Leadership Skills of Secondary School Students who Play Sports and Do Not

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Abstract

The purpose of the research is to examine the leadership skills of secondary school students studying in Adapazarı Central District of Sakarya Province according to whether they play sports or not. After obtaining permissions from the Ethics Committee and Adapazarı District Directorate of National Education, 11 secondary schools selected by cluster sampling method from 18 secondary schools that constitute the research universe were visited and the purpose of the descriptive research was explained to the 5th, 6th ,7th and 8 th grade students. The information questionnaire and the leadership scale that Cansoy and Turan adapted to Turkish was applied to 1,030 students who wanted to participate in the research voluntarily. Since the data showed normal distribution in the analyzes, independent samples t-test was used for binary cluster comparisons, and variance analysis for more than two cluster comparisons. Leadership skills of secondary school students were found significantly high in favour of those who play sports, especially those who are licensed and engaged in individual sports, and who have someone playing sports in their family.
Keywords: Children and youth, Students, Participation in sports activities, Leadership ability.

1.Introduction

The word "leadership" is derived from the word "lead", which means course [1], and it is regarded as a skill that motivates for certain purposes and not everyone has [2]. It is stated that leadership potential can be determined at early ages and in some sources, it is stated that leadership skills are gained through experience

[3]. It is reported that the leadership skill consists of features such as establishing communication easily, having the ability to adapt to new situations and being sensitive to others and these skills should be handled at the primary education level in order to be developed [4].

1.1. Leadership Skill and Leadership Qualities

Leadership is defined as producing techniques to reach the common goals of the group and progress of the group and progress, creating a vision, defining and transferring their duties to the skilled individuals in reaching the vision. Leadership qualities are explained to be different from leadership skills as naturally owned behaviors and can be taught easily in and out of the classroom. It is stated that a good leader should have qualities such as; decision-making ability, consistency, imagination, entrepreneurship, desire to work, ability to analyze, understanding others, bearing risks voluntarily, practical intelligence, and ability to speak clearly and comprehensively [5]. It is explained that leadership qualities such as motivation, energy, perseverance, intelligence, self-confidence, justice, honesty and forgiveness can be developed at an early age and the most important of these qualities is the ability to communicate well [6,7,5].

1.2. Leadership Styles

It is stated that there are four leadership styles, which can be listed as follows; autocratic style, which does not take socio-emotional phenomena into account in reaching the goal [8], democratic style, which discusses with the members in decisions and studies [9], the coaching style, which maintains its interest in human and work in a balanced way [10]. and liberal style, which shows the target to the employees and lets them free in achieving the target, and that effective leaders can use several styles together simultaneously with their experience and personality structures [10].

1.3. Leadership Approaches

Leadership-related approaches are gathered in three groups [6,7]. These are:

1- Characteristic Approach: in this approach, personal characteristics of the leader such as height, weight, intelligence, appearance and being social, emotional, physical and intellectual are attached

importance.

2- Behavioral approach: it has been developed in order to find answers to what needs to be done for effective leadership when the characteristic approach is not efficient. The behaviors of the leader towards group members were emphasized.

3- Situational Approach; in this approach, effective leadership is stated to depend both on the characteristics of the leader and the existing environment.

1.4. Leadership and Sports

Leadership is explained to be multidimensional and linked to the characteristics of the child [11]. It is explained that the leadership skills of secondary school students are higher than those of high school students, the opportunities for elementary school students to participate in leadership-related activities are limited, and these activities should be included in the curriculum when the child starts school [12].

According to the preparation for life theory, games played in childhood provide preliminary preparation for adult life [13]. It is suggested that by doing sports, which is a kind of game, negative emotions are eliminated and playing sports is important in self-discovery and development of some skills. Considering that leadership skills of communication, decision making and self-confidence develop with sports in childhood, and that leadership qualities in primary education are higher than in high school [12], the question" Does playing sports create a difference in the leadership skills of secondary school students?" came to mind. In the literature, leadership qualities of high school students are considered significant in favour of sports high school students [14,15]. However, no studies investigating the leadership skills of secondary school students according to their sports status have been encountered. In this respect, it was aimed to determine the leadership skills of secondary school students according to their sports status and examine whether these skills differ by the variables such as age, gender, grade level, family income, regular sports status, age of starting sports, being licenced, whether there is someone playing sports in their family, branch of the sports if any, whether they have any other activities other than sports, type of non-sports activity and grade point average.

2.Method

2.1. Participants

The purpose of the descriptive research is to examine the leadership skills of secondary school students studying in Adapazarı District of Sakarya Province according to whether they play sports or not. 11 secondary schools selected from those 18 schools by cluster sampling method in terms of the homogeneity of the population. A total of 1.030 secondary school students, 530 male and 500 female, participated in the study.

2.2. Materials

Personal Information Form:

An 11-question personal information form was used to determine the socio-demographic characteristics of the participants.

Roets Leadership Assessment Scale:

It is a 5-point Likert-type scale including 26 items developed by [16] and adapted to Turkish by [17]. The lowest score that can be obtained is 0 and the highest score is 78. The standardization of the scale was carried out with 10-14 years of age, and the reliability coefficient was found to be .91 [17]. The reliability coefficient for this research was found to be .88.

2.3. Procedure

In line with the purpose of the research; research permits were obtained from Kocaeli University Non-Interventional Clinical Research Ethics Committee and Sakarya Provincial Directorate of National Education. The schools were visited on the day ad time determined by the school directorates. The purpose of the research was explained to the students by holding meetings in the classrooms, and the scales were applied to those who volunteered to participate.

2.4. Data Analysis

The data were analyzed with the SPSS 18.0 package program. Since the data showed normal distribution, of the parametric tests; the independent samples t-test was used for binary cluster comparisons, and the variance analysis (ANOVA) for more than two cluster comparisons.

3. Results

Table 1. *Analysis of the Leadership Scale Scores by Gender, Sports Status (T-Test)*

Variables		N	%	X	SS	T	P
Gender	Female	500	48.5	52.46	12.85		
	Male	530	51.5	51.40	12.95	0.322	0.316
Playing sports	Yes	624	60.6	53.39	12.49	4.607	**0.00**
	No	406	39.4	49.64	13.22		
License	Yes	268	26.00	54.97	12.63	4.552	**0.00**
	No	762	74.00	50.84	12.84		
Sports in the family	Yes	358	34.8	53.58	12.73	3.044	**0.002**
	No	672	65.2	51.02	12.92		
Hobby Status	Yes	708	68.7	52.72	12.94	2.972	**0.003**
	No	322	31.3	50.15	12.68		

In Table 1, leadership scores by gender were not found significant. Leadership scores of those playing sports (53.39 ± 12.49) were found significantly higher than those who did not (49.64 ± 13.22) ($p = 0.00$; $p < 0.05$). Leadership qualities of those who were licenced (54.97 ± 12.63) were found to be significantly higher compared to those who were not licensed (50.84 ± 12.84) ($p = 0.00$; $p < 0.05$); and of those who had someone playing sports in their family (53.58 ± 12.73) compared to those who did not (51.02 ± 12.92). ($p = 0.02$; $p < 0.05$). The scores of those with a hobby other than sports (52.72 ± 12.94) were found to be significantly higher than those without a hobby (50.15 ± 12.68) ($p = 0.03$; $p < 0.05$).

Table 2. *Leadership Level Variance Analysis by Age and Grade Level*

Variables		N	%	X	SS	F	P
Age	10	56	5.4	52.82	14.27	0.422	.833
	11	194	18.8	51.24	14.42		
	12	217	21.1	52.62	12.45		
	13	353	34.3	51.56	12.89		
	14	193	18.7	52.32	11.07		
	15	17	1.7	50.47	16.40		

In Table 2, leadership scores by age were not found significant.

Table 3. *Leadership Level Variance Analysis by Family Income*

Variables		N	%	X	SS	F	P
Family Income	2000tl and below	380	36.9	49.18	13.17	9.114	**0.000**
	2001-2500tl	143	13.9	52.27	12.54		
	2501-3000tl	209	20.3	51.66	12.62		
	3001-3500tl	85	8.3	52.88	12.66		
	3501-4000tl	90	8.7	55.74	12.78		
	4001tl and above	123	11.9	56.89	11.09		

In Table 3, Leadership skills were found to be the highest in those with 4000tl and above income, followed by 3501-4000tl, and those with 2000tl and below income had the lowest scores (49.18 ± 13.17). In family income, those with higher incomes were found to have significantly the highest leadership skills ($p = .000$; $p < 0.05$).

Table 4. *Leadership Skills Variance Analysis Results by Sports Branch and Age of Starting Sports (One Way Anova)*

Variables		N	X	SS	F	P
Sports Branch	None	670	51.02	12.94	5.086	**0.006**
	Team Sport	189	52.92	12.99		
	Individual Sports	171	54.29	12.38		
Age of Starting Sports	Not Playing Sports	406	49.64	13.22		
	5-6 years old	4	64.25	8.99		
	7-8 years old	178	53.79	11.77	5.283	**.000**
	9-10 years old	225	52.52	12.93		
	11-12 years old	171	53.37	12.27		
	13-14 years old	46	55.35	13.78		

In Table 4, it is seen that those doing individual sports have the highest leadership skills score (54.29±12.38), the scores decreased gradually in those doing team sports (52.92±12.99) and those with no sports branch (51.02±12.94). It is also seen that the leadership skill score is the lowest in those who do not play sports (49.64 ± 13.22), the highest score is in the group starting sports at the age of 5-6 (64.25 ± 8.99), and the rest is ranged significantly as 13-14 years old (55.35 ± 13.78), 7-8 years old (53.79 ± 11.77), 11-12 years old (53.37 ± 12.27) and 9-10 years old (52.52 ± 12.93) ($p = .000$; $p < 0.05$).

Table 5. *Leadership Level Variance Analysis Results by Sports Branch (One Way Anova)*

Variables		N	X	SS	F	P
Sports Branch	Not playing sports	406	49.71	13.25	**2.678**	**0.000**
	Volleyball	70	54.41	12.41		
	Basketball	73	53.17	12.44		
	Athletics	53	51.18	12.72		
	Handball	12	51.75	15.53		
	Football	193	51.60	12.02		
	Cycling	20	54.80	11.08		
	Fitness	13	46.76	12.57		
	Swimming	68	57.55	11.94		
	Chess	9	58.33	15.25		
	Boxing	30	51.30	13.49		
	Gymnastics	10	51.40	9.34		
	Judo	17	56.47	17.68		
	Karate	19	56.73	9.75		
	Wrestling	9	59.11	10.22		
	Badminton	9	57.22	11.72		
	Rowing	10	56.80	10.95		
	Tennis	9	51.00	11.07		

In Table 5, it is seen that the leadership scale scores by sports branch are the highest in individual sports and they decrease gradually as wrestling (59.11 ± 10.22), chess (58.33 ± 15.25), swimming (57.55 ± 11.94), badminton (57.22 ± 11.72), karate (56.73 ± 9.75), judo 56.47 ± 17.68 and cycling (54.80 ± 11.80), whereas the highest scores significantly decrease gradually as volleyball (54.01 ± 12.77), basketball (53.17 ± 12.44), handball (51.75 ± 15.53) and football (51.57 ± 11.99) in team sports.

4. Discussion, Conclusion and Suggestions

Leadership scores by gender were not found significant. In the literature, contrary to the studies that do not find any difference [18,19,20], there are also studies that find the leadership qualities of girls higher [21]. Leadership skills were found significantly higher in those who play sports. Contrary to studies with similar results [22,23], there are also studies that do not find any difference [24]. As those who play sports are more active, self-confident and tend to lead in social environments [25,26] and playing sports improves personality traits which are indications of leadership and strengthens leadership skills, and playing sports improves personality traits which are indications of leadership and strengthens leadership skills, it was thought that starting sports in childhood affects the development of leadership skills as it improves the personality traits positively. İt was thought that starting sports in childhood affects the development of leadership skills as it improves the personality traits positively.

Leadership skills are significant in favor of students playing sports being licensed. In the literature, contrary to the studies supporting our findings [27], it has also been reported that playing sports being licensed does not affect leadership [24,28,29,30]. Considering the fact that licensed athletes are disciplined because they are focused on success and they prioritize working together [31]; it is thought that leadership skills of those who are licenced increase as they work with group awareness to achieve the competition-oriented goal. It was recommended to do studies comparing the effect of competitive sports and recreational sports on the development of leadership qualities in children.

Leadership skills of those in whose family there is someone playing sports were found significantly higher. It is reported that there are similar studies in the literature, parents who are interested in sports encourage their children to play sports and socialization and leadership qualities develop with sports [32,33,34,35,36]. Leadership qualities are significant in favor of those who have a hobby other than sports. No studies have been found in the literature in this respect. However, considering that participating in an activity in free time increases leadership qualities of self-esteem, motivation, self-renewal and self-confidence [37,38,39], it is thought that with the development of their self-confidence, the leadership skills of those who have a hobby also develop.

Leadership skills by age were not found significant. In the literature, it has been stated that age is associated with the level of leadership, children take responsibility as they grow older, and leadership qualities develop with the development of self-control and individual decision making [40,41,42]. Leadership scores of those with family income between 3501-4000 were found to be significantly higher than those with family income of 2000 TL and below. In the literature, supporting our results, it was suggested that high family income results from living more freely and improvement of their self-confidence [43,44,45]. Increased self-confidence also improves leadership skills. The information in the literature also supports our results. The high family income improves living more freely and the self-confidence of the child. As a result, increasing income level increases self-confidence and improve leadership skills.

Leadership scores of students interested in individual sports were found to be significantly higher than those of students that do not play sports and are interested in team sports. In the literature, it is stated that dealing with team sports or individual sports does not affect leadership [46,47]. However, in some studies, it is stated that playing individual sports increases self-confidence, self-control and motivation to achieve compared to team sports [48]. It is thought that the reason for higher leadership skills in individual sports might be due to taking responsibility in decision making and strategy development in individual struggle, and conducting detailed studies were considered appropriate.

Leadership scores of those who started sports at the age of 6 and 8 were found to be significantly higher than those who started sports at other ages. Contrary to the studies supporting these findings [49], it is also reported that the age of starting sports does not affect the leadership level [50]. It is stated that with the beginning of school at the age of 6; children gain skills such as being with their peers, collaborating, adapting to the group, self-expression and at the age of 8, they gain skills such as socializing with their peers and learning to control their emotions [51,52]. Considering the explanations suggesting that leadership skills can be gained theoretically and practically during the academic lesson and can be developed by teaching leadership roles [53,54,55] , inclusion of sports in the curriculum in primary school and even in pre-school education is considered important for the development of leadership skills in children.

Leadership skills were found to be significant in favor of those having non-sports hobbies. It is stated

that especially reading books develops leadership skills as a result of development of critical thinking, looking at events by interrogating more and formation of decision-making skills [21,56,57,58). Especially; Reading books improves critical thinking and ensures correct questioning. As a result of correct inquiry, decision making and leadership skills develop. Dealing with other areas is also thought to affect leadership qualities as it contributes to skill development as a result of looking at life from a different aspect and learning. Getting a hobby; it provides a different view of life. Looking differently to life supports maturation. The level of maturation is also thought to contribute to skill development. As a result, while leadership skills are insignificant in terms of gender and age variables; playing sports, being licensed, starting sports at an early age, working in individual banches, having someone playing sports in the family, having a hobby other than sports, high family income are determined as variables that affect leadership skills positively.

Recommendations

Considering that leadership is a trait that can be learned and developed and that it is positively affected by sports; inclusion of physical education lesson in the curriculum starting from pre-school education has been considered important for the development of leadership qualities.

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