

Researching the future expectations of sports sciences students

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Abstract

Background and Study Aim As the field of sports science continues to evolve rapidly, understanding students' aspirations is crucial for adapting educational programs accordingly. Furthermore, gaining insights into their future expectations can aid in addressing emerging trends and demands within the sports industry. The aim of the research is to examine how the future expectations of sports science students change at the end of their education life.

Material and Methods The study focused on sports science students in Turkey, with a sample size of 130 students selected randomly. These students willingly participated in the research, and their pre-test and post-test scores were compared using a standardized scale to evaluate changes in their perceptions and expectations. The collected data were analyzed using the SPSS program. To examine potential differences among variables within the research group, the Man Whitney U test was utilized for dependent groups, while the Kruskal Wallis H test was applied to assess multiple differences between groups. A significance level of $p < 0.05$ was established.

Results The research revealed a significant difference in the pre-test results solely based on the educational status of the sports science students' mothers and fathers. Moreover, notable variations were observed in the average differences between pre-test and post-test scores concerning the students' departments and age. However, no significant differences were found in the future expectations of sports science students when considering gender, age, department, and income status variables. Notably, there was a significant difference favoring undergraduate students in terms of their mother's and father's education status variables. Furthermore, the mean scores of the pre-test and post-test demonstrated a significant difference between the age groups of 17-18 and those aged 21 and above. Additionally, significant differences were observed between students in the "Sports Management" department and those in the "Coaching" department, favoring the latter.

Conclusions The study emphasizes that gender, age, department, and income status did not significantly impact the future expectations of sports science students. However, it is crucial to address the educational needs of undergraduate students and the variations in scores among different age groups and departments to better cater to their career aspirations and development.

Keywords: sports, future expectation, sports science students

Introduction

The opportunities, career prospects, and expectations for personal development that young people will encounter during and after university education have become a topic of general interest in society. University students express their hopes and concerns for the future, and this issue holds great importance for policymakers, the business world, and academic circles alike [1]. Additionally, many university students aim to build a successful career and attain financial security in the future [2]. However, the changes observed in traditional fields of work, technological advancements, and digital transformation have led students to reassess their career plans. The emergence of new industries and changes in the business world require students to possess more flexible and versatile skills. Therefore, university students are focusing on enhancing

their technological proficiency, developing entrepreneurial skills, and adapting to the evolving business world [3].

Future expectations, while being proportional to an individual's degree of anticipation for an event, also guide development as they influence goal setting and planning behaviors [4, 5]. In this regard, future expectations can be considered as determinant factors in shaping people's lives. When we specifically focus on the concept of future expectations for young individuals, it has been selected as the main theme in this study due to its impacts on long-term plans that are crucial for the future, such as educational goals, job opportunities, social and emotional adjustment in school, and perceived competence [6]. This is because during this period, young men and women strive to acquire various adult roles and responsibilities, including exploring relationships, participating in social networks, keeping up with employment opportunities, and negotiating life responsibilities [7].

Future expectations have been significant determinants of youth development and behavior [8]. After adolescence, many young individuals begin to develop more concrete plans and expectations for their future lives. They explore university education and careers, start working part-time, and strive to achieve economic income [9]. As a result, future expectations can have different effects on each young person. For instance, from a theoretical perspective, beliefs that the future is unpredictable and uncontrollable tend to discourage future orientation and promote erroneous evaluations of outcomes and risks. This, in turn, can lead young people to engage in various risky behaviors, focus on impulsive actions, resist delaying gratification, and seek excitement [10]. Considering the potential for different scenarios, identifying young people's future expectations can be targeted to promote societal health and psychological well-being.

Research indicates that university students generally focus on factors such as a stable career, job security, and financial stability [11]. However, future expectations for university students are not limited to just work and career. Many students also consider lifestyle choices and personal happiness [12]. Students may have goals related to starting a family, traveling, and personal development [13]. However, studies also show that students have concerns about their future financial security and economic well-being [14]. Therefore, university students often shape their career choices based on their future financial goals and lifestyle preferences.

Other studies have shown that students' future expectations, which involve their predictions about what will happen to them in important aspects of life, are associated with their subsequent school adjustment [15, 16, 17]. However, limited research has examined changes in future expectations of sports science students based on demographic factors such as gender, age, field of study, various income groups, parents' educational background, and self-identification.

This study aims to examine the future expectations of students studying sports science in different departments during their enrollment and graduation years.

Research Questions:

- What is the level of future expectations among sports science students in the first year of their academic studies?
- What is the level of future expectations among sports science students in the final year of their academic studies?
- What differences exist in the future expectations of sports science students between the first and final years of their academic studies?

Materials and Methods

Participants

The population of the study consists of sports science students in Turkey, while the sample consists of 130 students who were selected through simple random sampling and voluntarily participated in the research. The participants are students enrolled in the Hasan Doğan School of Physical Education and Sports at Karabük University between the years 2018-2022. The research includes students from the departments of Teaching, Coaching, and Sports Management. The study is limited to 1st-year students of the fall semester of the 2018-2019 academic year and 4th-year students of the spring semester of the 2021-2022 academic year at the Hasan Doğan School of Physical Education and Sports, Karabük University. The research has been supported by the Karabük University Social and Human Sciences Ethics Board with the ethical board decision number E-78977401-050.02.04-237290, dated 29.03.2023.

Research Design

The research is designed using a quantitative research model, specifically the correlational survey model. The data was collected by the researchers in a classroom setting. Pre-tests were administered to 1st-year students in the departments of Teaching, Coaching, and Sports Management before the class, and post-tests were conducted with the same students who reached the 4th year after a four-year educational process, also in a classroom setting. It took approximately 4 minutes for each participant to complete the questionnaire.

Data Collection Instrument

The research data was collected using a personal information form developed by the research team, which included descriptive information such as gender, age, department, income status, mother's education level, father's education level, and mood. In addition, the "Future Expectations" scale developed by Tuncer [18] was used. Initially, the scale consisted of 17 items, but based on expert opinions and factor analysis, two items were removed, resulting in a 14-item scale [18]. The scale was designed using a five-point Likert scale, with scoring ranging from "Strongly Disagree (1.00-1.79)" to "Strongly Agree (4.20-5.00)".

Statistical Analysis

Descriptive statistical methods such as frequencies (n), percentages (%), mean (X), and standard deviation (SD) were used for the analysis of descriptive personal information. Prior to the analysis of the research questions, the normality (skewness and kurtosis) test was performed and it was observed that the data that were not in the range of -1 to +1 were not normally distributed [19]. Non-parametric tests, specifically the Mann-

Whitney U test and Kruskal-Wallis H test, were applied to analyze the non-normally distributed data. The participants' scores on the scale were used to calculate the KMO (Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin) and Cronbach's Alpha values. For the pre-test, the KMO value was found to be 0.81, and Cronbach's Alpha was 0.83. For the post-test, the KMO value was 0.86, and Cronbach's Alpha was 0.90.

Results

Table 1 presents the descriptive information of the participants, including the percentage and frequency values. Of the participants involved in the study, 64.2% were male, while 35.8% were female. The distribution of students among departments was as follows: Sports Management (67 students), Teaching (33 students), and Coaching (34 students). Regarding income status, the majority of

participants (74.6%) reported family income falling within the minimum wage to twice that amount. In terms of self-description, based on the responses to the question aimed at assessing the general state of the participants, the majority identified themselves as mild-tempered (34.3%) and happy (38.1%).

Table 2 displays the mean scores of the participants on the pretest and posttest, as well as additional statistical measures. The pretest mean score is observed to be lower than the posttest mean score. The skewness and kurtosis values for both the pretest and posttest indicate a slightly skewed distribution. Additionally, the posttest demonstrates a higher internal consistency compared to the pretest, as indicated by the C'alpha coefficient.

Table 3 presents the results of the statistical analysis comparing the pre-test and post-test mean scores between different groups. The analysis

Table 1. Gender variable percentage and frequency distribution

Author Information		N	%
Gender	Male	86	64.2
	Female	48	35.8
Age	17 - 18 Years	44	32.8
	19 - 20 Years	66	49.3
	21 Years and Above	24	17.9
Department	Sports Management	67	50.0
	Physical Education and Sports Teaching	33	24.6
	Coaching Training	34	25.4
Family Income Status	2020 - 4040 TL	100	74.6
	4041 - 6060 TL	29	21.6
	6061 TL and Above	5	3.7
Mother Education Status	Primary School	67	50.0
	Middle School	35	26.1
	High School	29	21.6
	Degree	3	2.2
Father Education Status	Primary School	52	38.8
	Middle School	33	24.6
	High School	35	26.1
	Degree	14	10.4
How would you describe yourself?	Unhappy	15	11.2
	Irritable	22	16.4
	Mild-mannered	46	34.3
	Happy	51	38.1
	Total	134	100.0

Table 2. Distribution of pre-test – post-test scores

Test	N	X	Ss	Skewness	Kurtosis	C'Alpha
Pre-Test	134	3.96	.50	-1.073	3.348	.83
Port-Test	134	3.69	.62	-1.056	4.029	.90

reveals no significant differences between women and men in both the pre-test and post-test mean scores. Similarly, there are no significant differences observed between females and males in the post-test mean scores. Additionally, no significant differences were found in the mean scores between females and males.

Table 4 presents the comparison of pre-test average scores among sports science students in different age groups. The analysis reveals no significant differences in the pre-test mean scores between the age groups of 17-18 years, 19-20 years, and 21 years and above. Similarly, no significant

differences were found in the post-test mean scores between these age groups.

Table 5 presents the comparison of pre-test mean scores among sports science students, teaching students, and coaching students. The analysis indicates no significant differences in the pre-test mean scores between these groups. Similarly, no significant differences were observed in the post-test mean scores between sports management students, teaching students, and coaching students.

Table 6 presents the comparison of pre-test average scores among sports science students based on different income levels. The analysis reveals

Table 3. Distribution of pre-test and post-test scores by gender variable

Test	Gender	N	Mean Rank	Rank Sum	u	p/ES
Pre-Test Total	Male	86	66.87	5750.50	29.50	.79 / 0.00
	Female	48	68.64	3294.50		
Post-Test Total	Male	86	67.22	5781.00	20.00	.91 / 0.00
	Female	48	68.00	3264.00		

Table 4. Distribution of pre-test-post-test scores by age variable

Test	Age	N	X	Ss	Mean Rank	c2	p/ES
Pre-Test Total	17 - 18 Years	44	4.10	.38	77.10	5.07	0.13 / .05
	19 - 20 Years	66	3.95	.45	65.34		
	21 Years and Above	24	3.75	.71	55.83		
Post-Test Total	17 - 18 Years	44	3.61	.66	60.48	4.04	0.07 / .01
	19 - 20 Years	66	3.70	.59	67.66		
	21 Years and Above	24	3.80	.62	79.94		

Table 5. Distribution of pre-test-post-test scores by department variable

Test	Department	N	X	Ss	Mean Rank	c2	p/ES
Pre-Test Total	Sports Management	67	3.93	.48	62.21	2.13	0.06 / .04
	Physical Education and Sports Teaching	33	3.89	.52	64.26		
	Coaching Training	34	4.15	.48	81.07		
Post-Test Total	Sports Management	67	3.78	.72	71.72	5.64	0.34 / .02
	Physical Education and Sports Teaching	33	3.52	.69	59.95		
	Coaching Training	34	3.69	.00	66.50		

Table 6. Distribution of pre-test and post-test scores by income variable

Test	Income status	N	X	Ss	Mean Rank	c2	p/ES
Pre-Test Total	2020 - 4040 TL	100	3.97	.43	66.95	2.492	.288 / .01
	4041 - 6060 TL	29	3.91	.65	64.83		
	6061 TL and Above	5	4.23	.69	94.00		
Post-Test Total	2020 - 4040 TL	100	3.68	.61	66.00	1.054	.590 / .00
	4041 - 6060 TL	29	3.69	.69	70.10		
	6061 TL and Above	5	3.85	.23	82.40		

no significant differences in the pre-test scores between students with different income levels. Likewise, there were no significant differences found in the post-test average scores among students with varying income levels.

Table 7 presents the comparison of pre-test average scores among sports science students based on their educational backgrounds. The analysis reveals no significant differences in the pre-test scores among primary school students, secondary school students, high school students, and undergraduate students. Similarly, there were no significant differences found in the post-test mean scores among students with different educational backgrounds.

Table 8 presents the analysis of pre-test average scores among sports science students based on their

educational backgrounds. The findings reveal a significant difference in the pre-test scores among primary school students, secondary school students, high school students, and undergraduate students. However, no significant difference was observed in the post-test mean scores among students with different educational backgrounds.

Table 9 presents the analysis of pre-test mean scores among sports science students based on their moods: unhappy, irritable, mild-tempered, and happy. The results indicate that there was no significant difference in the pre-test scores among individuals with different moods. Similarly, no significant difference was observed in the post-test mean scores among students with different moods.

Table 10 presents the analysis of mean scores of pre-test and post-test obtained from sports science

Table 7. Distribution of pre-test-post-test scores according to the variable of mother’s educational status

Test	Mother	N	X	ss	Mean Rank	χ^2	p/ES
Pre-Test Total	Primary school ^a	67	3.95	.41	64.06	9.520	.023* / .18 d;a.b.c
	Middle School ^b	35	4.12	.40	77.07		
	High School ^c	29	3.95	.54	69.91		
	Degree ^d	3	2.64	.97	9.33		
Post-Test Total	Primary school	67	3.81	.60	73.94	4.916	.178 / .00
	Middle School	35	3.57	.62	59.49		
	High School	29	3.61	.64	64.91		
	Degree	3	3.31	.53	42.17		

Table 8. Distribution of pre-test-post-test scores according to the variable of father’s educational status

Test	Father	N	X	Ss	Mean Rank	χ^2	p/ES
Pre-Test Total	Primary school ^a	52	3.93	.43	63.61	12.728	.005* / .12 d;a.b.c
	Middle School ^b	33	3.97	.41	65.56		
	High School ^c	35	4.18	.41	84.64		
	Degree ^d	14	3.54	.73	43.68		
Post-Test Total	Primary school	52	3.71	.59	66.75	.329	.955 / .00
	Middle School	33	3.64	.67	65.35		
	High School	35	3.70	.62	69.11		
	Degree	14	3.73	.66	71.32		

Table 9. How would you describe yourself? Distribution of pre-test and post-test scores by variable

Test	Description	N	X	Ss	Mean Rank	χ^2	p/ES
Pre-Test Total	Unhappy	15	4.05	.47	70.47	1.590	.662 / .02
	Irritable	22	3.79	.66	58.05		
	Mild-mannered	46	4.01	.39	69.62		
	Happy	51	3.97	.51	68.79		
Post-Test Total	Unhappy	15	3.66	.79	70.13	1.178	.758 / .01
	Irritable	22	3.71	.54	74.32		
	Mild-mannered	46	3.72	.56	63.98		
	Happy	51	3.67	.67	66.96		

Table 10. Distribution of pre-test and post-test scores by age variable

Age	N	X	Ss	Mean Rank	χ^2	p/ES
17 - 18 Years ^a	44	4.10	.38	57.25	6.012	0.04* / .05 a-c
19 - 20 Years ^b	66	3.95	.45	69.55		
21 Years and above ^c	24	3.75	.71	80.67		

Table 11. Distribution of pre-test-post-test scores according to department variable

Department	N	X	Ss	Mean Rank	χ^2	p/ES
Sports Management ^a	67	3.91	.48	76.04	6.918	0.03* / .03 a-c
Physical Education and Sports Teaching ^b	33	3.89	.52	61.76		
Coaching Training ^c	34	4.15	.48	56.25		

students based on their age groups. The results indicate that there was no significant difference in the mean scores among participants in different age groups.

Table 11 shows the comparison of pre-test and post-test mean scores obtained from sports science students. The results reveal that there was no significant difference in the mean scores among sports management students, teaching students, and coaching students.

Discussion

There was no significant difference between the variables of gender, age, department, income status of sports science students and the pre-test post-test mean scores of the participants from the “Future Expectation” scale. Yıldırım and Özkan [20] found that there was no significant difference between the variables of gender, age, department and income status of sports science students and the pretest and posttest scores of the participants from the “Future Expectation” scale [20].

In contrast to previous research, the findings of the study conducted by Çapa et al. [21] revealed the presence of gender differences in the future expectations of university students in Turkey. The findings indicated that female students expressed greater concerns about unemployment and anticipated lower income compared to their male counterparts. Similarly, Arslan et al. [22] revealed in their study that gender significantly influenced students’ career goals. Moreover, Capri et al. [23] reported gender disparities in the future expectations of university students in Italy. The study revealed that female students exhibited a stronger inclination towards employment rather than entrepreneurship, unlike their male counterparts.

Based on several studies [24, 25], it has been suggested that age does not play a significant role in shaping students’ future expectations. However, Polat and Şahin [26] conducted a study that presented contrasting results. Their research revealed age differences in the future expectations of

university students in Turkey. Specifically, younger students exhibited higher salary expectations, while older students prioritized job security as a key factor in their future aspirations. These findings highlight the need for further investigation into the complex interplay of age and future expectations among students.

When considering the impact of family income, Park and Lee [27] discovered a positive correlation between the income levels of university students in South Korea and their future expectations. The study revealed that students from higher-income backgrounds had higher salary expectations, while those from lower-income backgrounds prioritized job security.

Similarly, in a study conducted by Çapa et al. [21], examining the maternal education status of university students in Turkey, it was found that there is a positive relationship between the education levels of students’ mothers and their future expectations. The research indicated that students with mothers who had higher education levels had higher salary expectations.

These findings highlight the influence of family income and maternal education status on students’ future expectations, emphasizing the need to consider socio-economic factors when addressing career aspirations and development among university students.

When investigating the influence of father’s education level, Çapri et al. [23] conducted a study revealing a positive correlation between the educational attainment of fathers of university students in Italy and their future expectations. The research demonstrated that students with fathers who had higher education levels held higher salary expectations, while those with fathers who had lower education levels prioritized job security. In line with our research, Tezcan et al. [28] also found that the educational status of parents plays a significant role in shaping students’ future goals. These findings underscore the importance of parental education in influencing students’ expectations and highlight

the need to consider the broader socio-economic context when exploring career aspirations among university students.

The fact that there was no significant difference in the study of sports science students according to their departments can be interpreted as the inability of the participants to shape their future in terms of their departments. Independent of the research, Özkan and Sözbilir [29] revealed in a study they conducted that the expectations of undergraduate and graduate students about the future are different.

In investigating the impact of father's education level, the study conducted by Çapri et al. [23] uncovered a positive correlation between the educational attainment of fathers of university students in Italy and their future expectations. The findings indicated that students with fathers who had higher education levels held higher salary expectations, while those with fathers who had lower education levels prioritized job security. These results align with our own research and are consistent with the findings of Tezcan et al. [28], highlighting the significance of parental educational status in shaping students' future goals. These findings underscore the crucial role of parental influence in students' career aspirations and underscore the need to consider family background when providing guidance and support for students' future prospects.

Conclusions

The research findings indicate that there were no significant differences in the future expectations

of sports science students based on gender, age, department, or income status variables. However, significant differences were observed in relation to the education levels of their mothers and fathers, favoring undergraduate students. Additionally, there was a notable difference in the mean scores between the age groups of 17-18 and those aged 21 and above in both pre- and post-test scores, indicating a potential shift in expectations over time.

Moreover, significant differences were identified between students in the "Sports Management" department and those in the "Coaching" department, with the latter group exhibiting higher future expectations. Overall, the study suggests that students' future expectation levels may decline over the course of four years, irrespective of other variables such as gender, age, department, and income status.

To expand upon these findings and contribute to the existing literature, future research should explore the impact of various other variables that may influence the future expectations of young individuals. This will provide a more comprehensive understanding of the factors influencing their career aspirations and contribute to the advancement of knowledge in the field.

Conflict of interest

The authors declare that there is no conflict of interests.

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