

Examining Students' School Climate and Academic Motivation Levels with Various Demographic Variables

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Abstract

The aim of this research is to examine the effects of academic motivation and school climate on students in the Faculty of Sports Sciences, considering various demographic variables. The study encompasses processes in which two scales were evaluated to determine the levels of academic motivation and school climate among young individuals. The research sample consists of 519 students, with 278 males (53.6%) and 241 females (46.4%) currently enrolled in sports sciences. The data collection tools used in the study include the School Climate Scale and the Academic Motivation Scale. A relational survey model was employed in the research. Due to the normal distribution of the data sets, parametric tests were used in the analysis process. According to the score range determined in the Academic Motivation Scale, participants were found to have a moderate level of academic motivation. However, the statistical scores obtained from the School Climate Scale revealed that participants had a negative perception of school climate. Additionally, it was determined that academic motivation and school climate levels did not differ based on the gender variable of the participants, nor did they differ according to class level. Another finding of the study was that married individuals had lower levels of academic motivation and school climate compared to single individuals. A moderate relationship was found between the values obtained from the Academic Motivation and School Climate scales. In conclusion, it is recommended that students' academic and athletic obligations be balanced to ensure the harmonious development of school climate and academic motivation. It is believed that the findings of this study will provide valuable insights for future research in this area.

Keywords: Organization, Organizational Climate, School Climate, Motivation, Academic Motivation

Introduction

The presence of academically successful, qualified, and well-equipped individuals can be considered a significant force in the development of a society. Academic failures experienced by individuals may lead them to engage in various behaviors, such as dropping out of school. This situation can cause individuals to lose self-confidence and experience a sense of uselessness (Yıldırım, 2000). There are numerous factors, both positive and negative, that influence academic success (Razon, 1987). Among these factors, the family plays a significant role; however, it is not limited to just the family. Various variables, such as students' social and emotional development levels, study habits, and motivation, also impact academic success (Razon, 1987; Kasatura, 1990; Atılğan 1998; Şerefli, 2003; Balkıs et al., 2006; Yapıcı & Keskin, 2008; Keskin & Sezgin, 2009; Eymur & Geban, 2011). Failure is inevitable when motivating factors are insufficient (Soyer et al., 2010).

When viewed in general, it is impossible to overlook the significant impact of motivation on academic success. In this context, one of the most important factors that play a role in individuals' attainment of academic success is their attitudes towards learning (Güngör and Yenel, 2020). Therefore, studies conducted in this area have demonstrated that motivation has a substantial effect on academic achievement (Şevik, 2014). A review of the literature reveals that the concepts of academic success and school climate are often considered inseparable (Bahçetepe, 2013; Ma & Klinger, 2000). Consequently, the concept of motivation frequently arises in organizational settings. Motivation refers to the efforts individuals make within an organization to achieve specific goals. An organization is a system of norms, values, behaviors, and beliefs that influence the behavior of individuals within the organization (Dinçer, 1998). An organization also provides a structure, a shared language, and similar approaches to problem-solving within the organization (Atay, 2001). Just as each individual has a unique structure, organizations also have their own distinct structure that sets them apart from others. This distinct structure differentiates the organization and gives it a specific culture. Moreover, individuals who embrace and internalize this culture enhance their morale while working harmoniously with their colleagues within the organization, leading to a significant increase in productivity (Berberoğlu & Baraz, 1999). Consequently, due to changing cultural differences, various definitions of organizations have emerged. Barnard (1994) defined an organization as "a formation of the activities or forces of two or more individuals coordinated according to their own desires." Schein (1970) described an organization as "efforts made by individuals, who come together with specific objectives, within a hierarchy with a high sense of responsibility." Etzioni (1964, as cited in Güçlü, 2003) defined it as "units created with specific objectives in mind and aimed at achieving these objectives." In this context, each organization reflects its own climate based on its structure and culture.

The term "climate" originates from the Greek language. This term not only encompasses natural phenomena such as weather events or pressure but also describes how individuals within an organization perceive and interpret their surroundings, thus carrying psychological significance (Gilmer, 1971). Gellerman (1960) addressed the concept of psychological climate as industrial psychology. Can (1996) emphasized the notable connection between an organization's psychological structure and organizational climate. In other words, the concept of Organizational Climate, intertwined with terms such as environment, atmosphere, and

emotion, reflects the internal structure and quality of the organization, particularly the emotional states of individuals (Tagiuri, 1968).

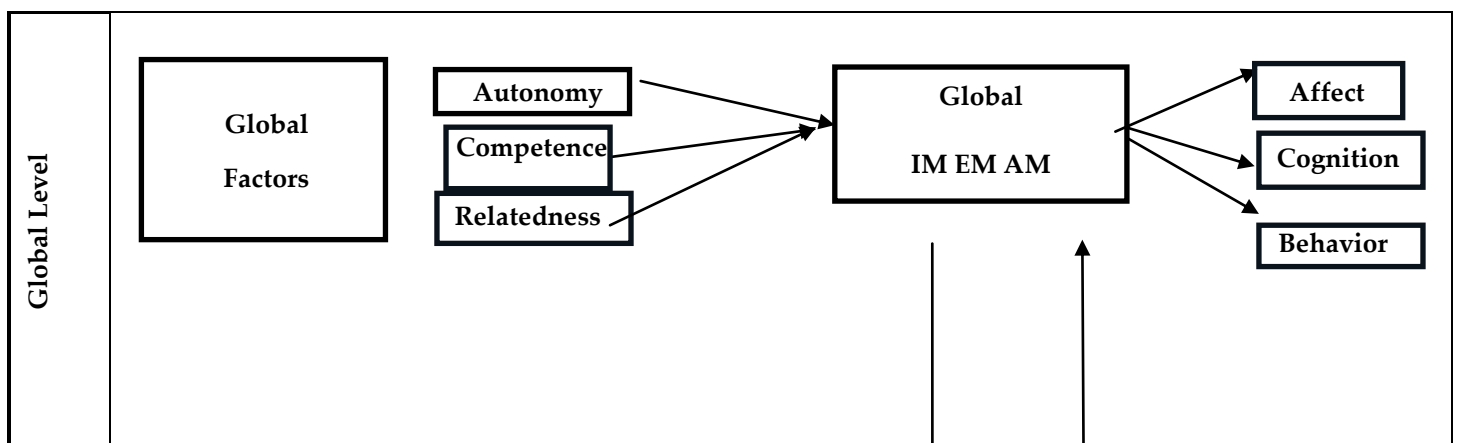
Cherrington (1994) defines organizational climate as “the set of structures and qualities that distinguish an organization from others.” He further elaborates by stating, “this definition is often likened to the concept of personality, as organizational climate is frequently referred to as the personality of the organization.” Halpin emphasizes this by stating, “Just as personality is crucial for individuals, climate is equally important for organizations.” Organizational climate is a psychological structure that encompasses the attributes that constitute the organization, differentiate it from others, maintain a stable and continuous structure within the organization, and influence, as well as are influenced by, the attitudes and behaviors of the individuals within the organization. Although it is intangible, it is perceived and valued by the members of the organization and encompasses all these characteristics (Karcioğlu, 2001). Consequently, as a result of these definitions and concepts, organizational climate is not confined solely to the organization but is also applicable in public institutions, schools, and many other domains. Since schools possess their own management style and hierarchy, they inherently embody their own climate. School climate refers to the collective values and beliefs that determine the attitudes towards maintaining unity, solidarity, and continuity among individuals within the school (Welsh, 2000). For a school to achieve its established objectives and to build a structure unique to itself, it is necessary to adopt a healthy and positive organizational climate among individuals (Ellis, 1988; Özdemir et al., 2010). The concept of school climate emerged as the term organizational climate found its place within the field of education. It forms a structure that determines the attitudes and behaviors of individuals within the school, fosters a shared mindset among them, and expresses the unity among members of the school (Cohen et al., 2009; Göcen & Kaya, 2014; Hoy & Miskel, 2015). School climate is an atmosphere that not only embodies the core characteristics of school life but also reflects the values and goals of the school. In this context, it also encompasses organizational structures and activities (Clifford et al., 2012). Studies indicate that a positive school climate provides conducive learning conditions for students, enhances academic achievement, and positively contributes to the commitment of staff members to the organization, leading to increased job satisfaction (Macneil, Prater & Busch, 2009). Additionally, school climate boosts satisfaction through positive teacher-student relationships and unity among students, further contributing to their academic success (Fraser, 1986). However, the school climate does not always foster a positive atmosphere; at times, a negative climate may prevail. In such instances, collaboration and solidarity may be lacking within the institution. A negative school climate can lead to employees feeling undervalued and perpetually engaged in a competitive environment. In schools where administrators do not uphold the school's objectives and where a negative school climate persists, the behaviors exhibited by them may fail to support the developmental processes of both teachers and students. Teachers in such environments may perform their duties under certain conditions without harboring any emotional connection towards their colleagues, students, or the school itself (Hoy, Tarter & Kottkamp, 1991). Furthermore, it has been observed that teachers, due to a lack of personal development concerns, do not prioritize their students' academic success, resulting in low achievement levels (Hoy & Miskel, 2013). Consequently, in environments where the climate is unhealthy, there is a tendency towards a more rigid, strict, and oppressive structure, where individuals are not accorded sufficient importance and value. Such environments are characterized by limited communication, low participation in activities, and minimal interpersonal interaction. Due to the inability of administrators to effectively demonstrate various leadership styles, individuals are subjected to an oppressive working environment that lacks job satisfaction and enjoyment (Varol, 1989). In contrast to a negative

structure, the existence of a positive school climate fosters positive human relationships, enabling individuals to feel valued and leading to more effective collaboration in achieving the school's objectives. As a result, the concept of school climate becomes more prominent, as it establishes a sense of order within the school (Çalık et al., 2011).

School climate has become a concept that significantly impacts students' academic success and learning skills in education (Loukas, 2007). When organizational climate is perceived positively, employees interact within the organization with a sense of trust. The climate within schools is directly related to students' academic achievement. Moreover, organizational climate greatly influences the behaviors, emotions, and attitudes of employees (Gök, 2009; Halis & Uğurlu, 2008; Çelik, 2016). The effect of school climate on students' emotions and thoughts is undeniable, and it has been demonstrated through various studies that school climate encompasses self-esteem as well as various relationships (Cairns, 1987; Way, Reddy & Rhodes, 2007). Therefore, a positive school climate not only contributes to the personal development of students but also plays a crucial role in enhancing the overall well-being of teachers and other staff members (UNESCO, 2017). Students' perceptions and experiences of the school climate contribute to their behaviors, emotions, and academic achievements (Wilson, 2004). The successful implementation and positivity of the school climate offer numerous benefits, including influencing behaviors. Since the primary goal of education is to achieve the highest level of success in line with students' predetermined goals, it is vital for students to continue their educational lives in a positive climate. Research has shown that school climate reflects the interaction between students' academic achievements (Bektaş & Nalçacı, 2013), their attachment to the school (İhtiyaroğlu & Demirbolat, 2016), and their satisfaction (Özdemir, Sezgin, Şirin, Karip & Erkan, 2010). In environments with such positive climates, trust among colleagues will increase, and there will be a heightened sense of responsibility. At the same time, more sincere relationships will be developed, leading to higher levels of morale and motivation (Şişman, 2002). Teachers have successfully supported students' development by challenging them under more difficult conditions (Özdemir, 2002). In schools where the school climate is maintained positively, senior administrators have specific expectations from students and teachers. To meet these expectations, administrators provide teachers with all the necessary resources and opportunities. Furthermore, when any adverse effect arises, solidarity and unity are promoted among teachers and students, fostering a supportive attitude (Hoy et al., 1998). A positive school climate not only contributes to individuals' personal development but also has a significant impact on the academic motivation of teachers and university students' perceptions within the school climate (Terzi & Uyangör, 2017). The term motivation, which is present in many aspects of our lives, is derived from the Latin word "movere," meaning "to move." It is generally described as the power source that supports sustaining an activity that has been initiated and completing it (Schunk, Meece & Pintrich, 2013). In Turkish, the word has been defined by the Turkish Language Association as "incentive" and "motivation" (TDK, 2011). Motivation is a crucial factor that can influence individuals' behaviors in various fields. In this context, academic achievement is one of the areas where motivation can be exemplified. In their academic careers, students are required to exhibit various behaviors, such as regular school attendance, showing interest in lessons, taking responsibility, and completing homework. Academic motivation, known as the most critical element in fulfilling these tasks and responsibilities, serves as a reminder to students and emerges as a significant factor determining their academic success (Wentzel & Wigfield, 2007). Academic motivation is a concept that represents the necessary power within the academic process (Karataş & Erden, 2012). It holds great importance in education, and in this context, low motivation among students emerges as a structure that affects and hinders the tasks to be carried out (Grunschel et al., 2016).

Motivation continues to have an impact as a crucial driving force from the beginning to the end of students' educational lives (Bacanlı & Şahinkaya, 2011). Many researchers who have studied this area assert that motivation affects many fields but is particularly rooted in academic skills and educational life in the context of academic motivation (Uyulgan & Akkuzu, 2014). It has been shown that students' interest and attachment to school throughout their educational lives influence their academic success. Deci and Ryan (1985) have revealed that academic motivation is closely linked to the efforts students put forth with curiosity throughout their educational lives. Therefore, the interest and attention students demonstrate toward their school during their educational journey are among the most valuable factors contributing to their academic success, with motivation being another critical element (Uyulgan & Akkuzu, 2014). Academic motivation emerges as a driving force that encourages students to participate in the learning process or motivates them to learn (Ryan & Deci, 2002). Academic motivation is generally categorized into two groups: intrinsic motivation and extrinsic motivation (Ryan & Deci, 2000). Intrinsic motivation has been conceptualized as an internal driving force that encourages an individual to engage in a particular activity out of curiosity, interest, or satisfaction (Deci, Cascio & Krusell, 1975). It is associated with other components such as research, learning goals, and intrinsic intellectuality (Vallerand, 1992). On the other hand, extrinsic motivation appears as the effort exerted to earn certain rewards or avoid punishments in order to engage in a particular activity (Dev, 1997). Academic motivation is considered one of the most effective driving forces in student learning (Tucker et al., 2002). Therefore, academic motivation is regarded as the sole factor that guarantees students' academic success (Griffin et al., 2012). Among the many factors that contribute to students' performance and academic achievement, academic motivation is considered one of the most important elements (Tucker et al., 2002). In this context, it plays a crucial role in students' participation and active involvement (Pavlou, 2006), learning autonomy, and academic performance (Rana, Mahmood & Reid, 2015). More importantly, intrinsic academic motivation has a positive significance in reducing stress and depression among undergraduate students, which in turn helps create a positive atmosphere in the classroom free from interpersonal conflicts (Huang, Lv & Wu, 2016). Vallerand's motivation model presents a different perspective on academic motivation.

Social Factors	Mediators	Hierarchical Levels of Motivation	Consequences
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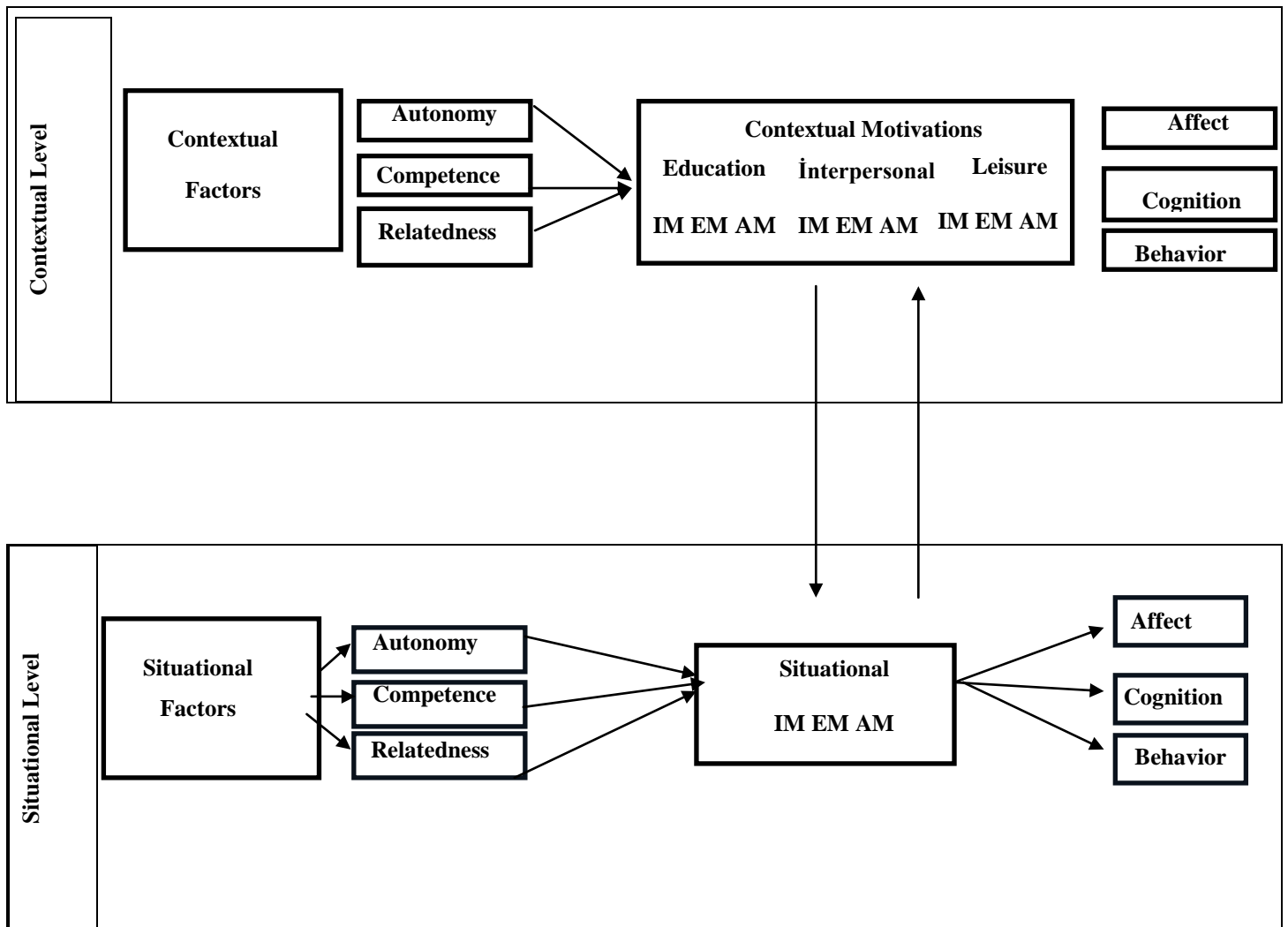


Figure 1: The Hierarchical Model of Motivation (Vallerand, 1997)

IM: Represents Internal Motivation, EM: Reflects External Motivation, and AM: Corresponds to Amotivation.

To distinguish between short-term and long-term motivation, the Self-Determination Theory (SDT) can be utilized as a role model. SDT emerges as a comprehensive motivation theory that aids individuals in self-motivation and guiding their behaviors. This theory allows for the examination of individuals' internal and external motivations, enabling an analysis of their effects on quality of life, success, and overall well-being. Consequently, Vallerand mapped SDT into a hierarchical model of motivation, analyzing motivation across three different levels (Guay, Mageau, & Vallerand, 2003; Vallerand, 1997; Vallerand, 2000). As illustrated in the figure, IM represents Internal Motivation, EM represents External Motivation, and AM represents Amotivation.

The global level is highly abstract as it relates to a person's motivational orientation due to personal identity. The contextual level is less abstract because it defines an individual's perceived relationship with other tangible entities, such as organizations like schools. The situational level, which is the focus of this study, is more specific compared to the global and

contextual levels. It reflects an individual's motivational response to a particular activity. In an educational setting, students' emotions towards school and learning influence their approach to learning environments and tasks. In this context, in-class learning activities also affect students' overall approach to learning (Stolk, Jacobs, Girard, & Pudvan, 2018). Therefore, academic motivation plays a crucial role in shaping students' cognitive, emotional, and behavioral patterns, both directly and through their personal goal orientations (Church et al., 2001; Daniels et al., 2014; Kaplan & Maehr, 2007). Generally, academic motivation is explained as "the provision of the necessary motivation for academic success" (Bozanoğlu, 2004). Ultimately, the aim of this study is to examine the academic motivation and perceptions of school climate among students of the Faculty of Sports Sciences in relation to various demographic variables. The significance of this research lies in its findings, which highlight that fostering a positive school climate and supporting high levels of academic motivation can contribute to students' academic success and learning processes, while also helping them balance their academic and athletic responsibilities, thereby enhancing their overall performance.

Material and Method

Research Model

This study aimed to investigate the effects of academic motivation and school climate on the educational experiences of students enrolled in the Faculty of Sports Sciences, considering different variables. The research was conducted using a descriptive approach and employed a correlational survey model. This model is used to identify relationships between two or more variables and to obtain clues within the framework of cause-and-effect relationships (Creswell & Creswell, 2018).

Research group

The study group consisted of 519 participants, including 241 (46.4%) female and 278 (53.6%) male students, who were enrolled in the Faculty of Sports Sciences at a public university offering undergraduate sports education. Of these participants, 164 (31.6%) were studying coaching education, 159 (30.6%) were in physical education and sports teaching, 187 (36.0%) were in sports management, and 9 (1.7%) were studying recreation. The participants were distributed across different academic years as follows: 114 (22.0%) were first-year students, 114 (22.0%) were second-year students, 107 (20.6%) were third-year students, and 184 (35.5%) were fourth-year students. The average age of the participants was identified as 23.00.

Data Collection Tools

The data collection tools used in this study included a demographic information form, the Academic Motivation Scale, and the School Climate Scale. The data were collected on a voluntary basis from the participants using these scales.

Academic Motivation Scale

The Academic Intrinsic Motivation Scale, developed by Shia (1998), is a 28-item scale with a 7-point Likert-type format. The scale includes items related to needs, fear, competence, mastery, peer, and power motivations. The reliability of the scale was calculated through internal consistency, and it was found to be highly reliable. The internal consistency coefficient of the Academic Intrinsic Motivation Scale ranges from .70 to .90. In the final study, this coefficient (Cronbach's alpha) was .90. Only one reverse item (item 18: "I am not affected if someone gets better grades than me in class.") was identified and analyzed after

being reversed. The final version of the scale, adapted into Turkish and studied by Coşkun (2019), has been presented.

School Climate Scale

The School Climate Scale, developed by Terzi (2015), consists of 17 items and uses a 5-point Likert scale. As a result of the Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA), the total variance explained by the scale was found to be 56%. The factor loadings for the three dimensions of the scale range from .46 to .76, while the item-total correlations vary between .34 and .60. The reliability analysis of the scale was conducted by the researcher using Cronbach's Alpha. For the first dimension, school attachment, the alpha value was found to be $\alpha = .75$; for the second dimension, communication, $\alpha = .86$; and for the third dimension, learning environment, $\alpha = .81$. The overall reliability of the scale was calculated as $\alpha = .90$. Although some adaptation studies measuring the school climate scale for primary and secondary school students exist, no school climate scale specifically designed for university students has been encountered.

The School Climate Scale for university students is a 5-point Likert-type scale rated as follows: 1—Never, 2—Rarely, 3—Sometimes, 4—Often, 5—Always. The arithmetic means of the scores obtained from the scale (at each dimension level or overall scale) indicate that means ranging from 1.00 to 2.60 reflect a negative (closed) climate, means ranging from 2.61 to 3.40 reflect a moderate (average) climate, and means ranging from 3.41 to 5.00 indicate a positive (open) climate.

Data Analysis

The data for the study, conducted during the fall and spring semesters of the 2023-2024 academic year, were collected from voluntary participants who were students in the Faculty of Sports Sciences. IBM SPSS Statistics 24 software was used to analyze the data. Descriptive statistical analyses were performed on the data related to demographic variables, the Academic Motivation Scale, and the School Climate Scale. The skewness and kurtosis values were found to be between +1.5 and -1.5, indicating that the data followed a normal distribution (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2013). Given the normal distribution of the data, independent samples t-tests, one-way ANOVA, and Pearson correlation tests were used for the parametric relational analyses.

Findings

Table 1. Participants' Mean Scale Scores for School Climate and Academic Motivation

Scales	N	Min	Max	\bar{x}	S
Academic Motivation	519	1,00	4,39	2,02	,63
School Climate	519	1,00	4,06	1,95	,58

The mean total score of the participants from the Academic Motivation scale is ($\bar{x}=2.02$). The total score they received from the school climate scale was determined as ($\bar{x}=1.95$).

Table 2. T-Test Results of Mean Scores of Academic Motivation and School Climate Scales according to Gender Variable

Scales	Gender	N	\bar{x}	S	sd	t	p
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Academic Motivation	Male	278	1,96	,61	517	,561	,575
	Female	241	1,93	,55			
School Climate	Male	278	2,05	,63	506,3	1,01	,310
	Female	241	1,99	,63			

When the mean scores of the participants from the academic motivation and school climate scales were examined, it was determined that there was no statistically significant difference according to the gender variable ($p>0.05$).

Table 3. T-Test Results of the mean scores obtained from school climate and academic motivation scales according to marital status variable

Scales	Marital Status	N	\bar{x}	S	sd	t	p
Academic Motivation	Married	32	1,78	,71	34,2	-2,01	,052
	Single	487	2,04	,63			
School Climate	Married	32	1,66	,58	35,2	-2,91	,006
	Single	487	1,97	,58			

Upon examining the data obtained from the School Climate Scale, a significant difference in favor of single individuals was identified between married and single individuals for the School Climate Scale ($p<0.05$).

Table 4. One Way Analysis of Variance Comparison Results of Mean Scores from Academic Motivation and School Climate Scales According to Department Variable (One Way-ANOVA)

Scales	Departments	N	\bar{x}	Ss	VK	KT	Sd	KO	f	p				
Academic Motivation	Sport Management	187	2,11	,70	B. Groups	2,8	3	,956	2,36	,070				
	Training Education	164	1,98	,64							W. Groups	208,2	515	,404
	Physical and Sports Education	159	1,99	,54							Total	211,1	518	
	Recreation	9	1,67	,56										
	Total	519	2,02	,63										
School Climate	Sport Management	187	2,01	,64	B. Groups	1,70	3	,567	1,64	,178				
	Training Education	164	1,95	,58							W. Groups	177,5	515	,345
	Physical and Sports Education	159	1,87	,49							Total	179,2	518	
	Recreation	9	2,00	,79										
	Total	519	1,95	,58										

In the comparative analysis of the participants' Academic motivation scale according to the department variable, it was determined that there was no statistically significant difference. ($p>0.05$).

Table 5. One-Way Variance Analysis Comparison Results of Students' School Climate Scale According to Department Variable (One Way-ANOVA)

Scales	Class	N	\bar{x}	Ss	VK	KT	Sd	KO	f	p
Academic Motivation	1st grade	114	1,93	,67	B. Groups	1,5	3	0,501	1,2	,298

	2nd grade	114	2,08	,68	W. Groups	209,6	515	,407
	3rd grade	107	2,05	,52	Total	211,1	518	
	4th grade	184	2,03	,64				
	Total	519	2,02	,63				
School Climate	1st grade	114	1,89	,60	B. Groups	2,5	3	,853 2,48 ,060
	2nd grade	114	1,88	,57	W. Groups	176,6	515	,343
	3rd grade	107	1,92	,56	Total	179,2	518	
	4th grade	184	2,04	,59				
	Total	519	1,95	,58				

Comparative analyzes made according to the department variable of the participants' school climate scale revealed that there was no statistically significant difference ($p>0.05$).

Table 6. T-Test Results of Mean Scores from Academic Motivation and School Climate Scales According to Sports Participation Variable

Scales	Participation in Sport	N	\bar{x}	S	sd	t	p
Academic Motivation	Exist	452	2,01	,62	82,1	-894	,074
	Absent	67	2,10	,70			
School Climate	Exist	452	1,93	,57	82,7	-1,80	,374
	Absent	67	2,08	,64			

When the average scores obtained in line with the answers given by the participants to the academic motivation and school climate scales were examined, it was determined that there was no statistically significant difference according to the variable of participation in sports ($p>0.05$).

Table 7. T-Test Results of the Mean Scores of Academic Motivation and School Climate Scales According to the Variable of Being an Athlete in the Family

Scales	Athlete Status in Family	N	\bar{x}	S	sd	t	p
Academic Motivation	Exist	134	1,91	,68	214	-2,2	,027
	Absent	385	2,06	,61			
School Climate	Exist	134	1,82	,61	217	-2,7	,006
	Absent	385	1,99	,57			

Upon examining the participants' mean scores from the Academic Motivation and School Climate scales, a significant difference in favor of non-athletes was identified.

Table 8. The Relationship Between Academic Motivation and School Climate Scale (Pearson Correlation)

		Academic Motivation	School Climate
Academic Motivation Scale	Pearson Correlation	1	,488**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		,000
	N	519	517
School Climate Scale	Pearson Correlation	,488**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	,000	
	N	519	519

**The correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

A positive significant relationship of (.488**) was found between the Academic Motivation Scale and the School Climate Scale ($p < 0.01$). **

Table 9. Regression Analysis Results on the Effect of Academic Motivation on School Climate

Variables	Standardize β	Standard Error	Critical Rate	p	R ²
School Climate Academic Motivation	.48	.03	1.42	.000	.24

A statistically significant relationship between academic motivation and school climate has been identified ($\beta = .48, p < .05$). Upon examining the R-squared value presented in the table, it can be stated that academic motivation explains 24% of the variance in school climate.

Discussion and Conclusion

This study aimed to examine the perceptions of academic motivation and school climate among students enrolled in the Faculty of Sports Sciences, considering various demographic variables. The findings revealed significant differences and relationships with respect to certain variables. Specifically, the average score on the academic motivation scale was identified as ($\bar{x} = 2.02$), and the corresponding score on the school climate scale was ($\bar{x} = 1.95$). This indicates that students' perceptions of the school climate are negative. The data obtained from the school climate scale suggests that students hold negative perceptions of the school environment, which could potentially impact their academic motivation. The findings related to students' academic motivation reveal that they exhibit a moderate level of desire and effort in achieving their academic goals. However, it should not be overlooked that this level of motivation, being less than optimal, might hinder students from maximizing their academic performance. Ultimately, the results indicate that while students are academically motivated, their levels of motivation are not particularly high.

When demographic variables were examined according to the sub-dimensions of the scales, no statistically significant difference was found in the perceptions of both the school climate scale and the academic motivation scale according to the gender variable. The correlation analysis indicated a positive significant relationship between the academic motivation scale and the school climate scale ($r = 0.488, p < 0.01$). This suggests that higher academic

motivation among students is associated with more positive perceptions of the school climate. In the study conducted by Terzi (2015), it was found that, in terms of gender values among university students, there were significant differences in the perception of organizational climate, particularly in the communication and school commitment dimensions, in favor of female students. However, no significant differences were observed between genders regarding the learning environment. A high level of academic motivation among students is a desirable condition. The findings of this study are consistent with the research by Gömleksiz and Serhatlıoğlu (2013) on students' perceptions and opinions regarding their levels of academic motivation. Additionally, the findings related to school climate align with the study conducted by Terzi (2015) on university students' perceptions of school climate. Although there are studies conducted in different educational fields, there are studies in the literature that show similar results (Aka, 2014; Akman, 2010; Aydın, 2010; Karaman, 2011; Özdemir, Sezgin, Şirin, Karip & Erkan, 2010). Academic motivation, which plays an important role in the continuity of students' success in their educational lives, is a crucial factor affecting students' responsibilities, interests, and continuity in their educational journeys. School climate, on the other hand, plays a significant role in shaping students' emotional, physical, and social environments. The strong connection between school climate and academic achievement has been frequently emphasized in the literature (Yıldırım, 2000; Şevik, 2014; Bahçetepe, 2013; Ma & Klinger, 2000; Ellez, 2004; Madran, 2006; Acat ve Dereli, 2012). Upon reviewing the conducted studies, it has been supported that when students' motivation levels are high, there is an increase in success and the emergence of a positive school climate. In the study conducted by Çelik (2017), it was also concluded that in all studies on university students' perceptions of school climate, the perceptions of school climate were found to be at a moderate level, with a score range of 3.12.

The literature supports the relationship between academic motivation and school climate among students in the Faculty of Sport Sciences. Not only is a positive school climate associated with higher motivation among students, but it also plays a critical role in enhancing their academic success. Therefore, the findings suggest that improving students' perceptions of the school climate will enhance their academic motivation, which, in turn, contributes to their success. To determine the relationship between the independent and dependent variables, both correlation and regression analysis results were emphasized. The data demonstrate that academic motivation significantly contributes to students' perceptions of school climate. The R^2 value indicates that academic motivation explains 24% of the variance in school climate. This finding suggests that academic motivation is a key factor in understanding how students perceive their school environment. The data also highlights the important role that academic motivation plays in increasing students' commitment to their schools. Ultimately, the stronger and more solid students' commitment to their schools is, the greater their academic motivation will be. Simons et al. (1999) proposed that student-athletes experience higher levels of stress due to their responsibilities, which reduces the time they dedicate to academic work, particularly during exam periods. Therefore, some studies have shown that student-athletes who are overly committed to sports may have lower academic averages. When examining related studies (Filiz & Demirhan, 2018; Sevilmiş & Şirin, 2016; Çelenlioğlu, 2020; Terzi & Uyangör, 2017; Küçükosmanoğlu, 2015), Terzi and Uyangör's (2017) study found that students had high levels of school climate and motivation, whereas students in the Faculty of Sport Sciences exhibited lower levels. The findings of the present study are consistent with Küçükosmanoğlu's (2015) results, which indicated low motivation levels among students. The role of school climate and motivation is a significant factor in the sustainability of the academic lives of students in the Faculty of Sports Sciences. In this context, student-athletes face unique challenges in their academic lives, as they strive to

maintain both physical and mental balance. Students aiming to sustain a successful and exemplary athletic identity may encounter difficulties in making healthy decisions, implementing those decisions, and maintaining their motivation for success if they lack high motivation. Therefore, school climate plays a crucial role in the continuity of students' academic lives and the enhancement of their motivation. Without considering the perspectives of motivation and school climate, it is challenging to address these issues meaningfully. Hence, it is evident that academic motivation and perceptions of school climate serve as strong and encouraging decision-making mechanisms. Based on all the findings, it is recommended that programs be developed to balance students' academic and athletic responsibilities. In addition, providing various seminars aimed at enhancing academic motivation, strengthening academic counseling systems, and offering support programs such as career planning assistance could help improve the academic motivation and school climate perceptions of students in the Faculty of Sports Sciences.

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