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FAIR PLAY PERCEPTION IN EARLY ADOLESCENT SEDENTARY CHILDREN

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ABSTRACT

Considering that life-long health behaviors are mostly acquired during adolescence, the participation of individuals in early adolescence in games and sports activities at schools should be increased. It is socially important to raise awareness about developing behaviors that are in line with the spirit of fair play and instilling these behaviors in children at the earliest possible age, in addition to ensuring active participation. Thus, the aim of this research is to determine the perceptions of sedentary children in early adolescence towards the concept of fair play through metaphors and drawings. This study was carried out within the scope of phenomenology, one of the qualitative research designs, in order to determine the perceptions about the concept of fair play. A total of 71 students in the early adolescence period between the ages of 11-14, studying at secondary education levels in the city center of Ankara, participated in the study on a voluntary basis in the fall semester of the 2022-2023 academic year. In order to obtain the data, a personal information form was applied to children in early adolescence and the children were asked "Fair play is like; because" and draw a picture reflecting their thoughts on the concept of Fair play. The data collection tool was applied by the researchers themselves. Through content analysis, similar expressions were brought together under appropriate categories and presented, and the drawings made were examined. With the evaluation of the data, 67 metaphors were collected in 4 different categories, since the 4 metaphors that the children produced in total 71 metaphors did not contain any meaning. While it was determined that the participants developed metaphors in the "respect element" and "cooperation element" categories related to the concept of fair play, these categories were followed by the "friendship element" and "justice element" categories.

Keywords: Fair play, early adolescence, metaphorical perception, qualitative research.

INTRODUCTION

The individual is in a continuous process of development and change throughout his life but the greatest changes occur during adolescence. The development that takes place during adolescence is important both personally and socially. The sports environment, which contributes physically in the early adolescence of individuals, also provides a positive change in the context of interpersonal communication and the development of prosocial competencies (Cronin & Allen, 2018; Graupensperger et al., 2018; Izquierdo & Anguera, 2021). The expectation that sport, which is intended to contribute to the holistic development of individuals, is actually working in the opposite direction in this case (Aktaş, & Sezen-Balçıklı, 2023).

The personality formation of children starts in the family and continues with the school. Cultural, moral and traditional values acquired in the family can be further developed in schools with the influence of the environment. Individuals progress in their journey of self-actualization by internalizing the values they learn and experience throughout their lives, and through these values, they gain the ability to direct their lives (Aktaş & Ötken, 2022). The development of students' interests, perspectives and abilities can be supported and shaped within the scope of physical education and sports lessons at school or in a game and sports environment (Coakley, 2011). As Yapan (2007) states, the games offered by the teachers at the right time can be effective in the social and environmental development of children as well as their physical development. Coaches and parents can create environments where prosocial behaviors are encouraged and reinforced (Ellis et al., 2004). Directing students to their fields of interest and encouraging their participation provides an important opportunity for them to gain the spirit of fair play, which is the superior moral concept. Fair play, a globally understood concept that finds its origins in sports, is not only a fundamental element of sports but also a more general philosophy of respect for others and rules, whether in the field of sports or in society (Renson, 2009). Fair play should not only be considered in a sportive dimension but also as a universal principle that can be applied to various contexts in which young people participate in regular sports (Ludwiczak and Bronikowska, 2022) as well as in daily life (Amoroso et al., 2023).

The Declaration of Sport, Tolerance and Fair Play agrees that sport as a form of social activity is an important field of education (Ludwiczak & Bronikowska, 2022; Sekot, 2011). When students are encouraged to focus on self-referential development, they are more likely to make positive judgments and develop an evolving mindset (Cheung et al., 2001; Morgan, 2019). However, most young people perceive fair play only in the field of sports (Bronikowska et al., 2019; Ludwiczak & Bronikowska, 2022; Sekot, 2011). However, the experiences of children in a sports environment with behaviors developed in a manner befitting the spirit of fair play may provide young people with a better opportunity to support the spread of these behaviors and encourage other individuals, as well as obtaining benefits from social connections. Considering that life-long health behaviors are mostly acquired during adolescence, it is important to ensure that individuals in early adolescence actively participate in games and sports activities at schools. Apart from that to raise awareness for children to develop behaviors

in accordance with the spirit of fair play and to gain these behaviors at the earliest possible age is considered important.

In this context, metaphors can serve as a framework that carries researchers further in terms of seeing themselves from a different perspective and understanding their needs by clarifying the intuitive knowledge that sedentary children in early adolescence have about the concept of fair play. Metaphors constitute not only the elements of speech, but also a basic mechanism of the mind that allows elaboration of previous experiences (Zhao et al., 2010) as well as filtering and making sense of new experiences (Blau & Eshet-Alkalai, 2017). Therefore, the aim of this study is to determine the perceptions of sedentary children in early adolescence towards the concept of fair play through metaphors and drawings.

METHOD

Research Model

In this study, which aims to determine the perceptions of sedentary children in early adolescence towards the concept of fair play through metaphors and drawings, phenomenology design was used. It is one of the qualitative research methods and it provides a suitable research environment to investigate phenomena that are not completely foreign to us but at the same time we do not fully understand (Creswell & Creswell, 2017; Patton, 2014). As Yıldırım and Şimşek (2021) pointed out, this method offers an effective approach to examine ambiguous or complex issues.

Research Group

In the fall semester of the 2022-2023 academic year, a total of 71 students in the early adolescence period between the ages of 11-14, studying at secondary education levels in the city center of Ankara, participated in the study on a voluntary basis.

Data Collection Tools

The data collection tool consists of two parts. The first part contains the information of the participants, in which the demographic characteristics were recorded for the interpretation of the data obtained in the study. The second part is designed to determine the perceptions of students in early adolescence between the ages of 11-14 about the concept of fair play by using metaphors. For this purpose, the children were asked to complete a sentence such as "Fair play is like/similar to ... because..." and to draw a picture reflecting their thoughts on the concept. The children were given 40 minutes (one class hour) to complete their drawings. The students who participated in the research were explained what they should do by paying attention not to use guiding expressions.

Analysis of Data

In accordance with the purpose of the research, the data were analyzed by content analysis technique. In content analysis, the stages of data reduction, presentation, revealing and validation of the data were carried out (Miles & Huberman, 1994). The metaphors were numbered and then coded by examining one by one, explanations and drawings related to fair play. During the coding phase, a code list was created according to the meanings of metaphors and drawings. In order to ensure the consistency of the research, the forms collected from the participants were analyzed independently by the three researchers, by re-reading the themes, sub-themes and codes. After that the comparison of those with disagreement and consensus was finalized in accordance with the "analyst triangulation" strategy (Patton, 2014). According to Miles and Huberman's (1994) formula, the number of consensus and disagreement was determined and the reliability of the research was calculated. The harmony of metaphors and drawings was gathered under the same themes as 94%. In the research, originality was preserved by presenting the views and drawings of the participants with direct quotations.

FINDINGS

After the analysis phases were completed, the metaphors were separated into themes that make sense in terms of their similarities and differences and were turned into tables. The metaphors that children created for the concept of fair play were examined under certain codes and themes in accordance with their common characteristics and then numerical information was presented. A few examples of different metaphors are given. The distribution of the metaphors created by the children participating in the research for the concept of fair play and the metaphors created by the children participating in the study for the concept of fair play according to categories is given in Table 1.

Table 1. Distribution of Metaphors Produced by Sedentary Children in Early Adolescence for the Concept of Fair Play, According to Categories.

Conceptual themes	Codes
Respect	Leo, courtesy, respect, magic wand, love, brotherhood
Solidarity	Protection, angel, helping, helping a friend, helpfulness
Friendship	Close Friendship, true friendship, friendship, honesty to be loyal
Justice	Justice, loyalty, fair play, trust, fair play, cheating, rooster crow

Fair Play as an Element of Respect

Sport has been an indispensable part of human life with its different forms and rules since the beginning of history. In the 20th century, under the regulation of international organizations, sports surpassed the understanding of games and entertainment and gained the function of mediating the promotion of cultures and traditions of nations and the establishment of international friendships. Considering this period, it is seen that new meanings were attributed to sports (Tanriverdi, 2012). When the metaphors for the concept of fair play

were examined, it was seen that the children thought of this concept in the concept of respecting their friends with whom they struggled in the sports branch they did, physical education lessons and the games they played.

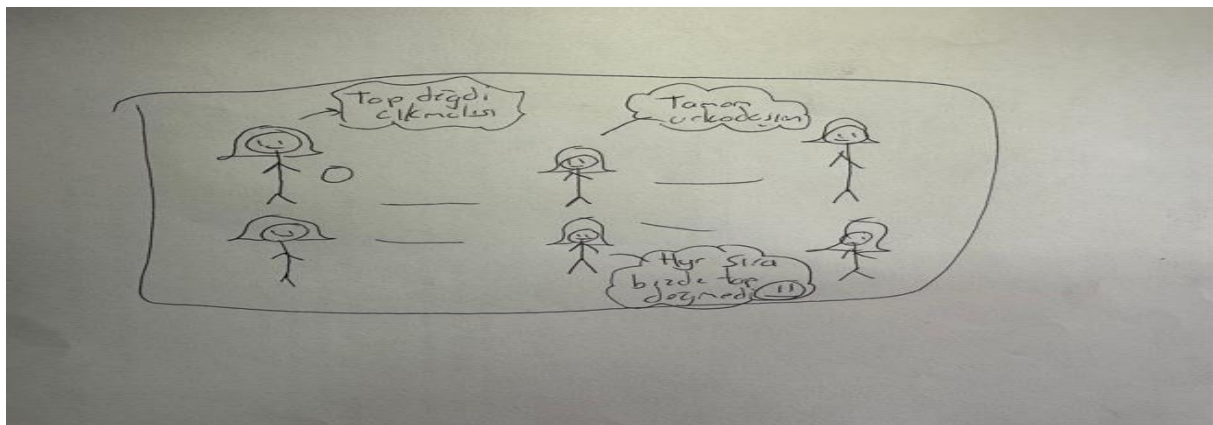


Figure 1. Drawings for Fair Play as an Element of Respect

The analyzes made in the drawing of Student 20 (Picture 1) aroused the expectation of having a perspective perception with the presence of proportional drawings of objects and people reflecting the characteristics of the naturalism period. The student likened her drawing to the metaphor she created and stated that the concept of fair play should be played with her friends in the game, tolerant of her opponents and that everyone should respect each other.

“Fair play is like/similar to justice; because we have to play in the game without insulting others who are tolerant. We should respect each other.” (Student 20)

Fair Play as an Element of Solidarity

Man is a social being. For this reason, he has to cooperate with other people in order to continue his life (Dever, 2010). Especially team sports teach children and youth how to behave in a group, how to keep their behavior and excitement under control. In addition to these positive points, various positive behaviors will be reflected in the adulthood processes of children in the future, such as being sharing and collaborative and being in solidarity. It is of great importance that the spirit of fair play is reflected in the way of gaining the ability to play. In this theme, they combined the concept of fair play, which they started to learn through both physical education lessons and sports branches, under the element of solidarity.

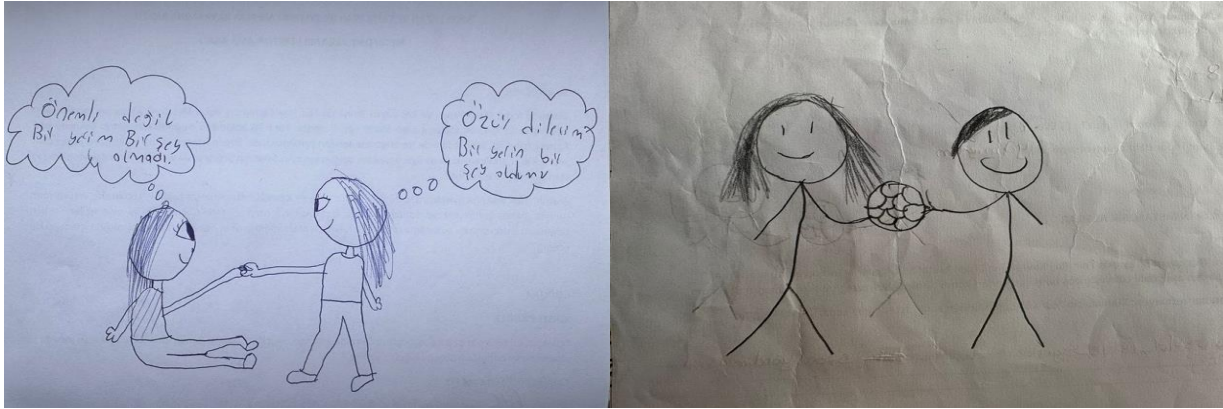


Figure 2(a-b). Drawings for Fair Play as an Element of Solidarity

In the drawing of Student 15 (Figure 2), he depicted trying to lift his friend from the ground by helping his friend who had fallen while playing together. It can be said that the happy facial expressions in the picture show the satisfaction that this behavior adds. In the metaphor he created, he compared the concept of fair play to empathizing and mentioned that he should help his friend who fell and that if he were in the same situation, he would be happy to be treated the same way.

“Fair play is/is like empathizing; because we have to help our friend who has fallen in the game, and if I were in the same situation, I would like them to help me.” (Student 15)

Fair Play as an Element of Friendship

The phenomenon of sports, which includes different values, enables children and young people to exist in a social group and to integrate with this group (Kaplan & Çetinkaya, 2014). Student 8 (Figure 3) painted children happy to play together. When the metaphors created in this theme were examined, they stated that they had a fun time by playing friendly games in which friendship bonds were strengthened.

“Fair Play is like/similar to friendship because; strengthens the bonds of friendship.” (Student 8)

Fair Play as an Element of Justice

Sports ethics are possible with adherence to philosophical principles (Erdemli, 2002; Şahin, 1998). While sports increase social relations, it also provides the opportunity to develop empathy and habit by shortening social distances. In addition to strengthening the feelings of solidarity, it encourages harmonious action within the group and develops the habit of obeying the rules (Kaplan & Çetinkaya, 2014). Fair play first emerged as an expression of respect for human dignity and playing fair and honest games in all kinds of sports was adopted as a basic moral principle.

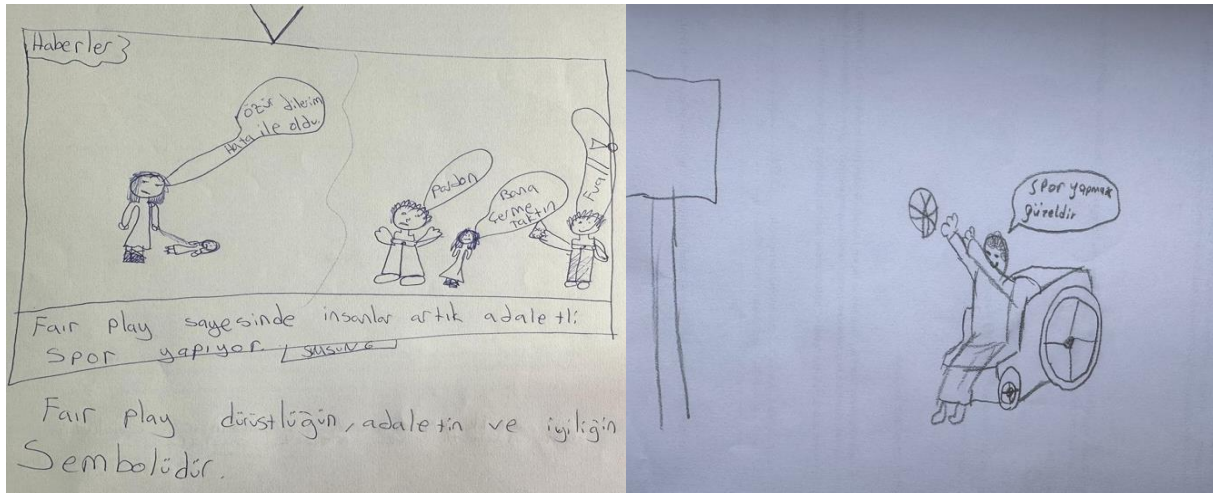


Figure 3(a-b). Drawings for Fair Play as an Element of Justice

“Fair play is like/similar to the right to play sports, because; It is the right of a person who does or cannot do sports to do sports.” (Student 17)

“Fair play is like/similar to fairness, honesty, because; people play their games more fairly and fairer.” (Student 12)

CONCLUSION and DISCUSSION

According to the results of the research on fair play perception in early adolescence sedentary children, the concept of fair play was gathered under four themes as respect, cooperation, friendship and justice. These themes constitute the basic components of the concept of fair play. During this period, children begin to relate, play and compete with friends and other people. Therefore, the understanding of fair play is very important in early adolescence. Especially in the secondary school period, it is an important process in which children between the ages of 10-14 discover themselves more and begin to determine what they want. During the child's self-discovery period; to find answers to the questions of psychological behavior, character, learning style, where to learn; constitute the most important references in the planning of educational structures (Tapkı & Türkyılmaz, 2018).

Fair play not only defines the behavior in accordance with the written rules of the game, but also is an understanding of life that includes social and moral values (Sezen-Balçıklı, 2023). It encourages children to teach the right behavior and show respect and empathy for other people, and to adopt a healthy approach to winning and losing. Early adolescence is especially important for children, as it is during this period that children develop their social skills and begin to interact with other people.

Social concerns can also override the goals of cooperation and long-term sustainability over the harmonization, competitive and individual goals within peer groups. The concepts of respect for the opponent, fair play,

friendship and helpfulness are supported by metaphors and drawings that children learn practically during the games through physical education lessons in schools. Parry (1998) supports the metaphors created in the study findings with the statement that physical education activities should be seen as 'practices' that serve as a context for the development of human excellences and 'virtues' and the development of character qualities that lead people to act virtuously.

Early adolescence is an important opportunity to shape the attitudes of athletes about fair play. In this period, the athletes begin to learn the importance of fair play and correct behavior. Ludwiczak and Bronikowska (2022) determined that the group that best understands the concept of fair play in sports and non-sporting groups is in the sports group. In addition, students who receive professional sports education stated that they understand fair play not only with sports but beyond the situations of sports (Bronikowska et al., 2019; Kowalska, 2015). It teaches children to compete with other people in a healthy way, to respect others, to empathize with others and to respect themselves. Therefore, it is important that young people skillfully and consciously prepare to fulfill their adult roles according to full and universal norms (Ludwiczak & Bronikowska, 2022).

When the metaphors created in early adolescence were analyzed, it was observed that they were collected in the themes of cooperation and friendship. In addition, human figures helping their fallen friends in their drawings and drawings of children playing together support the formation of friendship and social bonds, which are an important aspect of fair play. Children can work in respect, tolerance and cooperation with their teammates and opponents by following the rules of fair play. In this way, friendship and teamwork skills develop. In addition a sense of responsibility develops with physical education lessons as it is necessary for athletes to comply with the rules of the game, to be responsible for their own behavior and to protect the rights of others. In this way, athletes learn to take responsibility in other areas of their lives as well. It is possible to support children's moral development and social upbringing by wisely promoting fair play values (Bronikowska et al., 2019). Especially since these values are well understood and appreciated by children and young people and thus values are at the top of the moral values hierarchy, they can help facilitate the recognition of the world and oneself (Mallia et al., 2018). It has been stated that fair play is more than a sports principle (Kowalska, 2015). In the metaphors and drawings created in our research, it has been seen that fair play is perceived only in the context of sports environments or as a rule related to the situations encountered in daily life in a broader sense. The fair play study findings of Ludwiczak and Bronikowska (2022) with adolescents in the context of physical education and sports behaviors support our research results.

Explaining the concept of fair play, supporting it with various stories and games, rewarding them if they exhibit fair play and ethical behaviors in the lessons may encourage them to adopt these behaviors. This would be useful for children who do not play sports in early adolescence are equipped in the field of fair play and ethical morality. Studies show that physical education teachers and trainers play a very important role in the healthy upbringing and education of the young generation (Hodge & Lonsdale, 2011).

SUGGESTIONS

In conclusion, our research findings show that fair play has an important role not only in sports but also in their social and psychological development for early adolescence athletes. In this period, the athletes' learning the right behaviors about fair play will help them to become successful and responsible adults in the future. Therefore, it is recommended that physical education lessons, which create a natural classroom environment for fair play concept learning, should be given in the primary education level, instead of elective courses, every week in a method in which all students participate.

ETHICAL TEXT

In this article, journal writing rules, publication principles, research and publication ethics rules and journal ethics rules were followed. Responsibility for any violations that may arise regarding the article belongs to the author(s). The ethics committee approval of the article was obtained from the Ethics Committee of Gazi University, with the date 09/05/2023 and the decision number 2023- 660.

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