

*Field : Physical Education*

*Type : Research Article*

*Received: 04.04.2016 - Accepted: 24.05.2016*

## **Parents' Thoughts towards Their Children Participation in Swimming Course as a Leisure Time Activity: A Qualitative Research**

**Yalın AYGÜN**

Inonu University, Physical Education and Sports Department, 44280, Battalgazi, Malatya, TURKEY

**Email:** [yalinaygun@gmail.com](mailto:yalinaygun@gmail.com)

### **Abstract**

While sports, and especially swimming, are particularly important for the physical, mental and psychological development of children, parents also have significant role in orienting their children towards sports. The aim of this study was to identify the views of parents regarding their children's participation to swimming courses, and to propose a number of recommendations based on these views. The study was based on a descriptive study method, and used a phenomenological design. The study participants included seven parents whose children took swimming courses at the Inonu University Indoor Swimming Pool in 2015 and 2016, and who voluntarily accepted to take part in the study. In this study, parent opinions were grouped under six main themes, which included: leisure time activities, the types of sports the children participate to, the goals of children in participating to swimming, the effects of swimming on children's development and health, parent participation to swimming, and swimming facility.

**Keywords:** leisure time activities, swimming, parent views, children and sports

## Introduction

From the days for the first men – who hunted with bows, gathered food and protected himself by fleeing wild animals – to our day, mobility has been an inseparable part of human life. The Turkish Language Association (TDK, 2016) defines sports as “All physical activities performed either individual or in group according to a set of rules, with the intent of achieving physical and mental development.” Sports are physical, mental and psychological activities performed according to rules set and implemented by others to achieve a particular objective, and which involves a competitive atmosphere where participants can win or lose. The concepts of sports and physical activity are generally used interchangeably or in tandem by society. However, in contrast to sports, physical activity involves exercise, games, and other daily activities (Baltaci, 2008: 3).

Studies in the literature describe that parents’ attitudes play an important role in the physical, mental and psychological well-being of children, in guiding them towards sports and physical activities, and in enabling them to make sports and physical activity part of their life styles. These studies describe that, in addition to the children’s willing to take part in physical activities, parents much also be supportive and interested in promoting physical activities (Dinc, et al., 2011: 93). Studies also note that certain parents are more willing to promote sports and physical education for their children, based on the thought that they would positively contribute to their children’s development and socialization; while other parents have a more negative stance towards their children’s participation to sports, based on the view that it would negatively affect their children’s academic performance (Guyen et al., 2006: 81). Certain studies indicate that parents need to assume a more active role in supporting the physical and cultural development of their children in their children’s leisure time (Elci, et al., 2014: 44), and that, in order to contribute to their children’s development, parents have to be willing to support their children’s continued involvement in a sports (Pehlivan, 2009: 74).

Physical education programs for children include physical exercise (fitness), team sports, two-player or individual sports, and leisure time activities (Baltaci, 2008: 8). Leisure time is defined as the time individuals willingly allocate to activities outside of those which are obligatory for the continuation of their quality of life in their social environment (Mansuroglu, 2002: 53). Leisure time activities, on the other hand, can be defined as the activities which individuals perform willingly and at their own leisure, rather than out of obligation.

The best type of exercise for children are the ones they perform regularly, while also being entertaining and rewarding (Baltaci, 2008: 13).

Parents are one of the key factors that allow children to make effective use of their leisure time. Swimming, which is a type of sport and leisure time activity, is known to have positive effects on children’s development, and is even a mandatory class in many countries (Celebi, 2008: 1). As an activity which, first of all, serves to prevent drowning, swimming involves coordinated movement based on certain techniques, and the conscious and instinctive control, movement and positioning of body parts within water. Swimming, which is a popular sports and physical activity, is also recommended for the treatment of certain pediatric diseases (cystic fibrosis, hemophilia, muscle dystrophies, obesity, rheumatoid arthritis) (Baltaci, 2008: 14).

The aim of this study was to determine the views of parents regarding their children's participation to swimming courses as a leisure time activity. The study was important in that it helped demonstrate the effect of parents on children's participation to sports and physical activities, and the parents' views on their own children's activities.

## **Materials and Methods**

### **Study Model**

The study was performed using the qualitative study method. Qualitative studies can be defined as studies in which qualitative data collection methods – such as observation, interviews and document analysis – are used, and a qualitative approach is used for identifying perceptions and events in their natural environment in a way that it is both realistic and holistic (Yildirim et al., 2011: 39). Another important feature of qualitative studies is that they examine humans, entities and events in their own natural settings (Punch, 2005: 142). The present study also made use of a phenomenological design. The phenomenological design focuses on cases on which we have a general knowledge, but lack any in-depth and detailed understanding (Yildirim et al., 2011: 72). According to Merriam (2013: 23), data in phenomenological designs are also collected through interviews, observations and document analysis. In studies of such design; the questions that are asked, what is observed, and the documents that are considered relevant, will depend on the theoretical framework and discipline of the study.

### **Participants**

The study participants were selected according to the criteria sampling method, which is one of the sample approaches used in qualitative studies. With this method, researcher may either use their own set of criteria to determine the study sample, or rely of a list of pre-defined criteria (Yildirim et al., 2011: 112). Two basic criteria were used in this study.

These were: (1) Voluntary participation to the study, and (2) Parent whose children have taken swimming courses at Inonu University's Indoor Swimming Pool between 2015 and 2016. Study participants also signed a consent form concerning their voluntary inclusion into the study. Participants were also informed that their identity would be kept confidential.

With the criteria sampling method, the number of individuals included into the study should generally not exceed 10 (Yildirim et al., 2011: 74). According to Creswell, the phenomenological approach should involve the evaluation of 3 to 10 persons (Creswell, 2014: 189). Based on these considerations, the present study was conducted with seven adults. To meet ethical requirements, the parents' identity information were kept confidential, and the parents were designated with codes such as E.1., E.3., and E.7. in the study.

### **Data Collection**

Steward and Cash (1985: 7) define interviews as “An interactive and reciprocal communication process based on question and answers, conducted according to a pre-determined and serious objective.” In this study, data were collected through interviews. After reviewing the literature, the views of experts were consulted to ensure the content and scope

validity of a semi-structure interview form; the questions on the form were finalized based on the recommendations and criticisms of they provided. To assess the understandability of the questions, preliminary interviews were performed with two parents to examine the clarity of the questions. It was determined that all of the study questions were understandable. Qualitative data was collected by voice recording the face-to-face interviews performed on February 21, 2016, with the seven parents who took part in the study. The interviews lasted between 10 to 15 minutes.

### Data Analysis

Content analysis was applied to the collected data. The main purpose of content analysis is to identify the concepts and relationships that help explain and clarify the data. Concepts lead to themes, and themes allow cases to be better organized and understood (Yildirim et al., 2011: 227). Based on qualitative and quantitative dimensions of texts and data, content analysis attempts to identify certain dimensions and aspects of social phenomena which otherwise would not be known or observable (Gokce, 2006: 20). During the study analysis, the voice recordings were converted into texts in a computer environment by the researcher and a specialist in this field. The researcher and specialist have performed this separately and independently of one another. Following this, the words or collection of words that were considered as best reflecting the opinions of the parents regarding the questions were separately coded and written by the researcher and the specialist in the field. The identified codes were then organized and assigned to form sub-themes, while sub-themes were organized and assigned to form themes. The reliability of the study was calculated using the formula “reliability (percentage conformity) = [agreement / (disagreement + agreement)] x 100.” Based on this formula, reliability was calculated as 0.93. Miles and Huberman (1994) describe that, for a good qualitative reliability, the reliability of the coding must at least by 80%. Personal information regarding the parents are shown in Table 1, while personal information regarding the children are shown in Table 2.

**Table 1.** Personal Information on the Parents

Code	Gender	Age	Civil Status	Education Level	Education Level of Spouse	Knows Swimming	Spouse Knows Swimming	House
E.1.	Female	40	Married	Doctorate	Doctorate	Yes	Yes	Duplex Apartment
E.2.	Female	41	Married	University	University	Yes	Yes	Apartment
E.3.	Female	38	Married	University	University	Yes	Yes	Apartment
E.4.	Female	39	Married	University	Doctorate	Yes	Yes	Apartment
E.5.	Female	37	Married	University	University	Yes	Yes	Duplex Apartment
E.6.	Female	35	Married	University	University	No	Yes	Apartment
E.7.	Female	46	Married	Open Plan School	High School	No	Yes	Apartment

**Table 2.** Personal Information on the Children

Gender	Age	Number of Siblings	Number of Friends (According to Parents' View)	Current Grade
Male	9	0	Partly Sufficient	4 <sup>th</sup> Grade
Male	9	1	Sufficient	3 <sup>rd</sup> Grade
Male	10	1	Sufficient	4 <sup>th</sup> Grade
Female	10	1	Sufficient	4 <sup>th</sup> Grade
Male	9	0	Sufficient	3 <sup>rd</sup> Grade
Female	7	1	Sufficient	1 <sup>st</sup> Grade
Male	6	1	Sufficient	Kindergarten
Male	8	1	Sufficient	2 <sup>nd</sup> Grade
Female	9	0	Sufficient	4 <sup>th</sup> Grade

### Findings

Based on the analyses that were performed, the views of the parents regarding swimming were categorized according to six main themes. These themes were leisure time activities, the types of sports the children participate to, the goals of the children in participating to swimming, the effects of swimming on the children's development and health, parent participation to swimming and swimming facility.

**Table 3.** Themes and Sub-Themes

Themes	Sub-Themes
Leisure Time Activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Leisure Time Activities Performed by the Children</li> <li>- Leisure Time Activities that Parents Want their Children to Do</li> <li>- Level of Priority of Sports Compared to Other Activities</li> </ul>
Type of Sports the Children Participate To	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Individual Sports</li> <li>- Team Sports</li> </ul>
The Goals of the Children in Participating to Swimming	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Children's Skill in Swimming</li> <li>- Reasons for the Children's Participation to Swimming</li> <li>- Purpose for the Children's Participation to Swimming</li> <li>- Duration of Children's Participation to Swimming</li> <li>- Priority of Swimming for Children</li> </ul>
The Effects of Swimming on the Children's Development and Health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Cognitive Effects</li> <li>- Affective Effects</li> <li>- Psychomotor Effects</li> <li>- Health Effects</li> </ul>
Parent Participation to Swimming	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Children's Willingness to be Watched by Parents</li> <li>- Effect on the Parents' Social Life</li> <li>- The Parent Participating to Children's Swimming Activities</li> </ul>
Swimming Facility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Safety</li> <li>- Adequacy of Swimming Facilities</li> <li>- Hygiene</li> <li>- Location Where Children Learn Swimming</li> </ul>

### **Leisure Time Activities Theme**

An evaluation of the parents' responses indicated that the "leisure time activities" theme consisted of three sub-themes, which were the "leisure time activities performed by the children," the "leisure time activities parents want their children to do," and the "level of priority of sports compared to other activities." Frequencies and parent opinions concerning these sub-themes are shown below.

#### **Leisure Time Activities Performed by the Children Sub-Theme**

Frequency of the codes: Swimming(4), Basketball(3), Violin(3), Play Games(3), Read Books(2), Computer(2), Tennis, Orchestra, Guitar, Listen to Music, Piano, Lego, Cinema, Table Tennis, Bicycle, Football, Volleyball, English.

E.2. "In their leisure time, they both go to swimming. At the same time, they also take table tennis courses on the weekends. My elder son also takes violin classes at the chamber orchestra. My other son plays guitar on his own."

E.4. "He does activities on the computer, reads books, goes to the cinema."

#### **Leisure Time Activities that Parents Want their Children to Do Sub-Theme**

Frequency of the codes: Swimming(3), Play with their friends(3), Listen to Music(2), Read Books(2), Basketball(2), Violin(2), Nature Sports, Music, Piano, Football, Chess, Tennis, Folklore, Guitar.

E.1. "I want him to spend time in nature, with his friends and doing nature sports."

E.2. "I want them to read book. To read more books than they do now..."

#### **Level of Priority of Sports Compared to Other Activities Sub-Theme**

Frequency of the codes: Sports has greater priority than other activities(4), Sports have equal priority/importance as other activities(3).

E.2. "Sports and sports-related activities should come before all other types of activities."

E.6. "I would say that sports is somewhat more important for their personal development. But I also would like them to engage in activities both in the area of sports and arts."

#### **Types of Sports the Children Participate To Theme**

An evaluation of the parents' responses indicated that the "types of sport the children participate to" theme consisted of two sub-themes, which were "individual sports," and "team sports." Frequencies and parent opinions concerning these sub-themes are shown below.

### **Individual Sports Sub-Theme**

Frequency of the codes: Swimming(4), Skiing(2), Tennis, Golf, Table Tennis, Cycling.

E.2. “Tennis and swimming”,

E.5. “Table tennis, cycling, swimming”

### **Team Sports Sub-Theme**

Frequency of the codes: Basketball(3), Football, Team sports other than swimming

E.1. “If my child didn’t have the opportunity to take part in swimming, I would have liked him to play basketball.”

E.3. “If my wasn’t swimming, I would have like him to play basketball or tennis.”

E.6. “Basketball, football”

### **Goals of the Children in Participating to Swimming Theme**

An evaluation of the parents’ responses indicated that the “the goals of the children in participating to swimming” theme consisted of five sub-themes, which were “children’s skill in swimming,” “reasons for the children’s participation to swimming,” “purpose for the children’s participation to swimming,” “duration of children’s participation to swimming,” and “priority of swimming for children.” Frequencies and parent opinions concerning these sub-themes are shown below.

### **Children’s Skill in Swimming Sub-Theme**

Frequency of the codes: Particularly Skilled (4), I do not know(2), Not Skilled,

E.1. “I think that he is particularly skilled [in swimming]. However, what’s more important for me is whether he wants to continue. If he wants to, he can; but if he doesn’t want to, he can stop once he is old enough to give that decision.”

E.2. “I think they’re skilled in swimming. Their teacher were saying the same since they were in kindergarten. At least, they were never afraid of the water, and were always brave. That’s why I think they’re quite skilled when it comes to swimming.

E.7. “I don’t know much about this, but the teacher considers him adequate, which means he making progress. But I can’t really comment on how skilled he is [in swimming].”

### **Reasons for the Children’s Participation to Swimming Sub-Theme**

Frequency of codes: Intention to become professional swimmer(5), life-long interst in swimming, child interested in swimming.

E.1. “I’d prefer that is my child who decides if he wants to go on with swimming.”

E.2. “I’d like them to continue swimming for as much as they can. When studying at university, they can join the university team. They can continue swimming with a club/team.”

E.5. "I want them to become licensed [professional] swimmers."

### **Purpose for the Children's Participation to Swimming Sub-Theme**

Frequency of the codes: Physical Development(4), Physical Health(3), Have a Good Time, Prevent Bad Habits, Learn How to Learn, Spend Time Productively, Reduce Stress, Spend Energy, Willingness, Become a Licensed Swimmer, Thinking of Swimming as a Priority Sports, Social Development, Develop Team Spirit.

E.1. "...for his health and physical development; so that he spends a good time."

E.2. "...Because they are in period of growth and development. [Swimming] will have a positive effect on their growth, so that they will grow in a better way. Plus, as they are growing, it will help prevent them from acquiring bad habits. It will help them learn new things. Since they are two little boys, I want them to spend their time together more actively. That way, I want them to do better things in their leisure time. That's why I wanted them to do swimming."

### **Duration of Children's Participation to Swimming Sub-Theme**

Frequency of the codes: Three years(2), Two years(2), One year, For years, Nine years, Less than a year.

E.5. "Five months"

### **Priority of Swimming for Children Sub-Theme**

Frequency of the codes: Swimming has greater priority than other activities(6), Uncertain(1)

E.1. "I am not really certain about this. I generally don't distinguish sports in terms of their level of importance."

E.3. "Swimming works all muscle groups, and give a good basis for starting other sports later on; that's why I think it has priority over other sports."

### **Effects of Swimming on the Children's Development and Health Theme**

An evaluation of the parents' responses indicated that the "effects of swimming on the children's development and health" theme consisted of four sub-themes, which were "cognitive effects," "affective effects," "psychomotor effects," and "health effects." Frequencies and parent opinions concerning these sub-themes are shown below.

#### **Cognitive Effects Sub-Theme**

Frequency of the codes: Improves Attention Deficit(2), Instills Discipline (2), Increases Awareness of the Need for Teachers, Increases Awareness on Following Rules, Problem-Solving Skills, Better Concentration in Classes, Better Performance in Classes, No Noticeable Effects.



E.1. “I don’t have much of an opinion on this, since he does a lot of sports at the same time, I don’t know which one has a greater impact. As a child, he is generally good in class, but it might be better for him if he works more in a disciplined manner.”

E.2. “I think it affects both of them positively. That’s because both of them had attention deficit before; I still think they do, but it’s better than before. [Swimming] helps them focus their attention. In the end, they work on the same sports for 1.5 hours every week, I think it helps them develop their attention. Their classes in school are normally 40 minutes. But by taking swimming for 1.5 hours, and having to do the same thing during this period, it improves the time they can focus on their classes.”

### **Affective Effects Sub-Theme**

Frequency of the codes: Being Happy(4), Acquire Team Spirit(4), Entertainment(3), Socialize(3), Be Motivated(2), Develop Positive Friendships(2), Share, Become a Sportsman, Be Positive, Self-Confidence, Throw Away Stress, Gain Determination, Develop Positive Behaviors.

E.2. “They really enjoy it a lot. Plus, they build friendships within their group, do very nice things in the name of team spirit, and also meet with their friends outside of swimming activities. That’s why swimming and the environment we are in have really allowed our children to gain a lot in terms of social activity.”

E.3. “It’s fun for them. It makes them very happy. Seeing them happy also makes me happy. It’s positive, because they swim in groups, and it’s a shared activity. In other words, they learn about sportsmanship. I think that’s very positive.”

### **Psychomotor Effects Sub-Theme**

Frequency of the codes: Coordination Skills(2), Muscle Development(2), Fine and Gross Motor Skills, Become Energetic, Increase Body Length, Become More Dynamic, Not Noticeable Effect.

E.1. “I don’t think it has any negative effects. As positive effects, I think it improves his fine and gross motor skills, and develops his coordination skills.”

E.2. “I think it has positive effects. For example, both of my children’s legs were very weak, and when they first started [swimming], the weakness of their legs was very visible. In time, they improved this and developed their muscles by swimming. It is very visible on them. In fact, that’s one of the reasons I made them start swimming.”

### **Health Effects Sub-Theme**

Frequency of the Codes: Reduced frequency of infection, Stronger Immunity, Bone Development, Improve Allergic Asthma Attacks, Improves Lung Capacity, Improves Muscle Built.

E.2. “I think it has positive effects. For example, my elder son has a history of allergic asthma. Although it’s not very severe, he has asthma attacks once in a while. I think that

swimming really reduced the frequency of these attacks. It's most likely because it improves his lung capacity. I think that had a very important positive effect."

E.7. "It's good for his health. It's also good for his muscle development. That's because his muscles were very weak before."

### **Parent Participation to Swimming Theme**

An evaluation of the parents' responses indicated that the "parent participation to swimming" theme consisted of three sub-themes, which were "children's willing to be watched by parents," "effect on the parents' social life," and "the parent participating to children's swimming activities." Frequencies and parent opinions concerning these sub-themes are shown below.

#### **Children's Willingness to be Watched by Parents Sub-Theme**

Frequency of the codes: Yes, He/She Wants To (6), He/She Sometimes Wants To.

E.4. "Yes, he wants to [be watched]."

E.5. "Sometimes."

#### **Effect on the Parents' Social Life Sub-Theme**

Frequency of the codes: Does Not Limit Social Life(3), Limits Leisure Time but not Socialization(2), Limits Social Life, Allows Socialization with Other Parents at the Pool.

E.2. "I've made a lot of new friends thanks to swimming, and these friendships have all been continuing for a long time. It has a positive effect on my social life."

E.7. "It sometimes constraints your social life, so that's issue."

#### **The Parent Participating to Children's Swimming Activities Sub-Theme**

Frequency of the codes: Mother(5), Mother and/or Father(2), Aunt and/or Mother.

E.6. "It's either the mother or the father,"

### **Swimming Facility Theme**

An evaluation of the parents' responses indicated that the "swimming facility" theme consisted of four sub-themes, which were "safety," "adequacy of swimming facilities," "hygiene," and "location where children learn swimming." Frequencies and parent opinions concerning these sub-themes are shown below.

### **Safety Sub-Theme**

Frequency of the codes: Safe because there are enough coaches and personnel, Safe because it is clean(2), Safe because parents can accompany children(2), Safe because it is an official institution, Safe because it is a good facility, Safe because there are few students.

E.1. “The facility is managed by the university, which makes me feel more at ease. The fact that the facility is affiliated with an institution which can be inspected is very important for me. Rather than having a facility managed by a private sector [company] out of economic concerns, it is better that we have a facility located within a science-oriented institution that focuses more on giving sports services. I think it’s safe, that’s my general impression. I can say that it is safe.”

E.4. “It is safe. At least the changing rooms are separate. Children can dress up accompanied by their parents. The instructors closely take care of the children. I think it is also safe in that respect.

E.7. “It’s safe, since we can observe our children. They are under our watch.”

### **Adequacy of Swimming Facilities Sub-Theme**

Frequency of the codes: Inadequate both in terms of quality and quantity(4), Adequate both in terms of quality and quantity(2).

E.1. “They are absolutely not adequate. I think they are inadequate both in terms of quality and quantity. I especially see a lot confusion and disorder when swimming courses are given in summer. There are no set rules or standards about how the courses are supposed to be given, and about who is supposed to organize them. There can be a hundred children in the pool all of a sudden. As a result, it becomes less of a swimming class, and more of a ‘jumping into water’ session...”

### **Hygiene Sub-Theme**

Frequency of the codes: Pool is Clean(7), There is information about the pool’s status, Pool water is regularly tested.

E.1. “Since it’s the university’s own facility, I believe that it is better monitored and more hygienic. I don’t have detailed information about how they [keep the pool clean], but I know that they regularly take and examine samples from the pool. But the fact that the facility is affiliated with an official institution and the university makes me feel a lot more at ease about its level of hygiene.”

E.2. “I definitely think that it is hygienic. That’s why we preferred the university pool. We come from the city center. Every weekend, we drive 20-30 minutes to get here. We prefer this place because we thought that it is more hygienic here. We often speak with the facility’s director. We trust him. We believe that the all the necessary hygiene measures are being taken.”

## Location Where Children Learned Swimming Sub-Theme

Frequency of the codes: At a Pool(7).

E.1. “They learned it by taking special courses at a pool.”

E.6. “They learned it here, in this courses (pool).”

## Conclusion, Discussion and Recommendations

In this study, the parents’ views were grouped under six main themes, which were leisure time activities, the types of sports the children participate to, the goals of the children in participating to swimming, the effects of swimming on the children’s development and health, parent participation to swimming and swimming facility.

Based on the parents’ responses and views, the “leisure time activity” theme was found to consist of three sub-themes, which were “leisure time activities performed by the children” the “leisure time activities parents want their children to do,” and the “level of priority of sports compared to other activities.” In their study entitled “The Parents’ Opinion and Expectations About Their Children’s Leisure Time Activities and Sport Participation” Elci et al. (2014) describe that the most preferred leisure time activities for children are watching TV, listening to music, spending time on the computer or internet, and playing sports. The same study also described that the leisure time activities parents want their children to do the most are – in decreasing order – playing sports, reading books and magazines, playing music instruments, and playing mind games. Based on Elci et al. study, it was determined that children are more interested in music, computer and the internet for their leisure time activities, while parent want children to spend more leisure time on sports, music (i.e. playing instruments) and reading books.

The “types of sport the children participate to” theme consisted of two sub-themes, which were “individual sports” and “team sports.” According to the parents’ responses, the types of sports the children performed the most were swimming, basketball and skiing. In their study entitled “Determination of The Reasons Why Families Are Sending Their Children to Basketball Schools” Ozturk et al. (2016) described that one most important reasons why parents sent their children to basketball schools was to allow their children to be healthy, to develop their self-esteem, to reinforce their sense of responsibility, to prevent them from acquiring bad habits, to allow them to better socialize, to keep them away from the stress of school, and to allow them to develop team spirit. At the same time, parents also believed that sending their children to basketball schools will also help them career- and financial-wise later in their lives. In the present study, parents generally described basketball as the second sports they would like to see their children play in the event that there are no facilities or means for swimming nearby. The reasons parents listed for their decision to have their children take swimming courses included – in parallel with the findings of the abovementioned study – to prevent children from acquiring bad habits, to reduce stress in their children, to improve their social development, to improve their physical health, to develop team spirit, and to reinforce their self-confidence.

The “goals of the children in participating to swimming” theme consisted of five sub-themes, which were which were “children’s skill in swimming,” “reasons for the children’s participation to swimming,” “purpose for the children’s participation to swimming,” “duration

of children's participation to swimming," and "priority of swimming for children." In their study entitled "Examination of The Changes in Primary School Students' Academic Success, Physical and Social Behaviors Following Their Attendance to Sport Activities" Yalcin et al. (2013) investigated the effect of participating to sports activities on the school performance on elementary school children. They determined that parents reported positive effects on the school performance, the physique and the social behavior of children who regularly took part in sports activities. In their study entitled "The Expectations of The Families From Their Children Who Are Participating Sports, Behavioral Changes That Are Observed in Children and Obstacles to Participation to Sports", Pehlivan (2009) listed the main reasons why parents choose to send their children to basketball schools as: allowing their children to gain regular sports habits, allowing their children to develop a team spirit, and improving the health of their children. In the present study, the main reasons why parents sent their children to swimming classes were: to ensure that their children would develop a lifelong interest in swimming, to allow their children to gain develop a team spirit, and the positive effects of swimming on children's health. According to the study entitled "Parents' Opinions About Directing Their Children to Sports and Physical Activity" of Dinc et al. (2011), an increase in the parents' income and education level was associated with a greater emphasis on learning rather than winning in their children's sports activities. Similarly in the present study, the children's parents generally had a university level education or higher, and mainly supported their children's participation to swimming to promote learning.

The "effects of swimming on the children's development and health" theme consisted of four sub-themes, which were "cognitive effects," "affective effects," "psychomotor effects," and "health effects." In their study entitled "Family Factor in Physical Education and Sports" Guven et al. (2006) described that parents are the main determining factor in their children's participation to sports. They also determined that while certain parents were aware of the positive effects physical education and sports have on children, and hence supported their children's participation in them, many parents thought that sports would negatively affect their children's academic performance, and even increase their likelihood to sustain injuries; these parents hence adopted a negative attitude towards their children's participation to sports. In the present study, it was determined that parents were generally of the opinion that swimming improved academic performance, increased the duration of the children's focus, and had positive cognitive effects. The results of the present study were thus in agreement with Guven et al. (2006) study. In contrast to the parents who considered that participation to sports is likely to increase their children's likelihood to become injured, parents in the present study described that swimming positively affected and improved their children's coordination skills as well as their fine and gross motor muscles. The "parent participation to swimming" theme consisted of three sub-themes, which were "children's willing to be watched by parents," "effect on the parents' social life," and "the parent participating to children's swimming activities." The "swimming facility" theme, on the other hand, consisted of four sub-themes, which were "safety," "adequacy of swimming facilities," "hygiene," and "location where children learn swimming." In his postgraduate thesis entitled "The Effect of Families on The Participation to Swimming" Ozsandikci et al. (2010) determined that the parents' level of education and income was a factor that influenced the extent to which parents guided their children to sports, and that the parents had a determining effect on whether the children showed interest and participated in sports. He also observed that inadequate hygiene conditions and maintenance at sports facilities discourage parents and students from taking part in sports. In the present study, it was observed that the parents'

willingness to come to the pool to accompany their children had a positive effect on the latter's participation to sports (thus indicating that the children wanted to be watched by their parents). Although most of parents knew how to swim, it was noted that they did not practice this sports together with their children; the parents' claimed that this had to do with ensuring their children's safety. The parents considered that the swimming facilities were inadequate, both in terms of quality and quantity; however, they also described that they considered Inonu University's indoor swimming pool as being clean, which was why they brought their children to this pool. Based on these findings, it is possible to state that hygiene at a sports facility has an important effect on the parents' and children's participation to sports.

Based on the finding described above, we can propose the following recommendations:

1. Parents should work to identify their children's areas of interests and skills, and accordingly guide them to suitable sports.
2. Children should take part in both individual sports and team sports, in order to better promote the development of their personal and social characteristics.
3. Children should be guided towards sports and physical activity, and efforts should be made to ensure that their participation remains regular and long-term.
4. When guiding children towards sports, parents should not only support their motivation to win, but also promote learning, their sense of sharing, their socialization, and sportsmanship behaviors.
5. In addition to their educational development, swimming classes should also contribute to children's socialization.
6. Parents generally described that swimming courses contributed to the cognitive, affective and psychomotor development of their children; however, these courses should also contribute to the development of sportsmanship behaviors. Thus, the content of these courses should be modified accordingly, in a manner that encourages sportsmanship.
7. Sports have a significant positive impact of children's physical, mental and psychological development. For this reason, even if there are no means or facilities where children can swim, parents should encourage their children to play another sports such as basketball.
8. Parents should act as role models for their children when encouraging them to play sports, and should also practice the same sports as their children if possible.
9. Parents could be informed about the benefits of encouraging on guiding their children towards swimming.
10. The number and quality of swimming facilities should be increased.
11. Sports facilities should provide a hygienic environment in which children can practice sports.

## REFERENCES

- Baltacı G (2008). *Çocuk ve Spor*. (1. Baskı). Ankara: Klasmat Matbaacılık.
- Creswell JW (2013). *Araştırma deseni, nitel, nicel ve karma yöntem yaklaşımları*. (Trans. Ed. SB Demir) Ankara: Eğiten Kitap.

- Celebi S (2008). *Yüzme antrenmanı yaptırılan 9-13 yaş grubu ilköğretim öğrencilerinde vücut yapısal ve fonksiyonel özelliklerinin incelenmesi*. Yayınlanmamış Yüksek Lisans Tezi. Erciyes Üniversitesi, Sağlık Bilimleri Enstitüsü.
- Dinc ZF, Uluoz E, Sevimli D (2011). Parents' opinions about directing their children to sports and physical activity. *e-Journal of New World Sciences Academy*, 6(2), 93-102.
- Elci G, Mulazımoğlu Ballı O (2014). The parents' opinion and expectations about their children's leisure time activities and sport participation. *Journal of CBU Physical Education and Sport Sciences*, 6(1), 36-46.
- Gokce O (2006). *İçerik analizi: kuramsal ve pratik bilgiler*. Ankara: Siyasal Kitabevi.
- Güven O, Oncu E (2006). Family factor in physical education and sports. *Aile ve toplum: eğitim kültür ve araştırma dergisi*, 3(10), 81-90.
- Mansuroğlu S (2002). Determination of leisure characteristics and outdoor recreation tendencies for students of Akdeniz university. *Akdeniz University Journal of Faculty of Agriculture*, 15(2), 53-62.
- Merriam SB (2013). *Nitel araştırma desen ve uygulama için bir rehber*. (Trans. Ed. S Turan). Ankara: Nobel Yayıncılık.
- Miles MB, Huberman AM (1994). *Qualitative data analysis: an expanded sourcebook*, London: Sage Publications Ltd.
- Ozsandıkçı K (2010). *Yüzme sporuna katılımda ailelerin etkisinin incelenmesi (The Effect of Families on the Participation to Swimming)*. Yayınlanmamış Yüksek Lisans Tezi. Karadeniz Teknik Üniversitesi, Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü.
- Oztürk H, Akin A, Damar D (2016). Determination of the reasons why families are sending their children to basketball schools. *Journal of CBU Physical Education and Sport Sciences*, 11(1), 1-12.
- Pehlivan Z (2009). The expectations of the families from their children who are participating sports, behavioral changes that are observed in children and obstacles to participation to sports. *SPORMETRE The Journal of Physical Education and Sport Sciences*, 7(2), 69-76.
- Punch KF, Etöz Z (2005). *Sosyal araştırmalara giriş: Nicel ve nitel yaklaşımlar*. Ankara: Siyasal Kitabevi.
- Stewart CJ, Cash WB (1985). *Interviewing: principles and practices*. (4th edition). Dubuque, Iowa: W.C. Brown Publishers.
- Yalcın U, Balci V (2013). Examination of the changes in primary school students' academic success, physical and social behaviors following their attendance to sport activities. *SPORMETRE The Journal of Physical Education and Sport Sciences*, 11(1), 27-33.
- Yıldırım A, Şimşek H (2011). *Sosyal bilimlerde nitel araştırma yöntemleri*. İstanbul: Seçkin Yayınları.
- TDK(2016)[http://www.tdk.gov.tr/index.php?option=com\\_gts&arama=gts&guid=TDK.GTS.5728d6f3a6b0b7.31834566](http://www.tdk.gov.tr/index.php?option=com_gts&arama=gts&guid=TDK.GTS.5728d6f3a6b0b7.31834566) (accessed March 25,2016).