

## COMPARISON OF BODY IMAGE LEVELS OF STUDENTS WHO DO SPORTS AND WHO DO NOT DO SPORTS

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### ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study is to compare body image levels of students who do sports and who do not do sports. Population of the study was constituted by students studying at Istanbul Gelişim University whereas the sample was represented by 81 students studying at Istanbul Gelişim University School of Physical Education and Sports and 80 students studying Architecture, Psychology and Sociology who voluntarily participated in our study. Body Appreciation Scale, validity and reliability study of which was conducted by Anlı et al. in 2015, was used as data collection tool. For analyzing data obtained, SPSS 20 was used. Single sample “Kolmogorov-Smirnov” test was applied to learn whether the data had a normal distribution while “Anova-Homogeneity of variance” test was applied to determine its homogeneity and it was seen that the data was homogeneous, with a normal distribution. In analysis of data, descriptive statistics and independent sample t- test were applied. It was found as a result of the study that body appreciation scores of people who do sports regularly were higher than those of who do not do sports regularly.

**Key Words:** body image, students who do sports and who do not do sports

### INTRODUCTION

The concept of body image was first addressed in 1920 as a psychologic and sociologic concept by Paul Schilder. Studies before Schilder were usually limited to distorted body images which came out due to brain damage. Schilder defines body image as the own picture of a person shaped in his/her mind by him/her (Polat, 2007: 8; Dunham. 2002: 25).

Body image distortion was first included in phantom organ fact report of a 16<sup>th</sup> century surgeon, Ambroise Pare. acar Head, a neurologist in 1920s, asserts the concept of body schema. Accordingly, body schema is a whole comprising of past lives which are organized mainly in emotional cortex and current sensations” (Doğan and Doğan, 1992: 1-2).

Past experiences of a person take an important place in development of body image. Responses of a person to his/her own body in the past and reactions of the surrounding society regarding his/her body, affect body image development of a person (Acar, 2010). Body image that is usually perceived positively may cause significant effects on self esteem and self confidence of an individual (Şanlı, 1991: 63).

Secord and Jourard defines body image as satisfaction or dissatisfaction of an individual with his/her body (Brylinsky, 1990: 5).

Today, people have better realized necessity of joining physical activities. Many people attend sport centers or exercise at home. People utilize methods such as acupuncture, surgical operation, medication, diet, physical activity and exercise in order to keep their body shapes or have ideal body sizes. Physical activity which is one of the ways followed for ideal body structure, is a method many people have preferred in recent years. While people find an opportunity to have a new physical appearance through physical activities, with this new appearance they also have positive thoughts on physical fitness characteristics of their bodies. As a result of study conducted by Çok on adolescent sedentaries, it is found that teenagers who participate in physical activities are more satisfied with their bodies compared to those who do not participate. It has been put forward through studies that physical activity has a positive effect on body image and that people who participate in physical activities feel less anxious compared to those who do not join physical activity, when their bodies are assessed by other people, as well (Acar, 2010: 22-23). It is stated that Swedish young girls and boys who aim at athletics focus on their bodies and body functions and have positive thinking about their bodies (Frisén and Holmqvist, 2010). It has been revealed in many studies that sports contributes to positive character development and body image development of a person (Brettschneider and Heim, 1997).

Sports may influence body image among women in many ways. Competitive environment embodied in sports may promote athletes for having a better body (Striegel-Moore, Silberstein, Grunberg and Rodin, 1990), moreover feeling of perfectionism which comes out in sports may also effect desire for having a beautiful body (Fulkerson, Keel, Leon and Dorr, 1999). Hausenblas and Fallon finds in their study in 2006 that sports has a positive effect on body satisfaction.

The purpose of this study is to make a comparison between body image levels of students who do sports and who do not do sports.

## **Method**

### **Population and Sample**

Population of the study was constituted by students studying at Istanbul Gelişim University whereas the sample was represented by 81 students studying at Istanbul Gelişim University School of Physical Education and Sports and 80 students studying Architecture, Psychology and Sociology who voluntarily participated in our study.

### **Data Collection Tool**

#### **Body Appreciation Scale**

Body Appreciation Scale (BAS) is a scale developed by Tylka, & Wood-Barcalow, in 2015. Validity and reliability was investigated by Anlı et al. in 2015. BAS, a 5-point Likert-type measuring tool,

consists of 10 items. Total item correlation coefficients of the scale range between .31 and .76 (Anlı et al., 2015).

### Analysis of Data

SPSS 20 was used for analyzing the data in this research. “Kolmogorov-Smirnov” test was applied to determine that the data had a normal distribution while “Anova-Homogeneity of variance” test was applied to determine its homogeneity and it was found that the data was homogeneous, with a normal distribution. Descriptive statistics and independent sample t test were used in the analysis of data.

### FINDINGS

**Table 1. Descriptive Statistics finding**

Do you do sports regularly?	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Yes	78	42,5256	6,47016
No	70	38,7714	8,47190

As a result of descriptive statistical analysis, body appreciation score of people who do sports regularly was found to be 42,5256 while body appreciation score of people who do not do sports regularly was 38,7714.

**Table 2. Independent sample t test**

F	Sig.	t	Sig. (2-tailed)
5,768	,018	3,047	,003
		3,004	,003

As a result of independent sample t test, a difference of statistically significant level was found.

### Discussion and Conclusion

As a result of descriptive statistical analysis, body appreciation score of people who do sports regularly was found to be higher than that of people who do not do sports regularly. Considering this data, it is possible to assert that individuals who do sports regularly are more content with their bodies and departments. When body appreciation scores of people who do sports regularly and who do not do so, a statistically significant difference was found.

In consequence of literature review, studies which support data of the study were discovered. Martin et al. find in their study in 2000 that body appreciation levels of people doing sports are better than those of who do not do sports. Netz et al. indicate in their study in 2008 that psychological well being of women who exercise regularly gets better. In a study by Williams and Cash in 2001, effects of rotational weight exercises on body appearance and physical self competence of college students are examined. At the end of the result, they find, after six-week exercises, that body contentment levels of individuals in experimental group are better than those of people in control group. Lindwall and Lindgren (2005) also discover a positive improvement in body image of Swedish adolescent girls who have joined different types of exercises for six weeks. McVey and Davis find in their study in 2002 that women experience body dissatisfaction and that this dissatisfaction can be overcome by means of sports. Tazegül explores Effect of 16-Week Exercise Programme on Body Image in his study in 2017 and finds that there is a positive improvement in body images of people in the sample group. Tazegül and Güven find body image score of athletes in the branch of body building as  $(74,0000 \pm 15,15610)$  in their study in 2017. Ogden, Veale and Summers, 1997, state that exercise has a positive effect on body image. Field et al. (2001), Ingledew, Hardy and Sousa, 1995, state that sports substantially influences body image of an individual. They emphasize that sports has a very important place in reaching a desired body shape, particularly in the adolescent period. Hubbard finds in his/her study in 2013 that exercise affects body image positively. Campbell and Hausenblas, 2009; Martin Ginis and Bassett-Gunter, 2011, state that exercises of medium level-heaviness contributes to improvement of body image. Zarshenas et al. examine effect of short-term aerobic exercises on body image in their study of 2013. It comes out as a result of their study that short-term aerobic exercises have an effect on body image. Ginis et al. find in their study in 2012 in which they examine effect of 16-week diet and exercise on body image of obese and fat women that a decrease occurs in body discontentment of the sample group due to weight loss.

In conclusion, it was found that body appreciation level of people who do sports regularly was higher and they were more satisfied with their bodies.

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