

## Examining the Involvement Level of People who Practise Karate

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### Research Article

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### Abstract

This study aims to determine the participants' level of involvement who are engaged in karate in Adana and whether this involvement differs according to the demographic variables of the people. The data were collected from karate clubs in Adana via a survey. Analyses were carried out on 268 valid surveys. According to the analysis results, the participants' involvement in karate shows significant differences according to marital status, age, how many years karate has been practised, how often karate is practised and going out of province for karate purposes. Besides, while the dimension with the highest mean of the scale of involvement in karate sport is "Attraction" ( $\bar{x}=4,54$ ), the dimension with the lowest average is "Identity Expression" ( $\bar{x}=3,57$ ). Lastly, the general average of the scale items is  $\bar{x}=4,01$ . Based on this, it can be interpreted that the participants' interest in karate is generally high. These results highlight the positive tendencies of individuals involved in karate and underline the attractiveness and importance of the activity in their lives.

**Keywords:** Physical activity, Exercise, Karate, Personal involvement

## Karate Sporunu Yapan Kişilerin Karate Sporuna Olan İlgi Düzeylerinin İncelenmesi

### Öz

Bu çalışmanın amacı, Adana ilinde karate sporuyla uğraşan kişilerin karateye olan ilgi düzeylerinin belirlenmesi ve bu ilginin kişilerin demografik değişkenlerine göre farklılaşıp farklılaşmadığının tespit edilmesidir. Veriler, oluşturulan bir anket yardımıyla Adana'da bulunan spor salonlarından toplanmıştır. Analizler, kullanılabilir 268 anket üzerinden gerçekleştirilmiştir. Analiz sonuçlarına göre katılımcıların karate sporuna olan ilgileri; medeni duruma, yaşa, kaç yıldır karate sporu yapıldığına, ne sıklıkla karate sporu yapıldığına ve karate sporu amaçlı il dışı seyahate çıkmaya göre anlamlı farklılıklar göstermektedir. Ayrıca, karate sporu ilgilenim ölçeğinin en yüksek ortalamaya sahip olan boyutu "Çekicilik" ( $\bar{x}=4,54$ ) boyutu iken, en düşük ortalamaya sahip olan boyut ise "Kendini İfade" ( $\bar{x}=3,57$ ) boyutudur. Son olarak, ölçek maddelerinin genel ortalaması  $\bar{x}=4,01$ 'dir. Buradan hareketle, genel olarak katılımcıların karate sporuna olan ilgilerinin yüksek olduğu yorumu yapılabilir. Bu sonuçlar, karate sporuyla uğraşan bireylerin olumlu eğilimlerini vurgulamakta ve sporun yaşamlarındaki çekiciliğini ve önemini altını çizmektedir.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** Fiziksel aktivite, Egzersiz, Karate, Kişisel ilgi

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## INTRODUCTION

Karate, a martial art with a long history and a global follower, has a special place in the sports world by contributing to personal health, social interaction and physical fitness (Chaabene et al., 2012). Despite being one of the traditional Japanese martial arts and its history going back to centuries, it could be argued that Karate in Türkiye is relatively new (Bozkurt, 2014). Karate originated on the Japanese island of Okinawa and has become a global phenomenon practiced by millions of people worldwide (Susila et al., 2022). Among countless sports disciplines, karate has not only carved out a special place for itself with its rich history, cultural significance, and widespread international participation, but has also begun to play an increasingly vital role in the multifaceted world of sports tourism (Jakhel, 2019).

In an era shaped by the search for global connections and different leisure experiences, the tie between sports and tourism has emerged as a prominent and developing phenomenon (Kim et al., 2015). Sports tourism is a rapidly growing type of tourism that makes significant contributions to the economies of many countries and communities around the world, covering various sports disciplines (Petrovic, 2020). Sports tourism, the combination of travel and sports, has become a critical driver of economic, cultural and social development of a country. According to the World Tourism Organization (WTO), sports tourism accounts for approximately 10% of the global tourism industry, making a significant contribution to job creation, infrastructure development and local economic growth (WTO, 2020). In addition, in line with the 2023 targets of the Türkiye Tourism Strategy, sports tourism is included as one of the alternative tourism types prioritized in planning studies (Akyol & Akkaşoğlu, 2021). International karate competitions and tournaments have now become major events that attract large crowds and television viewers. For example, 982 athletes from 105 countries worldwide participated in the most recent World Karate Championships in 2021 (WKF, 2021). Such high-profile competitions are a major motivator for sports tourism, as karate enthusiasts travel great distances to support their nation or idol. It is estimated that international karate events generate tens of millions of dollars per year in tourism revenue for host countries through expenditures on accommodation, meals, transportation and paraleisure activities (Daniels & Norman, 2003). Understanding how individuals become interested in karate and how this interest varies among different demographic groups provides valuable insight into the local importance of the activity and broader implications for the field of sports studies. The findings of the research make significant contributions to the existing body of knowledge. The study examines the karate community in Adana, aiming to determine the participants' interest levels in karate and to determine whether these levels differ according to certain demographic variables. Analyses based on 268 valid surveys reveal interesting insights into the dynamics of karate participation in Adana. These findings not only enrich our understanding of sport participation, but also have the potential to inform targeted strategies for promoting and developing karate in Adana and similar communities.

Physical fitness and performance are important elements of karate training. Molinaro et al. (2020) evaluated the effects of kata and kumite techniques on physical performance in elite karate competitors. The findings showed that these karate practitioners exhibited superior

jumping ability compared to non-karate practitioners. Additionally, a review article by Navickaite and Thomas (2022) examined the requirements of elite adult Kyokushin style karate and offered training recommendations based on a needs analysis. In this review, the importance of strength and conditioning for karate practitioners is emphasized.

Cognitive functioning and emotional well-being are also areas of interest in karate research. Jansen and Dahmen-Zimmer (2012) investigated the effects of cognitive, motor and karate training on the cognitive functions and mental states of elderly individuals. The study concluded that karate training has positive effects on cognitive functioning and emotional well-being in the elderly population. Additionally, Russo and Ottoboni (2019) conducted a systematic review on the perceptual-cognitive skills of those involved in combat sports, including karate practitioners. The research emphasized the importance of cognitive abilities such as decision-making and attention processes in combat sports performance.

The perceived benefits and risks associated with karate participation have also been examined in comparison with other sports. Limpo and Tadrict (2021) developed a scale to measure the perceived benefits and aggression-related risks of karate and football. The research found that karate is perceived to have greater physical, emotional, cognitive and social benefits compared to football. Additionally, findings showed that perceived benefits were positively associated with athlete participation and quality of life.

Studies examining the psychological aspects of karate are also included in the literature. Vveinhardt and Kaspars (2022) examined the relationship between mindfulness practices and the psychological state and performance of Kyokushin karate practitioners. Research has found that mindfulness practices are positively associated with psychological health and performance in karate practitioners. Núñez-Barriopedro et al., (2021) investigates the effect of happiness on the loyalty of karate practitioners. This study highlights the importance of psychological well-being and engagement in developing loyalty and commitment among athletes. Understanding the psychological factors that contribute to the success and satisfaction of karate practitioners informs training programs and athlete support systems.

There are also studies that provide information on related issues such as tourism, marketing and cultural heritage that can be applied in the context of karate. Jamal and Getz (1995) discuss cooperation theory and community tourism planning that may be relevant when considering the organization and planning of karate events or tournaments. According to the researchers, understanding the dynamics of inter-organizational relationships and planning at the community level can contribute to the development and success of karate as a martial art. Pike and Page (2014) provide a narrative analysis of the literature on destination marketing organizations that may be valuable when examining the marketing strategies and branding efforts of karate events or training centres. According to the study, karate organizations can effectively promote their sport and attract people's attention by understanding the principles of destination marketing.

The aim of the study is to determine the interest level of people who practice karate and to determine whether this interest differs according to the demographic variables of the people. In the research conducted for this purpose, data was obtained through a survey. In addition to demographic questions, this survey also includes a scale to measure the participants' level of interest in karate.

## **METHOD**

### **Research Model**

In the present study, the correlational and descriptive research method are used as the research method.

### **Study Group**

The population of the research consists of people interested in karate in Adana. Since the exact number of people practicing karate in Adana cannot be determined clearly, it was aimed to reach the minimum sample number of 384 by applying the unlimited universe formula. For this purpose, the necessary data for the study was collected from people who practice karate in Adana, by attending to karate clubs over a period of 3 months, through the introduction of surveys on a voluntary basis. However, during the research, there were times the club owners were rather reluctant for the survey to be filled out and karate practitioners did not want to participate in the research despite permission. For these reasons, analyses were conducted on 268 usable surveys obtained from participants who voluntarily wanted to participate in the research.

### **Ethical Approval**

Ethics approval was obtained from Çukurova University Ethics Committee on 28/12/2023.

### **Data Collection Tools**

The original scale that was used was developed by Kyle et al. (2007) and translated into Turkish by Gürbüz et al. (2018) includes 15 questions measuring interest, 5 dimensions (attraction, importance, social relationship, identification, self-expression), and the response categories of the scale items start from "1: Strongly Disagree" to "5: Strongly Agree." It has been subjected to a 5-point rating going up to. Based on a number of similar studies and their limitations, Kyle et al. (2007) designed and tested a modified involvement scale using data that were collected from the campers visiting national forest in Southern California. Since then, their study was cited more than 100 times and inspired further research in sports and tourism related activities such as skiing, fishing, travelling, birdwatching and so on.

### **Data Analysis**

As stated, Kyle et al.'s (2007) study was adapted to karate and the reliability and validity of the scale was also tested. First of all, the Alpha Reliability coefficient of the 15-item leisure activity interest scale used in the research was calculated as 0.769. The reliability coefficients

of the scale were calculated by randomly dividing the scale into two and the sample into two, and also according to the odd and even numbered scale items, and it was found that all of them were above 0.700. For this reason, it was concluded that the scale is "reliable" (Alpar, 2013: 849). Then, confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) was applied to test the validity of the scale. CFA results revealed a good model fit with a chi-square value of 131.867, 76 degrees of freedom ( $p < .001$ ) and  $\chi^2/df = 1.735 < 5$  (Hair et al., 2010). In addition, other goodness-of-fit statistics are also among the reference values ( $0.90 < CFI < 1$ ,  $0.90 < NFI < 1$ ,  $0.90 < IFI < 1$ ,  $0.95 < TLI < 1$ ,  $RMSEA < 0.08$ ) (Hair et al., 2010). Goodness of fit results for CFA results are presented in Table 1.

**Table 1.** Confirmatory factor analysis measurement model goodness of fit statistics

Goodness of Fit Indices	Results
$\chi^2/DF$	1.735
Comparative Fit Index (CFI)	0.940
Normed Fit Index (NFI)	0.917
Incremental Fit Index (IFI)	0.942
Tucker-Lewis Fit Index (TLI)	0.967
Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA)	0.052

Following the validity of the statistics, t test statistics showing the significance of the relationship between latent variables and observed variables, standardized load values showing the strength of the relationship between the observed variables and latent variables, and descriptive statistics for the confirmatory factor analysis model to examine the margins of error of the observed variables are given in Table 2.

**Table 2.** Descriptive statistics for the confirmatory factor analysis measurement model

Dimensions and Items	Std. Load Rating	Tolerance	R <sup>2</sup>	t
<b>Attractiveness</b>				
1. Karate is one of the most fun things I do.	0.866	0.115	0.751	3.643
2. Karate is very important to me.	0.549	0.392	0.201	10.899
3. Karate is one of the most satisfying things I do.	0.714	0.387	0.509	7.929
<b>Giving importance</b>				
4. I think most of my life revolves around karate.	0.544	0.621	0.602	11.146
5. Karate has a central role in my life.	0.780	0.348	0.608	2.351
6. If I were to choose another free time activity instead of karate. I would have to seriously rethink it.	0.520	0.854	0.103	10.710
<b>Social Relationship</b>				
7. I enjoy talking about karate with my friends.	0.715	0.605	0.512	7.868
8. I met most of my friends because of karate.	0.682	0.546	0.466	8.418
9. Practising karate gives me the opportunity to be with my friends.	0.645	0.650	0.416	9.092
<b>Identification</b>				
10. When I practice karate, I am truly myself.	0.651	0.714	0.423	8.617
11. I identify with people and images related to karate.	0.735	0.545	0.541	6.811
12. When I practice karate, I don't have to worry about how I look.	0.502	0.853	0.252	10.251
<b>Self Expression</b>				
13. When you see a person practice karate, you can tell a lot about that person.	0.666	0.778	0.444	7.675
14. Practising karate says a lot about who I am.	0.826	0.419	0.682	3.684
15. When I practice karate, people see me the way I want them to see me.	0.530	0.968	0.281	9.992

From Table 2, it can be seen that the standardized loading value of each item is greater than 0.50 and the t values are greater than 1.96. Therefore, it was seen that there was no item that needed to be removed from the scale. From Table 1, it is possible to say that the scale, which validity of statistics are observed to be among the reference values, hence has a valid structure.

## FINDINGS

88.1% of the participants in the study are men and 44% are 40 years old and over. 74.3% of the participants are married, 45.1% are high school graduates, and 32.1% are karate coaches. Of the participants, 43.3% of whom have been interested in karate for 11-20 years, 36.2% practice karate every two days. In addition, while the rate of those traveling out of town for karate purposes is 86.2%, 57.1% of the survey participants have memberships in more than one club for karate. Details of the findings regarding the demographic variables of the participants are given in Table 3.

**Table 3.** Distribution of participants by demographic characteristics

Variable	Frequency	%	Variable	Frequency	%
<b>Gender</b>			<b>Marital status</b>		
Male	236	88.1	Married	199	74.3
Woman	32	11.9	Single	69	25.7
<b>Education level</b>			<b>Duration</b>		
Primary education	35	13.1	1-10 years	20	7.5
High school	121	45.1	11-20 years	116	43.3
Associate degree	35	13.1	21-30 years	109	40.7
Undergraduate and above	77	28.7	31 years and above	23	8.6
<b>Age</b>			<b>Frequency</b>		
18-28 years old	73	27.2	Every day	42	15.7
29-39 years old	77	28.7	Every other day	97	36.2
40 years and above	118	44.0	Once in three days	63	23.5
<b>Job</b>			<b>Out of Province Travel</b>		
Athlete	71	26.5	Once a week	66	24.6
Coach	86	32.1	Yes	239	86.2
Student	49	18.3	No	37	13.8
Referee	30	11.2	<b>Club Membership</b>		
Other	32	11.9	Yes	153	57.1
			No	115	42.9
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>268</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>268</b>	<b>100</b>

After revealing the demographic profile of the participants in the research, the sub-dimensions of the interest in karate scale were determined. It was investigated whether there was a significant difference according to the marital status of the participants. Table 4 presents the

results of the T-test, which was conducted to reveal whether the dimensions of interest in karate differ according to marital status.

**Table 4.** Comparison of participants' karate interests in terms of marital status

	<b>Marital status</b>	<b>n</b>	<b><math>\bar{X}</math></b>	<b>Sd</b>	<b>t</b>	<b>p</b>
Attractiveness	Married	199	4.51	0.59	0.431	0.67
	Single	69	4.55	0.65		
Giving importance	Married	199	4.22	0.59	0.058	0.95
	Single	69	4.22	0.70		
Social Relationship	Married	199	3.92	0.84	0.460	0.65
	Single	69	3.86	0.88		
Identification	Married	199	3.81	0.87	0.248	0.80
	Single	69	3.78	0.79		
Self Expression	Married	199	3.68	0.89	2.042	<b>0.04*</b>
	Single	69	3.42	0.99		

\* $p \leq 0.05$

According to the T-test results, it was found that only the "Self-Expression" sub-dimension of the participants' involvement dimensions showed a significant difference according to marital status ( $p < 0.05$ ). Looking at Table 4, married participants assigned a higher mean to the self-expression dimension than single participants. From the averages, it is understood that married people see karate as a way of self-expression more than single people.

The T-test results, which question whether interest dimensions differ according to the situation of traveling outside the city of residence for karate purposes, are given in Table 5.

**Table 5.** Comparison of participants' karate interests in terms of traveling

	<b>Out of Province Travel</b>	<b>n</b>	<b><math>\bar{X}</math></b>	<b>Sd</b>	<b>t</b>	<b>p</b>
Attractiveness	No	37	4.54	0.53	0.183	0.86
	Yes	231	4.52	0.62		
Giving importance	No	37	3.11	1.57	5.077	<b>0.00**</b>
	Yes	231	4.06	0.95		
Social Relationship	No	37	4.06	0.75	1.212	0.23
	Yes	231	3.88	0.87		
identification	No	37	3.96	0.96	1.078	0.23
	Yes	231	3.77	0.83		
Self Expression	No	37	3.64	1.25	0.462	0.72
	Yes	231	3.56	0.90		

\*\* $p \leq 0.01$

According to the t-test, it was found that only the "Caring" sub-dimension of the participants' involvement dimensions showed a significant difference according to their traveling status ( $p < 0.05$ ). Looking at Table 5, the average of the answers given to the questions regarding the

importance dimension of the participants who have travelled out of the province for karate purposes is higher than the average of the participants who have not travelled out of the province for karate purposes. Based on this finding, it can be concluded that people who have travelled outside the province for karate purposes attach more importance to karate.

ANOVA was conducted to determine whether the research participants' interest in karate differed in sub-dimensions according to their age. ANOVA results are summarized in Table 6.

**Table 6.** Comparison of participants' karate interests by age

	Age	n	$\bar{X}$	Sd	f	p
Attractiveness	18-28	73	4.51	0.66	0.268	0.76
	29-39	77	4.49	0.51		
	40+	118	4.55	0.62		
	Total	268	4.52	0.60		
Giving importance	18-28	73	3.82	1.23	0.845	0.43
	29-39	77	4.05	0.93		
	40+	118	3.91	1.13		
	Total	268	3.93	1.10		
Social Relationship	18-28	73	3.86	0.80	0.291	0.75
	29-39	77	3.88	0.74		
	40+	118	3.95	0.95		
	Total	268	3.91	0.85		
identification	18-28	73	3.64	0.72	4.515	<b>0.01**</b>
	29-39	77	3.83	0.90		
	40+	118	4.02	0.91		
	Total	268	3.86	0.87		
Self Expression	18-28	73	3.39	0.94	1.776	0.17
	29-39	77	3.64	0.92		
	40+	118	3.64	0.99		
	Total	268	3.57	0.96		

**\*\*p≤0.01**

According to Table 6, it was found that only the "Identification" dimension showed a significant difference according to age ( $p < 0.05$ ). According to the homogeneity of variances (Levene) test, since the variances were homogeneous, the Gabriel test (Mayers, 2013: 180), one of the Post-Hoc tests, was applied to see which groups there were differences. The results of multiple comparisons between groups are given in Table 7.

**Table 7.** Identification dimension multiple comparison (gabriel) table by age

			Average Difference	Level of Meaning
Identification	40 years and above	18-28 years old	0.380	<b>0.01**</b>

**\*\*p≤0.01**



According to Table 7, participants aged 40 and over have a higher identification average than participants aged 18-28. According to this result, it can be said that relatively older people identify themselves more with karate.

The ANOVA result, which was conducted to determine whether the participants' interest in karate changes significantly depending on how long they have been practising karate, is shown in Table 8.

**Table 8.** Comparison of participants' karate interests according to duration

	<b>Duration</b>	<b>n</b>	<b><math>\bar{X}</math></b>	<b>Sd</b>	<b>f</b>	<b>p</b>
Attractiveness	1-10 years	20	4.30	0.88	2.849	<b>0.04*</b>
	11-20 years	116	4.54	0.58		
	21-30 years	109	4.49	0.60		
	31 years and above	23	4.81	0.30		
	Total	268	4.52	0.60		
Giving importance	1-10 years	20	3.45	1.56	1.749	0.16
	11-20 years	116	3.93	1.04		
	21-30 years	109	4.04	0.97		
	31 years and above	23	3.80	1.43		
	Total	268	3.93	1.10		
Social Relationship	1-10 years	20	3.80	0.91	3.273	<b>0.02*</b>
	11-20 years	116	3.96	0.79		
	21-30 years	109	3.77	0.89		
	31 years and above	23	4.35	0.80		
	Total	268	3.91	0.85		
Identification	1-10 years	20	3.85	0.76	5.292	<b>0.00**</b>
	11-20 years	116	3.70	0.81		
	21-30 years	109	3.91	0.94		
	31 years and above	23	4.45	0.57		
	Total	268	3.86	0.87		
Self Expression	1-10 years	20	3.20	1.07	1.637	0.18
	11-20 years	116	3.52	0.94		
	21-30 years	109	3.67	0.88		
	31 years and above	23	3.68	1.22		
	Total	268	3.57	0.96		

\* $p \leq 0.05$ , \*\* $p \leq 0.01$

According to the ANOVA results, considering how many years the participants have been practicing karate, significant differences are observed in the dimensions of "Attractiveness", "Social Relationship" and "Identification". In order to see which groups there are differences, the multiple comparison results are presented in Table 9.

**Table 9.** Interest multiple comparison (gabriel) table by duration

			Average Difference	p
Attractiveness	31 years and above	1-10 years	0.51159	<b>0.03*</b>
Social Relationship	31 years and above	21-30 years	0.57413	<b>0.01**</b>
identification	31 years and above	11-20 years	0.75387	<b>0.00**</b>
		21-30 years	0.53490	<b>0.02*</b>

\* $p \leq 0.05$

From Table 9, it can be seen that the participants who have been practising karate for 31 years or more have higher scores on the attractiveness dimension than those who have been practising karate for 1-10 years, on the social relationship dimension than those who have been practising karate for 21-30 years, and on the identification dimension than those who have been practising karate for 11-20 years and 21-30 years. From this finding it is concluded that people who have been practicing karate for relatively longer years find this activity more attractive, develop their social relations with this it, and identify themselves more with karate.

Finally, in the difference tests, ANOVA was conducted to determine whether the research participants' interest in karate differed according to the frequency of doing karate. ANOVA results are included in Table 10.

**Table 10.** Comparison of participants' interests according to the frequency of doing karate

	Frequency	n	$\bar{X}$	Sd	f	p
Attractiveness	Every day	42	4.34	0.75	3.828	<b>0.01**</b>
	Every other day	97	4.47	0.66		
	Once in three days	63	4.69	0.50		
	Once a week	66	4.62	0.46		
	Total	268	4.54	0.61		
Giving Importance	Every day	42	3.80	1.09	1.111	0.35
	Every other day	97	3.96	0.96		
	Once in three days	63	3.78	1.40		
	Once a week	66	4.10	0.97		
	Total	268	3.93	1.10		
Social Relationship	Every day	42	3.78	0.88	1.300	0.28
	Every other day	97	3.83	0.92		
	Once in three days	63	3.96	0.73		
	Once a week	66	4.05	0.83		
	Total	268	3.91	0.85		
Identification	Every day	42	3.98	0.71	0.669	0.57
	Every other day	97	3.80	0.96		
	Once in three days	63	3.93	0.89		
	Once a week	66	3.80	0.81		
	Total	268	3.86	0.87		
Self Expression	Every day	42	3.60	0.75	1.826	0.14
	Every other day	97	3.67	0.89		
	Once in three days	63	3.65	1.11		
	Once a week	66	3.34	0.99		
	Total	268	3.57	0.96		

\*\* $p \leq 0.01$

According to Table 10, it was found that only the "Attractiveness" dimension showed a significant difference according to the frequency of practising karate ( $p < 0.05$ ). In order to see which groups this difference exists between, the multiple comparison results are given in Table 11.

**Table 11.** Attractiveness dimension multiple comparison (gabriel) table by frequency

			Average Difference	p
Attractiveness	Once in three days	Every day	0.35185	<b>0.02*</b>

\* $p \leq 0.05$

According to Table 11, participants who practice karate every three days have a higher average attractiveness than participants who practice it every day. Based on this, it can be interpreted that people who practice karate every three days find karate more attractive than people who practice karate every day. On the other hand, according to the results of a difference test, the dimensions of interest in karate do not show significant differences according to gender, membership status in karate clubs, profession, and education level ( $p > 0.05$ ).

Finally, descriptive statistics were used to determine the interest levels of the participants in the research towards karate. Descriptive findings regarding the scale items are shown in Table 12.

**Table 12.** Descriptive findings regarding the karate sport interest scale

Dimensions and Items	Average	Std. Dev.
<b>Attractiveness</b>	<b>4.54</b>	<b>0.61</b>
1. Karate is one of the most fun things I do.	4.64	0.68
2. Karate is very important to me.	4.52	0.71
3. Karate is one of the most satisfying things I do.	4.41	0.89
<b>Giving importance</b>	<b>3.93</b>	<b>1.10</b>
4. I think most of my life revolves around karate.	4.32	0.81
5. Karate has a central role in my life.	4.21	0.94
6. If I were to choose another free time activity instead of Karate, I would have to seriously rethink it.	4.13	0.98
<b>Social Relationship</b>	<b>3.91</b>	<b>0.85</b>
7. I enjoy talking about karate with my friends.	4.08	1.12
8. I met most of my friends because of karate.	3.85	1.02
9. Practising karate gives me the opportunity to be with my friends.	3.78	1.06
<b>Identification</b>	<b>3.86</b>	<b>0.87</b>
10. When I practice karate, I am truly myself.	3.87	1.13
11. I identify with people and images related to karate.	3.55	1.10
12. When I practice karate, I don't have to worry about how I look.	3.98	1.07
<b>Self Expression</b>	<b>3.57</b>	<b>0.96</b>
13. When you see a person practice karate, you can tell a lot about that person.	3.73	1.19
14. Practising karate says a lot about who I am.	3.53	1.15
15. When I practice karate, people see me the way I want them to see me.	3.58	1.16
<b>GENERAL</b>	<b>4.01</b>	<b>0.49</b>

n = 268

When the expressions in the scale are examined in Table 12, the three items with the highest mean are; "Karate is one of the most fun things I've ever done." ( $\bar{x}=4.64$ ), "Karate is very important to me." ( $\bar{x}=4.52$ ) and "Karate is one of the most satisfying things I have done." It is

understood that ( $\bar{x}=4.41$ ). On the other hand, the statement with the lowest mean was "Practising karate says a lot about who I am." ( $\bar{x}=3.53$ ), when we look at the standard deviation values, the biggest deviation is "When you see a person practising karate, you can tell a lot about that person." It can be seen in the statement. It is understood from Table 12 that the dimension with the highest average on the basis of dimensions is the "Attractiveness" dimension ( $\bar{x}=4.54$ ). The dimension with the lowest average is the "Self-Expression" dimension ( $\bar{x}=3.57$ ). Additionally, the overall average of the scale items is  $\bar{x}=4.01$  out of 5. Based on this, it can be interpreted that the participants' interest in karate is generally high.

## DISCUSSION

The aim of the research is to determine the interest level of people who practice karate in Adana and to determine whether this interest differs according to the demographic variables of the people. According to the analysis results, it was found that among the participants' involvement dimensions, only *the Self-Expression* sub-dimension showed a significant difference according to marital status. It is understood that married people see karate as a way of expressing themselves more than single people. Although they did not show interest in karate or the self-expression sub-dimension linearly, Kim and McKenry (2002) and Williams (2003) studies investigated the effect of marital status on participation in different sports contexts. Supporting the results of the current study, they found that married people had more positive psychological well-being and higher motivation to participate in sports than single people did. On the other hand, Leon-Guereno et al. (2020) study concluded that marital status did not have a significant effect on the motivation to participate in marathon running.

According to another finding, it was determined that only *the Importance* sub-dimension showed a significant difference according to travel status and it was concluded that people who travelled outside the province for karate purposes gave more importance to karate. The fact that the importance sub-dimension shows a significant difference according to the travel situation is evidence that this activity is the priority of those who are involved in karate more comprehensively and perhaps more determinedly. *The identification* dimension showed a significant difference according to age. It was concluded that relatively older people identify themselves more with karate. Witte et al. (2016) similarly observed that the cognitive functions and emotional well-being of the elderly, whose commitment to karate increased with age, improved significantly.

According to the results of the research, it has been revealed that people who have been practicing karate for longer years find karate more attractive, improve their social relations with it and identify themselves more with karate. According to Fuller and Lloyd (2019), practicing martial arts for a long time has positive effects on various psychological factors, including interest in sports, social relationships and self-definition.

*The Attractiveness dimension* of the Karate Interest Scale showed a significant difference according to the frequency of practising karate. It was concluded that people who practice

karate every three days find karate more attractive than people who practice karate every day. Less frequent but still consistent participation may lead to a greater sense of excitement and anticipation, which may increase the perceived attractiveness of the activity. On the other hand, those who practice every day may become more accustomed to routine, potentially leading to a decrease in perceived attractiveness. According to other difference test results, the dimensions of interest in karate do not show significant differences according to gender, membership status in karate clubs, profession and education level.

Finally, descriptive statistics were used to determine the interest levels of the participants in the research towards karate. When the scale expressions are examined, the three items with the highest mean; *Karate is one of the most fun things I do*, *Karate is very important to me*, and it turns out that *Karate is one of the most satisfying things I do*. These findings generally give a clue that the participants have a positive attitude towards karate. Participants see karate as a fun, important and satisfying activity. Such positive perceptions can be effective in encouraging continued participation, motivation, and long-term participation in karate. From a practical perspective, this information is valuable for karate instructors, clubs and organizations. They can use this information to highlight the fun and rewarding aspects of karate when promoting it. Emphasizing the fun, importance and satisfaction experienced by participants can attract newcomers and keep existing practitioners interested.

On the other hand, the statement with the lowest mean is *"Practising Karate says a lot about who I am."* The low mean score for this statement indicates that the study participants, on average, did not strongly identify their personal identity with karate. Participants may participate in karate primarily as a hobby or physical activity rather than as a deeply ingrained part of their identity. Additionally, individuals may have multiple interests and activities that contribute to their self-concept and karate may not be a top priority. This result also highlights the diversity of motivations and reasons for engaging in karate among participants.

On the basis of dimensions, it was observed that the dimension with the highest average was *the Attractiveness* dimension and the dimension with the lowest average was *the Self-Expression dimension*. In Bozkurt's (2015) study, which investigated the effect of personal commitment in fitness training, the attractiveness dimension also came to the fore and the participants agreed that fitness training was important for them, that it was very satisfying, and that they enjoyed it very much. Additionally, the overall average of the scale items is  $\bar{x}=4.01$  out of 5. Based on this, it can be interpreted that the participants' interest in karate is generally high.

These results highlight the positive tendencies of individuals involved in karate and underline the attractiveness and importance of the activity in their lives. Capitalizing on this high level of interest can contribute to the growth and sustainability of karate as a martial arts. Given the generally high levels of interest, karate organizations and clubs may hold open events, workshops or introductory classes to attract more participants. A sense of community and camaraderie can be strengthened among karate practitioners. Social interactions, activities and support networks can be encouraged that can further increase the sense of belonging and personal significance associated with karate. Feedback can be obtained regularly from

Bozkurt, A., & Türkeri, C. (2024). Examining the involvement level of people who practise karate. *Journal of Sport Sciences Research*, 9(1), 100-115.

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participants to understand their changing interests and expectations. Other suggestions include expanding facilities in Adana, hosting regional or international events and collaborating with local communities to further engage and educate individuals in karate.

**Conflicts of Interest:** The authors declare that they have no conflict of interest.

**Research Ethic Informations:** Çukurova University Ethics Committee approved the study protocol.

**Ethical Approval:** Çukurova University Ethics Committee.

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