



(ISSN: 2587-0238)

Çakır, Z. & Gönen, M. (2022). Investigation of the Decision Regrets of the Graduates and Students of the Faculty of Sports Sciences in the Selection of the Department, *International Journal of Education Technology and Scientific Researches*, 7(18), 1334-1346.

DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.35826/ijetsar.485>

Article Type: Research Article

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## INVESTIGATION OF THE DECISION REGRETS OF THE GRADUATES AND STUDENTS OF THE FACULTY OF SPORTS SCIENCES IN THE SELECTION OF THE DEPARTMENT

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Received: 10.03.2022

Accepted: 21.05.2022

Published: 15.06.2022

### ABSTRACT

The aim of this study is to examine the decision regrets of the graduates and students of the Faculty of Sport Sciences in their department selection. The population of the research consists of the students studying at the Faculties of Sport Sciences and the graduates of the Faculty of Sport Sciences. The study group of the research is 765 (373 Male, 392 Female) randomly selected among students and graduates studying at Bayburt University, Bartın University, Dokuz Eylül University and Hitit University, Department of Physical Education and Sports Education, Sports Management, Coaching Education and Recreation in the 2021-2022 academic year. ) consists of voluntary participants. The "Professional Decision Regret Scale" developed by Brehaut et al. (2003) and adapted into Turkish by Erdurcan and Kırdök (2017) and the "Personal Information Form" created by the researcher were used to collect the data of the research. The analyzes of the obtained data were made using the SPSS 26 package program. After it was determined that the data were normally distributed in the analysis, independent sample t-test analysis, One-way ANOVA analysis, and Scheffe analyzes were performed to reveal the difference between groups. As a result, statistically significant differences were found in all of the variables of gender, department, class, factor of choosing the department, order of preference of the department and working status in their own field in order to determine the difference between the decision regret levels of the participants in the selection of the department.

**Keywords:** Career choice, decision, regret, education, sports science

## INTRODUCTION

People have had to make important decisions and choices in many areas of their lives throughout their lives. While it can be an ordinary decision about daily work, these decisions and choices can also be career decisions that can significantly affect the lives of individuals and change their lifestyles. As a consequence of these decisions, individuals can experience a situation that results in satisfaction or regret (Erdurcan & Kırdök, 2017). Career decisions have an important place in terms of having a profession and gaining a place in society. Among the determinants of advancing a career is the choice of school and department, which is at the beginning of these processes (Kuzgun, 2000). A person's choice of a profession, vocational program, or career is made by selecting the most appropriate alternative from a variety of possibilities (Doğan & Bacanlı, 2012). Career choices, particularly the future expectations of university-aged youngsters, can influence a wide range of actions, from university selections to life planning (Gönen, Öktem, 2022). The individual determines the shape of his/her career by evaluating or rejecting the options that appear before him/her (Kuzgun, 2000). When individuals consider factors such as their personal characteristics, interests, abilities, and values at this selection stage, they can reach satisfaction at the end of the choice made (Koca, 2010). A large part of a person's life will be affected by school and department choices chosen for career and vocational purposes, from the city they will live to their value judgments (Akkoc, 2012; İpek et al., 2020). Therefore, it will enable students to choose the department where they will get the highest efficiency in their department preferences while planning their lives to prevent possible dissatisfaction or regrets that they may experience in their professional life in the future. Regret is described as the emotion that causes the individual to feel sad as a result of a disappointing decision by wishing that he had not made this choice and not made this decision after his choices, preferences and decisions (Brehaut et al., 2003; Erdurcan & Kırdök, 2017; Maingay, 1991).

the profession is the work that a person does to maintain his/her life. A profession is defined as a set of activities, the rules of which are determined by society, based on systematic knowledge and skills gained through a certain education, to produce useful goods or services and to earn money in return (Kuzgun, 2014). Universities are one of the important institutions in providing individuals with a profession. Individuals shape their professional careers with practices such as work experience and internship by embarking on a path in terms of a professional career with a university education (Buyruk, 2009; Dursun & Aytaç, 2012; Guest & Duyen, 2016). In this regard, individuals' choosing a program at the university can also be considered a career choice. In our country, there are Physical Education and Sports Education, Sports Management, Coaching Education, and Recreation departments in Sports Sciences Faculties. Students who graduate from these departments can work in various professional fields.

Profession choosing is related to each other, such as choosing a profession, starting a job, or getting an education (Sampson, Robert, Reardon, Peterson, and Lenz, 2004). Indecision during the career choice process, which is common among university students, brings along the concepts of anxiety and low self-esteem (Van Vianen et al., 2009). The reason for not meeting expectations and a high level of regret in business life in the future may be

the wrong choice made for any reason during the university and department choice processes (Yeşilyaprak, 2012). Business life includes a large part of human life. Unhappiness in business life is likely to spread to other areas of life. From this perspective, people must try to make the best choice by considering many factors while planning their careers and choosing a profession. However, everything may not be as desired in life and individuals may make choices they do not want or regret the choices they have made. While this professional regret causes dissatisfaction and loss of performance in the work environment, it can also negatively affect the individual's non-work life. To eliminate the professional decision regret that causes this and similar problems, first of all, the reason and level of this regret should be known. In this context, this study aims to investigate the decision regrets of the graduates and students of the Faculty of Sport Sciences in their department choice.

When the literature is reviewed, it is noteworthy that there are studies such on career, decision making, decision-making difficulties, and indecision, but there is not much research in terms of professional decision regrets (Connolly & Zeelenberg, 2002). It is thought that the findings and suggestions to be revealed as a result of the research will contribute to the field. The study has a unique quality in this respect.

In this respect, the aim of this study is to investigation of the decision regrets of the graduates and students of the faculty of sports sciences in the selection of the department

## **METHOD**

### **Research Model**

In this study, a survey model was used. Survey research is the study conducted on relatively larger samples compared to other studies in which the views of the participants on a subject or event or their interests, skills, abilities, attitudes, and similar characteristics are determined (Fraenkel et al., 2006). The main purpose of survey research is to describe the current situation. Since this type of study usually relies on a large amount of data, the researcher works on large samples by performing statistical operations (Karasar, 2009).

### **Population-Sample (Study Group)**

The study population consists of students studying in the Faculties of Sport Sciences and graduates of the Faculty of Sport Sciences. The study group of the study consists of 765 (373 Male, 392 Female) volunteer participants randomly selected from the students and graduates studying at Bayburt University, Bartın University, Dokuz Eylül University, and Hitit University in the departments of Physical Education and Sports Education, Sports Management, Coaching Education and Recreation in the 2021-2022 academic year.

### **Data Collection Tools**

"Professional Decision Regret Scale" was developed by Brehaut et al. (2003) and adapted into Turkish by Erdurcan and Kırđök (2017), and the "Personal Information Form" was created by the researcher was used to

collect the data of the study. In the study, the Cronbach alpha internal consistency coefficient of the scale was found to be .778. After the scale was transferred to the digital environment, it was transferred to various university students through various student groups on social media by making it an online form for reaching more university students in Turkey purposes and was sent to university students in some cities of Turkey as a link. Participants included in the study were informed about the purpose, importance, and method of the study. The study was carried out with volunteer participants. It was stated to the participants that the data obtained would only be used for research purposes and that their information would not be shared.

**Personal Information Form:** The literature on regret for decisions in department selection was reviewed, and the “Personal Information Form” prepared by the researchers was used to obtain data on the variables thought to be related to these concepts. There are questions to determine the gender, department, class, order of choice, the reason for going to the department, perceived income status, and working status of the university students in this prepared form.

**Professional Decision Regret Scale:** The scale, adapted into Turkish by Erdurcan and Kirdök (2017), was arranged according to a 5-point Likert scale between “1” Strongly disagree, “5” Strongly agree. Items 1, 3, and 5 on the scale are reverse coded. During the calculation of the scores, the reversed items are scored in reverse first, and 1 is subtracted from the market value for each item on the scale. Five items are added, and a total score is obtained for 5 items. This score is multiplied by five to obtain a value between 0-100. An increase in the calculated score between 0 and 100 indicates an increase in decision regret. It can be said that if the score taken from the scale is between 0-24 “not regret the decision at all,” between 25-49 “slightly regret about the decision,” between 50-74 “regret about the decision,” and between 75-100 “very regret about the decision.”

#### Checking Normality with Skewness and Kurtosis Values

In this study, Skewness and Kurtosis values were examined to determine whether the data were normally distributed, and when the table below is examined, the values of Kurtosis and Skewness between -1.5 and +1.5 show that the data has a normal distribution (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2013).

**Table 1.** Kurtosis and Skewness Values

	<b>N</b>	<b>Min.</b>	<b>Max.</b>	<b>Skewness</b>	<b>Std.Error</b>	<b>Kurtosis</b>	<b>Std.Error</b>
Professional Decision Regret	765	10.00	70.00	-0.553	0.088	-1.411	0.177

When Table 1 is examined, it is seen that the kurtosis and skewness values of the scale are between 1.5 and +1.5, so parametric analyzes were performed.

#### Data Analysis:

The data obtained within the scope of the study were analyzed using the SPSS 26 Package Program. Before deciding on the data analysis method, it was checked whether the data met the reliability requirement or not.

The Cronbach Alpha reliability coefficient of the scale was determined as .778. If the coefficient is 0.7 and above, the reliability of the scale is considered good (Kılıç, 2016; Ozdamar, 2010). The z-score was calculated to determine whether the data provided a normality distribution, and the extreme values obtained in this context, the questionnaires of the participants (30 individuals) who filled the research form incorrectly or incompletely were excluded from the study. Within this scope, in the analysis of the data, an independent sample t-test analysis was performed to evaluate the differentiation according to the gender variable. One-way ANOVA was used to determine the differences between the data, which were found to meet the normality conditions, according to choice order, choice type, department, class, and working status variable (Büyüköztürk, 2011; George & Mallery, 2010). The Scheffe test was used to reveal the difference between the groups. The significance level was considered as  $p < 0.05$  in data analysis.

**FINDINGS**

**Table 1.** Means of Demographic Characteristics of Participants

	<b>Variables</b>	<b>f</b>	<b>%</b>
<b>Gender</b>	Male	373	48,8
	Female	392	51,2
	<b>Total</b>	765	
<b>Department</b>	Physical Education and Sports Education	202	26,4
	Sports Management Department	252	32,9
	Coaching Education Department	138	18,0
	Recreation Department	173	22,6
	<b>Total</b>	765	
<b>Class Degree</b>	1st-grade	237	31,0
	2nd-grade	226	29,5
	3rd-grade	126	16,5
	4th-grade	87	11,4
	Graduates	89	11,6
	<b>Total</b>	765	
<b>The Factor for Choosing the Department</b>	Voluntarily	112	14,6
	Family Advice	193	25,2
	Coach/Teacher Advice	176	23,0
	Friend Advice	138	18,0
	I Have No Opportunity to Enter Another Section	146	19,1
	<b>Total</b>	765	
<b>Preference of the department where the participants settled/graduated</b>	1. Place	296	38,7
	2. Place	187	24,4
	3. Place	105	13,7
	4. Place	177	23,1
	<b>Total</b>	765	
<b>Working status of the participants</b>	I work in my field	174	22,7
	I work in an out of field job	289	37,8
	I do not work	302	39,5
	<b>Total</b>	765	

Considering Table 1, it was observed that 373 (48.8%) of the participants were male, and 392 (51.2%) were female. Considering the departments studied or graduated, it was observed that 202 (26.4%) participants studied

in Physical Education and Sports Education, 252 (32.9%) participants in Sports Management, 138 (18.0%) participants in Coaching Education, 173 (22.6%) participants in Recreation Department. Of the participants, 237 (31.0%) are in the 1st-grade, 226 (29.5%) are in the 2nd-grade, 126 (16.5%) are in 3rd-grade, 87 (11.4%) are in 4th-grade, and 89 (11.6%) are graduates. According to the factor of choosing the department, of the participants, 112 (14.6%) stated that they preferred the department voluntarily, 193 (25.2%) with the department with family advice, 176 (23.0%) with the department with the recommendation of a Coach/Teacher, 138 (18.0%) with the recommendation of a friend, and 146 (19.1%) stated that they preferred the department because they did not have the opportunity to enter another department. Considering the order of preference of the department where the participants settled/graduated, it was observed that 296 (38.7%) participants preferred it in the first place, 187 (24.4%) participants in the second place, 105 (13.7%) participants preferred it in the 3rd place, and 177 (23.1%) participants in the 4th place. Considering the working status of the participants in their fields, it was observed that 174 (22.7%) participants were working in a job related to their field, 289 (37.8%) participants were working in a job outside their field, and 302 (39.5%) participants were not working.

**Table 2.** The Participants’ Decision Regret Levels in the Department Preference T-Test Analysis Results by the Gender Variable

Variables	N	X	Ss	t test			
				t	sd	P	
Gender	Male	373	34,57	22,202	-8,038	763	.000*
	Female	392	46,88	20,165			

\* p<0,05

Considering the Table 2, it was determined that there was a statistically significant difference in the mean decision regret level of the participants according to gender ( $t[-8.038]=0.00$ ;  $p<0.05$ ), and it was determined that the professional decision regrets of female participants were higher than male participants ( $X=46.88$ ).

**Table 3.** The Participants’ Decision Regret Levels in the Department Preference Anova-Test Analysis Results by the Department Variable

Department Variable	N	X	Ss	Source of Variance	KT	sd	KO	F	P	Significant Difference
Physical education and sports education (a)	202	19,85	17,412	Between G.	223339,59	3	74446,53	382,693	.000*	d-a,b,c; b-a,c
Sports management (b)	252	54,80	9,252	Within G.	148039,81	761	194,533			
Coaching education (c)	138	24,92	19,917	Total	371379,41	764				
Recreation Department (d)	173	57,89	8,089							
Total	765	40,88	22,047							

\* p<0,05

Table 3 shows that there is a statistically significant difference in the mean scores of the participants’ professional decision regret scale according to the variable of education ( $F=382.693$ ;  $<P 0.05$ ). In consequence of the Scheffe test to determine the source of the difference, it was determined that the mean score of the vocational decision regret scale ( $X =57.89$ ) of the students studying in the recreation department was significantly higher than the mean score of students studying in physical education and sports education ( $X =19.85$ ), sports management ( $X$

=54.80) and coaching education (X =24.92) departments. However, the mean score of the Sports management department (X =54.80) was found to be significantly higher than the students of physical education and sports education (X =19.85) and coaching education department (X =24.92).

**Table 4.** The Participants’ Decision Regret Levels in the Department Preference Anova-Test Analysis Results by the Class of Education/Graduation Status Variable

Class	N	X	Ss	Source of Variance	KT	sd	KO	F	P	Significant Difference
1st-grade (a)	237	31,91	22,530	Between G.	53292,74	4	13323,18			
2nd-grade (b)	226	40,26	22,478	Within G.	318086,67	760	418,53			b-a
3rd-grade (c)	126	39,76	22,089	Total	371379,41	764		31,833	.000*	c-a;
4th-grade(d)	87	51,95	14,594							d-a,b,c;
Graduates (e)	89	57,07	7,753							e-a,b,c;
Total	765	40,88	22,047							

\* p<0,05

Considering the Table 4, it was determined that there is a statistically significant difference in the mean scores of the participants’ professional decision regret scale according to the variable of education grade/graduation status (F=31,833; <P 0.05), and the Scheffe test was used to determine the source of this difference. According to the test results, it was found that the professional decision regret scale means a score of the graduate participants (X =57.07) was significantly higher than the mean score of 1st-grade (X =31.91), 2nd-grade (X =40.26), and 3rd-grade (X =39.76) participants. Besides, it was determined that the professional decision regrets of 4th-grade students (X =51.95) were different from 1st-grade (X =31.91), 2nd-grade (X =40.26) and 3rd-grade (X =39.76) students, while the professional decision regrets of 3rd-grade (X =39.76) and 2nd-grade (X =40.26) students were significantly different from 1st-grade (X =31.91) students.

**Table 5.** The Participants’ Decision Regret Levels in the Department Preference Anova-Test Analysis Results by the Factor of Choosing the Department

The Factor for Choosing the Department	N	X	Ss	Source of Variance	KT	sd	KO	F	P	Significant Difference
Voluntarily (a)	112	21,07	17,30	Between G.	121958,91	4	30489,72			
Family Advice (b)	193	38,13	22,62	Within G.	249420,49	760	328,18			
Coach/Teacher Advice (c)	176	33,12	20,91	Total	371379,41	764		92,904	.000*	b-a;
Friend Advice(d)	138	50,50	15,41							c-a;
I Have No Opportunity to Enter Another Section (e)	146	59,96	7,77							d-a,b,c;
Total	765	40,88	22,04							e-a,b,c,d

\* p<0,05

There is a statistically significant difference in the mean scores of the participants’ professional decision regret scale according to the variable of department preference (F=92.904; <P 0.05). According to the results of the Scheffe test to determine the difference between which groups, it was observed that the decision regret levels of the group that chose the department because there was no opportunity to enter another department

(X=59.96) were significantly higher than the groups that chose with their own preference (X =21.07), family advice (X =38.13), coach/teacher recommendation (X =38.12), friend recommendation (X =50.50). Besides, the decision regrets of those who chose with friend recommendation (X =50.50) are significantly higher than those who chose with their own preference (X =21.07), family advice (X =38.13), and coach/teacher recommendation (X =38.12). Still, it was observed that the decision regrets of those who chose family advice and coach/teacher advice were significantly higher than those who chose the department voluntarily.

**Table 6.** The Participants’ Decision Regret Levels in The Department Preference Anova-Test Analysis Results by Order of Preference of The Department Where He/She Is Placed/Graduated

Preference of the department where the participants settled/graduated	N	X	Ss	Source of Variance				F	P	Significant Difference
				Between G.	KT	sd	KO			
First place <sup>(a)</sup>	296	26,04	20,15	Between G.	154110,54	3	51370,17	179,928	.000*	b-a; c-a,b; d-a,b,c
Second place <sup>(b)</sup>	187	38,02	21,77	Within G.	217268,87	761	285,50			
Third place <sup>(c)</sup>	105	55,47	6,144	Total	371379,41	764				
4 place <sup>(d)</sup>	177	60,05	5,513							
Total	765	40,88	22,047							

\* p<0,05

There is a statistically significant difference in the mean scores of the participants’ professional decision regret scale according to the order of preference of the department where he/she is placed/graduated (F=179.928; <P 0.05). According to the results of the Scheffe test to determine the difference between which groups, it was observed that the level of regret for the professional decision of the participants (X = 60.05) who chose the department they settled/graduated in the fourth place was statistically significantly higher than the participants who chose the department they graduated from in the first place (X = 26.04), second (X = 38.02) and third (X = 55.47). Besides, those who chose the third place (X = 55.47) had a significantly higher professional decision regret than those who chose the first (X = 26.04) and second (X = 38.02) place. It was concluded that those who chose the second place had higher professional decision regrets than those who chose the first place.

**Table 7.** The Participants’ Decision Regret Levels in The Department Preference Anova-Test Analysis Results by The Working Status Variable

Working status	N	X	Ss	Source of Variance			F	P	Significant Difference	
				Between G.	KT	sd				
I work in my field <sup>(a)</sup>	228	27,89	21,430	Between G.	71742,50	2	35871,25	91,223	.000*	b-a,c; c-a;
I work in an out of field job <sup>(b)</sup>	313	51,15	17,179	Within G.	299636,91	762	393,22			
I do not work <sup>(c)</sup>	224	39,75	21,518	Total	371379,41	764				
Total	765	40,88	22,047							

\* p<0,05

According to the variable of working status, a statistically significant difference was found in the mean scores of the participants’ professional decision regret scale (F=91,223; <P 0.05), and in consequence of the Scheffe test, which was carried out to determine between which groups this difference is, it was determined that the



professional decision regret levels of the participants who work in a job other than their own field ( $X=51,15$ ) are significantly higher than the participants who work in their own field ( $X=27.89$ ) and those who do not ( $X=39.75$ ). A significant difference was observed between the mean professional decision regrets of the non-working participants ( $X=39.75$ ) and the mean score of participants working in a job in their field ( $X=27.89$ )

## **CONCLUSION and DISCUSSION**

Considering the findings of our study, it is seen that female students among the students of the Faculty of Sport Sciences experience more decision regret in choosing their department. Since there is no study covering the faculties of sports sciences on the subject, in a study examining the professional decision regrets of university students by Güleç and Kirdök (2018), it was stated that there was no significant difference between male and female students in terms of professional decision regret.

It was concluded that the first-grade students had the lowest decision regrets, and the graduates had the highest decision regrets by the grade status. It is thought that many problems that may be encountered in real life after graduation, especially at work, may cause such regret in people.

According to the factors in choosing a department, it was determined that those who had the least decision regret were those who chose with their own preferences, and those who had the most decision regret were those who made a compulsory choice of a department because they do not have the opportunity to enter another department and those who choose a department with the advice of friends. It is thought that this situation is revealed by the fact that the students did not research in detail about the departments they chose; they were guided by their family and friends, and especially because of the fear of not being able to enter any department they made hasty decisions.

According to the order of preference of the department where they settled/graduated, those who have the least decision regrets are those who settled on their first choice. Those who settled on their fourth choice were the ones who experienced the most decision regrets. Students develop various strategies to make the right choice before the exam. Some of them are not able to choose the department they want the most because of their insufficient scores and the fear of not being able to settle in. This situation may cause students to settle in a department they do not want and increase the level of decision regret in the future.

According to their working status, those who have the least decision regret are those who work in a job related to their field, while those who have the most decision regret are those who have to work outside their own field. It is thought that people who have the opportunity to work in their own field will not regret the decision they have made regarding the choice of profession, as they will have a good command of their work, will love their work, and will find their work valuable, thus providing job satisfaction. Otherwise, those who do not work in their field will regret their decision and perhaps want to change their profession, as they will not be able to provide job satisfaction.

Consequently, profession choice and university and department choices that are a part of it have a significant impact on the lives of individuals. It is necessary for the individual to know about him/herself and the business world, to use this knowledge, and develop plans to achieve his/her professional goals so that the individual does not experience regrets in his/her department and profession choices (Barker & Kellen, 1998). Individuals should carefully consider their department and profession choices, which should be made deliberately and deliberately rather than by chance, after thoroughly analyzing the necessary sectoral expectations and job areas. Reversing the decision made may be wearing out and a waste of effort in the future, but it may also be impossible to return. Therefore, the right decision to be made will contribute to the comfort of life, ensure a happy life, and allow the job that one loves to be done. Wrong decisions and regrets that will create a society of unhappy, weary people who are always in search of it. The individual's probability of finding a job in that field, his/her success and failure, and whether he will like his/her job and his/her quality of life will be determined by the right choices.

### RECOMMENDATIONS

It will contribute to the field by determining the reasons why students often say sentences such as "I wish I wasn't in this department right now, actually I would go on to another department and choose a different profession" and making different studies.

### ETHICAL TEXT

At every stage of the research process, it acted per the principles of scientific research and publication ethics. Data were collected voluntarily. Necessary approvals (ethics committee/parent approval) were obtained to carry out the study. Ethics committee approval was obtained from Bayburt University Ethics Committee Presidency with its letter dated 23/05/2022 and numbered 2022/132.

**Author(s) Contribution Rate:** In this study, the contribution rate of the first author is 50% and the contribution rate of the second author is 50%.

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