



Socialization Effect of Physical Activity in Students Who Need Special Education

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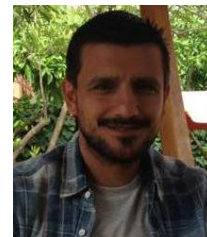
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Abstract

In this study, it was aimed to determine the effect of physical activity on socialization in secondary school students who need special education. The sample of the research is composed of 40 middle school students (n=20 experimental group and n=20 control group) who were educated in Malatya Sehit Yuzbası Hakkı Akyuz Secondary School and indicated that they needed special education with the report given by Guidance Research Center. The socialization scale developed by Demirdağ (2010) was applied to the parents of the students before and after the 16-week activity program in determining the socialization levels of the students. Statistical analysis revealed that there was a significant difference between the pre-test and post-test scores of the students in the experimental group ($p < 0.05$). The study found that the 16-week physical activity program, which was held at least 3 days a week, contributed to the socialization of middle school students who needed special education.

Keywords: Special education, Physical activity, Socialization

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1. Introduction

Some special arrangements that is included the concept of "at least limited educational environment" are made for the education of children who need special education. At least limited educational environment, in which children with special needs are placed in general education classes at the beginning, are being dealt with a new understanding of "integration" nowadays and children in need of special education are trained in general education classes by providing support services to themselves and their teachers (Eripek, 2000).

Integration education is special education practices based on the principle of providing supportive education services to individuals who need special education and training with their peers without inadequacy in primary education, secondary education and non-formal education institutions. In other words, integration education is specifically including of children with disability together their peers who are normally developing to education and teaching in normal classes (MacMillan, 1982). This education shows different developmental characteristics from their peers due to their physical, mental, emotional and social characteristics; but is an education given to students who attend full-time or part-time education with their peers. Integration education is the place in which a student with special training needs, with the least restrictive training environment, meets their needs at the highest level and as much as possible with their peers who do not need special education (Alver *et al.*, 2011).

The main problem for the individual with disability is to adapt to society and to pass to the manufacturer position. The main goal of integration education is to give children with disabilities to society. The basic understanding underlying integration education is that the interaction between people with disabilities and those without disabilities will increase so that social barriers will abolish and social acceptance will take place (Kaner, 2000). The main aim of the education is to raise the potential of each individual to the highest level and to bring them into a producer position in society. The main problem for the individual with disability is to adapt to collecting and to pass to the manufacturer position (Kayaoğlu, 1999).

It is important to practice of integration education in order to acquire the skills of social life in environments where children with special needs have normal peers (Koçyiğit, 2015). It was determined that children with disabilities who benefited from integration education showed the expected progress in the areas of language, cognitive, motor, perceptual and social development (Bricker *et al.*, 1982). The fact that children with disability receive integrated education in normal schools makes them partly easier to live as an individual in society. In addition, participation of a disabled child to a group of friends in the school and acceptance causes the child to feel less addictive and develop his sense of trust (Demir and Açar, 2010).

The success of integration practices depends on the ability of individuals who need special education to adequately receive the necessary special education and normal education services (Causton-Theoharis *et al.*, 2011). Physical activity programs and recreational activities can be used as a means of contributing to the success of the educational process in the integration educations for disabled people. Thus, during the physical and recreational activities of students participating in integration education, their interaction with other peers will increase; so it is anticipated that the students will be able to record advances in terms of social development and can adapt to social life more easily. For this reason, in this research, it was aimed to determine the socialization effect of the 12 week physical activity program which is performed at least 3 days in a week in the students who need special education.

2. Method

The sample of the research is composed of 40 middle school students (n=20 experimental group and n=20 control group) who were educated in Malatya Sehat Yuzbası Hakkı Akyuz Secondary School and indicated that they needed special education with the report given by Guidance Research Center. Students in the experimental group were given an activity program consisting of basic skills for football and basketball between 15.00 and 17.00 for 3 days a week (Monday, Wednesday and Friday) for 16 weeks. Students in the control group continue their normal lives without participating in any activity program. The socialization scale that is a 5-point Likert-type scale developed by Demirdağ (2010) was applied to the parents of the students before and after the 16-week activity program in determining the socialization levels of the students. The scale consists of 30 questions. The 1-9 questions on the scale refer to the level of socialization of the students, 10-16 questions about the parents' general thoughts about sport, 17-22 questions about sport effects and 23-30 questions about the effects of sports students on socialization levels.

3. Statistical Analysis of Data

The data were tested with the Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test for normal distribution. Paired Sample T Test was used to determine whether the difference between the mean of two independent groups was meaningful as it was understood that the data were normal distribution. The data obtained from the scale were evaluated in the SPSS 22.0 package program at a level of 0.05 significance and 95% confidence interval.

4. Findings

Table-1. Comparison of Pre-test and Post-test Scores of the Experiment Group

| Variables | Groups | N | X | Sd | S _{error} | t Test | | |
|---------------------|-----------|----|--------|------|--------------------|--------|----|--------|
| | | | | | | t | df | p |
| Socialization score | Pre test | 20 | 125.85 | 7.52 | 1.68 | -6.581 | 19 | 0.000* |
| | Post test | 20 | 133.45 | 4.28 | 0.95 | | | |

* Significance at 0.05 level

Table 1 shows that there is a significant difference between the pre-test and post-test results of the students in the experimental group ($p < 0.05$). When the mean values were examined, it was seen that the socialization scores of the students in the experimental group increased after 16 weeks of activity program.

Table-2. Comparison of Pre-test and Post-test Scores of Control Group

| Variables | Groups | N | X | Sd | S _{error} | t Test | | |
|---------------------|-----------|----|--------|------|--------------------|--------|----|--------|
| | | | | | | t | df | p |
| Socialization score | Pre test | 20 | 127.60 | 8.30 | 1.85 | 2.415 | 19 | 0.026* |
| | Post test | 20 | 125.35 | 6.80 | 6.80 | | | |

* Significance at 0.05 level

In **Table 2**, it is seen that the students in the control group have a significant difference between the pre-test and post-test results ($p < 0.05$). It is understood that the average socialization scores of the students in the control group decreased after 16 weeks without any activity.

5. Discussion and Conclusion

Socialization is the formation of many complex factors. By socialization, it is meant that the individual learns the culture he lives in and indirectly other cultures connected with this culture. In other words, socialization; one has to learn to obey the rules and values of the group and adopt these values. This learning continues throughout life, from birth to death, during which time the individual's relationship to the people around him and other environmental factors play an important role in social cohesion (Yavuzer, 2000).

Individuals with special needs are individuals with different needs from their peers due to their physical, mental, emotional and social characteristics (Kargin, 2004). Individuals with special needs can be trained with the programs prepared according to their needs and with their healthy peers in the organized educational institutions with special support services (Tsukerman and Vygotskii, 2000). In this educational process, recreational activities and physical activity programs supporting the social development of students who need special education can be used as a tool. As a matter of fact, it was seen that the physical activity program which was performed between 03:00 pm and 05:00 pm (Monday, Wednesday and Friday) for 16 weeks in this study contributes to the socialization of the students who need special education. When the literature is examined, it is possible to reach the results that supports this research.

Kestek and İbiş (2006) reached the conclusion that the flexibility training program that is applied 3 times a week for 8 weeks to educable children with mentally disabled, contributed to the social development of children as well as to the development of flexibility in children. It was stated that behavioral changes occurred in children participating in the study and the activity program was an effective tool in the process of adaptation to social life.

Bayazit *et al.* (2007) examined the effect of an 8-week amusing athletic training program (3 days a week) on the development of psychomotor skills in educable children with mentally disabled. In the study it was reported that the training program for the students in the experimental group provided skill development and social development. In addition, it was stated that the development was higher in the group with the partner study than in the group with the individual study.

Savucu and Bicer (2009) reported that regular activities, group exercises and team sports such as basketball contribute to the physical, mental and social development of individuals with mentally disabled. It has been reported that sport enables disabled people to come together with their healthy peers so that it is an effective tool in providing 'integration' which is the main objective of special education.

Ilhan (2007) in his study that assessed effect of physical education and sport activities on the level of mental harmony children with disabled, concluded that and the children in the experimental group were reduced in neurotic behavioural problems.

Ilhan (2008) in his study to determine whether regular physical education and sport activities affect the social levels of educable children with mentally disabled stated that the physical education program contributed to the socialization of children with intellectual disabilities. It has been stated that this contribution is especially meaningful in the fields of interaction with others, participation in group activities and sharing. In a similar study, McMahan (1998) demonstrated the importance of recreational activities in terms of social integration, friendship and social acceptance in disabled people. In his study, Chiang (2003) stated that after activities in a fun environment, autistic children increase social natural interactions and friendship with their peers, feelings of loneliness decrease. Dunn (1997) has stated that sports can be a tool for to provide social cohesion and contribute to socialization of disabled people.

In this study found that the 16-week physical activity program, which was held at least 3 days a week, contributed to the socialization of middle school students who needed special education. For this reason, recreational activities and physical activity programs should be organized for the students who often need special education. Thus, social values such as self-confidence, appreciation, work, courage, responsibility in students who need special education may develop.

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