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EXAMINING THE EFFECT OF SPORTS PARTICIPATION AND CERTAIN DEMOGRAPHIC VARIABLES ON UNIVERSITY STUDENTS' VIEWS ON SUBSTANCE ABUSE

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ABSTRACT

This research aims to examine the effect of sports participation and some demographic variables on the opinions of university students regarding substance abuse. The research was conducted within the scope of the general survey model, a quantitative research approach. The study sample comprises 535 university students, 214 women and 321 men, studying at Atatürk University in the 2025–2026 academic year. Data were collected using a Personal Information Form and the Substance Addiction Opinion Scale. The collected data were analyzed using the independent samples t-test and one-way analysis of variance (One-Way ANOVA) based on the number of groups in the independent variable. The LSD post-hoc test was applied to determine the source of significant differences, and all statistical analyses were evaluated at a 5% significance level ($p < .05$). The findings revealed that students' views on substance addiction differed significantly according to certain variables. In terms of gender, male students had significantly higher scores regarding perceptions of the harmful effects of addictive substances compared to female students. Although no statistically significant differences by age were found, students aged 22 years and older had higher mean scores on some sub-dimensions. Significant differences were observed in income level, grade level, sport type, and years of sports participation. In contrast, no significant differences were found for parental education level, sports participation status, or weekly duration of sports activity. Additionally, students engaged in team sports exhibited more protective and positive views toward substance addiction compared to those participating in individual sports. In conclusion, the results indicate that views on substance addiction among university students are influenced not only by individual characteristics but also by socioeconomic and sport-related factors. In this context, team sports may be considered an important protective factor, and incorporating sport-based approaches into preventive programs targeting university students is recommended.

KEYWORDS: Substance abuse, sports, university students.

1. INTRODUCTION

Sport emerged throughout history as an extension of human efforts to adapt to challenging living conditions and survive; over time, it evolved into a systematic and institutionalized structure with established rules and became an important part of social life (Mirzeoğlu, 2003). Today, sport is regarded not only as an activity aimed at improving physical performance but also as a multidimensional phenomenon that supports individuals' psychological well-being, social adaptation, and quality of life (Kusan & Sabah, 2022). In this respect, sport is defined as a holistic field of activity that can be performed individually or in teams, conducted within specific rules, supports the development of physical and mental abilities, and possesses educational and recreational characteristics (Yetim, 2006). Indeed, in developed societies, sport is considered one of the fundamental educational tools contributing to individuals' physical, social, psychological, and cultural development and plays a strategic role in raising healthy generations (Ateş, 2011).

On the other hand, the rapidly increasing use of substances and substance addiction in modern societies has emerged as a significant public health problem at both individual and societal levels. The concept of substance encompasses all chemicals that have the potential for misuse and addiction, can be consumed through various routes, and cause changes in mood, perception, cognition, and other brain functions (Altuner et al., 2009). Substances such as alcohol, tobacco, heroin, cocaine, opium, and certain medications are among those that may produce intoxicating effects, reduce daily functioning, and negatively affect physical and mental health (Budak, 2000). Substance addiction, however, is defined as a chronic brain disorder characterized by the progressive increase and persistence of substance use to re-experience the pleasurable effects of the substance or avoid withdrawal symptoms, accompanied by behavioral problems (Uzbay, 2015). The phenomenon of addiction is explained through core characteristics such as intense craving, loss of control, and persistent patterns of use despite harmful consequences (Shaffer, Hall, & Bilt, 2000). This condition is considered not only a biological process but also a multidimensional problem shaped by the interaction of psychosocial risk and protective factors (Polat, 2014).

Substance addiction has been associated with numerous psychosocial problems, including low self-esteem, difficulties in interpersonal

relationships, challenges in expressing emotions, anxiety, and depression (Karakas & Ersöğütçü, 2016). Therefore, addiction is a condition that reduces individuals' quality of life, impairs social adaptation, and requires clinical intervention (Kurupınar, 2012). At this point, preventive approaches are of critical importance in combating addiction. The literature emphasizes that sport is an important protective factor in reducing smoking and substance use, and that expanding school-based sports activities may be an effective strategy for preventing risky behaviors (Gökler & Koçak, 2008). Similarly, participation in social, cultural, artistic, and sportive activities is considered functional in keeping children and adolescents away from substance use. Such activities contribute to the development of structured leisure habits among young people and reduce their tendency toward risky behaviors (Bingöl Kantarcı, 2022). However, due to its relatively easy accessibility, legal acceptance, and potential role as a gateway to certain illicit substances, cigarette addiction is regarded as one of the most common and critical forms of addiction (Piar, 1988).

Although the existing literature demonstrates the physical and psychosocial benefits of sport, studies addressing the protective role of sport on addictive behaviors within a holistic framework remain limited. In particular, there is an increasing need for research explaining the relationship between sports participation during childhood and adolescence and the risk and protective factors related to addiction. In this context, sport may be considered not only a field of performance and recreation but also an intervention area that should be addressed from the perspectives of preventive mental health and public health.

This study aims to address the effects of sport on individuals' physical and psychosocial development through a holistic approach, reveal the protective role of sport in preventing substance use and addiction, and emphasize the importance of sports participation in keeping young people away from substance addiction.

2. METHOD

2.1. Research Method

This study is a quantitative research study conducted using the survey method, which is widely used in the social sciences and accepted in the literature as a valid research approach.

2.2. Research Model and Design

The study was conducted using the survey model. Survey models are research approaches that aim to

examine a past or present situation as it exists by conducting studies on a sample group selected from a larger population. The event, individual, or object that constitutes the subject of the research is described within its own conditions and as it naturally exists (Karasar, 2005).

2.3. Population and Sample

The population of this study consisted of students of Atatürk University. The sample group was composed of accessible students from different faculties during the 2025–2026 spring semester, selected using random sampling.

2.4. Data Collection Tools

In this study, the following data collection tools were used:

Personal Information Form: The research form developed by the researchers included various variables such as gender, age, total family income, grade level, parental education status, sports participation status, weekly duration of sports participation, type of sport performed, sports branch

engaged in, and the number of years of sports participation.

Opinion Scale on Substance Addiction Among Youth: This scale, whose validity and reliability were established by Özdemir (2011), was found to have a four-factor structure (causes, harms, approaches, and informing) following the analyses. Following the analyses, 31 of the 54 items in the trial scale were removed, leaving 23 items in the final scale. The factor loadings for the four factors ranged from .53 to .81. The variances explained by each factor were 16.6%, 15.7%, 10.1%, and 10.1%, respectively, for a total explained variance of 52.5%. The item-total correlations for each sub-factor of the four-factor scale ranged between .45 and .67 for Factor I, .53 and .71 for Factor II, .40 and .60 for Factor III, and .36 and .54 for Factor IV. Cronbach’s Alpha internal consistency coefficients were calculated to assess the scale’s reliability. The alpha reliability coefficient was calculated as .82 for Factor I, .84 for Factor II, .73 for Factor III, and .73 for Factor IV. The overall reliability coefficient of the scale was .83.

2.5. Reliability of the Study

Table 1. Cronbach’s Alpha (a) Reliability Analysis Results of the Substance Addiction Opinion Scale.

Scale	Sub-Dimensions	Cronbach’s Alpha	Number of Items
Substance Addiction Opinion Scale	Reason for a Person Becoming Addicted to Addictive Substances (Cigarettes, Alcohol, or Drugs)	,900	8
	Harms of Addictive Substances (Cigarettes, Alcohol, or Drugs)	,897	7
	Reason for Not Using Addictive Substances (Cigarettes, Alcohol, or Drugs)	,827	4
	Being Informed About Addictive Substances (Cigarettes, Alcohol, or Drugs)	,785	4
	Total Scale Score	,935	23

In the literature, a Cronbach’s Alpha coefficient of .70 and above is considered acceptable (Nunnally, 1978, cited in Peterson, 1994; Şimşek, 2007; Salvucci et al., 1997). Accordingly, when the reliability analyses obtained in this study are examined, it is understood that the Cronbach’s Alpha value for the total scale score is at a sufficient level.

3. DATA ANALYSIS

In this study, students’ views regarding substance addiction were analyzed using the SPSS 26.0

statistical software package. In addition to descriptive statistics, normality analyses were conducted by considering skewness and kurtosis values.

Table 2. Descriptive Statistics and Normality Analysis Results of Students’ Substance Addiction Opinion Scale.

Dimension/ Scale	N	X	Sd	Skewness	Kurtosis
Reason for a Person Becoming Addicted to Addictive Substances (Cigarettes, Alcohol, or Drugs)	535	31,42	6,36	-1,074	1,031
Harms of Addictive Substances (Cigarettes,	535	28,96	5,25	-1,383	1,501

Alcohol, or Drugs)					
Reason for Not Using Addictive Substances (Cigarettes, Alcohol, or Drugs)	535	15,77	3,43	-1,010	,984
Being Informed About Addictive Substances (Cigarettes, Alcohol, or Drugs)	535	14,68	3,19	-,704	1,003
Total Scale Score	535	90,85	14,98	-1,357	1,501

As a result of the analyses, it was determined that the skewness and kurtosis values for the Substance Addiction Opinion Scale and its sub-dimensions were within the range of ± 1.5 (Table 2). These values are reported in the literature to fall within the acceptable limits for normal distribution (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2007; George & Mallery, 2010). Based on the obtained findings, the data were accepted as showing a normal distribution. Considering the categorical structure of the independent variables, the independent samples t-test was used for binary comparisons. At the same time, one-way analysis of variance (One-Way ANOVA) was used to compare three or more groups. Following the variance analysis, the post-hoc LSD test was used to determine between which groups the statistically significant differences existed. All statistical analyses were conducted at a 5% significance level ($p < .05$) (Alpar, 2001).

Figure 1. Normality Analysis Graph of the Research Dat

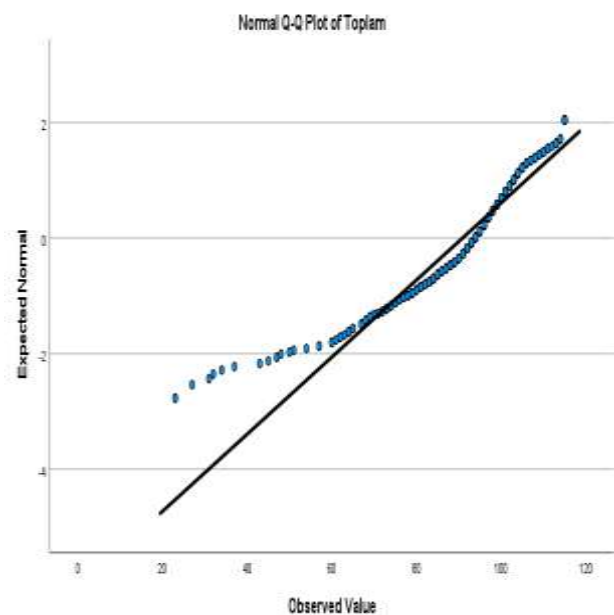


Table 3. Information on Students' Demographic Variables

		(N)	(%)
Gender	Female	214	40,0
	Male	321	60,0
Age	Between 18-19 Years of Age	74	13,8
	Between 20-21 Years of Age	311	58,1
	22 Years of Age and Above	150	28,0
Income Level	One Minimum Wage and Below	187	35,0
	Between Two and Three Minimum Wages	292	54,6
	Four Minimum Wages and Above	56	10,5
Grade Level	1st Year	99	18,5
	2nd Year	182	34,0
	3rd Year	104	19,4
	4th Year	150	28,0
Parental Education Status	Mother or Father is a University Graduate	62	11,6
	Neither of Them	473	88,4
Sports Participation Status	Yes, I Do Sports	450	84,1
	No, I Do Not Do Sports	85	15,9
Weekly Duration of Sports Participation	Between 3-5 Hours	260	48,6
	Between 6-8 Hours	132	24,7

	9 Hours and Above	58	10,8
Type of Sport	Individual Sports	256	47,9
	Team Sports	194	36,3
Years of Sports	Between 1-3 Years	210	39,3
	Between 4-6 Years	127	23,7
	7 Years and Above	113	21,1
	Total	535	

According to Table 3, 60.0% of the participants were male, and 40.0% were female. The majority of students were between the ages of 20 and 21 (58.1%), and their income was predominantly between two and three minimum wages (54.6%). It was determined that the largest proportion of participants were in the 2nd year (34.0%), and that the majority did not have a mother or father who was a university graduate (88.4%). Of the students, 84.1% participated in sports, and the weekly duration of sports participation mostly ranged between 3-5 hours (48.6%). By sport type, individual sports (47.9%) were more prevalent, and most participants

had been participating in sports for 1-3 years (39.3%).

3.1. Research Ethics

The Ethics Committee of Atatürk University approved this study. Pursuant to the official letter dated 17.10.2025 and numbered 317747, it was unanimously decided by the members attending the meeting that the research proposal titled "Factors Affecting Substance Addiction: An Examination in Terms of Sports and Different Variables" complied with ethical principles.

4. RESULTS

Table 4. Comparison of t-Test Results of Students' Substance Addiction Opinion Scale Scores According to the Gender Variable.

Scale	Sub-Dimensions	Variable	n	\bar{x}	Ss	t	p
Substance Addiction Opinion Scale	Reason for a Person Becoming Addicted to Addictive Substances (Cigarettes, Alcohol, or Drugs)	Female	214	31,48	6,38	,158	,875
		Male	321	31,39	6,366		
	Harms of Addictive Substances (Cigarettes, Alcohol, or Drugs)	Female	214	28,40	5,77	-	,044*
		Male	321	29,33	4,85		
	Reason for Not Using Addictive Substances (Cigarettes, Alcohol, or Drugs)	Female	214	15,74	3,61	-	,849
		Male	321	15,80	3,31		
	Being Informed About Addictive Substances (Cigarettes, Alcohol, or Drugs)	Female	214	14,65	3,26	-	,842
		Male	321	14,71	3,14		

* $p < .05$.

When Table 4 is examined, it is seen that according to the gender variable, a statistically significant difference was found only in the "harms of addictive substances" sub-dimension of the

Substance Addiction Opinion Scale ($p < .05$). In this sub-dimension, male students were found to have higher mean scores compared to female students. No significant gender-based differences were identified in the other sub-dimensions ($p > .05$).

Table 5. Comparison of One-Way ANOVA Results of Students' Substance Addiction Opinion Scale Scores According to the Age Variable.

Scale	Sub-Dimensions	Variable	n	\bar{x}	Ss	F	p	LSD
Substance Addiction Opinion Scale	Reason for a Person Becoming Addicted to Addictive	Between 18-19 Years of Age	74	31,18	7,22	1,459	,233	
		Between 20-21 Years of Age	311	31,12	6,37			

	Substances (Cigarettes, Alcohol, or Drugs)	22 Years of Age and Above	150	32,18	5,85						
	Harms of Addictive Substances (Cigarettes, Alcohol, or Drugs)	Between 18-19 Years of Age	74	29,72	5,73				,933	,394	
		Between 20-21 Years of Age	311	28,80	5,01						
		22 Years of Age and Above	150	28,90	5,48						
	Reason for Not Using Addictive Substances (Cigarettes, Alcohol, or Drugs)	Between 18-19 Years of Age	74	16,05	4,20	,298	,742				
		Between 20-21 Years of Age	311	15,71	3,22						
		22 Years of Age and Above	150	15,78	3,46						
	Being Informed About Addictive Substances (Cigarettes, Alcohol, or Drugs)	Between 18-19 Years of Age	74	14,98	3,76	,485	,616				
		Between 20-21 Years of Age	311	14,59	3,07						
		22 Years of Age and Above	150	14,74	3,13						

* $p < .05$

According to Table 5, it was determined that the sub-dimension scores of the Substance Addiction Opinion Scale did not show a statistically significant difference according to the age variable ($p > .05$).

However, when the mean scores were examined, students aged 22 years and above were observed to have higher mean scores in some sub-dimensions compared to the other age groups.

Table 6. Comparison of One-Way ANOVA Results of Students' Substance Addiction Opinion Scale Scores According to the Total Income Variable.

Scale	Sub-Dimensions	Variable	n	\bar{x}	Ss	F	p	LSD
Substance Addiction Opinion Scale	Reason for a Person Becoming Addicted to Addictive Substances (Cigarettes, Alcohol, or Drugs)	One Minimum Wage and Below ^(a)	187	29,83	7,08	12,763	,000	b>a,c
		Between Two and Three Minimum Wages ^(b)	292	32,66	5,48			
		Four Minimum Wages and Above ^(c)	56	30,28	6,82			
	Harms of Addictive Substances (Cigarettes, Alcohol, or Drugs)	One Minimum Wage and Below ^(a)	187	28,15	6,49	3,485	,031	b>a
		Between Two and Three Minimum Wages ^(b)	292	29,43	4,08			
		Four Minimum Wages and Above ^(c)	56	29,17	5,82			
	Reason for Not Using Addictive Substances (Cigarettes, Alcohol, or Drugs)	One Minimum Wage and Below ^(a)	187	15,15	4,17	4,823	,008	b>a
		Between Two and Three Minimum Wages ^(b)	292	16,13	2,83			
		Four Minimum Wages and Above ^(c)	56	16,00	3,35			
	Being Informed About Addictive Substances (Cigarettes, Alcohol, or Drugs)	One Minimum Wage and Below ^(a)	187	14,37	3,88	8,020	,000	c>a,b
		Between Two and Three Minimum Wages ^(b)	292	14,82	2,63			
		Four Minimum Wages and Above ^(c)	56	15,00	3,24			

* $p < .05$.

According to Table 6, it was determined that all sub-dimension scores of the Substance Addiction Opinion Scale showed statistically significant differences according to the total income variable ($p < .05$). Post-hoc (LSD) analyses indicated that, in the sub-dimensions of reason for addiction, harms of the substance, and reason for not using the substance, students with an income level between two and three minimum wages had higher mean scores compared to students with an income level of one minimum wage or below. In the informing sub-dimension, students with an income level of four minimum wages or higher had significantly higher mean scores than the other groups.

Table 7. Comparison of One-Way ANOVA Results of Students' Substance Addiction Opinion Scale Scores According to the Grade Level Variable.

Scale	Sub-Dimensions	Variable	n	\bar{x}	Ss	F	p	LSD
Substance Addiction Opinion Scale	Reason for a Person Becoming Addicted to Addictive Substances (Cigarettes, Alcohol, or Drugs)	1st Year	99	30,38	6,62	5,209	,001	a < b,c
		2nd Year	182	32,06	6,31			
		3rd Year	104	32,95	5,11			
		4th Year	150	30,28	6,76			
	Harms of Addictive Substances (Cigarettes, Alcohol, or Drugs)	1st Year	99	28,70	5,45	,799	,495	
		2nd Year	182	28,83	5,30			
		3rd Year	104	29,67	3,84			
		4th Year	150	28,79	5,87			
	Reason for Not Using Addictive Substances (Cigarettes, Alcohol, or Drugs)	1st Year	99	15,60	3,84	,838	,473	
		2nd Year	182	15,80	3,46			
		3rd Year	104	16,21	2,97			
		4th Year	150	15,56	3,42			
	Being Informed About Addictive Substances (Cigarettes, Alcohol, or Drugs)	1st Year	99	14,75	3,42	2,433	,064	
		2nd Year	182	14,26	3,36			
		3rd Year	104	15,31	2,41			
		4th Year	150	14,71	3,23			

* $p < .05$

According to Table 7, a statistically significant difference was found in the "reason for a person

Table 9. Comparison of t-Test Results of Students' Substance Addiction Opinion Scale Scores According to the Sports Participation Status Variable.

Scale	Sub-	Variable	n	\bar{x}	Ss	t	p
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becoming addicted to addictive substances" sub-dimension of the Substance Addiction Opinion Scale according to grade level ($p < .05$). Post-hoc (LSD) analyses showed that the mean scores of 1st-year students in this sub-dimension were significantly lower than those of 2nd- and 3rd-year students. No significant differences were identified in the other sub-dimensions according to grade level ($p > .05$).

Table 8. Comparison of t-Test Results of Students' Substance Addiction Opinion Scale Scores According to the Parental Education Status Variable.

Scale	Sub-Dimensions	Variable	n	\bar{x}	Ss	t	p
Substance Addiction Opinion Scale	Reason for a Person Becoming Addicted to Addictive Substances (Cigarettes, Alcohol, or Drugs)	Mother or Father is a University Graduate	62	30,79	6,49	-,838	,402
		Neither of Them	473	31,51	6,35		
	Harms of Addictive Substances (Cigarettes, Alcohol, or Drugs)	Mother or Father is a University Graduate	62	27,83	6,15	-,1795	,073
		Neither of Them	473	29,10	5,11		
	Reason for Not Using Addictive Substances (Cigarettes, Alcohol, or Drugs)	Mother or Father is a University Graduate	62	15,25	3,79	-,1267	,206
		Neither of Them	473	15,84	3,38		
	Being Informed About Addictive Substances (Cigarettes, Alcohol, or Drugs)	Mother or Father is a University Graduate	62	14,67	3,51	-,027	,978
		Neither of Them	473	14,68	3,14		

According to Table 8, it was determined that the sub-dimension scores of the Substance Addiction Opinion Scale did not show a statistically significant difference according to the parental education status variable ($p > .05$). Although limited differences were observed between the groups when the mean scores were examined, these differences were not found to be statistically significant.

		Dimensions						
Substance Addiction Opinion Scale	Reason for a Person Becoming Addicted to Addictive Substances (Cigarettes, Alcohol, or Drugs)	Yes	450	31,65	6,29	1,906	,057	
		No	85	30,22	6,65			
	Harms of Addictive Substances (Cigarettes, Alcohol, or Drugs)	Yes	450	29,02	5,00	,648	,517	
		No	85	28,62	6,43			
	Reason for Not Using Addictive Substances (Cigarettes, Alcohol, or Drugs)	Yes	450	15,69	3,29	-	1,271	,204
		No	85	16,21	4,07			
	Being Informed About Addictive Substances (Cigarettes, Alcohol, or Drugs)	Yes	450	14,77	3,04	1,465	,144	
		No	85	14,22	3,85			

According to Table 9, it was determined that the sub-dimension scores of the Substance Addiction Opinion Scale did not show a statistically significant difference according to the sports participation status variable ($p>.05$). Although limited differences were

observed between students who participated in sports and those who did not when the mean scores were examined, these differences were not statistically significant.

Table 10. Comparison of t-Test Results of Students' Substance Addiction Opinion Scale Scores According to the Type of Sport Variable.

Scale	Sub-Dimensions	Variable	n	\bar{x}	Ss	t	p
MSubstance Addiction Opinion Scale	Reason for a Person Becoming Addicted to Addictive Substances (Cigarettes, Alcohol, or Drugs)	Individual Sports	256	30,56	6,69	-	,000*
		Team Sports	194	33,09	5,41		
	Harms of Addictive Substances (Cigarettes, Alcohol, or Drugs)	Individual Sports	256	28,63	5,57	-	,046*
		Team Sports	194	29,54	4,08		
	Reason for Not Using Addictive Substances (Cigarettes, Alcohol, or Drugs)	Individual Sports	256	15,32	3,46	-	,006*
		Team Sports	194	16,18	3,01		
	Being Informed About Addictive Substances (Cigarettes, Alcohol, or Drugs)	Individual Sports	256	14,44	3,30	-	,007*
		Team Sports	194	15,20	2,61		

* $p<.05$

According to Table 10, it was determined that all sub-dimension scores of the Substance Addiction Opinion Scale showed statistically significant differences according to the type of sport variable

($p<.05$). When the mean scores were examined, students participating in team sports were observed to have higher scores in all sub-dimensions compared to those engaged in individual sports.

Table 11. Comparison of One-Way ANOVA Results of Students' Substance Addiction Opinion Scale Scores According to the Weekly Duration of Sports Participation Variable.

Scale	Sub-Dimensions	Variable	n	\bar{x}	Ss	F	p
Substance Addiction Opinion	Reason for a Person Becoming Addicted	3-5 saat arası	260	32,03	6,43	2,797	,062
		6-8 saat arası	132	31,69	5,24		

	to Addictive Substances (Cigarettes, Alcohol, or Drugs)	9 saat ve üzeri	58	29,87	7,54		
	Harms of Addictive Substances (Cigarettes, Alcohol, or Drugs)Reason for	3-5 saat arası	260	29,01	4,93	,121	,886
		6-8 saat arası	132	28,92	4,96		
	Reason for Not Using Addictive Substances (Cigarettes, Alcohol, or Drugs)	9 saat ve üzeri	58	29,31	5,47	,103	,902
		3-5 saat arası	260	15,72	3,26		
		6-8 saat arası	132	15,59	3,24		
	Being Informed About Addictive Substances (Cigarettes, Alcohol, or Drugs)	9 saat ve üzeri	58	15,79	3,60	,280	,756
		3-5 saat arası	260	14,85	3,06		
		6-8 saat arası	132	14,61	3,08		
		3-5 saat arası	260	32,03	6,43		

*p<.05.

According to Table 11, it was determined that the sub-dimension scores of the Substance Addiction Opinion Scale did not show a statistically significant difference according to the weekly duration of sports

participation variable (p>.05). When the mean scores were examined, no distinct differences were found among the sub-dimensions based on weekly sports participation duration.

Table 12. Comparison of One-Way ANOVA Results of Students' Substance Addiction Opinion Scale Scores According to the Years of Sports Participation Variable.

Scale	Sub-Dimensions	Variable	n	\bar{x}	Ss	F	p	LSD
Substance Addiction Opinion Scale	Reason for a Person Becoming Addicted to Addictive Substances (Cigarettes, Alcohol, or Drugs)	Between 1-3 Years	210	32,10	6,08	4,133	,017*	c<a,b
		Between 4-6 Years	127	32,21	5,99			
		7 Years and Above	113	30,19	6,80			
	Harms of Addictive Substances (Cigarettes, Alcohol, or Drugs)Reason for	Between 1-3 Years	210	29,29	4,62	1,171	,311	
		Between 4-6 Years	127	28,45	4,99			
		7 Years and Above	113	29,16	5,66			
	Reason for Not Using Addictive Substances (Cigarettes, Alcohol, or Drugs)	Between 1-3 Years	210	15,83	3,02	,380	,684	
		Between 4-6 Years	127	15,51	3,25			
		7 Years and Above	113	15,63	3,81			
	Being Informed About Addictive Substances (Cigarettes, Alcohol, or Drugs)	Between 1-3 Years	210	14,65	2,91	,321	,725	
		Between 4-6 Years	127	14,88	2,84			
		7 Years and Above	113	14,88	3,47			

*p<.05

According to Table 12, a statistically significant difference was found only in the "reason for a person becoming addicted to addictive substances" sub-dimension of the Substance Addiction Opinion Scale according to the years of sports participation variable (p<.05). Post-hoc (LSD) analyses indicated that students with 7 years or more of sports experience had significantly lower mean scores in this sub-dimension compared to students who had

participated in sports for 1-3 years and 4-6 years. No significant differences were identified in the other sub-dimensions (p>.05).

5. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

In this study, the sub-dimensions of the Substance Addiction Opinion Scale among university students were examined in terms of gender, age, income level, grade level, parental education status, and sport-

related variables. The findings obtained indicate that students' views regarding substance addiction differed according to some sociodemographic variables, while no significant differentiation was observed for certain other variables.

In the analyses conducted according to the gender variable, a significant difference was found in favor of male students in the "harms of addictive substances" sub-dimension of the scale ($p < .05$). This finding indicates that male students had higher perceptions regarding the harmful effects of addictive substances compared to female students. There are numerous studies in the literature indicating that males are more prone to substance use and addictive behaviors. Studies conducted within Turkish samples reveal that the rates of cigarette, alcohol, and illicit substance use are higher among males than females (Altıntaş et al., 2004; Ögel, 2010; Yılmaz & Koç, 2018). The higher prevalence of risk-taking behaviors among males and the tolerance of substance use within traditional gender roles may explain this result.

When evaluated by the age variable, although no statistically significant difference was found between the groups, students aged 22 years and above had higher mean scores on some sub-dimensions. This situation may be associated with increased experiences and environmental exposure related to substance use as age progresses. The literature emphasizes that the relationship between age and substance addiction is not linear and that the university period represents a particularly risky transition process (Ögel, 2001; Kalyoncu et al., 2010). While some studies report higher risk among younger age groups, other studies indicate that habits may become more permanent as age increases (Yazıcı et al., 2014).

In the analyses conducted according to the income level variable, significant differences were found in all sub-dimensions ($p < .05$). In particular, students with an income level between two and three minimum wages were found to have higher scores in the sub-dimensions related to the causes of addictive substance use, perception of harms, and reasons for not using substances. This finding suggests that increased economic opportunities may facilitate access to substances and increase the risk of use. There are studies in the literature reporting a positive relationship between income level and substance use (Altıntaş et al., 2004; Tot et al., 2002). On the other hand, it is also stated that very low income levels may increase the risk due to stress and psychosocial problems (Ögel, 2010).

Regarding grade level, a significant difference

was found only in the sub-dimension "reason for a person becoming addicted to addictive substances," and especially 2nd- and 3rd-year students were observed to have higher scores. The increase in academic pressure, concerns about the future, and the expansion of social environments during the middle years of university life may explain this finding. Similarly, the literature reports that attitudes toward substance use may change during the later years of university education (Kaya et al., 2012; Yılmaz & Koç, 2018).

In the comparisons stratified by parental education status, no statistically significant differences were found across any of the sub-dimensions. This result suggests that parental education level alone may not be sufficient to determine students' views regarding substance addiction. However, the literature emphasizes that family communication, parental attitudes, and supervision are important determinants independent of education level (Ögel, 2001; Tot et al., 2002).

Although no significant differences were found in the analyses by the sports participation status variable, students who participated in sports were observed to hold more positive views in some sub-dimensions. The literature frequently states that sport is a protective factor, although it is not sufficient on its own to prevent substance use completely (Kalyoncu et al., 2010; Yıldız et al., 2017).

In contrast, regarding the type of sport variable, significant differences were identified across all sub-dimensions in favor of students participating in team sports ($p < .05$). Team sports may provide a more protective structure than individual sports by strengthening social support, sense of belonging, and supervision mechanisms. Similar findings are also reported in the literature, indicating that participation in team sports may reduce risky behaviors (Yıldız et al., 2017; Kaya et al., 2012).

Finally, no significant differences were found in the weekly duration of sports participation and the years of sports participation, except for the "reason for addiction" sub-dimension within the years of sports participation variable. Increased awareness regarding substance use among individuals with a longer history of sports participation may explain this finding.

5.1. Conclusion

This study revealed that university students' views regarding substance addiction differed particularly according to the variables of gender, income level, grade level, and type of sports participation. While higher levels of risk perception

and attitudes were observed in some sub-dimensions among male students and individuals in the middle-income group, participation in team sports was associated with greater protection. In contrast, variables such as age, parental education status, and duration of sports participation were found to have limited effects on views regarding substance addiction. The findings indicate that substance addiction is a multidimensional phenomenon and should be addressed not only through individual factors but also together with social and environmental factors.

5.2. Recommendations

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- Participation in team sports should be encouraged to strengthen the protective effects of sports.
 - Psychosocial support and counseling services for university students should be expanded.
 - Preventive studies regarding substance addiction should focus not only on providing information but also on improving social support and life skills.
 - In future studies, it is recommended that students' perceptions regarding substance use be examined in depth through the use of qualitative methods.

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