



Amateur, Professional, and Recreational Kick Boxing Sport*

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Abstract

This study aims to evaluate the amateur and professional kickboxing sport in terms of recreation as it becomes popular day by day. This study was carried out using a compilation-type method. The literature has scanned and associated to amateur, professional, recreational, and kickboxing sports. While amateurism is expressed as doing a job without any profit, professionalism transforms the activity done as profession and for profit. The unprofessionalism can also be considered a step before becoming professional. There are significant differences in the competition rules of amateur and professional sports branches. Kickboxing, which is made as an amateur sport, makes a distinction between tatami and ring styles and allows the athletes to compete in the style that suits them. In the recreational kickboxing branch, individuals prefer kickboxing as a hobby, health, and leisure activity. Today, it is also possible to encounter that some individuals started as recreational activities and proceeded to amateur and professional level. As a result, in addition to the practice of kickboxing as an amateur and professional athletes, it is seen that individuals prefer a very intense form for recreational purposes. From another point of view, it can be said that the recreational features of defence and combat sports are gradually increasing.

Key Words: *Amateur, Kickboxing, Professional, Recreation*

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1. Introduction

Kickboxing which is one of the contact sports, is a famous defense and combat sport today. Kickboxing has become a recreational sport among widely held amateur and professional competitions. Individuals have practiced it for health, hobbies, and leisure activities, without aiming to compete. In this research, we aim to draw the attention of athletes, trainers, and sportspeople to this subject by considering the athletes who practice kickboxing, one of the defense and combat sports, from an amateur, professional and recreational perspective.

Amateur

The French word amateur is defined as “doing a job not for making money, but only for pleasure, enthusiastic, curious (anyone), anti-professional,” and “doing a job without being a profession or field expert” (sozluk.gov.tr, 2020).

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Professional

From the *French* word Professional, it was derived into our language as Professional. In the Turkish dictionary, “(someone) who does a job for profit, is anti-amateur.” (sozluk.gov.tr, 2020). Kucukgungor (1998) stated his professionalism as “Professionalism means that the athlete does sports depending on a certain organization to gain financial profit. Professional athletes do sports as a profession to earn income and to survive.” he states.

Amateur and Professional

Turkish sports branches were established on two foundations, amateur and professional-Amare, which means to love, to enjoy in Latin. The word has entered in Turkish as the concept of amateur, and it means that the athlete does sports because he likes and enjoys it. For this reason, to talk about being an amateur means that the athlete does not choose the branch of sports he does as a profession and is not doing it as an ongoing source of income. A professional athlete does sports for financial gain and depends on a certain organization. Professionalism should not be made as a profession to gain profit and to continue living (Kucukgungor, 1998).

Today, it is seen that the legal regulations of professional identity in Turkey are recognized only by athletes in the football branch. Other sports branches other than football have been authorized to make arrangements within the General Directorate of Youth and Sports framework. In pursuance of Article 24 of the Law on the Organization and Duties of the General Directorate of Youth and Sports No. 3289, for a sports branch to be accepted as a professional sports branch, upon the proposal of the General Director of Youth and Sports, provided that the opinion of the Central Advisory Board is taken, Approval of the Minister of State is required. Basketball and Volleyball Federations has been authorized to regulate the athlete registration, license, visa, and transfer issues. Following these regulations, some basic adjustments regarding professionalism were made in the instructions prepared by the Board of Directors of Basketball and Volleyball Federations. Thus, it can be said that hidden professionalism has emerged in certain sports branches (Kucukgungor, 1998).

Recreation

Recreation; The meaning of the word, which passed into our language from the French word "recreation," is expressed in two definitions "activities that people participate voluntarily for entertainment and sports in their spare time" and "to bring a region to a state where people can use it for entertainment and rest" (TDK, 2020).

Recreation activities may differ depending on the preferences and interests of individuals. For this reason, different areas such as sports, tourism, art, and culture can be created by these various interests of people. Sportive recreation is considered as the sportive activities that the person performs voluntarily in his free time, entirely independently in his work and education life, depending on physical activities (Ergul, 2008) .

Recreation and sports are in an interact with each other. While sports meet the recreational needs of people, recreation has also contributed to the success of individuals in sports, which started as an amateur activity with the increase of individuals doing sports, by continuing as a professional over time (Sahin, 1997).

Kickboxing Definition and History

Kickboxing is a popular combat sport consisting of punches and kicks, developed from karate, Muaythai, and boxing branches for general self-defense purposes and emerged by blending these techniques in a unique way (kickboks.gov.tr, 2021). In another definition, Gümüşay (2021) states Kickboxing is a sport that requires performance in terms of game rules and energy metabolism, which can be done both on the floor and on the ring. Today, athletes practice kickboxing at a licensed professional and amateur level, while individuals prefer it for hobbies, health, free time, and recreation.

The foundations of kickboxing date back to 2000 years ago in Asia. Japanese kickboxing emerged in the 1960s, and American kickboxing in the 1970s. Japanese kickboxing became K1 in 1993. Historically, kickboxing can be considered a mixed combat sport that combines several traditional

styles. This approach has increased since the 1970s, and kickboxing has become popular. Since the 1990s, kickboxing has contributed to the emergence of mixed martial arts by combining different fighting techniques (kickboks.gov.tr, 2020).

Kick Boxing, which became widespread in Europe in 1976, started to develop with WAKO organizations. The founder of WAKO is Mr. Georg Bruckner from Berlin. He is the person who organized the first World Championship in Semi and Full Contact Karate branches with 110 athletes from 18 countries in 1978. Then WAKO immediately established the rules and regulations for new combat sports and continued its duty as a unique Kick Boxing Federation globally (Montenegro, 2009).

Kick Boxing, which was given as a lesson in a small number of gyms in Turkey in the 1980s, started its activities in three branches (Semi Contact, Light Contact, Full Contact) under the Boxing Federation in 1994 under IAKSA. The first Turkish Championship was held in 1994 in Ankara (Koçak and Sezen Balçıklanlı, 2018).

Amateur Kickboxing Sub Competition Styles

According to the Amateur Competition Regulations of the Turkish Kickboxing Federation, kickboxing competitions are held in 7 sub-styles, namely ring and tatami styles (kickboksAmt, 2021).

- ✓ Full Contact Style
- ✓ Low Kick Style
- ✓ K-1 Rules Style
- ✓ Point Fighting Style
- ✓ Light Contact Style
- ✓ Kick Light Style
- ✓ Musical Form Style (Kickboks.gov.tr, 2021).

Full Contact

The Full Contact style is a style that aims to win the athlete's opponent during the competition by using all his energy and full contact force. In this discipline, the athlete must punch and kick the allowed score points effectively, quickly, and firmly, with complete contact. Competitions arranged in this style are held on the ring following the standards (kickboks.gov.tr, 2021).

Low Kick

The hit and contact features desired to be applied in this competition style are the same as the Full Contact style. Kicking the limbs of an extra opponent is also included in the rules. Competitions arranged in this style are held on the ring following the standards (kickboks.gov.tr, 2021).

K-1 Rules

The K-1 Rules style is also similar to the techniques used in the Full Contact and Low Kick styles performed in the ring. The use of elbow strikes is not permitted. Hugs cannot last more than 5 seconds. In addition to punches and kicks made to the allowed score zones, knee kicks without hugging are added (kickboks.gov.tr, 2021).

Point Fighting

This is a competition style where two contestants are placed in the allowable hitting zones before their opponent and quickly get the most points. In the Point Fighting style, strokes are controlled and lightly performed. Forceful and harsh hits are not allowed. The person with the most points at the end of the match wins. Point Fighting competitions are held in the tatami style (kickboks.gov.tr, 2021).

Light Contact

In the Light Contact competition style, which is one of the sub-styles of Kick Boxing, the athletes must use their punches and kicks in a controlled manner. In Light Contact style, the competition continues until the middle referee says stop. Light Contact competitions are held on the tatami (kickboks.gov.tr, 2021).

Kicklighter

Kick Light competition-style Point Fighting emerged as an intermediate level from Full Contact and Low Kick styles. Kicks are used on the limb used in low kicks; however, they should be used in a controlled manner while applying. Attention should be paid to the equal use of punches and kicks during the competition. Kick Light style competitions are held on the tatami (kickboks.gov.tr, 2021).

Musical Form

In musical form style competitions, the aim is a competitive style performed in an imaginary way against one or more opponents. In this style, the athletes use the techniques of Far Eastern sports aesthetically, accompanied by specially chosen music. All methods shown should progress from musical accompaniment to rhythm. This competition style is performed on the tatami (kickboks.gov.tr, 2021).

Amateur and Professional Sportsmanship in Kickboxing

In the three paragraphs of article 6 in the primary status of the Turkish Kickboxing Federation; To organize amateur, professional, and all kinds of kickboxing competitions and organizations in the country, to ensure the continuity of all competitors and organizations, to appoint managers, administrators, trainers, referees, representatives, observers, and other officials to these activities (Main Statu, 2014).

With this article, the federation has gathered all the authority in all amateur and professional kickboxing competitions held in Turkey. Mainly as of 2005, the proliferation of professional kickboxing matches in our country and the coordination problems of these organizations have emerged. For this reason, it has taken all professional games to be held with the "*Professional Kickboxing Competition Instruction*" and "*Professional Kickboxing Referee Instruction*" published in the regulations (professional Kickboxing Instruction, 2008).

All kinds of competitions with different names such as Semi Contact, Light Contact, Full Contact, Low Kick, Thai Kick Boxing, A-1, K-1, and Kick Boxing techniques to be held in Turkey under the name of Kick Boxing are included in the Kick Boxing Competitions category, The permission of these competitions is given by the Turkish Kick Boxing Federation (professional Kickboxing Instruction, 2008).



Amateur Kickboxing (trtspor.com.tr, 2022)



Professional Kickboxing (fanatik.com.tr, 2022)

When we consider amateur and professional kickboxing as a contact sport, there are some rule differences between amateur rules to protect the athlete's health. With the decisions taken in recent years, the styles of amateur kickboxing have been created. It has been ensured that the athletes protect their health and compete in a suitable technique for their body dynamics. By distinguishing between tatami and ring styles, amateur kickboxers were asked to choose whether the athletes should compete in one of the rings or tatami styles. Some of the main differences between amateur and professional kickboxing are as follows;

- ✓ The main goal in the tatami styles of amateur kickboxing is to earn points. In-ring styles, besides earning-rings, there is also knockout.

- ✓ In professional kickboxing, the main goal beyond earning points is to knock out the opponent as soon as possible.
- ✓ While athletes in amateur kickboxing are required to wear protective equipment, protective equipment is not allowed in private, professional kickboxing sports. However, some equipment may be necessary for professional competitions organized by federations to transition from amateur to professional.
- ✓ While strict health rules are applied in the event of a knockout in amateur ring branches and definite times are determined for the athlete to compete again, it can be said that the health rules are a little more flexible in professionals.
- ✓ In amateurs, the referees have the authority to watch the athletes more closely and stop the match immediately if the athlete is not suitable to continue. In this case, it is applied in amateur branches to protect the health of athletes.

With the regulations in this context, amateur and professional kickboxing has become the safe contact sport.

Recreational Kick Boxing

As stated in the definition of recreation, the activity is done to express action as a recreational activity is the individual's willingness to participate in their own time outside of work, study and working life. Today, Kickboxing is practiced by both amateurs and professionals. On the other hand, recreational activities are continued by individuals who have never been amateur or professional competitors and athletes who have finished their active sports life. In a study conducted by Yigit and Dinc (2021), the websites of sports facilities serving in the province of Istanbul were examined. It was stated that kickboxing was the most popular sport in defense and combat sports. Gumusay (2022), in his study, investigated the demographic information of 828 kickboxing individuals, 118 of them were national athletes, 389 of them were working to become a national athlete 321 of them were doing kickboxing for recreational purposes. According to this information, it is seen that the number of people who train in kickboxing for recreational purposes is relatively high. We think it is necessary to consider that individuals start as a recreational sport and progress as amateurs and professionals over time.



Recreational Kick Boxing (Studiospor, 2022)

Method

This research is a compilation type of research. The document analysis method used the data collection method in the study. While scanning the literature, PubMed, Dergipark ISI, SportDiscus, Scopus, Google Scholar, search engines, and academic web pages were used while reviewing the literature. While searching, the words 'kickboxing, amateur, professional, recreation, recreational' were used as keywords. By compiling the sources obtained, current studies on the subject were compiled by associating with each other.

Findings and Discussion

In the findings of the study titled "Analysis of Multi-Purpose Recreational Sports Center Websites for the Determination and Classification of the Diversity of Sports Services" by Yigit and Dinc

(2021), the most frequently used defense/combat sports services on the websites of the recreational sports center are listed as follows. Kick Boxing 39.1% (n=27), Boxing 20.3% (n=14), Tae Bo 11.6% (n=8) Aikido 8.7% (n=6) results were found. In the review of recreational sports centers, it has been observed that kickboxing is among the services that take place the most among 212 sports services. From this point of view, it can be said that kickboxing has become a sport that people spare time for in their spare time, apart from being an amateur and professional athletes.

Özmen and Cırdı (2021), in their study titled "A Bourdiean Approach to the Relationship between Social Stratification and Amateur Defense Sports: The Case of Kayseri," conducted interviews with 12 athletes interested in Muay Thai, Taekwondo, boxing, and kickboxing defense sports. In the light of the data, it has been observed that the athletes who perform a defense sport as an amateur in the province of Kayseri are socialized in the lower class. In this context, athletes see the sports they are active in as an "escape" from their social strata with the economic capital they will obtain. To increase the financial status of the interviewed athletes, they aimed to obtain certificates in various sports branches. It has been observed that the sport they do is not a leisure time activity but an "exit ticket" to come to better positions. This study shows that defense and combat sports are not made for recreational purposes but are done purely for economic concerns. In this context, it has been observed that the socio-financial status of individuals engaged in defense and combat sports creates differences in their perspectives on sports.

In the study of Gumusay (2022), it was determined that 14.3% of the participants who do kickboxing are national athletes, 47% are competitive athletes working to be national, 38.8% are recreational, leisure time, hobby etc. It is seen that the share of individuals doing kickboxing for recreational purposes is relatively high. Pursuits, health, weight control, self-defense, etc., of individuals who do kickboxing for recreational purposes. Goals such as when the motivation rates of the research results are examined, it has been observed that the individuals who do kickboxing for recreational purposes have higher intrinsic motivation levels than the national athletes.

Bastug et al., Ö. (2017). In this study, in which leisure time behaviors in different cultures were examined in their search titled "Recreation in different cultures: Investigation of leisure time activities," "recreational activities of some cultures were examined, and as a result, the rate of watching television, which is a passive recreation activity, is higher than other leisure activities in Turkish, American and British society. It has been determined that there are some participation in outdoor recreation activities and sportive recreation activities in the German and Australian society. In contrast, in Chinese society, time is spared for traditional sports, and cultural activities, and participation is more in these activities.

Conclusion

Today, Kick Boxing is a very trendy among defense and combat sports, but it is also followed with interest by people interested in these sports. Kickboxing is a sport for amateur, professional and recreational purposes. Amateurism is defined as doing a job not to make money, but because he likes it. On the other hand, professional appears as anti-amateur to profit from his work. On the other hand, recreational activities are mainly carried out in order to spend the time of individuals usefully outside of work and studentship. Although it seems possible to draw the boundaries of amateur and professionalism today, it is very difficult to draw these boundaries when the applications are examined. It is possible to say that amateurism is gradually disappearing in sports branches made for health and recreation purposes, and people who are in the status of elite athletes do sports to get financial gain. It is seen that the athletes exhibit their performances in order to gain financial gain, especially in sports that are popular in terms of competition and watching among sports branches. It is seen that Kick Boxing is widely preferred by people today for amateur, professional and recreational purposes.

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