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ANALYSIS OF THE ATTITUDES OF STUDENTS AT THE SCHOOL OF PHYSICAL EDUCATION AND SPORTS TOWARDS VIOLENCE

ABSTRACT

This study was designed and carried out at the School of Physical Education and Sports at Çukurova University in order to determine whether the attitudes of the students towards violence differed according to their gender, certification status, status as performers or spectators of contact/non-contact sports, and the academic departments in which they were enrolled. A total of 403 students, who were randomly selected on a voluntary basis, participated in the study. The "Adolescents' Attitudes towards Violence Scale", which was developed by Cetin (2011), was used as the data collection tool.

As result of the analysis, the study concluded that there are significant differences in the attitudes of students enrolled in the School of Physical Education and Sports towards violence in terms of gender, favoring the male students and in terms of spectators of contact/non-contact sports in favor of the spectators of contact sports. While no significant difference was found with respect to the certification status, performers, contact/non-contact sports, and departments enrolled, the study found that the students who enrolled in the department of coaching education scored higher than students who enrolled in other departments in terms of violent behavior. Similarly, regarding attitudes towards violence, certified students scored higher than those who were not certified and the performers of contact sports scored higher than the students who performed non-contact.

Keywords: Violence, Contact/Non-contact sports, Sports spectators, University students

ÖZET

Bu araştırma, Çukurova Üniversitesi Beden Eğitimi ve Spor Yüksekokulu öğrencilerinin şiddet tutumlarının; cinsiyete, lisanslı sporcu olup olmadıklarına, temaslı, temassız yapılan ve izlenen spor branşı ile akademik eğitim aldıkları bölümlere göre anlamlı bir farklılık gösterip göstermediklerine yanıt aranacak şekilde planlanıp yürütülmüştür. Gönüllü ve tesadüfî seçilen 403 öğrencinin katılımıyla gerçekleştirilmiştir. Veri, toplama aracı olarak Çetin (2011) tarafından geliştirilen "Ergenlerin Şiddete Yönelik Tutumları Ölçeği" kullanılmıştır.

Yapılan analizler sonucunda, Beden Eğitimi ve Spor Yüksekokulu öğrencilerinin şiddete yönelik tutumları; cinsiyete göre, erkekler lehine ve izlenen temaslı, temassız sporlara göre, temaslı sporları izleyenlerin lehine şiddet tutumları arasında anlamlı bir fark bulunmuştur. Lisanslı-lisanssız durumuna, temaslı-temassız sporları yapanlara göre ve bölümler arasında anlamlı fark bulunmamasına karşın antrenörlük bölümü öğrencilerinin diğer bölümlere, lisanslı öğrencilerin lisanslı olmayanlara ve temaslı sporları yapanların, temassız sporları yapanlara göre şiddet puanlarının daha yüksek olduğu belirlenmiştir.

Anahtar Sözcükler: Şiddet, Temaslı-Temassız sporlar, Spor İzleyicileri, Üniversite öğrencileri.

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INTRODUCTION

Violence is a universal phenomenon that exists in all areas of life including family, school, work, and the field of sports. The universal nature of violence stems from its destructive attitude towards individuals and society (Ayan, 2006). The World Health Organization describes violence as "the intentional use of physical force or power, threatened or actual, against oneself, another person or against a group or community, that either results in or has a high likelihood of resulting in injury, death, psychological harm, maldevelopment, or deprivation (WHO, 2002; Krug and Dahlberg, 2002). Back (2000) described aggression and violence as the "use of physical force with the aim of damaging the body or limiting the freedom of an individual." According to Freud, aggression and violence are the reflections of an individual's own destructive tendencies towards him/herself on to the objects in the external world (Geçtan, 2004). John Dewey describes violence as misused power and energy (Dewey, as cited by Dursun, 2011). The Dictionary of the Institute of Turkish Language describes violence as the utilization of negative force against the supporters of opposing opinions and extreme states of emotions and behaviors. The Latin word "*violentus*" implies the manner in which an act is conducted, and the word "*violare*" means hurting, damaging, or abusing with an emphasis on the act that is performed (Wade, 1971). In English, "*violence*" refers to two meanings indicating force and abuse (Betz, 1977). In light of these definitions, the problem of violence should be considered as a "violation of rights and freedoms". Hence, violence is a systematic problem that hinders sustainable social development, destroys the confidence of individuals and others in life, decreases the level of self-value and self-confidence, creates a sense of fear and

desperation, and accordingly threatens the spiritual and physical health of society (Altekin, 2013). In its widest meaning, the concept of violence expresses the violation of borders emerging with the abuse of power, force, authority, and superiority (Dursun, 2011). The fact that the nature of violent acts is both learnable and intuitive can also allow aggression to be manipulated during the process (İkizler et al., 1996). This manipulation could be improved in positive or negative directions through education. Adolescence is a period with diverse characteristics within the educational process. Adolescence is the process between the childhood and adulthood in human life. This process is experienced in educational institutions in modern societies. Educational institutions follow families in terms of their function as the specializers during the period when the individual attains social behaviors. The positive knowledge, information, and social values attained in educational institutions enable individuals to create a vision about the future and ensure the development of legal behaviors instead of violating the legal principles. Education not only ensures the sustainability of the social culture, but also establishes the basis of transformation. Violence is the primary factor that prevents this transformation. As the number of acts of violence increases, they become ordinary and individuals become accustomed to acts of violence day by day. This legitimates the acts of violence. Permanent measures should be taken to stop violence. In order for such efforts to be effective, accurate and realistic determinations must be made. According to a study conducted by the Ministry of National Education titled, "The Increasing Tendency towards Violence among Adolescents and Cases of Violence at Schools," the distribution of

the young population in Turkey is as follows: children aged 0-5 years = 7864, which is 10.6%; teenagers aged 6-18 years = 17760, which is 24%; and young adults aged 19-25 years = 8988, which is 12.1%. This demonstrates that Turkey has a young population with the highest risk of attitudes towards violence, which is incomparable to any of western countries (MONA, 2008).

Violence in sports as a sociological phenomenon results from the interaction of many parameters. From the sociological perspective, assigning the whole responsibility of a behavior solely to an individual would mean ignoring the responsibilities of the family, media, society, and government (Saldırım, 2007). The competitive nature of participating in sports and the feeling of achievement are the underlying causes of violent behaviors. Sports environments also enable masses which display behaviors and emotions that create attitudes towards violence, to discharge their aggression. In this respect, sports could be assumed as a phenomenon that both produces violence and enables the discharge of violent behaviors. We consider that sports, which we perceive as the antidote to violence, would keep young people away from acts of violence, but is that the reality? There are various fields of sports with diverse characteristics such as contact sports that are physically performed, and non-contact sports that

do not require physical contact. There are active performers of sports at the certified athlete level, and there are people who are interested in sports as spectators. Within the framework of such characteristics, inquiring about the attitudes towards violence may provide a wider perspective for understanding violence.

This study focuses on the attitudes of adolescents towards violence during their university education. The importance of this study, which was carried out with the students that receive academic education about sports at the School of Physical Education and Sports at Çukurova University, lies in the notion that the trainers, administrators, and physical education teachers are responsible for preventing violence in sports environments and the attitudes of these actors towards violence should be determined to be considered in terms of the measures to be taken against violence. This study sought answers to the question of whether the attitudes of the students towards violence differed according to their genders, certification status, status as performers or spectators of contact/non-contact sports, and the academic departments in which they were enrolled.

MATERIAL AND METHOD

This is a descriptive study carried out with the students enrolled in the School of Physical Education and Sports at Çukurova University during the spring semester of 2013.

Participants.: This study was performed with 403 students selected randomly on a voluntary basis among 870 students studying at 3 different departments (Physical Education Teacher Education,

Sport Management and Coaching Education) of the School of Physical Education and Sports participated in the study.

Data collection: The data collection tool used in this study was the "Adolescents' Attitudes Towards Violence Scale", which was developed by Çetin as a tool to assess the attitudes of adolescents enrolled in high schools and universities towards physical violence. There were

10 items in the scale, which was designed as a Likert-type scale. The lowest score in the scale was 10 and the highest score was 50. The Cronbach's alpha reliability coefficient of the scale was .85 for the 10 items (Çetin, 2011). The alpha coefficient of the scale that was administered to the current sampling was determined to be 0.85. The Kolmogorov-Smirnov goodness-of-fit test was administered in order to understand whether the scores obtained by the students from the attitudes towards violence scale were normally distributed. As shown in Table 2, it was determined that the scores obtained from the attitudes towards violence scale were not normally distributed. Therefore, the

Mann-Whitney U-test was administered in order to compare the mean scores for both groups. The Kruskal-Wallis H-Test was used to compare the mean scores of more than two groups.

RESULT

As displayed in Table 1, 39.5% of the participants were female and 60.5% were male. The distribution of frequency by departments showed that 39% of the students were enrolled in the Department of Coaching Education, while 26% were enrolled in the Physical Education Teacher Education, and 35% studied at the Department of Sport Management. Sixty one percent of the students were certified athletes, while 39% had no certification.

Table 1. Demographical Distributions of Students

	N	%
Female	159	39.5
Male	244	60.5
Total	403	100.0
Coaching Education	157	39.0
Physical Education Teacher Education	105	26.0
Sport Management	141	35.0
Total	403	100.0
Certified	246	61.0
Uncertified	157	39.0
Total	403	100.0

The percentage of students who were certified athletes in contact sports in the fields of soccer, basketball, handball, kick boxing, karate, korfbal, futsal, arm wrestling, boxing, taekwondo, wrestling, and muay thai was 40.7%, while the percentage of those who performed non-contact sports in the fields of volleyball, canoeing, gymnastics, table tennis, fitness, track and field, tennis, swimming, sailing, Pilates, shooting, triathlon, and chess was 20.32%. The percentage of uncertified students was 39.0%.

The types of sports selected by the students were divided in two groups as

contact and non-contact sports. Seventy-seven point nine percent of the students were spectators of contact sports including soccer, basketball, handball, boxing, karate, kick boxing, muay thai, taekwondo, and arm wrestling. Twenty point three percent of students were spectators of non-contact sports including volleyball, canoeing, gymnastics, table tennis, dancing, track and field, swimming, shooting, cycling, and chess. One point seven percent of the students were not spectators of any type of sports.

Table 2. Results of the Kolmogorov-Smirnov Goodness-of-Fit test

Attitude Scale	N	Min	Max	Med	\bar{X}	SD	p
	403	10	49	19	20.59	8.15	0.000

As shown in Table 2, the scores ranged between 10 (minimum) and 49 (maximum), while the mean score was 20.59 and the median was 19. Due to the significant differences found according to

the results of the Kolmogorov-Smirnov goodness-of-fit Test ($p < 0.01$), it was determined that the data did not have an abnormal distribution.

Table 3. Tendency towards violence according to gender

Gender	N	Mean rank	MVU	p
Female	159	180.95	1.605	0.003
Male	244	215.72		

$p < 0.01$

As shown in Table 3, there was no significant difference between the attitudes towards violence according to gender ($p < 0.01$). The mean rank scores

of male students were higher than those of the female and male students were found to have a greater tendency towards violence.

Table 4. Attitude towards violence by certification

Certification	N	Mean Rank	MVU	p
Certified	246	209.99	1.735	0.084
Uncertified	157	189.48		

$p > 0.05$

As shown on Table 4, no significant difference was found between the certified and uncertified students in terms of their attitude towards violence

($p > 0.05$). According to the mean rank, certified students is indicated higher attitudes scores towards violence.

Table 5. Attitude towards violence by contact and non-contact types of sports

Type of Sports Performed	N	Mean Rank	Chi-Square	p
Contact	164	212.34	3.178	0.204
Non-contact	82	205.30		
Uncertified	157	189.48		

$p > 0.05$

As shown in Table 5, there is no significant difference between the fields of sports. According to the mean rank scores obtained by students according to

the characteristics of the field of sports, those who performed contact sports had higher mean score ranks and had a greater tendency towards violence.

Table 6. Attitude towards violence by the type of spectated sport

Spectated Sport	N	Mean Rank	Chi-Square	p
Contact	314	209.69	6.229	0.04
Non-contact	82	174.35		
Non spectator	7	181.14		

P<0.05

As shown in Table 6, there was no significant difference between the fields of sports that the students were spectators of, in terms of tendency

towards violence. The mean rank of tendency towards violence was found to be higher in students who were the spectators of contact sports.

Table 7. Attitude towards violence by departments

Department	N	Mean Rank	Chi-Square	p
Coaching Education	157	217.28	4.466	0.10
Physical Education Teacher Education	105	190.78		
Sport Management	141	193.34		

p>0.05

As shown in Table 7, there was no significant difference between the departments in terms of tendency towards violence. The mean rank

averages indicated that the students enrolled in coaching department had a greater tendency towards violence.

Table 8. Attitude of towards violence by favorite teams

Favorite Team	N	Mean Rank	Chi-Square	p
Adana Spor	74	196.34	3.157	0.36
Adana Demirspor	131	216.21		
Other	150	192.37		
None	48	202.03		

p>0.05

As shown in Table 8, there was no significant difference between the students in terms of their favorite teams. According to the mean rank, the fans of

Adana Demirspor had higher scores with respect to the tendency towards violence.

DISCUSSION

In this study, the attitude scores of male students were found to be higher than those of the female students in terms of their attitudes towards violence. The findings of this study were in line with the results of the studies in the literature (Wrangham and Peterson, 1996; Loeber, 1998; Kabak, 2009; Tucker and Parks, 2001). The social role attributed to men

and women in society leads men to have a greater tendency towards violence. Therefore, male children may be assumed to have a greater tendency towards violence due to their socialization within roles that encourage violence. On the other hand, the public tolerance regarding the utilization of violence by men as a problem solving tool within the socialization process could

have an effect on the reinforcement of such behaviors and the development of more positive perspectives towards violence (Çetin, 2004). This study did not include an inquiry on the reasons for the attitudes towards violence. The literature studies covering the motifs towards violence included findings about the effects of gender and financial status on the tendency towards violence (Balkis et al., 2005; Özgür et al., 2011). The study found no significant differences in the students' attitudes towards violence according to certification. The study by Kırımoglu et al. (2008) found no significant differences between those who played sports and those who did not according to levels of aggression. Students who performed contact sports were observed to have higher scores of attitudes towards violence. Dervet (2007) mentioned that certain studies reported that individuals who performed sports with high aggression elements tended to act in violence in their daily lives. In some other studies, Dervet (2007) stated that the performers of these sports could easily control their aggressive behaviors and therefore had a lower tendency towards violent behaviors. Involvement in sports was found not to increase aggression in high school students, but to increase the impulsivity and it was determined that those who were involved with sports were more impulsive than those who were not (Dervet et al., 2010). The sports that required direct contact with an opponent were observed to have a greater tendency towards violence when compared to those who participate in team sports. A study by Tutkun et al. (2010) found that there was a significant difference between destructive aggression, passive aggression, and general aggression scores of the performers of individual sports and the average aggression scores of team sport players.

A significant difference was found between the groups in terms of their attitudes towards violence according to the fields of sports they were spectators of. It was observed that the spectators of contact sports had a higher tendency towards violence. The audiences that follow sports events live or through recorded broadcasting through visual media, such as the TV, are called spectators (Silva, 1980). Fanatic spectators who cause violence could be categorized into two groups: direct and indirect. Members of the first group watch the games in stadiums, while the second group is the media audience (Bjelajac, 2005). Since there were no questions on the spectator types, the students were assumed to be spectators of both groups. According to the studies based on learning theories, violence displayed on TV broadcasts has an increasing possibility of modeling (Mutlu, 1999). In the social learning model suggested by Bandura children who watch aggressive role models were noted to have a higher tendency to display violent behaviors (Bandura et al., 1961). In the light of this model, it would be possible to suggest two options: one would be the suggestion that the game content with contact sports involving violence has led students towards violence; and the second would be the suggestion that those children watched these fields of sports due to their tendency towards violence, promoted by their experiences and role models. In addition, the "cognitive age principle" stated by Berkowitz would be an important approach. According to this approach, violent behaviors could be associated with other aggressive thoughts, actions of opinion, emotions or hidden behaviors and activate them. For instance, a scene with a gun or a boxing match on TV could recall aggression and violence, which would lead to various violent reactions in diverse environments (Arıcak, 1995). The findings of the study

by Kapıcıoğlu (2008) indicated that violent experiences were important processes that determined their perceptions of violence. A one-to-one correspondence existed between the violent experiences and definitions of violence. According to the findings of the current study, the difference observed in the tendency towards violence in terms of departments did not indicate a statistical difference; however, the scores of students enrolled in the Department of Coaching Education were found to be higher than those enrolled in the Department of Physical Education Teacher Education, as well as the Department of Sport Management. While the literature contained no studies on the tendency towards violence by educational department, the study by Bostan and Kılıçgil (2008), which was carried out with students enrolled in the School of Physical Education and Sports and other faculties, the students enrolled in the School of Physical Education and Sports at Ankara University were found to have more "destructive aggression" and "passive aggression" than students enrolled in various faculties and departments of the same university. There has been a marked increase in the number of violent acts in various sports fields, fights between fanatics and the police or the fans of the opponent team in certain cities of Turkey. In this respect, Adana has often become the topic of discussion. This is due to the fanatics of two strong opponents: Adanaspor and Adana. An inquiry on students' attitudes towards violence according to these local teams they supported concluded that the attitude scores of Adana Demirspor fans were higher. In one of the previous studies of the current researchers, it was determined that Adanaspor fans had a greater tendency towards violence than the fans of Adana Demirspor (Bilir and Sangün, 2014). The difference of this study could be due to selection of sampling among the university students.

According to the study by Uysal and Temel (2009), in the event that an education program is designed about the prevention of violence in the school environment, students would use more constructive conflict solution approaches, they would have less violent behaviors, or less tendency towards violence, and thus, a more secure and less violent school environment could be ensured. With regard to these findings, regardless of the type of educational institutions, education should be the starting point for the prevention of violence in sports activities. According to the report by the Turkish Grand National Assembly Research Commission, which was published in 2011, the organization of sports environments, security measures, attitudes of athletes and administrators, applicability of the laws on the prevention of violence, and the careful implementation of regulations were important factors for the prevention of violence. The prevention of violence should be included in elementary education curriculum in Turkey and special attention should be paid to the applicability of the legislation. In terms of ignorance towards implementation, the authorities and methods of inspection should be clearly outlined. Such environments should be created to ensure a peaceful atmosphere at sports events (TGNA Report, 2011). Efforts to attain the responsibility and understanding of life by individuals and ensuring the socialization of individuals within sociocultural values and school foresights would lead individuals to experience a lifestyle around the functions of school. This lifestyle will undoubtedly decrease the risk of a greater tendency towards violence for individuals (Kızmaz, 2006). The government, institutions, educators, families, and all elements of the society should cooperate and declare mobilization. Unless the education system and perspectives are changed or

the social consensus and tolerance are ensured, the prohibitions and legislation would remain dysfunctional. Although legislation/prohibitions have positive contributions in terms of deterrence, the fact that negative reactions could lead to attraction is also inevitable (Koçöz, 2011). The fair play principles that could have an effect against violence should not only be implemented in sports, but the government should also make contributions to developing attitudes with the help of families, schools, and peer groups (Zukowska and Zukowski, 2008). Providing programs about violence during college education could have an

effect on the attitudes towards violence. In the event that an education program is designed about the prevention of violence in the school environment, students would use more constructive conflict solution approaches, they would have less violent behaviors and have a lower tendency towards violence. Moreover, a more secure and less violent school environment could be ensured (Uysal and Temel, 2009). In this respect, the focus should be on educational institutions that will train the personnel who will work in educational institutions and sports environments.

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