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Original article

ASSESSMENT OF TAEKWONDO NATIONAL SPORTS ATTITUDES TOWARDS ELDERLY

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Abstract*

Aim. In this study, it was aimed to evaluate the attitudes of taekwondo national sportsman's towards elderly.

Methods. The study is planned in the descriptive type. The survey was conducted with Taekwondo national sportsmen. The universe of the research was national sportsmen who played Taekwondo in all over Turkey and were over 18 years old. The 128 national sportsmen who agreed to participate in the research of the research sample and returned with the questionnaires were formed. In gathering the data; Information form prepared by researchers questioning the socio-demographic information of the sportsmen and "Attitude Scale Towards the Elderly" were used. Mann Whitney U and Kruskal Wallis test were used to evaluate the relationship between the number and percentage distributions of the demographic data of the study and the sociodemographic characteristics and Attitudes towards the Elderly Attitudes Scale. The results were evaluated at 95% confidence interval and $p < 0.05$ significance level.

Results. Taekwondo national sportsmen who agreed to participate in the survey had a mean age of 28.25 ± 2.15 , 38.3% of them were high school graduates, 33.75% were students, and 42.6% were in core families, 27.9% were living in the city for the longest time, 27.5% 39.2% of them had spent 16 years or more playing sports. ($P < 0.05$), college graduates ($p < 0.05$), fractured family members ($p < 0.05$), students ($p < 0.05$), the same households with the elderly family members as compared to the socio-demographic characteristics of the national athletes and attitude scale scores towards the elderly ($p < 0.05$) and those who were 16 years and over ($p < 0.05$) had a higher mean score of attitude scale towards elderly.

Conclusions. As a result of the research, it was found that Taekwondo sport affects positively the attitudes of individuals towards their elderly. In terms of variables, being a woman, being a college graduate, living in fragmented families, becoming a student, living in the same household with an elderly family, and doing sports over 16 years affects positively towards the elderly.

Key words: National sportsmen, Elderly, Attitude, Taekwondo

Introduction

The fact that the elderly population is increasing rapidly in all the countries of the world makes it necessary for every country to plan their plans for their elderly and elderly health. Old age is an inevitable period of human life. Individuals older than 65 years of age are considered "elderly", although they vary from person to person (Taşçı, 2010). The increase in the proportion of elderly population in society will naturally also increase the likelihood of young people encountering elderly people at any place and at any time. As the proportion of older adults continues to increase in both the population and the labor force, it becomes increasingly important to understand the determinants of attitudes towards the elderly so that it may be possible to promote more positive attitudes in young adults.

Young people will interact with the elderly as their parents or their professional lives and their positive or negative attitudes towards the elderly will directly affect the socioeconomic and cultural experiences of the elderly individuals (Ucun, Mersin & Öksüz, 2015). It is a universally acknowledged truth that older adults attract negative attitudes, and are seen as weakened in mind and body. The elderly used to be a highly respected group and were admired for their experience and wisdom. Changes in the political, social, and economic landscape altered perceptions about aging and ultimately decreased the status and position of the elderly in society (Robinson, & Howatson-Jones, 2014).

With a growing sense of individualism and an increasing concern with staying young, older people have had to face an escalating level of

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disregard, disrespect, and marginalization. These prevailing social and cultural issues have indubitable social and academic significance that merits far more attention and applied action than it is now receiving (Berger, 2017). This is found in both ageist individuals guided by prejudice and pro-aging people who feel pity for the perceived enfeeblement commensurate (Stuart-Hamilton & Mahoney, 2003).

The social and cultural relationship and understanding of old age differ from one society to another. In the formation of such differences, the societies have their own internal dynamics, historical development, life and livelihoods. These attitudes are influenced by the individual's past experiences, cultural beliefs, values, educational status and motivation (Akdemir, Çınar, Görgülü, 2007). The attitude that individuals have developed is first shaped in the social environment and later on a personal level based on knowledge (Kulakcı, 2010). Even young children may change their perceptions after learning more about older adulthood. Perceptions of the elderly were determined for pre-school children who then participated in a curriculum that focused on positive characteristics of older adults (Blunk & Williams, 1997). A significant decrease in prejudice was found in the group that was exposed to the curriculum. An increase in prejudice was found in a control group of same aged children.

Attitudes towards old people are correlated with different aspects, the most influential predictors assessed by previous studies include age, gender, educational level, gerontological education, experience, and contact with old people (Söderhamn, Lindencrona, & Gustavsson, 2001). Gender also appears to be a factor in attitudes about older adults. In a study of college students' attitudes towards the elderly, the sample evaluated older men and women in young old, old-old and the oldest-old categories (Hawkins, 1996). Regardless of the age category, male students viewed older females more negatively than older male subjects. A study conducted by Allen & Johnson (2009) evaluated attitudes towards the elderly; they found girls valued old people higher than boys. This is in contrast to another study, where male students had more positive attitudes than females (Hweidi & Al-Obeisat, 2006).

In a study conducted by Acımuş and his colleagues (2006) it is stated that, in Turkey, social viewpoint on aging was evaluated and it was found out that an aged person who is introverted, isolated from his sexuality, not expecting, living in his own loneliness, poor, incapable, weak social relations. In a study investigating the thoughts of elder abuse of university students, it was seen that about half of the students (49.2%) participated in the survey

stated that their productivity was over, that they defined as the disease or disability period and 57.8% stated aging age as 60-65 (Karadeniz et al., 2009).

Emotional thoughts and behaviors influence each other. Therefore, positive emotions and attitudes are the most important factors that increase the possibility of positive aging of individuals. Therefore, it is important to investigate the attitudes of the young people who will live on these plans to the elderly in the future plans for the elderly. (Ucun, Mersin, Öksüz, 2015). Direct contact between younger and older persons could cause younger people to develop more positive attitudes toward the elderly. However, Angiullo et al., 1996 have found that the amount and frequency of direct contact with the elderly was not associated with the development of more positive attitudes toward the elderly.

Regular assessment of the individual's attitudes towards elderly discrimination and the examination of the social and social characteristics that affect elderly discrimination are necessary for the early detection of adverse elderly discrimination. In this study, it was aimed to evaluate the attitudes of taekwondo national sportsmen towards aging. In line with this aim, the following questions were created.

Research Questions

1. Is there a relationship between the socio-demographic characteristics of Taekwondo national sportsmen and their attitudes towards aging?
2. How is the sport's attitude toward aging?

Methods

Research is planned in a descriptive manner. The survey was conducted with Taekwondo national sportsmen. The universe of the research was national sportsmen who played Taekwondo in all over Turkey and were over 18 years old. The 128 national athletes who agreed to participate in the research of the research sample and returned with the questionnaires were formed. In gathering the data; Information form prepared by researchers questioning the socio-demographic information of the athletes and "Attitude Scale Towards the Elderly" were used.

Attitude Scale Towards the Elderly

The Kogan Attitude Scale Towards the Elderly, developed by Nathan Kogan in 1961, is a measure designed to measure the attitudes of individuals towards their aging. This scale has been applied to health workers as well as to determine the attitude of the society towards aging. It is a 6-point Likert-type measure with no social terms and no medical terms. A scale consisting of 34 items; There are 17 positive and 17 negative expressions. Questions 1-17 are negative, and questions 18-34



are positive. Because of the structure of the scale, negative expressions are from right to left 6 5 4 3 2 1, positive expressions; From left to right 1 2 3 4 5 6. The scores obtained from all the items are collected and the total score is reached. The scale range of the scale is between 34-204 points, high score indicates positive attitude and low score indicates negative attitude. The Turkish validity and reliability study of the scale was made by Duyan and Gelbal (2013). Cronbach Alpha reliability was calculated as 0.789 for the positive attitude subscale, 0.794 for the negative attitude subscale, and 0.840 for the Attitude Scale Towards the Elderly.

Data collection

The data of this study were collected from national sportsmen who played Taekwondo in Turkey and over 18 years old. It started after the ethics approval for the search. At the time of data collection, the sportsmen who accepted to participate in the survey were informed by the researchers that the form was signed and the form was signed by those who agreed to participate in the survey by providing the meaning of the purpose and extent of the research. Before the forms to be used in the research were given, necessary explanations were made orally and care was taken to create a silent environment with little stimulation during application.

Evaluation of Data

After the data were collected, the option that each individual indicated for each item on the

scales was entered into the SPSS program by the researchers and the total scores of the individuals from the scales were calculated. Mann Whitney U and Kruskal Wallis test were used to evaluate the relationship between the number and percentage distributions of the demographic data of the study and the sociodemographic characteristics and Attitude Scale Towards the Elderly. The results were evaluated at 95% confidence interval and $p < 0.05$ significance level.

Limitations of the Study

This research is limited to national sportsmen who are over 18 years old in Taekwondo sports in Turkey, who are open to communication and who agree to participate in the research.

Results

Taekwondo national sportmen who agreed to participate in the survey had a mean age of 28.25 ± 2.15 , 38.3% high school graduates, 33.75% students, 42.6% in core families, 27.9% in the city for the longest time, 27.5% were lived in the same house as the grandmother and 39.2% of them had been playing sports for more than 16 years ($p < 0.05$), college graduates ($p < 0.05$), fractured family members ($p < 0.05$), students ($p < 0.05$), the same households with the elderly family members as compared to the socio-demographic characteristics of the national athletes and attitude scale scores towards the elderly ($P < 0.05$) and those who were 16 years and over ($p < 0.05$) had a higher mean score of attitude toward aging (Table 1).

Table 1. Comparison of Sociodemographic Characteristics and Attitudes Toward Aging Scores of National Sportsmen (n = 128) 174.005

	Attitude Scale Towards the Elderly X ± SD	p
Gender		
Female	182.78±6.08	U=7.500
Male	165.23±7.06	p=0.00*
Education Status		
Primary Scholl	166.07±8.04	KW=3.764
High Scholl	175.56±7.56	p=0.00*
University	180.38±6.48	
Family Type		
Nuclear family	169.98±4.79	KW= 0.186
Extended family	171.76±8.54	p=0.01*
Shattered family	180.27±3.75	
Work		
Student	179.64±3.52	KW= 3.275
Official	175.45±6.08	p=0.02*
Self-employment	166.92±5.07	
The longest place to live		
Village	191.24±4.85	KW= 6.057
District	171.74±6.84	p=0.00*



City	159.03±4.67	
Living with the elderly family in the same house		
Yes	183.09±4.75	U=12.000
No	164.92±3.86	p=0.03*
Duration of sport		
1-5 year	168.76±6.63	KW= 8.075
6-15 year	163.74±6.05	p=0.02*
16 year and upper	189.45±3.37	

p<0.05

Discussion

In our country, care for the elderly is largely provided by family members, and especially by children, although elderly people in many countries are given care by professional people (Hweidi and Al'Obeisat, 2006: 24, Lambrinou et al., 2009: 617). For this reason, it is important to determine the attitudes of the young people towards the elderly and to meet the needs of knowledge, attitude and skill related to the old age. According to the findings obtained from our study, it was found that the athletes living in the same house as the elderly showed a positive attitude towards the elderly at a significant level. Tan, Zhang, and Fan (2004) reported results from Chinese University students. They have been reporting on the positive attitudes held by an elderly person. In our study, participants who live in the same household with the elderly individual may have a positive attitude because they are closely related to the elderly individual.

Another finding from our study is that female athletes have a positive attitude towards older people at a significantly higher level than men. A study conducted by Allen & Johnson (2009) evaluated attitudes towards the elderly; they found girls valued old people higher than boys. This is in contrast to another study, where male students had more positive attitudes than females (Hweidi & Al-Obeisat, 2006). This difference may be related to the population of the study. Slevin (1991) administered an Attitudes Toward the Elderly inventory to secondary school pupils during their final two years of schooling and to nurses. The subjects of the study demonstrated negative attitudes, and there appeared to be a definite gender socialization influence, with females demonstrating less negative attitudes than males.

According to the results of a study by Canatan (2009), a total of 186 students studying in different high schools in Ankara in order to determine elderly thoughts similar to this finding obtained from our study; It is seen that young people in general have a positive approach to aging and old age and that girls have positive attitudes higher than men. Pan et al.2009 and Wang et al.2009 reported that, their study was statistically

significant when we found that the attitudes of the students towards their ages were more positive than those of the males, similar to our findings.

When the attitude scores towards the elderly were examined according to the type of family that the students live in, it is found that the attitudes towards the elderly are more positive than those who live in the fragmented family and those living in the core and wide family. Likewise, the findings of Lovell (2006) and Lopez (2014) were similar to our study findings. In a study conducted by Bousfield and Hutchison (2010) it was predicted that young people's experiences of contact with older people would be positively associated with their attitudes and behavioral intentions towards the elderly, and the results provided support for this prediction. Although no significant relationships emerged between contact frequency and the various outcome measures, contact quality was associated with young people's attitudes and behavioral intentions towards the elderly. Significant positive associations were found between contact quality and attitudes, and between quality and behavioral intentions. Thus, the better quality of contact with older people experienced by our respondents, the more favorable of their attitudes and behavioral intentions towards the elderly.

Conclusion

This study provides evidence about the potential value of improving knowledge of aging as a way of reducing negative attitudes toward the elderly. As a result of research, it was found that Taekwondo sport affects positively the attitudes of individuals towards their aging. In terms of variables, being a woman, being a college graduate, living in fragmented families, being a student, living in the same household with an elderly family, and doing sports over 16 years affects positively towards the elderly. In terms of increasing the attitudes of the national athletes towards their aging more positively, it is important that the programs in which the athletes can coexist more with the elderly are more positive attitudes towards the elderly.

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