



# The Effect of Sports on Life Skills: A Descriptive Study on Parents

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## **Authors' contributions**

*This work was carried out in collaboration between both authors. Author MG designed the study, performed the statistical analysis, wrote the protocol, and wrote the first draft of the article. Author AV conducted the literature research of the study and delivered the surveys to the clubs included in the study. Both authors read and approved the final manuscript.*

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## **ABSTRACT**

**Aims:** The aim of the study was to examine the effect of sports on life skills of parents who send their children to sports activities in sports clubs.

**Study Design:** In the study, the "Scale of the Effect of Sports on Life Skills" developed by Aak and Düz was applied. The information was provided on a voluntary basis, and the "Personal Information Form" and "The Effect of Sports on Life Skills" scale questionnaire were sent via Google form.

**Place and Duration of Study:** The research was conducted with the participation of 242 volunteer parents who sent their children to sports activities in sports clubs in the Marmara Region, Istanbul, Izmit and Yalova in Türkiye between 2022 and 2023.

**Methodology:** A descriptive study was conducted on the effect of sports on life skills by determining the parents' license status, sports branch, individual or team sports category, sports

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year and activity hours and days. In the analysis of the data, independent groups t-test for variables, one-way analysis of variance, ANOVA and Post Hoc tests were used for more than two group analysis.

**Results:** In the study, significant differences were found in the categories of leadership ( $p=0.012$ ), teamwork ( $p=0.020$ ), emotional skills ( $p=0.011$ ) and goal setting ( $p=0.003$ ) among licensed parents. A significant difference was found in the categories of communication ( $p=0.014$ ), leadership ( $p=0.003$ ) and goal setting ( $p=0.005$ ) among those with 4-6 years of sport experience compared to those with 1-3 years of sport experience. There was a significant difference in time management ( $p=0.029$ ), time management ( $p=0.014$ ) and communication ( $p=0.001$ ) between those who do sports 4 days or more and those who do sports 1 hour a day, between those who do sports 2-3 hours a day and those who do sports 1 hour a day.

**Conclusion:** As a result, it can be said that sports activities significantly affect life skills of the parents who participated in the study, considering that they have athlete licenses and years/weeks/days of participation in sports. It is thought that sports activities can positively affect individuals in terms of time management, leadership, teamwork, emotional skills, social skills and goal setting at every stage of their lives.

*Keywords: Children; parents; exercise; sport; life skills.*

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Life skills training enables children and adolescents to develop skills that will enable them to cope more dynamically with the difficulties and obstacles they face in daily life, to develop supportive behaviors in coping with difficulties, to develop self-confidence and personality, and to develop psychosocial competencies that are important for them to lead a productive and healthy lifestyle. It can be an important way to contribute to well-being and health, especially where health problems are associated with behaviors that lead to an inability to cope robustly with personal and social challenges. Therefore, teaching life skills to children and adolescents is considered vital as one of the key elements of developing psychosocial competence, helping individuals to lead more productive and happy lives [1,2].

It is known that teamwork, goal setting, taking responsibility and ensuring that young people who play sports play a role in creation a modern society are important in creating a modern society [3]. Sports participation is thought to be effective on multiple social relationships and mental development in young people. In addition to the contribution of physical activity and sports participation to the quality of life, it is thought that there are mechanisms that can be associated with good practice and life satisfaction that will positively affect students' health and quality of life [4]. School teams, neighborhood teams and sports clubs should be supported and encouraged in terms of sports environments. It is thought that the motor skill levels of children

participating in sports activities in sports schools increase, should not be limited to summer school activities and sports should be made a standard of living [5-8].

It is thought to be effective in individuals to have a disciplined, planned, patient and extroverted personality as the duration of participation in sports increases. It is also known that sports play an important role in increasing individuals' socialization, empathy, tolerance, cooperation and positive thinking skills. Considering the positive contribution of sports to life skills, it may be recommended that individuals increase the time they devote to sports [9].

Children, especially school-age youth, should be encouraged to participate in sports activities to support their physical, mental and psychological development and to develop characteristics such as winning, losing and respect. Young people should be supported to increase their sports activities to improve their time management, cognitive and emotional skills, communication and social skills, leadership, problem solving, decision-making and academic skills to avoid life stress. It has been found that life skills in individuals are developed by enabling the development of many factors such as their ability to succeed [10,11].

In addition to sports and physical activity, which are factors affecting life skills, multiple intelligences are also effective [12], and it is understood from the studies that life skills can be increased by increasing physical activities instead of spending time in front of the screen

[13,7]. The importance of contributing to society has been emphasized by conducting reliability studies of the scales used to evaluate the development of perceived life skills through sport [14]. As a result of the literature research, in order to determine the factors affecting life skills, it was aimed to examine the individual effects of sports participation status, sports history and exercise participation status of parents who send their children to activities in sports clubs.

## 2. MATERIALS AND METHODS

### 2.1 Research Method

Two hypotheses were determined for the purpose of the study; H1: Sport has an effect on life skills in parents, H2: Sport has no effect on life skills in parents. The research is an original descriptive study. In the study, the "The Effect of Sports on Life Skills" scale developed by Aak and Düz (2018) and adapted into Turkish was used. As a result of the article reviews, it was determined that the scale was applied to young people and athletes (University students [15], Public Employees [16], Physical Education teachers [17]) and individuals in different categories. In the literature review, no studies on parents were found. The information was given on a voluntary basis and the "Personal Information Form" and the "Effect of Sports on Life Skills" scale survey was sent via Google form. After receiving the approval of the university ethics committee, the surveys were sent via e-mail to the parents who sent their children to sports, with the permission of the sports clubs.

### 2.2 Research Group

The research group population consisted of sports clubs and sports schools in the Marmara region, Istanbul, Izmit and Yalova provinces. The sample of the research consisted of parents of children participating in sports activities in sports clubs and sports schools. 242 volunteer parents participated in the research.

### 2.3 Data Collection

#### 2.3.1 Personal Information Form

In the personal information form of the research, in order to determine the demographic characteristics, information such as the children's sports branch, sports age, sports category, parents' sports license status, sports branch,

sports activity (day/week) and sports activity (day/hour) status were categorized and examined in the research.

#### 2.3.2 Life skills scale for sport

The "Effect of Sports on Life Skills" scale developed by Aak and Düz [18] consists of 31 items and 7 sub-dimensions. The survey was asked in 5-point Likert format. The Cronbach Alpha value applied to the entire scale was found to be  $\alpha = 0.955$ . Among the sub-dimensions of the scale, time management Cronbach Alpha value  $\alpha = 0.832$ , Communication Cronbach Alpha value  $\alpha = 0.795$ , Leadership Cronbach Alpha value  $\alpha = 0.818$ , Teamwork Cronbach Alpha value  $\alpha = 0.818$ , Social skills Cronbach Alpha value  $\alpha = 0.792$ , Emotional skills Cronbach Alpha value  $\alpha = 0.792$ . value was determined as  $\alpha = 0.842$  and goal setting Cronbach Alpha value was determined as  $\alpha = 0.863$ . The research was conducted in accordance with the Helsinki protocol. Ethics committee approval for the research was received with the decision numbered 20 taken at the meeting of the Kocaeli University, Social Sciences Ethics Committee dated 10/11/2022 and numbered 2022/10.

### 2.4 Data Analysis

In the analyses, the subcategories of life skills of sport (time management, communication, teamwork, social skills, emotional skills and goal setting) were examined in terms of parent's sport years, sport activity status (days/week) and daily sport activity duration (hours/day). The findings were analyzed in SPSS 22.0 program. It was determined that the data were normally distributed and analyzed with t-test in independent groups from parametric tests. One-way variance analysis One-Way ANOVA in groups of more than two and Tukey test was applied to determine the source of the difference from which group. The significance level of the test was accepted as  $p < .05$ .

## 3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

According to the sports background of the parents included in the research, the relationship between the parents who enable their children to participate in sports activities and the sports background of these children and their life skills was examined. In literature research, no studies have been found on the effect of sports background on the life skills of parents who enable their children to participate in sports

activities. However, it was determined as a result of research that the scale was also applied to different individuals. It is thought that this study may support future research.

In Table 2, which examines the life skills of the parents according to their license status, it was found that parents with athlete licenses were better ( $p < .05$ ) in the subcategories of leadership ( $p = 0.012$ ), teamwork ( $p = 0.020$ ), emotional skills ( $p = 0.011$ ) and goal setting ( $p = 0.003$ ). It is thought that sportive activities have a significant effect on the life skills of parents with a license. When looking at the life skills of the parents in terms of sports branch status, it was found that individual sports were better in the subcategories of time management, communication, leadership, social and emotional skills and goal setting, and team sports were only better in team work. It was determined that parents involved in recreational sports were weaker in life skills compared to individual and team sports (Table 3). It is thought that sports are effective in life skills in terms of coping with problems individually and producing solutions compared to those who are engaged in team sports.

When we look at the life skills of the parents in terms of their sports experience, parents with 7-9 years of experience in time management

( $\pm 4.536$ ), parents with 10 years and above in the communication and leadership category ( $\pm 4.450$ ), teamwork ( $\pm 4.517$ ) and social skills ( $\pm 4.425$ ). It has been found that parents of 10 years and above have good life skills. It was determined that parents with 4-6 years of sports history were better in the emotional skills category ( $\pm 4.228$ ), and those with 7-9 years of sports history were better in goal setting ( $\pm 4.536$ ) ( $p = 0.005$ ) (Table 4). It is thought that parents who are new to sports are not as experienced in endowing with life skills compared to others, and that the skills in their lives can improve as the duration of their sports activities increases. When considered in terms of parents' daily sports activity levels, those who do 4 or more days of activity in time management ( $p = 0.029$ ) have lower scores in communication ( $\pm 4.365$ ), leadership ( $\pm 4.388$ ), teamwork ( $\pm 4.365$ ), social skills ( $\pm 4.317$ ), emotional skills. It was determined that life skills were better with the average value of ( $\pm 4.197$ ) and goal setting category ( $\pm 4.462$ ) (Table 5). Although there was a significant difference only in time management among those who practiced sports for 4 days or more, there were higher values in all categories in terms of mean values. In line with these results, longer duration of sports activities has positive results in skills such as socialization, day planning and decision making.

**Table 1. Table of the research personal information form**

		<b>F</b>	<b>%</b>
<b>Parents Athlete License</b>	Yes (Athlete License)	134	55,4
	No (Athlete License)	108	44,6
<b>Child's Sports Branch Category</b>	Team Sports	161	66,5
	Individual Sports	81	33,5
<b>Child's Sport Age</b>	1-5 year	199	82,2
	6-10 year	32	13,2
	11-15 year	8	3,3
	16-20 year	3	1,2
<b>Child's Sports Category</b>	licensed Competitor Athlete	111	45,9
	Sports School	131	54,1
<b>Parent' Sports Age</b>	1-3 year	149	61,6
	4-6 year	58	24,0
	7-9 year	14	5,8
	10 year and more	21	8,7
<b>Parent's Sport Branch Category</b>	Individual Sports	81	33,5
	Team Sports	151	62,4
	Recreational Sports	10	4,1
<b>Parent Sports Activity Days</b>	1 day	34	14,0
	2-3 day	155	64,0
	4 day and more	53	21,9
<b>Parent Sports Activity Day/Hour</b>	1 hour	90	37,2
	2-3 hour	124	51,2
	3 hour and more	28	11,6

**Table 2. Research group parents' athlete license status scale categories analysis**

	<b>Athlete License</b>	<b>N</b>	<b><math>\bar{X}</math></b>	<b>S.d.</b>	<b>f</b>	<b>p</b>
<b>Time Management</b>	Yes	131	4,315	0,581	1,450	,230
	No	104	4,231	0,462		
<b>Communication</b>	Yes	131	4,273	0,609	1,504	,221
	No	104	4,183	0,492		
<b>Leadership</b>	Yes	131	4,325	0,569	6,481	<b>,012*</b>
	No	104	4,148	0,475		
<b>Team Works</b>	Yes	131	4,391	0,490	5,486	<b>,020*</b>
	No	104	4,244	0,462		
<b>Social Skill</b>	Yes	131	4,321	0,600	3,462	,064
	No	104	4,185	0,491		
<b>Emotional Skill</b>	Yes	131	4,200	0,675	6,641	<b>,011*</b>
	No	104	3,983	0,597		
<b>Goal Setting</b>	Yes	131	4,401	0,602	8,862	<b>,003*</b>
	No	104	4,183	0,497		

**Table 3. Analysis of research group parents' sports status**

		<b>N</b>	<b><math>\bar{X}</math></b>	<b>S.d.</b>	<b>f</b>	<b>p.</b>
<b>Time Management</b>	Individual Sports	79	4,310	0,489	,452	,637
	Team Sports	146	4,269	0,555		
	Recreational Sports	10	4,150	0,555		
<b>Communication</b>	Individual Sports	79	4,272	0,492	,613	,543
	Team Sports	146	4,223	0,597		
	Recreational Sports	10	4,075	0,541		
<b>Leadership</b>	Individual Sports	79	4,263	0,448	1,302	,274
	Team Sports	146	4,256	0,575		
	Recreational Sports	10	3,980	0,569		
<b>Team Works</b>	Individual Sports	79	4,268	0,453	1,669	,191
	Team Sports	146	4,368	0,504		
	Recreational Sports	10	4,167	0,304		
<b>Social Skill</b>	Individual Sports	79	4,291	0,547	1,956	,144
	Team Sports	146	4,267	0,564		
	Recreational Sports	10	3,925	0,487		
<b>Emotional Skill</b>	Individual Sports	79	4,190	0,579	1,606	,203
	Team Sports	146	4,075	0,679		
	Recreational Sports	10	3,850	0,689		
<b>Goal Setting</b>	Individual Sports	79	4,373	0,485	1,123	,327
	Team Sports	146	4,277	0,608		
	Recreational Sports	10	4,150	0,543		

When looked at in terms of parents' sports activity time (hours) levels, those who do 4 hours or more of activity are better in terms of average values in the time management category ( $\pm 4.375$ ), leadership ( $\pm 4.293$ ), team work ( $\pm 4.494$ ) and goal setting ( $\pm 4.375$ ). has been detected. It was determined that those who did 2-3 hours of activity were better in communication ( $\pm 4.360$ ), social skills ( $\pm 4.316$ ), and emotional skills ( $\pm 4.165$ ) (Table 6). In terms of weekly sportive activity duration, it was determined that those who practiced sports for 4 hours or more showed higher values in all categories in terms of mean values compared to the others. In line with

these results, it is thought that with the increase in weekly sports activity times and durations, individuals can achieve positive development in every sense of their lives.

In the study of Düz and Aslan, examining the life skills of high school students, a significant difference was found in the life skills of students with a bachelor's degree compared to those without a bachelor's degree in the categories of time management, leadership, teamwork and goal setting ( $p < .05$ ). As a result, sports for young people who do sports; they think that it can positively improve many life skills such as

teamwork, goal setting, initiative, respect for others, time management, leadership, problem solving, decision making, cognitive, emotional, communicative and social skills [7].

Bardakçı and Biçer in their study on the effect of exercises performed with functional sports equipment on the life skills of sedentary women, found that exercises applied to sedentary women between the ages of 20-47 for 12 weeks and 3 days a week had a positive effect on the quality of life [19], in the study where the life skills scale applied to physical education teachers, Çimen and Akıncı found that teachers under the age of 35 were in the time management category of single teachers ( $p < .05$ ), time management, leadership, social skills of teachers with 15-24 years of service were in the time management category ( $p < .05$ ) [17].

Papacharisis et al., support the effectiveness of a life skills program that integrates sports and life skills training on 40 female volleyball players

aged 10-12 with at least 2 years of sports activity history, and they think that it can be an effective model in learning life skills. Therefore, they concluded that youth with improved life skills and improved goal-setting, problem-solving, and positive thinking skills will have a better chance of becoming better students, better athletes, and more engaged and productive community members [20].

Yılmaz in the study on the effect of sports on life skills applied to student athletes at different education levels between the ages of 11-24, found that the life skills of student athletes engaged in athletics were higher than tennis players ( $p < .05$ ) [6], Gümüšoğlu and Küçük found that the life skills they applied to U14 young football players, they concluded that skills programs provided improvements in task, social and team cohesion categories, and that individuals' communication with their teammates within the team was also strong [21].

**Table 4. Research group parents' sports year situation analysis**

		N	$\bar{X}$	S.d.	f	p	Tukey
<b>Time Management</b>	1-3 year	144	4,196	0,487	3,698	<b>,013*</b>	
	4-6 year	57	4,346	0,546			
	7-9 year	14	4,536	0,553			
	10 year and more	20	4,488	0,676			
<b>Communication</b>	1-3 year	144	4,146	0,506	3,616	<b>,014*</b>	<b>b&gt;a</b>
	4-6 year	57	4,382	0,557			
	7-9 year	14	4,214	0,611			
	10 year and more	20	4,45	0,776			
<b>Leadership</b>	1-3 year	144	4,144	0,476	4,902	<b>,003*</b>	<b>b&gt;a</b>
	4-6 year	57	4,414	0,513			
	7-9 year	14	4,329	0,763			
	10 year and more	20	4,45	0,668			
<b>Team Works</b>	1-3 year	144	4,251	0,454	3,395	<b>,019*</b>	
	4-6 year	57	4,404	0,549			
	7-9 year	14	4,5	0,37			
	10 year and more	20	4,517	0,459			
<b>Social Skill</b>	1-3 year	144	4,205	0,514	1,408	0,241	
	4-6 year	57	4,329	0,585			
	7-9 year	14	4,321	0,575			
	10 year and more	20	4,425	0,73			
<b>Emotional Skill</b>	1-3 year	144	4,05	0,633	1,058	0,368	
	4-6 year	57	4,228	0,624			
	7-9 year	14	4,089	0,718			
	10 year and more	20	4,15	0,78			
<b>Goal Setting</b>	1-3 year	144	4,201	0,492	4,347	<b>,005*</b>	<b>b&gt;a</b>
	4-6 year	57	4,461	0,58			
	7-9 year	14	4,536	0,692			
	10 year and more	20	4,438	0,777			

**Table 5. Research group parents' sports activity duration (days) table**

	Day	N	$\bar{X}$	S.d.	f	p	Tukey
<b>Time Management</b>	1 day	34	4,118	0,558	3,608	<b>,029*</b>	<b>c&gt;a</b>
	2-3 day	149	4,263	0,526			
	4 day and more	52	4,423	0,506			
<b>Communication</b>	1 day	34	4,184	0,512	1,885	0,154	
	2-3 day	149	4,198	0,577			
	4 day and more	52	4,365	0,532			
<b>Leadership</b>	1 day	34	4,235	0,473	2,422	0,091	
	2-3 day	149	4,2	0,557			
	4 day and more	52	4,388	0,495			
<b>Team Works</b>	1 day	34	4,284	0,449	0,306	0,737	
	2-3 day	149	4,321	0,484			
	4 day and more	52	4,365	0,504			
<b>Social Skill</b>	1 day	34	4,221	0,488	0,382	0,683	
	2-3 day	149	4,25	0,581			
	4 day and more	52	4,317	0,536			
<b>Emotional Skill</b>	1 day	34	4,103	0,643	0,712	0,492	
	2-3 day	149	4,072	0,639			
	4 day and more	52	4,197	0,687			
<b>Goal Setting</b>	1 day	34	4,199	0,476	2,855	0,06	
	2-3 day	149	4,273	0,578			
	4 day and more	52	4,462	0,57			

**Table 6. Research group parents' sports activity duration (day/hour) table**

	Day/Hour	N	$\bar{X}$	S.d.	f	p	Tukey
<b>Time Management</b>	1 hour	86	4,145	0,508	4,336	<b>,014*</b>	<b>b&gt;a</b>
	2-3 hour	121	4,349	0,533			
	4 hour and more	28	4,375	0,542			
<b>Communication</b>	1 hour	86	4,055	0,547	7,835	<b>,001*</b>	<b>b&gt;a</b>
	2-3 hour	121	4,36	0,555			
	4 hour and more	28	4,232	0,49			
<b>Leadership</b>	1 hour	86	4,186	0,486	0,878	0,417	
	2-3 hour	121	4,279	0,588			
	4 hour and more	28	4,293	0,437			
<b>Team Works</b>	1 hour	86	4,279	0,473	2,137	0,12	
	2-3 hour	121	4,32	0,506			
	4 hour and more	28	4,494	0,37			

	Day/Hour	N	$\bar{X}$	S.d.	f	p	Tukey
<b>Social Skill</b>	more						
	1 hour	86	4,172	0,54	1,762	0,174	
	2-3 hour	121	4,316	0,592			
<b>Emotional Skill</b>	4 hour and more	28	4,295	0,42			
	1 hour	86	4,017	0,609	1,306	0,273	
	2-3 hour	121	4,165	0,663			
<b>Goal Setting</b>	4 hour and more	28	4,107	0,705			
	1 hour	86	4,247	0,501	0,764	0,467	
	2-3 hour	121	4,329	0,61			
	4 hour and more	28	4,375	0,571			

Cope et al., found a strong relationship between life skills development and sports participation. They provide some evidence that coaches with special training are in a better position than coaches with less or no training [22]. Brunelle et al. [23] concluded that programs that combine sports with life can have an impact on positive social values in adolescents (23). Altun et al., in which the life skills of high school students were evaluated in sports, it was determined that sports was a part of young individuals, especially students who played sports, participated in team sports and played in the school team, were better in life skills than their other friends ( $p < .05$ ) [8].

#### 4. CONCLUSION

As a result, it is thought that the effect of sports background on life skills may be important in terms of its impact on the family and especially on future generations. It is thought that the result that sports background has an impact on leadership, teamwork, emotional skills and goal setting may be an important factor in parents' children's participation in sports. It can be thought that the high impact on life skills according to the year of participation in sports and duration of participation (day; day-hour) may be due to their presence in sports environments and sports groups. It has been observed that parents who send their children to sports clubs can improve their quality of life depending on the sports activities they will do throughout their lives. It can be said that the effect of sports is a process that determines life skills such as time management, communication, leadership, teamwork, social skills, emotional skills and goal setting by ensuring that parents set an example for their children by doing sports and especially by ensuring that their children do sports.

#### DISCLAIMER (ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE)

We, the author, declare that we do not use ANY generative AI technologies such as Large Language Models (ChatGPT, COPILOT, etc.) and text-to-image generators while writing or editing the posts.

#### ETHICAL APPROVAL

Ethics committee approval for the research was received with the decision numbered 20 taken at the meeting of Kocaeli University, Social Sciences Ethics Committee dated 10/11/2022 and numbered 2022/10. All authors hereby declare that all experiments have been examined and approved by the appropriate ethics committee and have therefore been performed in accordance with the ethical standards laid down in the 1964 Declaration of Helsinki.

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#### COMPETING INTERESTS

Authors have declared that no competing interests exist.

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