



## A study on trait anger – anger expression and friendship commitment levels of primary school 2<sup>nd</sup> stage students who play – do not play sports\*

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### Abstract

The aim of this research was to investigate the state of trait anger-anger expression and friendship commitment levels depending on the fact whether 2<sup>nd</sup>-stage-students in primary schools played sports or not.

Personal Information Form, Trait Anger-Anger Expression Scales and Inventory of Peer Attachment were used in order to collect the data.

The population of the research was consisted of the students who studied in 2<sup>nd</sup> stage of 40 primary state schools that belonged to National Education Directorate of Hatay Province between 2009-2010 academic year. Sample group was made up by 853 students of 21 primary schools who were selected from the population (262 boy students and 149 girl students who played sports as registered players; 233 boy students and 209 girl students who did not play sports.).

To sum up; the comparison of the scores of trait anger and external anger of the participant students who played sports yielded a statistically significant difference in terms of sex variable ( $p < 0.05$ ). As for the sedentary group, boys had higher scores of internal anger and external anger than girls. In the comparison of the scores of friendship commitment in sedentary students in terms of sex variable, it was found out that there was a statistically significant difference between girls and boys, which was in favour of boys ( $p < 0.05$ ).

**Keywords:** High school; trait anger; physical education and sport; friendship

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\*This article was an oral presentation at the 1<sup>st</sup> International Congress on Children and Sports, “Let the Children Play!” 19-21 April 2010. Near East University, Nicosia, Northern Cyprus.

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## **Spor yapan – yapmayan ilköğretim okulu II. kademe öğrencilerinin sürekli öfke-öfke ifade tarzları ve arkadaş bağlılığı düzeylerinin incelenmesi\***

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### **Özet**

Bu çalışmanın amacı, ilköğretim okulu II. Kademe öğrencilerinin spor yapıp yapmama durumlarına göre sürekli öfke- öfke ifade tarzları ve arkadaş bağlılığı düzeylerinin incelenmesidir.

Araştırmada veri toplama aracı olarak araştırmacılar tarafından geliştirilen kişisel bilgi formu, Spielberger ve arkadaşları (1988) tarafından geliştirilen, Özer (1994) tarafından Türkçeye uyarlanan “ Sürekli Öfke - Öfke İfade Tarzı Ölçeği ” (Trait Anger and Anger Expression Scales) ve Armsden ve Greenberg (1987) tarafından geliştirilen, Türkçeye uyarlanması Hortaçsu ve Oral (1991) tarafından yapılmış olan “Arkadaş Bağlılık Ölçeği” kullanılmıştır.

Araştırmanın evrenini, 2009-2010 eğitim-öğretim yılında Hatay İl Milli Eğitim Müdürlüğüne bağlı olarak hizmet veren 40 ilköğretim (devlet) II. kademe öğrencileri oluşturmaktadır. Örneklem grubunu ise, 21 ilköğretim okuluna devam eden lisanslı olarak spor yapan 262 erkek, 149 kız öğrenci ve spor yapmayan 233 erkek, 209 kız öğrenci olmak üzere toplam 853 ilköğretim okulu öğrencisi oluşturmaktadır.

Elde edilen verilerin hesaplanmasında ve değerlendirilmesinde SPSS 16,0 istatistik paket programı kullanılmıştır. Veriler yüzde (%) ve frekans tabloları verilerek özetlenmiştir. Verilerin normallik sınaması One-Sample Kolmogorov-Simironov test ile yapılmış olup verilerin normal dağılım gösterdiği varsayımı sağlanmıştır. Dolayısıyla veriler parametrik testlerden, Independent sample-t testi ile analiz edilmiştir. Bu çalışmada hata düzeyi 0,05 olarak kabul edilmiştir

Sonuç olarak; araştırmaya katılan sporcu öğrencilerin cinsiyet değişkeni açısından elde edilen sürekli öfke ve dışa öfke puanlarının karşılaştırılmasında istatistiksel olarak anlamlı bir farklılık olduğu ( $P<0,05$ ), sedanterlerde ise, erkeklerin içe öfke ve dışa öfke durumlarının kızlardan daha yüksek bulunmuştur. Sedanter öğrencilerin cinsiyet değişkeni açısından elde edilen arkadaş bağlılığı puanlarının karşılaştırılmasında kız ve erkek öğrenciler arasında erkekler lehine istatistiksel olarak anlamlı bir farklılık olduğu tespit edilmiştir ( $P<0,05$ ).

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** İlköğretim; öfke; beden eğitimi ve spor; arkadaşlık

## Introduction

Adolescence is the period during which childhood is left behind and life rapidly changes. The most evident aspect of this period is that it involves key developments that affect life. One may keep positive and negative characteristics obtained during adolescence for life. Effects that last totally for 5-6 years in adolescence may continue for 50-60 years. Of course, childhood years –especially the first five years- are important; but it is scientific fact that adolescence affects character development and personal development in the individuals (Abalı, 2004).

Adolescence is defined as a process during which sexual development starts and finishes (Saygılı, 2004), a “mid-period” spent between childhood and adulthood (Kulaksızoğlu, 2004), a developmental period during which the individuals are economically dependent because not only they receive formal education and are in the struggle for a profession but also are unmarried in terms of marital status (Koç, 2004), a life period during which the society where the individuals live does not consider them as a child anymore but does not grant them an adult status, an adult role and an adult functioning entirely yet (Yavuzer, 2001), the second period during which development occurs in the fastest way (Söylemez, 2005) and a transition and a change period (Bıçakçı, 2000).

Although the definitions above reflect various points of views; it is understood that they mutually emphasize development and change and point out a process that leads to adulthood and maturity. When these views are combined we can describe adolescence as a process which individuals live in order to reach maturity by undergoing bodily, psychological, sexual and social developments and changes after leaving the childhood behind (Kırımoğlu, 2007).

Period of primary school is a period during which children leave their families, have relations with the world outside and participate in social environments (Yörükoglu, 1993). School is a new social environment and the first social institution in the socialization process. It is seen that children who started school develop more social contacts with many friends than pre-school period, family is placed in the second place and group games are replaced with individual games (Yavuzer, 1996).

It is pointed out that different emotions occur during adolescence period and these basic emotions are reported as fear, anger, joy, sadness, sympathy, hate, hope and amazement: (Cüceloğlu, 2000). Anger, one of these emotions, is variously defined. Some discuss it as a negative emotion while some discuss it as a positive emotion. The reason is that anger is caused by different dimensions. For Kısaç (1999), these dimensions are explained as physical

and physiological aspect of anger, social and cognitive aspect of anger and behavioral and reactional aspect of anger.

When we analyzed the studies about the concept of anger it was found out that interest in the concept of anger in the scientific sense was initiated by Novaco in 1975 and has still been continuing (Özmen, 2006).

Anger is an emotion that may expand from dissatisfaction, rage to violence in order to get rid of the anxiety caused by the helplessness, weakness and inefficacy experienced by the individuals when they meet an obstacle or danger (Doğan et al., 2005). The way anger is expressed is very important. Anger is interpreted according to the way it is expressed and problems occur due to the outcomes caused by the way anger is expressed (Batıgün 2004; Erkek et al. 2006). Therefore, pre-adolescence and adolescence becomes very critical periods in this regard. It is reported that the adolescent may be in conflict with the family when they express their choices or when their social and physical activities are restricted or due to the problems while determining the boundaries between responsibilities and freedom and autonomy or due to the dissatisfaction with the self and they may be angry at everything and everybody perceived as a threat against themselves or their identity struggle during this emotionally intensified period (Yıldırım, 2006).

Peer groups in adolescence are the most appropriate and helpful environment for the adolescent's development. However, peer groups may have harmful effects like other environments, too but the benefits of peer group dominate. Adolescents feel freer in the peer groups where individuals share common interests, needs and same tendencies, excitements and hopes (Rahmi, 2000). They are provided with opportunities to develop their physical and mental skills within sincere relations (Rahmi, 2000). Kulaksızoğlu (1999) describes friendship as the smallest social unit where mutual behavioral patterns and attitudes are shared and new behavioral patterns and attitudes are shaped.

Communication with peer, initiated in the pre-school period, facilitates the children's adaptation to environmental stimuli because the children become able to understand the world outside through communication. Social needs that intensify during adolescence such as sense of belonging, acceptance and commitment may cause the individual to completely be under the control of peer group (Aydın, 2003). Keeping away from the family, adolescents spend more time with peer groups (Kıran, 2003). Often, peers are as much effective on the individuals as their family (Cüceloğlu, 1992). Therefore, it may be suggested that friendship is important for emotional development during adolescence. Besides, the most important

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feedbacks and messages come from friends -not teachers and parents- during this period. So, friendship relations are very important during adolescence (Saçar, 2007).

Physical education and sports is accepted as an entity of planned and purposeful activities, which is considered as inseparable and complementary part of general education and aims at physical, mental, social and emotional development of the individuals who are the basic source of the future generations (Yıldırım & Yetim, 1996).

From this point of view, it is of high importance to investigate whether playing sports contributes to the styles of anger-anger expressions and to friendship commitment levels of the students in primary school 2<sup>nd</sup> stage who played sports and who did not.

The study was designed to examine trait anger-anger expression and friendship commitment levels depending on the fact whether 2<sup>nd</sup>-stage-students in primary schools played sports or not.

### **Method**

General screening model, one of the descriptive research methods, was used in this research. Screening model is defined as an approach that aims at describing a present situation as it is (Karasar, 2005).

### **Population of the research**

Population of the research was consisted of the students who studied in 2<sup>nd</sup> stage of 40 primary state schools of National Education Directorate of Hatay Province between 2009-2010 academic year. Sample-group was made up by 853 students that attended 21 primary schools (262 boy students and 149 girl students who played sports as registered players; 233 boy students and 209 girl students who did not play sports.). Required approvals were obtained from the authorities concerned and girl and boy students who were registered players and actively played sports were accepted in the research as sport-players.

### **Data collection tools**

In order to collect data; Personal Information Form designed by the researchers, Trait Anger-Anger Expression Scales designed by Spielberger et al. (1988) and adapted by Özer (1994) for Turkish and Inventory of Peer Attachment designed by Armsden & Greenberg (1987) and adapted by Hortaçsu & Oral (1991) for Turkish were utilized in the research.

### **Trait anger and anger expression scales**

The original design was developed by Spielberger (1983). Turkish adaptation was carried out by Özer (1994). It is a 34-item scale which measures the anger levels and anger

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expression styles in adolescents and adults. The scale consists of 4-point scales (1: never, 4: completely) to answer the items. No total score is obtained from the scale and scoring is carried out for subscales. Higher scores in the subscale of the trait anger (10 items) mean a higher level of anger. Higher scores in the subscale of anger control (8 items) demonstrate the ability to control anger. External anger (8 items) suggests that anger is easily expressed and internal anger (8 items) shows suppressed anger. In the study of reliability; criterion related validity and factor analysis were carried out for the adaptation study.

Item-total correlation scores were found to be between .14 and .56 and Croanbach alpha internal consistency was between .73 and .84 (Savaşır & Şahin, 1997).

### **Inventory of peer attachment**

Inventory of Peer Attachment was developed by Armsden and Greenberg (1987). It is used to measure the dimensions of cognitive-affective commitment between adolescents and their friends. Turkish adaptation was carried out by Hortaçsu and Oral (1991). It is a five-point Likert type inventory with 25 items. Total scores range from 25 to 125. Higher scores of the inventory mean stronger friendship commitment. The original form included the subscales of esteem, understanding and trust. However, only total scores are used because the values of factor analysis and outcomes of the original form were not consistent in the study conducted for the Turkish adaptation of the inventory (Löker, 1999). In the study of Löker (1999) that investigated validity and reliability of the inventory; Croanbach Alpha reliability coefficient was estimated as .92. Item-correlation ranged from .51 and .75. In the study of Akkapulu (2005); it was found out that internal consistency coefficient was .91 and .95 with split halves technique, .71 with test-retest technique. Item total correlation coefficients ranged from .09 to .67.

### **Analysis of the data**

SPSS 16.0 version was used for the calculations and evaluations of the data obtained. The data were summarized with percentage and frequency tables. Normality test was performed with One-Sample Kolmogorov-Simirnov test and it was assumed that the data followed a normal distribution. Therefore, the data were analyzed with Independent Sample-t test of the parametric tests. Error threshold was accepted as 0.05.

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## Results

As shown in Table 1, 262 of the participants who played sports were boys and 149 were girls whereas in the sedentary group 233 were boys and 209 were girls. The total number of the participants was 853.

**Table 1.** Distributions of the percentages (%) and frequencies of the participants according about whether they played sports or not in terms of sex variable

		f	%
Player	Boy students	262	63,7
	Girl sutudents	149	36,3
	Total	411	100,0
Sedentary	Boy students	233	52,7
	Girl sutudents	209	47,3
	Total	442	100,0

**Table 2.** Distributions of the percentages (%) and frequencies of the participants about whether they played sports or not in terms of age variable

		Age	f	%
Player		11	17	4,1
		12	112	27,3
		13	170	41,4
		14	100	24,3
		15	10	2,4
		16	2	,4
		Total	411	100,0
Sedentary		11	10	2,3
		12	107	24,2
		13	218	49,3
		14	93	21,0
		15	14	3,2
		Total	442	100,0

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When we analyzed the Table 2, it was found out that general age distribution of the participants was 11-16 and 27 students belonged to age group of 11 year-old, 317 students to age group of 12 year-old 388 to age group of 13 year-old, 193 to age group of 14 year-old, 24 to age group of 15 year-old and 1 to age group of 16 year-old.

**Table 3.** Comparison of the anger state in terms of sex variable

Variables	Sex	N	Mean	Std. deviation	T	P	
<b>Player</b>	Trait anger	Boy students	262	21,8550	5,51643	3,453	0,001*
		Girl students	149	19,8859	5,62755		
	İnternal anger	Boy students	262	16,0496	4,18369	1,674	0,095
		Girl students	149	15,3289	4,21779		
	External anger	Boy students	262	16,5267	4,23600	3,231	0,001*
		Girl students	149	15,0940	4,46812		
Anger control	Boy students	262	20,8092	4,84094	1,339	0,181	
	Girl students	149	21,4631	4,61567			
<b>Sedentary</b>	Trait anger	Boy students	233	22,5322	5,73631	1,700	0,090
		Girl students	209	21,5837	5,98989		
	İnternal anger	Boy students	233	16,9185	4,25352	2,782	0,006*
		Girl students	209	15,7368	4,67529		
	External anger	Boy students	233	16,9871	4,27753	2,933	0,005*
		Girl students	209	15,7321	4,71852		
Anger control	Boy students	233	20,3090	4,63669	0,912	0,362	
	Girl students	209	20,7464	5,43827			

P<0.05\*

As seen Table 3; the comparison of anger states in terms of sex variable of the participants who played sports and those who were sedentary did not yield any statistically significant difference between girls and boys of the group who played sports for the anger subscales of internal anger and anger control ( $p>0.05$ ). However; the comparison of trait anger scores and external anger scores of the girls and boys who played sports presented a

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statistically significant difference between girl students and boy students ( $p < 0.05$ ). Trait anger scores and external anger scores of boys were higher than those of girls in these comparisons.

It was found out in the comparison made for the sedentary group in terms of sex variable that there was not any statistically significant difference between sedentary girls and sedentary boys in terms of trait anger and anger control ( $p > 0.05$ ). Yet, the comparison of internal anger scores and external anger scores demonstrated a statistically significant difference between sedentary girls and sedentary boys ( $p < 0.05$ ). Internal anger scores and external anger scores of the boys was higher than that of girls.

**Table 4.** Comparison of the participants according to sex variable in terms of friendship commitment.

Variables		Sex	N	Mean	Std. deviation	T	P
Player	Friend	Boy students	262	66,0076	11,8188	1,136	0,257
		Girl students	149	64,6779	10,6601		
Sedentary	Friend	Boy students	233	68,0386	12,6740	3,853	0,000*
		Girl students	209	63,3589	12,8325		

\* $P < 0.05$

When we analyzed Table 4, the comparison of the participants who played sports and those who were sedentary according to sex variable in terms of friendship commitment did not show any statistically significant difference between boy players and girl players ( $p > 0.05$ ). On the other hand, the comparison of the friendship commitments scores in sedentary girls and sedentary boys revealed a statistically significant difference between sedentary girls and sedentary boys ( $p < 0.05$ ). Friendship commitments scores of the boys were higher than that of the girls in these comparisons.

## Discussion

In the comparison of anger states of the participants (who played sports) according to sex variable, we could not detect any statistically significant difference between girl students and boy students for the scores of the anger subscales of internal anger and anger control ( $p > 0.05$ ). In light of this finding; it might be concluded for the primary school students who played sports that anger-anger expression styles were similar according to sex variable. Some

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of the studies (Kısaç, 1997; Okman, 1999; Gök, 2009) in literature that investigated the points above supported our finding, suggesting that sex variable was not a determinant factor for the anger levels. Therefore, it might be said that playing sports was not a determining factor in reducing and controlling anger for the participants of the present research.

However, the comparison of scores of trait anger and external anger of the girl students and the boy students who played sports demonstrated a statistically significant difference between the girl students and the boy students ( $p < 0.05$ ). In these comparisons, boy students who played sports had higher trait anger and external anger than that of the girl students playing sports. In this regard, it might be concluded that boy students who played sports experienced more intense trait anger and exposed more their anger than the girl students. In fact, when we analyzed the scores of the trait anger of the study group in the study by Yıldırım (2006) in terms of sex variable, scores of trait anger of boys were found to be higher than that of girls. This finding supported ours and it might be interpreted that playing sports did not affect trait anger levels for the research participants.

Therefore, it might be concluded that boy students who played sports had more difficulty controlling their anger, exposed their anger more compared to girl students who played sports. As for the girl students who played sports; they experienced and exposed anger less. According to literature about this point, it was presumed that anger control of the students decreased as the level of external anger increased (Albayrak & Kutlu, 2009). This presumption supported our study findings. Moreover; it might be emphasized that it is important for psychological health and should be emphasized for behavioral risk factors. Because, –even if it was not the aim of our research–it was reported in the studies conducted about anger state in literature (Avcı, 2006; Bridewell & Chang, 1997; Lamb & Pusker, 1991; Deffenbacher, et al., 1996) that repressed anger may be the cause of behavioral disorders such as depression, suicide, drug addiction, aggressiveness, violent behaviors.

Again, according to the findings of the study “Evaluation of the Effects of Sports on Psychological State of the Handicapped Individuals” by Tuncer; it was found out that handicapped individuals who played sports had higher anger levels compared to those who did not; which supported our conclusion that playing sport was not significantly effective in reducing anger levels.

According to another finding of the study; the comparison of anger state of the sedentary participants according to sex variable did not reveal any statistically significant difference in terms of trait anger and anger control between sedentary girl students and

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sedentary boy students ( $p>0.05$ ). The comparison of the scores of the sedentary girl students and sedentary boy students in terms of internal anger and external anger demonstrated a statistically significant difference between the sedentary girl students and sedentary boy students ( $p<0.05$ ). The internal anger levels and external anger levels of the sedentary boy students were higher than that of the girl students in these comparisons. On the other hand; Köksal and Gençdoğan (2007) and Gök (2009) reported that sex variable did not yield any significant difference in terms of internal anger levels and external anger levels. These findings contradicted ours. This contradiction might be resulting from the socio cultural differences of the participants. In light of this finding; it might be said that sedentary boy students exposed more loudly their anger than sedentary girl students.

It was found out that there was not any statistically significant difference between girl students who played sports and boy students who played sports according to the sex variable in terms of friendship commitment ( $p>0.05$ ). However, we found a statistically significant difference between sedentary girl students and sedentary boy students in the comparison of the scores of friendship commitment ( $P<0.05$ ). The comparison suggested that sedentary boy students had higher friendship commitment compared to sedentary girl students.

As a conclusion; although boy students who played sports had higher trait anger and external anger than that of girl students who played sports, it might be said that boy students made friends more easily. In this sense; it might be concluded that anger expression style did not affect friendship commitment negatively. Furthermore; adolescents may reflect their anger styles in a different way in order not to lose their friends and not to be isolated from friend circle. In this regard; it is maintained that adolescents may not be showing their anger just not to be isolated from the friend group and that friend relations play key role for adolescents to show an aggressive behavior or not (Albayrak and Kutlu, 2009).

As a result; it might be summarized as long as the participants of the research were concerned that;

1. Playing sports did not affect trait anger-anger expression styles and friendship commitment in a determining way,
2. Sedentary boy students adopted more trait anger and external anger styles compared to sedentary girl students and
3. Sedentary boy students expressed their anger in a more obvious way than sedentary girl students.

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The research may be repeated with primary school students who play in National Team in order to obtain more accurate results and outcomes about the research topic.

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