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THE EFFECT OF UNIVERSITY STUDENTS' ATTITUDES TOWARDS SPORTS ON THEIR HAPPINESS LEVELS

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ABSTRACT

It is known that participation in sports positively affects people's mental health and reduces the negative effects of psychological disorders. It is said that this situation is caused by the happiness levels of individuals. It is known that there is a relationship between participation in sports and happiness levels. But, there are limited studies in the literature on the effect of participation in sports on happiness. The aim of this study is to examine the effects of Bayburt University students' attitudes towards sports on their happiness levels. In this study, descriptive survey model was used. The population of the research consists of students studying at Bayburt University. "Personal Information Form", "Attitude towards Sports Scale" and "Oxford Happiness Questionnaire-Short Form" were used as data collection tools. The sample consists of 352 students studying at Bayburt University in the 2021-2022 academic year. SPSS 25.00 package program was used in the analysis of the data obtained. Skewness-Kurtosis normality test, correlation and regression analysis were used in the analysis of the data. When the effect of the sub-dimensions of the participants' attitude scale towards sports on their happiness levels is examined, it is seen that one of the sub-dimensions of the attitude scale towards sports, Being Interested in Sports, has a significant effect on the happiness levels of university students. As a result, in this study on university students, it is seen that there is a relationship between attitude towards sports and happiness and that attitude towards sports affects the happiness levels of individuals. In addition, doing sports can contribute to individuals not only physiologically but also psychologically and in this respect, it can have positive effects on people's psychology such as happiness.

Keywords: Sports, attitude, happiness, university students.

INTRODUCTION

The evaluation of people, objects and events with a positive or negative attitude is defined as attitude (Gerrig & Zimbardo, 2012). Everything that a person can conceive of, from the concrete to the abstract, including objects, people, groups and ideas, is included in the term attitude (Petty & Wegener, 1998), which is used to refer to a person's overall appraisal of people (including himself/herself), objects and subjects (Bohner, & Dickel, 2011). An attitude might be an object, a person, or an abstract idea (Albarracin & Shavitt, 2018). People typically have either positive or negative attitudes (Hepler & Albarrac in 2013; Albarracin & Shavitt, 2018). Most human actions, as well as their social and personal life, can be impacted by attitude (Phillips & Silverman, 2015). According to Carlson (1994), the factors affecting attitudes are listed as those related to culture (gender, idols, different interests), those who are related to society (family, sports experiences, skill level, relationships with peers, previous physical education experiences and perceptions related to sports) and those who are related to school (teacher effect) (Kangalgil et al., 2006). It is possible that the attitudes formed in the university age will direct the behaviors of individuals in the future periods (Gönen & Ceyhan, 2022).

Attitudes have three components; emotional, mental and behavioral. The definitions of these components are as follows (Inceoğlu, 2010):

Emotional Component: In addition to classifying information, sensations and experiences related to the environment, there is an association of these classifications with positive, negative events, desired or undesirable goals. The existence of such a relationship represents the emotional component of the attitude. The emotional component is also closely related to the individual's value system. When an individual enters into a relationship with an object, situation or person, the value system he has or takes part in significantly affects the formation of his relationship form (Inceoğlu, 2010).

Cognitive Component: Cognitive component, which includes all kinds of knowledge, experiences, beliefs and thoughts about the person, situation, event or object that constitutes the subject of the attitude, constitutes an important section of the attitude. Cognitive component is connected with the process of mental functioning of the individual and is a component related to the systematization and classification of intellectual or mental functioning. These classifications, on the one hand, affect the individual's perceptions of different situations, objects, people and on the other hand, ensure that his reactions to different stimuli are different from each other (Inceoğlu, 2010).

Behavioral component: It reflects the tendency of the individual to behave towards the subject of attitude in a certain group of stimuli. These behavioral tendencies can be observed from words or other actions. These are also under the influence of the individual's habits, norms and attitudes that are not directly related to the attitude object in question (Inceoğlu, 2010).

The Turkish Language Association dictionary defines happiness as a state of pleasure to continually and fully achieve all desirable situations (<http://www.tdk.gov.tr> Access Date: 20.06.2022). It refers to a person's subjective perception of his/her life or circumstances, which includes a thorough assessment of the person's present-moment emotions and a thorough cognitive assessment of the person's existence (Kim et al., 2020). Happiness develops as a broad assessment of what a person has gone through in his/her own life (Diener et al., 2009). It is believed that happiness is a concept that an individual should want for himself (Kırkibir, 2020). For many people, it is extremely important and most cultures define it as a very worthwhile objective (Fisher, 2010). Positive emotions are said to counteract negative emotions that arise after obstacles encountered during the day (Olsson et al., 2013). The happiness level of a person can be characterized a show positively a person evaluate the total quality of his life in general (Bülbül & Giray, 2011).

It can be said that there are three components of happiness. The first of these is the frequency of experiencing positive emotions, the second is the frequency of experiencing negative emotions and the third is life satisfaction. Experiencing positive and negative emotions creates the affective dimension of happiness, while life satisfaction creates the cognitive dimension (Diener, 1984; Çeçen, 2007). Emotions such as joy, excitement, hope, confidence, courage can be given as examples of positive emotions that make up the affective dimension of happiness. Emotions such as anger, hatred, anxiety, fear, hopelessness, sadness can also be given as examples of negative emotions. Life satisfaction, which constitutes the cognitive dimension of happiness, expresses the evaluations and judgments of the individual regarding various areas and dimensions of life (social life, family life, health, work life, etc.) (Sapmaz & Doğan, 2012).

According to Akgün (1992), the term "sports" refers to a broad category of activities that enhance a person's state of health, physical condition and performance (Şentürk, 2015). Doing or participating in sports has many positive effects on individuals. One of the many individual and societal benefits attributed to sport has been its ability to promote health (Edwards & Casper, 2019). Sports form the basis of a healthy lifestyle (Orhan, 2019). During childhood, adolescence and adulthood, it promotes the preservation of people's physical and mental health (Wang & Zhang, 2021). It also contributes to their socio-cultural development (Gönen et al., 2022). It might be argued that a person's attitude toward sports is influenced by their family, their social surroundings and either positive or negative past experiences. Examining the literature reveals that participating in sports affects happiness. Huang and Humphreys (2011) suggest that if spor improves mental health, reduces the effects of depression and anxiety, it can also have an effect on happiness. According to Dolan et al. (2008), participating in sports leads to increased levels of happiness. In light of this information, it was intended to investigate how Bayburt University students' attitudes about sports affected their levels of happiness.

METHOD

Research Model

This study is a descriptive survey study on the impact of Bayburt University students' attitudes about sports on their levels of happiness. In general, the descriptive survey model is defined as the screening arrangements made on the sample consisting of the population in order to make a general judgment about the current population in a population with more or less elements (Karasar, 2012).

Population and Sample

The population of the research consists of students studying at Bayburt University. The sample consists of 352 students studying at Bayburt University in the 2021-2022 academic year.

Data Collection Tools

As a data collection tool, the first part is the "Personal Information Form", the second part is the "Attitude Scale towards Sports" and the third part is the "Oxford Happiness Questionnaire-Short Form".

Attitude Scale Towards Sports (SYT)

Attitude Scale Towards Sports "(SYT)" created by Şentürk (2015). It consists of 25 statements in order to measure the attitude towards sports. The expressions show distribution under three sub-dimensions. The first sub-dimension was divided into sub-dimensions as "being interested in sports", the second sub-dimension as "living with sports" and the third sub-dimension as "doing active sports". The KMO value was found to be 0.958. As a result of the analysis, the Barlett test was found to be significant ($\chi^2= 8712.629$; $p<001$). It is seen that the results for the total item correlation ranged between 0.50 and 0.74. Regarding the invariance of the scores over time, the reliability of the SAS was measured by the test method and the correlation coefficient ($r=.89$) obtained as a result of the comparison of the application scores also gives the reliability of the test. The Cronbach Alpha values calculated separately for the two applications of PBWA were found to be ".83" and ".87", respectively. It is a Likert type scale consisting of 5 options (Şentürk, 2015). The Cronbach Alpha values obtained in this study were found to be .864 for interest in sports, .702 for living with sports and .695 for active sports.

Oxford Happiness Questionnaire-Short Form

The scale was developed by Hills and Argyle (2002). The scale consists of 8 items and a correlation of .93 ($p<.001$) with its original 29-item form was found. The Turkish adaptation of OHQ-SF was made by Doğan and Çötök (2011). Accordingly, as a result of the exploratory factor analysis, a 7-item structure with an eigenvalue of 2,782 and a single factor explaining 39.74% of the total variance was obtained. The single-factor structure of OHQ-SF was examined by confirmatory factor analysis and the goodness of fit indices were found ($\chi^2/df=2.77$,

AGFI=0.93, GFI=0.97, CFI=0.95, NFI=0.92, IFI=0.95, RMSEA=0.074). The internal consistency coefficient for the reliability of OHQ-SF was found to be .74 and the test-retest reliability coefficient was found to be .85 (Doğan & Çötök, 2011). The Cronbach Alpha value obtained in this study was found to be .739.

Ethical Compliance

Before the research was conducted, the necessary permission was obtained from the Bayburt University Ethics Committee (Date: 15.03.2022, Number of Sessions: 2022/4, Document Number: E-15604681-050.99-59196).

FINDINGS

Table 1. Frequency and Percentages of Demographic Variables

Variable	Groups	f	%
Gender	Women	160	45.5
	Men	192	54.5
Educational Level	Associate degree	211	59.9
	Undergraduate	141	40.1
Class	1	37	10.5
	2	239	67.9
	3	40	11.4
	4	36	10.2
Socioeconomic Income Level	Low	100	28.4
	Middle	237	67.3
	High	15	4.3

When Table 1 is examined, 192 (54.5%) of the participants are men and 160 (45.5%) are women. The number of those who received undergraduate education was determined as 141 (40.1%) and the number of those who received associate degree education was determined as 211 (59.9%). According to grade level, the number of students studying in the first grade is 37 (10.5%), the number of students studying in the second grade is 239 (67.9%), the number of students studying in the third grade is 40 (11.4%) and the number of students studying in the fourth grade is 36 (10.2%). In terms of socioeconomic income level, 100 (28.4%) of the participants were found to be at low income level, 237 (67.3%) of them were at middle income level and 15 (4.3%) of participants were at high income level.

Table 2. The Attitude Towards Sports Scale and the Oxford Happiness Questionnaire Skewness-Kurtosis Normality Test

Scale Dimensions	Living with Sports	Doing Active Sports	Interest in Sports	Happiness
n	Valid Data	352	352	352
	Missing Data	0	0	0
Mean	3,5488	3,4702	3,7264	3,1498
Median	3,5000	3,5000	3,7692	3,1429
Standard Deviation	,66327	,68202	,62402	,68779
Skewness	-,321	-,112	-,490	-,227
Kurtosis	,476	-,082	1,352	,060
Minimum	1,00	1,33	1,00	1,14
Maximum	5,00	5,00	5,00	5,00

When Table 2 is examined, it is seen that the skewness and kurtosis values of the scales are between +1.5 and -1.5. Tabachnick and Fidell (2013) accept that the distribution occurs as a normal distribution when the skewness and kurtosis values are between +1.5 and -1.5. Since the skewness and kurtosis values of the statements about the scales are between +1.5 and -1.5, it can be said that the distribution in the study shows a normal distribution. Therefore, in this study, analyzes that can be made with normal distribution were made.

Table 3. The Relationship Between Attitudes Towards Sports and Happiness Levels

	Living with Sports	Doing Active Sports	Interest in Sports
Happiness	r ,283**	,260**	,295**
	p ,000	,000	,000
	n 352	352	352

According to Table 3, when the relationship between the mean scores of the participants' "Attitude Scale towards Sports" sub-dimensions and the mean scores of "Happiness Levels" is examined, it is seen that there is a positive low level significant relationship ($r=0.283$; $p<0.05$) between the participants' average scores of "Happiness" and "Living with Sports", a low level of positive correlation between the mean scores of "Happiness" and "Doing Active Sports" ($r=0.260$; $p<0.05$) and a low level of positive correlation between the mean score of "Happiness" and "Interest in Sports" ($r=0.260$; $p<0.05$). =0.295; $p<0.05$).

Table 4. Multiple Linear Regression Analysis Results on the Effects of Sport Attitude Scale Sub-Dimensions on Happiness

Model	Non-standardized		Standardized		Correlation					
	B	Std. Error	Beta	t	p	Zero-order	Partial	Part	Tolerance	VIF
(Fix)	1,844	,218	---	8,447	,000	---	---	---	---	---
Living with Sports	,112	,091	,108	1,225	,221	,283	,066	,062	,337	2,968
Doing Active Sports	,066	,080	,065	,824	,411	,260	,044	,042	,417	2,395
Interest in Sports	,183	,093	,166	1,979	,049	,295	,106	,101	,368	2,719

Described Variable: Happiness (Total)
 $R=0,310$; $R^2=0,096$; $F_{(3-348)}=12,362$; $p=0,000$; Durbin-Watson (D.W.) Statistic=1,959

According to Table 4, as a result of the multiple linear regression analysis carried out to reveal how the sub-dimensions of "Living with Sports", "Doing Active Sports" and "Interested in Sports", which are thought to have an effect on the "Happiness Scores Mean" of the participants, predict "Happiness"; Variables of "Living with Sports", "Doing Active Sports" and "Having Interest in Sports" showed a significant relationship with "Happiness" ($R=0.310$; $R^2=0.096$) ($F_{(3-348)}=12.362$; $p<0.05$). The variables of "Living with Sports", "Doing Active Sports" and "Having Interest in Sports" together explain about 10% of the change in the average score of "Happiness". According to the standardized regression coefficients, the relative importance of the predictor variables on "Happiness", respectively; "Interested in Sports" ($\beta=0.166$), "Living with Sports" ($\beta=0.108$) and "Active Sports" ($\beta=0.065$). Considering the significance tests of the regression coefficients of the predictor variables; It is concluded that in the predictive variables, only the variable of "interest in sports" ($t=1.979$;

$p < 0.05$) was a significant predictor of "Happiness", the sub-dimensions of "Living with Sports" ($t = -1.225$; $p > 0.05$) and "Doing Active Sports" ($t = 0.824$; $p > 0.05$) are not significant predictors of "Happiness". When the relations between the predictive variables and "Happiness" are examined; With "Interest in Sports" ($r = 0.295$) [when the effect of other predictive variables is controlled ($r = 0.106$)], Correlation at the level of "Living with Sports" ($r = 0.283$) [when the effect of other predictive variables is controlled ($r = 0.066$)], with "Active Sports" ($r = 0.260$) [when the effect of other predictive variables is controlled ($r = 0.044$)] is observed.

CONCLUSION and DISCUSSION

When the relationship between the sub-dimensions of the participants' attitude scale towards sports and their happiness levels was examined (Table 3), a positive and low-level significant relationship was found between living with sports, doing active sports, being interested in sports and their happiness levels. Doing sports, that is, participating in physical activity, can be described as a situation that shows the attitude towards sports. When the literature is examined, studies by Hills and Argyle (1998), Huang and Humphreys (2011), Richards et al. (2015), Lera-López et al. (2016), Zhang and Chen (2019), Frey and Gullo (2021) concluded that there is a positive relationship between doing sports/participating in physical activity and happiness levels. Considering the literature, it can be said that individuals who do sports are happier than those who do not. Huang and Humphreys (2012) state that participation in sports can have positive consequences for life. It can have an effect that can improve physical and mental health and increase happiness (An et al., 2020). Doing sports plays an active role in reaching happiness (Diener & Seligman, 2004), which is one of the most basic goals of human life. In addition, participation in sports provides opportunities for socialization, removes negative stimuli, increases self-confidence and helps to develop communication and cooperation skills (Frey & Gullo, 2021). Considering this information given, the current situation is caused by the emergence of socialization opportunities for individuals with sports activities, the increase in self-confidence of the individual as a result of feeling good physically and mentally and helping him/her to get away from the negativities he/she faces in his/her life.

When the effect of the sub-dimensions of the participants' attitude scale towards sports on their happiness levels is examined (Table 4), it is seen that one of the sub-dimensions of the attitude scale towards sports, Being Interested in Sports, has a significant effect on the happiness levels of university students. Accordingly, interest in sports seems to be an important factor in explaining the variance on the happiness levels of university students. Therefore, as the level of interest of the participants in sports increases, there will be an increase in their happiness levels.

As a result, in this study on university students, it is seen that there is a relationship between attitude towards sports and happiness and that attitude towards sports affects the happiness levels of individuals. In addition, doing sports can contribute to individuals not only physiologically but also psychologically and in this respect, it can have positive effects on people's psychology such as happiness.

RECOMMENDATIONS

There are some limitations in the study. The sample in the study consists of 352 participants. Therefore, studies with a larger sample group will enable the data obtained to reach healthier outcomes. The scales in the research are limited to the Attitude towards Sports and Oxford Happiness Questionnaire. Examining the effects and relationships from various aspects by adding different scales will contribute to the literature.

ETHICAL TEXT

Before the research was conducted, the necessary permission was obtained from the Bayburt University Ethics Committee (Date: 15.03.2022, Number of Sessions: 2022/4, Document Number: E-15604681-050.99-59196). "In this article, journal writing rules, publication principles, research and publication ethics rules, journal ethics rules have been followed. Responsibility for any violations that may arise related to the article belongs to the author."

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