

## **The Investigation of the Relationship Between Digital Addiction and Sportsmanship Behaviors of Team and Individual Athletes**

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### **Abstract**

The aim of this study is to examine the relationship between digital addictions and sportsmanship behaviors of team and individual athletes. The sample population of the study consists of a total of 419 competitive athletes in team (n=216) and individual (n=203) sports, selected by simple random sampling method in the 2024-2025 and 2025-2026 seasons. “Personal Information Form”, “Digital Addiction Scale (DAS)” and “Sportsmanship Behavior Scale (SBS)” were used as data collection tools in the study. An independent sample t-test was used for pairwise comparisons, and one-way analysis of variance and the Tukey HSD test were used for multiple comparisons for the scores obtained from the scale. Statistically significant differences were found in the mean scores of “DAS” and “SBS” of the research group in gender and age variables ( $p<0.05$ ). On the other hand, a significant correlation was found between “DAS” and “SBS” of the athletes ( $p<0.05$ ). In this context, it was determined that as the digital addiction levels of athletes increased, their sportsmanship behaviors decreased accordingly.

**Keywords:** Team and individual athletes, Digital addiction, Sportsmanship behavior

## Introduction

Nowdays, the widespread integration of digital technologies into all areas of life brings about an inevitable process of transformation for all individuals, including athletes. Digital addiction, defined by the uncontrolled and excessive use of smartphones, social media platforms, and online games, has critical effects on the cognitive and emotional capital of athletes. This not only shapes focus, motivation, and social interactions but also has the potential to redefine sports ethics and the values of sportsmanship that underpin professional behavior. As a matter of fact, the distraction caused by digital addiction, the search for instant gratification, and the tendency to distance from reality create a risk profile that can directly complicate the display of sportsmanship behaviors such as respect for the opponent, sportsmanship, sincere adherence to the rules, and meeting victory/defeat with the same maturity (Sukys et al., 2021).

Digitalization, which has become an indispensable part of human life, has an internet-based and modular structure (Allcott et al., 2022; Dresch-Langley and Hutt, 2022). This structure has transformed existing understandings of digitalization by appealing to all age groups and brought the concept of digital addiction to the agenda (Meng et al., 2022; Hawi et al., 2019). Digital addiction is defined as a type of addiction that occurs as a result of excessive and uncontrolled use of digital technologies and can negatively affect an individual's social, academic, and professional life (Christakis, 2019). Although it is not possible to completely eliminate digital materials from life today, conscious and balanced use plays an important role in reducing the risk of digital addiction (Akyol & Mamak, 2022).

The concept of sportsmanship has a multidimensional structure that forms the ethical basis of sport and includes universal values such as honesty, justice, respect, courage, generosity, and cooperation (Koç, 2013; Stornes & Bru, 2002; Stornes & Ommundsen, 2004). However, in competitive sports environments in particular, the desire to win can turn into an attitude of “winning at all costs,” which may lead to a departure from sportsmanship values and pave the way for the spread of aggressive behaviors (Yıldırım, 2005; Tanrıverdi, 2012). Hence, sportsmanship stands out as a fundamental component that goes beyond mere on-field behaviors, directly influencing athletes’ character development and ethical decision-making processes (Shields & Bredemeier, 1995).

It is a known fact that team sports develop social skills such as communication skills, mutual assistance, and cooperation in individuals. On the other hand, athletes engaged in individual sports are observed to develop positive character traits such as higher self-confidence, discipline, and willpower (Acar et al., 2023). Therefore, this differentiation of team and individual athletes' behaviors constitutes the focus of our research. In this context, the main purpose of our research is to examine the relationship between digital addiction levels and sportsmanship behaviors in team and individual athletes. The study aims to make a unique contribution to the literature in terms of addressing the phenomenon of digital addiction and sportsmanship values together. It is thought that revealing the possible effects of digital addiction on athletes' ethical decision-making processes, social interactions, and performance-oriented behaviors will help to understand the current problems encountered. Also, it is expected that by identifying possible differences between individual and team athletes, it will enable the development of practical strategies for coaches, sport managers, and sport educators, and these findings are expected to guide the protection and development of sportsmanship values.

## Material and Method

### *Ethical Statement*

Ethics committee permission dated 28.03.2024 and numbered 2024/45 was obtained from Sinop University, Human Research Ethics Committee for this study.

### *Research Model*

Since the research aims to determine the current situation, it was designed with the correlational research design, which is one of the survey model types. Survey models are research approaches that aim to describe a past or present situation as it exists. The subject of the research, whether an individual or an object, is described as it exists within its own conditions. No effort is made to change or influence them in any way. The relational survey model, which is a type of survey model, is a research model that aims to determine the existence and/or degree of change between two or more variables (Karasar, 2009).

### *Population and Sample*

The population of the study consists of athletes actively participating in clubs affiliated with various federations in Turkey. The research sample consists of a total of 419 competitive athletes selected through a simple random sampling method, including 216 team sport athletes (football, volleyball, basketball, handball) and 203 individual sport athletes (boxing, kickboxing, taekwondo, wrestling) affiliated with various clubs under the mentioned federations (Table 1). There are several practical rules in the literature regarding sample size. In the study, the rule that the sample size in scale studies should be a minimum of 5 and a maximum of 20 times each scale item was taken into consideration (Tavşancıl, 2014). Accordingly, in determining the research sample, the digital addiction scale contains 19 items and the sportsmanship behavior scale contains 27 items, totaling 46 items. Considering the requirement of having at least five times as many participants as the number of items, the minimum number of participants for the study was determined to be 230. In order to eliminate possible problems that may be encountered in the research and to increase the reliability of the research, 419 samples were reached in this study.

**Table 1.** Frequency and percentage distributions of demographic characteristics of the participants

	f	%
<b>Gender</b>		
Female	180	43.0
Male	239	57.0
<b>Age</b>		
17-19	207	49.4
20-22	119	28.4
23-25	39	9.3
26-28	21	5.0
29+	33	7.9
<b>Sports age</b>		
0-3	34	8.1
4-7	85	20.3
8-11	127	30.3
12-15	79	18.9
16+	94	22.4
<b>Sports type</b>		

Team Sports	216	51.6
Individual Sports	203	48.4
<b>Sports branch</b>		
Football	53	12.6
Basketball	59	14.1
Handball	51	12.2
Volleyball	52	12.4
Taekwondo	53	12.6
Boxing	50	11.9
Kickboxing	51	12.2
Wrestling	50	11.9
<b>Total</b>	419	100

#### *Data Collection Tools*

Personal Information Form: In the form prepared by the researcher, the athletes were asked to answer questions such as gender, age, sports age, and sports branch.

The Digital Addiction Scale, developed by Kesici and Tunç (2018), consists of 19 items and 5 sub-dimensions: overuse, relapse, interrupting the flow of life, mood, and inability to quit. The total reliability of the scale was .87. In the factors of the scale, it was stated that the reliability was .74 in the overuse factor, .79 in the relapse factor, .76 in the interrupting the flow of life factor, .74 in the mood factor, and .72 in the inability to quit factor. In our current study, the recurrent reliability coefficients were determined as; overuse .78, relapse .81, interrupting the flow of life .83, mood .75, and inability to quit .74. The lowest score that can be obtained in case of a negative response to all items of the scale is 19, while the highest score that can be obtained in case of a positive response is 95.

The Sportsmanship Behavior Scale was developed by Gümüş et al. (2020). The 5-point Likert-type scale contains 27 items and 5 sub-dimensions: rules, deliberate behavior, opponent, approach to the game, and sportsmanship behavior. The Cronbach's alpha reliability coefficient of the scale is .88 for rules, .74 for deliberate behaviors, .81 for opponent, .77 for approach to the game, and .90 for sportsmanship behavior. In this study, the recurrent reliability coefficients were determined as rules .91, deliberate behaviors .82, opponent .75, approach to the game .72, and sportsmanship behavior .89. The scale is scored between 27 and 135. High scores indicate a high level of sportsmanship behavior.

#### *Data Collection*

The questionnaire method was used as a data acquisition tool in the study. The questionnaire prepared by the researcher consists of four sections. The first part of the scales includes information about the purpose and nature of the study. The second section includes the "Personal Information Form," the third section the "Digital Addiction Scale," and the fourth section the "Sportsmanship Behavior Scale." The questionnaire, transferred to the "Google Forms" application, was sent online to competitive athletes via email and social media applications during the 2024–2025 and 2025–2026 season. There was no time limit for responding. There is an option to return on each screen, and participation in the study was ensured with the submit button at the end of the survey. After the sufficient sample size was reached, the questionnaire link was closed to access, and the data set was made ready for statistical analysis.

### Statistical Analysis

Before selecting the statistical tests to be applied, the Kolmogorov–Smirnov normality test was conducted to examine whether the data were normally distributed ( $p > 0.05$ ). An independent sample t-test was used for pairwise comparisons, and one-way analysis of variance and the Tukey HSD test were used for multiple comparisons for the scores obtained from the scale. The relationship between DAS and SBS was analyzed with the Pearson correlation test. The research findings were expressed as percentage (%), mean, and standard deviation, and the differences in all statistical results were considered significant at  $p < 0.05$  level of significance. Data were analyzed using the SPSS 29.0 V. statistical package program.

### Findings

In this section of the study, the results of the research are presented in tables and figures.

**Table 2.** Analyses of the DAS and SBS by participants' gender variable

Sub Dimensions		Gender	n	$\bar{X}$	SD	t	p
DAS	Overuse	Female	180	14.52	3.69	1.030	0.304
		Male	239	14.10	4.47		
	Relapse	Female	180	8.13	2.71	0.584	0.560
		Male	239	7.97	2.91		
	Interrupting the Flow of Life	Female	180	9.39	3.60	-.826	0.410
		Male	239	9.70	3.83		
	Mood	Female	180	10.36	3.20	0.618	0.537
		Male	239	10.15	3.51		
	Inability to quit	Female	180	11.05	2.72	3.622	<b>0.001*</b>
		Male	239	10.01	3.03		
SBS	Rules	Female	180	25.37	4.30	4.306	<b>0.001*</b>
		Male	239	23.16	5.76		
	Deliberate Behaviors	Female	180	19.19	4.16	4.084	<b>0.001*</b>
		Male	239	17.36	4.78		
	Opponent	Female	180	12.33	2.19	2.575	<b>0.011*</b>
		Male	239	11.67	2.90		
	Approach to the game	Female	180	14.82	2.97	2.252	<b>0.025*</b>
		Male	239	14.05	3.77		
	Sportsman Behavior	Female	180	37.19	5.40	3.477	<b>0.001*</b>
		Male	239	34.88	7.56		

\* $p < 0.05$

When Table 2 was analyzed in terms of gender variable, a difference was found only in the “inability to quit” sub-dimension ( $p < 0.05$ ). In this case, the “inability to quit” sub-dimension scores of female athletes were found to be higher than those of male athletes. On the other hand, it was found that the scores of female athletes were statistically higher than the scores of male athletes when the sub-dimension scores of the SBS were analyzed ( $p < 0.05$ ). In summary, female athletes exhibit more sportsmanship behavior compared to male athletes.

**Table 3.** Analyses of the DAS and SBS by participants' age variable

Sub Dimensions		Age	n	$\bar{X}$	SD	F	p	Difference
DAS	Overuse	1) 17-19	207	13.95	3.65	4.507	<b>0.001</b>	1-2 and 1-4
		2) 20-22	119	15.24	4.46			
		3) 23-25	39	13.64	4.52			
		4) 26-28	21	15.95	4.91			
		5) 29+	33	12.61	4.15			
	Relapse	1) 17-19	207	8.04	2.65	1.731	0.142	-

SBS		2) 20-22	119	8.08	2.87	3.958	<b>0.004</b>	1-2.3.4
		3) 23-25	39	7.85	2.95			
		4) 26-28	21	9.33	3.55			
		5) 29+	33	7.30	2.91			
		1) 17-19	207	8.89	3.11			
	Interrupting the Flow of Life	2) 20-22	119	10.16	4.13	1.264	0.283	-
		3) 23-25	39	10.41	4.03			
		4) 26-28	21	11.10	5.02			
		5) 29+	33	9.73	3.89			
		1) 17-19	207	10.17	2.96			
	Mood	2) 20-22	119	10.51	3.56	1.676	0.155	-
		3) 23-25	39	9.90	3.21			
		4) 26-28	21	11.29	4.79			
		5) 29+	33	9.45	4.21			
		1) 17-19	207	10.52	2.73			
	Inability to quit	2) 20-22	119	10.84	2.97	2.094	0.081	-
		3) 23-25	39	9.64	3.72			
		4) 26-28	21	10.05	3.25			
		5) 29+	33	9.91	2.83			
		1) 17-19	207	24.40	5.31			
Rules	2) 20-22	119	23.08	5.70	2.870	<b>0.023</b>	1-4	
	3) 23-25	39	24.21	5.48				
	4) 26-28	21	26.00	3.61				
	5) 29+	33	24.73	3.71				
	1) 17-19	207	17.83	4.64				
Deliberate Behaviors	2) 20-22	119	17.75	4.76	2.189	0.069	-	
	3) 23-25	39	19.36	3.73				
	4) 26-28	21	20.71	4.28				
	5) 29+	33	18.52	4.52				
	1) 17-19	207	11.75	2.61				
Opponent	2) 20-22	119	11.78	2.85	5.343	<b>0.001</b>	1-4.5	
	3) 23-25	39	12.41	2.45				
	4) 26-28	21	13.00	2.19				
	5) 29+	33	12.67	2.20				
	1) 17-19	207	13.92	3.28				
Approach to the game	2) 20-22	119	14.18	3.64	1.671	0.156	-	
	3) 23-25	39	14.97	3.67				
	4) 26-28	21	16.81	3.14				
	5) 29+	33	15.73	2.99				
	1) 17-19	207	35.48	6.88				
Sportsman Behavior	2) 20-22	119	35.72	7.08	36.24	6.11		
	3) 23-25	39	36.18	6.72				
	4) 26-28	21	39.43	4.93				
	5) 29+	33	36.24	6.11				
	1) 17-19	207	36.24	6.11				

\*p<0.05

When Table 3 is analyzed in terms of age variable, a statistical difference was found in the sub-dimensions of the DAS in the sub-dimensions of “overuse and interrupting the flow of life” (p<0.05). On the other hand, significance was observed in the “deliberate behaviors and approach to the game” sub-dimensions of the SBS (p<0.05). In this case, it is seen that participants aged 26-28 and 29+ have higher levels of sportsmanship behaviors.

**Table 4.** Analyses of the DAS and SBS by participants’ sports age variable

Sub Dimensions	Sports age	n	$\bar{X}$	SD	F	p
Overuse	0-3	34	14.09	4.22	0.473	0.756

<b>SBS</b>		4-7	85	14.80	4.34		
		8-11	127	14.02	3.82		
		12-15	79	14.28	4.09		
		16+	94	14.23	4.46		
	<b>Relapse</b>	0-3	34	8.03	2.82	0.634	0.639
		4-7	85	8.35	2.86		
		8-11	127	7.77	2.75		
		12-15	79	8.22	2.81		
	<b>Interrupting the Flow of Life</b>	16+	94	7.98	2.91	0.437	0.782
		0-3	34	9.26	3.83		
		4-7	85	9.49	3.88		
		8-11	127	9.41	3.51		
	<b>Mood</b>	12-15	79	9.52	3.64	0.477	0.752
		16+	94	10.00	3.96		
		0-3	34	10.15	3.30		
		4-7	85	10.33	3.32		
	<b>Inability to quit</b>	8-11	127	10.06	3.15	1.962	0.099
		12-15	79	10.67	3.48		
		16+	94	10.10	3.70		
		0-3	34	10.53	3.13		
<b>Rules</b>	4-7	85	10.58	3.07	0.536	0.710	
	8-11	127	10.07	2.70			
	12-15	79	11.19	2.79			
	16+	94	10.23	3.14			
<b>Deliberate Behaviors</b>	0-3	34	23.44	7.13	1.008	0.403	
	4-7	85	24.26	4.86			
	8-11	127	24.31	4.79			
	12-15	79	23.52	5.82			
<b>Opponent</b>	16+	94	24.45	5.14	0.912	0.457	
	0-3	34	12.00	3.46			
	4-7	85	11.47	2.51			
	8-11	127	12.07	2.33			
<b>Approach to the game</b>	12-15	79	12.08	2.67	0.567	0.686	
	16+	94	12.12	2.76			
	0-3	34	14.03	3.74			
	4-7	85	14.04	3.60			
<b>Sportsman Behavior</b>	8-11	127	14.36	3.38	0.196	0.940	
	12-15	79	14.51	3.07			
	16+	94	14.73	3.69			
	0-3	34	36.53	9.01			
		4-7	85	35.60	6.63		
		8-11	127	35.96	6.31		
		12-15	79	36.13	6.48		
		16+	94	35.55	7.09		

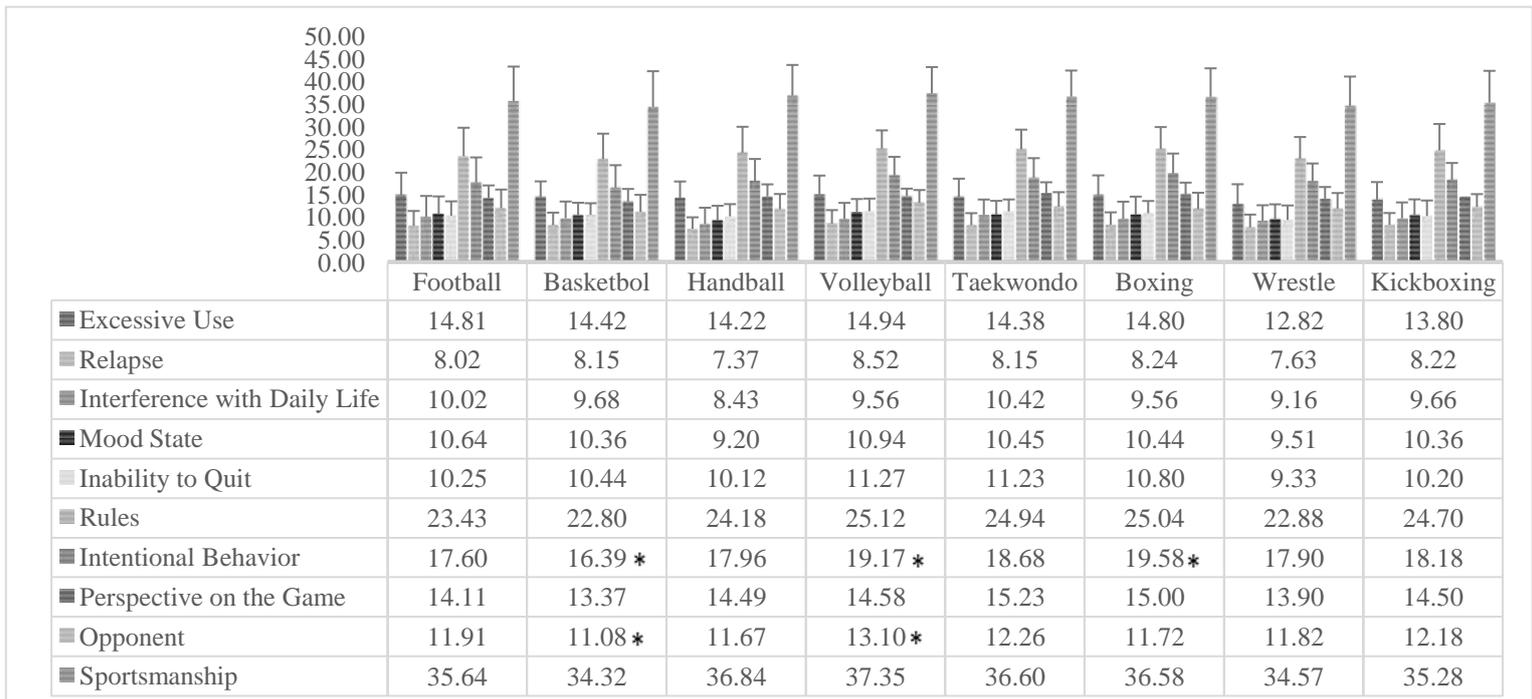
When Table 4 is analyzed, no statistical significance was found in the sub-dimensions of DAS and SBS ( $p > 0.05$ ). In this case, it can be said that sports age has no effect on digital addiction and sportsmanship behavior.

**Table 5.** Analyses of the DAS and SBS by participants' sports type variable

Sub Dimensions		Sports type	n	$\bar{X}$	SD	t	p
DAS	Overuse	Team Sports	216	14.65	3.97	1.870	0.062
		Individual Sports	203	13.89	4.31		
	Relapse	Team Sports	216	8.10	2.94	0.458	0.647
		Individual Sports	203	7.98	2.69		
	Interrupting the Flow of Life	Team Sports	216	9.45	3.92	-.672	0.502
		Individual Sports	203	9.69	3.53		
	Mood	Team Sports	216	10.24	3.27	-.046	0.964
		Individual Sports	203	10.25	3.51		
	Inability to quit	Team Sports	216	10.57	2.83	.830	0.407
		Individual Sports	203	10.33	3.06		
SBS	Rules	Team Sports	216	23.86	5.63	-.992	0.322
		Individual Sports	203	24.37	4.91		
	Deliberate Behaviors	Team Sports	216	17.76	4.97	-1.784	0.075
		Individual Sports	203	18.56	4.17		
	Opponent	Team Sports	216	11.95	2.65	-.045	0.964
		Individual Sports	203	11.96	2.63		
	Approach to the game	Team Sports	216	14.10	3.56	-1.784	0.085
		Individual Sports	203	14.68	3.35		
	Sportsman Behavior	Team Sports	216	36.11	7.09	.722	0.471
		Individual Sports	203	35.63	6.51		

\*p<0.05

When Table 5 is analyzed in terms of sport type, no statistical difference was found in



the sub-dimension scores of DAS and SBS (p>0.05).

**Figure 1.** Analyses of the DAS and SBS by participants’ sports branch variable

When Figure 1 is analyzed, no statistically significant difference was found between DAS and its sub-dimensions in terms of sports branch (p>0.05). On the other hand, when the SBS and its sub-dimensions were evaluated, a significant difference was found only in the “deliberate behavior” and “opponent” sub-dimensions (p<0.05). In the deliberate behavior sub-dimension, it was observed that volleyball and boxing athletes had higher levels of

sportsmanship behavior than basketball athletes. It was also determined that volleyball players had the highest score in the sub-dimension of sportsmanship behavior towards the opponent.

**Table 6.** Correlation analysis between DAS and SBS

		Sportsmanship Behavior Scale
Digital Addiction Scale	r	-.143**
	p	0.003

\*p<0.05

As a result of the correlation analysis in Table 6, it was determined that there was a negative and weak relationship between digital addiction and sportsmanship behavior ( $p<0.05$ ). In this case, it is expected that as participants' digital addiction increases, their sportsmanship behaviors decrease.

### Discussion and Conclusion

In this study, it was aimed to examine the relationship between digital addictions and sportsmanship behaviors of team and individual athletes and evaluated according to gender, age, sports age, sports type, and sports branch variables.

When the research was evaluated according to the gender variable, it was seen that the scores of the inability to quit sub-dimension in the sub-dimensions of the DAS were higher in female athletes than in male athletes. On the other hand, it was determined that the sportsmanship behaviors of female athletes were higher than those of male athletes. Öztaş et al. (2025), in their study on athletes, stated that there was no significant difference in digital addiction levels according to gender variable. However, there are also findings in the literature reporting that women are in a riskier group, especially in terms of social media addiction (Koçak & Şimşek, 2023; Andreassen et al., 2017). In this context, the fact that female athletes scored higher than males in the “inability to quit” sub-dimension in our study can be explained by women's tendency to engage in online social interactions more. On the other hand, when the sportsmanship behavior scores of the participants were examined, it was found that the scores of female athletes were higher than those of male athletes. In summary, female athletes exhibit more sportsmanship behavior compared to male athletes. In their study, Gill (1992) reported that male athletes perceived themselves as more competitive and victory-oriented compared to female athletes. Therefore, male athletes, who tend to exhibit a greater drive for competition and victory compared to female athletes, are expected to display more antisocial behaviors toward both their teammates and opponents during competitions. In a similar study, Stanger et al. (2013) stated that male athletes exhibited antisocial attitudes more than female athletes in their behavior towards teammates and opponents.

In our study, significant differences were found in digital addiction levels according to age; in particular, athletes aged 20–22 and 26–28 scored higher on the sub-dimensions of “overuse” and “interrupting the flow of life,” while athletes aged 29 and above were found to have lower levels of digital addiction. In summary, these results indicate that online social interactions and digital media use may be more intense during young adulthood. In the literature related to the research topic, there are findings that young athletes have higher levels of digital addiction. For example, Gündüzalp and Yıldız (2020) stated that technology addiction levels in individuals who do sports differ according to age groups, and addiction scores are higher, especially in young groups. Fiedler et al. (2023) reported that social media use is more intense in adolescent and young athletes and that digital addiction decreases with age. Therefore, our current research findings are in line with the results of the literature and

support that athletes in the younger age group are more prone to digital addiction. This may be associated with the social environment of athletes and their access to digital media. On the other hand, the decrease in digital addiction scores with increasing age can be explained by the fact that individuals make their technology use more functional and controlled. On the other hand, when the sportsmanship behaviors of the participants were interpreted, significance was observed in the “deliberate behaviors and approach to the game” sub-dimensions of the SBS. It was observed that the group aged 26-28 had higher levels of sportsmanship behaviors. In a similar study, Eisenberg and Fabes (1998) stated that as the age of athletes increases, their sportsmanship behaviors also increase.

When we look at the variable of sport age, which is another variable of our research, no statistical difference was found in the scores of the participants' digital addiction levels and sportsmanship behavior levels. Therefore, as a result of the current research findings, it can be said that sport age has no effect on digital addiction and sportsmanship behavior. Similar results are also found in the literature. Karaca et al. (2019) reported that there was no significant difference in social media addiction levels by sports year in their study on university students. In the context of sportsmanship behaviors, Sezen-Balçıklı (2010) found that the moral decision-making processes of athletes are mostly related to sports type and gender and that the sports year variable alone is not a strong determinant.

When we look at the sports type variable, which we think is an important variable of our research, no statistical difference was found in the digital addiction and sportsmanship behavior scores of team and individual athletes. In the literature, it is seen that studies comparing digital addiction in terms of team and individual athletes are limited. In this case, it is thought that further research is needed to obtain healthier results. However, when we look at the studies similar to our research topic, it was seen that different results were obtained. For example, Vega-Díaz and González-García (2024), in their study on university students, stated that team sports may increase individuals' risk of social network addiction, while individual sports may be associated with lower addiction symptoms. From this point of view, the fact that there was no significant difference according to the sports type variable in our current study shows that the findings differ from some results in the literature. When the sportsmanship behaviors of the athletes were interpreted, no difference was observed between team and individual athletes. However, Acar et al. (2023), in a similar study on athletes, examined the antisocial behaviors of team and individual athletes in sports and stated that the antisocial behaviors of participants interested in team sports were higher than those of individual athletes. On the other hand, Rutten et al. (2011) reported that individual athletes showed less antisocial behavior than team athletes in their study on adolescent athletes. This difference can be interpreted as intense competition, physical contact and group dynamics in team sports may increase the risk of developing antisocial behaviors against both opponents and teammates, while in individual sports, the fact that responsibility and performance belong only to the individual may encourage more controlled and self-disciplined behaviors.

When the research was interpreted in terms of the sports branch variable, no statistically significant difference was observed between the DAS and its sub-dimensions. However, when the SBS and its sub-dimensions were evaluated, a significant difference was found only in the “deliberate behavior” and “opponent” sub-dimensions. In the deliberate behavior sub-dimension, it was observed that volleyball and boxing athletes had higher levels of sportsmanship behavior than basketball athletes. It was also determined that volleyball players had the highest score in the sub-dimension of sportsmanship behavior towards the

opponent. Basketball is a sport of constant physical contact, where fouls and infractions are an important part of the game. This may increase the risk of players developing more deliberate behavior against their opponents. However, since volleyball is a sport in which there is no direct physical contact and only interaction with the opponents through the ball, players can be expected to show a higher level of sportsmanship behavior towards their opponents. Boxing, on the other hand, is a high-contact sport, but due to the nature of the game, the boundaries between aggression and sportsmanship are more distinct as the actions against the opponent take place within the framework of the rules. For this reason, it is an understandable result that boxing athletes show higher levels of sportsmanship in the “deliberate behavior” dimension compared to basketball players. The fact that volleyball players received the highest score in sportsmanship behavior towards the opponent can be explained similarly. The low-contact nature of volleyball eliminates the possibility of physical harm to the opponent and creates a sports culture based on adherence to the rules of the game, communication, and respect. This situation contributes to volleyball players scoring higher in sportsmanship toward their opponents.

In the study, it was determined that there was a negative and weak relationship between digital addiction and sportsmanship behavior of athletes. In this case, it is expected that as participants' digital addiction increases, their sportsmanship behaviors decrease. In the literature, it is emphasized that digital addiction has negative effects, especially on empathy, self-control, and social relationships. Kuss and Griffiths (2017) stated that digital addiction can increase social isolation and weaken empathy in interpersonal relationships. Similarly, Andreassen et al. (2017) reported that individuals with high social media addiction have low self-esteem and self-control, which may lead to more problematic behaviors in social interactions. Sportsmanship behaviors are closely related to values such as self-control, empathy, and social responsibility (Kavussanu & Boardley, 2009). From this perspective, decreases in the athlete's self-control skills and empathy level with the increase in digital addiction may negatively affect sportsmanship behaviors. Sezen-Balçıkanlı (2010) also emphasizes that sportsmanship is related to affective and social dimensions and is directly affected by the individual's social interaction styles.

As a result, in our study, it was revealed that as the digital addiction levels of athletes increase, their sportsmanship behaviors decrease accordingly. At this point, it is seen that digital addictions of athletes play an important role in terms of sportsmanship. In line with the results obtained in the research, our recommendations are that training seminars should be organized for athletes to reduce the negative effects of digital addiction and to develop conscious technology use. It is also important to raise awareness of families and the immediate environment to reduce the level of digital addiction in young athletes. On the other hand, it is especially important to instill sportsmanship behaviors in athletes as a habit from the very beginning of their involvement in sports. Sportsmanship behavior can be revealed as a psychological perspective from an individual perspective and as societal from a social perspective. Also, sportsmanship behavior can be addressed with more qualitative research, and the foundations of such behaviors can be investigated.

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