

The Effect of Athlete Engagement on Social Identity in Team Sports

Takım Sporlarında Sporcu Bağlılığının Sosyal Kimlik Üzerine Etkisi

Günseli DUMAN¹  Gamze AKYOL ^{2*}  Batuhan ORDU³  Sermin AĞRALI ERMiŞ⁴ 

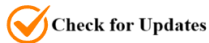
¹ Aydın Adnan Menderes University, Didim Vocational School; gduman@adu.edu.tr; Aydın/Türkiye

² Aydın Adnan Menderes University, Faculty of Sport Science; gamz.akyoll@gmail.com; Aydın/Türkiye

³ Aydın Adnan Menderes University, Faculty of Sport Science; batuhanordu@outlook.com.tr; Aydın/Türkiye

⁴ Aydın Adnan Menderes University, Faculty of Sport Science; s.agrali.ermis@adu.edu.tr; Aydın/Türkiye

* Corresponding author: Dr. Gamze Akyol; gamz.akyoll@gmail.com



Academic Editor: Akan Bayrakdar

Received: 10.02.2025

Accepted: 24.03.2025

Published: 28.03.2025

Citation: Duman, G., Akyol, G., Ordu, B., & Ağralı Ermiş, S. (2025). The Effect of Athlete Engagement on Social Identity in Team Sports, *Journal of Sport for All and Recreation*, 7(1), 73-79.

<https://doi.org/10.56639/jsar.1637226>

Copyright: © 2025 by the authors. Submitted for possible open access publication under the terms and conditions of the Creative Commons Attribution (CC BY) license(<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>).



Abstract: This study aims to examine the effect of athlete commitment on social identity in team sports. In this regard, 369 athletes engaged in team sports (basketball, football, volleyball) participated in the study. In the study designed with a quantitative research model, Athlete Loyalty Scale and Social Identity in Sports Scale were used. The skewness and kurtosis values of the data indicated that the distribution was normal. In this context, independent samples t-test, ANOVA, Pearson correlation analysis, and simple linear regression analysis were applied. It was found that there were no significant differences in social identity levels and athlete commitment between athletes based on gender. However, basketball and football players had higher social identity and commitment levels than volleyball players. It was also observed that as age and years of sports experience increased, athletes' social identity and athlete commitment levels also increased. Additionally, athlete commitment was found to have a significant effect on athletes' social identity levels. In conclusion, the study demonstrates that athlete commitment has a significant impact on the formation of social identity and that as athletes' commitment to sports increases, their social identity strengthens.

Keywords: Social Identity, Athlete engagement, Team sports.

Özet: Bu çalışmanın amacı, takım sporlarında sporcu bağlılığının sosyal kimlik üzerindeki etkisini incelemektir. Bu doğrultuda, takım sporları (basketbol, futbol, voleybol) yapan 369 sporcu çalışmaya katılmıştır. Nicel araştırma modeli ile tasarlanan çalışmada, Sporcu Bağlılığı Ölçeği ve Sporda Sosyal Kimlik Ölçeği kullanılmıştır. Elde edilen verilerin çarpıklık ve basıklık değerlerine göre normal dağılım gösterdiği saptanmıştır. Bu bağlamda, çalışmada bağımsız örneklem t testi, ANOVA, Pearson korelasyon analizi ve basit doğrusal regresyon analizi uygulanmıştır. Sporcuların cinsiyetlerine göre sosyal kimlik düzeyleri ve sporcu bağlılıkları farklılık göstermemiş, ancak basketbol ve futbol sporcularının, voleybol sporcularına kıyasla daha yüksek sosyal kimlik ve bağlılık düzeylerine sahip olduğu tespit edilmiştir. Yaş ve spor yılı arttıkça, sporcuların sosyal kimlik ve sporcu bağlılıklarının da arttığı gözlemlenmiştir. Ayrıca sporcu bağlılığının sporcuların sosyal kimlik düzeyleri üzerinde anlamlı bir etkisi olduğu bulunmuştur. Sonuç olarak, sporcu bağlılığının sosyal kimlik oluşumu üzerinde önemli bir etkisi olduğunu ve sporcuların spora olan bağlılıklarının arttıkça sosyal kimliklerinin güçlendiğini ortaya koymaktadır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Sosyal kimlik, Sporcu bağlılığı, Takım sporları.

1.Introduction

One of the most effective ways to support individuals' physical, emotional, and social development, facilitate teamwork, enhance solidarity, and foster a sense of belonging to a community is through sports. Sports represent not only a series of physical activities but also a significant phenomenon that contributes to individuals' socialization by providing them with a sense of social identity and group membership (Choudhury et al., 2024; Teke & Karakuş, 2022). Social identity is considered a crucial part of an individual's identity, shaped by their sense of belonging to a social group, the strong bond they form with the group, and how this bond influences their social perceptions and behaviors. The idea that belonging to a group and the emotional connection between the individual and the group form the foundation of social identity has been widely accepted for many years (Parker et al., 2021).

The fundamental principle of social identity is that group membership is motivated by the desire to create a positive distinction from other social groups, and to achieve this, group members display pro-group attitudes (Sears and Cianfrone, 2024). Griffin (1998) argued that children define their identities through sports and experience identity acquisition, initially engaging in activities such as wearing sports apparel or discussing sports, which help construct this identity. In this sense, sports contribute to the formation of new social identities by encouraging individuals to come together around shared interests and establish new connections.

Moreover, it helps individuals more clearly define the communities to which they feel they belong. Athletes' achievements are perceived as tangible representations of societal values, which, in turn, motivate individuals to place greater importance on these values (Campo et al., 2018). Therefore, the significance of a sport is not limited to its content; it gains meaning through the identity it fosters in individuals (Sullivan, 2018).

Athlete Commitment and Social Identity in Sports: Athlete commitment refers to the psychological state of an individual's desire and determination to continue participating in a particular sport or sport-related activity, reflecting the depth of the individual's relationship with the sport and their passion for it (Myburgh et al., 2018). In psychology, the concept of commitment involves a range of factors that explain why individuals continue certain relationships or activities (Driver and Tocher, 2019), and in this context, athlete commitment is linked to an individual's willingness and determination to participate in sports (Pulido et al., 2018).

On the other hand, the process of achieving and sustaining success in sports is closely related to the athlete's identity, their level of commitment to the sport, and their physical abilities. As a competitive physical activity organized within specific rules and goals, sport has the potential to both shape an individual's identity and enhance their commitment (Dereceli et al., 2023; Temel and Tükel, 2021).

Although studies examining the relationship between social identity and athlete commitment are limited, they often focus on athlete identity. Martin et al. (2018) evaluated the impact of social identity on the commitment of young student-athletes to sports and effort, noting that commitment and effort play a significant role in how individuals define themselves in relation to a group. Chen et al. (2010) examined the impact of athlete identity, commitment, and sport participation on college students, concluding that increasing participation in sports is crucial for individuals to form their personalities and improve their performance.

Research aimed at understanding the mechanisms behind sport participation behavior has identified athlete identity as one of the key psychological determinants of commitment (Choudhury et al., 2024; Hagiwara and Isogai, 2014; Hagiwara et al., 2018; Martin et al., 2018). In this context, a sports team becomes a significant source of social identity for an individual. For those who are strongly committed to their team, the team evolves from being merely an entertainment vehicle into a platform for self-expression and a place where they experience a sense of social belonging.

In this regard, the study aims to examine the impact of athlete commitment on social identity in team sports. The limited number of studies addressing the relationship between social identity and athlete commitment in literature highlights the need for further research on this topic. Team sports are structures where athletes set aside personal interests to work together toward a common goal and support each other. For the team to function effectively as a whole, athletes with different characteristics must integrate (Ronkainen and Kavoura, 2023). In this way, team sports offer a context in which athletes can more clearly express their social identities and experience a stronger sense of belonging.

2. Method

Research Model: This study was designed using the relational survey model, a quantitative research method, to examine the effect of athlete commitment on social identity in team sports. Survey models aim to draw general conclusions about a population by examining either the entire population or a sample selected from it (Creswell, 2017). The relational survey model, on the other hand, allows for the analysis of the relationship or effect between two or more quantitative variables using statistical methods (Fraenkel et al., 2012).

Research Group: The population of the study consists of licensed athletes aged 18 and older, participating in team sports (basketball, football, volleyball). A total of 403 athletes participated in the study, and after reviewing the data obtained, 34 participants were excluded due to outliers. Thus, the final sample of the study consisted of 369 athletes, including 220 males and 149 females. The sample was selected using a random purposive sampling method. This method allows the researcher to randomly select a portion of the population based on the determined sample size, thus increasing the likelihood that the individuals included in the sample will represent the overall population (Arlı and Nazik, 2001).

Data Collection: Athletes aged 18 and older who volunteered to participate in the study were administered an online survey via Google Forms. The survey included a personal information form identifying the participants' gender, age, sport, and years of experience, as well as the Athlete Commitment Scale and the Social Identity in Sports Scale.

Athlete Commitment Scale (ACS): The Athlete Commitment Scale, developed by Lonsdale et al. (2007) and adapted into Turkish by Keleşek et al. (2018), consists of 16 items and has four sub-dimensions: trust (items 1-4), dedication (items 5-8), vitality (items 9-12), and enthusiasm (items 13-16). The scale is rated using a 5-point Likert scale. The reliability coefficients for the sub-dimensions were reported as 0.92 for trust, 0.75 for dedication, 0.83 for vitality, and 0.90 for enthusiasm in the adaptation study. In the current study, since the analysis was conducted based on the total athlete commitment score, the reliability coefficient for the total score was found to be 0.89.

Social Identity in Sports Scale (SISS): Developed by Bruner et al. (2014) and later revised by Bruner and Benson (2018), this scale consists of 9 items with three sub-dimensions: in-group ties, cognitive centrality, and in-group influence, and is rated using a 7-point Likert scale. The Turkish adaptation of the scale was conducted by Turkyay et al. (2018), retaining the original item and sub-dimension structure, but with a 5-point Likert scale. The reliability coefficients for the sub-dimensions were reported as 0.92 for in-group ties, 0.89 for cognitive centrality, and 0.95 for in-group influence. In the current study, since the analysis was based on the total social identity score, the reliability coefficient for the total score was found to be 0.82.

Data Analysis: The data were analyzed using SPSS 26 software. The distribution of the data was examined using skewness and kurtosis values. The skewness and kurtosis values for athlete commitment (skewness = 0.072, kurtosis = -0.907) and social identity

in sports (skewness = 0.029, kurtosis = -0.662) were found to fall within the reference range of -1.5 to +1.5, indicating a normal distribution (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2013). Accordingly, comparisons related to categorical variables (gender, sport) were conducted using independent samples t-tests and one-way ANOVA. The relationships between continuous variables (age, years of sport experience, athlete commitment and social identity in sports) were analyzed using Pearson correlation analysis, and a simple linear regression analysis was applied to determine the effect of athlete commitment on social identity.

Ethical Aspect of Research: The research was conducted with the permission of Aydın Adnan Menderes University, Ethics Committee for Social and Human Sciences Research dated 27/11/2024 and numbered 19/07 E-21315140-050.04-647306.

3.Results

In this part of the research, statistical analyses conducted for the purpose are included.

Table 1. Mean, standard deviation, skewness, and kurtosis values of the scales

	n	Mean	Sd	Skewness	Kurtosis
Social identity	369	3.02	0.73	0.072	-0.907
Athlete commitment	369	3.02	0.70	0.029	-0.662

It was determined that the study participants' social identity level was 3.02 ± 0.73 , and their athlete attachment level was 3.02 ± 0.70 . The skewness and kurtosis values of the scales, as presented in Table 1, were found to fall within the range of normal distribution.

Table 2. Frequency and percentage distribution of the study group

		f	%
Gender	Male	220	59.6
	Female	149	40.4
Sport branches	Basketball	136	36.9
	Football	142	38.5
	Volleyball	91	24.6
	Total	369	100.0

The study participants consisted of 59.6% males and 40.4% females. In terms of sports, 38.5% of the athletes were engaged in football, 36.9% in basketball, and 24.6% in volleyball. The mean age of the athletes was 21.76 ± 2.43 years, and their average duration of sports participation was 3.08 ± 1.41 years.

Table 3. Comparison of athletes' social identity and athlete commitment levels by gender

	Gender	n	Ort.	Ss	t	p
Social identity	Male	220	3,02	0,77	0,06	0,95
	Female	149	3,02	0,68		
Athlete commitment	Male	220	3,03	0,73	0,27	0,78
	Female	149	3,00	0,66		

Independent samples t-tests were used to compare the athletes' social identity and athlete commitment levels by gender. The results, presented in Table 3, show that there were no significant differences in social identity and athlete commitment based on gender ($p > 0.05$).

Table 4. Comparison of athletes' social identity and athlete commitment levels by gender

	Gender	n	Mean	Sd	t	p
Social identity	Male	220	3.02	0.77	0.06	0.95
	Female	149	3.02	0.68		
Athlete commitment	Male	220	3.03	0.73	0.27	0.78
	Female	149	3.00	0.66		

Independent samples t-tests were used to compare the athletes' social identity and athlete commitment levels by gender. The results, presented in Table 4, show that there were no significant differences in social identity and athlete commitment based on gender ($p > 0.05$).

One-way ANOVA was used to compare the athletes' social identity and athlete commitment levels by sport (Table 5). The results, presented in Table 5, show that there were significant differences in social identity [$F(2,366) = 4.34, p \leq 0.05$] and athlete commitment [$F(2,366) = 4.57, p \leq 0.05$] based on sport. Levene's test for homogeneity of variances indicated that the variances for social identity [$F(2,366) = 1.93, p > 0.05$] and athlete commitment [$F(2,366) = 0.99, p > 0.05$] were homogeneous. Therefore, Bonferroni

post hoc tests were conducted to identify the sources of these differences. The results of the Bonferroni test revealed that basketball players had significantly higher social identity levels compared to volleyball players. Regarding athlete commitment, basketball and football players had significantly higher commitment levels compared to volleyball players.

Table 5. Comparison of athletes' social identity and athlete commitment levels by sport

	Branch	n	Mean	Sd	F	p	Difference
Social identity	Basketball ¹	136	3.12	0.69	4.34	0.01*	3<1
	Football ²	142	3.04	0.77			
	Volleyball ³	91	2.83	0.70			
Athlete commitment	Basketball ¹	136	3.08	0.69	4.57	0.01*	3<1,2
	Football ²	142	3.08	0.73			
	Volleyball ³	91	2.82	0.63			

* $p \leq 0.05$

Table 6. Correlation between athletes' age, years of sport, social identity, and athlete commitment

		Age	Year of Sport	Social Identity
Year of sport	r	0.84**		
	p	0.00		
	n	369		
Social identity	r	0.83**	0.89**	
	p	0.00	0.00	
	n	369	369	
Athletes' commitment	r	0.85**	0.92**	0.87**
	p	0.00	0.00	0.00
	n	369	369	369

** $p \leq 0.01$

Pearson correlation analysis was used to determine the relationships between athletes' age, years of sport, social identity, and athlete commitment. The results are presented in Table 6. A positive and significant correlation was found between athletes' age and both social identity ($r = 0.83$, $p \leq 0.01$) and athlete commitment ($r = 0.85$, $p \leq 0.01$). Additionally, a positive and significant correlation was observed between athletes' years of sport and social identity ($r = 0.89$, $p \leq 0.01$) and athlete commitment ($r = 0.92$, $p \leq 0.01$). These findings suggest that as athletes' age and years of sport increase, their social identity and athlete commitment levels also tend to increase. Furthermore, a significant positive relationship was found between athlete commitment and social identity ($r = 0.87$, $p \leq 0.01$), indicating that as athlete commitment increases, so does their social identity.

Table 7. The effect of athlete commitment on social identity

	B	t	p	R	R ²	F	p
Social identity	0.91	34.61	0.00	0.87	0.76	1198.18	0.00*

Independent variables: Athlete' commitment

* $p \leq 0.01$

A simple linear regression analysis was conducted to examine the effect of athletes' commitment levels on their social identity. The results are presented in Table 7. Athlete commitment was found to have a significant and positive effect on athletes' social identity [$F(1,367) = 1198.18$, $p \leq 0.01$]. Athlete commitment explains 76% of the variance in athletes' social identity ($R^2 = 0.76$). According to the regression analysis, a one-unit increase in athlete commitment increases athletes' social identity by 0.91 units ($B = 0.91$, $t = 34.61$, $p \leq 0.01$).

4. Discussion

This study examined the impact of athlete commitment on social identity in team sports, analyzing the levels of athlete commitment and social identity in relation to athletes' gender, sport, age, and years of participation. The results showed no significant differences in social identity based on gender. A review of the literature reveals that research on social identity in sports is limited, and most studies have focused more on athlete identity and its subdimensions, particularly social identity. In this context, some studies addressing the concept of athlete identity were discussed. Coffey (2022) reported that there were no significant gender-based differences in the social identity levels of basketball, football, handball, and volleyball athletes; Doğaner et al. (2020) found no gender differences in the social identity levels of tennis, badminton, and table tennis athletes; and Bedir and Önal (2023) concluded that there were no gender-based differences in the social identity levels of winter and ice sports athletes. These findings align with the results of the present study. In contrast to these findings, some studies have indicated that male athletes have higher levels of social identity than female athletes (Evans et al., 2024; Savaş et al., 2023; Uluç and Yurtdaş, 2023; Worley, 2024).

The study also found no significant differences in athlete commitment levels based on gender. This finding is consistent with research conducted in various sports disciplines. Studies on bocce athletes (Uluç and Akçakoyun, 2021), open-water swimmers (Schei et al., 2023), orienteering athletes (Ryan et al., 2023), table tennis players (Kusan et al., 2024), taekwondo athletes (Cocco et al., 2024), athletes participating in both individual and team sports (Siyahtaş et al., 2020), and recreational runners (Smith et al., 2023) have also found no gender-based differences in athlete commitment levels. However, some studies have identified gender-based differences. For instance, Taştan et al. (2023) found higher commitment levels in women, while Arıkan and Akoğuz-Yazıcı (2022) reported higher commitment levels in men. The variations in findings between studies could be attributed to the geographical location and cultural context of the research.

In the study, when the social identity levels of athletes were compared according to their sports, it was found that basketball athletes had higher social identity levels than volleyball athletes. In contrast, Çinibulak and Özdilek (2023) found differences in athlete identity levels among basketball, volleyball, and football players, but unlike the present study, they reported that basketball athletes had lower average athlete identity levels. However, some studies have found no significant differences in social identity levels between team and individual sports (Savaş et al., 2023; Worley, 2024).

The study also found differences in athlete commitment levels based on the sports played. Basketball and football athletes showed higher commitment levels than volleyball athletes. This finding contrasts with that of Arıkan and Akoğuz-Yazıcı (2022), who found higher athlete commitment levels in volleyball players compared to basketball, volleyball, handball, and football players. This discrepancy could be attributed to the seasonal popularity of the sport and its success rates, which might influence commitment levels.

Furthermore, the study found positive correlations between athletes' age, years of participation, their social identity, and athlete commitment levels. This suggests that as athletes' age and their participation in sports increases, their social identity formation and commitment levels also rise. This finding is consistent with the study by Worley (2024), which identified a positive relationship between years of participation and social identity. Similarly, Uluç and Yurtdaş (2023) reported that team athletes with older ages and longer participation durations had higher social identity levels. However, some studies found no significant age-related differences in social identity levels (Ronkainen and Kavoura, 2023; Savaş et al., 2023).

Regarding athlete' commitment, Arıkan and Akoğuz-Yazıcı (2022) found that athletes with more years of experience had higher commitment levels, while Schei et al., (2023) found that athletes who trained more frequently had higher commitment levels. On the other hand, some studies have found no significant relationship between years of participation and athlete commitment (Cocco et al., 2024). These findings suggest that the specific characteristics of the sport, such as its frequency, intensity, and the coach's approach, may also influence athlete commitment.

In this study, a positive relationship between social identity and athlete commitment was found, and athlete commitment was shown to have a significant effect on athletes' social identity levels. These findings suggest that as athletes' commitment to sport increases, their social identity levels in sport also strengthen. Similarly, Evans et al., (2024) identified a strong relationship between athlete identity and commitment to sport, showing that 48% of commitment to sport is explained by athlete identity. Moreover, the literature indicates that individuals with a high perception of athlete identity tend to have increased levels of participation in physical activity and sport (Anderson et al., 2009), and their commitment to the sport they practice also strengthens (Martin et al., 2018). These results suggest that athletes' commitment to their sport may influence their identification with it, meaning that the formation of social identity in sport may be shaped by this commitment. This is because athletes' commitment to sport not only enhances their physical participation but also strengthens the emotional and social bonds they establish with the sport (Myburgh et al., 2018).

In this study, no significant differences were found in social identity and commitment levels according to athletes' gender; however, basketball and football athletes were found to have higher social identity and commitment levels compared to volleyball athletes. Additionally, it was observed that as athletes' age and years of participation in sports increased, their social identity and athlete commitment levels also increased. This finding supports similar studies in the literature, which suggest that as athletes gain more experience, their social identity formation strengthens and their commitment to sport increases.

Conclusion

In conclusion, this study highlights the significant impact of athlete commitment on the formation of social identity, showing that as athletes' commitment to sport increases, their social identity becomes stronger. These findings are an important step in understanding the relationship between athlete commitment and social identity and emphasize the importance of social connections in enhancing athletes' commitment to sport.

Author Contributions: The conceptualization, methodology, validation, analysis, research, references, writing-original drafting, writing-review, editing and visualization of this study were done by G.D., G.A., B.O. and S.A.E. The author has read and accepted this version of the published article.

Financial Support: No financial support was received from institutions and/or institutions during the preparation and writing of this study.

Conflict of Interest: There is no conflict of interest between the authors regarding the publication of this article.

Informed Consent: Informed consent forms were obtained from all participants who participated in the study.

Declaration of Data Availability: Data are available for sharing upon request.

Acknowledgments: We would like to thank all participants who took part in the study.

References

- Anderson, C. B., Mâsse, L. C., Zhang, H., Coleman, K. J., & Chang, S. (2009). Contribution of athletic identity to child and adolescent physical activity. *American journal of preventive medicine*, 37(3), 220-226. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.amepre.2009.05.017>
- Arikan, A. N., & Akoğuz-Yazıcı, N. (2022). Examining the commitment levels of athletes: A cross-sectional analysis on team sports. *Mediterranean Journal of Sports Sciences*, 5(2), 738-748. <https://doi.org/10.38021asbid.1198835>
- Arlı, M., & Nazik, H. (2001). *Introduction to scientific research*. Gazi Publishing.
- Bruner, M. W., McLaren, C. D., Mertens, N., Steffens, N. K., Boen, F., McKenzie, L., Haslam, A.S., & Fransen, K. (2022). Identity leadership and social identification within sport teams over a season: A social network analysis. *Psychology of Sport and Exercise*, 59, 102106. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.psychsport.2021.102106>
- Bedir, F., & Önal, L. (2023). Examining the relationship between athlete identity and perceived social competence: The example of winter and ice sports athletes. *Kilis 7 December University Journal of Physical Education and Sports Sciences*, 7(1), 182-191.
- Bruner, M. W., Boardley, I. D., & Côté, J. (2014). Social identity and prosocial and antisocial behavior in youth sport. *Psychology of sport and exercise*, 15(1), 56-64. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.psychsport.2013.09.003>
- Campo, M., Martinent, G., Pellet, J., Boulanger, J., Louvet, B., & Nicolas, M. (2018). Emotion–performance relationships in team sport: The role of personal and social identities. *International Journal of Sports Science & Coaching*, 13(5), 629-635. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1747954118785256>
- Chen, S., Snyder, S., & Magner, M. (2010). The effects of sport participation on student-athletes' and non-athlete students' social life and identity. *Journal of issues in intercollegiate athletics*, 3(1), 176-193.
- Choudhury, M. M., Erdman, A. L., Stapleton, E., Gale, E., & Ulman, S. (2024). Identifying links between athletic identity and risk factors related to youth sport participation. *Frontiers in psychology*, 15, 1362614. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2024.1362614>
- Creswell, J. W. (2017). *Araştırma deseni nitel, nicel ve karma yöntem yaklaşımları* (Eds.: Demir, S.B.). Eğiten Kitap.
- Cocco, V. M., Bisagno, E., Cadamuro, A., Rubichi, S., Stathi, S., & Vezzali, L. (2024). Sport identification, moral perceptions and collective action: A study with young football players. *Journal of Community & Applied Social Psychology*, 34(1), e2715. <https://doi.org/10.1002/casp.2715>
- Coffey, M. (2023). *Athletes' intrateam social identities and perceptions of performance, group cohesion, and group membership in female rugby teams* [Unpublishing Master's Thesis]. Calgary University.
- Çinibulak, E. & Özdilek, Ç. (2023). Examining the self-confidence and athlete identity levels of athletes. *Innovation Sports Journal*, 1(1), 27-37.
- Dereceli, Ç., Dereceli, E., & Yıldız, T. (2023). Spor yapan ve spor yapmayan spor bilimleri fakültesi öğrencilerinin kişisel uyum düzeyleri ile liderlik yönelimlerinin karşılaştırılması. *Uluslararası Dağıcılık ve Tırmanış Dergisi*, 6(2), 38-51. <https://doi.org/10.36415/dagcilik.1359180>
- Doğaner, S., Görmüş, M., & Kiliç, M. Ö. (2020). Sporcu Kimliği İle Öz Yeterlik Arasındaki İlişkinin Farklı Değişkenler Açısından İncelenmesi. *Journal of International Social Research*, 13(69). <http://dx.doi.org/10.17719/jisr.2020.4058>
- Driver, B. L., & Tocher, S. R. (2019). *Toward a behavioral interpretation of recreational engagements with implications for planning*. C. S. Van Doren, G. B. Priddle and J. E. Lewis (Eds.), Land and Leisure Routledge.
- Evans, A. L., Coffee, P., & Barker, J. B. (2024). The effects of social identity and social identity content on cohesion, efficacy, and performance across a competitive rugby league season. *International Journal of Sport and Exercise Psychology*, 22(7), 1724-1742. <https://doi.org/10.1080/1612197X.2023.2229349>
- Fraenkel, J. R., Wallen, N. E., & Hyun, H. H. (2012). *How to design and evaluate research in education* (7th ed.). McGraw-Hill.
- Griffin, R. S. (1998). *Sports in the lives of children and adolescents: Success on the field and in life*. Praeger.
- Hagiwara, G., Kuroda, J., Oshita, K., Shimozone, H., & Matsuzaki, T. (2018). Relationships between athletic identity and the two dimensions of sport commitment of Japanese student athletes. *Journal of Physical Education and Sport*, 18(3), 1514-1517. <https://doi.org/10.7752/jpes.2018.03223>
- Hagiwara, G., & Isogai, H. (2014). Relationship between athletic identity and sport commitment linked to sport involvement. *Journal of Sport Science and Physical Education*, 67, 91-99.
- Keleş, S., Kara, F. M., & Aşçı, F. H. (2018). "Validity and reliability study of the "Athlete Commitment Scale". *Spormetre Journal of Physical Education and Sports Sciences*, 16(3), 39-47.
- Khajaeiflaton, S., Fallah, Z., Bahlekeh, T., & Askari, A. (2023). Providing a model for improving mental well-being of athletes with emphasizing on the role of professional identity and commitment. *Sport Psychology Studies*, 12(46), 1-12. <https://doi.org/10.22089/spsyj.2020.7559.1814>
- Kusan, M., Toklu, S., Derelioğlu, M., & Çankaya, S. (2024). The effect of athlete self-efficacy on sports commitment level in table tennis players. *International Journal of Exercise Psychology*, 6(1), 9-17. <https://doi.org/10.51538/intjournexerpsyc.1351205>
- Lonsdale, C., Hodge, K., & Jackson, S. A. (2007). Athlete engagement: II. Developmental and initial validation of the Athlete Engagement Questionnaire. *International Journal of Sport Psychology*, 38(4), 471-492.

- Martin, L. J., Balderson, D., Hawkins, M., Wilson, K., & Bruner, M. W. (2018). The influence of social identity on self-worth, commitment, and effort in school-based youth sport. *Journal of Sports Sciences*, 36(3), 326–332. <https://doi.org/10.1080/02640414.2017.1306091>
- Myburgh, E., Kruger, M., & Saayman, M. (2018). Aspects influencing the commitment of endurance athletes: a tourism perspective. *Journal of Sport & Tourism*, 22(4), 275–301. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14775085.2018.1472032>
- Parker, P. C., Perry, R. P., Coffee, P., Chipperfield, J. G., Hamm, J. M., Daniels, L. M., & Dryden, R. P. (2021). The impact of student-athlete social identity on psychosocial adjustment during a challenging educational transition. *Psychology of Sport and Exercise*, 56, 101979. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.psychsport.2021.101979>
- Pulido, J. J., Sánchez-Oliva, D., Sánchez-Miguel, P. A., Amado, D., & García-Calvo, T. (2018). Sport commitment in young soccer players: A self-determination perspective. *International Journal of Sports Science & Coaching*, 13(2), 243–252. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1747954118755443>
- Ronkainen, N., & Kavoura, A. (2023). *Athletic Identity*. In *Routledge Handbook of Applied Sport Psychology*. Routledge.
- Ryan, L., Daly, E., & Blackett, A. D. (2023). Sport-related concussion disclosure in women's rugby—A social identity approach. *Frontiers in sports and active living*, 5, 1058305. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fspor.2023.1058305>
- Savaş, B. Ç., Mavıbaş M., & Karababa, B. (2023). Examining the athlete identity levels of students at the faculty of sports sciences. *Journal of Sports and Science*, 1(1), 40–54.
- Schei, G.S., Høigaard, R., Erikstad, M.K., Ivarsson, A., & Haugen, T. (2023). Identity leadership and cohesion in elite sport: Y: The mediating role of intra-team communication. *Heliyon*, 9(7).
- Sears, J., & Cianfrone, B. A. (2024). *Social identity theory*. In *Encyclopedia of Sport Management*. Edward Elgar Publishing.
- Siyahtaş, A., Tükenmez, A., Avcı, S., Yalçınkaya, B., & Çavuşoğlu, S. B. (2020). Examining the sports commitment levels of individual and team sports athletes. *International Social Mentality and Researcher Thinkers Journal*, 6(34), 1310–1317. <https://dx.doi.org/10.31576/smryj.581>
- Smith, J., Williams, D., Soebbing, B. P., & Washington, M. (2023). The Influence of a University's Social Identity on Changing Athletic Affiliations. *Journal of Issues in Intercollegiate Athletics*, 6(1), 18.
- Sullivan, G. B. (2018). Collective emotions: a case study of south African pride, euphoria and unity in the context of the 2010 FIFA world cup. *Front. Psycho*, 9, 1252. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2018.01252>
- Tabachnick, B.G., & Fidell L.S. (2013). *Using multivariate statistics*. Pearson.
- Taştan, Z., Demirli, A., & Moghanlou, A. E. (2023). The role of athlete commitment in determining athlete self-efficacy in orienteering participants. *Research in Sports Science*, 13(2), 46–51. <https://doi.org/10.5152/rss.2023.23011>
- Teke, M. S., & Karakuş, S. (2022). The effect of sports on social development process. *Journal of Social, Humanities and Administrative Sciences*, 8(53), 733–736. http://dx.doi.org/10.29228/JO_SHAS.62508
- Temel, A. S., & Tükel, Y. (2021). Examining the health outcomes and happiness levels that result from engaging in physical recreation: A study on university students. *International Journal of Research in Education and Science (IJRES)*, 7(2), 545–561. <https://doi.org/10.46328/ijres.2244>
- Turkay, H., Yetim, A., & Sezer, P. (2018). Adaptation of the social identity scale in sports to Turkish. *Journal of Academic Social Research*, 6(78), 493–504.
- Uluç, E. A., & Akçakoyun, F. (2021). The role of bocce athletes' target orientation on their commitment to sports: the case of çanakkale province. *Mediterranean Journal of Sport Sciences*, 4(3), 424–437. <https://doi.org/10.38021/asbid.1034025>
- Uluç, E. A., & Yurtdaş, Ş. Ş. (2023). Social identity approach to leadership in sports. *ROL Sports Sciences Journal*, 4(3), 981–995. <https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.8344852>
- Worley, J. T. (2024). *Peer relationships, social identity, and motivational experiences in youth sport* [Unpublishing Master's Thesis]. Utah State University.

Disclaimer/Publisher's Note: Statements, opinions and data contained in all publications are solely those of the individual author(s) and contributor(s) and not of JSAR and/or the editor(s). JSAR and/or the editor(s) do not accept any liability arising from any ideas, methods, instructions or products referred to in the content.