
The Worries, Career Employment Attitudes, and Social Inequalities of Master's Degree Students

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Aim: University students' mental health is affected by worries about the employment of their future. Our purpose is to analyze the relationships between traits of worry and career attitudes, happiness and autonomy in their quality of life among postgraduates.

Method: Independent of their socioeconomic status, all students obtained financial aid from the government of Luxembourg. A link to an online questionnaire was sent to their home address. The instrument assessed: Penn-State-Worry scale, Career dimensions (adaptability, optimism, knowledge and planning), Happiness and Quality of Life Autonomy scores, and socio-demographic characteristics. Bivariate-tests, correlations and multiple linear regression models were used for analysis.

Results: A majority of the 481 volunteers (26.4 years; SD=5.5) were women and unemployed. Socio-demographical factors such as European or non-EU nationality (*vs. Luxembourgish*), possession of an internship employment contract (*vs. fixed-term and permanent contract*) and being a part of social and humanity sciences domain were related with high worries. Lower adaptability ($\beta = -2.271$; $p < 0.001$) and optimism career attitudes ($\beta = -2.162$; $p = 0.002$), low happiness ($\beta = -1.518$; $p = 0.039$) and autonomy in their quality of life ($\beta = -0.669$; $p = 0.004$), respectively, were affected by higher worry score.

Conclusion: Worry indicator could be observed routinely to monitor students' career adaptability and optimism. University career employment workshops may help to increase the individual capabilities to improve and/or to maintain their wellbeing. Nationality, employment contract status and chosen academic field had generated mental health inequalities that must be considered in consultations, counselling and implementation of prevention and promotion programs.