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The perceptions of modern sports of students in the department of physical education and sports in Turkey

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The aim of this study is to determine the perceptions of modern sports of the students studying at the departments of physical education and sports in Turkey, and to examine them based on different variables such as age, gender, department, grade, academic gross domestic product (GPA) and the habit of actively doing sports. In terms of the data analysis process, the descriptive statistics were presented with the values of frequency, percentage, average and standard deviation. In order to determine the differences in the group average of the population, the researcher made use of one sample t-test. To compare three-phase groups, variance analysis (ANOVA) was conducted and the Sidak post hoc test was used for paired comparisons. The analysis was conducted using the statistical package for social sciences (SPSS) 21.0 packet program. The Cronbach Alpha analysis was also used to test the reliability of the three statements about modern sports in the survey. Following the validity and reliability studies conducted by Özer, the Cronbach Alpha was measured as 0.75 while specifically for the current study the Cronbach Alpha coefficient was found to be 0.80. In a review of the study findings, no statistically meaningful differences between the participant students' age, gender and active sports participation variables and the socio-economic, political and educational sub dimensions of the scale were found. On the other hand, there were differences found between students' departments, classes and grade point averages and the sub dimensions of the scale. The study results revealed that to improve perceptions of modern sports in Turkey, socio-economic, political and educational factors must be considered. In this sense, the need for new revisions has arisen considering the socio-economic, politic and educational issues all together.

Key words: School, sports, physical education, sports management, modern sports understanding.

INTRODUCTION

While sport provides opportunity for the eminence of countries, it also represents an obvious call for cultural, social and economic aspects (Nicholson et al., 2011). Insufficient physical activity that has become a universal

disorder is the fourth most common cause of death (Kohl et al., 2012).

Insufficient level of physical activity, especially obesity is a disorder that has fatal results like cardiovascular

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disease and diabetes. Therefore, children and young people should be encouraged to participate in physical activities, and sports with the aim of being healthy generations (Melekoğlu, 2015). Even in developed countries of western societies, physical activity level is low. Nowadays, 31% of population at the age of 15 and older ones are inactive (Hallal et al., 2012).

Today, sport is a significant factor in upbringing qualified persons who have completed their physical, social and emotional development, and also it can be considerably deemed as supporter of socializing process for children and adolescents (Pherson, 1981).

Participating in sport influences social and emotional development in addition to healthy development of young generation (Marquis and Baker, 2015). Participating in regular physical activity significantly contributes to cognitive functions development together with supporting healthy aging process for children, adolescents and also adults (Booth et al., 2000; Weuve et al., 2004). Such factors as competition, entertainment, rivalry and developing rivalry motivate participating in this area (Koivula, 2009). Participating in sport has substantial functions in terms of strengthening the entire society, enhancing communication, cooperation, solidarity and social ties in society (NSW Sport and Recreation, 2007).

Sport is a central element and prominent dimension of popular culture within many countries (Mewett, 1999). Because sport plays a vital role within communal actions. According to the Sport and Recreation New Zealand (SPARC) (2003), sport and physical activity fosters cooperation and helps strengthen social ties and networks within communities. For example, Harris (1998), suggest that sport can be used to foster new friendship and social connectivity often across class, religious and ethnic boundaries. There is a significant parallel between extending sports, which is one of the most common and influential institutions of modern society, to wider populations and having people play sports as well as the development level of the society (Ünal, 2009). That the habit of playing sports becomes a modern understanding would also increase the gains of sports.

The presence of common sense is the basic element in sports becoming a lifestyle and the popularization of modern sports understanding. In this sense, modern sports understanding can be defined as consisting of physical, socio-cultural and mental bases with the aim of improving agents' health, social, spiritual and mental well being. It also seeks to ensure that every side of society benefits from these bases in optimal levels.

In fact, participation in sports contributes to agents' cognitive, affective, physical and motor development as well as reinforces and organizes behaviors, skills, social and communicative abilities, a sense of excitement and competition, civil participation, and mental and emotional well being. Playing sports is an action with a goal in itself (Mirzeoğlu, 2013; Kale and Erşen, 2003; Zorba et al.,

2005; Ramazanoğlu and Ramazanoğlu, 2004; Allender et al., 2006; Edwards, 2013; Stepto and Butler, 1996; Acet, 2005; Erdemli, 2008). Also, in terms of its social contributions, sports is a determining factor in improving cooperation, unity, solutions to social problems, empowering a sense of belonging, social interactions, peace, love and respect, and ultimately it is a determining factor in improving social health and well being (Wermeulen and Verweel, 2006; Grieve and Sherry, 2012; Sherlock et al., 2010; Wessels and Joseph, 2013; Fereidouni et al. 2005).

That every side of society can reap the benefits of sports mentioned above is an indication of modern sports understanding. Thus, the acceptance and popularization of this understanding in society requires providing physical and mental background.

Statement of the problem

While Strong et al. (2005) emphasizes the supportive nature of an active lifestyle in society, Eime et al. (2015) underlines the significance of composing an effective and widespread sports environment for this aim, which can be said to refer to the mental preparation phase. However, in the name of the popularization of modern sports understanding, it is essential to promote a strong physical background, and an extensive and accessible facility network. Halonen et al. (2015) highlights the need for improving the facility concept, generalizing it and increasing the availability of these facilities.

It is vital to popularize sports in society, to have agents gain the above-mentioned qualifications and to perceive sports as a universal culture (Atasoy and Kutler, 2005). Despite its popularity around the world and its common language (Çeyiz and Özbek, 2014), sports gains popularity and prevalence based on societies' socio-economic conditions (Ekmekçi et al., 2013).

In Turkey, the government is primarily responsible for improving and popularizing sports in society. The 59th statement in the Constitution of the Republic of Turkey states that "The Republic encourages the prevalence of sports in society," which indicates that sports is a constitutional duty (the Constitution of the Republic of Turkey, 59th Statement).

Especially with the contributions to social structures and the encouraging attitudes of institutions, it is aimed to improve and popularize modern sports understanding in Turkey. One of leading factors in this goal is the students studying at the School of Physical Education and Sports, which delivers sports education in the country. That students practice educational activities in this sense would contribute to this understanding. It is crucial and essential to prepare and foster a background in Turkey which would improve the country through progress and independent institutions (Serarslan, 2005).

This study aims to explore the students' opinions studying at Physical Education and Sports departments in Turkey, and to examine them based on different demographic variables (Age, Gender, Department, Class, Academic Grade Point Averages and Active Participation in Sports).

METHODOLOGY

Research model

First of all, pollsters were selected to collect the data and a short briefing on the scale was given to the pollster. The data of the study was gathered through face to face surveys with students currently studying at departments of physical education teaching, sports management, movement and exercise, and recreation in sports fields of the universities in Turkey.

The sample of the study

According to the 2014 to 2015 report of the Higher Education Board, there are a total of 66 sports departments in Turkey's universities, 57 of which are the School of Physical Education and Sports, 7 are Institutes of Sports Sciences and 2 of them are the Supreme Council of Sports Sciences and Technology (Higher Education Board, 2015). The sample of the study was composed of the students currently studying at the various institutions in Turkey mentioned earlier. This group was determined with the random sampling method considering time, place, financial limitations and easy applicability of the method. 52 universities and 6,318 students studying at these universities participated in the study within Turkey.

Data collection tools

The survey used for data collection, *Sports Executives' Opinions towards Creating a Modern Sports Understanding*, was developed by Özer (2011). The questions in the survey are categorized under three sub dimensions: questions 1 to 10 belong to the socio-economic sub dimension; questions 11 to 20 belong to the educational sub dimension and questions 21-30 belong to the political sub dimension. It is a 5-point Likert scale in which statements ranged from 1 to 5 (1: *Definitely Disagree*, 2: *Disagree*, 3: *Undecided*, 4: *Agree*, 5: *Definitely Agree*). For a correct and efficient survey filling process, necessary instructions were given properly and the ambiguities were clarified for the participants. 7,500 surveys were delivered within the study context, 1,182 of the recollected ones were declared null and void, and 6,318 of them were accepted as valid for the study.

Data collection and analysis processes

Within study goals, the surveys were delivered and the obtained data and the participants' responses were encoded and computerized using Microsoft Excel. In the data analysis process, the descriptive statistics were presented via frequency, percent, average and standard deviation values. The t-test was used to check whether the ensemble average of the mass differed from its value. Additionally, to compare three-phase groups, variance analysis (ANOVA) was conducted and the Sidak post hoc test was

used for paired comparisons. The analysis was conducted using the statistical package for social sciences (SPSS) 21.0 packet program.

However, since the sample group differentiated, exploratory factor analysis and validity-reliability analysis were also implemented on the scale. Upon factor analysis, three sub dimensions were determined. These sub dimensions were labeled: *socio-economic*, *educational* and *politic dimensions*, just like in the original form of the scale. Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) sample sufficiency coefficient in the factor analysis was measured as 0.92, which refers to adequacy for showing factor structure of 6.318 surveys (The criteria value is $KMO > 0.70$). Additionally, according to the Bartlett test results ($p = 0.01, p < 0.05$), the sub dimensions are meaningful in structural terms.

The Cronbach Alpha analysis was conducted to test the reliability of 30 statements related to modern sports understanding. The Cronbach Alpha coefficient was found to be 0.75 in Özer' (2011) study while the results of the current study's analysis revealed the Cronbach Alpha as 0.80. This indicates that the scale is quite reliable. Following the reliability studies, factor analysis was implemented in order to test the construct validity of 30 statements in the survey. Since 3, 7 and 11 items are negative statements, their scores were reversely encoded and included in the analysis as such (Table 1).

The obtained three dimensions constitute about 66% of the total variance. In such studies, the variance rate is generally expected to be 60% or more. In a review of the dimensions, it was determined that the socio-economic sub dimension constituted 26% of the total variance, and its internal consistency was measured as 0.77. In terms of the educational sub dimension, it constituted 22% of the total variance with 0.75 internal consistency coefficient. For the political sub dimension, it was measured that it constituted 18% of the total variance and its internal consistency coefficient was 0.71. It was revealed that the validity and reliability of the 30 statements related to modern sports understanding were provided.

FINDINGS

It was determined that 20% of the participants were under 19, 54% were between 20 to 22 and 26% were at the age of 23 and older. It is also seen that 44% of them were female while 56% were male. 63% of the sample group was revealed to be actively participating in sports. 46% of the participant students were studying at teaching departments, 29% in sports management, 20% in coaching and 6% in recreation departments. 30% of them were first year, 40% were second year, 21% were at third year and 10% were fourth year students. 18% of these students had of low level grade point averages (1 to 1.99), 57% had medium (2 to 2.99), and 26% had high level grade point averages (3.00 to 4.00) (Table 2).

Determining the variables affecting modern sports understanding

Variance analysis (ANOVA) and the t-test were conducted with the aim of examining the relationships between participants' age, gender, active participation in sports, departments in which they study and grade point

Table 1. The construct of modern sports understanding survey.

Statement	Factor load	Internal consistency (%)	Explained variance
Socio-economic dimension			
I think the financial resources set aside for sports in our country are sufficient	0.577		
I think the activities and organizations conducted by public and private institutions with the aim of expanding sports in society are adequate	0.621		
I think the number of sports facilities in our country is insufficient.	0.463		
I don't think that without creating a modern sports understanding in society, sports wouldn't be popularized	0.603		
I think there is a direct proportion between the development level of the country and modern sports understanding	0.611		
I think with the establishment of modern sports understanding in society the health expenses of the society would decrease	0.599	26	0.77
I think with the establishment of modern sports understanding in society the violence rate in society would decrease.	0.573		
Creating a modern sports understanding in society could positively contribute to the solutions of social problems	0.589		
An increase in society's wealth is an important factor in creating a modern sports understanding and increasing the number of athletes	0.539		
A modern sports understanding has been created in our country	0.585		
Educational dimension			
I think sports culture and education are not delivered properly at educational institutions	0.470		
The basic education of creating a modern sports culture understanding should start at primary grade level	0.493		
I think in Turkish media, the programs which encourage and raise awareness about sports are adequate	0.609		
I think local administrations should play a more active role in creating a modern sports understanding and in the popularization of sports	0.476		
The creation of modern sports understanding in society would contribute to our international achievement in sports.	0.472		
Increasing the effectiveness of school sports activities would contribute to creating a modern sports understanding in society	0.462	22	0.75
I think the TV programs on both public and private channels which promote sports and raise awareness do not draw interest.	0.446		
I think the graduates from Physical Education and Sports Departments aren't of adequate qualification in terms of sports culture and education	0.473		
I think mass media tools are quite effective in creating modern sports understanding in society	0.439		
The reason for the low number of licensed athletes in our country is the insufficient sports education and sports awareness	0.436		
Political dimension			
I think the institutions which are responsible for sports management in our country are successful enough	0.651	18	0.71

Table 1. Contd.

The sports activities organized with the support of the government would contribute to create a modern sports understanding	0.459
I think the efforts of youth and sports clubs to popularize sports in our country are adequate	0.625
The sports legislations cannot meet the needs of modernization and popularization of sports	0.473
The inadequate number of qualified sports executives and sportsmen is one of the key problems in sports	0.582
The federations should play a more active role in creating and popularizing a modern sports understanding	0.641
An independent and influential genre should be created in Turkish sports in order to create and popularize a modern sports understanding	0.641
The absence of a mechanism to inspect sports policies in our country is one of the basic problems	0.683
There should be a functional national sports policy in order to create and popularize a modern sports understanding	0.679
A new sports policy should be established in order to create and popularize a modern sports understanding	0.653

averages, and modern sports understanding sub dimensions. The results are presented in Table 3. The Sidak paired comparison test was applied to determine the sources of the differences which were determined in the sub dimensions following variance analysis (Table 3).

Reviewing the relationships between the participant students' age groups and sub dimensions of the scale, the average dimension scores of the participants were found to be the same, which indicates that the age of participants does not have any effect on their modern sports understandings, and that the participants at different ages were at similar perception levels of modern sports understanding ($p>0.05$) (Table 4).

Following a review of the relationships between the sample group's gender features and sub dimensions of the scale, the average dimension scores of the participant students were measured to be the same, which indicates that the gender of the participants does not affect their modern sports understandings, and male and female participants possess similar perception levels concerning modern sports understanding ($p>0.05$) (Table 5).

After examining the relationships between the participants actively participating in sports and the sub dimensions of the scale, it was revealed that the average dimension scores of the participants were not different from each other, which indicates that the participants' conditions related to their active participation in sports have no effect on their modern sports understandings, and that both active and inactive participants have similar perception levels related to modern sports understanding ($p>0.05$) (Table 6).

According to the results, it was determined that the students' current departments do not have any effect on the socio-economic dimension average scores, and that the participants studying at different departments have the same average dimension scores ($F=0.29, p>0.05$).

In terms of the educational sub dimension, it was measured that the participant students' departments affected their average dimension scores, and that the students from recreation departments had higher average educational dimension scores than the ones from other departments ($F=6.16, p<0.05$). Thus, it can be inferred that when compared to the students from other departments, the students at recreation departments think that educational issues surrounding raising modern sports awareness are quite important ($p<0.05$).

On the basis of the political sub dimension of the scale, it was measured that the departments of the participants were influential on their average dimension scores, and the scores of students studying at recreation departments were found to be higher than other departments' students' scores ($F=11.05, p<0.05$), which indicates that recreation department students find political (management) issues surrounding modern sports understanding more important than other students ($p<0.05$) (Table 7).

According to the results, the class levels of the students do not have any effect on the socio-economic and education sub dimensions scores, and average dimension scores of the participants do not differ from each other's. Based on the results of the political sub dimension of the scale, it was determined that the participants' class levels affect their average dimension

Table 2. The participants' features.

Age	N	Percentage
Under 19	1.256	19.9
20- 22 age	3.399	53.8
23 age and above	1.663	26.3
Total	6.318	100.0
Gender		
Female	2.770	43.8
Male	3.548	56.2
Total	6.318	100.0
Actively doing sports		
Yes	4.001	63.3
No	2.317	36.7
Total	6.318	100.0
Department		
Teaching	2.879	45.6
Sports management	1.824	28.9
Coaching	1.242	19.7
Recreation	373	5.9
Total	6.318	100.0
Grade		
1	1.879	29.7
2	2.499	39.6
3	1.321	20.9
4	619	9.8
Total	6.318	100.0
Score averages		
Low (1-1.99)	1.125	17.8
Medium (2-2.99)	3.574	56.6
High (3.00-4.00)	1.619	25.6

Table 3. ANOVA test values based on age variable.

Dimension	Age group (Years)	N	X	s.s.	F	p
Socio-economic dimension	≤19	1256	2.62	0.52	0.71	0.49
	20-22	3399	2.62	0.57		
	≥23	1663	2.64	0.55		
Educational dimension	≤19	1256	3.08	0.47	0.16	0.85
	20-22	3399	3.07	0.50		
	≥23	1663	3.07	0.54		
Political dimension	≤19	1256	3.58	0.64	2.05	0.13
	20-22	3399	3.56	0.69		
	≥23	1663	3.53	0.67		

Table 4. T-test values based on gender variable.

Dimension	Gender	N	X	s.s.	t	p
Socio-economic dimension	Female	2.770	2.62	0.55	0.36	0.72
	Male	3.548	2.63	0.55		
Educational dimension	Female	2.770	3.07	0.48	0.01	0.99
	Male	3.548	3.07	0.52		
Political dimension	Female	2.770	3.55	0.67	0.71	0.48
	Male	3.548	3.56	0.68		

Table 5. T-test values based on active participation in sports variable.

Dimension	Actively doing sports	N	X	s.s.	t	p
Socio-economic dimension	Yes	4.001	2.62	0.57	0.96	0.34
	No	2.317	2.63	0.52		
Educational dimension	Yes	4.001	3.07	0.49	0.74	0.46
	No	2.317	3.08	0.52		
Political dimension	Yes	4.001	3.56	0.70	0.23	0.82
	No	2.317	3.56	0.64		

Table 6. ANOVA test values based on department variable.

Dimension	Department	N	X	s.s.	F	p	Paired comparison
Socio-economic dimension	Teaching (1)	2.879	2.62	0.56	1.24	0.29	i
	Sports management (2)	1.824	2.61	0.56			
	Coaching (3)	1.242	2.64	0.54			
	Recreation (4)	373	2.66	0.53			
Educational dimension	Teaching (1)	2.879	3.06	0.53	6.16	0.01	4>1,2,3
	Sports management(2)	1.824	3.05	0.47			
	Coaching (3)	1.242	3.09	0.48			
	Recreation (4)	373	3.16	0.47			
Political dimension	Teaching (1)	2.879	3.56	0.68	11.05	0.01	4>1,2,3
	Sports management(2)	1.824	3.50	0.68			
	Coaching (3)	1.242	3.59	0.67			
	Recreation (4)	373	3.71	0.64			

scores, and that it was found to be higher among first year students than second class students ($F=3.27$, $p<0.05$), which indicates that first year students think that political (management) issues surrounding modern sports awareness are more important when they are compared to second year students ($p<0.05$) (Table 8).

In terms of the socio-economic sub dimension, the grade point averages of the participants were found to be effective on their average dimension scores, and the participants with higher grades had higher average dimension scores than the students with lower grade point averages ($F=5.80$, $p<0.05$). The participants with

Table 7. ANOVA test values based on class grade variable.

Dimension	Grade	n	X	s.s.	F	p	Paired comparison
Socio-economic dimension	1	1879	2.63	0.53	1.41	0.24	-
	2	2.499	2.61	0.56			
	3	1.321	2.64	0.57			
	4	619	2.63	0.53			
Educational dimension	1	1.879	3.08	0.48	1.68	0.17	-
	2	2.499	3.06	0.49			
	3	1.321	3.09	0.50			
	4	619	3.07	0.62			
Political dimension	1	1.879	3.59	0.66	3.27	0.02	1>2
	2	2499	3.53	0.69			
	3	1.321	3.58	0.68			
	4	619	3.55	0.68			

Table 8. ANOVA test values based on academic GPA.

Dimension	GPA	n	X	s.s.	F	p	Paired comparison
Socio-economic dimension	Low (1-1.99)	1.125	2.58	0.55	5.80	0.01	1<3
	Medium (2-2.99)	3.574	2.62	0.55			
	High (3.00-4.00)	1.619	2.66	0.57			
Educational dimension	Low (1-1.99)	1.125	3.02	0.50	8.42	0.01	1<2,3
	Medium (2-2.99)	3.574	3.08	0.50			
	High (3.00-4.00)	1.619	3.09	0.50			
Political dimension	Low (1-1.99)	1.125	3.51	0.72	5.61	0.01	1<3
	Medium (2-2.99)	3.574	3.55	0.66			
	High (3.00-4.00)	1.619	3.60	0.68			

higher grades think that socio-economic matters related to the development of modern sports understanding were more important when they were compared with the ones with lower grades ($p<0.05$).

Based on the education sub dimension, it was seen that the grade point averages of the participants had an influence on their average dimension scores, and that the participants with medium levels of grades had higher average dimension scores than the ones with lower grades ($F=8.42, p<0.05$), which could indicate that the participants with high and medium levels of grades think that education issues related to the development of modern sports understanding are quite significant compared to the participants with lower grades ($p<0.05$).

In terms of the political sub dimension, it was revealed that grade point averages of the participants had

influences on their average dimension scores, and the participants with higher grades had higher political dimension average scores than the ones with lower grades ($F=5.61, p<0.05$). From this, it is determined that the participants with higher grades accept political (management) issues surrounding the development of modern sports understanding as more important when they were compared with the students with lower grades ($p<0.05$). Based on the study's results, it is concluded that academic success levels of the participants had an effect on their modern sports understandings ($p<0.05$).

DISCUSSION

It seems possible to develop and popularize modern

sports understanding (MSU) in Turkey on the condition that various social institutions would act with a common understanding. One of these institutions is university and sports departments delivering education within universities. When agents studying at these departments gain scientific knowledge related to sports and transfer it to society, this contributes to the development of MSU, to the constitution of a qualified sports culture and to an increase in the popularization of sports in the country.

Likewise, universities' comments on sports from a scientific perspective and making it a practical issue can be perceived as both an individual and a social gain. Thus, the generations studying at the sports departments of universities are expected to contribute to both the intellectual and physical sides of MSU in Turkey and to transfer this to the following generations.

In this context, this study aims to determine the perceptions of modern sports in Turkey of those students studying at the departments of physical education and sports and to examine differences based on demographic variables of the participants. According to the results based on the data obtained from the sub scales, meaningful differences between the political sub scale and participants' departments, classes and academic grade point averages were found.

It was determined that in terms of the political sub scale, the participants' departments were influential on average dimension scores and this influence and difference was found to be higher in average scores in the political dimension of recreation students than the students at the other departments ($F=11.05, p<0.05$). It is inferred that political (management) issues surrounding modern sport understanding are more important for recreation students than other departments' students ($p<0.05$).

In terms of the political sub dimension, the participants' classes were also influential on average dimension scores, and the difference in first year students were higher than second year students ($F=3.27, p<0.05$), which can be interpreted as that compared to second year students, first year students think that political (management) issues are more important for modern sport understanding ($p<0.05$).

In terms of the political sub scale, the participants' average scores were found to be effective in average dimension scores, and the participants with higher scores also have higher political dimension scores than the students with lower grades ($F=5.61, p<0.05$). The participants with higher scores are thought to perceive political (management) issues as more important for improving modern sports understandings than the participants with lower scores ($p<0.05$).

It can be accepted that a health functioning of social institutions depends on the effectiveness of political power in the country. In this sense, political understanding is determinant and is of great influence in

creating and increasing mass interest in sports which is one of these social institutions.

Today, primarily developed countries give the necessary importance to sports (Özen et al., 2012). This is due to the fact that sports is a significant tool in raising healthy generations and establishing social peace, and sports policies of countries are dealt with in this sense (Doğu and Yetim, 2014). Within these policies, crucial legislative regulations have been enacted. However, for Turkey, it seems a must to revise these legislative policies and political understanding.

The low numbers of licensed athletes and low success rate in Turkey are indicators that sports has not been adopted as a life style and of an inadequate level of necessary sports policies in the country (Aykın and Bilir, 2013). There should be established a sports policy which is practical and appropriate for daily conditions. Sports is of vital importance in guiding the country's improvement (İmamoğlu et al., 2007).

Sports policies for Turkey absolutely aim to encourage a high level of participation and incentives. In fact, the sole need of the country is the creation of a sports culture (Bağlan, 2014). Thus, within the sports system, there are needs of competitive power and modern management models which would meet the requirements immediately (Dilek, 2013). With the aim of transferring these political and legislative regulations into practice, especially the regulations supporting the youth and accepting them as a valuable source in this sense should not be ignored (Şentuna and Çelebi, 210). As emphasized earlier, legislative regulations and political understanding should focus on mass participation and encouragement. In this sense, organization of sports activities by public institutions could be an important step.

The state is primarily responsible for improving and popularizing sports understanding in Turkey. The 59th statement in the Constitution of the Republic of Turkey mentions states that "The Republic encourages the prevalence of sports in society," which indicates that sports is a constitutional duty (the Constitution of the Republic of Turkey, 59. Statement).

Karataş et al. (2011) remarks that there should be sportive activities and organizations so as to have the masses internalize sports while Aydın (2008) implies that public institutions are to organize activities and organizations supporting sports. In a study by Şahin and İmamoğlu (2011), 86% of the participants expressed that sports services are under the responsibility of the state. With the aim of meeting this liability, the state is expected to organize sports activities and organizations to increase people's interests in sports (Karahüseyinoğlu et al. 2003). However in another study by Aydın et al., (2007) it is understood that the state was unable to reach the desired standards related to sports, and was unable to popularize it among the masses.

Addressing the sports understanding in the country

from a educational perspective is necessary in order to have political understanding contribute to the development of modern sports understanding. Referring to this necessity and the findings related to the sub scales, meaningful differences between the education sub scale and participants' department and class were found.

It was found in the education sub scale that the participants' departments affected the average dimension scores, and the average dimension scores of recreation department students were higher than the other departments' students' scores ($F=6.16, p<0.05$). It is seen that the students in the recreation department accept the issues surrounding modern sports understanding as more important when they are compared to other departments' students ($p<0.05$).

It was revealed that students grade point averages played a role in the education sub scale average scores and that the participants with high and medium levels of grades had higher education sub scale average scores than other participants with lower grades ($F=8.42, p<0.05$). The participants with high and medium level grades think that the educational issues surrounding the development of modern sports understanding are important when compared to the students with lower grades ($p<0.05$).

Education is the unique tool of both individual and social development. It is also determinant in creating a sports culture and modernization of sports understanding. Physical education courses and sports culture, especially those delivered at schools can influence all aspects of an individual's life. Kirk (2004) implies that the students who play sports within his skills play an important role in society and in sports culture. At this point, it is vital to extend in-school and out-of-school sports activities.

In fact, Melekoğlu (2015) emphasizes that the students who participate in sports activities within a school setting continue to participate in such activities when they are out of school. Thus, Aydoğan et al. (2015) underscores that sports activities should be given to the individuals more often and effectively within school settings so as to assess this understanding in an effective way because a school setting is ideal for increasing participation in sports. Thus, it should be increased through developing various strategies with school management (Drake et al., 2015).

Individuals' participation in in-school and out-of-school activities is of vital importance in terms of physical, cognitive and mental development. With the development and modernization of sports understanding, one can expect to witness multi-dimensional developments among students. Participation in sports activities within a school setting helps the youth to maintain and improve mental health (Jewett et al., 2014). It would not be incorrect to think that the student showing healthy mental developments would also have higher academic success.

It is unquestionable that there is a positive relationship between students' academic success and sports activities (Pequero, 2010; Guest and Schneider, 2003).

At this point, a study by Feldman and Matjasko (2007) revealed that the students who participated in one or more activities had the highest grade point averages while the ones not participating had the lowest grade point averages. Although the positive relationship between participation in sports activities and academic success have been proved clearly and scientifically, the study conducted by Ünal (2011) revealed that, in Turkey, the importance of the matter has not been thoroughly understood and sports understanding has yet to be instilled in students' minds at schools in Turkey.

Certainly, one of the determining factors of participation in in-school and out-of-school sports activities includes students' or their families' socio-economic status. As a result, Sarı (2012) conducted extensive research in Turkey and found that the students from low income families participated in extracurricular activities quite less than other students. Thus, it is expected that students with high academic success adopt a more positive sports understanding and a higher level of modern sports understanding.

In terms of students in Turkey, the popularization of sports culture and modernization of perspectives towards sports not only depends on schools but also on the cooperation and mutual support of public institutions and mass media tools. Increasing awareness and encouraging society to take part in sports is a much easier task using mass media. Regarding the interest in sports today, the public shares an opinion which has provided a background for the increase in the number of agents who actively play sports or who are interested in sports activities as spectators. Mass media tools play a significant role in the creation, enlightenment and guiding of this public opinion (Ünsal and Ramazanoğlu, 2013; Şahan and Çınar, 2004). Yücel et al. (2015) stated that mass media tools play a determining role in agents' playing sports and in their sports preferences because active participation can be encouraged through the advertising of various sports branches through media (Karataş et al. 2011).

With the unitary state system in Turkey, the provincial administrations in Turkey and especially the local departments are expected to act in accordance primarily with schools and other institutions, and to extend sports culture to the whole country by starting with cities first. In other words, since the local administrations are the closest management unit to the public, they play an essential role in the modernization and popularization of sports understanding.

In a review of European countries, local administrations meet the public's recreation and sports needs, raise awareness in public and instill this understanding through working in cooperation with both public institutions and

private subsidiaries. These institutions which undertake the delivery of appropriate and scientific education, prepare the setting and provide services (Mersinli, 2009). Concerning the situation in Turkey, Ateş (2011) indicates that sports activities inherently possessing local and common features would be more efficient if they delivered to the public with the cooperation of municipalities and other local administrations.

Local administrations are the governmental institutions which deliver local services in the development and modernization of sports, which encourages people to play sports and meet people locally. Municipalities are expected to give particular importance to the public's content concerning sports, to increase the quality of service, attendance and new memberships at sports facilities; namely, they are expected to be more active in the issues related to sports participation (Yüzgenç and Alay, 2014; Sunay, 2000).

Dealing with sports culture with a modern understanding and providing all sides of society with sports participation are among the key sports policies. Especially an approach which does not consider the differences in all sides of society would affect the development of modern sports understanding in a negative way. In this sense, the findings related to the study's sub dimension of socio-economic status suggest that there is a meaningful relationship between the participants' socio-economic status sub dimension and grade point averages. Considering the relational rates, the participants' grade point averages were found to be effective on their average dimension scores, and the average socio-economic dimensions scores of the participants with higher grade point averages were seen to be higher than the students with lower grade point averages ($F=5.80, p<0.05$).

In this context, compared to the participants with lower grade point averages, the participants with higher grade point averages think that socio-economic issues surrounding the development of modern sports understanding are more important ($p<0.05$). Through investing in sports more in terms of individual, administrative and social perspectives, developed countries encourage people to spend more time playing sports (Bernard and Busse, 2004). In fact, it can be inferred that the economic development of countries coincide with their achievements in sports (Saatçioğlu and Karaca, 2012). Societies' attitudes towards sports reflect their general structure. Contemporary societies accept sports as an inseparable part of life (Yetim, 2010), and as the most important indicator of their development (Yazıcı, 2014).

Social progress and modernization are the highlights of countries' sports understandings. Güzel et al. (2012) claims that sports culture is something to be gained in developed countries while according to Bulgu (2013) widespread participation in sports is the indicator of the

development of sports culture in a country.

Social development can be expressed through social, cultural and economic indicators. The development and modernization of sports understanding can be interpreted as being one of these indicators. The widespread participation in sports in economically and socially developed countries where there are high level of incomes is a commonly known fact (Erkal, 1982).

According to Atasoy and Kuter (2005), sports become more widespread based on a society's socio-economic conditions. Additionally, in a more specific study, Atan et al. (2014) expresses that the places which are developed in socio-cultural and economic terms have a more positive attitude and have greater expectations from physical education and sports while Yener and Güngörmüş (2006) emphasize that there is a parallel between cities' socio-economic development levels and sports achievements. To Doğan and Moralı (1999), almost all of the individuals sports regularly come from medium and high levels of income groups.

Conclusion

Modern sports understanding refers to a sports culture in which all sides of the society participate in the process, and which strives for both individual and social well being. The research results suggest that the modernization and popularization of modern sports understanding in Turkey should be dealt with as a whole (socio-economic, political and educational dimensions) instead of from only one perspective.

In a review of the study findings, no statistically meaningful differences between the participant students' age, gender and active sports participation variables and the socio-economic, political and educational sub dimensions of the scale were found. On the other hand, there were differences found between students' departments, classes and grade point averages and the sub dimensions of the scale.

Compared to the students at other departments, the students from recreation department think that educational and political issues surrounding the development of modern sports understanding are more important than other issues, and these issues are to be dealt with thoroughly. Compared to the second year students, the first year students were found to think that political issues are of more significance in popularization of MSU in Turkey, and necessary political steps should be taken accordingly. And lastly, the students with higher grade point averages accept the socio-economic, educational and political issues surrounding the development and popularization of MSU in Turkey as important, and they agree that these issues should be taken into consideration as a whole.

According to the findings, it is concluded that

regulations should be improved through assessing the socio-economic, political and educational issues as a whole so as to develop and popularize MSU in Turkey. Thinking that the state is primarily responsible for these sports issues, we can also imply that the precisions of related public institutions concerning this matter would be a determinant in the process. It is vital in Turkey that the government enforces and popularizes sports concepts and should take necessary precautions (Sunay and Saracalıoğlu, 2003). Because, as also mentioned above, the state is responsible for creating, developing and popularizing sports culture in the country within its laws.

Dealing with MSU as a whole seems to be the only way to expand sports culture to every side of society no matter which socio-economic inequalities exist. In doing so, public institutions contribute to diversifying sports activities through providing in cash or in kind contributions. The active participation of local administrations and mass media tools in the process would increase the accessibility of the organized sports activities and the participation rate. Also, in terms of education, together with active roles of schools and amateur sports clubs in such activities, modern sports understanding would start at schools and expand to popularize, which would in turn contribute quantitatively and qualitatively to sports culture in the country.

And ultimately, the legislative responsibilities of the government related to sports would gain functionality when this process is supported by political power and when the legislative regulations are imposed. It would not be wrong to state that the Turkish Republic would deal with issues surrounding socio-economic, political and educational aspects of the development of MSU, and would fulfill necessary legislative regulations in order to improve the country.

CONFLICT OF INTERESTS

The author had not declared any conflict of interests.

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