

High School Students' Attitudes towards Physical Education and Sports Teaching Profession

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Abstract

The aim of this study is to examine the attitudes of students continuing their education in different secondary education institutions towards physical education and sports teaching profession according to various variables. In this quantitative study, the survey model was adopted. While the population of the study consists of secondary education institutions affiliated to Kırkkale Provincial Directorate of National Education, the sample group consists of 1531 students who continue their education in secondary education institutions affiliated to the central district of this province and determined by probabilistic simple random sampling method. "Attitude Scale towards Physical Education Teaching Profession" developed by Yanık and Çamlıyer (2013) was used as the measurement tool. Reliability, independent sample and one-way variance analyses were applied to the data that met the normality assumptions. Depending on the homogeneity assumption of the data, Welch values were taken into consideration and Tamhane's T2 and Tukey tests from Post Hoc tests were applied as second level tests. As a result of the research, it is seen that doing sports affects the attitude towards physical education and sports teaching profession. Therefore, it is thought that directing students who want to do this profession to sports activities will play an important role in developing positive attitudes towards the profession.

Keywords: Physical education, Teaching profession, Student, Sport, Attitude

Lise Öğrencilerinin Beden Eğitimi ve Spor Öğretmenlik Mesleğine Yönelik Tutumları

Öz

Bu araştırmanın amacı farklı ortaöğretim kurumlarında öğrenimlerine devam eden öğrencilerin beden eğitimi ve spor öğretmenliği mesleğine yönelik tutumlarının çeşitli değişkenlere göre incelenmesidir. Nicel bir araştırma olan bu çalışmada tarama modeli benimsenmiştir. Çalışmanın evrenini Kırkkale İl Millî Eğitim Müdürlüğü'ne bağlı ortaöğretim kurumları oluştururken, örneklem grubunu ise bu ilin merkez ilçesine bağlı ortaöğretim kurumlarında öğrenimlerine devam eden ve olasılıklı basit rastlantısal örnekleme yöntemi ile belirlenen 1531 öğrenci oluşturmaktadır. Ölçme aracı olarak Yanık ve Çamlıyer (2013) tarafından geliştirilen "Beden Eğitimi Öğretmenlik Mesleğine Yönelik Tutum Ölçeği" kullanılmıştır. Normallik varsayımlarını sağlayan verilere güvenirlilik, bağımsız örneklem ve tek yönlü varyans analizleri uygulanmıştır. Verilerin homojenlik varsayımını sağlama durumuna bağlı olarak Welch değerleri dikkate alınmış ve ikinci seviye testi olarak Post Hoc testlerinden Tamhane's T2 ve Tukey testleri uygulanmıştır. Araştırma sonucunda spor yapmanın beden eğitimi ve spor öğretmenliği mesleğine yönelik tutumu etkilediği görülmektedir. Dolayısıyla bu mesleği yapmak isteyen öğrencilerin spor faaliyetlerine yönlendirilmesinin mesleğe yönelik olumlu tutumun geliştirilmesinde önemli bir rol oynayacağı düşünülmektedir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Beden eğitimi, Öğretmenlik mesleği, Öğrenci, Spor, Tutum

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INTRODUCTION

Attitude is defined as an individual's positive or negative evaluative tendency towards an object, person or situation (Thurstone & Chave, 1929). Britt (1958) defines attitude as the tendency to act towards or against a certain goal; Allport (1966) argues that attitude represents the individual's capacity to organise events, direct reactions and be prepared for situations. Fishbein (1967) considered attitude as a form of mental response and this approach paved the way for studies emphasising the effect of attitudes on behaviour. Again, Fishbein and Ajzen (1975) argue that attitudes are an important predictor of behaviour under appropriate conditions and draw attention to the determining role of accessibility. Ajzen (1991) extends this framework by defining attitudes as psychological dispositions expressed in positive or negative evaluations of objects, individuals or events. İnceoğlu (1993) defines attitudes as a permanent state of readiness that is shaped through the individual's experiences and directs the responses to stimuli. Feldman (2002), on the other hand, considers attitude as a holistic structure consisting of affective, behavioural and cognitive components and emphasizes that it provides a critical criterion for understanding individual behaviours. In this context, attitude is a strategic tool in determining the behaviours and tendencies of young people who constitute the future of societies. It also has a critical role in the educational planning and orientation of young people.

Research on career choice processes shows that the difficulties faced by individuals have a multidimensional structure. Çınar (2011) emphasises that career choices have a critical importance that can affect almost every aspect of individuals' lives. Kan and Akbaş (2014) stated that emotional factors-especially motivation, attitude and anxiety-significantly shape students' interest in courses and the certainty of their career choices. Eryetiş (2016) suggested that individuals' awareness of the opportunities offered to them forms the basis for them to make informed career decisions. Bacanlı (2016) draws attention to the need for guidance services for secondary school students in career selection processes. Hirschi (2018) discussed in depth how socioeconomic conditions and family expectations restrict individual decision-making processes. Brown and Lent (2021) stated that rapidly changing global labour market conditions and technological transformations create uncertainty and stress on students, so interventions to improve self-efficacy perception are of strategic importance. Azhenov et al. (2023) found that career guidance programmes provide critical support for students to cope with these complexities and enable them to make more informed decisions. Finally, Sarwar et al. (2024) argue that career counselling services not only facilitate students' decision-making processes but also provide strategic guidance for their future professional lives. Therefore, the teacher is directly involved in the processes of behavioural change desired to be achieved in students, planning of vocational interests and orientations, overcoming the difficulties experienced by students in the decision-making process, in short, in the processes of career planning stages to be concluded in the targeted way, and primarily has an effect on students.

The teaching profession has been examined for many years as a critical field that shapes the social, cognitive and emotional development of individuals and supports the sustainability of social development. Ataünal (2003) states that teachers' development of professional competences and attitudes in accordance with international standards plays a decisive role in

the effectiveness of their profession. In this context, Demir (2004) argues that teachers' positive attitudes towards their profession have a direct effect on their professional success. Çelikten, Şanal and Yeni (2005) emphasise the fundamental roles of teachers in ensuring social peace, transferring cultural values and raising qualified human resources. Helvacı (2009) states that social expectations for the teaching profession are gradually increasing and that teachers assume a strategic role in the processes of providing desired behavioural changes in students. Aydın and Sağlam (2012) argue that it is a prerequisite for prospective teachers to develop a sincere interest in the profession and to internalise the requirements of the profession in order to be effective in the performance of the teaching profession. Ünsal (2021) states that teachers are not only knowledge transmitters but also guides who direct the development of students' basic skills such as critical thinking, independent learning and problem solving. Yurduseven et al. (2022) argue that teachers' pedagogical and social skills shape students' psychological well-being as well as their academic performance. Kılıç (2024) analyses the critical effects of transformations in perceptions of the teaching profession on the social status of teachers and trust in the education system. Hendrian and Kurniawati (2024) reveal that teachers' pedagogical competences and skills such as empathy play an important role in increasing students' engagement in learning processes. Similarly, Fabris and Longobardi (2024) state that teachers' individual qualities such as emotional intelligence are a determining factor in increasing students' motivation to learn and strengthening their psychological resilience. In conclusion, the teaching profession has a central role in both supporting individual achievement and ensuring the sustainability of societal development. Promoting the professional development of teachers not only unlocks the individual potential of students, but also accelerates the cultural and social progress of societies.

The teaching profession aims at the holistic development of the individual in the field of physical education and sports. Sallis and McKenzie (1991) state that physical education increases the rate of participation of students in society and enables them to acquire the social skills necessary for this participation. Shephard (1997) also states that physical education has positive effects on physical and mental health and academic success. In this context, physical education and sports teachers have a critical effect on students' acquisition of these skills, experiencing their positive effects and making them a lifestyle, especially considering the intensity of teacher-student communication and the high role modelling habits of students. According to Bailey (2006) and Kirk (2010), physical education and sport teaching emphasises the development in different disciplines as a whole. It makes physical education courses and especially physical education teaching profession very important in developing physical abilities, adopting healthy lifestyles, developing social skills and increasing the quality of life in general.

Physical education teaching is recognised as a critical profession that supports the physical, social and cognitive development of individuals and contributes to the general well-being of societies. Hardman (2008) analyses the opportunities and challenges of physical education teaching in a global context and emphasises the critical role of this profession in educational policies. Ma et al. (2012), by comparing physical education models in China and Western countries, emphasises the pedagogical effectiveness of this profession and its role in the cultural context. Yıldız et al. (2020) argue that physical education teachers promote lifelong

health habits in students and enable the development of basic skills such as discipline, leadership and self-efficacy. The profession not only encourages physical activity but also strengthens the social bonds of individuals as an element that strengthens social solidarity. Mirze and Yılmaz (2022) state that physical education teachers guide students in developing their social interaction skills and keeping them away from harmful habits by directing them to physical activities. In this context, it is pointed out that physical education classes not only contribute to individual welfare, but also enable students to gain self-confidence and establish social bonds. Therefore, it is thought that the profession has a holistic effect on individuals that goes beyond physical health. Araç and Yıldırım (2022) state that individuals who prefer physical education teaching as a professional career have the opportunity to specialise in multidisciplinary fields such as sports science, health and education and have the opportunity to develop skills such as leadership, communication and problem solving. In addition, the potential to constantly interact with young people and make a meaningful difference in their lives makes this profession an important tool not only for individual success but also for social contribution. UNESCO's 2024 report highlights the contribution of physical education teachers in the implementation of quality physical education programmes and draws attention to the impact of this education on lifelong physical activity habits. In conclusion, physical education teaching is a profession that not only improves the physical health of students, but also develops their social skills and self-confidence and contributes to the social and cultural sustainability of societies. Therefore, physical education teaching is considered as a versatile career option that combines individual satisfaction with social benefit and offers individuals the opportunity for professional self-realisation. In this context, determining the level of students' attitudes towards this profession is of great importance for policy makers and teacher training programmes in terms of regulation and development activities. Because it is thought that determining whether students who will choose teaching as a career have positive attitudes towards the profession they choose or what level their attitudes are will have positive effects on professional success and student performance. Existing studies predominantly focus on students' attitudes toward physical education classes and their preferences for sports activities, examining these through various dimensions such as school environment, socioeconomic realities, cultural factors, and educational policies (Zeng et al., 2011). Research on the attitudes of pre-service physical education teachers often explores variables such as gender, grade level, regular participation in physical activities, and parental occupations (Yıldizer et al., 2017). Similarly, tool development studies for measuring attitudes toward coaching professions (Turğut et al., 2018) have contributed significantly to the field. However, these studies largely remain focused on subject-specific attitudes and do not address students' perspectives on particular careers within the field. For instance, research analysing middle school students' attitudes toward physical education and sports, alongside their self-efficacy perceptions, highlights that licensed athletes demonstrate an advantage in self-efficacy-often linked to the attitudes of physical education teachers (Arikan, 2020). In this context, the study on "High School Students' Attitudes toward the Profession of Physical Education and Sports Teaching" aims to address a notable gap in the literature by investigating students' attitudes not only toward physical education as a subject but also toward a specific profession. While it is well-documented that individuals actively engaged in sports or pursuing athletic careers often gravitate toward professional roles in this field, the extent to which physical education and

sports classes influence the career inclinations of students in different secondary education institutions remains unclear. This underscores the necessity for systematic research on students' attitudes toward the profession of physical education and sports teaching, with particular emphasis on variables such as gender, sports participation habits, and school type. A deeper understanding of the factors shaping students' career preferences will not only facilitate the creation of evidence-based policies in the field of physical education and sports but also enhance students' motivation and deepen their professional interests. Furthermore, identifying students' attitudes toward this teaching profession will serve as a strategic resource for guiding prospective educators in their career planning. Consequently, this study seeks to comprehensively examine these attitudes, contributing valuable insights to the academic field. The findings are expected to play a significant role in developing targeted career guidance strategies for physical education and sports educators and in cultivating highly qualified professionals in this domain.

METHOD

Research Design

In this study, which is a quantitative research, the survey model was adopted. The survey model is a research approach that is widely used in social sciences and aims to describe a past or current situation as it is. In this approach, the individual or object that is the subject of the research is tried to be defined within its own conditions and without any intervention (Karasar, 2020).

Participants

While the population of the study consists of secondary education institutions affiliated to Kırıkkale Provincial Directorate of National Education, the sample group consists of students continuing their education in secondary education institutions (Anatolian High School, Anatolian Imam Hatip High School, Sports High School and other high schools) affiliated to the central district of this province. The sample group determined by probabilistic simple random sampling method consists of 630 students from Anatolian High School, 111 students from Anatolian Imam Hatip High School, 340 students from Sports High School and 450 students from other high schools (Fine Arts, Vocational and Technical High School). A total of 1531 students, 565 females and 966 males, participated in the study (Table 1).

Table 1. Distribution of demographic information of the participants

Variable		N	%
Gender	Male	966	63.1
	Female	565	36.9
Sports Participation Status	Yes	971	63.4
	No	560	36.6
Grade Level	9th class	469	30.7
	10th class	342	22.1
	11th class	230	15.5
Income	12th class	490	31.7
	Bad	289	19.0
	Middle	904	58.5
School Type	Good	338	22.5
	Anatolian High School	630	41.7
	Anatolian İmam Hatip High School	111	7.2
	Sports High School	340	22.0
	Others	450	29.1

Ethical Approval

The necessary ethics committee permissions were obtained from Kütahya Dumlupınar University Social Sciences and Humanities Scientific Research and Publication Ethics Committee (on 05.02.2024 with the decision numbered 24).

Data Collection Tool

In the first part of the measurement tool consisting of two parts, there are 5 questions prepared for the demographic information of the students (gender, sports participation status, grade level, income, school type). In the second part, there is the ‘Attitude Scale towards Physical Education Teaching Profession-ASPETP’ developed by Yanık and Çamliyer (2013) in order to examine students' attitudes towards physical education and sports teaching profession. The five-point Likert-type measurement tool consists of 3 sub-dimensions and 18 items in total. The internal consistency coefficient (Cronbach Alpha) of the scale was determined as $\alpha=.94$ for the sub-dimension of Interest in the Profession, $\alpha=.82$ for the sub-dimension of Expectation from the Profession, $\alpha=.85$ for the sub-dimension of Confidence in the Profession and $\alpha=.93$ for the total scale (Yanık & Çamliyer, 2013). The internal consistency coefficient of our study was determined as $\alpha=.87$ for the sub-dimension of Interest in Profession, $\alpha=.86$ for the sub-dimension of Expectation from Profession, $\alpha=.80$ for the sub-dimension of Confidence in Profession and $\alpha=.89$ for the total scale (Table 2).

Table 2. The calculated reliability (Chronbach's Alpha) of attitude towards physical education teaching profession scale

Sub Dimension	Item Number	Chronbach's Alpha (α)
Expectation from Profession	6	.86
Confidence in the Profession	4	.80
Interest in the Profession	8	.87
Total Score	18	.89

Data Collection Process

In order to collect the research data, official secondary education (high school) institutions affiliated to the Provincial Directorate of National Education in the provincial

centre of Kırıkkale in the academic year 2024-2025 were visited and students were asked to fill out the scales (05.03.2024-16.05.2024). Before the scales were filled in, the participants were informed and their voluntary consent was obtained. Those under 18 years of age were asked to have their parents sign the parental approval form. Within the scope of the study, 1635 participants returned the scales. The scales of 104 participants with incomplete and incorrectly completed scales were excluded from the study, and the responses of the remaining 1531 participants were prepared for statistical analyses.

Analysing the Data

The data obtained were transferred to the SPSS 23.0 package programme and Kolmogorov-Smirnov normality test was applied. Although the results did not show normal distribution, it was accepted that the data had a normal distribution since the skewness and kurtosis values were between -2 and +2 (George & Mallery, 2010). Reliability (Chronbach's Alpha), independent sample test (T-test) and one-way ANOVA were applied to the data. Depending on the homogeneity assumption of the data, Welch values were taken into consideration and Tamhane's T2 and Tukey tests were applied as second level tests (Hochberg & Tamhane, 1987; Tukey, 1949). Results were evaluated according to $p < .05$.

Table 3. Skewness and Kurtosis values of attitude towards physical education teaching profession scale

Sub-dimension	Skewness	Kurtosis
Expectation from Profession	-.259	-1.298
Confidence in the Profession	-.414	-1.114
Interest in the Profession	-.259	-1.194

FINDINGS

Within the scope of the aim of our research, the attitudes of the participants towards the profession of physical education and sports teaching were examined according to various variables and the results of the data analysis were presented.

Table 4. T-test results of attitude towards physical education teaching profession scale sub-dimension scores according to gender variable

Sub-dimension	Gender	N	\bar{X}	S	t	p
Expectation from Profession	Male	966	23.19	6.70	4.899	.000**
	Female	565	21.52	5.96		
Confidence in the Profession	Male	966	14.24	4.05	-4.009	.000**
	Female	565	15.16	4.52		
Interest in the Profession	Male	966	29.83	8.60	-.121	.904
	Female	565	29.88	7.12		

** $p < .01$

An analysis of Table 4 reveals a statistically significant difference in the sub-dimensions of expectation from the profession ($t(1529) = 4.899$; $p < .05$) and confidence in the profession ($t(1529) = -4.009$; $p < .05$) based on the gender variable. Examination of the mean scores indicates that male participants exhibit higher average scores in the expectation from the profession sub-dimension compared to female participants. Conversely, in the confidence in the profession sub-dimension, female participants demonstrate superior average scores

compared to their male counterparts. These findings underscore the nuanced influence of gender on professional attitudes and perceptions.

Table 5. T-test results of attitude towards physical education teaching profession scale sub-dimension scores according to sports participation status variable

Sub-dimension	Sports Participation	N	\bar{X}	S	t	p
Expectation from Profession	Yes	971	25.73	4.88	32.003	.000**
	No	560	17.11	5.18		
Confidence in the Profession	Yes	971	16.08	3.37	19.225	.000**
	No	560	11.97	4.36		
Interest in the Profession	Yes	971	33.90	6.32	35.326	.000**
	No	560	22.84	5.64		

**p<.01

An analysis of Table 5 reveals statistically significant differences in the sub-dimensions of expectation from the profession ($t(1529) = 32.003$; $p < .05$), confidence towards the profession ($t(1529) = 19.225$; $p < .05$), and interest in the profession ($t(1529) = 35.326$; $p < .05$) based on the variable of sport participation status. Examination of the mean scores indicates that individuals actively engaged in sports exhibit significantly higher scores across all three sub-dimensions—expectation, confidence, and interest—when compared to those who do not participate in sports. These findings highlight the influence of sports participation in shaping professional attitudes, likely stemming from greater familiarity, motivation, and alignment with the profession’s values.

Table 6. One-Way ANOVA results of attitude towards physical education teaching profession scale sub-dimension scores according to the grade level variable

Sub-dimension	Grade level	N	\bar{X}	S	F	p	Difference
Expectation from Profession	9th class	469	24.50	6.61	22.693	.000*	a-b
	10 th class	342	22.46	5.82			a-c
	11 th class	230	22.16	5.85			a-d
	12 th class	490	21.01	6.64			b-d
Confidence in the Profession	9th class	469	15.89	3.35	28.109	.000*	a-b
	10 th class	342	13.97	4.91			a-c
	11 th class	230	14.09	4.21			a-d
	12 th class	490	13.97	4.28			
Interest in the Profession	9th class	469	32.65	5.48	40.922	.000*	a-b
	10 th class	342	29.30	8.51			a-c
	11 th class	230	29.10	7.71			a-d
	12 th class	490	27.91	9.24			

*p<.01, 9. class (a), 10. class (b), 11. class (c), 12. class (d)

The analysis of Table 6 reveals statistically significant differences across the sub-dimensions of expectation from the profession ($F(3, 742.3) = 22.693$; $p < .05$), confidence towards the profession ($F(3, 701.4) = 28.109$; $p < .05$), and interest in the profession ($F(3, 692.7) = 40.922$; $p < .05$), as determined by the grade level variable. Post-hoc analysis using Tamhane’s T2 indicates a notable distinction between 9th-grade students and their peers at other grade levels. Furthermore, in the sub-dimension of expectation from the profession, significant differences were observed between 10th-grade and 12th-grade students. These findings underscore the impact of grade level on professional attitudes, reflecting developmental, experiential, and academic factors unique to each stage.

Table 7. One-Way ANOVA results of attitude towards physical education teaching profession scale sub-dimension scores according to the income variable

Sub-dimension	Income	N	\bar{X}	S	F	p	Difference
Expectation from Profession	Bad	289	24.02	5.84	15.673	.000**	a-b
	Middle	904	22.57	6.75			a-c
	Good	338	21.36	6.03			
Confidence in the Profession	Bad	289	16.07	4.75	18.808	.000**	a-b
	Middle	904	14.30	3.95			a-c
	Good	338	14.05	4.32			
Interest in the Profession	Bad	289	30.09	7.91	3.307	.037*	
	Middle	904	29.44	7.98			b-c
	Good	338	30.74	8.43			

**p<.01, *p<.05, Bad (a), Middle (b), Good (c)

Upon examination of Table 7, statistically significant differences emerged across the sub-dimensions of expectation from the profession ($F(2, 664.3) = 15.673$; $p < .05$), confidence towards the profession ($F(2, 584.7) = 18.808$; $p < .05$), and interest towards the profession ($F(2, 1530) = 3.307$; $p < .05$) when analyzed by income status. Post-hoc analyses (Tukey, Tamhane's T2) revealed notable distinctions; individuals with poor income status demonstrated significant differences in the expectation sub-dimension when compared to those with moderate and good income statuses. Similarly, the confidence sub-dimension indicated disparities between participants with poor income status and all other groups. Regarding interest towards the profession, differences were identified between participants with moderate and good income statuses. These findings underscore the critical influence of economic background on professional attitudes.

Table 8. One-Way ANOVA results of attitude towards physical education teaching profession scale sub-dimension scores according to the school type variable

Sub-dimension	School type	N	\bar{X}	S	F	p	Difference
Expectation from Profession	Anatolian High School	630	21.19	4.01	1002.1	.000**	
	Anatolian Imam Hatip High School	111	29.18	2.54			a-b. b-d
	Sports High School	340	29.60	1.88			a-c. c-d
	Others	450	17.58	6.39			
Confidence in the Profession	Anatolian High School	630	14.22	3.35	453.6	.000**	
	Anatolian Imam Hatip High School	111	19.53	1.67			d-b
	Sports High School	340	17.62	1.39			d-c
	Others	450	11.56	4.63			
Interest in the Profession	Anatolian High School	630	27.54	4.12	1004.2	.000**	
	Anatolian Imam Hatip High School	111	39.06	2.95			a-b. b-d
	Sports High School	340	37.35	2.17			a-c. c-d
	Others	450	25.15	10.0			

**p<.01, Anatolian High School (a), Anatolian Imam Hatip High School (b), Sports High School (c), Others (d)

The analysis of Table 8 reveals statistically significant differences in the sub-dimensions of expectation from the profession ($F(3, 469.7) = 1002.1$; $p < .05$), confidence towards the profession ($F(3, 489.2) = 453.6$; $p < .05$), and interest towards the profession ($F(3, 464.6) = 1004.2$; $p < .05$) based on the type of school attended. Post-hoc analysis using Tamhane's T2 highlights distinctions in the expectation sub-dimension between students enrolled in Anatolian High Schools and those in Sports High Schools and Anatolian Imam

Hatip High Schools. Similarly, significant differences in the confidence sub-dimension are identified between students in Sports High Schools and Anatolian Imam Hatip High Schools compared to those in other high schools. Furthermore, the interest sub-dimension exhibits disparities between Anatolian High School students and those attending Sports High Schools and Anatolian Imam Hatip High Schools. These findings underscore the influence of school type on professional attitudes and perceptions.

DISCUSSION, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

In the study examining the attitudes of students from various secondary education institutions toward the profession of physical education and sports teaching, a statistically significant difference was identified in the sub-dimensions of expectation from the profession and confidence in the profession, according to the gender variable. However, no statistically significant difference was observed in the sub-dimension of interest in the profession (Table 4). Similarly, Kaleli (2020) highlighted that attitudes toward the teaching profession differ based on gender, with the significant difference favoring female teacher candidates. Asimaki and Vergidis (2013), in their investigation of the gender dimension in career choice, emphasized that an individual's gender is a determining factor in their professional preferences. Richardson and Watt (2006), in their research conducted across three major Australian universities, and Bourdieu (2001) also underscored the influence of gender on attitudes toward the teaching profession. Güllü et al. (2016) demonstrated that secondary school students' attitudes toward physical education and sports lessons are shaped by gender. Likewise, Akandere et al. (2010) highlighted that gender significantly impacts students' attitudes toward physical education courses and their academic achievement motivation. The findings of the present study align with the existing literature, corroborating the role of gender in shaping attitudes toward teaching professions. Social norms based on gender roles in Türkiye may play an important role in explaining these differences. While men's greater association with sports and physical education raises their level of expectation from the profession, women may score higher on confidence in the profession as they feel the need to prove their achievements in this field. Furthermore, focusing on pedagogical skills that support women's professional confidence may deepen this gap. Gender-based inequalities in the education system and perceptions of the status of the physical education profession also contribute to shaping these attitudes. In this context, the balancing role of social and educational policies is of great importance.

A statistically significant difference was observed in the sub-dimensions of expectation from the profession, confidence in the profession, and interest in the profession within the ASPETP, based on the variable of sports participation status. Analysis of mean scores indicates that participants who engage in sports exhibit higher scores across all sub-dimensions compared to those who do not (Table 5). Similarly, Başkonuş (2020) identified significant differences in the sub-dimensions of interest, expectation, and confidence towards the profession among secondary education students, emphasizing that these differences favored

individuals who participated in sportive activities. In alignment with these findings, Pehlivan (2010) reported that individuals actively involved in sports demonstrated more positive attitudes toward the teaching profession compared to non-participants. Gerber et al. (2014) highlighted that participation in physical activity enhances resilience to occupational stress, underscoring its role as a critical strategy for managing stress (Austin et al., 2005). Furthermore, Altun and Güvendi (2019) emphasized that students who engage in sports exhibit significantly higher scores in demonstrating positive behaviors in physical education compared to their non-participating peers. These findings collectively underscore the integral role of sports participation in fostering positive attitudes toward the teaching profession and resilience in professional contexts. In this context, personal experiences and perceptions are at the forefront among the reasons why individuals who do sports in Türkiye show higher expectations, confidence and interest in the profession of physical education and sports teaching. Individuals who engage in sports comprehend the value of the profession better because they personally experience the importance and impact of physical activity. In addition, the identification of individuals involved in sports activities with skills such as physical performance and teamwork can make the profession more attractive. In addition, while participation in sports supports becoming more familiar with sports culture and developing confidence in the profession, the distance of individuals who do not participate in sports may limit their interest in this field.

A statistically significant difference was identified in the sub-dimensions of expectation from the profession, confidence in the profession, and interest in the profession based on the grade level variable. Post-hoc analysis (Tamhane's T2) revealed distinctions between 9th-grade participants and those in the 10th, 11th, and 12th grades. Additionally, a significant difference was observed between 10th and 12th-grade participants (Table 6). Supporting these findings, Özlü et al. (2022) highlighted that attitudes toward the teaching profession vary according to grade level. Similarly, Pektaş and Kamer (2011), in their study with pre-service science teachers, demonstrated significant differences in attitudes based on grade, with first-year students ($\bar{x}=224.01$) scoring higher than fourth-year students ($\bar{x}=211.03$). Altun and Güvendi (2019) posited that as grade level increases, there is a notable improvement in positive behaviors and sportsmanship scores. Akandere et al. (2010) further argued that classroom dynamics shape the motivational climate; however, academic pressures may hinder participation in physical education activities. Conversely, when academic success is associated with physical education, it can deepen students' interest in the subject. These findings collectively underscore the interplay between grade-level progression, academic demands, and professional attitudes. In this study, in the context of Türkiye, grade-level differences in attitudes toward the teaching profession can be attributed to developmental and academic transitions experienced across educational stages. Ninth-grade students, as newcomers to secondary education, often possess high expectations yet lack sufficient awareness of career realities, resulting in elevated scores in the expectation sub-dimension. By the 12th grade, students nearing graduation typically exhibit more defined career objectives, grounded in pragmatism, which may account for their comparatively lower scores in this area when juxtaposed with 10th-grade peers. Variations in confidence levels can be linked to maturity; younger students tend to idealize professions, whereas older students critically assess their

feasibility. Furthermore, the Turkish education system's emphasis on structured career counselling in advanced grades may intensify these distinctions, reflecting the interplay between developmental trajectories and institutional interventions.

Statistically significant differences were identified across the sub-dimensions of expectation from the profession, confidence in the profession, and interest in the profession based on the income status variable. Post-hoc analyses (Tukey, Tamhane's T2) revealed notable disparities, particularly between individuals with low income levels and those with moderate or good income levels in the expectation sub-dimension. Similarly, differences were observed between participants with moderate and good economic status. In terms of confidence in the profession, individuals from lower economic backgrounds exhibited significant variation compared to other economic groups. Additionally, the interest sub-dimension showed differences between participants with moderate and good income levels. These findings highlight the profound impact of economic conditions on professional attitudes and perceptions. The observed differences may be attributed to the limited career options available to individuals with lower economic status. Supporting this, Singh (2012) identified differences in students' attitudes toward professions based on economic class. Akbaşı et al. (2019) reported that high school students in lower income groups exhibited more positive attitudes toward the teaching profession than their higher-income peers. Similarly, Yanık (2017) found that students' attitudes toward the profession of physical education and sports teaching varied based on perceived family income status. These findings collectively emphasize the importance of socioeconomic factors in shaping professional attitudes and career preferences. In the context of Türkiye, economic disparities significantly influence professional attitudes toward teaching professions. Individuals with lower income levels often perceive teaching as a secure and attainable career due to its perceived stability, leading to heightened expectations. However, socio-economic challenges, such as limited access to educational resources, may undermine their confidence in the profession compared to higher-income groups. Participants from higher economic strata, with access to broader career opportunities, often exhibit diminished interest in teaching, prioritizing professions deemed more lucrative or prestigious. Middle-income individuals, positioned between aspiration and pragmatism, demonstrate moderate confidence and interest. These findings emphasize the critical role of socio-economic factors in shaping perceptions of career viability, professional trust, and aspirations.

A statistically significant difference was observed in the sub-dimensions of expectation from the profession, confidence in the profession, and interest in the profession based on the secondary education (high school) variable. Post-hoc analysis (Tamhane's T2) indicated that participants from Anatolian High Schools differed significantly from those attending Sports High Schools and Imam Hatip High Schools in the sub-dimension of expectation from the profession. Similarly, in the sub-dimension of confidence in the profession, notable differences were found between students in other high schools and those in Sports High Schools and Imam Hatip High Schools. Furthermore, in the sub-dimension of interest in the profession, a significant distinction was identified between participants from Anatolian High Schools and those from Sports High Schools and Anatolian Imam Hatip High Schools (Table 8). These findings are consistent with previous research. Pektaş and Kamer (2011) emphasized that attitudes toward the teaching profession vary according to the type of high school attended.

Yanık (2017) similarly noted that students' attitudes toward the profession of physical education and sports teaching differ based on their high school type. Additionally, Üzüm and Alıncak (2022) highlighted the effect of high school type on attitudes toward the teaching profession. These results align with the existing literature, reinforcing the impact of school type on professional attitudes and career orientations. In the context of Türkiye, significant differences in professional attitudes toward teaching based on school type can be ascribed to variations in institutional priorities and socio-cultural influences. Sports High Schools, emphasizing physical education, cultivate stronger alignment with the teaching profession, fostering elevated expectations, confidence, and interest among students. Conversely, Anatolian High Schools, with their focus on academic achievement, may divert student aspirations toward disciplines perceived as more academically prestigious. Similarly, Imam Hatip High Schools, rooted in religious and moral education, likely emphasize professions associated with social service and community impact, including teaching, thereby enhancing students' confidence and interest in the field. These models emphasise the critical role of curriculum and cultural orientation in shaping career perceptions and aspirations within Turkey's educational framework. Thus, it is possible to say that different types of schools in Turkey have significant effects on students' vocational orientations and career perceptions. Each school type, with its unique curriculum structure and pedagogical approach, directs students' individual preferences, social expectations and career choices. In this process, the interaction of educational institutions with social expectations emerges as a strong factor shaping students' occupational orientations. In particular, while these institutions fulfil the function of shaping individuals' perceptions of their social roles, they also provide guidance to develop students' vocational goals in line with their individual abilities and interests. The impact of educational institutions is not limited to the transfer of academic knowledge, but also contributes to the shaping of cultural values, social norms and ethical priorities. Therefore, the diversity offered by different types of schools in Turkey's education system plays a fundamental role in shaping vocational orientations and strengthening career perceptions.

As a result, the attitudes of secondary school students towards physical education and sports teaching profession differ according to various variables. Female students have higher attitudes towards the profession and expectations from the profession than male students. It is thought that doing sports affects the attitude towards the profession of physical education and sports teaching, so directing students who want to do physical education and sports teaching profession to sports activities will positively affect students' attitudes towards the profession. Yetim and Göktaş (2000) state that physical education and sports teachers have multifaceted roles in directing young people to sports, developing social values, health culture and community participation. Physical education teachers shape the attitudes and behaviours of young individuals towards sports and physical activities. In addition, physical education teachers are very important in raising a generation that values physical activity and its benefits and in influencing their general development and welfare. In this study, it was also found that increasing metacognitive thinking skills with the increase in grade level affects the attitude towards the profession, so directing students to their favourite professions in line with their knowledge, skills and interests will enable them to develop positive attitudes towards the professions they will perform in the future. Secondary education (high school) institutions

where students study also affect attitudes towards the teaching profession, so students should be directed to secondary education institutions where they can develop positive attitudes towards the profession they will prefer at the point of their career. Based on the results of the research, the following suggestions were made.

- ✓ Enrich the content of physical education courses to emphasize the social, physical, and psychological benefits of sports while increasing interest in the teaching profession. Including career-oriented activities can foster professional awareness among students.
- ✓ Expand the variety and accessibility of sports clubs in schools to enable students aspiring to pursue physical education teaching to actively participate in different athletic disciplines.
- ✓ Embed career guidance programs into school curricula to develop students' professional attitudes toward physical education teaching. These programs should help students discover their talents and interests while emphasizing the importance of the profession.
- ✓ Develop educational policies that address gender differences in professional expectations and motivation. Initiatives aimed at boosting female students' confidence and supporting male students' professional expectations can help achieve equity in attitudes.
- ✓ Organize seminars, career days, and events featuring success stories and role models to inspire students and shape a positive perception of the teaching profession in physical education.
- ✓ Establish mentoring programs between current physical education teachers and students to enable direct interaction and provide students with accurate insights into the profession.
- ✓ Offering students greater access to internships and practical training experiences, direct exposure to professional responsibilities, can significantly increase interest in teaching.
- ✓ Strengthen collaborations between universities and secondary schools to create opportunities for observation, internships, and practical training, bridging the gap between academic learning and professional practice.
- ✓ Introduce workshops focused on analytical thinking, problem-solving, and pedagogical skills to prepare students for professional roles in physical education teaching.
- ✓ Organize events that highlight the societal contributions and individual development benefits of the teaching profession. Such campaigns can positively influence students' attitudes toward the profession.

Limitations

- ✓ The regional scope of this research restricts the generalizability of its findings, limiting their applicability to other regions and diverse student populations.
- ✓ As the study exclusively focuses on individuals enrolled in formal educational institutions, it fails to address the attitudes of those outside the schooling system, resulting in a gap in representational data.
- ✓ The reliance on self-reported measures introduces a potential bias towards social desirability, which may hinder the accurate reflection of participants' genuine attitudes.

- ✓ The absence of detailed consideration of socio-cultural dynamics, family structures, and socio-economic variables may impede the comprehensive explanation of underlying factors influencing attitudes.
- ✓ The omission of variables such as the type, frequency, and quality of sports activities limits the ability to conduct an in-depth analysis of the impact of sports participation on professional attitudes.

These limitations highlight the need for future research to adopt a broader and multidimensional approach to yield more comprehensive and generalizable insights.

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