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# An Investigation of the Sports Awareness Levels of Individuals Participating in International Sports Events in Terms of Various Variables: The Case of the Marmara Region

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## ABSTRACT

The objective of this study is to examine whether the level of sports awareness among individuals participating in international sports events in the Marmara Region varies according to demographic variables. The population of the study consists of individuals participating in sports events in the Marmara Region, while the sample consists of a total of 441 participants selected from the provinces of Istanbul, Kocaeli, Sakarya, Yalova, Bursa, and Edirne. The "Sports Awareness Scale", a tool developed by Uyar and Sunay (2020), was utilised as the primary data collection instrument. The research design employed a descriptive survey model. Following the acquisition of ethical committee approval, the administration of the questionnaires was conducted by the researcher(s) in person within the designated activity areas, in accordance with the stipulations of the research permit. All data were initially coded on paper, subsequently transferred to the SPSS Statistical 25.0 program, and then subjected to data editing. The analysis of the data was conducted using a range of statistical methods, including independent samples T-test, one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA), and post-hoc analyses for differences. All analyses were evaluated at a significance level of $p<.05$. Consequently, it was determined that the general sports awareness scores of the participants in the study were high in terms of the Sports Awareness Scale.

***Keywords:*** Sports awareness, Event, Recreation, International Sports Events

## INTRODUCTION

When it first emerged, sport was an activity designed to make use of free time. Over time, this purpose has changed; sport has become a tool that strengthens social interaction by drawing in individuals from different segments of society (Eskiler et al., 2022). Initially based on entertainment and recreation, sporting activities began to be practised in ways that were not limited to professional standards (Yıldız, 2025). In this context, sport is considered one of the most comprehensive, diverse and highly engaging aspects of recreation (Uzun and Karataş, 2022). Sports and recreation appear as two complementary concepts.These two concepts mutually nourish and transform each other (Yalçın et al., 2022).

Sports has played a significant role in shaping the concept of recreation today, along with its direct contribution to it. While sport provides an important arena for meeting individuals' recreational needs (Özant et al., 2025), recreation also plays a decisive role in the spread of sport in society and in achieving sporting success (Bahadır and Kaya, 2016). Sport generally fulfils this function through initiatives such as "sport for all" or "sport for a healthy life" (Malloy et al., 2003). In fact, all sports have recreational characteristics at a fundamental level; through their game formats, they are positioned as leisure activities for both players and spectators (Henderson, 2004). Players and spectators approach these activities with a serious attitude; sport is perceived not only as entertainment but also as an indicator of social identity and belonging (Ece et al., 2022).

Sporting activities are one of the important elements that contribute to an individual's psychological well-being. These activities provide individuals with an enjoyable environment and thus encourage socialisation. Sporting environments facilitate sharing and the development of positive emotions among individuals (Eime et al., 2013). Social integration, considered one of the important contributions of sport, enables individuals to accept or fulfil their social roles while also adding meaning to life (Spaaij, 2012). Social relationships developed through social integration act as a protective barrier against stress and support the development of positive health behaviours (Hoye et al., 2015).

International sporting events are multifaceted organisations in modern societies that go beyond sporting competition; they stand out for their economic, social, cultural, and political dimensions (Getz, 2012; Gratton & Preuss, 2008). Such events offer various opportunities for host countries and cities, including increased tourism revenues, infrastructure investments, international visibility, and brand value creation (Preuss, 2007; Higham, 1999). Mega events, particularly the Olympic Games and the FIFA World Cup, attract global media attention, thereby strengthening the image of destinations, increasing intercultural interaction, and contributing to social integration (Toohey and Veal, 2007; Weed, 2014; Roche, 2000).

One of the most significant effects of sporting events on individuals is their potential to increase sports awareness. Sports awareness can be defined as a multidimensional concept encompassing individuals' level of knowledge about sport, their attitudes and behavioural tendencies towards sport, and their perception of social benefits (Trail & James, 2001; Ko & Pastore, 2005). Sports awareness can be defined as *the process* whereby *individuals and society learn about the individual and social benefits of sport, relate these benefits to other areas of life, put them into practice, and raise awareness among those around them* (Çalgan and İnan, 2023). Today, sports awareness has led to the adoption and popularisation of sport by wider audiences due to the impact of globalisation (Carty et al., 2021; Gurbuz et al, 2024).

The proliferation of mass media and the increase in screen time have led to the spread of sedentary lifestyles (Singh et al., 2024). This situation has led to the importance of sport coming to the fore and an increased need for the public to be informed about sport (den Braver et al., 2022). This awareness encourages individuals to engage in sport both actively and passively, paving the way for the adoption of healthy lifestyles, the strengthening of social capital, and increased social solidarity (Misener & Mason, 2006; Kaplanidou & Vogt, 2007).

The Marmara Region, Turkey's most socio-economically and culturally diverse region, offers a critical research area for examining the effects of international sporting events on individuals' levels of awareness. The region hosts international organisations in many cities, primarily Istanbul; this directly affects both the local population's perspective on sport and the region's sporting culture (Grix & Houlihan, 2014; İnce & Yıldıran, 2019). Therefore, the example of the Marmara Region serves as an important laboratory for understanding the reflections of international sporting events on participants.

The primary objective of this study is to examine the sports awareness levels of individuals participating in international events and recreational activities in terms of various variables.

## METHOD

### Research Model

Using a descriptive survey model, this study aimed to examine whether the levels of sports awareness among individuals participating in international sporting events in the Marmara Region differed according to demographic variables. The descriptive survey model is a type of research that aims to present the current situation as it is and is conducted using data collection tools such as observation or questionnaires on a sample or samples selected from a specific population (Karasar, 2022). As this model is conducted using data collection tools such as scales and questionnaires, it provides a suitable framework for examining the levels of sports awareness among participants in international sporting events in terms of various demographic variables

### Research Population and Sample

The population of the study consists of individuals participating in international sporting events in the Marmara Region. The sample of the study is limited to 441 individuals participating in international sporting events in the Marmara Region (İstanbul, Kocaeli, Sakarya, Yalova, Bursa, Edirne)

The study population consists of individuals participating in international sporting events in the Marmara Region. The study sample is limited to 441 individuals participating in international sporting events in the Marmara Region (Istanbul, Kocaeli, Sakarya, Yalova, Bursa, Edirne).In our study, the convenience sampling model was used.

The reason why the study sample group consists of the above-mentioned provinces is that provinces such as Sakarya, Bursa, and Istanbul, which have been selected as European sports cities, organize international-level sporting events, and because the Turkish National Olympic Committee has Olympic athlete training centers in the Marmara Region (TOHM).

### Data Collection Tool

***Sports Awareness Scale:*** In addition to the personal information form prepared by the researcher(s) to determine the demographic characteristics of the students, the "Sports Awareness Scale" developed by Uyar and Sunay (2020) was used to determine the participants' level of sports awareness. The scale is a 5-point Likert scale consisting of 30 items and two sub-dimensions.

The "Sports Knowledge and Discernment" dimension comprises 21 items (items 1-21), while the "Social and Individual Benefits" dimension comprises 9 items (items 22-30). The lowest possible score on the scale is 30, and the highest possible score is 150. As the score increases, the level

of sports awareness also increases. The score ranges are classified as follows: 30-53 points "not aware at all", 54-77 points "not aware", 78-102 points "moderately aware", 103-126 points "aware".

### Data Collection and Analysis

After obtaining ethical committee approval, the questionnaire was administered face-to-face by the researcher(s) in the activity areas within the scope of the research permit. All participants were informed about the subject and purpose of the research, and it was made clear that participation was voluntary. All data were coded on paper, transferred to the SPSS Statistical 25.0 programme, and data editing was performed. A normality test was performed to determine which statistical analyses would be applied to the data, and the results were found to be within the ±2 range. This indicates that the data are normally distributed. Accordingly, the T-test for independent samples, one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA), and post-hoc analyses of differences were used to determine the relationship between demographic variables and levels of sports awareness. All analyses were evaluated at a significance level of $p<.05$.

**Table 1.** Results related to measurement tools

| Scales | Skewness | Kappa | Cronbach's Alpha |
|---|---|---|---|
| Sports Knowledge and Knowledge Discrimination | -1.527 | 1.915 | 0.96 |
| Social and Individual Benefit | -1.497 | 1.989 | 0.94 |
| Sports Awareness Scale | -1.559 | 1.897 | 0.97 |

Table 1 indicates that the sports awareness measurement results fall within the ±2 limits and that these results exhibit normal distribution characteristics (George and Mallery, 2019). Furthermore, the reliability coefficient (Cronbach Alpha) of the data obtained from the Sports Awareness Scale was calculated in the present study. In this context, the Cronbach Alpha values for the "Sports Knowledge and Discernment" sub-dimension are as follows: 0.96; Cronbach Alpha values for the "Social and Individual Benefit" sub-dimension were 0.94; The Cronbach Alpha value for the Sports Awareness Scale was found to be 0.97, indicating that the data obtained from the scale is highly reliable (Büyüköztürk, 2020).

## FINDINGS

Findings Related to Demographic Characteristics

**Table 2.** Demographic Characteristics of Participants in the Study by Gender

| Gender | N | Mean $\bar{x}$ | Standard Deviation σ | Min-Max |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Female** | 243 | 31.31 | 5.884 | 21-48 |
| **Male** | 198 | 31.40 | 5.962 | 21-45 |

According to the data in Table 2, of the 441 participants in the study, 243 were female and 198 were male. The average age of participants was calculated as 31.31 (SD=5.884) for women and 31.40 (SD=5.962) for men. The minimum and maximum age range was 21–48 for female participants and 21–45 for male participants. These findings reveal that the average ages of female and male participants were quite close and that there was no significant gender-based difference in age distribution.

**Table 3.** Demographic Characteristics of Participants in the Study

| | RELATIONSHIP WITH SPORT | Frequency (F) | Percentage (%) |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Male** | No relationship with sport | 28 | 14.1 |
| | Participant | 66 | 33.3 |
| | Spectator | 26 | 13.1 |
| | Both participant and viewer | 78 | 39.4 |
| | Total | 198 | 100.0 |
| **Female** | I have no connection with sports | 44 | 18.1 |
| | Participant | 72 | 29.6 |
| | Spectator | 83 | 34.2 |
| | Both participant and viewer | 44 | 18.1 |
| | Total | 243 | 100.0 |
| | **YEAR OF INTEREST IN SPORT** | | |
| **Male** | 1-5 years | 104 | 52.5 |
| | 6-9 years | 61 | 30.8 |
| | 10 years and over | 33 | 16.7 |
| | Total | 198 | 100.0 |
| **Female** | 1-5 years | 111 | 45.7 |
| | 6-9 years | 81 | 33.3 |
| | 10 years and above | 51 | 21.0 |
| | Total | 243 | 100.0 |
| | **FAMILY MEMBERS INVOLVED IN SPORTS** | | |
| **Male** | Yes | 98 | 49 |
| | No | 100 | 50.5 |
| | Total | 198 | 100.0 |
| **Female** | Yes | 123 | 50.6 |
| | No | 120 | 49.4 |
| | Total | 243 | 100.0 |
| | **A MEANS OF STAYING INFORMED ABOUT SPORTS-RELATED DEVELOPMENTS** | | |
| **Male** | Television | 19 | 9.6 |
| | Newspaper-Magazine | 54 | 27.3 |
| | Social Media | 70 | 35.4 |
| | Friends | 51 | 25.8 |
| | Family | 4 | 2.0 |
| | Total | 198 | 100.0 |
| **Women** | Television | 16 | 6.6 |
| | Newspaper-Magazine | 78 | 32.1 |
| | Social Media | 90 | 37.0 |
| | Friends | 53 | 21.8 |
| | Family | 6 | 2.5 |
| | Total | 243 | 100.0 |
| | **AGE GROUP** | | |
| **Male** | 21-30 years old | 140 | 57.6 |
| | 31-39 years old | 72 | 29.6 |
| | 40 years and older | 31 | 12.8 |
| | Total | 243 | 100.0 |
| **Female** | 21-30 years old | 109 | 55.1 |
| | 31-39 years old | 62 | 31.3 |
| | 40 years and older | 27 | 13.6 |
| | Total | 198 | 100 |

Table 3, shows tat male participants were more active in sports than female participants. While 78 (39.4%) of male participants were both participants and spectators, this rate was 44 (34.2%) among female participants. The proportion of female participants with no connection to sport is 44 (18.1%), which is 28 (14.1%) higher than that of males. This indicates that women's level of participation in sport is lower than that of men. When evaluated in terms of the duration of interest in sports, the most intensive group in both genders was found to be between 1–5 years. On the other hand, it is noteworthy that the rate of those who have been interested in sports for 10 years or more is 51 (21.0%) among female participants, which is 33 (16.7%) higher than among male participants. In

terms of the presence of individuals involved in sports in the family, this rate was determined to be 98 (49.5%) in the families of male participants and 123 (50.6%) in the families of female participants. When evaluating the means of staying informed about sports developments, both men (70, or 35.4%) and women (90, or 37.0%) most frequently preferred social media. This was followed by newspapers/magazines and friends, while television and family were the least frequently used sources of information. In terms of age groups, individuals aged 21–30 constitute the vast majority of those interested in sports, with 140 (57.6%) of men and 109 (55.1%) of women. In contrast, interest in sports remains low among participants aged 40 and above in both genders.

## Hypothesis Test Results Regarding Differences in the Study

**Table 4.** Comparison of Participants' Sports Awareness Scores Based on Gender Variable (T-Test Results)

| | Gender | N | Mean $\bar{x}$ | Standard Deviation σ | T | p |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Sports Knowledge and Discernment** | **Women** | 243 | 85.89 | 14.277 | -1,149 | ,251 |
| | **Male** | 198 | 87.37 | 12.469 | | |
| **Social and Individual Benefit** | **Female** | 243 | 36.49 | 6.728 | ,272 | ,786 |
| | **Male** | 198 | 36.32 | 6.333 | | |
| **Sports Awareness Scale** | **Women** | 243 | 122.38 | 20.248 | -,714 | ,475 |
| | **Male** | 198 | 123.70 | 17.875 | | |

When examining the analysis results for the gender variable in Table 4, it appears that the average score for males ($\bar{x}$=87.37) is slightly higher than that for females ($\bar{x}$=85.89) in the sub-dimension of "sports knowledge and distinguishing knowledge". However, this difference among males is not statistically significant (t = -1.149; p = 0.251 > 0.05). In the "social and individual benefit" sub-dimension, the mean score for women ($\bar{x}$=36.49) was very close to the mean score for men ($\bar{x}$=36.32) and was also not statistically significant (t=.272; p=0.786 > 0.05). Although the mean score for men ($\bar{x}$=123.70) was higher than that for women ($\bar{x}$=122.38) on the overall sports awareness scale, this difference was not statistically significant (t=-,714; p= 0.475 > 0.05). Accordingly, in terms of the gender variable, although small differences were observed in the mean scores of female and male participants on the sports knowledge and knowledge discrimination, social and individual benefit, and sports awareness scales, these differences were not statistically significant.

**Table 5.** Comparison of Participants' Sports Awareness Scores Based on the Variable of Family Members Engaged in Sports (T-Test Results)

| | Family Involvement in Sports | N | Mean $\bar{x}$ | Standard Deviation σ | T | p |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Sports Knowledge and Discernment** | Yes | 221 | 86.66 | 13,521 | ,164 | ,870 |
| | No | 220 | 86.45 | 13,511 | | |
| **Social and Individual Benefit** | Yes | 221 | 36.18 | 6,801 | -,759 | ,448 |
| | No | 220 | 36.65 | 6,288 | | |
| **Sports Awareness Scale** | Yes | 221 | 122.84 | 19,487 | -,144 | ,886 |
| | No | 220 | 123.10 | 18,969 | | |

When examining the analysis results for the variable 'engaged in sports' in Table 5, the average 'yes' score ($\bar{x}$=86.66) and the average 'no' score ($\bar{x}$=86.45) for participants in the 'sports knowledge and distinguishing knowledge' sub-dimension were very close and not statistically significant (t=0.164; p=0.870 > 0.05). Similarly, in the "social and individual benefit" dimension, the mean score for "yes" ($\bar{x}$=36.18) was very close to the mean score for "no" ($\bar{x}$=36.65) and was not statistically significant (t=-,759; p= 0.448 > 0.05). In the overall sports awareness scale, the average score for 'no' ($\bar{x}$=123.10) was slightly higher than the average for 'yes' ($\bar{x}$=122.84), but again, this difference was not statistically significant (t=-,144; p= 0.886 > 0.05). Accordingly, in terms of the variable of engaging in sports within the family, although small differences were observed in the mean scores for sports knowledge and distinguishing knowledge, social and individual benefits, and the sports awareness scale, these differences were not statistically significant.

**Table 6.** Comparison of Participants' Sports Awareness Scores Regarding the Variable of Being Aware of Sports-Related Developments (ANOVA and Post-Hoc Analysis Results Regarding Differences)

| | SPORTS AWARENESS TOOL | N | Mean $\bar{x}$ | Standard Deviation σ | F | p |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Sports Knowledge and Discrimination of Knowledge** | Television[a] | 35 | 84.71 | 15,085 | ,938 | ,442 |
| | Newspaper-Magazine[b] | 132 | 85.14 | 14,305 | | |
| | Social Media[c] | 160 | 87.46 | 13,144 | | |
| | Friends Circle[d] | 104 | 87.73 | 12,468 | | |

| | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Family [e] | 10 | 84.90 | 12,871 | | |
| **Social and Individual Benefit** | Television[a] | 35 | 35.20 | 7,087 | 1,522 | ,195 |
| | Newspaper-Magazine[b] | 132 | 35.53 | 6,755 | | |
| | Social Media[c] | 160 | 37.16 | 6,267 | | |
| | Social Circle[d] | 104 | 36.82 | 6,356 | | |
| | Family[e] | 10 | 36.40 | 7,516 | | |
| **Sports Awareness Scale** | Television[a] | 35 | 119.91 | 21,630 | 1,184 | ,317 |
| | Newspaper-Magazine[b] | 132 | 120.67 | 20,225 | | |
| | Social Media[c] | 160 | 124.62 | 18,551 | | |
| | Social Circle[d] | 104 | 124.55 | 17,849 | | |
| | Family[e] | 10 | 121.30 | 19,950 | | |

When examining the analysis results for the variable 'means of staying informed about sports developments' in Table 6, the participants' sub-dimension 'sports knowledge and distinguishing information' television score average ($\bar{x}$=84.71), newspaper-magazine score average ($\bar{x}$=85.14), the average social media score ($\bar{x}$=87.46), the average friends circle score ($\bar{x}$=87.73), and the average family score ($\bar{x}$=84.90) were very close and not statistically significant (F=0.938, p=0.442>0.05). In the "social and individual benefit" sub-dimension, the television score average ($\bar{x}$=35.20), newspaper-magazine score average ($\bar{x}$=35.53), social media score average ($\bar{x}$=37.16), peer group score average ($\bar{x}$=36.82), and family score average ($\bar{x}$=36.40) were very close ( ) and were not statistically significant (F=1.522, p=0.195>0.05). Across the "Sports Awareness Scale" as a whole, although small differences were observed in the television average score ($\bar{x}$=119.91), newspaper-magazine average score ($\bar{x}$=120.67), social media average score ($\bar{x}$=124.62), peer group score average ($\bar{x}$=124.55), and family score average ($\bar{x}$=121.30), but these differences are not statistically significant (F= 1.184, p= 0.317> 0.05).

**Table 7.** Comparison of Participants' Sports Awareness Scores in Terms of the Sports Relationship Status Variable (ANOVA and Post-Hoc Analysis Results for Differences)

| | RELATIONSHIP STATUS WITH SPORT | N | Mean $\bar{x}$ | Standard Deviation σ | F | p | Intergroup Difference |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Sports Knowledge and Discernment** | I have no connection to sport[a] | 72 | 83.72 | 15,553 | 3,048 | 0.029 | a-b |
| | Participant [b] | 138 | 89,08 | 11,088 | | | |
| | Spectator [c] | 109 | 85.25 | 14,337 | | | |
| | Both participant and viewer[d] | 122 | 86.54 | 13,588 | | | |
| **Social and Individual Benefit** | I have no connection with sports | 72 | 34.85 | 7,294 | 2,384 | 0.069 | a-b |
| | Participant [b] | 138 | 37.36 | 5,578 | | | |
| | Spectator [c] | 109 | 36.43 | 6,951 | | | |
| | Both participant and viewer[d] | 122 | 36.26 | 6,617 | | | |
| **Sports Awareness Scale** | I have no relationship with sport[a] | 72 | 118.57 | 22,109 | 2.969 | 0.032 | a-b |
| | Participant [b] | 138 | 126.44 | 15,632 | | | |
| | Spectator [c] | 109 | 121.68 | 20,488 | | | |
| | Both participant and viewer[d] | 122 | 122.80 | 19,411 | | | |

When examining the analysis results for the variable related to the relationship with sport in Table 7, statistically significant differences are observed in the " " (sport knowledge and knowledge discrimination ), " " (social and individual benefit ), and " " (Sport Awareness Scale) across the board ( ). (F= 3.048; 2.384; 2.969, p< 0.05). Accordingly, in the "sports knowledge and knowledge discrimination" sub-dimension ( ), the mean score for "no relationship with sports" ($\bar{x}$ = 83.72) is lower than the mean score for participants ($\bar{x}$ = 89.08). In the "social and individual benefit" sub-dimension, the mean score for "no relationship with sport" ($\bar{x}$ = 34.85) is lower than the mean score for participants ($\bar{x}$ = 37.36). Overall, the mean score for "I have no relationship with sport" on the "Sports Awareness Scale" ($\bar{x}$ = 118.57) is lower than the participant mean score ($\bar{x}$ = 126.44).

**Table 8.** Comparison of Participants' Sports Awareness Scores in Terms of Years of Interest in Sports (ANOVA and Post-Hoc Analysis Results for Differences)

| | YEAR OF INTEREST IN SPORT | N | Mean $\bar{x}$ | Standard Deviation σ | F | p | Intergroup Difference |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Sports Knowledge and Discernment** | 1-5 years old[a] | 215 | 82.83 | 15,589 | 18,687 | ,000 | a-b<br>a-c |
| | 6-9 years [b] | 142 | 88.99 | 9,725 | | | |
| | 10 years and over [c] | 84 | 91.99 | 10,154 | | | |
| **Social and Individual Benefit** | 1-5 years [a] | 215 | 34.78 | 7,249 | 14,798 | ,000 | a-b<br>a-c |
| | 6-9 years [b] | 142 | 37.54 | 5,255 | | | |
| | 10 years and over [c] | 84 | 38.70 | 5.518 | | | |
| **Sports Awareness Scale** | 1-5 years [a] | 215 | 117.61 | 22,070 | 19,036 | ,000 | a-b<br>a-c |
| | 6-9 years [b] | 142 | 126.53 | 13,916 | | | |
| | 10 years and over [c] | 84 | 130.69 | 14,655 | | | |

When examining the analysis results for the variable of years of interest in sport in Table 8, statistically significant differences are observed in "sport knowledge and knowledge discrimination", "social and individual benefit" and the "Sport Awareness Scale" overall (F= 18.687; 14.798; 19.036, p < 0.05).

Accordingly, in the "sports knowledge and knowledge discrimination" sub-dimension , the mean score for 1 to 5 years ($\bar{x}$ = 82.83) is lower than the mean score for 6 to 9 years ($\bar{x}$ = 88.99). Similarly, the mean score for 1 to 5 years ($\bar{x}$ = 82.83) is lower than the mean score for 10 years and above ($\bar{x}$ = 91.99). In the "social and individual benefit" sub-dimension, the average score for 1 to 5 years ($\bar{x}$ = 34.78) is lower than the average score for 6 to 9 years ($\bar{x}$ = 37.54). Again, the mean score for 1 to 5 years ($\bar{x}$ = 34.78) is lower than the mean score for 10 years and above ($\bar{x}$ = 38.70). Across the entire Sports Awareness Scale, the average score for 1 to 5 years ($\bar{x}$ = 117.61) is lower than the average score for 6 to 9 years ($\bar{x}$ = 126.53). Again, the mean score for 1 to 5 years ($\bar{x}$ = 117.61) is lower than the mean score for 10 years and above ($\bar{x}$ = 130.69).

**Table 9.** Comparison of Participants' Sports Awareness Scores According to Age Group Variable (ANOVA and Post-Hoc Analysis Results for Differences)

| | AGE GROUP | N | Average $\bar{x}$ | Standard Deviation σ | F | p | Intergroup Difference |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Sports Knowledge and Discernment** | 21-30 years old[a] | 249 | 85.22 | 14,054 | 13,134 | ,000 | a-c<br>b-c |
| | 31-39 years old [b] | 134 | 85.48 | 13,323 | | | |
| | 40 years and older [c] | 58 | 94.79 | 7,343 | | | |
| **Social and Individual Benefit** | 21-30 years old [a] | 249 | 35.61 | 6,774 | 15,611 | ,000 | a-c<br>b-c |
| | 31-39 years old [b] | 134 | 36.04 | 6,541 | | | |
| | 40 years and older [c] | 58 | 40.72 | 3,065 | | | |
| **Sports Awareness Scale** | 21-30 years old [a] | 249 | 120.83 | 19,996 | 15.221 | ,000 | a-c<br>b-c |
| | 31-39 years old [b] | 134 | 121.52 | 18,983 | | | |
| | 40 years and older [c] | 58 | 135.52 | 9,095 | | | |

When examining the analysis results for the age group variable in Table 9, statistically significant differences are observed in "sports knowledge and knowledge discrimination," "social and individual benefit," and the "Sports Awareness Scale" overall (F= 13.134; 15.611; 15.221, p< 0.05). Accordingly, in the sub-dimension of "sports knowledge and distinguishing knowledge" ( ), the mean score for those aged 21 to 30 ( ) ($\bar{x}$ = 85.22) is lower than that for those aged 40 and over ( ) ($\bar{x}$ = 94.79). Similarly, the average score for those aged 31 to 39 ($\bar{x}$ = 85.48) is lower than the average score for those aged 40 and above ($\bar{x}$ = 94.79). In the "social and individual benefit" sub-dimension, the average score for those aged 21 to 30 ($\bar{x}$ = 35.61) is lower than the average score for those aged 40 and above ($\bar{x}$ = 40.72). Similarly, the mean score for those aged 31 to 39 ($\bar{x}$ = 36.04) is lower than the mean score for those aged 40 and above ($\bar{x}$ = 40.72). Across the entire "Sports Awareness Scale", the average score for those aged 21 to 30 ($\bar{x}$ = 120.83) is lower than the average score for those aged 40 and above ($\bar{x}$ = 135.52). Similarly, the mean score for those aged 31 to 39 ($\bar{x}$ = 121.52) is lower than the mean score for those aged 40 and above ($\bar{x}$ = 135.52).

## DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

The findings obtained in our study have been discussed in light of existing academic research.

It has been reported that there are minor differences in the sub-dimensions and overall scale mean scores according to the gender variable, but these differences are not statistically significant. This result suggests that gender is not a determining variable in terms of "sports awareness" regarding participation in international sporting events; in this respect, it can be said that women and men have similar levels of sports awareness towards such events.

In terms of the gender variable, studies conducted on university students regarding sports awareness in the literature (Smith and Green, 2018; Demir and Aycan, 2018; Karakaya et al., 2020) determined that gender has no decisive effect on sports awareness; Yıldız (2021) revealed that perceptions of the social and individual benefits of sports are similar regardless of gender. In his research on the effect of gender and the specificity of sport on performance, Mocanu (2022) examined the effect of gender on different sports and reported that gender does not create a significant difference in sports awareness and that this situation may be more related to individuals' personal experiences.

It was reported that the mean scores across the subscales and the scale as a whole were very close or showed minor differences based on the variable of engaging in sport, but these differences were not statistically significant. This result suggests that participating in sports within the family is not a decisive variable in terms of "sports awareness" regarding participation in international sporting events; in this respect, it can be said that those who do not participate in sports have a similar level of sports awareness towards such events. The literature emphasises that sports awareness is not solely dependent on the sports participation status of family members, but is rather shaped by the individual's own sports experiences, participation motivations, and environmental factors. For example, Demir and Aycan (2018) state that the level of sports awareness is related to the frequency of individual participation rather than the family, while Karakaya et al. (2020) state that the family's influence on participation in sporting events is indirect and that the main determinants are the individual's personal preferences and interaction with sports culture. In their study on intergenerational sports influence (parent-child relationship), Deng et al. (2022) reported that parents' participation in sports did not have a sufficient impact on their children. The literature also contains research findings suggesting that family structure and number of siblings may influence individuals' motivation and awareness regarding participation in sports. Arslan and Güllü (2017) stated that individuals in large families are more likely to be directed towards sports, while Koca and Demirhan (2018) reported that siblings participating in sports together strengthened social benefits and awareness levels in individuals. In their qualitative study on role modelling in siblings' participation in sports, Osai et al. (2020) reported that younger siblings are drawn to sports by following the example of their older siblings and that this affects their level of awareness of sports. Similarly, Yıldırım (2021) emphasised that family interaction and siblings sharing their sports experiences contribute to awareness development. Therefore, the results obtained in this study reveal that sports awareness can develop not only through individual efforts but also through family dynamics, sibling relationships, and shared sports experiences. This supports the notion that they are interconnected.

According to the variable of being aware of sports-related developments, the mean scores in all categories of the sub-dimension "sports knowledge and distinguishing information" were very close. Similarly, the mean scores in all categories of the sub-dimension "social and individual benefits" were very close. Looking at the scale as a whole, small differences were observed in the mean scores across all categories, but these were not statistically significant. This result suggests that tools for staying informed about sports developments are not a decisive variable in terms of "sports awareness" regarding participation in international sporting events. Similar results are found in the literature on the subject. For example, Demir and Aycan (2018) reported that the platforms used to follow sports-related information are not directly decisive for awareness, which is more related to personal interest and participation levels. Therefore, In light of the findings of the research, it appears that sports awareness is shaped by participants' level of knowledge, their possession of sports culture, and their individual skills.

Statistically significant differences were reported across sub-dimensions and the scale as a whole according to the variable of relationship status with sport. In particular, the mean scores for 'no relationship with sport' were lower than the participants' mean scores across sub-dimensions and the scale as a whole. This result suggests that having an active relationship with sport may increase the level of sports awareness. When evaluated in terms of participation in international sporting events, this indicates that participants who play an active role in sporting events tend to show more interest in such events, while participants who have no relationship with sport may have weaker motivations to participate in such sporting events . Karakaya et al. (2020) emphasise that regular exercise habits have a more significant impact on awareness than the source from which individuals follow sports-related developments. Furthermore, Yıldırım (2021) and Wei et al. (2025) report that following sports-related information through media, social networks, or face-to-face sources does not have a decisive effect on sports awareness, and that awareness can primarily develop through individual experiences and practices.

Statistically significant differences were reported across sub-dimensions and scales according to the variable of years of interest in sport. In particular, participants with 1 to 5 years of interest in sport were found to have lower levels of sports

knowledge and knowledge discrimination, social and individual benefits related to sport, and sports awareness compared to categories with longer histories of interest in sport. Therefore, it can be said that participants who have been interested in sport for longer periods of time, i.e. those with a long-term relationship with sport, have a higher level of awareness and understanding of sport. When this situation is evaluated in terms of participation in international sporting events, it can be concluded that individuals who have been interested in sport for many years are more likely to participate in such events, as their knowledge, awareness and perception of benefits will increase. Oja et al. (2022) reported in their research on the participation and attitudes of adults towards sport in Estonia that individuals with a sporting background, along with the age variable, had higher awareness of sport than those without a sporting background.

Statistically significant differences were reported across sub-dimensions and the scale as a whole according to the age group variable. In particular, it was determined that participants in the younger age groups, namely those aged 21 to 30 and 31 to 39, had lower levels of sports knowledge and knowledge discrimination, social and individual benefits related to sports, and sports awareness. These results indicate that sports knowledge and the ability to distinguish information, social and individual benefits related to sports, and sports awareness increase with age. In particular, the fact that individuals aged 40 and above have a higher level of awareness than middle-aged and younger age groups suggests that sports create a stronger sense of awareness and value in individuals in the long term. When evaluating this situation in terms of participation in international sporting events, it can be interpreted that individuals in older age groups perceive sport not only as an activity but also as a meaningful value in terms of cultural, social, and individual aspects of recreational activities, and have made it a part of their lives. The literature highlights that the age variable is related to sports awareness and the individual and social benefits of sport. Koca and Demirhan (2018) emphasise that age can be a factor that increases awareness in relation to sports participation, while Arslan and Güllü (2017) state that individuals place greater importance on the health and social aspects of sports, especially as they age. Regarding this topic, Yıldırım (2020) stated that younger age groups establish a more competition and entertainment-oriented relationship with sport, while in older age groups, the benefits and awareness dimensions of sport come to the fore. Füzéki et al. (2024) concluded in their research conducted in the UK that individuals in the 35-49 age group show a parallelism between age and their level of awareness of sports activities. This situation may be related to social environment factors, role modelling, cognitive maturation, and social environment effects. Therefore, the findings of this study show that sports awareness is not only related to individual experiences but also to life experiences that develop with age, health awareness, and the perception of social participation.

When the research findings obtained within the scope of this study, which examined the levels of sports awareness of individuals participating in international sporting events in the Marmara Region in terms of different variables, are evaluated in general, it reveals that sports awareness is shaped by individual experiences and participation levels, regardless of gender, along with age and family dynamics. The results obtained in the study emphasize that participation in activities, sports experience, family, and social environment play an important role in sports awareness.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

This study examined the levels of sports awareness among individuals participating in international sporting events in the Marmara Region of Turkey in terms of different variables. The findings reveal the relationships between sports awareness and various demographic and family factors. The results obtained within the scope of the research will guide future studies. In this sense, researchers/individuals and institutions involved in future studies should adopt a holistic approach in different areas to increase sports awareness. In this context, cooperation with educational institutions can ensure the development of sports awareness among younger generations. The expansion of volunteer systems in international events can contribute to making sport a part of young people's lives, while also strengthening cultural interaction. Furthermore, creating media campaigns for sport-related events can pave the way for communicating the social, cultural, and health dimensions of sport to wider audiences. This can raise awareness about the increasing value of sport and such sporting events in society as a whole. It is important for local authorities to approach sporting events not only from an economic perspective, but also in terms of their cultural and social benefits. In addition to all this, the joint action of all stakeholders in sport within the scope of common projects will increase the impact of awareness-raising efforts and contribute to the stronger acceptance of sport in society.

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The authors contributed equally to this work.

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**Institutional Review Board Statement**

The research was approved on 25 April 2025 by the Scientific Research and Publication Ethics Committee of Mardin Artuklu University (Decision number: 2025/5).

**Informed Consent Statement**

Informed consent was obtained from all subjects involved in this study.

**Conflicts of Interest**

The authors unequivocally assert that this research was undertaken while devoid of any commercial or financial affiliations that might be perceived as potential conflicts of interest.

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