

## ANALYSIS OF THE LEVELS OF DOING SPORT AND AGGRESSION IN HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS

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### ABSTRACT

*The objective of this study is to examine the aggression levels of high school students who do and who do not do sports and to examine the effects of sport on aggression levels. In this study, survey method was used to measure the aggression levels. Aggression inventory, which was developed by Kiper and which had 30 items, was used to measure aggression. 78 male students studying in a high school of Samsun were included in the study. 43 of these students were licensed athletes, while 35 did not do sports. As for statistical methods, descriptive statistics and independent t test were used, following normality tests. The data obtained were recorded in SPSS 20 program and significance level was accepted as  $p < 0.05$ . When the destructive aggression, passive aggression and assertiveness levels of volleyball players and wrestlers were compared, no statistically significant difference was found ( $p > 0.05$ ). When athlete and non-athletes groups were compared, statistically significant difference was found ( $p < 0.05$ ). As a result, significant differences were found in destructive aggression, passive aggression and assertiveness of athletes when compared with non-athletes.*

**Keywords:** Sport, aggression, high school students

### INTRODUCTION

Sport activities are very important in developing self-confidence, self-control, respect for others and positive behaviors. Participation in sport activities especially in school age contributes significantly to personality development. Students participation in sport activities in school age is at least as important as academic education. Curricular and extracurricular social, sportive and artistic activities are important to educate productive individuals who can adapt to society. These kinds of activities on the one hand give desired positive behaviors to individuals while on the other hand they minimize and prevent non-desired behavior patterns.

It can be said that individuals who do sports are livelier, more outgoing, more hardworking, more patient, more ready for social relations, more ready to adapt to

a new situation and more emotionally balanced (Tiryaki 1991). Similarly, through sports, people beat their opponents mentally and physically and satisfy themselves. However, some people advocate that their desires for aggression do not go away with sports; on the contrary, they say that these desires increase with sports (Şahin, 2003).

The importance of values related with aggression in the family and in the society about aggression and violence and the attitudes towards aggression should also be remembered. Children who learn aggression and violence from young ages generally continue these behaviors all their lives (Erşan et al. 2009). Social learning suggests that children not only learn how to commit violence, but also positively evaluate violence when it is rewarded (Fowler et al. 2016). Studies show that people who are inclined to violence are generally angrier and more aggressive than those who are not. However, the real association between anger and aggression is not so clear. Whether an angry person will behave aggressively depends on situational factors, the person's cognitive traits and assessments or the person's previous learnings and ability to assess the consequences of actions. Whether anger will cause aggression depends on the person's beliefs, expectations and even biological structure as well as conditions (Şahin, 2006).

Aggression can be defined as behaviors of an individual or a group to hurt others (Bilgin 1995). According to another definition, aggression is "hostile, offending, battering, agonizing behaviors conducted to surpass and lead others, to ruin things and negate things" (Erşan et al. 2009). Aggression can be examined in three groups as destructive aggression, assertiveness and passive aggression. Destructive aggression is thought to be synonymous with aggression including hostility. When people's expectations are not met, they can have complicated feelings such as disappointment, sadness and fear. A person who has such feelings can show aggressive behaviors which cannot be accepted by the society. Here, the person has the purpose to hurt the source that he thinks has hurt him. Assertiveness is stated to be one of the healthy behaviors in interpersonal communication and interaction. At the same time, it is an individual's way of protecting his rights by protecting other people's rights and stating his thoughts, feelings and beliefs directly, honestly and suitably. In assertiveness, while one tries to make others accept his thoughts, he does this within the limits of respect. However, assertive people do not allow others to be disrespectful or unfair to them. Passive aggression is to satisfy the feeling of aggression without making the other person angry. Here, the desire of hurting the person opposite perceptibly is predominant. Passive aggression can also be considered as an indirect type of aggression since individuals allow others to know directly or indirectly that they are angry or hurt by being cross or frowning (Tutkun 2010).

Recently, aggressive behaviors have increasingly become more frequent in schools, gymnasiums and stadiums in this technological age since children and adolescents have forgotten face to face communication as a result of visual media and social media and since their demands from life have changed. Children and adolescents are influenced from bad examples and they also try to solve their problems with such methods from time to time. It is important to find out the aggressive behaviors shown by adolescents in sports, the types of such aggressive

behaviors and the results of these behaviors in order to be able to prevent violence and aggression in sports. It is important to find out problems and take precautions about aggression, which is an important problem in society, especially in school children in order to prevent the problem from getting bigger.

The purpose of this study is to examine the levels of doing sport and aggression in high school students.

## MATERIAL AND METHODS

78 high school students between the ages of 13 and 15 participated in the study voluntarily. The average age of the athlete group (n=43) was found to be  $14.7 \pm 0.95$  (years), while the average age of the non-athlete group (n=35) was found to be  $14.9 \pm 1.21$  (years).

The participants were given a questionnaire form consisting of two parts under supervision. In the first part, there are questions about the demographic characteristics of the participants (age, gender, type of sport), while there is an aggression inventory in the second part. "Aggression Inventory" which was examined for validity and reliability by Kiper (1984), has 30 items and includes three sub-scales as destructive aggression, assertiveness and passive aggression. In the inventory, each subscale has 10 questions. The questions are 7-Likert type questions which are answered between the ends "does not fit me at all" and "fits me very much". Theoretically, a person who answers each question with "fits me very much" gets (+)30 points, while a person who answers each question with "does not fit me at all" gets (-)30 points. However, since minus scores cannot be used statistically and zero will cause a problem in statistical analysis, 31 was added to each total score. Thus, the lowest score one can get from each subscale is 1, while the highest score is 61. Although the inventory did not have one, a general aggression score was obtained for each participant based on the total scores of each subscale. Normality tests, descriptive statistics and independent t test were used as statistical method. The data obtained were recorded in SPSS 20 program and significance level was accepted as  $p < 0.05$ .

## RESULTS

The results of 78 high school students-23 volleyball players, 20 wrestlers and 35 non-athletes are presented below in tables.

**Table 1.** Distribution of participants' scores from the subscales of aggression inventory in terms of the state of doing sports

State of doing sports	n	Destructive Aggression	Passive Aggression	Assertiveness
Athletes	43	18.3	23.7	29.3
Sedentary	35	46.5	44.2	47.5
<b>p</b>		<b>&lt;0.05</b>	<b>&lt;0.05</b>	<b>&lt;0.05</b>

Statistically significant difference was found between the destructive aggression, passive aggression and assertiveness levels of the groups ( $p < 0.05$ ).

**Table 2.** Distribution of participants' scores from the subscales of aggression inventory in terms of sport branches

Branches	n	Destructive Aggression	Passive Aggression	Assertiveness
Volleyball	20	17.5	23.0	28.7
Wrestling	23	19.0	24.3	29.9
<b>p</b>		>0.05	>0.05	>0.05

No significant difference was found between the destructive aggression, passive aggression and assertiveness levels of the volleyball players and wrestlers in the athlete group ( $p > 0.05$ ).

## DISCUSSION

Sport has an important role not only physically but also in raising healthy individuals. In terms of individuals' being able to show positive behaviors accepted by the society, sport should be regarded as a part of education. However, sometimes the errors in individuals' perception of sport can trigger undesired behaviors. When the dimensions of violence and aggression in the society are considered, it should be understood that sport is an important opportunity to solve this problem and precautions should be taken by finding out the problems (Bayansalduz, 2014).

When the results of our study about aggression are examined, a statistically significant difference was found in the destructive aggression, passive aggression and assertiveness scores of the non-athlete group when compared with the athlete group ( $p < 0.05$ ). In a study conducted on male athletes and non-athletes who were high school students, Kırımlioğlu et al. (2008) found that there was no statistically significant difference between the aggression levels of the study groups ( $p > 0,05$ ). In a study conducted on high school students, Dervent et al. (2010) found that high school students who did sports were more assertive than those who did not do sports; however, they did not find differences in other aggressiveness types. Results can be seen to be different and this difference can be explained with the fact that individuals' aggressiveness levels are not only associated with their sporting habits. A great number of factors such as an individual's social environment, family and expectations can influence aggressive behaviors.

When the general aggression and sub-scale scores of volleyball players and wrestlers were examined, no statistically significant difference was found ( $p > 0.05$ ). Similarly, aggression level averages of wrestlers were found to be higher than those of volleyball players. Öcal (2007) found statistical differences in the comparison of general aggression, destructive and passive aggression and assertiveness comparisons of female volleyball players and female wrestlers ( $p < 0.05$ ) and reported that female wrestlers had higher levels of aggression when

compared with female volleyball players. Yıldız (2009) compared subjects' sport branches and the sub-dimensions of aggression and found that there were no significant differences between the aggression sub-dimensions of basketball, handball, football, table tennis, swimming and taekwondo athletes ( $p>0,05$ ). In the aforementioned study, handball players had the highest destructive aggression averages, while table tennis players had the lowest. This result supports the idea that athletes who do sports which include physical contact are more open to provocation and this can make the athlete more aggressive.

It can be said as a result of our study that athletes had less aggression attitudes when compared with non-athletes. This result can be associated with the thought that children who do sports will be mentally and emotionally more balanced. This result also supports the thought that school children can control their intense emotional changes with the support of sport and they can be satisfied with beating their opponents mentally and physically. By encouraging school children to do sports and by supporting them, aggression levels can be decreased since children coming from different cultures, different environments and different families will have more tolerance and more empathy.

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