, problems of skills mismatch in Turkey aroused from over-qualification, and university graduates suffered from this situation rather than high school or vocational school graduates (Sahin, 2021). Skills mismatch can be occurred by geographical obstacles, disequilibrium in supply and demand of employment, and discrepancy between labor market and education system (Suna, et al., 2020). For that reason, employment and education relationship is defined as two-sided, so they share similar concerns (Suna, et al., 2020). Massification in higher education and problems in alignment of educational outputs to the labor market demand create negative impact on the skills mismatch (Cidem et al., 2021). In addition to that, rapid changing trends of labor market are difficult to catch by higher education (Acemoglu & Restrepo, 2018). Therefore, deeper

understanding about expectations of both labor market graduates, and higher education can be beneficial for the employment of graduates.

Finally, massification in higher education is mentioned as one of the significant factors which impacts graduate unemployment (Onal, 2002). Especially after 2000s, explosion in the number of universities and graduates create many issues about qualification in education and the employment of the graduates (Gur, 2016). The increase in the number of universities was described as a way of enhancing the employment (Ay, 2012). However, this explosion caused growing body of unemployed graduates, and lowering the standards in universities (Saka & Yaman, 2011). Existing studies show that students are concerned for their employment after graduation, and they are uncomfortable about the rapid increase in the number of higher education institutions in terms of its negative impacts on education quality (Bora, 2011; Erdogan, 2021). With lowering standards in higher education and inequality in opportunities among universities, students' competencies in their profession have also been diversified (Mok, 2016). Therefore, future employability of students are shaped under these conditions. Although employability is not a direct way to be graduate employment, it can be defined as a bridge between university and labor market about graduate employment issue. From the higher education perspective, providing individuals with higher order, generic and soft skills, and professional competencies is the main way to get involved into graduate employment issue (Gur, 2016). For that reason, raising competitive graduates in the labor market and providing a graduate identity can be discussed under education quality of universities. This study, therefore, aimed that examining perceived university quality of senior students as a predictor of their employability perceptions. Besides that, other demographic characteristics of the sample as GPA, gender, SES, and work experience status were examined as independent variables of both quality and employability perceptions. In that way, graduate unemployment issue was discussed from higher education perspective, and the impact of university quality was examined as a predictor of students' employability.

Findings of the study indicated that although they showed no relationship with perceived quality separately, the combination of gender, GPA, and work experience of senior students predicted their quality perception. Existing literature about perceived quality and

GPA stated that academic achievement of students is related with their university quality perceptions (Brisco et al., 2016; Perales et al., 2020, Thesis et al., 2020). These studies mainly conclude that students who have higher academic achievement tend to be more positive about their university quality. However, academic achievement was not examined as a predictor of perceived quality in these studies, and there is only relationship among these two variables. Academic achievements of students are related with both their individual efforts and institutional support from the university (Becirevic et al., 2017). For that reason, students who have higher academic achievements may have more positive attitude towards their university quality. Students' responses on university quality did not differentiate in respect to other demographic characteristics. While considering gender groups, no significant differences between female and male students have been supported by existing literature about university quality. The study, conducted in Turkey, stated that both female and male students have positive attitudes toward university education quality for online learning (Yener & Tascioglu, 2018). Additionally, other studies about gender role on university quality perceptions show opposite results. According to Cera (2018), female students have more positive approach to university quality than males' in both Czech and Slovakia (Cera et al., 2018). On the other hand, in Spain, the study indicated that male students have higher satisfaction about their university quality than female students' (Blazquez-Resino et al., 2022). Therefore, university quality perceptions of male or female students can be varied for context, and different results can be obtained; therefore, in this study, gender of students did not predict their quality perceptions. Furthermore, work experience variable was not regarded as related with students' responses on university quality. One of the studies about graduates' perceptions of university education quality and their development of workplace competence stated that development of experiential learning and internship support of the university are related with higher university quality by graduates (Richardson & Kabanoff, 2003). Another study indicated that students who have part-time work experience have moderately higher positive response on university quality than their peers who have no experience (Akareem & Hossain, 2016). However, there is lack of study about impact of work experience, gender, and GPA of students on their attitudes toward university quality. In addition to that, combination of these three variables were not examined as a predictor of perceived quality before. Likewise, there are limited studies in the literature for supporting relationship between socioeconomic status of

students and their perceived university quality (Meraz, 1983; Kealy & Rockel, 1987), so this study results indicated that there is no significant impact of socioeconomic status on quality attitudes of students.

Study findings about employability perceptions of students indicate that there is positive and significant relationship between senior students' perceptions of university quality and future employability. According to that, students' quality perceptions predict their future employability perceptions. Although there is lack of study about university quality and employability relationship, relevant literature stated that university education forms greater part of individual's employability perceptions. University is a place where acquiring higher order skills, intellectual facilities and experiential learning happens, so its role on development of students' social, academic, and professional skills cannot be ignored. Not surprisingly, employability of people shows parallelism with their educational degree for most countries (UNESCO, 2021). Nevertheless, university education and employment relationship contain more than that. University education promotes the individuals for capability to do related tasks, and so, be more 'employable'. This study, therefore, purposed to examine the role of university quality on the future employability from the student perspective. In the light of that, senior students' responses showed that higher quality perceptions about the university are associated with higher level of future employability attitudes. Relevant literature is remarked about the relationship between quality of university education and employability of students. According to Brennan (2018), with massification in higher education, universities' employability functions become prominent in knowledge-based economy, so employability should be integrated to the internal quality assurance mechanisms of the universities (Brennan, 2018). Similarly, both internal and external members of the university mentioned the importance of the relationship between employability and university education quality (Cheng et al., 2022). Another research presented that the quality assurance factors predict the graduate employability of students (Oyebanji & Omojola, 2018). In addition to that, employability approaches, in the last decade especially, tended to more focus on quality of university education (Blackwell et al., 2001; Clarke; 2018; Holmes, 2013). For that reason, results of the study are supported by the relevant literature.

The study results indicated that the combination of GPA, work experience, and gender of students predict their employability perceptions. Relevant literature about employability supports this hypothesis. According to Ang's study (2015), results, obtained from employers and graduate university students, indicate that female participants showed higher employability rather than the male participants (Ang, 2015). Additionally, another study, which were conducted with employed and unemployed participants, showed that unemployed female participants saw their employability efficacies higher than the unemployed males (Cifre et al., 2018). On the other hand, some other studies remarked challenges of women's employment, so these challenges create a negative impact on women's employability perceptions. Rubery's study (2002) about women's employability in EU countries, for example, showed that the women's accessing to employment is harder than the men's (Rubery, 2002). Yet, Rubery's study mainly focused on women and men's employment rather than their self-perceptions for ability to getting a job, so employment issue from the gender perspective is varied in this study. Therefore, gender of students is also regarded as predictive on their employability perceptions according to the existing literature.

Furthermore, findings of the study showed that work experience status predicted students' employability perceptions. There are numerous studies in the literature, which are parallel to this finding. Crossman and Clarke's study (2010) stated that students' international work experience provided them with experiential learning, ways of thinking, development of soft skills, etc. These acquisitions are related with graduate employability outcomes in the study (Crossman & Clarke, 2010). Another study stated that internship and work experience in higher education play crucial role on graduate employability of students (Helyer & Lee, 2014). Correspondingly, many other studies presented that the work experience possesses a supportive role on students' future employability and gaining transferable skills (Blackwell et al., 2013; Minocha et al., 2017; Tomlinson, 2017; Cheng et al., 2021). In addition to that, work experience is described as one of the premises of employability, so there is no study which indicated negative relationship between work experience and individual's employability. Existent studies indicated that GPA is one of the indicators of how students achieve their academic tasks, so it impacts individual's employability perceptions. However, the role of external factors such as labor market demand are more crucial factors for perceived employability of graduates than their

academic achievement (Mainga et al., 2022). Another study indicated that the time of graduation, obtaining a master's degree, or gender are described as additional factors for graduate employability besides GPA of the students (Mehmetaj et al., 2021). Furthermore, the result of socioeconomic status shows no predictor roles on the employability perceptions. In the literature, socioeconomic status of students represents inequalities in terms of diversification in accessing the sources (Crawford et al., 2016). Thus, studies indicated that there is a gap among disadvantaged groups such as ethnic minorities, low socioeconomic status, etc. in terms of their employment (Brown, 2016; Zwysen et al., 2018). At that point, however, this study focused on university's role on students' employability perceptions. In fact, university provides equal academic or social services to their students in terms of their development regardless of their SES groups. For that reason, students' future employability perceptions did not differentiate according to their socioeconomic status. Since, their perceptions were based on the quality of their university education.

In conclusion, graduate unemployment issue has been discussed from the perspective of employability perceptions among senior students. At that point, role of university quality has been highlighted as a predictor of the perceived employability. Findings of the study promotes this prediction and underlines importance of university quality for future graduates' employability. In addition to that, combination of work experience, gender, and GPA of students is also assumed as a predictor of employability perceptions of senior students. The results of quality perceptions of students showed that demographic characteristics of the students have been predicted for their perceived quality. Thus, quality and employability perceptions of students have been discussed under the graduate unemployment issue, so results of the study indicate that quality perceptions of students show significant and positive impact on shaping their employability perceptions.

5.2 Recommendations

According to study findings, there are some recommendations for higher education, university members, and policymakers. In the higher education level, encouraging universities so as to enhance their quality culture, and supporting this structure with proper external quality mechanism would be beneficial for spreading culture of quality in higher education level. Also, understanding university members' needs and expectations

about the university, and focusing on employability of the students will be a guide for strategic plannings. From the university members' perspective, expressing their ideas for enhancing the university and more communication among each other are crucial for university development, so they should be more participatory in the university plannings; especially students should be more volunteer to express themselves. Lastly, policymakers should give more importance on university quality than their quantities, so that they can make more funding for enhancing universities' substructures. In addition to that, they had better focus on enhancing employability opportunities of future graduates. For the future studies, examining relationship between quality and employability perceptions should be applied to
population of graduated students. Thus, variation of study findings can be discussed in terms of employability perspective. Also, qualitative design for employability and university quality can give deeper analysis to understand students' opinions and concerns about their employability.

5.3 Implications of the Study

Institutional and academic quality of universities give an advantage to students about their employability. Although existing studies about graduate employability shows that getting university degree provides higher employability of individuals, there are lack of studies examining quality of university and its relations with individual's employability. Findings of this study, therefore, reveal some implications for theory, research, and practice.

From the theoretical perspective, study findings indicates that there is a positive and significant relationship between students' university quality and future employability perceptions; and quality perceptions of the students predicted their employability perceptions. According to that, senior students' attitudes toward their university's quality has been positively related with their future employability perceptions, so if students are satisfied with their university's quality, they tend to suppose that they are highly employable than others, and if not, their employability expectations diminish relatively.

Moreover, work experience of students has been another factor for influencing their future employability responses. Results of the study show that work experience status of senior students predict their future employability. Similarly, relevant literature supports

this finding, with stating that the importance of work experience and practical knowledge of students are important for students' graduate employability. Therefore, future employability of senior students has been associated with their university quality perception, gender, GPA, and work experience status. This study can be described as preliminary research in terms of examining relationship among university quality and future employability of students. In that way, it cracks an open door for understanding importance of university's institutional and academic quality for future employability of students in addition to other factors. Besides, understanding differences between employment and employability aspects; and drawing university's boundaries separated from markets and government's responsibilities in terms of employability roles have been another implication of the study.

This research contributes to higher education literature in terms of enhancing universities' community service and educational functions with its findings about perceptions of employability and university quality relationship. Furthermore, integration of university quality in graduate employability phenomenon would be getting more attention for further studies. Although employability of the universities is one of the existent factors for internal and external quality assurance mechanisms, examining employability function of the university for quality assurance has not been correctly fit to the main purpose. This study, therefore, focused the definition of employability, and it would be helpful guide for assessing employability outcome -rather than assessing graduate employment- with quality assurance. Also, it has been attention gatherer study in terms of developing instruments which more focused on graduate employability-university relationship.

Practically, the current study contains useful information for university and faculty governance, internal and external quality assurance bodies, and other members of higher education. As mentioned, study results indicate positive and significant relationship between university quality and students' future employability, so university governance may develop policies or regulations for enhancing university quality in terms of physical arrangements, social services, development of library, laboratory equipment, and career services, etc. Besides that, academic quality can be developed by curriculum revisions, meeting needs of academic staff, and teaching-learning effectiveness. Undoubtedly, reformative alterations about university quality would be positive impact on students'

future employability attitudes. Moreover, supporting students for experiential learning and internship opportunities are useful for both enhancing academic quality and encouraging students' employability attitudes. From the quality assurance bodies' perspective, this study, like some other employability studies, shows that employment outcomes do not demonstrate employability of the university. For that reason, analysis of employability should be conducted multidimensionally rather than statistical data about employment of graduates. By the way, strengths and weaknesses of the institution can be identified more accurately. This study aimed that creating awareness about university quality for students' future employability. In the light of that, university members can aim at generating quality culture in the university. For that reason, collective act for development of the university would be the most effective way of constituting a quality culture.

Therefore, examining this issue would be beneficial for analyzing issues in higher education system, so qualitative design would be more inclusive for students' responses. Furthermore, the current study can be conducted with larger sample size or with different universities' students. In that way, representativeness of the study would be higher.

5.4 Conclusion

Graduate employability is one of the rising issues all over the world. Today, with the growing number of universities and graduates, employability of individuals, relevant to positional value with their university degree, is getting harder than before. Especially in Turkey with increasing numbers of the universities, accessing to equal standards and students' proper transition from school to work are crucial for quality of higher education system. Even inequality of opportunity among future graduates starts before university, this gap gets bigger with the universities' inequal implements. Under the circumstances, developing quality of universities will be more vital than focusing on the number of buildings. Although government is in charge of the employment of the graduates, policymakers and market, employability aspect is broader than that, so universities play a crucial role for development of individuals' capability to achieve relevant tasks about their professional life. As it is indicated in this study university students' future employability senses are related to their quality attitudes toward the university. In the light of that, universities have particular importance in order to shape the students'

employability tendencies. Also, a university as a living organism keeps in touch with various dynamics as inner members, market, society, non-governmental bodies; so it should be analyzed and developed in these contexts, and employability can be defined cross points of the equilibrium. This equilibrium among members can be defined as being between two fires, so making fundamental changes for each demand on university harms to its authenticity. At that point, understanding needs of the members are more eligible than making fundamental changings. In that way, problematic issues can be solved with more awareness. This study, therefore, contributes to literature in terms of understanding students' tendencies on employability and quality of university relationship. Further studies about this relationship will be helpful for understanding other members' opinions.

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APPENDICES

A. APPROVAL OF THE METU HUMAN SUBJECTS ETHICS COMMITTEE

UYGULAMALI ETİK ARAŞTIRMA MERKEZİ
APPLIED ETHICS RESEARCH CENTER

ORTA DOĞU TEKNİK ÜNİVERSİTESİ
MIDDLE EAST TECHNICAL UNIVERSITY

DUMLUPINAR BULVARI 06800
ÇANKAYA ANKARA/TURKEY
T: +90 312 210 22 91
F: +90 312 210 79 59
ueam@metu.edu.tr
www.ueam.metu.edu.tr

Sayı: 28620816 /

14 OCAK 2022

Konu : Değerlendirme Sonucu

Gönderen: ODTÜ İnsan Araştırmaları Etik Kurulu (İAEK)

İlgi : İnsan Araştırmaları Etik Kurulu Başvurusu

Sayın Doç. Dr. Serap EMİL

Danışmanlığını yürüttüğünüz Buse TANYEL'in "Üniversite Son Sınıf Öğrencilerinin Algılanan Gelecekteki İstihdam Edilebilirliğinin Yordayıcısı Olarak Üniversite Kalitesi" başlıklı araştırmanız İnsan Araştırmaları Etik Kurulu tarafından uygun görülmüş ve **0015-ODTUİAEK-2022** protokol numarası ile onaylanmıştır.

Saygılarımızla bilgilerinize sunarız.

Prof.Dr. Mine MISIRLISOY
İAEK Başkan

B. APPROVALS FROM BALIKESIR UNIVERSITY

T.C.
BALIKESİR ÜNİVERSİTESİ REKTÖRLÜĞÜ
Öğrenci İşleri Daire Başkanlığı

Sayı : E-28711322-044-137712 27.04.2022
Konu : Anket Çalışması (Buse KAYLAN)

ORTA DOĞU TEKNİK ÜNİVERSİTESİ REKTÖRLÜĞÜNE
Üniversiteler Mh. Dumlupınar Blv. No:1 PK:06800
Çankaya/ ANKARA

Üniversitemiz Necatibey Eğitim Fakültesi ve Spor Bilimleri Fakültesi Dekanlıklarının Üniversiteniz öğrencisi Buse KAYLAN'ın tez çalışması ile ilgili cevabi yazıları ekte gönderilmiştir.
Gereğini bilgilerinize arz ederim.

Prof. Dr. Mehmet NARLI
Rektör a.
Rektör Yardımcısı

Ek:Yazı (2 Sayfa)

Bu belge, güvenli elektronik imza ile imzalanmıştır.

Belge Doğrulama Kodu :BSDK4KK2LU Pin Kodu :17182 Belge Takip Adresi : https://www.turkiye.gov.tr/balikesir-universitesi-ebys

Adres:Çağış Yerleşkesi, Bigadiç Yolu Üzeri 17. Km.
Altıeylül/BALIKESİR
Telefon:02666121400 Faks:0266 6121428
e-Posta:ogris@balikesir.edu.tr Web:www.balikesir.edu.tr
Kep Adresi:balikesiruniversitesi@hs01.kep.tr

Bilgi için: Nihal DEMİRCAN
Unvanı: Şef
Tel No: 0266 6121400-1703

T.C.
BALIKESİR ÜNİVERSİTESİ
Necatibey Eğitim Fakültesi Dekanlığı

Sayı : E-70465693-300-137084 25.04.2022
Konu : Anket İzni

REKTÖRLÜK MAKAMINA
(Öğrenci İşleri Daire Başkanlığı)

İlgi : 22.04.2022 tarihli ve 28711322/044/136164 sayılı yazı.

Orta Doğu Teknik Üniversitesi Rektörlüğünün Eğitim Bilimleri Anabilim Dalı Eğitim Yönetimi ve Planlaması yüksek lisans programı öğrencisi Buse KAYLAN'ın "Üniversite Son Sınıf Öğrencilerinin Algılanan Gelecekteki İstihdam Edilebilirliğinin Yordayıcısı Olarak Üniversite Kalitesi" konulu tez çalışmasını Fakültemiz son sınıf öğrencilerine uygulama isteği Dekanlığımızca uygun görülmüştür.

Bilgilerinizi ve gereğini arz ederim.

Prof. Dr. Mehmet BAŞTÜRK
Dekan

Adres:Dinkçiler Mah. Soma Cad. Merkez/Balıkesir
Telefon:2662412762-104 Faks:2662412762-104
e-Posta:goktas@balikesir.edu.tr Web:www.balikesir.edu.tr/nef
Kep Adresi:balikesiruniversitesi@hs01.kep.tr
Bilgi için: Reyhan Pekdağ
Unvanı: Bilgisayar İşletmeni
Tel No: 02662412762-141130

T.C.
BALIKESİR ÜNİVERSİTESİ
Spor Bilimleri Fakültesi Dekanlığı

Sayı : E-11091771-044-137315 26.04.2022
Konu : Anket Çalışması (Buse KAYLAN)

REKTÖRLÜK MAKAMINA
(Öğrenci İşleri Daire Başkanlığı)

İlgi : 22.04.2022 tarihli ve 28711322/044/136164 sayılı yazı.

İlgi yazınıza istinaden Orta Doğu Teknik Üniversitesi Rektörlüğünün Eğitim Bilimleri Anabilim Dalı Eğitim Yönetimi ve Planlaması yüksek lisans programı öğrencisi Buse KAYLAN'ın "Üniversite Son Sınıf Öğrencilerinin Algılanan Gelecekteki İstihdam Edilebilirliğinin Yordayıcısı Olarak Üniversite Kalitesi" konulu tez çalışması ile ilgili Fakültemizde veri toplaması Dekanlığımızca uygun bulunmuştur.

Bilgilerini ve gereğini arz ederim.

Prof. Dr. Fikret SOYER
Dekan

Adres:Bigadiç Yolu Üzeri Çağış Yerleşkesi 17. Km BALIKESİR
Telefon:2662391838 Faks:2662391838
e-Posta:besyo@balikesir.edu.tr Web:http://besyo.balikesir.edu.tr/
Kep Adresi:balikesiruniversitesi@hs01.kep.tr
Bilgi için: Hakan Yıldırım
Unvanı: Bilgisayar İşletmeni
Tel No: 2666121400

C. APPROVALS FROM CANAKKALE 18TH MARCH UNIVERSITY

T.C.
ÇANAKKALE ONSEKİZ MART ÜNİVERSİTESİ REKTÖRLÜĞÜ
Öğrenci İşleri Daire Başkanlığı

Sayı : E-93130991-302.08.01-2200084885 22.04.2022
Konu : Buse KAYLAN-Araştırma İzni

ORTA DOĞU TEKNİK ÜNİVERSİTESİ REKTÖRLÜĞÜ
(Öğrenci İşleri Daire Başkanlığı)

İlgi : 19.04.2022 tarihli ve 54850036-044-E.298 sayılı yazınız.

Üniversiteniz Eğitim Bilimleri Anabilim Dalı Eğitim Yönetimi ve Planlaması yüksek lisans programı öğrencisi Buse KAYLAN'ın, Doç.Dr. Serap EMİL'in danışmanlığında yürütmekte olduğu "Üniversite Son Sınıf Öğrencilerinin Algılanan Gelecekteki İstihdam Edilebilirliğinin Yordayıcısı Olarak Üniversite Kalitesi" konulu tez çalışması kapsamında 11 Nisan 2022-29 Temmuz 2022 tarihleri arasında Üniversitemiz son sınıf öğrencilerine anket uygulama isteği uygun görülmüştür.

Bilgilerinizi ve gereğini arz ederim.

Prof. Dr. Sedat MURAT
Rektör

Ek: Olur (1 sayfa)

Adres: Terzioğlu Yerleşkesi Rektörlük Binası B Blok Zemin Kat
Telefon No: (0 286) 2180018 Faks No:
e-Posta: İnternet Adresi: https://www.comu.edu.tr
Kep Adresi: comu@hs01.kep.tr
Bilgi için : Hülya Ulaş Şef V.
Telefon No: (0 286) 2180018 - 10022

D. APPROVALS FROM KOCAELI UNIVERSITY

T.C.
KOCAELİ ÜNİVERSİTESİ
Öğrenci İşleri Daire Başkanlığı

Sayı : E 21447663 302.08.01 221701
Konu : Buse KAYLAN - Araştırma İzni Hk.

DAĞITIM YERLERİNE

İlgi : 19.04.2022 tarihli, 298 sayılı ve "Buse KAYLAN - Araştırma İzni" konulu yazı

Orta Doğu Teknik Üniversitesi Eğitim Bilimleri Anabilim Dalı Eğitim Yönetimi ve Planlaması yüksek lisans programı öğrencisi Buse KAYLAN'ın 11 Nisan 2022 - 29 Temmuz 2022 tarihleri arasında Üniversitemiz son sınıf öğrencilerinden anket yoluyla Uygulama yapılabilmesi hususunda;

Gereğini bilgilerinize rica ederim.

Prof.Dr. Ahmet KÜÇÜK
Rektör Yardımcısı

DAĞITIM
Devlet Konservatuvarı Müdürlüğüne
Denizcilik Fakültesi Dekanlığına
Diş Hekimliği Fakültesi Dekanlığına
Eğitim Fakültesi Dekanlığına
Fen Edebiyat Fakültesi Dekanlığına
Güzel Sanatlar Fakültesi Dekanlığına
Havacılık ve Uzay Bilimleri Fakültesi Dekanlığına
Hukuk Fakültesi Dekanlığına
İktisadi ve İdari Bilimler Fakültesi Dekanlığına
İlahiyat Fakültesi Dekanlığına
İletişim Fakültesi Dekanlığına
Mimarlık ve Tasarım Fakültesi Dekanlığına
Mühendislik Fakültesi Dekanlığına
Sağlık Bilimleri Fakültesi Dekanlığına
Spor Bilimleri Fakültesi Dekanlığına
Teknoloji Fakültesi Dekanlığına
Tıp Fakültesi Dekanlığına
Turizm Fakültesi Dekanlığına
Ziraat Fakültesi Dekanlığına
Adalet Meslek Yüksekokulu Müdürlüğüne
Ali Rıza Veziroğlu Meslek Yüksekokulu Müdürlüğüne
Değirmendere Ali Özbay Meslek Yüksekokulu Müdürlüğüne
Ford Otosan İhsaniye Otomotiv Meslek Yüksekokulu Müdürlüğüne
Gazanfer Bilge Meslek Yüksekokulu Müdürlüğüne
Gölcük Meslek Yüksekokulu Müdürlüğüne
Hereke Asım Kocabıyık Meslek Yüksekokulu Müdürlüğüne
Hereke Ömer İsmet Uzunyol Meslek Yüksekokulu

Mevcut Elektronik İmzalar
AHMET KÜÇÜK (Rektör Yardımcılığı (Eğitim Öğretim) - Rektör Yardımcısı) 22.04.2022 11:52

Belge Doğrulama Kodu :BSD048BAU3 Belge Doğrulama Adresi :https://turkiye.gov.tr/kocaeli-universitesi-ebys

Yazı ve Destek İşleri Şube MüdürlüğüKocaeli Üniversitesi Umuttepe Yerleşkesi 41380, Kocaeli
Tel:(+90262) 303 12 01-02 Faks:(+90262) 303 12 03
E-Posta :ogrenci@kocaeli.edu.tr Elektronik Ağ :http://odb.kocaeli.edu.tr/
Kep Adresi: kocaeliuniversitesi@hs01.kep.tr

Bilgi için: Mehmet Demirbaş
Memur
Telefon No:

Bu belge 5070 sayılı Elektronik İmza Kanununun 5. Maddesi gereğince güvenli elektronik imza ile imzalanmıştır

T.C.
KOCAELİ ÜNİVERSİTESİ
Öğrenci İşleri Daire Başkanlığı

Müdürlüğüne
İzmit Meslek Yüksekokulu Müdürlüğüne
Kandıra Meslek Yüksekokulu Müdürlüğüne
Karamürsel Meslek Yüksekokulu Müdürlüğüne
Kartepe Atçılık Meslek Yüksekokulu Müdürlüğüne
Kartepe Turizm Meslek Yüksekokulu Müdürlüğüne
Kocaeli Meslek Yüksekokulu Müdürlüğüne
Kocaeli Sağlık Hizmetleri Meslek Yüksekokulu Müdürlüğüne
Uzunçiftlik Nuh Çimento Meslek Yüksekokulu Müdürlüğüne
Kandıra Uygulamalı Bilimler Yüksekokulu Müdürlüğüne
Ulaştırma Yüksekokulu Müdürlüğüne
Yabancı Diller Yüksekokulu Müdürlüğüne
Fen Bilimleri Enstitüsü Müdürlüğüne
Gastroenteroloji ve Hepatoloji Enstitüsü Müdürlüğüne
Sağlık Bilimleri Enstitüsü Müdürlüğüne
Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü Müdürlüğüne

Belge Doğrulama Kodu :BSD048BAU3 Belge Doğrulama Adresi :https://turkiye.gov.tr/kocaeli-universitesi-ebys
Yazı ve Destek İşleri Şube MüdürlüğüKocaeli Üniversitesi Umuttepe Yerleşkesi 41380, Kocaeli
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Telefon No:
Kep Adresi: kocaeliuniversitesi@hs01.kep.tr

E. INFORMED CONSENT FORM

GÖNÜLLÜ KATILIM FORMU

Bu çalışma, ODTÜ Eğitim Yönetimi ve Planlaması yüksek lisans öğrencisi Buse TANYEL tarafından yüksek lisans tez çalışması kapsamında, Doç. Dr. Serap EMİL'in danışmanlığında yürütülmektedir. Balıkesir, Kocaeli ve Çanakkale 18 Mart Üniversiteleri'ni kapsayan bu çalışmada amaç, üniversite son sınıf öğrencilerinin mezun istihdam edilebilirliğini ve üniversite hizmet kalitesi ile ilişkisini incelemektir. Çalışma sonunda elde edilecek bilgiler mezun adaylarının istihdam edilebilirliğinin daha verimli bir şekilde planlanmasına katkı sağlayacaktır. Çalışmaya katılım tamamen gönüllülük esasına dayanmaktadır. Ankette, sizden kimlik belirleyici herhangi bir bilgi istenmemektedir ve cevaplarınız tamamıyla gizli tutulacaktır. Elde edilecek bilgiler araştırmacılar tarafından değerlendirilerek sadece bilimsel amaçlarla kullanılacaktır.

Cevaplamanız gereken iki anket bulunmakta ve anketlerin hiçbiri, genel olarak kişisel rahatsızlık verecek soruları içermemektedir. Ancak, katılım sırasında sorulardan ya da herhangi başka bir nedenden ötürü kendinizi rahatsız hissederseniz anketi yarıda bırakarak çıkmakta serbestsiniz. Böyle bir durumda anketi uygulayan kişiye, anketi tamamlamadığınızı söylemeniz yeterli olacaktır. Çalışmadan ayrılmanız durumunda sizden toplanan veriler çalışmadan çıkarılacak ve imha edilecektir. Anket sonunda, bu çalışmayla ilgili sorularınız cevaplanacaktır.

Çalışma hakkında daha fazla bilgi almak için Buse TANYEL (E-posta: tanyel.buse@metu.edu.tr) ile iletişim kurabilirsiniz.

Çalışmaya katıldığınız için şimdiden teşekkür ederiz.

Bu çalışmaya tamamen gönüllü olarak katılıyorum ve istediğim zaman çalışmadan ayrılabileceğimi biliyorum. Verdiğim bilgilerin bilimsel amaçlarla kullanılmasını kabul ediyorum.

(Lütfen formu doldurup imzaladıktan sonra veri toplayan kişiye geri veriniz).

Tarih:
İmza:
Ad Soyad:

F. DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION QUESTIONNAIRE

Demografik Bilgi Formu

Cinsiyetiniz: ( ) Kadın ( ) Erkek

Üniversiteniz:

Bölümünüz:

Genel not ortalamanız:

Ailenizin aylık ortalama gelir düzeyi:

A) 2.000 TL ve altı
B) 2.001 – 4.000 TL
C) 4.001 – 6.000 TL
D) 6.001 ve üstü

Zorunlu stajım dışında iş/staj tecrübem: ( ) Var ( ) Yok

G. PERCIEVED FUTURE EMPLOYABILITY SCALE

No	Genç yetişkinlerin üniversite sonrası iş yaşamı ile ilgili pek çok hedefi ve beklentisi olabilir. Bu konu ile ilgili herkesin birtakım düşünceleri vardır. Sizden istenen her ifadeyi dikkatlice okuyarak kendinizi değerlendirmenizdir. Sorular "Kesinlikle katılmıyorum (1)" ve "Kesinlikle katılıyorum (6)" şeklinde altı derecelidir. Lütfen kendinize en yakın hissettiğiniz dereceyi işaretleyiniz. Her bir soru için tek dereceyi işaretleyiniz ve boş madde bırakmayınız.	(1) Kesinlikle Katılmıyorum	(2) Katılmıyorum	(3) Kısmen Katılmıyorum	(4) Kısmen Katılıyorum	(5) Katılıyorum	(6) Kesinlikle Katılıyorum
1	İşimde başarılı olmak için kurduğum ilişkilerden yararlanabileceğim.						
2	İşimi iyi yapmamı sağlayacak sosyal ilişkiler ağı kuracağım.						
3	Olası iş fırsatlarını belirlememe yardımcı olabilecek bir iletişim ağı kuracağım.						
4	Kariyer alanımda iş bulmama yardımcı olabilecek insanlarla nasıl iletişim kuracağımı bileceğim.						
5	Çalışmalarımdan edindiğim bilgileri kullanarak amacıma uygun iş tecrübesine sahip olacağım.						
6	Gelecekteki işverenlerim, biriktirmiş olduğum iş deneyiminden etkilenecekler.						
7	Gelecekteki işverenlerim kazandığım iş deneyimlerinden memnun olacaklar.						
8	Gelecekteki işverenlerime, istedikleri uygulama becerilerine ve akademik tecrübeye sahip olduğumu gösterebileceğim.						
9	Tecrübelerim, başa çıkma gücümün olduğunu ve kolayca pes etmediğimi gösterecek.						
10	Olası iş verenlerim, iyi motive olduğumu başarılarımdan görebilecekler.						
11	Olası işverenlerim, kendim için net hedeflerim olduğunu görebilecekler.						
12	Sicilim (kayıtlarım), güçlü bir iş etiğine sahip olduğumu gösterecektir.						
13	Gelecekteki işverenlerimin işe alımlarda, diğer üniversitelerden ziyade benim üniversitemin mezunlarını tercih edeceklerinin avantajına sahip olacağım.						
14	Eğitim aldığım üniversitenin itibarı, iş ararken bana çok önemli bir kazanç sağlayacak.						
15	Eğitim aldığım üniversitenin çok sayıda olası işverenle güçlü ortaklıkları olduğu için, bana açık pek çok iş fırsatı olacak.						
16	Üniversitemin mezunları yüksek talep gören çalışma pozisyonları konusunda iyi bir şekilde yetiştirildiği için, aranılan biri olacağım.						
17	Benim için mevcut olan çeşitli iş fırsatlarına hakim olacağım.						
18	Kariyerimde iyi olmak için atmam gereken adımları öğreneceğim.						
19	Seçtiğim alandaki iş fırsatlarını keşfetme becerimi geliştireceğim.						
20	Seçtiğim alandaki mesleki eğilimler konusunda güncel kalacağım.						
21	İstediğim işi elde etmek için gereken bilgileri kazananacağım.						
22	Seçtiğim mesleğe uygun becerilere sahip olacağım.						
23	Gelecekteki işverenlerim, istedikleri bilgileri ve alana uygun özel/teknik becerileri öğrenmiş olacağımı görecekler.						
24	Gelecekteki işverenlerimin sıklıkla ihtiyaç duyacakları mantıklı düşünme ve problem çözme becerilerimi geliştirmiş olacağım.						

** Bilimsel ilkelere bağlı kalmak ve uygun biçimde atıf yapmak koşuluyla yazarlardan izin almadan ölçeği araştırmalarınızda kullanabilirsiniz.*

H. HIGHER EDUCATION PERFORMANCE-ONLY SCALE

		Hiç Katılmıyorum.	Katılmıyorum.	Kararsızım.	Katılıyorum.	Kesinlikle Katılıyorum.
1.	Akademik personel, ders ile ilgili sorularımı yanıtlayabilecek yeterli bilgiye sahiptir.	1	2	3	4	5
2.	Akademik personel, bana nazik ve saygılı bir şeklide yaklaşmaktadır.	1	2	3	4	5
3.	Akademik personel, hiçbir zaman isteklerime cevap veremeyecek kadar meşgul değildir.	1	2	3	4	5
4.	Akademik personel, benim sorunum olduğu zaman çözmek için samimi bir ilgi göstermektedir.	1	2	3	4	5
5.	Akademik personel, öğrencilere karşı olumlu bir tutum sergilemektedir.	1	2	3	4	5
6.	Akademik personelin, öğrencilerle olan sınıf içi iletişimi yeterli düzeydedir.	1	2	3	4	5
7.	Akademik personel, bilgi ve becerilerimin (performansımın) gelişim süreci ile ilgili geribildirim sağlamaktadır.	1	2	3	4	5
8.	Akademik personel, öğrencileri yönlendirmek için yeterli zamanı ayırabilmektedir.	1	2	3	4	5
9.	Üniversitem iyi bir imaja sahiptir.	1	2	3	4	5
10.	Üniversitemin öğrenci yurt imkanı vardır ve yeterlidir.	1	2	3	4	5
11.	Üniversitemin akademik tesisleri (derslik, laboratuar, konferans salonu vb.) yeterlidir.	1	2	3	4	5
12.	Üniversitemde mükemmel kalitede diploma programları yürütülmektedir.	1	2	3	4	5
13.	Üniversitemin sosyal tesisleri, öğrencilerin kullanımına uygun ve yeterlidir.	1	2	3	4	5
14.	Üniversitemde kişisel ilginin sağlanması için	1	2	3	4	5

	sınıf büyüklükleri minimum kapasitede tutulmaktadır.					
15.	Üniversitemde çok sayıda ve çeşitli uzmanlık programları sunulmaktadır.	1	2	3	4	5
16.	Üniversitem esnek müfredat yapısına sahip programlar sunmaktadır.	1	2	3	4	5
17.	Üniversitem mükemmel kampüs planı ve görünüşü olan ideal bir yere (lokasyona) sahiptir.	1	2	3	4	5
18.	Üniversitem oldukça saygın diploma programları sunmaktadır.	1	2	3	4	5
19.	Akademik personel, kendi alanında oldukça bilgili ve tecrübe sahibidir.	1	2	3	4	5
20.	Üniversitemden mezun kişiler kolayca iş bulabilmektedirler.	1	2	3	4	5
21.	Bir sorunum olduğunda idari personel, sorunu çözmek için samimi bir ilgi göstermektedir.	1	2	3	4	5
22.	İdari personel, öğrencilere özenli ve bireysel ilgi göstermektedir.	1	2	3	4	5
23.	İdari personel, öğrencilerin soruları/ şikayetleri ile etkin olarak ve zamanında ilgilenir.	1	2	3	4	5
24.	İdari personel, hiçbir zaman öğrencilerin isteklerine cevap veremeyecek kadar meşgul değildir.	1	2	3	4	5
25.	İdari birimler, öğrencilere ait kayıtları ve bilgileri hatasız ve ulaşılabilir olarak tutmaktadırlar.	1	2	3	4	5
26.	İdari personel, öğrenciye verdiği sözü zamanında yerine getirir.	1	2	3	4	5
27.	İdari büroların çalışma saatleri benim için uygundur.	1	2	3	4	5
28.	İdari personel, öğrencilere karşı olumlu bir tutum sergilemektedir.	1	2	3	4	5
29.	İdari personelin, öğrencilerle olan iletişimi iyi düzeydedir.	1	2	3	4	5
30.	İdari personel, kendi görev alanlarına ait prosedüre ilişkin yeterli bir bilgi düzeyine sahiptir.	1	2	3	4	5

31.	Üniversitem ile yaptığım işlemlerde(kayıt, askerlik durumu, ders seçimi vb.) kendimi güvende hissederim.	1	2	3	4	5
32.	Üniversitem, hizmetlerini daha önceden söylediği zaman içinde gerçekleştirir.	1	2	3	4	5
33.	İdari personel, öğrencilere ayrım gözetmeksizin ve saygılı olarak davranmaktadır.	1	2	3	4	5
34.	Üniversitem tarafından öğrencilere yeteri kadar özgürlük ortamı sağlanmaktadır.	1	2	3	4	5
35.	Üniversitem öğrencinin gizlilik haklarına saygılıdır.	1	2	3	4	5
36.	Üniversitemin personeline rahatlıkla telefonla ulaşabilirim.	1	2	3	4	5
37.	Üniversitem mükemmel bir danışmanlık hizmeti sunmaktadır.	1	2	3	4	5
38.	Üniversitemin sunduğu sağlık hizmetleri yeterlidir.	1	2	3	4	5
39.	Üniversitem, öğrenci kulüplerinin kurulmasını teşvik etmekte ve desteklemektedir.	1	2	3	4	5
40.	Üniversitem sunduğu hizmet kalitesini arttırabilmek için öğrencilerden gelen bildirimlere değer vermektedir.	1	2	3	4	5
41.	Üniversitemin standart ve anlaşılması kolay bir hizmet sunum yöntemi vardır.	1	2	3	4	5
42.	Üniversitemden aldığım hizmet beklentilerimi tamamen yerine getirmiştir.	1	2	3	4	5
43.	Üniversitemi başkalarına tavsiye ederim.	1	2	3	4	5
44.	Bir daha üniversite seçme şansım olsa, yine de bu üniversiteyi seçerdim	1	2	3	4	5
45.	Araştırma görevlileri uygulama derslerinde anlatacakları konulara hakim ve ders anlatmaya isteklidirler.	1	2	3	4	5
46.	Araştırma görevlileri, öğrencilere karşı olumlu bir tutum sergilemektedir.	1	2	3	4	5

I. TURKISH SUMMARY / TÜRKÇE ÖZET

1. Giriş

II. Dünya Savaşı'ndan sonra 1950'li yıllarda dünya, büyük dönüşümler içindeydi. Geçmiş yüzyıllarla karşılaştırıldığında; bu dönemde teknolojide, sanayide, ekonomide ve siyasette hızlı dönüşümler yaşandı. İkinci Dünya Savaşı'nda savunma sanayisindeki teknolojik gelişmelerin yükselişi sonraki yıllarda da devam etmiştir. Ancak ülkeler savunma sanayisindeki gelişmelere ek olarak telekomünikasyon, bilişim, üretim ve finans gibi diğer alanlara da yönelmişlerdir (Ryan, 2021). Buna bağlı olarak küreselleşmenin yayılması dünya çapında ulusal ekonomiden çok uluslararası ekonomik ilişkilerde bir trend oluşmasına neden olmuştur (Green, 2006). Ekonomi ve endüstrideki değişen trendlerle birlikte, bilgiye dayalı ekonomiye geçiş ve neredeyse her sektöre artan teknoloji entegrasyonu nedeniyle farklı işgücü ihtiyaçları ortaya çıkmıştır (Svarc & Dabic, 2017). Ayrıca hükümetler, dünya genelinde bu hızlanan dönüşüm ve küresel ekonomi trendini yakalamak için araştırma ve geliştirme çalışmalarına yoğunlaşmışlardır (Czarl ve Belovecz, 2007).

Bu konjonktürde yükseköğretim alanı da gelişen ekonomi ve endüstri trendlerinden yakından etkilenmiştir. Üniversite-sanayi ilişkisinin güçlenmesiyle üniversitenin topluma ekonomik katkısı eskisinden daha belirgin hale gelmiştir (Dema, 2001). Yükseköğretim açısından bu dönem, üniversiteler üzerinde topluma katkı sağlama konusunda baskılara yol açmış, öğretim ve araştırma işlevlerine ek olarak 'Üçüncü Misyon' da belirgin hale gelmiştir (Compagnucci & Spigarelli, 2020). Üçüncü misyon temel olarak bilgi ve teknolojiyi aktararak topluma katkıda bulunmayı içermektedir (Agasisti vd., 2019). 1963'te Birleşik Krallık'taki Yüksek Öğrenim Komitesi'nin raporu olan Robbins Raporu, yükseköğrenimin amaçlarını belirtmiştir. Bu raporda, üniversite eğitiminin genel işbölümü üzerindeki hayati rolü açısından önemi vurgulanmıştır (The Robbins Report, 1963). Aynı şekilde 1950'li yıllarda ABD'de üniversite-sanayi ilişkisinin artmasıyla kolej sistemi yaygınlaşmış, mesleki eğitim ve insan gücünün gelecekteki talepleri müfredatlarda yer bulmuştur. Üniversitelerin nitelikli beşeri sermayesi ve işgücü

üzerindeki etkisinin yanı sıra araştırma fonksiyonları da üniversite ve toplum arasında bir başka köprü olmuştur.

STEM alanındaki araştırma çalışmaları ve mesleki eğitimi üniversitenin üçüncü misyonu açısından odak noktası olmuştur (Bear ve Skorton, 2018). Akademik araştırma yapmak, girişimcilik fırsatlarına yol açarak ekonomik gelişmeye neden olabilmekte ve bu tür ilişkiler, üniversitenin finansal beslenişi ve topluma sosyoekonomik katkısı açısından karşılıklı olarak tanımlanabilmektedir. Araştırma ve öğretim merkezleri olarak üniversitelerin geleneksel önemine ek olarak, toplum katılımı ve toplumla karşılıklı ilişkileri, üniversitenin piyasalaştırılmasına sebep olmuştur.

Üniversiteler topluma katkılarının yanı sıra, bireysel düzeyde insanların sosyal ve ekonomik refaha ulaşmasını sağlar (Uysal ve Aydemir, 2016). Üniversite mezuniyeti insanların sosyal hareketliliğini teşvik etmekte ve daha yüksek gelir düzeyine sahip olmalarına katkı sağlamaktadır (Mok, 2015; Uysal ve Aydemir, 2016). UNESCO İstatistik Enstitüsü'ne (2021) göre, dünya çapında yükseköğretime kayıt oranı 1990'da %13,62 iken 2020'de %40,24'e ulaşmıştır. Bu yıllarda üniversite nüfusundaki hızlı artış, üniversitelerin kitleselleşmesi konusunda soru işaretleri uyandırmıştır. Altbach'a (2012) göre yükseköğretimde kitleselleşme standartların düşmesine neden olmaktadır çünkü çoğu ülkede her öğrenci en üst kaliteye erişememekte, dolayısıyla öğrenci ve öğretim üyesi açısından fırsat eşitliği olmayan bir tablo ortaya çıkmaktadır. Ayrıca yükseköğretimde kitleselleşme finansman, organizasyon ve yönetişim gibi sorunları da beraberinde getirmektedir (Trow, 2000). Bu nedenle üniversite eğitiminin kalitesi eskisinden daha yüksek sesle tartışılmaktadır. Avrupa ülkeleri için Bologna Deklarasyonu, yükseköğretimde kalite güvence sistemi için ilk resmi adım olmuştur. Bologna Deklarasyonu, temel olarak Avrupa üniversiteleri için yüksek ve eşit standartlar sağlamak ve dünya çapında rekabet güçlerini artırmak amacıyla 19 Haziran 1999'da 29 Avrupa ülkesi tarafından imzalanmıştır (EHEA, 2022). Bologna Süreci ilerleyen yıllarda giderek büyüyen bir yapıya kavuşmuştur. Türkiye, 2001 yılından bu yana Bologna Süreci'ne tam üyedir. Türkiye'nin Bologna üyeliği ve işbirliği diğer birçok ülkeye göre daha kolay olmasına rağmen, geliştirilmesi gereken başlıca iki konu hayat boyu öğrenme ve kalite güvencesi olarak belirtilmiştir (Tekeli, 2003). Bologna Süreci ile ilgili gerekliliklerin yerine getirilmesi nedeniyle Türkiye Yükseköğretim Kurulu (YÖK) ve

üniversite toplulukları birlikte çalışmıştır. Ancak YÖK, 2005 yılına kadar mevcut yükseköğretim sistemi ile ilgili herhangi bir stratejik planlama yapmamıştır. 2005 yılında ise başkan, rektörler ve YÖK üyelerine sunulan raporda, yükseköğretim sistemindeki sorunların; yükseköğretimde kalite sorunu, öğretim üyesi eksikliği ve talebi karşılamada üniversite sayısının yetersizliği olarak belirtilmiştir (Uysal ve Aydemir, 2016). Bu konulardan üniversite talebi konusu üzerinde en titiz çalışılan konu olmuştur. Üniversite sayısındaki bu hızlı büyüme planlamasında üniversite üyelerinin ve YÖK'ün kalite ve altyapı geliştirme ile ilgili kaygıları olsa da, üniversiteler kısa sürede Türkiye'nin dört bir yanında kurulmaya başlamıştır. 2002 yılında 76 üniversite yükseköğretime devam ederken, 2021 yılında üniversite sayısı 207'ye ulaşmıştır (THEC, 2021). Bunu takiben, mezun populasyonu da 30 yılda artmıştır. Üniversite nüfusunun artması, erişilebilirlik ve araştırma ve geliştirme açısından dikkate değer bir gelişme olmasına rağmen, her üniversite öğrencisi için benzer standartlara erişim zorlaşmaktadır. Kaynaklara erişim ve kalitenin düşmesi açısından öğrenciler ve üniversiteler arasında eşitsizlikler oluşmuştur. Bunun yanı sıra üniversitelerin prestij, tercih edilebilirlik ve fon kaynaklarının kısıtlı olması da kalite olgusuyla paralellik göstermektedir.

Yükseköğretimde kitleselleşmenin getirdiği kalite kaygılarının yanı sıra, üniversite mezunlarının büyük bölümünün bu nitelikli insan gücüne dahil olup olamaması konusu da bir soru işareti oluşturmaktadır. Eğitim ve genç istihdamı arasında olumlu bir eğilim olmasına rağmen, günümüzde artan üniversite mezunu nüfusuyla birlikte mezun istihdamı hemen hemen her ülke için üzerinde durulması gereken konuların başında gelmektedir. ABD'de yüksek öğretim mezunu işsizlik oranı 2000 yılında %1,7 iken 2020'de %4,8'e ulaşmıştır (Statista, 2022). Avrupa'da, yüksek öğretim mezunlarının işsizliği 2021'de %15,1 olarak bildirilmiştir (Eurostat, 2022). Maalesef Türkiye verilerine bakıldığında tablo daha da kötüye gitmekte; üniversite mezunlarının dahil olmasıyla birlikte işsizlik artmaktadır. 2019 yılından sonra her yıl Türkiye'deki üniversitelerden 1 milyonu aşkın kişi mezun olmaktadır (TÜİK, 2020). İŞKUR verilerine (2020) göre Türkiye'de mezun işsizliği 2016'dan 2021'e kadar ikiye katlanmıştır. 2016'da 489.000 kayıtlı işsiz üniversite mezunu varken, 2021'e gelindiğinde bu sayı bir milyonu geçmektedir (İŞKUR, 2020). Bora'ya (2015) göre Türkiye'de 1990'lara kadar üniversite diploması mezunlar için istihdam anlamına gelirken, günümüzde üniversitelerin kitleselleşmesi bu tanımın geçerliliğini yitirmesine neden olmuştur. Özellikle alt ve orta gelirli ailelerin çocukları

için üniversite mezunu ve beyaz yakalı olmak ayrı bir önem taşımaktadır (Bora ve Erdoğan, 2015). Ancak, farklı üniversitelerden mezun olan nüfusun hızla artması, mezunlar arasında eşitsizlik yaratmakta ve bazı üniversite mezunları kısa sürede istihdam edilebilirken, bazıları istihdam sürecinde zorluklarla karşılaşmakta ve uzun süre mesleği ile ilgili iş aramaktadır veya geçici işlerde çalışmaya başlamaktadırlar (Erdoğan, 2021). Lisans diploması istihdam açısından lise diplomasına göre hala avantaj sağlasa da üniversite mezunları arasında işsizlik oranı özellikle COVID-19 pandemisi ile zirve yapmıştır. İstihdam politikaları ve iş alanları gibi dış faktörlerin yanı sıra, üniversite eğitimi mezunların istihdam edilebilirliğinde önemli rol oynamaktadır. Ancak burada vurgulanması gereken iki önemli nokta vardır; birincisi, istihdam konusu devletin sorumluluğundadır, ikincisi ise istihdam edilebilirlik bireylerin istihdamının kesin bir yolu değildir. Knight ve Yorke (2006) istihdam edilebilirliği, bireyin "mesleki" ve "temel" becerilerde yetkinliklere sahip olarak istihdam edilme şansını artırması olarak tanımlamıştır. Akademik ve entelektüel kurumlar olarak üniversiteler, öğrencilere bu yeterlilikleri sağlamaktadırlar (Harvey & Green, 2001). Bunun yanında mesleki alanlarda uzmanlaşma da sağlamaktadırlar, dolayısıyla istihdam edilebilirlik çıktıları üniversitelerin kalite standartlarında yer edinmiştir. Bu nedenle bu çalışma, öğrencilerin üniversite eğitimlerinde istihdam edilebilirlik nitelikleri kazanmaya yönelik teşviklerini ele almıştır. Bu noktada üniversite kalitesinin geliştirilmesi ve öğrencilerin okuldan işe geçişine rehberlik edilmesi, istihdam edilebilirliği teşvik etmenin yollarından biri olarak tanımlanabilir.

Özetlemek gerekirse, Türkiye'de mezun istihdam edilebilirlik sorunu her geçen yıl daha da büyümektedir. Artan üniversite sayısı ve buna bağlı olarak daha fazla kişinin üniversite öğrencisi olma talebi karşılansa da bu öğrenciler hem eğitimlerinde hem de mezun olduktan sonra fırsat eşitsizliği ile karşı karşıya kalmaktadırlar. Bunun yanı sıra üniversite mezunları arasında da diplomalarının istihdam için yeterli olmadığını düşünen pek çok mezun sertifika kurslarına ve diğer bazı mesleki eğitimlere yönelmektedir (Aygül, 2018). Bu noktadan hareketle, üniversite öğrencilerinin üniversite eğitim kalitesine ilişkin algıları ve istihdam edilebilirlik yeterlikleri sorgulanmıştır. Bu nedenle, üniversite son sınıf öğrencilerinin algılanan gelecekteki istihdam edilebilirliklerinin incelenmesi, üniversite kalitesi ve diğer demografik değerler ile ilişkisinin anlaşılması açısından alana katkı sağlamaktadır.

1.1 Çalışmanın Amacı

Bu çalışmanın amacı, son sınıf öğrencilerinin üniversite kalite algılarının mezun istihdam edilebilirlik algılarının bir yordayıcısı olarak incelenmesidir. Bu şekilde, son sınıf öğrencilerinin üniversite eğitimlerinin verimliliğine ilişkin algıları ve bunun gelecekteki istihdam edilebilirlik algılarına etkisi tartışılmıştır. Araştırmanın bir diğer amacı da öğrencilerin demografik özelliklerinin istihdam edilebilirlik algıları ile nasıl ilişkili olduğunu anlamaktır. Ayrıca araştırmanın demografik değişkenleri, öğrencilerin kalite algıları ile de kavramsallaştırılmıştır. Bunun yanı sıra, öğrencilerin mezun istihdam edilebilirliği, katılımcıların GPA, cinsiyet, sosyoekonomik durum ve iş deneyimi gibi demografik değişkenleri ile analiz edilmiştir. Bu şekilde üniversite öğrencilerinin istihdam edilebilirliğinin artırılması ve algılanan istihdam edilebilirlik örüntüsünden üniversite kalitesinin önemi tartışılmaktadır.

1.2 Çalışmanın Önemi

Morley (2010), hükümet, akademi ve endüstri sınırlarının her geçen gün silikleştiğini ve yeniden formüle edildiğini, bu nedenle yükseköğretimin amacının kurumsal çıkarlar olarak tanımlanma eğiliminde olduğunu belirtmiştir. Tüketim toplumu olmaya doğru evrilinen bu günlerde, geleceğin emekçilerinin üretim yeri olan yükseköğretim, eskisinden daha fazla ön plana çıkmıştır. Bu nedenle üniversite öğrencilerinin istihdam edilebilirlik becerilerini kazanmaları ve diğer üniversite mezunlarına göre işgücü piyasasında avantajlı konuma sahip olmaları, üniversiteler arası akademik rekabet için önemli bir performans göstergesi olmuştur. Sektördeki konumlarını güçlendirirken ve gelecekteki öğrencileri tarafından tercih edilirliklerini artırırken, üyelerin ihtiyaçlarını karşılamak ve gelecekteki mezunlarını nitelikli hale getirmek için üniversite hizmetleri geliştirilmektedir. Ancak yükseköğretimde kitleselleşme, sınırlı kaynaklar ve fırsat eşitsizliği, üniversitelerde standartların düşmesine neden olmaktadır. Bu nedenle mezun işsizliği, yükseköğretimde kalitenin önündeki en önemli engellerden biri olmuştur.

Üniversite öğrencileri açısından bakıldığında mezuniyet sonrası süreçle ilgili artan bir stres bulunmaktadır. Mevcut araştırmalar, üniversite öğrencilerinin ve mezunlarının mezun istihdamı konusunda şikayetçi olduklarını ve 'üniversite diplomasını boşuna mı aldım', 'üniversite eğitimim aileme büyük bir maddi sıkıntı yaşattı ve ben bunu geri

alamayacağım' şeklinde düşünme eğiliminde olduklarını göstermektedir (Bora & Erdoğan, 2015; Erdoğan, 2021). Bunun yanı sıra mezunlar, üniversite sonrası iş bulma yolculuklarına sınavlar, sertifikalar ve diğer kurslar ile devam etmektedirler. Bu uzun süreç yıpratıcıdır ve genç kuşakta hayal kırıklığı, umutsuzluk ve öfke yaratmaktadır (Kicir, 2017). Korkmazer'e (2020) göre öğrencilerin akademik hayata ilişkin kaygıları ilkokuldan itibaren başlamakta ve üniversitenin son yılında bu kaygı işsizlik korkusu ile zirve yapmaktadır. Bu nedenle son sınıf öğrencileri, mezuniyetlerinden önce istihdam edilebilirliklerini sorgulama ve iş fırsatları arama eğilimindedirler (Kicir, 2017). Mezun istihdamına ilişkin bu karamsar tablo ne yazık ki üniversite kalite çerçevesinden incelenmemiştir. Bu nedenle, bu çalışma hem bulguları hem de üniversite kalitesi ve mezun istihdam edilebilirlik algılarına yönelik araştırma tasarımı yaklaşımıyla yükseköğretim literatüründe öncü niteliktedir.

Bu araştırma, Türkiye'deki üç farklı ilden üniversite öğrencilerinin algılanan üniversite kalitesi ile algılanan istihdam edilebilirlikleri arasındaki ilişkiyi anlama konusunda literatüre katkı sağlamaktadır. Çalışmanın bulguları, üniversite son sınıf öğrencileri arasında algılanan mezun istihdam edilebilirliğine ve bunun üniversite kalite modeli ile ilişkisine ışık tutmakta ve böylece Türkiye'deki mezun istihdam edilebilirlik çalışmaları hakkında bir çerçeve sunmaktadır. Bu şekilde, iç ve dış kalite güvence mekanizmalarını geliştirmenin ve mezun istihdam edilebilirliğine daha fazla odaklanmanın önemi kavramsallaştırılmıştır. Öğrencilerin istihdam edilebilirlik ve üniversite eğitimine ilişkin algılarını anlamak, üniversitelerde kalite kültürünün geliştirilmesi ve mezun istihdam edilebilirlik konusunun ele alınması açısından önemlidir, çünkü öğrenciler mezun olduktan sonra fırsat eşitsizlikleri ve işsizlikle başa çıkma konusunda konunun öznesidir. Bu nedenle algılarını ilgili verilerle yansıtmak, seslerini duyurmak, politika yapıcıları ve diğer üniversite mensuplarını bu konuda bilgilendirmek açısından önemlidir.

2. Yöntem

2.1 Araştırma Deseni

Bu çalışma korelasyonel araştırma olarak tasarlanmıştır. Araştırmanın yordayıcı değişkenleri algılanan üniversite kalitesi, cinsiyet, sosyoekonomik durum, genel not

ortalaması ve iş deneyimi iken, ölçüt değişkeni üniversite son sınıf öğrencilerinin gelecekte algılanan istihdam edilebilirliğidir.

2.1 Örneklem

Araştırmanın evreni, Türkiye'deki üniversitelere kayıt yaptıran tüm üniversite son sınıf öğrencileri olup, araştırmanın örneklemi Balıkesir, Çanakkale 18 Mart ve Kocaeli Üniversiteleri son sınıf üniversite öğrencileri olarak belirlenmiştir. Marmara bölgesinde Balıkesir, Çanakkale 18 Mart ve Kocaeli Üniversiteleri örneklem olarak seçilmiştir. Bu üniversitelerin tercih edilmesinde iki temel sebep bulunmaktadır. Öncelikle hepsi 1992'de kurulmuş, yani benzer bir geçmişe sahip üniversitelerdir. Bu sayede örnek üniversiteler arasındaki zaman farkı dezavantajı ortadan kaldırılmıştır. Ayrıca URAP Raporu'na (2019) göre Türkiye'deki
üniversitelerin sıralaması incelenirken hem Kocaeli, Çanakkale hem de Balıkesir üniversiteleri ortada yer aldığından, örneklemi dengelemek için çalışmanın örneklemi bu düşünce etrafında şekillenmiştir. İkinci olarak, örnek üniversiteler uzaktan eğitim yerine hibrit eğitim modeline sahiptir. Bu çalışmanın veri toplama süreci pandemi dönemi sonrasında hem online hem de yüz yüze olarak gerçekleştirilmiştir. Bu nedenle örnekleme yapılırken örnek erişilebilirliği ön planda tutulmuştur.

2.2 Veri Toplama Araçları

2.2.1 Demografik Bilgi Anketi

Demografik bilgi anketi, katılımcıların cinsiyeti, üniversitesi, öğrenim gördüğü alan, aylık aile geliri, genel not ortalaması ve iş tecrübesi ile ilgili 3 kısa cevaplı ve 4 çoktan seçmeli soru içermektedir.

2.2.2 Algılanan Gelecekteki İstihdam Edilebilirlik Ölçeği

Algılanan Gelecekteki İstihdam Edilebilirlik Ölçeği (PFES), 2019 yılında Gunavan tarafından geliştirilmiştir. PFES, genç yetişkinlerin gelecekteki istihdam edilebilirlik düzeyleri hakkındaki algılarını ölçmeyi amaçlayan bir kişisel bildirim olarak tasarlanmıştır. Altı puanlı Likert ölçeği, gelecekte değerlendirilen beceriler, birikmiş deneyimler, kişisel özellikler, ağlar, işgücü piyasası bilgisi ve gidilen eğitim kurumunun

itibarı olmak üzere gelecekteki istihdam edilebilirliğin altı boyutuyla ilgili 24 maddeden oluşur. Ölçekte yüksek veri değeri, genç yetişkinlerin iş hayatına hazır olduklarını ve kariyer planlamalarına yönelik olumlu tutumlarını göstermektedir (Alkın, Korkmaz ve Çelik, 2019).

Algılanan Gelecek İstihdam Edilebilirlik Ölçeği'nin (PFES) Türkçe uyarlaması 2019 yılında Alkın, Korkmaz ve Çelik tarafından geliştirilmiştir. Bu uyarlamada 24 madde ve altı boyut kullanılmıştır. Ölçeğin geçerlilik ve güvenilirliğini incelemek için Açıklayıcı Faktör Analizi (EFA) ve Doğrulayıcı Faktör Analizi (DFA) uygulanmıştır. Ölçeğin geçerlik ve güvenirlik sonuçlarına bakıldığında 24 maddenin toplam varyansları 0.8 olarak ölçülmüştür. Cronbach Alpha iç tutarlılık katsayıları 0.82 ile 0.95 arasında değişmektedir ve çalışma elde edilen değerin ölçeğin güvenirliği için yeterli düzeyi sağladığını göstermiştir. Ayrıca PFES'in madde ayırt ediciliğini incelemek için yapılan madde analizi, madde-toplam puanı arasındaki ilişkinin 0.41 ile 0.83 arasında değiştiğini ortaya koymuş ve bu değerlerin çalışmanın ayırt edicilik indeksine uygun olduğu belirtilmiştir (Alkın, Korkmaz & Çelik, 2019). Ayrıca bu çalışma kapsamında yapılan doğrulayıcı faktör analiz sonuçları şu şekilde olmuştur: $(\chi 2\ (19) = 985.38, p = 0.00)$, CFI = 0.95, TLI = 0.94, RMSEA = 0.07 and SRMR = 0.05.

2.3.3. Yükseköğretim Performans Ölçeği

Yükseköğretim Performans Ölçeği (HEdPERF), öğrencilerin üniversitelerde algıladıkları kalite düzeyini ölçmek için 2005 yılında Firdaus tarafından geliştirilmiştir. HEdPERF ölçeği, yedili likert ölçeğine sahip 41 maddeden oluşmaktadır ve bu maddelerin 13'ü üniversite kalitesini performansa dayalı bir ölçek olan SERPERF'ten uyarlanmıştır. Bunun yanı sıra HEdPERF ölçeği akademik olmayan yönler, akademik yönler, itibar, erişim, program sorunları ve anlayış olmak üzere altı boyut içermektedir (Firdaus, 2005). Ölçekte daha yüksek veri değeri, kurumda yüksek performansa dayalı kaliteyi temsil etmektedir.

HEdPERF, 2013 yılında Bektaş ve Akman tarafından Türkçe'ye çevrilmiştir. Türkçe uyarlamasında beşli Likert ölçeği ile 46 madde kullanılacaktır. Ölçeğin geçerlik ve güvenirliği Açımlayıcı Faktör Analizi (EFA) ve Doğrulayıcı Faktör Analizi (DFA) ile ölçülmüştür. Ölçeğin altı alt boyutu toplam varyansın 0.63'ü olarak ölçülmektedir. Bu

çalışmada yapılan doğrulayıcı faktör analizi sonuçları şu şekilde olmuştur: ($\chi 2$ (38) = 1341.31, p = 0.00) CFI = 0.91, TLI = 0.90, RMSEA = 0.07, SRMR = 0.45.

2.3 Veri Toplama Süreci

Araştırmanın örneklemini Balıkesir, Çanakkale ve Kocaeli üniversitelerinin son sınıf öğrencileri oluşturmaktadır. Örneklem belirlendikten ve veri toplama konusunda ilgili üniversite kurullarından ve etik kurulundan izinler alındıktan sonra katılımcılara üniversite ziyaretleri ve üniversite e-posta adresleri aracılığıyla çalışma hakkında bilgi verilmiştir. Çalışmaya ilişkin duyurular, katılımcıların e-posta adresleri aracılığıyla öğretim üyeleri ve idari personel tarafından sağlanmıştır. Çalışma, katılımcıların gönüllü katılımlarına dayanmaktadır. Benzer şekilde üniversite ziyaretlerinde de araştırmacı katılımcılara çalışma hakkında bilgi vermiş ve gönüllü katılımı sağlamıştır. Deneklerin çalışma ve prosedür hakkında herhangi bir aldatmacası olmamıştır. Veri toplama sürecinde Kocaeli ve Çanakkale Üniversiteleri ziyaret edilerek yüz yüze veri toplama yapılmıştır. Balıkesir Üniversitesi'nden veriler, ODTÜ Anket web sitesi kullanılarak çevrimiçi olarak toplanmıştır. Ayrıca örnek üniversitelerin öğrenci kulüplerine e-posta gönderilerek çalışma hakkında bilgi verilmiştir. Hem çevrimiçi hem de yüz yüze veri toplanmıştır. Veriler, üniversite, bölüm, cinsiyet, iş deneyimi, SES, GPA bilgilerini içeren demografik bilgi anketi ile katılımcılardan üniversite Yüksek Öğrenim Performans Ölçeği (HEdPERF) ve Algılanan Gelecek İstihdam Edilebilirlik Ölçeği (PFES) aracılığıyla toplanmıştır. Bu iki araç arasında bireyin verileriyle ilgili karışıklığı önlemek için, veri toplama HEdPERF, PFES ve demografik bilgi anketinden oluşan tek bir anket olarak tasarlanmıştır. Veriler anonim olarak toplanmıştır, bu nedenle kişilerin gizliliği korunmuştur.

2.4 Veri Analizi

Veriler SPSS 26 ve SPSS AMOS kullanılarak analiz edilmiştir. Çalışmanın ön analizi için her bir değişkenin normalliği ve örneklemin aykırı değerleri kontrol edilmiştir. Bu sayede çalışmanın analizi için veriler hazırlanmıştır. Örneklemin demografik özellikleri, ortalama, standart sapma ve frekanslar hesaplanarak tanımlayıcı istatistik olarak analiz edilmiştir. Ayrıca çalışmada kullanılan PFES ve HEDPERF ölçeklerinin geçerlik ve güvenirlikleri doğrulayıcı faktör analizi (DFA) kullanılarak ortaya konmuştur.

Araştırmanın ana veri analizi iki ayrı regresyon analizi kullanılarak gerçekleştirilmiştir. İlk olarak kalite algıları verileri, regresyon modelleri ile örneklemin demografik özellikleri ile analiz edilmiştir. İkinci olarak, algılanan istihdam edilebilirlik, kalite ve diğer bağımsız değişkenler arasındaki ilişki incelenmiştir. Verilerin analizinde hiyerarşik regresyon modeli kullanılmıştır.

3. Bulgular

Araştırmanın veri analiz sonuçları, araştırmanın hipotezlerinin desteklendiğini göstermiştir. Algılanan istihdam edilebilirliğin hiyerarşik regresyon sonuçlarına göre, örneklemin demografik özellikleri ile kalite ve istihdam edilebilirlik algıları arasında pozitif ve anlamlı bir ilişki bulunmuştur ($F(5, 622) = 53.94$, $p < 0.05$). Bu ilişkide, algılanan kalitenin katılımcıların algılanan istihdam edilebilirlik algıları üzerinde yordayıcı rolü olduğu ve kalite algısının istihdam edilebilirlik algıları üzerindeki etkisi ile varyansların %30'unun açıklandığı görülmüştür ($t(628) = 15.77$, $p = 0.00$). Algılanan kalite değişkeni olmayan örneklemin demografik özellikleri, algılanan istihdam edilebilirlik üzerindeki varyansların %2'sini açıklamıştır ($t(627) = 15.01$, $p = 0.00$).

Örneklemin demografik özellikleri kontrol edilerek algılanan kalite analiz edilirken, öğrencilerin not ortalaması, cinsiyet, SES ve iş deneyimi kalite algılarını yordamaktadır ($F(4, 623) = 1.61$, $p < 0.05$). Bu dört değişkenin algılanan kalite ile tek tek doğrudan bir ilişkisi olmamasına rağmen, cinsiyet, GPA, sosyoekonomik durum ve iş deneyimini içeren model algılanan kaliteyi önemli ölçüde yordamış ve varyansların %1'ini açıklamıştır.

4. Tartışma

Bireylerin istihdamı, bir ülkenin ekonomik gelişmişliğinin bir göstergesi olup, ülkelerin piyasadaki insan gücünü ne kadar verimli kullandıklarını göstermektedir (Bozdağlıoğlu, 2008). Benzer şekilde işsizlik, ülkeler için ekonomik büyümeye olumsuz bir müdahale olarak tanımlanabilmektedir. Ayrıca işsizlik politikalarla kontrol altına alınamazsa hem ekonomik hem de toplumun sosyal alanlarında dalgalanmalara neden olabilir. Toplum perspektifinden, bireylerin hayatlarını sürdürmek için istihdam edilmeleri gerekmektedir. Bunun yanı sıra, İnsan Hakları Evrensel Beyannamesi'nin (UHDR) 23:1 maddesinde de

çalışma hakkı korunmuştur, buna göre çalışma hakkı, "herkesin çalışma, işini özgürce seçme, adil ve elverişli çalışma koşulları ve işsizliğe karşı korunma" (UHDR, 1948) olarak belirtilmiştir. Bu nedenle, istihdam konusunda toplumun her kesiminin kendi rol ve sorumlulukları vardır ancak vatandaşların istihdamına ilişkin asıl rol politika yapıcılara düşmektedir (Stirati, 2012). Bununla birlikte istihdam tek taraflı bir konu değildir çünkü devlet, işgücü piyasası ve bireyler gibi birçok değişken ile ilişkilidir ve her birinin istihdamla ilgili beklentileri bulunmaktadır. Bu nedenle, istihdamın tüm yönlerini anlamak ve aralarında bir uzlaşma yaratmak, çözülmesi kolay bir konu değildir. Ayrıca mezunların istihdamı da istihdam konusunun bir başka boyutunu oluşturmaktadır. Mezunlar hem toplumun, hem de üniversitenin birer üyesi olmaktadırlar. Bu sebeple, şgücü piyasası ve üniversitenin kesişme noktası olarak tanımlanabilirler. Üniversiteler, akademik işlevlerinin yanı sıra bireylere mesleki yeterlilikler sağlamakta ve mezun kimliği kazandırmaktadır (Hinchliffe ve Jolly, 2010). Bu nedenle bireyler için üniversite diploması almak ekonomik ve sosyal refaha ulaşmanın bir yolu olarak tanımlanmaktadır (Johnson, 1973). Bu nedenle yükseköğretim bazı açılardan işsizliğin çözümü olarak görülmektedir (Kiraz ve Kurul, 2018). Bireylerin eğitim derecesi ile istihdamı arasında pozitif bir ilişki olmasına rağmen (Bağcı, 2018), yüksek öğrenim veya üniversite diploması doğrudan istihdam edilme yolu değildir. Özellikle günümüzde mezun işsizliği hem Türkiye'de hem de küresel ölçekte önemli sorunlardan biri olarak tanımlanmaktadır (Durak ve Kaya, 2014). Türkiye'de mevcut araştırmalar, mezun işsizliğinin arkasında birçok neden olduğunu göstermektedir; bunlar istihdam politikalarındaki eksiklikler, bazı mesleklerin arz ve talebindeki dengesizlik, beceri uyumsuzluğu ve yükseköğretimde kitleselleşme olarak özetlenebilir (Arslan ve Solak, 2020; Ay, 2012; Önal, 2012; Özer ve Suna, 2020).

Mezun işsizliği ile mücadelede öncelikle istihdam politikaları önemli bir yer tutmaktadır. Türkiye'de 1960'lı yıllardan itibaren önemli bir sorun olan işsizlik, 2001 yılında yaşanan mali krizle birlikte eskisinden daha yıkıcı bir şekilde gün yüzüne çıkmıştır (Ay, 2012). Günümüzde artan nüfus ve neo-liberal ekonomi politikaları ile ekonomik büyüme istihdam yaratamamaktadır (Ay, 2012). Ayrıca istihdamın sektörel dağılımındaki değişmeler, kırsal nüfusun azalması ve kadınların işgücü piyasasına katılımının azlığı istihdam politikalarında dalgalanmalara yol açarak işsizliği tetiklemiştir (Boztepe, 2007; Dayıoğlu & Ercan, 2010; Tunalı, 2003). Bunun yanında istihdama yönelik vergilerin

artırılması, üretimin ve enflasyonun kesintiyeuğraması, işgücü maliyetlerinin düşürülmesi Türkiye'de ekonomik sorunlara neden olan sorunlu istihdam politikalarından bazıları olarak tanımlanmaktadır (Onaran, 2002; İlkkaracan & Yörükoğlu, 2004). Ayrıca eğitim politikalarında yer alan konular istihdam politikalarıyla da ilişkilendirilmiştir (Ay, 2012). Gür'e (2016) göre üniversite sayılarındaki kontrol dışı yükselme, Türkiye'deki istihdam politikalarını olumsuz etkilemekte, dolayısıyla eğitim alanından istihdam politikalarına ilişkin politikalarda sorunlar ya da eksiklikler ortaya çıkarmaktadır. Dolayısıyla Türkiye'de istihdam politikalarındaki sorunlar mezunların işsizliği ile doğrudan ve dolaylı olarak ilişkilidir.

İkinci olarak, işgücü arzı ve talebi arasındaki dengesizlik, Türkiye'deki işsizlik sorunu için bir başka ayırt edici faktör olmuştur (Arslan ve Solak, 2020). Diğer bir deyişle Türkiye'de bazı meslekler işsizlikle diğer alanlardan daha fazla mücadele etmektedir. Öğretmen işsizliği bu konudaki en belirgin örnektir. Her yıl 100.000'i aşkın kişi eğitim fakültelerinden mezun olmaktadır (YÖK, 2020) ve halen istihdam edilmeyi bekleyen 500.000 öğretmen bulunmaktadır (İŞKUR, 2020). Ancak 2022 yılında devlet okullarına sadece 19.969 öğretmen atanmıştır (MEB, 2022). Bu noktada birçok öğretmen yıllardır istihdam edilemezken eğitim fakültelerinin kapasiteleri de yükselmeye devam etmektedir (YÖK, 2021). Dolayısıyla, bazı alanlarda işgücü sermayesinin büyümesi, bu alanların talebini aşmakta ve bu dengesizlik, öğretmen örneğinde de belirtildiği gibi, mezun işsizliğine dokunmaktadır. Hem politika yapıcılar hem de yükseköğretim alanı için işgücünün arz ve talebini analiz etmek mezun istihdamı için önemli olmuştur (Gökçe, 2014). Bu nedenle, mezun işsizliğine karşı önlemlerin belirlenmesinde üyeler arasındaki işbirliği ve katılım çok önemlidir.

Üçüncü olarak ise, mezunlar ile işgücü piyasası arasındaki beceri uyumsuzluğu, mezun işsizliğinde bir başka faktör olarak belirtilmektedir (Şahin, 2021). Beceri uyumsuzluğu, "bir bireyin mesleki becerilerinin mesleğini icra etmede yetersiz kalması" olarak tanımlanır (OECD, 2021). Şahin'e (2021) göre işletmelerin %54'ü aradıkları nitelikli iş gücüne ulaşamamaktadır. Bunun yanı sıra Türkiye'de beceri uyumsuzluğu sorunları aşırı nitelikten kaynaklanmakta ve lise veya meslek okulu mezunlarından çok üniversite mezunları bu durumdan muzdarip olmaktadır

(Şahin, 2021). Beceri uyumsuzluğu, coğrafi engeller, istihdam arz ve talebindeki dengesizlik ve işgücü piyasası ile eğitim sistemi arasındaki tutarsızlıktan kaynaklanabilmektedir (Suna, vd., 2020). Bu nedenle istihdam ve eğitim ilişkisi iki yönlü olarak tanımlanmakta ve benzer kaygıları paylaşmaktadırlar (Suna, vd., 2020). Yüksek öğretimdeki kitleselleşme ve eğitim çıktılarının işgücü piyasası talebiyle uyumlaştırılmasındaki sorunlar, beceri uyumsuzluğu açığını daha da büyütmektedir (Cidem et al., 2021). Buna ek olarak, işgücü piyasasındaki hızlı değişim eğilimleri, eğitim alanı açısından yakalaması zor bir hal almaktadır (Acemoğlu ve Restrepo, 2018). Bu nedenle, hem mezunların hem de yüksek öğrenimin beklentileri hakkında daha derin bir analiz, mezunların istihdamı için faydalı bir adım olacaktır.

Son olarak, yükseköğretimde kitleselleşme mezun işsizliğini etkileyen faktörlerden biri olarak belirtilmektedir (Önal, 2002). Özellikle 2000'li yıllardan sonra üniversite sayısındaki ve mezunlardaki hızlı artış, eğitimde yeterlilik ve mezunların istihdamı konusunda birçok sorun yaratmaktadır (Gür, 2016). Diğer bir nokta ise üniversite sayısının artırılmasının istihdamı artırmanın bir yolu olarak nitelendirilmesidir (Ay, 2012). Ancak bu hızlı artış işsiz mezun sayısının artmasına ve üniversite standartlarının düşmesine neden olmuştur (Saka ve Yaman, 2011). Mevcut araştırmalar, öğrencilerin mezun olduktan sonra istihdam edilme kaygısı taşıdıklarını ve üniversite sayılarındaki hızlı artışın eğitim kalitesi üzerindeki olumsuz etkisinden rahatsız olduklarını göstermiştir (Bora, 2011; Erdoğan, 2021). Yükseköğretimde düşen standartlar ve üniversiteler arasındaki fırsat eşitsizliği ile öğrencilerin mesleklerindeki yeterlilikleri de farklılık göstermektedir (Mok, 2016). Dolayısıyla öğrencilerin gelecekteki istihdam edilebilirlikleri bu koşullar altında şekillenmektedir. İstihdam edilebilirlik, mezun istihdamı için doğrudan bir yol olmamakla birlikte, mezun istihdamı konusunda üniversite ile işgücü piyasası arasında bir köprü olarak tanımlanabilir. Yükseköğretim açısından bakıldığında, bireylere üst düzey, genel ve sosyal beceriler ile mesleki yeterlilikler kazandırmak, mezun istihdamı konusuna dahil olmanın önemli bir yoludur (Gür, 2016). Bu nedenle işgücü piyasasına rekabetçi mezunlar yetiştirmek ve onlara mezun kimliği kazandırmak üniversitelerin eğitim kalitesi başlığı altında ele alınabilmektedir. Bu nedenle bu çalışma, son sınıf öğrencilerinin algılanan üniversite kalitesinin istihdam edilebilirlik algılarının bir yordayıcısı olarak incelenmesini

amaçlamıştır. Bunun yanı sıra, örneklemin diğer demografik özellikleri olan not ortalaması, cinsiyet, SES ve iş deneyimi durumu hem kalite hem de istihdam edilebilirlik algılarının bağımsız değişkenleri olarak incelenmiştir. Bu şekilde, mezun işsizliği konusu yükseköğretim perspektifinden ele alınmış ve üniversite kalitesinin etkisi, öğrencilerin istihdam edilebilirliğinin bir yordayıcısı olarak incelenmiştir.

Araştırmanın bulguları, algılanan kalite ile ayrı ayrı bir ilişki göstermemelerine rağmen, son sınıf öğrencilerinin cinsiyet, genel not ortalaması, sosyoekonomik durum ve iş deneyimi kombinasyonunun kalite algılarını yordadığını göstermiştir. Algılanan kalite ve genel not ortalaması ile ilgili mevcut literatür, öğrencilerin akademik başarılarının üniversite kalite algılarıyla ilişkili olduğunu belirtmektedir (Brisco vd., 2016; Perales vd., 2020, Thesis vd., 2020). Bu çalışmalar temel olarak, akademik başarısı yüksek olan öğrencilerin üniversite kalitesi hakkında daha olumlu olma eğiliminde oldukları sonucuna varmaktadır. Ancak bu çalışmalarda akademik başarı algılanan kalitenin bir yordayıcısı olarak incelenmemiştir ve sadece bu iki değişken arasında ilişki vardır. Öğrencilerin akademik başarıları, hem bireysel çabalarıyla hem de üniversiteden gelen kurumsal destekle ilişkilidir (Becireviç vd., 2017). Öğrencilerin üniversite kalitesine ilişkin yanıtları diğer demografik özelliklere göre farklılaşmamıştır. Cinsiyet gruplarına bakıldığında, kız ve erkek öğrenciler arasında anlamlı bir fark olmadığı, üniversite kalitesine ilişkin mevcut literatür tarafından desteklenmektedir. Türkiye'de yapılan araştırma, hem kız hem de erkek öğrencilerin çevrimiçi öğrenmeye yönelik üniversite eğitiminin kalitesine yönelik olumlu tutumlara sahip olduğunu belirtmiştir (Yener ve Taşçıoğlu, 2018). Bunun yanı sıra, üniversite kalite algılarında cinsiyet rolüne ilişkin yapılan diğer araştırmalar da tam tersi sonuçlar vermektedir. Cera'ya (2018) göre, hem Çek hem de Slovakya'da kız öğrenciler üniversite kalitesine erkeklerden daha olumlu yaklaşmaktadır (Cera vd., 2018). Öte yandan, İspanya'da yapılan çalışma, erkek öğrencilerin kız öğrencilere göre üniversite kalitelerinden daha yüksek memnuniyet duyduklarını göstermiştir (Blazquez-Resino ve diğerleri, 2022). Dolayısıyla kız ve erkek öğrencilerin üniversite kalite algıları bağlama göre değişebilmektedir ve farklı sonuçlar elde edilinebilir, bu çalışmada öğrencilerin cinsiyeti kalite algılarını yordamamaktadır. Ayrıca, iş deneyimi faktörü, öğrencilerin üniversite kalitesi yanıtlarıyla ilişkilendirilememiştir. Mezunların üniversite eğitimi kalite algıları ile iş yeri yeterliklerini geliştirmeleri üzerine yapılan çalışmalardan biri, yarı zamanlı iş deneyimi olan öğrencilerin, deneyimi olmayan akranlarına göre

üniversite kalitesine orta düzeyde daha yüksek olumlu yanıt verdiğini göstermiştir (Akareem & Hossain, 2016). Bununla birlikte, literatürde öğrencilerin iş deneyimi, cinsiyet ve genel not ortalamalarının üniversite kalitesine yönelik tutumları üzerindeki etkisine ilişkin çalışma eksikliği bulunmaktadır. Ayrıca bu üç değişkenin kombinasyonu daha önce algılanan kalitenin yordayıcısı olarak incelenmemiştir. Aynı şekilde, literatürde öğrencilerin sosyoekonomik durumları ile algıladıkları üniversite kalitesi arasındaki ilişkiyi destekleyen sınırlı sayıda çalışma vardır (Meraz, 1983; Kealy ve Rockel, 1987), bu nedenle bu çalışmanın sonuçları da sosyoekonomik durumun öğrencilerin kalite tutumları üzerinde anlamlı bir etkisinin olmadığını göstermiştir.

Öğrencilerin istihdam edilebilirlik algılarına ilişkin araştırma bulguları, son sınıf öğrencilerinin üniversite kalite algıları ile gelecekteki istihdam edilebilirlik algıları arasında pozitif ve anlamlı bir ilişki olduğunu göstermiştir. Buna göre öğrencilerin kalite algıları, gelecekteki istihdam edilebilirlik algılarını yordamaktadır. Üniversite kalitesi ve istihdam edilebilirlik ilişkisi ile ilgili çalışma eksikliği olmasına rağmen, ilgili literatür üniversite eğitiminin bireylerin istihdam edilebilirlik algısının büyük bir bölümünü oluşturduğunu belirtmektedir. Üniversite, bireyler için daha yüksek kazanımların elde edildiği bir yerdir bu sebeple mesleki beceriler, entelektüel olanaklar ve deneyimsel öğrenme burada gerçekleşmektedir, bununla birlikte öğrencilerin sosyal, akademik ve mesleki becerilerinin gelişimindeki rolü de göz ardı edilemez. Bireylerin istihdam edilebilirliğinin çoğu ülke için eğitim dereceleriyle paralellik göstermesi şaşırtıcı değildir (UNESCO, 2021). Ancak üniversite eğitimi ve istihdam ilişkisi bundan daha fazlasını içermektedir. Üniversite eğitimi, bireyleri ilgili görevleri yerine getirme ve dolayısıyla onları daha "istihdam edilebilir" kılma konusunda desteklemektedir. Bu nedenle bu çalışma, üniversite kalitesinin gelecekteki istihdam edilebilirlik üzerindeki rolünü öğrenci perspektifinden incelemeyi amaçlamıştır. Bunun ışığında, son sınıf öğrencilerinin yanıtları, üniversite hakkında daha yüksek kalite algılarının, gelecekte daha yüksek düzeyde istihdam edilebilirlik tutumları ile ilişkili olduğunu göstermiştir. İlgili literatür, üniversite eğitiminin kalitesi ile öğrencilerin istihdam edilebilirliği arasındaki ilişkiye dikkat çekmektedir. Brennan'a (2018) göre, yüksek öğretimde kitleselleşmeyle birlikte, üniversitelerin istihdam olanakları bilgi tabanlı ekonomide öne çıkmaktadır, bu nedenle istihdam edilebilirlik, üniversitelerin iç kalite güvence mekanizmalarına entegre edilmelidir (Brennan, 2018). Benzer şekilde, üniversitenin hem iç hem de dış üyeleri,

istihdam edilebilirlik ile üniversite eğitim kalitesi arasındaki ilişkinin öneminden bahsetmiştir (Cheng vd., 2022). Başka bir araştırma, kalite güvence faktörlerinin öğrencilerin mezun istihdam edilebilirliğini yordadığını göstermiştir (Oyebanji ve Omojola, 2018). Buna ek olarak, istihdam edilebilirlik yaklaşımları özellikle son on yılda üniversite eğitiminin kalitesine daha fazla odaklanma eğiliminde olmuştur (Blackwell vd., 2001; Clarke; 2018; Holmes, 2013). Bu nedenle çalışmanın sonuçları ilgili literatür tarafından desteklenmektedir.

Ayrıca çalışmanın bulguları, iş deneyimi durumunun istihdam edilebilirlik algılarını yordadığını göstermiştir. Literatürde bu bulguyla paralellik gösteren çok sayıda çalışma bulunmaktadır. Crossman ve Clarke'ın çalışması (2010), öğrencilerin uluslararası iş deneyiminin onlara deneyimsel öğrenme, düşünme biçimleri, sosyal becerilerin gelişimi kazandırdığını ortaya koymaktadır. Başka bir çalışmada, yükseköğretimde staj ve iş deneyiminin öğrencilerin mezun istihdam edilebilirliği için çok önemli bir rol oynadığı belirtilmiştir (Helyer ve Lee, 2014). Ayrıca, diğer birçok çalışma, iş deneyiminin öğrencilerin gelecekteki istihdam edilebilirlikleri ve aktarılabilir beceriler kazanmaları üzerinde destekleyici bir rolü olduğunu göstermiştir (Blackwell vd., 2013; Minocha vd., 2017; Tomlinson, 2017; Cheng vd., 2021). Buna ek olarak, iş deneyimi istihdam edilebilirliğin öncüllerinden biri olarak tanımlanmış olup, iş deneyimi ile kişinin istihdam edilebilirliği arasında negatif bir ilişki olduğunu gösteren bir çalışma bulunmamaktadır. Mevcut çalışmalar, GPA'nın öğrencilerin akademik görevlerini nasıl yerine getirdiklerinin göstergelerinden biri olduğunu ve bu nedenle bireylerin istihdam edilebilirlik algıları üzerinde etkisi olduğunu göstermiştir. Bununla birlikte, işgücü piyasası talebi gibi dış faktörlerin rolü, mezunların algılanan istihdam edilebilirliği için daha önemli bir faktör olmuştur (Mainga ve diğerleri, 2022). Ayrıca başka bir çalışma, mezuniyet zamanı, yüksek lisans derecesi veya cinsiyetin, öğrencilerin genel not ortalamasının yanı sıra mezun istihdam edilebilirliği için ek faktörler olarak tanımlandığını göstermiştir (Mehmetaj vd., 2021). Sosyoekonomik durumun sonuçlarının istihdam edilebilirlik algıları üzerinde yordayıcı bir rolü bulunmamaktadır. Literatürde öğrencilerin sosyoekonomik durumları, kaynaklara erişimdeki farklılıklar açısından aralarındaki eşitsizlikler olarak ifade edilmektedir (Crawford vd., 2016). Bu nedenle araştırmalar, istihdam açısından etnik azınlıklar, düşük sosyoekonomik statü vb. dezavantajlı gruplar arasında uçurum olduğunu göstermiştir (Brown, 2016; Zwysen vd., 2018). Ancak bu

noktada, bu çalışma üniversitenin öğrencilerin istihdam edilebilirlik algılarındaki rolüne odaklanmıştır. Bunun ışığında üniversite, SES grubuna bakılmaksızın öğrencilerine gelişimleri açısından eşit akademik veya sosyal hizmetler sunmaktadır. Bu nedenle öğrencilerin gelecekteki istihdam edilebilirlik algıları, sosyoekonomik durumlarına göre farklılaşmamıştır çünkü algıları, istihdam edilip edilmemekten çok üniversite eğitimleri ile iş bulabilme konusundaki yeterliliklerine dayanmaktadır.

Özetlemek gerekirse, mezun işsizliği konusu son sınıf öğrencilerinin istihdam edilebilirlik algıları açısından ele alınmıştır. Bu noktada, algılanan istihdam edilebilirliğin bir yordayıcısı olarak üniversite kalitesinin rolü vurgulanmıştır. Araştırmanın bulguları bu öngörüyü desteklemiş ve geleceğin mezunlarının istihdam edilebilirliği için üniversite kalitesinin öneminin altını çizmiştir. Buna ek olarak, öğrencilerin iş deneyimi, cinsiyet ve genel not ortalamalarının birleşimi de son sınıf öğrencilerinin istihdam edilebilirlik algılarının yordayıcısı olarak belirtilmiştir. Kalite algıları incelenirken öğrencilerin demografik özelliklerinin algılanan kaliteyi yordadığı görülmüştür. Böylece öğrencilerin kalite ve istihdam edilebilirlik algıları mezun işsizliği konusu başlığı altında ele alınmış ve çalışmanın sonuçları öğrencilerin kalite algılarının istihdam edilebilirlik algılarının şekillenmesinde anlamlı ve pozitif etkiye sahip olduğunu göstermiştir.

4.1 Öneriler

Araştırma bulgularına göre, yükseköğretim, üniversite mensupları ve politika yapıcılar için ortaya konan bazı öneriler bulunmaktadır. Yükseköğretim düzeyinde üniversitelerin kalite kültürlerini geliştirmelerinin teşvik edilmesi ve bu yapının uygun dış kalite mekanizmalarıyla desteklenmesi kalite kültürünün yükseköğretim düzeyinde yaygınlaşması açısından faydalı olacaktır. Ayrıca üniversite mensuplarının üniversite ile ilgili ihtiyaç ve beklentilerinin anlaşılması ve öğrencilerin istihdam edilebilirliğine daha fazla odaklanılması stratejik planlamalar için yol gösterici olacaktır. Üniversite mensupları açısından, üniversiteyi geliştirmek ve kendi üyeleri arasında daha fazla iletişim kurmak için fikirlerini ifade etmeleri üniversite gelişimi için çok önemlidir, bu nedenle üniversite planlamalarında daha katılımcı bir yapı oluşturulmalıdır, özellikle öğrencilere kendilerini ifade etme konusunda daha fazla alan tanınmalıdır. Bu şekilde fikirler daha iyi yapılandırılabilir veya tespit edilen sorunlar doğru bir şekilde çözülebilir. Son olarak, politika yapıcılar, üniversitelerin altyapısını geliştirmek için daha fazla

finansal destek sunabilirler. Bu noktada üniversitelerin niceliğinden çok kalitesine ve ayrılan kaynaklara daha fazla önem verilebilir. Buna ek olarak, geleceğin mezunlarının istihdam edilebilirlik fırsatlarını artırmaya odaklanabilirler. Gelecekteki çalışmalar için, kalite ve istihdam edilebilirlik algıları arasındaki ilişkinin incelenmesi, mezun öğrenci popülasyonuna uygulanmalıdır. Bu şekilde, çalışma bulgularının çeşitliliği istihdam edilebilirlik perspektifi açısından tartışılabilir. Ayrıca, istihdam edilebilirlik ve üniversite kalitesi için niteliksel tasarımlı araştırma, öğrencilerin istihdam edilebilirlikleriyle ilgili görüşlerini ve endişelerini anlamak için daha derin analizler sağlayabilir.

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TEZİN ADI / TITLE OF THE THESIS (**İngilizce** / English): UNIVERSITY QUALITY AS A PREDICTOR OF PERCEIVED FUTURE EMPLOYABILITY OF SENIOR UNIVERSITY STUDENTS

TEZİN TÜRÜ / DEGREE: **Yüksek Lisans** / Master ☒ **Doktora** / PhD ☐

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