

## COMPARING THE ATTITUDES OF THE STUDENTS WHO TAKE SPORTS-RELATED LESSONS AT UNIVERSITIES TOWARD SPORTS<sup>(1)</sup>

### ÜNİVERSİTELERDE SPORİF DERSLERİ SEÇMELİ ALAN ÖĞRENCİLERİN SPORA KARŞI TUTUMLARININ KARŞILAŞTIRILMASI

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**Öz:** 4 farklı üniversitede, çeşitli bölümlerde öğrenim gören ve sportif içeriaklı dersleri seçmeli olarak alan öğrencilerin, spora karşı tutumlarının incelenmesi amaçlanmıştır. Çalışmada toplamda 640 öğrenciye ulaşılırak (Koçak, 2014:59-69) tarafından geliştirilen "Spora Yönelik Tutum Ölçeği" gönüllü katılım sağlayılan Kocaeli Üniversitesi, İstanbul Teknik Üniversitesi, Mersin Üniversitesi ve Sakarya Üniversitesinde okuyan öğrencilere uygulanmıştır. SPSS 21.0 paket programı kullanılarak sırasıyla çalışmaya katılan tüm grupların frekans ve % dağılımları hesaplandı. 2'li karşılaşmalar için Bağımsız Gruplarda T-Testi, 3'lü karşılaşmalar için ANOVA Testi uygulanmıştır. Anlamlı farklılığın hangi gruppardan kaynakladığı belirlenmesi için Tukey analizi yapılmıştır. Bulgular: cinsiyet, sınıf düzeyi, lisanslı sporcu olup olmama, bir branşla ilgileneve okulumun üniversite değişkenlerine anlamlı farklılığı rastlanırken, yaş, bölüm, spor yılı değişkenlerinde anlamlı farklılığı rastlanmamıştır. Sonuç: Kadın öğrencilerin erkek öğrencilere göre sportif derslerin daha fazla fiziksel gelişimi desteklediği kanısında olduklarını, lisanslı öğrencilerin sedanter öğrencilere göre sporan psikososyal ve zihinsel gelişimi daha çok desteklediği düşünüldüğünü göstermiştir. Ancak tüm alt boyutlarda lisanslı sporcuların daha yüksek ortalamalara sahip olmaları, sporun tüm boyutlarındaki gelişimi desteklediği tutumunda olduklarını göstermiştir. Sınıf düzeyinin spora karşı tutumu etkilediği, bir branşla ilgisi olan grubun sedanter bireylere göre tüm alt boyutlarda daha yüksek ortalamalara sahip olmaları, rekreatif amaçla bile spor yapan öğrencilerin sporan tüm boyutlarındaki gelişimleri desteklediği tutumunda olduklarını ve spora karşı tutumun üniversitelere göre farklılığını göstermiştir.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** Spor, Spora Karşı Tutum, Üniversite Öğrencileri

**Abstract:** Purpose: The present study aims to examine the attitudes of the students, who study at 4 different universities in various departments and take sports lessons as elective, toward sports. **Method:** By reaching a total of 640 students in the study, the "Attitudes Towards Sports Scale" developed by (Koçak, 2014: 59-69) was applied to volunteering students at Kocaeli University, Istanbul Technical University, Mersin University and Sakarya University. The frequency and percentage distributions of all groups participating in the study were calculated via SPSS 21.0 package program. Independent T-Test was conducted for double comparisons and ANOVA Test, for triple comparisons. Tukey analysis was conducted to determine which groups caused the significant difference. **Results:** While there was a significant difference in the variables of gender, grade, being a licensed athlete, interest in a branch and the university attended, there was not a significant difference in the variables of age, department, years of doing sports. **Conclusion:** Female students think that sports lessons support more physical development than male students, and licensed students think that sports support psychosocial and mental development more than sedentary students. However, the higher averages of licensed athletes in all sub-dimensions revealed that they had attitude that sports support development in all dimensions. The fact that grade affects the attitude towards sports, the group that is related to a branch has higher averages in all sub-dimensions compared to the sedentary individuals shows that the students who do sports even for recreational purposes have an attitude to support the development of sports in all dimensions and that the attitude towards sports differs according to university.

**Keywords:** Sports, Attitude Toward Sports, University Students

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## INTRODUCTION

### Education

Education, which is divided into two as formal and informal, is a process of transferring the experiences and knowledge from the past to the new generations who continue to grow and to obtain desired behavioral changes in people (Kadir and Özkurt, 2016: 93-101). Education is indispensable for societies. Education means not only to increase the knowledge level of students, but also to make them better in emotional, social and physical terms. It is to be able to use all skills in solving problems completely and make them self-sufficient (Er-can, 1998: 35).

What is expected from education is to train individuals towards specific goals, to transform them into individuals fit for the society they live in and the modern world, and to provide them with the skills required by the era (Ergün and Ersoy, 2014: 673-700). In other words, it is helping individuals reach the best level by revealing their hidden talents. Developing individuals by considering them as a whole mentally, physically, emotionally and socially is the most important principle of contemporary education. According to modern understanding, reaching the goal in education is possible not only with mental education but also with P.E. (physical education). P.E. lesson, which aims to learn through movements, is an indispens-

able part of basic education and contributes to the goals of basic education with movements (Kangalgil et al., 2006: 48).

### Physical Education

There is a rapid differentiation in our age. This differentiation causes many techniques to change rapidly, replacing human power with mechanics, and consuming produced information immediately. This situation causes people to become more inactive, to become obese individuals with many health problems by distancing them from being in motion. Schools, whose main purpose is to prepare informed and trained manpower for the society, in this case have much more duty, and the education curriculum should be developed in order to overcome the future problems of individuals and to improve the required knowledge and skill levels. P.E. lessons are also included in education planning to support the healthy growth of students. P.E. is not only physical development education but also spiritual, social and moral behavior development training (GSB, 1973: 7).

P.E. lesson creates societies that are compatible with the social order and laws, open to opposing ideas, appreciative of beauty, refusing failure, and developing self-improved societies (Harmandar, 2004: 90). P.E. lessons are very important tools to protect and save young people from smoking, coffee house en-

vironment, pleasure-inducing substances and bad habits involving alcohol (Çöndü, 1999: 21). P.E. means the entire planned studies carried out in line with the aim of ensuring the physical, spiritual and intellectual development of the person, preparing for the conditions of life, strengthening the national consciousness and national feelings (Seaton et al., 1965: 6).

P.E. is “an educational process in which physical activities are used, as well as a process which contributes to the optimal development of attitudes, knowledge and skills required by individuals” (Heper et al., 2012: 4). P.E. is the development of personality based on the integrity principle of the body and is an indispensable part of education. It is the training of ensuring a healthy, strong, happy and balanced personality, as well as socialization, acculturation and awareness of being a citizen (Harmandar, 2004: 87). P.E. lesson emphasizes the development of individuals through a healthy society with happy, ethical, patriotic, creative, productive and spiritually strong individuals; while also raising them as individuals who are loyal to national and cultural values and have the behaviors required by a democratic life (Arac, 2000: 10). In other words, P.E. lesson can be explained as an indispensable part of basic education that develops individuals mentally and spiritually and most importantly, develops character by

laying solid foundations in the same context which is set for the healthy physical development of the society (Tutal, 2014: 7).

### Attitude

The word attitude was first used by the famous philosopher and sociologist Herbert Spencer in 1862. Spencer actually used attitude to describe the person's mental judgments. In 1888, Lange examined and researched attitude as a concept in its own right in laboratory studies. Although Lange's concept of attitude is independent from its current definition, he made definitions similar to these explanations. Later, the phenomenon of attitude as a popular topic studied by psychologists and sociologists has attracted the attention of many in the field. In the light of these studies, it is known to be the basis for the emergence of social psychology (Güllü and Güçlü, 2009: 2).

Attitude is explained as “a tendency attributed to an individual and that regularly forms their thoughts, feelings and behaviors about a psychological object” (Kağıtçıbaşı, 1999: 28). Attitudes are emotional events which help people shape their behavior. It affects the intensity of the person's behavior. For example, studies conducted in the school environment show that the students' attitudes towards the lesson, the materials related to the lesson and the teacher directly affect the lecture notes

(Hünük and Demirhan, 2003: 175). Attitude indicates the state of being ready to act or react toward some objects, concepts, events and situations by approaching and moving away. According to Franzoi (2003), attitude is the state of coding an object positively or negatively (Güllü and Güçlü, 2009: 2).

Attitudes can range from the most positive to the most negative. Negative attitudes such as having negative definitions of an object or ideas, disliking or hating it can manifest themselves in negative actions toward it. Positive attitudes can show themselves in having positive definitions towards objects or ideas, absorbing and loving it (Demirhan and Altay, 2001: 9).

Students can show positive or negative attitudes toward P.E. lesson as well as toward any other lesson. Developing positive attitudes of students toward P.E. lessons can make lessons efficient and make it easier for the lesson to reach its goals. It can even enable students to voluntarily participate in other physical activities in the future (Silverman and Scrabis, 2004: 4-12). For example, Sherill et al. (1998: 1894) showed that students who were more physically fit exhibited more positive approaches and attitudes towards physical activities (Doydu et al., 2013: 100).

## AIM

The study aimed to examine the attitudes of students towards sports who study at various

departments of 4 different universities (Kocaeli University, ITU, Sakarya University, Mersin University) and take sports-related lessons as elective.

## RESEARCH METHOD

### Study Group

The study group was comprised of 640 students in total at Kocaeli University, İstanbul Technical University, Mersin University and Sakarya University who studied at various departments and took "Compulsory" or "Elective" sports-related lessons.

### Data Collection Tools

The scale developed by Koçak (2014: 59) and was used in the study consisted of 3 sub-dimensions. It was comprised of 22 questions in total and these topics respectively; psychological development (12 questions), mental development (6 questions), physical development (4 questions). The items in this scale, applied in 5-point Likert type, were completely agree "5 points (4.20-5.00)", agree "4 points (3.40-4.19)", moderately agree "3 points (2.60-3.39)", slightly agree "2 points (1.80-2.59)", and completely disagree, "1 point (1.00-1.79)". Thanks to this scoring style, the maximum score that can be obtained from the scale under trial conditions is 175; while the minimum score is calculated as 35. Lisrel 88 program was used for factor analysis of the scale. The

margin of error in the study was calculated as  $p < 0.05$ .

### Data Collection

This scale, which was planned to be applied to various audiences in the study about attitude toward sports, was prepared in Excel, handed in and applied to students at the end of the relevant lessons. Students were told in advance that the survey information would be kept confidential, and information such as name-surname was never requested from the students in order for them to answer the questionnaire objectively. Data collection was carried out between the dates of September - October 2017.

### Data Analysis

The data obtained at the end of the study were analyzed statistically via the SPSS (Statistical Package for Social Sciences) 21.0 package program. In the statistical analysis phase, the following operations were applied respectively;

- The frequency and percentage distributions of all groups participating in the study were calculated.
- T-Test in Independent Groups for double comparisons and ANOVA Test for triple comparisons were applied.
- Tukey analysis was conducted to determine which groups caused the significant difference.

## RESULTS

**Table 1. Frequency and Percentage Distributions of the Participants**

PARAMETERS		N	%
Gender	Female	267	58,3
	Male	373	41,7
Age	19-21	313	48,9
	22-24	291	45,5
	Above 25	36	5,6
Grade	1st grade	184	28,7
	2nd grade	190	29,7
	3rd grade	55	8,6
	4th grade	211	33,0
University	Mersin University	126	19,7
	Kocaeli University	164	25,6
	İstanbul Technical University	122	34,7
	Sakarya University	128	20,0
Status of Sports Licence	Existent	271	42,7
	Nonexistent	369	57,7
Interest in a Sports Branch	Yes	290	45,3
	No	350	54,6

\*When the gender variable was examined in terms of frequency and percentage, 373 (58.3%) of the students who chose the university elective sports lesson were male; while 267 of them were female.

When the age variable was examined in terms of frequency and percentage, 313 (48.9%) of the students who chose the university elective lesson were between 19-21 years old; 291 of

them (45.5%) 22-24 years old; 36 of them (5.6%) were at age group of over 25 years old.

The grade variable revealed that in terms of frequency and percentage, 184 (28.7%) of the students who chose the elective lesson of the university were 1st graders; 190 of them (29.7%) 2nd graders; 55 of them (8.6%) 3rd

graders; and 211 of them (33.0%) were 4th graders.

The university variable showed that in terms of frequency and percentage, 126 (19.7%) of the participants who chose university elective sports lessons were at Mersin University; 164 of them (25.6%) at Kocaeli University; 122 of them (34.7%) at ITU; 128 of them (20.0%) were at Sakarya University.

The status of having a sports license showed that in terms of frequency and percentage, 271 (42.3%) of the students who chose the university elective lesson were licensed; while 369 (57.7%) of them were unlicensed.

Variable of interest in a sports branch showed that in terms of frequency and percentage, 290 (45.3%) of the students who chose the university elective lesson answered "Yes"; and 350 of them (54.6%) answered "No".

**Table 2. T-Test Results of the Participants' Attitudes Toward Sports According to the Gender Variable**

	Groups	N	Mean	SD	t	p
PSCHOLOGICAL	Male	373	4,0926	,79159	-1,57	,11
	Female	267	4,1903	,74338		
PHYSICAL	Male	373	4,1229	,77156	-2,11	,03*
	Female	267	4,2503	,72236		
MENTAL	Male	373	3,8874	,93670	-,85	,39
	Female	267	3,9504	,88912		

\*Table 2 reveals that students' attitudes toward sports do not differ significantly according to psychological development and mental development sub-dimensions ( $p > 0.05$ ). On the other hand, a significant difference is observed in the physical development

sub-dimension of students' attitudes toward sports ( $p < 0.05$ ). The results indicate that female students think that sports lessons support physical development more than male students.

**Table 3. T-Test Results of the Participants' Attitudes Toward Sports According to the Licence Variable**

	Groups	N	Mean	SD	t	p
PSCHOLOGICAL	Licenced	271	4,2053	,78531	2,02	,04*
	Unlicenced	369	4,0806	,76015		
PHYSICAL	Licenced	271	4,2073	,75318	,89	,37
	Unlicenced	369	4,1531	,75389		
MENTAL	Licenced	271	4,0507	,85930	3,26	,01*
	Unlicenced	369	3,8130	,94567		

\*Table 3 shows that there is a significant difference in students' attitudes toward sports according to sub-dimensions of psychological development and mental development ( $p < 0.05$ ). The results indicate that athletes who are licensed have higher scores in psychological development and mental development sub-dimensions. On the other hand, there is

no significant difference in physical development sub-dimension. Results show that the fact that licensed athletes have higher averages in all sub-dimensions compared to sedentary individuals is because that they have an attitude that sports support developments in all sub-dimensions.

**Table 4. ANOVA Test Results of the Participants' Attitudes Toward Sports According to University Variable**

	Groups	Sum of Squares	Sd	Quadratic Mean	F	p	Significant Difference
<b>PSCHOLOGICAL</b>	Inter-groups	4,826	3	1,609	2,71	,04*	3-4
	Intra-group	376,755	636	,592			
	Total	381,581	639				
<b>PHYSICAL</b>	Inter-groups	9,018	3	3,006	5,40	,00*	1-3
	Intra-group	353,759	636	,556			3-4
	Total	362,777	639				
<b>MENTAL</b>	Inter-groups	14,583	3	4,861	5,91	,00*	1-3
	Intra-group	522,710	636	,822			3-4
	Total	537,293	639				

\*Table 4 shows that a significant difference is present in all sub-dimensions of students' attitudes toward sports ( $p < 0.05$ ). Post-hoc (Tukey) test, one of the complementary analysis techniques, was used to determine which groups caused the significant difference as a result of the analysis. In the psychological development sub-dimension, Sakarya Uni-

versity students showed more psychological development than ITU students; while in physical development, Sakarya University and Mersin Universities had more physical development than ITU students. Additionally, in mental development, Sakarya University and Mersin University students also had more mental development than ITU students.

**Table 5. ANOVA Test- Results of the Participants' Attitudes Toward Sports According to Grade Variable**

	Groups	Sum of Squares	Sd	Quadratic Mean	F	p	Significant Difference
<b>PSYCHOLOGICAL</b>	Inter-groups	6,851	3	2,284	3,876	,00*	1-4
	Intra-group	374,730	636	,589			
	Total	381,581	639				
<b>PHYSICAL</b>	Inter-groups	3,949	3	1,316	2,333	,07*	
	Intra-group	358,828	636	,564			
	Total	362,777	639				
<b>MENTAL</b>	Inter-groups	7,911	3	2,637	3,168	,02*	1-4
	Intra-group	529,382	636	,832			
	Total	537,293	639				

\*Table 5 reveals that a significant difference is present in the psychological development and mental development sub-dimensions of the students' attitudes toward sports ( $p < 0.05$ ). Post-hoc (Tukey) test, one of the complementary analysis techniques, was used to determine which groups caused the significant difference as a result of the analysis. The results are in favor of the 4th grade between the 1st

and 4th grades in the psychological development sub-dimension; while in terms of mental development, it also points out that there is a significant difference in favor of the 4th grade between the 1st grade and 4th grade. On the other hand, no significant difference is found among the grades in the physical development sub-dimension ( $p > 0.05$ ).

**Table 6. T-Test Results of the Participants' Attitude Towards Sports According to the Variable of Interest in a Branch**

	Groups	N	Mean	SD	t	p
PSYCHOLOGICAL	Without a branch	367	4,0758	,75945	-2,19	,02*
	With a branch	273	4,2108	,78504		
PHYSICAL	Without a branch	367	4,1490	,75380	-1,05	,29
	With a branch	273	4,2125	,75288		
MENTAL	Without a branch	367	3,8079	,94552	-3,41	,00*
	With a branch	273	4,0559	,85848		

According to Table 6, a significant difference is present in the psychological development and mental development sub-dimensions of the students' attitudes toward sports ( $p < 0.05$ ). The results indicate that students with a branch have higher psychological development and mental development scores than students without a branch. On the other hand, there is not a significant difference in the physical development sub-dimension. The results show that the group that is related to a branch has higher averages in all sub-dimensions than sedentary individuals, and that sports support the development in all sub-dimensions.

## DISCUSSION

When examining the attitude toward P.E. and sports according to the gender variable, there are studies which did not find any sta-

tistically significant difference between female and male students (Koçak et al., 2015: 754; Göksel et al., 2017: 123-134; Yanık and Çamlıyer, 2015: 9; Göksel and Caz, 2016: 1; Gürbüz and Özkan, 2012: 78; Erden and Özmutlu, 2017: 415; Başkonuş, 2020: 365; Duman et al., 2020: 89). Studies with significant differences in attitude scores according to the gender variable, similar to our study, are also widely existent in the literature (Koçak 2014: 59; Akandere et al., 2010; Forbes et al., 2007: 125; Varol et al., 2017: 316; Türkmen et al., 2016: 48; Balyan et al., 2012: 196; Koca and Demirhan, 2004: 754-758); Kangalgil et al., 2006: 48-57; Çelik and Pulur, 2011: 115; Hünük and Demirhan, 2003: 175-184; Kalfa, 2019: 165-181). Yıldız et al. (2017: 35) on the other hand, in terms of gender variable, found a significant difference in the psycho-social development and physical develop-

ment factors as well as in the total score of attitude toward sports. This information shows that the result of our study coincides with the ones in the literature. The results also indicate that female students think that sports lessons support physical development more than male students. The reason for this may be because of the widespread awareness of healthy weight loss and better physical appearance among women with the effect of sports-related programs recently.

There are studies that show a significant difference in students' attitudes toward sports according to the variable of being licenced (Kangalgil et al., 2006: 48-56; Akandere et al., 2010: 1-10; Duman et al., 2020: 89-103). However, there were also studies where there was not a significant difference (Erden and Özmutlu, 2017: 415-425; Alparslan, 2008: 8). Our study indicates that the scores of licensed athletes in psychological development and mental development are significantly higher than those who are not. However, when all results are examined, the fact that licensed athletes have higher averages in all sub-dimensions compared to sedentary individuals shows that they are in the attitude that sports support developments in all sub-dimensions. It is thought that the reason why athletes have such positive attitudes towards sports is that they have the chance to observe the positive effects of sports directly on themselves.

Studies in which there is a significant difference in attitudes toward sports according to the grade variable are present in the literature (Kangalgil et al., 2006: 48-57; Akandere et al., 2010: 1-10; Hünük and Demirhan, 2003: 175-184; Altay and Özdemir, 2006: 9- 19; Subramaniam and Silverman, 2007: 602-611), while there are also studies with opposing results (Varol et al., 2017: 316-329; Başkonuş, 2020: 365; Göksel and Caz, 2016: 1-10). Göksel et al. (2017: 123) found a difference in the sub-dimension of living with sports in second grade students at university. However, there was not a statistically significant difference between students in sub-dimensions such as actively doing sports and interest in sports. Our study, on the other hand, indicates that there is a significant difference between 1st grade and 4th grade students in psychological development sub-dimension and between 1st grade and 4th grade in mental development. The reason for this may be that while the process of adaptation to the school prevailed in the first graders, the process of finding a job and starting life for the seniors caused the difference between the groups in terms of sports.

While there are studies with a significant difference according to the variable of dealing with a branch (Çelik and Pulur, 2011: 115-121; Öncü and Güven, 2011: 28-37; Kalfa, 2019: 165-181), a study with no significant

difference was also present (Tutal, 2014: 6). Kalfa (2019: 165-181) found a significant difference only in the mental development sub-dimension. Our study indicates that students with a branch have higher psychological development and mental development scores than students without a branch. Therefore, the present study corresponded with the literature. In addition, it was observed that the averages of those who were interested in a branch in all sub-dimensions were higher than other students. The reason for this may be that engaging in a sports branch even recreatively has a positive effect on attitude toward sports.

When the students' attitudes towards sports were examined according to the university variable, a significant difference was found in all sub dimensions. However, since the comparisons of these universities have not been made before in the literature, there is no study with a significant or insignificant difference. In the present study, students at Sakarya University have more psychological development than students at ITU in the psychological development sub-dimensions; while in physical development, Sakarya University and Mersin Universities have more physical development than ITU. In mental development, again, Sakarya University and Mersin Universities have more mental development than ITU.

## CONCLUSION

When the students' attitudes toward sports were examined in terms of the gender variable, a significant difference was observed in the physical development sub-dimension of the students' attitudes toward sports.

When the students' attitudes towards sports are examined in terms of the university variable, there is a significant difference according to the psychological development and mental development sub-dimensions.

When the students' attitudes towards sports were examined in terms of the university variable, a significant difference was found in the sub-dimensions of psychological development, physical development and mental development. The results showed that Sakarya University students had more psychological development than ITU students in the psychological development sub-dimension; while in physical development, Sakarya University and Mersin Universities had more physical development than ITU. In mental development, again, Sakarya University and Mersin University had more mental development than ITU.

When the students' attitudes toward sports were examined in terms of the grade variable, a significant difference was found in psychological development and mental development sub-dimensions. The results were in favor of

the 4th grade between the 1<sup>st</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> grades in the psychological development sub-dimension; while in terms of mental development, there was also a significant difference in favor of the 4<sup>th</sup> grade between 1<sup>st</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> grades.

When the attitudes of students toward sports are examined in terms of the variable of interest in a branch, there is a significant difference in psychological development and mental development sub-dimensions.

No significant difference was found in the variables of age, department, years of doing sports.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

In the light of the studies, if we can spread the sports activity not only throughout the university but throughout all age groups, the perspective towards sports can change positively.

New studies can be planned with larger sample groups on university students, and studies comparing the attitudes of university students studying in different geographical regions toward sports can be conducted.

Studies can be conducted to further increase the interest of students studying in different faculties and departments of universities towards sports.

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