



## Perceived Overqualification: Evaluation for Gastronomy Students

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### Abstract

One of the important elements for the food and beverage industry to carry out its activities successfully is the performance of the employees. Since it is a labor-intensive industry, employees become even more important. One of the obstacles to the superior performance of the employees is the perception of overqualification. In this study, it is aimed to produce solutions to manage the perception of overqualification, which may arise by examining the perceived overqualification levels of gastronomy students. A quantitative method was followed within the scope of the research. The data obtained through the questionnaire form (311 respondents) were analyzed by applying descriptive statistics and difference analysis. The findings of the study show that there is a differentiation from the perception of overqualification according to some demographic characteristics. These findings, which emerged within the scope of the study, were interpreted and suggestions were presented.

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## INTRODUCTION

In the context of planning, strategizing, and policy-making, it is imperative to duly acknowledge the unique attributes inherent in the tourist, travel, and hospitality sectors. This phenomenon can be attributed to the distinct qualities that define each industry, hence distinguishing it from others. Failure to consider these specific attributes may hinder one's ability to attain success in the given endeavor. When viewed from this perspective, it is crucial to undertake an examination of these marketplaces based on their specific characteristics. One notable characteristic is the conspicuous presence of a substantial human component. The simultaneous occurrence of production and consuming necessitates the presence of individuals fulfilling the roles of consumers, employees, and other consumers within the framework of production. The coexistence of production and consumption is a necessary condition. Consequently, it is imperative for employees to demonstrate exceptional performance in order to establish systems that meet the expectations set forth by all pertinent stakeholders. As a result, employees are required to perform outstandingly in order to set up systems that meet the expectations set by all relevant stakeholders. The aim of this study is to testing how overqualification affects employees' achievement of their maximum abilities.

The existence of a unified organizational structure inside the tourism product is well acknowledged. In alternative terms, tourists allocate their financial resources and engage in various activities, which may elicit emotional responses and shape their perceptions, until they depart from the destination where they maintain a permanent residence. The tourism product is a highly complex and contingency product with many uncertainties (Kaya & Kaya, 2023). Middleton (1989) posits that all entities and phenomena has the potential to be classified as tourism products. Hence, to effectively create and guarantee contentment with the comprehensive integrated tourism offering, it is imperative to deliver all facets of the product to the visitor in an optimal manner (Doan & Ozkoc, 2020; Karakuş, 2019). The importance of food and beverage experiences in the tourism business is well acknowledged (Akda & Demir, 2021; Bessière, 1998; Okumus et al., 2007; Şahin et al., 2021). The citations in the text encompass publications authored by Akda and Demir (2021), Bessière (1998), Okumus et al. (2007), and Şahin et al. (2021). The research literature largely recognizes the importance of gastronomic components in the overall success of an integrated tourism offering, whether it is the main focus or a supporting aspect (Onat, Karakuş, Pimentel, & Doan, 2021; Quan & Wang, 2004). This remark holds true regardless of the degree to which the cuisine element contributes to the overall experience of the travel (Ademoğlu & Şahan, 2023). According to Karakuş et al. (2018), it is crucial for professionals in this field to have skills at an ideal level in order to guarantee the provision of high-quality experiences to tourists. Currently, it is crucial to analyze the concept of perceived overqualification, which hinders the development of certain talents in the job market. The aim of this study is to investigate the impression of gastronomy students as being highly educated and to provide some strategies for addressing the problem of perceived overqualification. After thoroughly examining the relevant literature, it is clear that this inquiry is unique and creative, as no other studies have approached the topic in a comparable manner. An aim of this study is to fill the existing research gap.

## Literature Review

The concept of quality is extensively studied in multiple academic fields. In this context, it becomes apparent that employee qualities, including education, knowledge, abilities, experiences, and attitudes, play a significant role. The disparity between the characteristics possessed by the employee and the qualifications demanded by the job poses a notable obstacle. The present matter is characterized as a discrepancy in attributes within the existing body of

literature (Erdogan, Bauer, Peiró, & Truxillo, 2011a). Upon further analysis of this incongruity, it can be classified as a scenario in which employees possess qualifications that exceed the prescribed threshold, commonly referred to as "excessive qualification" or alternatively, as a situation in which employees possess credentials that do not meet the requisite level, known as "inadequate qualification-underqualification" (Ünsal Akbiyik, 2016; Yaşar & Adyın Alakuş, 2024). After conducting a comprehensive analysis of the available scholarly sources, it becomes apparent that the phenomenon of perceiving oneself as overqualified has a negative influence on employees' attitudes and behaviors, ultimately leading to a level of performance that falls below the expected norms (Johnson, Morrow, & Johnson, 2002; Maynard, Joseph, & Maynard, 2006). Moreover, a study conducted by Akbiyik (2016) in the realm of academia has provided evidence indicating that overqualification might detrimentally impact corporate performance. The topic of overqualification can be examined through two distinct approaches: the subjective method and the objective approach. Individuals who exhibit a degree of proficiency that surpasses the necessary qualifications for a specific occupation can be categorized as instances of objective overqualification. This implies that the training received by individuals exceeds the necessary qualifications for their respective occupations (Fine, 2007; Maltarich, Reilly, & Nyberg, 2011). As stated by Maltarich et al. (2011), subjective overqualification refers to an individual's subjective perception of possessing skills and talents that surpass the requirements of a certain employment. The perception of an employee regarding their own overqualification for their current position may manifest as an inflated assessment of their own competencies and capabilities in relation to the job criteria (Erdogan et al., 2011b). Subjective overqualification pertains to an employee's personal perception of possessing qualifications that exceed the requirements of their current position. The personal perception of an individual regarding their degree of overqualification may not necessarily align with the objective reality of the circumstances. Currently, there exists a disparity between an employee's subjective perception and the objective assessment of overqualification (Maltarich et al., 2011: p.236; Maynard et al., 2006: p.211).

As per the elucidation provided by Kristof-Brown (2000), the concept of overqualification pertains to a situation wherein there exists a discrepancy between the qualifications demanded by a job and the competencies possessed by an individual. Put simply, there exists a discrepancy between the competencies possessed by an individual and the demands imposed by a certain occupation. The term "capacity" pertains to the skills, knowledge, training, experience, and other qualifications possessed by the person engaged in a certain job. On the other hand, the term "demand" refers to the responsibilities and requirements associated with the employment. The concept of overqualification refers to a situation when an individual possesses a surplus of abilities and certifications that beyond the requirements of a certain profession. This discrepancy has the ability to manifest itself in two distinct manners. Upon initial examination, it appears likely that the individual in issue has attained a level of education surpassing the typical expectations for the specific profession. To provide an example, an individual with a master's degree may potentially secure work in a role that necessitates solely a bachelor's degree. The reason for this is that master's degrees typically exhibit a higher degree of specialization compared to bachelor's degrees. Furthermore, it is plausible that the individual may possess competencies that are not entirely aligned with the specific requirements of the position. Individuals with prior experience in marketing may possess the potential to secure employment in roles that necessitate sales skills, and conversely, individuals with sales experience may have the opportunity to obtain positions that require marketing expertise. This serves as a singular illustration of a potential occurrence. The occurrence of overqualification can lead to a diverse range of undesirable consequences, not only for the individual employee but

also for the employing organization. Individuals may experience emotions such as apathy, dissatisfaction, and suboptimal use when they possess qualifications that exceed the requirements of their current situation. Moreover, this could pose challenges in identifying employment opportunities that align effectively with an individual's skill set and personal interests. The presence of overqualified employees has the potential to lead to several unfavorable consequences for companies, such as increased salary demands, less productivity, and higher rates of employee turnover. Multiple factors can contribute to the occurrence of overqualification. One factor that is contributing to the current situation is the increasing need for employees who possess specialized talents. In light of the growing complexity of the economy, companies are actively pursuing workers who possess advanced levels of education and training. Another factor that contributes to this phenomenon is the increasing availability of skilled workers. Over the past few years, there has been a significant increase in the percentage of individuals who hold college degrees, leading to an intensified level of competition in the employment market. There are other ways that can be utilized to address the problem of overqualification. One plausible approach to augmenting the alignment between the skill sets provided by workers and the requirements of different employment jobs is to prioritize the enhancement of congruence. The aforementioned objectives can be accomplished through the implementation of enhanced job matching systems, the improvement of training programs, and the provision of comprehensive career counseling services. Furthermore, the promotion of labor mobility among workers might also serve as a means to tackle this matter. One possible strategy to accomplish this goal entails minimizing the costs related to job hunting and moving. The occurrence of overqualification poses a complex challenge that does not have simple solutions. However, by gaining an understanding of the fundamental reasons that contribute to overqualification and its negative consequences, proactive steps can be taken to address this problem and improve labor market conditions for both workers and employers.

As Fine (2007) posits, the concept of "perceived overqualification" pertains to an individual's subjective perception that they possess an excess of credentials, abilities, or educational attainment relative to the requirements of their present employment role. The concept under consideration is a psychological construct that centers on individuals' views on their own qualifications in relation to the demands of their work (Erdogan & Bauer, 2021). The consequences of perceived overqualification can have both advantageous and detrimental implications for both individuals and organizations, with the specific outcomes being contingent upon several contributing factors. Based on the results of multiple research, it has been observed that an individual's belief of being overqualified can potentially have adverse consequences on various aspects of their life. Previous research has established a correlation between excessive workload and several negative outcomes in the workplace. Specifically, Erdogan and Bauer (2009) found a negative association between excessive workload and job satisfaction. Additionally, Chambel et al. (2021) discovered a positive relationship between excessive workload and burnout levels. Moreover, Ma et al. (2021) identified a positive link between excessive workload and career distress. Lastly, Maynard et al. (2006) observed a positive relationship between excessive workload and intentions to quit one's current position. Andel et al. (2021) propose that the experience of perceiving oneself as overqualified might give rise to a range of negative emotions, such as impatience, boredom, and fury. Additionally, these adverse outcomes may stem from a mismatch between the individual's qualifications and the job needs, resulting in feelings of underutilization and dissatisfaction.

Conversely, there are instances in which it might be advantageous for an applicant to be perceived as possessing qualifications that exceed the requirements of the position. Previous research has established a positive association between psychological safety and many work-related outcomes. For instance, Lee et al. (2020) found a significant correlation between psychological safety and job performance. Additionally, Dar et al. (2022) demonstrated a link between psychological safety and innovative work behavior. Furthermore, studies conducted by Yi Li et al. (2022) and Ma et al. (2021) revealed that psychological safety is related to extra-role behaviors, namely helping behavior and voice directed towards peers. (Lee et al., 2020; Dar et al., 2022; Ma et al., 2021) have been cited in the present study. According to a study conducted by Ma et al. in 2021, individuals may exhibit increased motivation to exert more effort and beyond the prescribed expectations of their professional roles when they consider themselves as possessing an advantage stemming from their perceived overqualification. Moreover, this phenomenon has the capacity to enhance individuals' creative self-assurance and foster innovative behavior (Dar et al., 2022). Lee et al. (2020) found that the likelihood of experiencing pleasant outcomes is heightened when individuals perceive their current employment as a means to advance their future career prospects. Several factors possess the capacity to influence the outcomes of perceived overqualification. Erdogan and Bauer (2009) conducted a study that examined the potential moderating role of workers' autonomy in the workplace on the relationship between perceived overqualification and several outcomes, including job satisfaction. Alfes et al. (2016) argue that the presence of positive interpersonal relationships in the workplace can help alleviate the negative effects of perceived overqualification on an individual's job satisfaction. The research conducted by Ma et al. (2020) elucidates the relationship between perceived overqualification and professional distress by examining the mediating function of occupational identity. In the study conducted by Ma et al. (2020), findings suggest that the modest demeanor of a leader may play a role in moderating the relationship between perceived overqualification and both professional unhappiness and career planning. Hu et al. (2015) have posited that the inclusion of peer overqualification can exert an impact on the outcomes related to perceived overqualification, including the perceived importance of the task and individual performance. The phenomenon of perceived overqualification can potentially impact not just individuals but also organizations, leading to various consequences. According to the findings of Johnson et al. (2002), it has been determined that it has a significant impact on various aspects of the workplace, including working relationships, employee turnover, and organizational commitment. According to Erdogan et al. (2011b), the presence of people who are overqualified for their positions within an organization might potentially lead to problems regarding job fit, job happiness, and performance. Zhang et al. (2016) conducted a study on this topic. According to their research findings, it has been demonstrated that persons who are deemed overqualified can offer notable benefits to firms, including enhanced job performance and innovative behavior. The aforementioned advantages can be ascribed to the circumstance that individuals who are overqualified possess a greater level of experience than what is necessitated for the given position. Thompson et al. (2015) conducted a study that highlights the significance of considering both the potential disadvantages and advantages associated with hiring overqualified individuals when making judgments about them. Consequently, the focus of this study will mostly revolve around the phenomenon of perceived overqualification. The occurrence of perceived overqualification frequently results in a disconnection between employees and their employers. The presence of incongruence has been identified as a factor that leads to a decline in an individual's organizational commitment and job satisfaction, as demonstrated by the empirical study conducted by Fine and Nevo in 2008. Furthermore, it is imperative to acknowledge that the notion of perceived overqualification

is extensively acknowledged as a perception that enhances an individual's inclination to contemplate departing from their present occupation, as explicated in research conducted by Erdogan and Bauer (2009), Maynard et al. (2006), and Maynard & Parfyonova (2013). The significance of recognizing this reality lies in its widespread acknowledgment as a notion that enhances an individual's inclination to contemplate departing from their present employment.

The objective of this study was to examine the perceptions of gastronomy degree holders regarding their level of overqualification in relation to their employment. This study examined the potential impact of demographic variables on individuals' judgments of overqualification and self-perception. The results of this study can be utilized in developing a strategic approach for those who are anticipated to pursue careers in the hospitality industry in the foreseeable future, as this represents one of the prospective uses of the acquired data. The phrase "overqualification" is commonly employed to describe a situation in which an individual possesses educational or skill qualifications that beyond the requirements of a certain employment. There exists a discrepancy between the competencies possessed by individuals and the demands placed upon them within their professional roles. The presence of a mismatch between individuals and their work environment can result in several negative consequences, such as a decline in job satisfaction and organizational commitment, along with an increase in intentions to leave the organization. Based on the research findings, a significant association was observed between certain demographic variables and the phenomenon of perceiving oneself as overqualified among students pursuing a culinary degree. Furthermore, other than gender and age, the aforementioned attributes encompassed educational attainment and professional background. The research also revealed that students who expressed intentions to pursue professions in the fine dining industry were more prone to perceiving themselves as overqualified compared to their peers. Based on the results of this study, the perception of possessing an excessive degree of qualifications is a multifaceted phenomenon that is impacted by various circumstances. Based on the results of the research, individuals who are enrolled in culinary programs with the intention of entering the fine dining sector are prone to perceiving themselves as excessively competent through self-assessment. This phenomenon can be attributed to the heightened level of competition and increased expectations within the fine dining sector, as compared to other segments of the restaurant and food service industry. The results of this study can be utilized in developing a strategic framework for individuals who are anticipated to pursue careers in the hospitality industry in the foreseeable future, as this represents one of the prospective avenues for using the insights derived from this investigation. The objective of this road map is to furnish individuals with tools that will assist them in cultivating pragmatic expectations regarding their job prospects and in formulating informed selections pertaining to their educational and training alternatives.

## **Methods**

In his study we examine the relationship between the demographic features of students in the Department of Gastronomy and Culinary Arts and their perception of being overqualified. The measurement of perceived overqualification utilizes the scale created by Maynard, Joseph, and Maynard (2006), which comprises of nine items that are assessed on a 7-point Likert scale. Participants evaluated their level of agreement with each statement using a scale that ranged from 1 (indicating significant disagreement) to 7 (indicating strong agreement). Data on demographic variables such as gender, age, educational level, past work experience, previous training, departmental placement score, and current grade point average were also gathered.

We have used convenience sampling, a non-probability method, to gather data from easily accessible students in the Department of Gastronomy and Culinary Arts. Gürbüz and Şahin (2014) emphasize the utilization of this technique to attain a required sample size (p. 130). The aim was to acquire a comprehensive sample that includes all students from the department, due to the temporary shutdown of educational institutions during the survey period (September 29-31, 2023). An online questionnaire was used instead of face-to-face engagement due to practical limitations. Nevertheless, the decreased participation in online surveys in comparison to in-person surveys gives rise to questions over the representativeness of the sample. Hence, it is not appropriate to generalize the findings of the study to the entire population because there may be variations in outcomes at different time intervals (Çokluk et al., 2016, p. 19). The sample consisted of 10,071 students who are currently enrolled in gastronomy and culinary arts faculties and departments at public institutions in Turkey. These students are distributed throughout 35 faculties and 12 high schools (YOK, 2021, September 27-30). The examination was conducted between August 1 and August 31, 2021, while schools were closed. A total of 311 online surveys were collected, which were deemed appropriate for the study. There was no occurrence of missing data, emphasizing the significance of accurately labeling digital survey questions. The formula used by Başturk and Taştepe (2013, p. 127) yielded a sample size of 384, which was rounded to 384. However, it is recognized that this sample size may not accurately represent the total population. Although there is a limitation, the data that has been collected is considered adequate for conducting T-test and ANOVA analyses. It is recommended to multiply the observed variable (perceived overqualification phrases,  $n=9$ ) by a factor of 10 to scale it. This technique is consistent with the findings of Gürbüz and Şahin (2014, p. 324) and Reisinger and Mavondo (2008, p. 42). The study's total sample size of 311 specimens satisfied the analytical criteria.

The study employed an extensive questionnaire that was delivered to students studying gastronomy and culinary arts in various public universities in Turkey. The data analysis included the use of confirmatory factor analysis to evaluate the Gaussian distribution by examining the skewness and kurtosis values. The study utilized inferential statistical techniques, such as t-tests and ANOVA, to investigate the association between demographic characteristics and the perception of being overqualified among students studying gastronomy. The analytical methodologies employed enabled a comprehensive examination of the study inquiries.

## Findings

### Normality Distribution Regarding the Scale Used in the Study

According to the study conducted by Çokluk et al. in 2016, The present study relies on the normal distribution features of the variables included in the utilized scale, both individually and jointly. The interactions between the variables utilized in this analysis are expected to reflect the distribution features of a normal distribution (Hair, Black, Babin, & Anderson, 2009). Çokluk et al. (2016) suggest that the examination of multivariate normality assumptions can be conducted by graphical and statistical methods. This study necessitates a statistical assessment of a multivariate normal distribution, together with the determination of skewness and kurtosis values (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2014; Çokluk et al., 2016; Hair et al., 2009).

It is imperative to acknowledge that the determination of significant levels is contingent upon crucial skewness and kurtosis values. The aforementioned statement presents an intriguing piece of information. As stated by Hair et al. (2009), the determination of normality threshold values necessitates adherence to a significance level of 0.01 ( $-2.58$ ) and a significance level of 0.05 ( $-1.96$ ). The results of the conducted investigations pertaining to skewness

and kurtosis reveal that the observed skewness values exhibit a range of -0.021 to 0.514, while the observed kurtosis values span from -1.33 to 1.100. Table 1 presents the statistical foundation for assuming a normal distribution of the variables being examined. It contains detailed information on the kurtosis and skewness values of the scales employed in this study.

**Table 1.** Kurtosis and Skewness Values

Expressions	Kurtosis	Skewness
PO1	-1.339	.387
PO2	-1.100	.514
PO3	-1.277	.160
PO5	-1.227	-.021
PO6	-1.330	.157
PO7	-1.223	.078
PO8	-1.281	.159

**Source:** Authors Elaboration

The scale data revealed a maximum skewness value of 0.514, as evidenced in Table 1. The observed value of skewness is 0.021, which represents the lowest value. Upon examination of the kurtosis values, it is observed that the maximum value is -1,100, while the minimum value is -1.339. The figure of -1.339 lies between the two aforementioned extremes. The observed numerical values do not exhibit a statistically significant deviation from the previously established threshold values. As a result of this, parametric testing will be employed during the later phases of the inquiry.

### **Descriptive Statistics of The Sample**

Upon analyzing the gender distribution of the participants from whom the data was derived, it becomes evident that the male population (167) surpasses that of females. Males account for 53.7% of the overall participants. The study revealed that the proportion of female participants within the overall sample was 144, accounting for 46.3%. The data revealed that a significant proportion of the total student population, specifically 35.7%, fell within the age range of 21 to 22 years. Upon conducting a thorough analysis of the additional statistical data, it was observed that a total of 36 students who participated in the survey were aged 19 years or less, accounting for 11.6% of the sample. Furthermore, there were 78 students in the age range of 22 to 23 years, representing 25.1% of the respondents. Additionally, 50 students were into the age bracket of 24 to 25 years, making up 16.1% of the sample. Lastly, 36 students were aged 26 years or older, constituting 11.6% of the participants. Based on the grade levels of the kids that participated in the study, it was observed that the largest proportion (121 respondents) consisted of pupils in the second grade. Upon conducting a thorough analysis of the additional data, it was observed that the total number of respondents in the third grade amounted to 83, accounting for 26.7% of the sample. Similarly, the fourth grade comprised 72 kids, representing 23.2% of the sample. Furthermore, there were 35 graduate students, constituting 11.3% of the sample. Upon analyzing the Working Status of the student participants, it was shown that a significant proportion (198) have prior work experience. In relation to the employment status of the students surveyed, it was observed that a significant majority (195) had not undergone any prior professional training. Upon analyzing the University Admission Score, it is evident that a significant proportion of students are allocated to universities falling within the score range of 331-360 points. Upon analyzing the collective grade point averages of the student body, it has been determined that a significant proportion (113) possess an average ranging from 3.01 to 3.50.



**Validity and Reliability**

Validity, as defined by Nakip (2006: 150), pertains to the extent to which measures accurately reflect significant variations among the observed scale scores of the attributes under evaluation. In order to delve deeper into the subject matter, it is necessary to consider the degree of precision exhibited by the expressions incorporated within the scales employed for assessing the intended conceptual frameworks (Hair, Black, Babin, & Anderson, 2013: p.3). Factor analysis is commonly acknowledged as a dependable technique for assessing the number of dimensions and the content validity of scales. As a result, it assumes a pivotal function in the validation of measurement tools (Hair et al., 2013: p.125). Factor analysis is commonly categorized into two distinct methodologies: explanatory factor analysis (EFA) and confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2014: p.614). Exploratory research endeavors often give precedence to the utilization of Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA), especially during the first phases of a study (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2014). However, the significance of confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) becomes apparent when scholars possess theoretical conjectures on the underlying structure of the scales under examination (Hair et al., 2013).

The researchers conducted confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) to assess the alignment between the existing measurement scales used in various contexts and the observed data collected in the present study (Gürbüz & Şahin, 2014: p.326). Considering these variables, it is crucial to recognize that the metric employed to assess perceived overqualification, as utilized in this research, had been previously employed in prior academic inquiries. Consequently, the Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) method was utilized to assess the construct validity of the scale. The study presents the goodness-of-fit indices of the model, which are deemed appropriate within the context of this research. These indices are displayed in Table 2, indicating the utilization of rigorous validation approaches.

**Table 2.** Goodness-of-fit indices of CFA

Fitness Criteria	Good Fit	Acceptable Fit	References
Overall Fitness of the Model $\chi^2/df$ p value	$0 \leq \chi^2/df \leq 2$ .05 < p ≤ 1.00	$2 < \chi^2/df \leq 5$ .01 ≤ p ≤ .05	(Byrne, 2016) (Gürbüz & Şahin, 2014)
Comparative Fit Indices			
RMSEA	$0 \leq RMSEA \leq .05$ .95 ≤ IFI ≤ 1.00	.05 < RMSEA ≤ .08 .90 ≤ IFI < .95	(Schermelleh-Engel, Moosbrugger, & Müller, 2003) (HERBERT W. Marsh & Hau, 1996)
IFI	.95 ≤ NFI ≤ 1.00	.90 ≤ NFI < .95	(Byrne, 2016)
NFI	.95 ≤ NNFI ≤ 1.00	.90 ≤ NNFI < .95	(Mulaik et al., 1989)
NNFI	.95 ≤ CFI ≤ 1.00	.90 ≤ CFI < .95	(Bentler, 1992; Hu & Bentler, 1999)
CFI			
Absolute Fit Indices			
GFI	.90 ≤ GFI ≤ 1.00	.80 ≤ GFI ≤ .89	(H W. Marsh, Balla, & McDonald, 1988)
AGFI	.90 ≤ AGFI ≤ 1.00	.80 ≤ AGFI ≤ .89	(Doll, Xia, & Torkzadeh, 1994)
SRMR	$0 \leq SRMR \leq .05$	.05 < SRMR ≤ .08	(Gürbüz & Şahin, 2014)

**Source:** Authors Elaboration

Reliability refers to the consistency of a variable or group of variables being measured (Hair et al., 2013). In other words, it is the consistency between the answers given to the statements in the scale (Büyüköztürk et al., 2009). Internal consistency is a method used to determine reliability, and the Cronbach Alpha reliability coefficient is the

most commonly used method for measuring internal consistency (Hair et al., 2017). The minimum reliability coefficient (Cronbach Alpha) for scales used in a study should be 0.70 or more (Hair et al., 2017). In this study, a reliability coefficient of 0.70 was used as the minimum threshold. The perceived overqualification (PO) scale used in this study has a theoretical basis. Therefore, a first-level multi-factor confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) was conducted to determine whether the structure of this scale was supported by the collected data. The results of the first-level multi-factor CFA are shown in Table 3.

**Table 3.** Results of first-order multi-factor CFA

Model	Dimension	Item	Std. Path Coefficients	t	CR	AVE
Level	Perceived Overqualification (PO)	PO.1	0,766	Fixed *	0,881	0,517
		PO.2	0,714	12,585		
		PO.3	0,809	14,441		
		PO.5	0,648	11,297		
		PO.6	0,783	13,928		
		PO.7	0,657	11,467		
		PO.8	0,638	11,103		
<b>Fit indices:</b> $\chi^2/df= 2,570$ ; CFI= 0,977; P= 0,001; GFI= 0,969; AGFI= 0,938; RMSEA= 0,071; TLI= 0,965; SRMR= ,054						

**Source:** Authors Elaboration

Based on the findings shown in Table 3, Boan and Dedeolu (2019) and Dedeolu and Demirer (2015) demonstrate that dependability has been achieved. This assertion is supported by the fact that the reliability values for the composite structure, as proposed by Fornell and Larcker (1981), above the threshold of 0.70. Simultaneously, it can be asserted that the scale expressions exhibit convergent validity, as evidenced by the AVE and standardized factor loads beyond the threshold of 0.50 (Dedeolu, Balkcioglu, and Kucukergin, 2016; Hair et al., 2009). The standard factor loadings proposed by Buyukozturk (2002: p.474) were deemed acceptable in this study. The observed loadings had a value of 0.60. As a consequence, assertions PO.4 and PO.9, which possessed values below the specified threshold, were excluded from the investigation. The DFA results obtained after removing the terms from the equation are presented in Table 3. The goodness of fit values for the model, as shown in this table, are consistent with the goodness of fit values reported in Table 2. As a result of this, it can be argued that the scale exhibits both construct validity and reliability (see to Table 3 for an illustration).

**Findings**

To determine whether there is a difference between the gender of the students studying in the field of Gastronomy and Culinary Arts, the status of working in a job related to their profession and the status of receiving an education related to their profession, the t test was conducted to determine whether there is a difference in terms of perceived overqualification. The results of the analysis are as follows.

**Table 4.** The t-test results of the perceived overqualification levels of the students according to their gender

		N	$\bar{x}$	SS	t	p
<b>Gender</b>	Male	167	2,848	1,055	0,893	0,372
	Female	144	2,742	1,040		

**Source:** Authors Elaboration

In Table 4, it was tested whether the perceived overqualification levels of the students differed according to their gender. As a result of the analysis, it was observed that there was no significant difference in the perceived overqualification levels of the students according to their gender ( $t=0.893$   $p>0.05$ ).

**Table 5.** The t-test results of the perceived overqualification levels of the students according to their previous work related to their profession

		N	$\bar{x}$	SS	t	p
Working situations	Yes	198	2,969	1,072	3,881	0,000
	No	113	2,500	0,935		

Source: Authors Elaboration

In Table 5, it was tested whether there was a difference in the perceived overqualification levels of the students according to their previous work in a job related to their profession. In the light of the findings, it was revealed that there was a significant difference in the perceived overqualification levels of the students according to their working status ( $t=3,881$   $p<0.05$ ). As can be seen in Table 5, it can be stated that the perceived excessive qualification levels of students who previously worked in a job related to their profession ( $\bar{x}=2,969$ ) were higher than those who did not ( $\bar{x}=2,500$ ).

**Table 6.** The t-test results of the perceived overqualification levels of the students according to their previous education related to their profession

		N	$\bar{x}$	SS	t	p
Education status	Yes	116	2,750	1,062	0,635	0,526
	No	195	2,828	1,041		

Source: Authors Elaboration

Table 6 shows the results of the analysis on whether there is a difference in the perceived overqualification levels of the students according to their previous education related to their profession. In the analyses made in this context, no significant difference was observed in the perceived overqualification levels ( $t=0.635$   $p>0.05$ ) according to the educational status of the students.

**Table 7.** ANOVA results of perceived overqualification according to students' age, grade level, department placement score and grade point average

		N	$\bar{x}$	SS	F	p
Age	19 and under	36	2,428	0,799	11,836	0,000
	20-21	111	3,121	1,047		
	22-23	78	3,047	1,076		
	24-25	50	2,500	0,984		
	26 and up	36	2,055	0,658		
	Total	311	2,799	1,048		
Grade	Second Class	121	2,792	1,023	15,915	0,000
	Thirth Class	83	3,275	1,042		
	Fourth SClass	72	2,194	0,757		
	Graduation status	35	2,938	1,073		
	Total	311	2,799	1,048		

**Table 7.** ANOVA results of perceived overqualification according to students' age, grade level, department placement score and grade point average (cont.)

<b>University selection exam score</b>	<b>300 and below</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>3,029</b>	<b>1,147</b>	<b>7,710</b>	<b>0,000</b>
	301-330	86	3,159	1,115		
	331-360	112	2,594	0,895		
	361-390	33	2,090	0,793		
	391-420	28	2,744	1,060		
	421 and above	23	3,242	0,949		
Total	311	2,799	1,048			
<b>Grade Point Average (GPA)</b>	2.50 and below	58	3,069	1,051	4,694	0,003
	2.51-3.00	75	2,969	1,126		
	3.01-3.50	113	2,753	1,037		
	3.51-4.00	65	2,441	0,867		
	Total	311	2,799	1,048		

**Source:** Authors Elaboration

To examine the variation in perceived overqualification levels among students based on their age, an analysis of variance (ANOVA) test was employed. During the initial phase, it was ascertained that there existed a statistically significant disparity ( $F=11.836$ ,  $P<0.05$ ) in the perceived degrees of overqualification among the students based on their age. Post-hoc analysis was employed during the subsequent stage of the examination. During this phase, the researcher examines the subgroups to determine if there are substantial differences between them (Kayri, 2009). Consequently, it was concluded that the variances exhibited inequality, with a significance level of  $p<0.05$ . Due to this rationale, the Games-Howell method was favored for post-hoc analysis (Kayri, 2009: 56). Table 8 displays the clusters wherein a noteworthy disparity exists in the perceived levels of overqualification across students, categorized by their age.

A statistically significant difference ( $F=15.915$ ,  $P<0.05$ ) was seen when analyzing the relationship between students' overqualification levels and their grades. The third grade has the highest amount of overqualification among pupils, with a mean value of 3,275. The observed disparity can be attributed to the rise in the educational attainment of the students. A little decline in student overqualification is observed during the final year of their educational journey. The decrease in participation can be attributed to the phenomenon wherein students transition into the workforce subsequent to completing their education, necessitating the pursuit of employment opportunities and engagement in professional endeavors. Table 8 presents the grade levels that exhibit a statistically significant distinction from one another.

A statistically significant difference ( $F=7,710$ ,  $P<0.05$ ) was seen in the perceived overqualification of students based on their placement scores in gastronomy departments. The findings revealed that the students who achieved a score of 421 (mean = 3,242) points and above had the highest level of overqualification. In contrast, the phenomenon wherein students who are admitted to a university with a higher score than their peers perceive themselves as more qualified can be elucidated by the observation that individuals with higher levels of education tend to exhibit a greater sense of overqualification compared to their counterparts (Gizlier & Yıldız, 2021; Karaman & Çetinkaya, 2019). Table 8 illustrates the score ranges in which the pupils exhibit statistically significant differences from one another.

A statistically significant difference ( $F=4.694$ ,  $P<0.05$ ) was seen in the perceived degrees of overqualification among students in the gastronomy department, based on their grade point averages. The findings of this section

indicate that there is a positive correlation between students' grade point average and their level of overqualification. Specifically, it was observed that students with a grade point average of 2.50 and less exhibited the highest degree of overqualification, with an average score of 3.069. Table 8 presents the grade point averages of the pupils that exhibit statistically significant differences among them. The present correlation can be elucidated through the constructs of perceived overqualification and its impact on employee performance. According to the study conducted by Onat and Eren (2020), there is a correlation between higher job performance and lower levels of perceived overqualification among employees. In a similar vein, it was shown that students who exerted greater effort and achieved higher grade point averages exhibited lower levels of perceived overqualification.

**Table 8.** POST-HOC analysis results of perceived overqualification level according to students' age, grade level, department placement score and grade point average

			Average Difference	p
Age	19 and under	20-21	-,69241*	,001
		22-23	-,61905*	,008
		24-25	-,07143	,996
		26 and up	,37302	,207
	20-21	19 and under	,69241*	,001
		22-23	,07336	,990
		24-25	,62098*	,004
		26 and up	1,06542*	,000
	22-23	19 and under	,61905*	,008
		20-21	-,07336	,990
		24-25	,54762*	,030
		26 and up	,99206*	,000
	24-25	19 and under	,07143	,996
		20-21	-,62098*	,004
		22-23	-,54762*	,030
		26 and up	,44444	,099
	26 and up	19 and under	-,37302	,207
		20-21	-1,06542*	,000
		22-23	-,99206*	,000
		24-25	-,44444	,099
Grade	2nd Class	3rd Class	-,48318*	,007
		4th Grade	,59776*	,000
		Graduate	-,14657	,889
	3rd Class	2nd Class	,48318*	,007
		4th Grade	1,08094*	,000
		Graduate	,33661	,404
	4th Grade	2nd Class	-,59776*	,000
		3rd Class	-1,08094*	,000
		Graduate	-,74433*	,003
	Graduate	2nd Class	,14657	,889
		3rd Class	-,33661	,404
		4th Grade	,74433*	,003

**Table 8.** POST-HOC analysis results of perceived overqualification level according to students' age, grade level, department placement score and grade point average (devamı)

University selection exam score	300 and below	301-330	-,12991	,995
		331-360	,43517	,419
		361-390	,93865*	,007
		391-420	,28466	,925
		421 and above	-,21268	,977
	301-330	300 and below	,12991	,995
		331-360	,56508*	,002
		361-390	1,06856*	,000
		391-420	,41457	,492
		421 and above	-,08277	,999
	331-360	300 and below	-,43517	,419
		301-330	-,56508*	,002
		361-390	,50348*	,033
		391-420	-,15051	,982
		421 and above	-,64785	,053
	361-390	300 and below	-,93865*	,007
		301-330	-1,06856*	,000
		331-360	-,50348*	,033
		391-420	-,65399	,096
		421 and above	-1,15133*	,000
391-420	300 and below	-,28466	,925	
	301-330	-,41457	,492	
	331-360	,15051	,982	
	361-390	,65399	,096	
	421 and above	-,49734	,497	
421 and above	300 and below	,21268	,977	
	301-330	,08277	,999	
	331-360	,64785	,053	
	361-390	1,15133*	,000	
	391-420	,49734	,497	
GPA	2.50 and below	2.51-3.00	,09944	,953
		3.01-3.50	,31549	,249
		3.51-4.00	,62721*	,003
	2.51-3.00	2.50 and below	-,09944	,953
		3.01-3.50	,21605	,546
		3.51-4.00	,52777*	,011
	3.01-3.50	2.50 and below	-,31549	,249
		2.51-3.00	-,21605	,546
		3.51-4.00	,31172	,143
	3.51-4.00	2.50 and below	-,62721*	,003
		2.51-3.00	-,52777*	,011
		3.01-3.50	-,31172	,143
<b>* The mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level.</b>				

**Source:** Authors Elaboration

In Table 8, the results of the POST-HOC analysis of the perceived overqualification level according to the age, grade level, department placement score and grade point average of the students are listed. As can be seen from the table, it is understood that the sub-expressions are separated from each other in a significant way. Which expression has the highest level of overqualification can be understood by looking at the "x" value in Table 8.

### Discussion and Conclusions

Within the existing body of research, no empirical investigation has been identified that specifically explores the association between perceived overqualification and variables such as age, academic performance, university

entrance examination scores, and overall grade point average. Li, Hu, Huang, and Duan (2017) conducted a study to investigate the association between perceived overqualification and variables such as learning interest, learning input, and information sharing behavior. This study revealed a statistically significant and inverse association between perceived overqualification and both learning interest and learning input. A notable and favorable correlation exists between the perception of being overqualified and the action of sharing knowledge. In the present investigation, a distinction is noted between the educational backgrounds of the students and the learning input examined in the study conducted by Li et al. (2017). The research conducted by Onat and Eren (2020) examines the association between overqualification and the prior employment status of kitchen workers in various industries. These findings are also documented in the existing literature. In essence, the research reveals that kitchen employees who have prior experience in a distinct industry exhibit higher levels of qualification in comparison to their counterparts who lack such professional background. The findings of this study indicate that there is a positive association between prior work experience and overqualification among students. Hence, the current investigation provides support for the existing research in the scholarly literature. No existing research has been identified that specifically examines the correlation between alternative expressions in the current investigation and the perception of overqualification. Hence, it is postulated that this research endeavor will address the aforementioned lacuna in the existing body of scholarly work.

The tourist sector is characterized by a high degree of reliance on human labor. Therefore, it is imperative that employees possess specific competences to effectively meet the needs and guarantee the contentment of tourists. Nevertheless, despite possessing these competencies, certain barriers may impede employees from delivering exceptional performance. The issue of perceived overqualification has been identified as a significant obstacle (Onat & Eren, 2020). For the tourism product to be seen successfully by tourists, it is imperative that all of its components demonstrate success, given its integrated structure. Currently, one of the crucial elements pertains to the engagement in eating and drinking behaviors. In the context of this research, an investigation was conducted on kitchen personnel who will be employed in the food and beverage industry. This study investigates the relationship between certain characteristics and the sense of overqualification among students enrolled in gastronomy education programs.

Upon examination of the study's findings, it becomes evident that there is no discernible variation in the perception of overqualification based on gender and prior educational attainment. Nevertheless, it has been established that the prior experience of students in the food and beverage industry has led to a distinction in their view of being overqualified. It has been shown that individuals who possess prior professional experience tend to consider themselves as being overqualified at a greater magnitude compared to those without such experience. Currently, the individual's belief that they possess superior knowledge and skills compared to their peers, stemming from their experience, likely contributes to their heightened perception of overqualification. This perspective may stem from the belief that practical experience holds greater significance than formal education. Irrespective of the underlying factors, the opinion held by students regarding their own overqualification tends to exert a detrimental influence on their future academic performance.

The age variable is another factor that contributes to variations in the understanding of overqualification, as it is influenced by the characteristics of the pupils. In a broad sense, it is observed that the perception of overqualification tends to decrease significantly as students' age progresses. From a certain perspective, the process of individuals

aging and thus acquiring more information and skills can potentially enhance their capacity to see the world in a more realistic manner.

The perception of overqualification is shown to vary based on the results achieved in university entrance tests. Based on the available evidence, it can be inferred that students who attained the highest scores upon admission to the university tend to consider themselves as more overqualified compared to their peers. Nevertheless, it is imperative to acknowledge another pertinent concern within these findings. It is conceivable that the perspectives of students who have engaged in long-term academic pursuits may have undergone alterations in this regard. Hence, a more precise approach would involve assessing these data through a multifaceted lens.

One notable discovery from the research is that those with lower GPA levels may exhibit a heightened perception of being overqualified. There exist various factors contributing to this particular circumstance. Certain students may have the belief that professional experience carries greater significance than education. Due to this rationale, individuals may regard themselves as possessing excessive qualifications and hence fail to demonstrate the requisite level of significance towards educational pursuits. From this perspective, it aligns with the research indicating that students who had professional experience tend to have a heightened feeling of being overqualified. Another potential factor could be that students who possess a heightened level of self-awareness are cognizant of their own capabilities and thus place a greater emphasis on education as a means of personal growth and development. It is imperative to conduct an investigation into the underlying causes of this perceived overqualification and implement strategies to effectively address and mitigate this issue. By including students in the process of applying for internships, a more comprehensive comprehension of the significance of sector-specific experience and educational background can be attained. One of the observed trends is a decline in overqualification as individuals age. Summer internships have the potential to have influence by providing students with opportunities to apply their acquired knowledge and skills. During the formative years, it is crucial to underscore the significance of academic education on par with professional experience through the inclusion of executive guests from the relevant industry.

### **Beyan**

All authors of the article contributed equally to the article process. There is no conflict of interest that the authors should declare. In order to ensure that the research complies with ethical principles, approval was obtained from Recep Tayyip Erdoğan University Social and Human Sciences Ethics Committee on 27.09.2023 with the number 2023/248.

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**Appendix 1. Ethics Committee Permission**



**RECEP TAYYİP ERDOĞAN ÜNİVERSİTESİ  
SOSYAL VE BEŞERİ BİLİMLER ETİK KURULU**

**DEĞERLENDİRME RAPORU**

**Toplantı Tarihi** : 27/09/2023

**Toplantı K. Sayısı** : 2023/248

Dr. Öğr. Üyesi Gökhan ONAT'ın "PERCEIVED OVERQUALIFICATION: EVALUATION FOR GASTRONOMY STUDENTS ('ALGILANAN FAZLA NİTELİK: GASTRONOMİ ÖĞRENCİLERİ İÇİN DEĞERLENDİRME)" isimli projesi kapsamında yürütülecek çalışmalar için izin talebi kurulumuzca değerlendirilmiş olup;

- Etik açıdan uygun bulunmuştur.
- Etik açıdan uygun bulunmamıştır.
- Etik açıdan önerilen değişikliklerin yapılmasıyla uygun bulunmuştur.