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The Predictive Role of Life Skills on Career Anxiety: The Case of Vocational and Technical High Schools

Dr. Muhammet ?brahim Akyürek

Department of Educational Administration, Faculty of Education, Selcuk University, Turkey

Abstract

This study examines the relationship between life skills and career anxiety among students enrolled in vocational and technical high schools and explores the predictive role of life skills on career anxiety. The research was conducted with 385 eleventh- and twelfth-grade students attending vocational and technical high schools in Ankara, Türkiye, during the 2023–2024 academic year. A correlational quantitative research design was employed. Data were collected using the Life Skills Scale, which includes self-awareness, interpersonal communication, responsibility, and career planning dimensions, and the Career Anxiety Scale, which focuses on anxiety related to family influence and career choice. Descriptive statistics, Pearson correlation analysis, and multiple linear regression analysis were used to analyze the data. The findings indicated that students' overall life skills levels were high, with career planning emerging as the strongest dimension. Career anxiety levels were found to be close to a moderate level, particularly with respect to anxiety related to career choice. A low but statistically significant negative relationship was identified between life skills and career anxiety. Regression analysis revealed that life skills significantly and negatively predicted career anxiety, although the explained variance was limited. These results suggest that life skills constitute an important psychosocial resource in managing students' career-related concerns and uncertainties. In particular, career planning skills appear to play a key role in supporting students' decision-making processes regarding their future careers. The findings highlight the importance of strengthening life skills-oriented educational and guidance practices within vocational and technical education contexts.

Keywords: Life Skills, Career Anxiety, Vocational and Technical Education, High School Students, Career Planning