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The Effect of Motivation to Participate in Sports on Happiness Level in University Students

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Abstract

In this study, it was aimed to investigate the effect of individuals' motivation to participate in sports on their happiness level. This study is a descriptive survey study on the impact of Bayburt University students' attitudes about sports on their levels of happiness. This study is a descriptive survey study on the impact of Bayburt University sports sciences faculty students' participation motivation to sports on their levels of happiness. The population of this study, which examined the effect of motivation to participate in sports on happiness level, consisted of students studying at Bayburt University. The sample consisted of a total of 357 people, 129 of whom were female and 228 of whom were male, studying in different departments of the sports sciences faculty of the same university. "Personal Information Form", "Participation Motivation Questionnaire" and "Oxford Happiness Questionnaire-Short Form" were used as data collection tools. SPSS 25 package program was used for statistical analysis. Normality test, spearman correlation and simple linear regression analysis were used in the analysis of the data. When the effect of the participants' motivation to participate in sports on their happiness levels is investigated, it is seen that motivation to participate in sports has a significant effect on the happiness levels of university students. In conclusion, considering the findings obtained from the research, it is seen that there was a relationship between motivation to participate in sports and happiness in the study, and that motivation to participate in sports had an effect on the happiness levels of individuals.

Keywords: Happiness, Participation Motivation, Sports

1. Introduction

With the pandemic that has emerged in recent years and with the increase in mental health problems such as anxiety and depression that have emerged with intense and stressful work life, participation in physical activity and sports activities as a potential protector for mental health has become extremely meaningful. Consequently, participation in sports activities is positively associated with decrease in anxiety, depression, risk of mood and related happiness level (Pluhar et al., 2019). Sports participation levels improve the motivation of individuals and examine them as a point of practical experience with today's realities such as overcoming doubts and fears, relieving stress during training and competition, and they are of great importance in reducing certain threats to a person's mental and psychological health in the relevant modern learning environment.

In modern societies, participation in sports and physical activity has become a growing trend. Participation in sportive activities makes significant contributions not only to the individual's abilities and skills, but also to the social environment, the relationship between the athlete and the coach, and communication with the environment (Blynova et al., 2020). Sports activities help to figure out many psychological problems. Stress relief during training and competition plays an important role against certain threats to a person's mental and psychological health in the modern learning environment, which is concerned with examining issues on the psychological impact of sport as today's facts and practical experience point (Vardanyan, 2014; Blynova et al., 2020). Studies investigating the relationship between sports and exercise with depression focus on how sports and exercise function as antidepressants and how regular physical activity might decrease depressive symptoms in the individual and thus prevent depression (Babiss and Gangwisch, 2009). Individual physical activity or participation in exercise is an effective tool to encourage positive social and psychological outcomes (Berg et al., 2015). Exercise and health are two important factors of happiness in human beings. This idea suggests that happiness may be promoted in individuals by promoting health (Cohen and Lim, 2020).

Even though happiness is easy to define ostensibly and conceptually due to its frequent use in daily life, it is actually a broad concept that is very comprehensive to explain. Although many other concepts such as joy, peace, and excitement seem to reflect happiness, these words are not adequate to describe happiness. The reason for this is that there are various conditions underlying people's happiness (Demirel, 2019). The concept of happiness is defined as the state of elation in reaching all desired situations completely and continuously (<http://www.tdk.gov.tr>). It can be said that exercise and participation in sports activities play an important role among the important factors that lead to happiness.

Through sports activities, relaxation occurs in the body muscles and individuals begin to relax emotionally. Doing sports positively affects numerous hormones in our body. In particular, it decelerates the release of stress hormones in the body. As a result of this, depression symptoms are diminished and the person feels glad, peaceful, and happy (Gümüşdağ et al., 2022). Huang and Humphreys (2011) suggest that if doing sports improves mental health and decreases the effects of depression and anxiety, it might also affect happiness. Dolan et al. (2008), on the other hand, indicate that doing sports reveals higher levels of happiness. To summarize, it can be said that participation in sports and physical activity are specifically linked to the concept of happiness (Balish et al., 2016). Regarding this information, in this study carried out in the field of sports sciences, it was aimed to investigate the effect of individuals' motivation to participate in sports on their happiness level.

2. Materials and Methods

2.1 Research Model

This study is a descriptive survey study on the impact of Bayburt University sports sciences faculty students' participation motivation to sports on their levels of happiness. The descriptive survey model is defined as the screening arrangements made on the sample consisting of the population in order to make a general judgment about the existing population in a universe containing more or less elements (Karasar, 2012).

2.2 Research Group

The population of this study, which examined the effect of motivation to participate in sports on happiness level, consisted of students studying at Bayburt University. The sample consisted of a total of 357 people, 129 of whom were female and 228 of whom were male, studying in different departments of the sports sciences faculty of the same university.

2.3 Data Collection Tools

2.3.1 Personal Information Form

The questions in this section consist of questions about demographic variables such as gender, age, department of education, sports branch of interest.

2.3.2 Participation Motivation Questionnaire

In this research, in order to obtain the study data, Participation Motivation Questionnaire (Oyar et al., 2001) developed by Gill, Gross, and Huddleston (1983) was used to determine the reasons for young individuals to participate in sports (Gill et al., 1983), adapted by Oyar, Aşçı, Çelebi, and Mulazımoğlu (2001). The "Participation Motivation Questionnaire", developed by Gill, Gross and Huddleston in 1983 consists of 30 items and 8 sub-dimensions (Skill Development, Team Membership/Spirit, Entertainment, Friendship, Success/Status, Energy Expenditure, Physical Compliance, and Other Reasons). The reasons for students' participation in sports were evaluated on a 3-point scale as "Very Important (1)", "Somewhat Important (2)", and "Not Important at All (3)" (Gill, Gross, Huddleston, 1983). As the items in the "Participation Motivation Scale" are evaluated between 1 (Very Important) and 3 (Not Important at All), the low values obtained reveal that that item is more important. Reliability coefficient obtained from the total scale was found as $\alpha = .86$ (Oyar et al., 2001). The Cronbach Alpha value obtained for the scale in this study was found as .886.

2.3.3 Oxford Happiness Scale Short Form

The scale was developed by Hills and Argyle (2002). The scale consists of 8 items, and a correlation of .93 ($p < 0.001$) was found between the 29-item original form and the short form. The Turkish adaptation study of OHS-S was conducted by Dogan and Cötok (2011). Accordingly, as a result of the exploratory factor analysis, a single factor structure with 7 items, eigen-value of 2.782 and explaining 39.74% of the total variance was obtained. The single-factor structure of OHS-S was examined by confirmatory factor analysis and the goodness of fit indexes were found ($\chi^2/df=2.77$, AGFI=0.93, GFI=0.97, CFI=0.95, NFI=0.92, IFI=0.95, RMSEA=0.074). Internal consistency coefficient for the reliability of OHS-S was .74, test-retest reliability coefficient was found as .85 (Doğan and Cötok, 2011). The Cronbach's Alpha value obtained for the scale in this study was found as .680.

2.4 Analysis of the Data

The data were collected by creating an online questionnaire. SPSS 25 package program was used for statistical analysis. Prior to proceeding to statistical analysis, assumptions such as normality, homogeneity, stationarity, linearity, if any, related to these analyses should be checked and statistical information should be given about which assumptions are provided. In light of this information, the researcher should justify which analysis techniques he/she prefers and which he/she does not prefer (Tozoglu and Dursun, 2020).

2.5 Ethical Aspect of Research

Ethical approval for the study was taken from Ataturk University Faculty of Sport Sciences Ethics committee with the decision numbered E-70400699- 050.02.04-2200339367 - 2022/10, and required institutional permissions were obtained. In the Personal Information Form, it was stated that the objective of the research, the information to be obtained from the research would be kept confidential and the research was based on volunteerism.

3. Results

Table 1: Frequency and Percentages of Demographic Variables

Variable	Groups	f	%
Gender	Female	129	36.1
	Male	228	63.9
Department	Coaching Education	114	31.9
	Physical Education and Sports	50	14.0
	Sports management	134	37,5
	Recreation	59	16,5
Sports Branches	Football	102	28,6
	Basketball	17	4,8
	Volleyball	44	12,3
	Futsal	13	3,6
	Swimming	23	6,4
	Athletics	21	5,9
	Taekwondo	8	2,2
	Boxing	10	2,8
	Bocce	9	2,5
	Tennis	18	5,0
	Archery	10	2,8
	Handball	12	3,4
	Dart	9	2,5
	Fitness	25	7,0
	Other Sports Branches	36	10,1

When Table 1 is examined, 228 (63.9%) of the participants were male and 129 (36.1%) were female. According to the variable of the department, 134 of the participants (37.5%) were sports management students, 114 (31.9%) were coaching education students, 59 (16.5%) were recreation students, and 50 (14%) were physical education and sports students. Considering the variable of the sports branch, it was determined that 102 (28.6%) of the participants were interested in football, 17 (4.8%) basketball, 44 (12.3%) volleyball, 13 (3.6%) futsal, 23 (6.4%) swimming, 21 (5.9%) athletics, 8 (2.2%) taekwondo, 10 (2.8%) boxing, 9 (2.5%) bocce, 18 (5%) tennis, 10 (2.8%) archery, 12 (3.4%) handball, 9 (2.5%) darts, 25 (7%) fitness and 36 (10.1%) other sports branches. It was determined that the mean age of the participants was 20.99 ± 2.47 .

Table 2: Normality Test for Scale Total Scores

Scales	s	df	p
Happiness	,986	357	,002
Participation Motivation	,830	357	,000

When Table 2 is examined, it is seen that the scale total scores are $p < 0.05$. According to the outcomes of the analysis, it is seen that the scale total scores do not show normal distribution at the level of significance.

Table 3: Spearman Correlation Analysis Results for Participation Motivation Questionnaire and Oxford Happiness Scale

	Happiness	
Participation Motivation	r	.142**
	p	.007
	n	357

* $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$

When the data in Table 3 are examined, it is seen that there is a low level of positive ($r=142$) and statistically significant relationship between the two scales, according to the results of the Spearman correlation analysis performed to determine the relationship between the two scales.

Table 4: Simple Linear Regression Analysis Results on the Effects of the Mean Score of the Motivation to Participate Questionnaire on the Mean Score of Happiness Scale

Descriptive Variable	B	Std. Error	Beta	t	p	r
Constant	2.174	.423	-	5.139	.000	-
Participation Motivation	.441	.152	.152	2.897	.004	.152

Described Variable: Happiness

$R=0,152$; $R^2=0,023$; $F_{(1,355)}=8,394$; $p=0,000$; Durbin-Watson (D.W.) Statistic= $1,959$

According to Table 4, as a result of the simple linear regression analysis conducted to reveal how the "Participation Motivation Mean Score" predicted "Happiness", which is thought to have an effect on the participants' "Happiness Mean Score", it was found that there was a significant relationship ($R=0.152$; $R^2=0.023$) between them ($F_{(1,355)}=8.394$; $p<0.05$). "Motivation to Participate Questionnaire" mean score explains approximately 2.3% of the variation in "Happiness Scale" mean score.

4. Discussion and Conclusion

Considering the results of the Spearman correlation analysis (Table 3), which was performed to specify the relationship between the motivation to participate in sports and the happiness levels of the participants, a low level, positive, and statistically significant relationship was found between the motivation to participate in sports and their happiness levels. One of the most important factors that encourage and sustain physical activity is their motivation (Chowdhury, 2012). Motivation is the action of an individual under the influence of an intrinsic or extrinsic stimulus that establishes the direction, power, and priority of the action (Inceoğlu, 2010). It is known that intrinsic (such as skill development and mastery) and extrinsic factors (better health, good-looking etc.) are effective in the motivation of individuals to participate in sports (Moradi et al., 2020). Gill et al. (1983), who tried to determine the motivations of active participation in sports, emphasized that motivations such as skill development, team membership, entertainment, success, mobility, and friendship are effective in the participation of young people in sports; McDonald et al. (2002), on the other hand, based on Maslow's (1943) hierarchy of human needs, emphasized that motivations such as success, competition, social interaction, physical fitness, skill development, commitment, aesthetics, aggression, and value development were effective on participation in sports (Polat et al., 2018). Some studies have suggested that the most important reasons for motivation to participate in sports are skill development, learning new skills, recreation, and physical fitness (Moradi et al., 2020). Huang and Humphreys (2012) state that participation in sports may have positive consequences for life. It can be said that it may have an effect that could promote physical and mental health and increase happiness (An et al., 2020). Huang and Humphreys (2011) state that if participation in sports enhances mental health and reduces the effects of depression and anxiety, it might also affect happiness. It is stated that participation in sports plays a remarkable role in reaching happiness (Diener & Seligman, 2004), which is one of the most basic goals of human life. The concept of happiness is described as the state of being proud of reaching all desired situations completely and continuously. (<http://www.tdk.gov.tr>). It emerges as a general evaluation of the experiences of the individual in his/her own life (Diener et al., 2009). In addition, in a study conducted by Öktem (2022) on university students, it was concluded that there was a positive relationship between attitudes towards sports and happiness. In line with this information, it can be said that the increase in the motivation of individuals to participate in sports affects their happiness levels positively and promotes their happiness levels.

When the effect of the participants' motivation to participate in sports on their happiness levels is investigated (Table 4), it is seen that motivation to participate in sports has a significant effect on the happiness levels of university students. Accordingly, motivation to participate in sports is observed as an important factor in explaining the variance on the happiness levels of university students. Thus, it can be said that as the motivation level of the participants to participate in sports increases, there will be an increase in their happiness levels.

In conclusion, considering the findings obtained from the research, it is seen that there was a relationship between motivation to participate in sports and happiness in the study, and that motivation to participate in sports had an effect on the happiness levels of individuals. In this context, it can be said that happiness might be listed among the factors that motivate individuals to participate in sports. In this research, participation motivation questionnaire and happiness scale were utilized. It is thought that future studies will contribute to the expansion of the literature by using different scales with the participation motivation questionnaire.

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