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Research Article

A study on the attitudes and awareness of gifted and typically developing children toward sports

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Abstract

This study aims to examine the attitudes and awareness of gifted and typically developing children towards sports. The general survey method was used in the research. A total of 203 students at the Science and Arts Center, Türk Telekom Primary School, Türk Telekom Middle School and Vocational Anatolian High School affiliated voluntarily participated in the research. The Attitude Scale Towards Sports and the Sports Awareness Scale were utilized in the research as a data collection tool. Non-parametric Mann Whitney U, Kruskall Wallis, and Spearman correlation tests were used to analyze the data. When the participants' attitudes and awareness of sports were assessed, a significant difference was discovered in the doing active sports sub-dimension of the attitude scale toward sports of the students who exhibited typical development compared to the gifted students. However, there was no significant difference according to the gender variable. Still, there was a significant difference in the sub-dimensions of interest in sports, sports knowledge and distinguishing the knowledge, and social and individual benefits in the class variable. According to the variable of regular exercise, a significant difference was found in all sub-dimensions. There was a significant difference in the sub-dimensions of being interested in sports and doing active sports based on the variable of going to the gym. A relationship was discovered when the sub-dimensions of attitude and awareness were studied concerning the age variable. As a result, it can be argued that the attitudes and awareness of the participants towards sports differ in terms of variables, but the attitudes of the typically developing students towards active sports are higher. Accordingly, it is recommended to conduct studies on sportive practices in order to increase the attitudes of gifted students towards active sports.

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Introduction

The discovery of the effects of regular sports on the protection of the health of individuals in developed countries has led to the embrace of sports as a life philosophy nowadays (Li, 2010; Salome, 2010; Vorkapic-Ferreira et al., 2017). Although the concept of sport brings to mind the idea of "an action with the body" in individuals, it can be argued that this definition is incomplete. Sport is a physical phenomenon based on muscle strength, but it also has a psychological and

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sociological dimension since it requires discipline, perseverance, and determination and therefore is considered interdisciplinary (Bindesen & Bindesen, 2020). Especially in developmental children, muscle development, hardening of bone tissue, and internal organs' ability to perform their functions healthily are related to how much time these individuals devote to sports in their lives (Özer, 2017). Furthermore, studies have shown that doing sports positively affects psychomotor development in children (Abate et al., 2020; Öngül et al., 2017) and improves physical fitness characteristics significantly (Nikravan, 2019; Oliveira et al., 2017). In addition, it is reported that students who do sports have higher academic success (Merino Narvaez & Jimenez Plaza, 2017), have higher levels of stress management (Dolenc, 2015), and lower levels of aggression (Bostancı et al., 2017) than non-sport students. It is also stated that sports have a positive effect on the attitudes of individuals (Shajie, 2014; Turhan et al., 2021).

Attitudes are the set of values that direct human behavior (Phillips, 2003), and attitudes are formed in two ways. The first group stated that they formed their attitudes by interacting with the attitude object and the second group by being influenced by the attitudes of others (Canakay, 2006; Phillips, 2003). Anderson (1998), on the other hand, defined an attitude as *"a moderately intense excitement that enables the individual to be inclined or prepared to respond appropriately or inappropriately when a particular object is encountered"* (Canakay, 2006; Anderson, 1988). Individuals' attitudes significantly affect their love, hate, and behavior (Morgan 1991). Hutton and Baumeister (1992) stated that individuals' high levels of awareness enhance their attitude and behavior relationships. The differences in the learning levels and evaluation of events might result from an increase in an individual's awareness (Dökmen, 200*2).* Kabat-Zinn (2009) defined awareness as *"an awakening process that leads one to know oneself better and find the truth in this way."* Awareness and attitude, which are the features that can change from person to person, even in individuals who experience the same processes, may also differ between typically developing individuals and gifted individuals. While some personal and environmental factors do not affect typical students, it is also mentioned that they cause social and emotional problems in gifted students (Gross, 1999). Gifted children's (GC) emotional and social development are more sensitive than their peers' (Milne & Reis, 2000; Schmitz & Galbraith, 1985). It is stated that gifted children are sensitive to the events around them (Dunn, 2009; Rinn et al., 2018; Kara, 2020). It can be argued that these individuals' awareness and attitude levels are higher than the typically developing individuals. Although there are studies on attitudes and awareness towards sports in the literature (Ashutosh, 2016; Turan, 2020; Biçer, 2021; İlhan et al., 2019), this study was necessary since no studies had been done on the attitudes and awareness of Gifted Individuals and Typically Developing Individuals towards sports. It is anticipated that the study might contribute to the existing literature and also to educators, families, and researchers working in this field. For this purpose, the study focused on examining the attitudes and awareness of gifted and typically developing children towards sports.

Problem of Study

- What is the attitude and awareness level of gifted and normally developing children according to the gender variable?
- What is the attitude and awareness level of gifted and normally developing children according to the class variable?
- What is the attitude and awareness level of gifted and normally developing children according to the regular sports variable?
- What is the attitude and awareness level of gifted and normally developing children according to the school type variable?
- What is the relationship between the attitudes and awareness levels of gifted and normally developing children according to the age variable?

Method

Research Model

A general survey model was used in this study. The general survey model is the survey research in which the opinions of the participants about a subject or event or the characteristics such as interests, skills, abilities, and attitudes are determined (Büyüköztürk et al., 2016).

Participants

The research population consists of 1810 students studying at the Science and Arts Center (SAC) Türk Telekom Secondary School, and Anatolian Vocational High School, affiliated with the Directorate of National Education in Muş. The sampling method used in the research is criterion sampling. Criterion sampling might consist of individuals, events, or situations with certain characteristics in research. In this case, units that meet the criteria determined for the sample are included in the sample (Büyüköztürk et al., 2016). The study's sample group consists of a total of 203 students (101 girls, 102 boys) who participated in our study voluntarily. The study identified inclusion criteria such as being a SAC student, experiencing learning difficulties, not having an intellectual disability diagnosis, etc. Before the study, Muş Alparslan University granted scientific research ethics approval dated: 01.11.2021/22742, and the participants' parents signed a parental consent form.

Table 1. Descriptive information about the participants

Variables		n	%
Age	7 years	2	1.0
	8 years	16	7.9
	9 years	51	25.1
	10 years	43	21.2
	11 years	37	18.2
	12 years	14	6.9
	13 years	10	4.9
	14 years	5	2.5
	15 years	12	5.9
	16 years	8	3.9
	17 years	5	2.5
Gender	Female	101	49.8
	Male	102	50.2
Class	Primary School	75	36.9
	Secondary School	93	45.8
	High School	35	17.2
Regular Sports Activity	Yes	78	38.4
	No	125	61.6
School Type	SAC	84	41
	Other School	120	59
Total		203	100

When Table 1 was examined, it was determined that 25.1% of the participants were 9 years old, 49.8% were female and 50.2% were male. It was determined that 36.9% of the participants attended primary school, 45.8% attended secondary school and 17.2% attended high school. It was determined that 38.4% of the participants said yes, 61.6% said no, 41% of them were educated at BİLS and 59% of them were educated in other schools.

Data Collection Tools

In the study, a personal information form created by the researchers, an attitude scale towards sports, and a sports awareness scale were used to determine the demographic characteristics of the students. Information about the participants' age, gender, class and regular exercise status availability in their were obtained in the personal information form.

Attitude Scale Towards Sports

The scale developed by Şentürk (2012) helps determine individuals' attitudes toward sports and reveals the positive characteristics of individuals engaged in sports. It is a 5-point Likert scale. The scale has 25 items and a 3-factor structure (α=0.972). The first factor is defined as "interest in sports" (α=0.972), the second factor as "Sport-based life" (α=0.983), and the third factor as "active sports" (α=0.954). It is determined that the scale has internal consistency in total score and sub-factors and test-retest reliability (Şentürk, 2012). Cronbach α was calculated as .80 for this study.

Sports Awareness Scale

The scale developed by Uyar and Sunay (2020) measures the sports awareness of individuals. It is a 5-point Likert scale. As a result of the exploratory factor analysis (EFA), the scale consists of 30 items and two sub-dimensions. While the dimension of sports knowledge and distinguishing knowledge consists of 21 items, the dimension of social and individual benefits consists of 9 items (Uyar & Sunay, 2020). For this study, the Cronbach α was calculated as .77.

Data Analysis

The data were analyzed using mean, standard deviation, frequency, and normal distribution tests(Kolmogorow Smirnow, Shapiro-Wilks tests) was performed and it was determined that the data were not normally distribute in this study. Since the data did not show a normal distribution, the Mann-Whitney U test was utilized for binary variables from nonparametric tests, the Kruskal-Wallis T-test was used for multiple comparisons, and the Spierman Correlation test was used to determine the relationship between variables. After the Kruskal-Wallis T-test, the Mann-Whitney U test was performed again to determine which groups had a significant difference, and the significance level was taken as 0.05.

Results

This section contains the findings of the research questions.

First study question, the results of the difference analysis between the attitudes and awareness levels of gifted and typically developing children according to the gender variable are Presented in Table 2.

Table 2. U-Test results of the participants' scores in the sub-dimensions of the attitude towards sports and sports awareness scale according to the gender variable.

Dimensions	Gender	n	Mean Rank	Total Rank	U	p
Interest in sports	Female	101	102.47	10349.00	5104.00	.910
	Male	102	101.54	10357.00		
Sport-based life	Female	101	100.48	10148.00	4997.00	.712
	Male	102	103.51	10558.00		
Active sports	Female	101	105.04	10609.50	4843.50	.461
	Male	102	98.99	10096.50		
Sports knowledge and distinguishing the knowledge	Female	101	98.65	9964.00	4813.00	.419
	Male	102	105.31	10742.00		
Social and individual benefits	Female	101	108.19	10927.50	4525.50	.134
	Male	102	95.87	9778.50		

When Table 2 is examined, no significant difference was found between the sub-dimensions of being interested in sports (U=5104,00, p>0.05), Sport-based life (U=4997,00, p>0.05), and doing active sports (U=4843,50, p>0.05) according to the gender variable of the participants. In addition, there were no statistically significant differences between the sub-dimensions of the sports awareness scale, which are sports knowledge and distinguishing the knowledge (U=4813,00, p>0.05), social and individual benefits (U=4525,50, p>0.05).

Second study question, the results of the difference analysis between the attitudes and awareness levels of gifted and typically developing children according to the class variable are presented in Table 3.

Table 3. Kruskal Wallis test results of the scores of the participants from the sub-dimensions of attitude towards sports and sports awareness scale according to the class variable.

Dimensions	Class variable	n	Mean Rank	sd	χ2	p	I-J
Interest in sports	1.primary school	75	95.27	3	6.873	**.032***	
	2.secondary school	93	98.61				
	3.high school	35	125.43				**3-1,2**
Sport-based life	1.primary school	75	90.35	3	5.302	.071	
	2.secondary school	93	106.37				
	3.high school	35	115.34				
Active sports	1.primary school	75	98.29	3	1.076	.584	
	2.secondary school	93	101.72				
	3.high school	35	110.70				
Sports knowledge and distinguishing the knowledge	1.primary school	75	86.74	3	19.768	**.000**	
	2.secondary school	93	100.03				
	3.high school	35	139.93				**3-1,2**
Social and individual benefits	1.primary school	75	81.34	3	23.982	**.000**	
	2.secondary school	93	104.44				**2-1**
	3.high school	35	139.79				**3-1,2**

When Table 3 is analyzed, no statistically significant difference was found between the sub-dimensions of Sport-based life χ2 (sd=3, n=203) =5.302, p>0.05) and doing active sports χ2 (sd=3, n=203) =1.076, p>0.05) according to the class variable of the participants. However, a statistically significant difference was found in the sub-dimension of interest in sports χ2 (sd=3, n=203) =6,873, p<0.05) and the sub-dimensions of sports knowledge and distinguishing the knowledge χ2 (sd=3, n=203) =19,768, p<0.05), social and individual benefits χ2 (sd=3, n=203) =23,982, p<0.05) of the sports awareness scale.

Thirth study question, the results of the difference analysis between the attitudes and awareness levels of gifted and typically developing children according to the variable of doing regular sports activity are presented in Table 4.

Table 4. U-Test results of the scores of the participants from the sub-dimensions of the attitude towards sports and sports awareness scale according to the regular sports activity variable.

Dimensions	RSA	n	Mean Rank	Total Rank	U	p
Interest in sports	Yes	78	124.12	9681.00	3150.00	**.000**
	No	125	88.20	11025.00		
Sport-based life	Yes	78	126.71	9883.00	2948.00	**.000**
	No	125	86.58	10823.00		
Active sports	Yes	78	123.99	9671.00	3160.00	**.000**
	No	125	88.28	11035.00		
Sports knowledge and distinguishing the knowledge	Yes	78	116.31	9072.50	3758.50	**.006**
	No	125	93.07	11633.50		
Social and individual benefits	Yes	78	113.84	8879.50	3951.50	**.023**
	No	125	94.61	11826.50		

p<0.05 **RSA**: Regular Sports Activity

When Table 4 is evaluated, a significant difference was found in the sub-dimensions of being interested in sports(U=3150,00; p<0.05), Sport-based life (U=2948,00; p<0.05), and doing active sports (U=3758,50; p<0.05), in the attitude towards sports scale according to the participants' regular sports activity variable. In addition, a statistically significant difference was found between the sub-dimensions of sports knowledge and distinguishing the knowledge (U=3758,50; p<0.05), social and individual benefits (U=3951,50; p<0.05) of the sports awareness scale.

Fourth study question, the results of the difference analysis between the attitudes and awareness levels of gifted and typically developing children according to the school type variable are presented in Table 5.

Table 5. U-Test results of the scores of the participants in the sub-dimensions of the attitude towards sports and sports awareness scale according to the school type variable.

Dimensions	School Type	n	Mean Rank	Total Rank	U	p
Interest in sports	SAC	84	98.68	8289.00	4719.000	.439
	Other school	119	105.18	12621.00		
Sport-based life	SAC	84	105.36	8850.00	4800.000	.562
	Other school	119	100.50	12060.00		
Active sports	SAC	84	88.61	7443.50	3873.500	**.005**
	Other school	119	112.222	13466.50		
Sports knowledge and distinguishing the knowledge	SAC	84	98.54	8277.00	4707.000	.422
	Other school	119	105.28	12633.00		
Social and individual benefits	SAC	84	109.09	9163.50	4486.500	.182
	Other school	119	97.89	11746.50		

p<0.05 **SAC**: Science and Art Center (School for gifted)

When Table 5 is examined, a significant difference was found in the sub-dimension of the attitude scale towards sports (U=3873,500, p<0.05) of the participants according to the school type variable. However, no significant difference was found in the sub-dimensions of being interested in sports (U=4719,000, p>0.05) and sport-based life (U=4800,000, p>0.05). In addition, no statistically significant difference was found between the sub-dimensions of the sports awareness scale (U=4707,000, p>0.05) and social and individual benefits (U= 4486,500, p> 0.05).

Fifth study question, the analysis of the relationship between the attitudes of gifted and typically developing children towards sports and their awareness levels according to the age variable is presented in Table 6.

Table 6. Correlation test between the age variable of the participants and the sub-dimensions of attitude towards sports and sports awareness scales

	Age	IS	SL	AS	SKDK	SIB
IS	.109					
SL	.129	.661**				
AS	.071	.565**	.520**			
SKDK	**.270****	**.600****	**.541****	**.428****		
SIB	**.264****	**.594****	**.536****	**.394****	**.603****	

*p<0,05; **p<0,01; N (203)

The Spearman correlation test was conducted to test whether there was a significant relationship between a participant's age variable and the sub-dimensions of sports attitude and awareness. It was found that there was no statistically significant relationship between the age variable and the sub-dimensions of the attitude towards sports scale among the ones interested in sports (r=,109; p>0.05), sport-based life (r=,129; p>0.05), and doing active sports (r=,071; p>0.05). Among the sub-dimensions of the sports awareness scale, a low-level positive and significant relationship was observed in the sub-dimensions of sports knowledge and distinguishing the knowledge (r=,270**; p<0.05), and social and individual benefits (r=,264**, p<0.05). In the sub-dimension of interest in sports, a moderately positive and significant relationship was found in the sub-dimensions of sports knowledge and distinguishing knowledge(r=,600**, p>0.05), and social and individual benefits (r=,594**,p>0.05). In the sub-dimension of sport-based life, a low level of positive and significant correlation was found in the sub-dimensions of sports knowledge and distinguishing the knowledge (r=,541**, p>0.05), social and individual benefits (r=.536**, p>0.05). In the doing active sports sub-dimension, a low level of positive and significant correlation was discovered in the sub-dimensions of sports knowledge and distinguishing the knowledge (r=,428**, p>0.05) and social and individual benefits (r=,394**, p>0.05).

Discussion and Conclusion

This research aims to examine the attitudes and awareness of gifted and normally developing children towards sports in terms of various variables. Sports have been shown to promote social awareness and help social cohesiveness in

individuals. Hassandra et al. (2003) stated that the status of people in their social lives directly affects their attitudes and awareness toward sports. Considering that attitudes and awareness can change according to individual differences in social life (Kabat-Zinn, 2009), the attitudes and awareness levels towards sports may change in individuals with special talents and typical development. This study was carried out in order to examine the attitudes and awareness of gifted and typically developing individuals towards sports.

In the literature, it is identified that the attitudes and awareness studies of gifted and typically developing children towards sports generally focus on the attitudes and awareness of primary, secondary, and university students towards sports (Kalfa,2019; Önal et al., 2017). Previous literature has failed to address gifted and typically developed students in a study. For this reason, the discussion was carried out on similar topics in which the attitudes and awareness of primary, secondary, and university students towards sports were examined.

In this study, in which the attitudes and awareness of gifted and typically developing children towards sports were examined, no significant difference was found between the attitudes and awareness levels of the participants according to the gender variable. Göksel and Caz (2016) found that gender does not affect attitudes and awareness toward sports, which has similar findings to the research. However, when the attitudes and awareness of secondary school students toward sports are examined according to the gender variable, some studies conclude that male students' attitudes and awareness toward sports are high (Cengiz et al., 2018; Yıldırım et al., 2018; Göktaş et al., 2019). Therefore, we can argue that the lack of a gender difference in the findings is due to the increased use of social media and other digital media platforms in recent years, which has made sports more accessible and popular, increasing the attitudes and awareness levels of all individuals toward sports, regardless of gender (Ulukan et al., 2008).

There was no significant difference between the attitudes and awareness levels of the participants according to the class variable in the sub-dimensions of sport-based life and doing active sports on the attitude towards sports scale. However, significant differences were found in the sub-dimension of interest in sports in the attitude scale towards sports and in the sub-dimensions of the social and individual benefit of the scale of sports awareness, sports knowledge, and distinguishing the knowledge. When the difference between the groups is examined, it has been determined that it is in favor of high school students in the sub-dimension of interest in sports, knowledge of sports, and distinguishing knowledge, and in favor of secondary school and high school students in the sub-dimensions of social and individual benefits. According to the class variable, there are different opinions in the literature. Ergül et al. (2016) and Taşkın et al. (2009), which are similar to the results of the research, state that as the class level rises, the attitudes and awareness levels of individuals towards sports increase. On the contrary, Şam et al. (2021), and Yıldırım et al. (2018), on the other hand, concluded that as the class level rises, the attitudes of individuals toward sports decrease. In this study, it can be associated with the fact that as the grade level increases, it can contribute to the development of attitudes and conscious awareness of the participants in the sub-dimensions of social and individual benefit, interest in sports, sports knowledge, and distinguishing the knowledge, and thus they can feel the contribution of sports to social, cognitive, affective and psychomotor areas more (Ergül et al., 2016; Yılmaz, 2019).

According to the participants ' regular sports activity variable, a statistically significant difference was found between the attitudes and awareness levels towards sports. Some studies in the literature share similarities with this research's results. For example, in the study, Zengin (2013) determined that individuals who do sports regularly have higher attitudes and awareness towards sports than individuals who do not do sports regularly. In this regard, we can associate the result of our study with the fact that individuals who regularly do sports can improve their school success and physical and social behaviors positively and affect the socialization process positively (Yalçın & Balcı, 2013).

According to the school type variable, there was no statistically significant difference between the attitudes and awareness levels of the participants towards sports, between the sub-dimensions of interest in sports, sport-based life, and the sub-dimensions of sports knowledge and distinguishing the knowledge, social and individual benefits of the sports awareness scale. However, a significant difference was discovered in the doing active sports sub-dimension of the attitude towards sports scale. When we look at which group the difference is in favor of, it has been determined that the mean rank of the students receiving general education is higher than the mean rank of the students receiving education in SAC.

Also, the students' attitudes in general education schools towards active sports are higher. When the literature is examined, some studies conclude that the attitudes of the students who receive general education towards sports are high according to the school type variable. For example, Başkonuş (2020) and Hazar et al. (2021) found that the attitude scores of students who do active sports are higher than those who do not actively do sports. In this direction, we can say that active sports increase the interest of individuals in sports activities (Yapıcı, 2021), and this situation might positively affect individuals' attitudes towards sports.

According to the age variable of the participants, there was no statistically significant relationship between the attitudes and awareness levels towards sports and the sub- dimensions of the attitude towards sports scale, which are sport-based life and doing active sports. However, a low-level positive and significant relationship was found between the sub-dimensions of sports awareness scale, sports knowledge, and distinguishing the knowledge, social and individual benefits. Some studies in the literature are similar to our research results. For example, in their studies, Jose et al. (2011) and Miller et al. (2017) found a statistically significant relationship between childhood and physical activity in adulthood. Based on our findings, we can argue that the sports education received at an early age will be more likely to be continued in adulthood (Uyar, 2019) and that it might affect the awareness of individuals towards sports at later ages.

The attitudes of gifted people toward active sports were shown to be lower than those of people with typical development in the study. However, it has been reported that gifted individuals are more sensitive to social events and phenomena than individuals with typical fdevelopment (Özbey et al., 2018; Piechowski, 2009; Altun et al., 2014). In this case, the study found that the children who are educated in SAC receive an enriched education in their own talent areas, and the concept of sports is limited to physical education and sports lessons only in the schools where they are educated; therefore, their concentration on their own talent areas affects their attitudes towards active sports.

The findings of this research demonstrate that there is no change in participants' attitudes and awareness in terms of gender variables. However, it is concluded that as the class level increases, their attitudes and awareness increase, those who do sports regularly have higher attitudes and awareness, the attitudes and awareness of the students studying in general education schools are higher towards active sports and the awareness of sports increases as the age of the participant increases.

Recommendations

The following suggestions can be made as a result of this study:

- Content and practices aimed at improving students' attitudes and awareness towards sports can be added to the curriculum of "Games and Physical Activities" and "Physical Education and Sports" at education levels,
- In addition to social activities such as music and painting, physical education and sports activities that will help children's psychological, physical and social development can be included in the BİLSEM curriculum,
- Seminars can be organized for parents on the positive contributions of sports to the social, physical and mental development of the individual and to school success,
- Bringing the studies conducted with different sample groups in the field of sports sciences for gifted children into the literature.

Limitations

This research is limited to 84 students identified as gifted and 119 students with typical development. Limited to 2021-2022 academic year.

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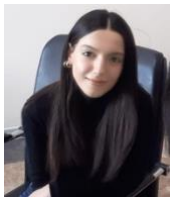

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