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**INVESTIGATION OF SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS' SPORTSMANSHIP BEHAVIORS IN PHYSICAL EDUCATION AND SPORTS LESSON**

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**Abstract:** In this study, it was aimed to examine the sportsmanship behaviors of secondary school students in physical education and sports lessons. The sample of the study consists of 949 students selected by simple random sampling, continuing their education in Hatay in the 2021-2022 academic year. "Physical Education Lesson Sportsmanship Behavior Scale" was used as a data collection tool in the research. Descriptive statistics, t, and ANOVA tests were performed in the analysis of the data. According to the research findings; it has been determined that the students' sportsmanship behaviors, exhibiting positive behaviors, avoiding negative behaviors, and in general in the scale are at a very good level. While there was no significant difference in the display of positive behaviors and overall scale according to gender, a significant difference was found in favor of female students in the dimension of avoiding negative behaviors. In the dimension of exhibiting positive behaviors, the sportsmanship scores of the 7th-grade students were found to be significantly lower than the other grade levels. In the dimension of avoiding negative behaviors, 6th-grade students' scores were higher than other grade levels. In general, the sportsmanship behaviors of the 6th-grade students were found to be higher than the 7th and 8th-grade levels. As a result of the research, it was determined that secondary school students' sportsmanship behaviors were very good, primarily by avoiding negative behaviors in physical education and sports lessons. In-depth research is recommended to determine why middle school students' sportsmanship behaviors differ.

**Keywords:** Physical education and sports, secondary school, sportsmanship, student

**ORTAOKUL ÖĞRENCİLERİNİN BEDEN EĞİTİMİ VE SPOR DERSİ  
SPORTMENLİK DAVRANIŞLARININ İNCELENMESİ**

**Öz:** Bu araştırmada, ortaokul öğrencilerinin beden eğitimi ve spor dersi sportmenlik davranışlarının incelenmesi amaçlanmıştır. Araştırmanın örneklemini, 2021-2022 eğitim-öğretim yılında Hatay'da öğrenimlerine devam eden, basit tesadüfi örneklemeyle seçilmiş 949 öğrenci oluşturmaktadır. Araştırmada veri toplama aracı olarak "Beden Eğitimi Dersi Sportmenlik Davranışı Ölçeği" kullanılmıştır. Verilerin analiz edilmesinde betimleyici istatistikler, t ve ANOVA testi yapılmıştır. Araştırma bulgularına göre; öğrencilerin sportmenlik davranışları, olumlu davranışları sergileme, olumsuz davranışlardan kaçınma ve ölçeğin genelinde çok iyi düzeyde olduğu tespit edilmiştir. Pozitif davranışların sergilenmesi ile ölçeğin genelinde cinsiyete göre anlamlı farklılığa rastlanmazken, negatif davranışlardan kaçınma boyutunda kız öğrenciler lehine anlamlı fark tespit edilmiştir. Pozitif davranışların sergilenmesi boyutunda 7. sınıf öğrencilerinin sportmenlik puanları diğer sınıf seviyelerinden anlamlı olarak düşük bulunmuştur. Negatif davranışlardan kaçınma boyutunda 6. sınıf öğrencilerinin puanları diğer sınıf seviyelerinden yüksek bulunmuştur. Ölçeğin genelinde ise 6. sınıf öğrencilerinin sportmenlik davranışları 7 ve 8. sınıf seviyelerinden yüksek bulunmuştur. Araştırma sonucunda, ortaokul öğrencilerinin beden eğitimi ve spor dersinde öncelikli olarak negatif davranışlardan kaçınma yoluyla sportmenlik davranışlarının çok iyi olduğu tespit edilmiştir. Ortaokul öğrencilerin, sportmenlik davranışlarının neden farklılık gösterdiğini belirlemek amacıyla derinlemesine araştırma yapılması önerilir.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** Beden eğitimi ve spor, ortaokul, öğrenci, sportmenlik

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## INTRODUCTION

Physical education and sports lesson is a very comprehensive field in which motor skills are developed through physical activity and includes health, ethical values, psychological and social skills (Dowling & Kårhus, 2011; Evangelio et al., 2019). While sports branches are included in physical education lesson activities, mostly game-based activities constitute the general content of the lesson (Türkmen & Varol, 2015). The purpose of the physical education and sports lesson is to create a learning process that focuses on student activities that can improve students' physical abilities (Lubay & Purnama, 2020). The preparation of physical education and sports lesson times, places, and lesson contents in a structure that carries virtue, character, and moral values are very important for the development of students (Brunsdon & Walker, 2022; Omeñaca et al., 2015; Stewart, 2014). Students who experience core values such as fair play, obeying the rules, solidarity, negotiation, and sharing in course activities are more successful than their peers in creating a healthy personality (Proios, 2011; Yılmaz et al., 2017).

Physical education and sports lessons conducted in schools have 18 general objectives (MEGSB, 1988). When the general aims are examined; it is understood that 7 items are related to sports virtue and character. Students are expected to be successful individuals who are willing to participate in national holidays, be willing to work in cooperation, take responsibility and follow the leader, make decisions on the spot with self-confidence, stand against injustice, and protect public resources. The physical education and sports course curriculum was updated in 2018 and a special aim of 8 items was determined (MEB, 2018). In the secondary school physical education and sports curriculum; emphasis was placed on understanding cultural accumulation and values, and developing self-management skills. Finally, physical education and sports activities, communication skills, fair play, cooperation, social responsibility, leadership, sensitivity to nature, and respect for differences appear to be the most important goals (Temel, 2022). Students who have these characteristics in their personality and keep them alive show virtuous behavior and are therefore defined as sportsmen.

The concept of sportsmanship (gentlemanliness) comes first among the basic values in the field of physical education and sports. The “International Sportsmanship Association” was established in 1926 to encourage sportsmanship behaviors in sports fields. This union has grouped sportsmanship behavior under 8 principles. When these principles are examined; the rules must be obeyed under all circumstances, the teammates must be adhered to loyal, the athlete must keep himself conditioned, the athlete must control his anger, violence must be avoided in the game, one should not be overly proud of the game won, one should not be stressed in defeat, and be strong-spirited and open-minded for a healthy body (Koç, 2013). Sportsmanship emerges as respect for the rules of the game and the opponent, refusal to win at any cost, and showing an honorable attitude in defeat (Bernal Rubio & Daniel-Huerta, 2016; Yıldiran, 2005). In another explanation sportsmanship is an individual who is responsible and considerate in maintaining integrity in a competitive environment (Stornes & Ommundsen, 2004) and therewithal sportsmanship, respect, self-discipline, fairness, courtesy, tolerance, Supreme volunteerism, and generosity were described with values such as compassion (Keating, 2007; Pehlivan & Konukman, 2004). In summary, sportsmanship is the behavior of an individual participating in physical education and sports activities by moral norms (Cremades, 2014; Gencheva et al., 2017). Sportsmanship behaviors can be exhibited formally and informally. In formal sportsmanship, participation in physical education, and sports activities, the rules are followed under all circumstances. In informal sportsmanship, it is to be able to accept the competition on equivalent terms with the opposing players. Even when the referee makes the wrong decision against the opponent team, it is to be able to have the

willpower to correct this situation (Yıldıran, 2004). Undoubtedly, the most valuable form of sportsmanship is informal sportsmanship. With the gains brought by acting with a group and being a team, sportsman students exhibit sportsmanship behaviors (Günbay & Sarı, 2020).

Today, violence is frequently encountered in competitions within the scope of school sports and the principle of “winning at any cost” is adopted by students (Esentürk et al., 2015; Koç & Karabudak, 2017; Loland, 2013). In this direction, individuals in the game show very aggressive behaviors against their teammates, coaches, referees, and rival players (Gencheva et al., 2017; Koç & Güllü, 2017). Unsportsmanlike behaviors are observed especially in professional and contact team sports (Kavussanu et al., 2009; Sezen-Balçıkanlı & Yıldıran, 2011). In football competitions, unsportsmanlike behaviors such as having illegal players play to win, provoking cards by provoking the opponent, and deliberately reducing the tempo of the game are striking (Temel et al., 2021). Moreover, as professionalism increases, elite athletes perceive unsportsmanlike behavior as legitimate (Green & Gabbard, 1999). In addition to these, many undesirable behaviors such as racism, discrimination, doping, betting, and match-fixing are encountered in sports competitions (Jang, 2013). The media, club presidents, sports managers, trainers, and teachers take a role in increasing unsportsmanlike behavior, knowingly or unknowingly, with their various discourses (Tanrıverdi, 2012).

There is a significant relationship between motivational orientations and sportsmanship. Students who adopt an absolute success-oriented ego orientation show unsportsmanlike behavior. Instead, students who adopt process-oriented task orientation engage in behaviors of obeying the game rules, accepting winning and losing (Ceglie, 2019). Schools and sports clubs have a great job to train in the light of a task-oriented motivational climate, away from ego-oriented approaches in the development of sportsmanship (Ford et al., 2012). Undoubtedly, when physical education and sports lesson activities are organized in this direction, sportsmanship orientation will reach the desired level (Akandere et al., 2009). As a result of playing different games and benefiting from sportive activities in physical education classes, peers give more importance to values such as cooperation, tolerance and cooperation, thus improving their sportsmanship skills (Glugatch et al., 2021). If the students, whose sportsmanship skills will be acquired, participate in physical education and sports classes with enthusiasm, the intended goals will be achieved (Günbay & Sarı, 2020).

According to the results of the literature, it was concluded that sportsmanship was good in female students (Ekinci & Koç, 2020; Türkmen & Varol, 2015), and male students (Kartal & İnan, 2018; Kural et al., 2022) or (Kayışoğlu et al., 2015; Rarujanai et al., 2022) that gender did not an important variable. Another issue affecting the formation of sportsmanship is the grade level at which students are categorized according to their age in formal education. The sportsmanship of the students with low-grade levels (5-6) at the secondary school level (Altun & Güvendi, 2019; Ekinci & Koç, 2020; Hassandra et al., 2007), the more advanced grade level is better (Kaplan & Akyüz, 2020; Kayışoğlu et al., 2015) or that grade level is not an effective variable (Goksel & Zorba, 2017; Yalçın et al., 2020), different opinions have been reached about each other. Based on this, research; this study was conducted to determine the physical education and sports lesson sportsmanship behaviors of secondary school students. In the study, it is thought that the results of the study will be important since it will also be examined whether gender or class level will be an effective variable in the formation of sportsmanship.

## METHODS

### Research Model

In this research, the relational survey model was used based on the quantitative research approach. This model is a useful model that determines the nature of the change between many variables and is used in recognizing relationships in large sample groups (Can, 2019: 9).

### Research Group

The research sample consisted of 949 secondary school students studying in Hatay. It is expected that there will be at least 250 data sets in scientific research (Karagöz & Bardakçı, 2020: 171). According to another view, it was argued that the sample should be at least 300 people in survey model studies (Cabrera-Nguyen, 2010: 101). In this respect, it is accepted that the sample group included in the research is sufficient. The research sample was formed by a simple random sampling method.

**Table 1.** Demographic characteristics of students

Variable	Subcategories	f	%	Total
Gender	Male	428	45.1	949
	Female	521	54.9	
Grade	5	137	14.4	
	6	136	14.3	
	7	473	49.8	
	8	203	21.4	

### Physical Education Lesson Sportsmanship Behavior Scale

There are 22 items in total, 11 of which are positive and 11 of which are negative statements, in the 5-point Likert-type scale developed by Koç (2013). The scale consists of 2 factors: exhibiting positive behaviors and avoiding negative behaviors. When the scale is evaluated over the total score, 22-110 points; when the average score is used, a score between 1 and 5 can be obtained. Cronbach's alpha internal consistency coefficients of the scale; It is .86 in the factor of exhibiting positive behaviors, .84 in the dimension of avoiding negative behaviors and .88 in the overall scale. As a result of the eigenvalues of the factors, the variance explained by the scale is 41.60%. Scale factor loads range from .727 to .459. High scores obtained from the scale mean that sportsmanship behaviors are exhibited at a good level.

### Procedure

The research started with the written permission of “Niğde Ömer Halisdemir University Scientific Research and Publication Ethics Committee” (meeting numbered DECISION-2021/11-08 dated 02.07.2021 and document number E-86837521-050.99-79838). A voluntary consent form for participation in the study was approved by the students and their parents, after obtaining permission from the school administration. The data were collected in the first semester of the 2021-2022 academic year, using the distribute-from-schools method.

### Data Analysis

The obtained data were analyzed with the help of the SPSS (Ver: 24.0) statistical package program. The relevance of the data to the normal dispersion was analyzed by regardful the reference values of “skewness -1.96 and kurtosis +1.96” (Can, 2019: 85). Since appropriate reference values were determined for the sportsmanship scale (skewness -.873; kurtosis .418) used in the study, parametric tests were applied in pairwise and multiple comparisons. Negative statements in the scale were evaluated with the reverse coding method. In the study, descriptive statistics, t test, and ANOVA tests were performed and a .05 significance level was taken into

account.

## RESULTS

First of all, descriptive analyzes were applied in the research. Then, comparisons were made according to gender and grade level.

**Table 2.** Physical education lesson sportsmanship behavior scores of students

Factors	n	Min	Max	$\bar{x}$	Sd
Exhibiting positive behaviors	949	1.55	5.00	4.21	.659
Avoiding negative behaviors	949	2.45	5.00	4.34	.593
The whole the scale	949	2.73	5.00	4.27	.521

Table 2 shows the physical education lesson sportsmanship behavior scores of the students. According to the table, the scores of the students' sportsmanship behaviors were found at a very good level. The students got the highest score in the dimension of avoiding negative behaviors.

**Table 3.** Comparison of physical education lesson sportsmanship behavior scores according to the gender of the students

Factors	Gender	n	$\bar{x}$	Sd	t	p
Exhibiting positive behaviors	Male	428	4.24	.617	1.481	.139
	Female	521	4.18	.691		
Avoiding negative behaviors	Male	428	4.23	.601	-4.995	.000*
	Female	521	4.42	.574		
The whole the scale	Male	428	4.24	.520	-1.876	.061
	Female	521	4.30	.521		

\*( $p < .05$ )

There was no significant difference according to gender in the dimension of displaying positive behaviors and overall scale ( $p > .05$ ). A significant difference was found in favor of female students in the dimension of avoiding negative behaviors ( $p < .05$ ).

**Table 4.** Comparison of physical education lesson sportsmanship behavior scores of students according to grade level

Factors	Grade	n	$\bar{x}$	Sd	F	p	Difference
Exhibiting positive behaviors	5	137	4.38	.620	10.050	.000*	5, 6, 8 > 7
	6	136	4.31	.556			
	7	473	4.09	.715			
	8	203	4.29	.561			
Avoiding negative behaviors	5	137	4.31	.638	6.737	.000*	5, 7, 8 < 6
	6	136	4.51	.518			
	7	473	4.34	.621			
	8	203	4.22	.514			
The whole the scale	5	137	4.34	.561	5.783	.001*	7, 8 < 6
	6	136	4.41	.394			
	7	473	4.22	.568			
	8	203	4.26	.426			

\*( $p < .05$ )

A significant difference was found in the scores of sportsmanship behaviors according to the grade level of the students ( $p < .05$ ). In the dimension exhibiting positive behaviors, the scores of the 7th-grade students were found to be significantly lower than the other grade levels ( $p < .05$ ). In the dimension avoiding negative behaviors, the scores of 6th-grade students were found to be significantly higher than other grade levels. In general, the scores of the 6th-grade students were higher than the 7th and 8th-grade students ( $p < .05$ ).

## DISCUSSION

Physical education and sports lesson sportsmanship behaviors of secondary school students were found at a very good level. Students' avoidance of exhibiting negative behaviors is better than exhibiting positive behaviors. The Ministry of National Education of the Republic of Turkey, with the addition of values education to its curriculum in 2018, wants to raise individuals who have adopted national-spiritual values. Among these values, there are values such as justice, responsibility, self-control, friendship, and helpfulness that make up the spirit of sportsmanship (Kangalgil et al., 2021). When alternative teaching models and methods are used in addition to traditional methods in physical education and sports lessons, it is viewed that students behave appropriately for sportsmanship. Students can gain sportive virtues with approaches such as the personal social responsibility model, sports education model, and game teaching to understand (Brunsdon & Walker, 2022). In their research, Courel-Ibáñez et al., (2019) grouped students according to exemplary behavior patterns and conducted physical education and sports lessons according to the personal social responsibility model. As a result of the research, it was determined that the students in the sportsmanlike and non-violent behavior cluster exhibited their sportsmanship behaviors in the playgrounds in line with the applied model. Gómez Mármol et al., (2018) observed that Spanish secondary school students studying in low-income rural areas increased their sportsmanship through the personal social responsibility model, and their violent and aggressive behaviors decreased. Similarly, Sánchez-Alcaraz Martínez et al., (2019) observed in their research that after applying the personal social responsibility model, students' responsibility and sportsmanship behaviors improved and they avoided violent behaviors. Through the sports education model, students can achieve similar sportsmanship gains (Méndez-Giménez et al., 2015). In their research, Burgueño and Medina-Casaubón (2020) noted that students who took the basketball unit through the sports education model developed the values of respect for rules and referees, respect for social contracts, full commitment, and respect for competitors. Robles et al., (2020) similarly found that the sports education model increased the sportsmanship behaviors of the students, but did not create a change in the physical activity levels. It is understood that sportsmanship behaviors are gained depending on the way physical education and sports lessons are taught. When physical education and sports lesson is applied through traditional or alternative methods in accordance with its purpose, students act in accordance with the spirit of sportsmanship (Temel & Kangalgil, 2021). In addition, students' strong motivation toward the lesson (Sierra-Díaz et al., 2022) and their awareness of sportsmanship (Ludwiczak & Bronikowska, 2022) are important factors in the development of sportsmanship behaviors. It was understood that the students participating in the research exhibited sportsmanship behaviors at a very good level because they carefully followed the lessons, had positive motivation towards the lesson, and were aware of the value (sportsmanship) learning outcomes.

Gender was not an important predictor of sportsmanship in terms of exhibiting positive behaviors and in the whole scale. In the dimension of avoiding negative behaviors, female students played a more dominant role. The first and most important institution that helps to form the character of individuals is the family. It is predicted that individuals can act within ethical criteria with the education received in the family. Şahin et al. (2021), it was observed that the sportsmanship behaviors of children who grew up at home with democratic family attitudes were high. It has been determined that especially female students raised in this atmosphere tend to exhibit appropriate behaviors and avoid inappropriate behaviors. Female students are in a task-oriented motivational climate that aims to achieve gains in the process, instead of ego orientation focused on winning. In sports competitions, girls show higher empathy skills compared to boys. Carrying out research in this direction, Kavussanu et al.

(2009) observed that girls competing in sports fields exhibit prosocial behaviors that are task-oriented, have high empathy skills, and are in line with the spirit of sportsmanship. In addition, female athletes avoid aggressive behavior and reflected their sportsman identity in the field. Koç and Nas (2022), on the other hand, found a relationship between academic self-efficacy, and sportsmanship and concluded that girls' academic self-efficacy and sportsmanship are better than boys. In the study of Efek and Yiğiter (2022), a negative relationship was found between stress and sportsmanship; it was defined that the stress levels of the girls were lower than the boys, and their sportsmanship was higher. In the study of Efek and Türegün (2022), it was seen that girls who are positive perfectionists avoid exhibiting negative behaviors and their sportsmanship is close to perfect as expected. Male students are in a better position than female students in participating in sports activities (Efek & Yiğiter, 2021; Yıldız & Özgül, 2017). In this situation, male students face a higher risk of injury in sports games. Güvendi et al. (2019) research showed that secondary school students who experienced fewer sports injuries were better at sportsmanship behaviors. In particular, it has been noticed that girls are ahead of boys in sportsmanship behaviors. These studies in the literature confirmed the research findings.

There is evidence that gender difference does not affect sportsmanship when physical education and sports lessons are model-based. In the study conducted by Burgueño and Medina-Casabón (2020), the sportsmanship of male and female students who received sports training showed a similar development. Kayışoğlu et al., (2015), on the other hand, concluded that the purpose of the lesson was achieved by the presence of a gym and sports areas for practicing physical education and sports lessons, and that male and female students exhibited similar sportsmanship behaviors. There is a relationship between students' expectations from physical education and sports lessons, their task values, and their sportsmanship. Rarujanai et al., (2022) found that Malaysian young students' expectations, task values, and sportsmanship were highly positively correlated; they found that there was no significant difference between the genders. Contrary to these results, there are results related to the fact that male students are better at sportsmanship (Kural et al., 2022; Türkçapar et al., 2020). When situations such as readiness and motivation of the researched sample are considered, different study findings are reached. The fact that different results on the gender variable are in the literature requires detailed research in terms of sportsmanship and gender.

In the dimension of exhibiting positive behaviors, 5th-grade students, avoided negative behaviors, and 6th-grade students in general displayed more sportsmanlike behaviors. Throughout the scale, sportsmanship scores tended to decrease starting from the 6th-grade level, and the scores of the 7th and 8th grades were significantly lower. The lowest sportsmanship score was seen at the 7th-grade level. When the literature is examined, Hassandra et al. (2007), as a result of providing Olympic education to middle school students, fair play behaviors of 5th-grade students have improved significantly. As a result of their research, Ekinci and Koç (2020) found the sportsmanship behaviors of 5th and 6th-grade students with high academic success at a very good level. In the study of Koc (2017), 5th-grade students exhibited better empathy and sportsmanship behaviors compared to higher grade levels, while the tendency to violence was found at the lowest level. At lower ages, students avoid violence and act with sportsmanship in this direction. Students, whose age progresses with the grade level, continue to be a part of sports by joining sports clubs or school teams. In their research, Koç and Tamer (2016) determined that students can exhibit negative behaviors with their participation in sports, and students with further education (grades 9-10) become prone to violence. It has been detected that the 5th-grade students are willing to exhibit the sportsmanship behaviors desired to be seen on the sports fields. Sportsmanship is at a good level in the 5th and 6th grades of secondary school, and there is a wide range of literature on the decreasing trend of



sportsmanship in the following grade levels (Altun & Güvendi, 2019; Buğdaycı & Abakay, 2018; Doğar & Yağmur, 2019; Türkmen & Varol, 2015; Yıldız & Özgül, 2017; Yılmaz et al., 2017). These considerations, therefore, confirm the study findings.

## CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

As a result of the research; the opinion that the physical education and sports lesson sportsmanship behaviors of secondary school students are at a very good level has been dominant. According to the avoidance of negative behaviors, female students achieved higher scores. With regard to the grade level, the highest sportsmanship scores were measured at the 6th-grade level, while the lowest sportsmanship scores were measured at the 7th and 8th-grade levels. Based on the results of the research, it is recommended to conduct in-depth research to examine the differentiation of sportsmanship behaviors especially due to grade level in physical education and sports lessons.

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