

## **Investigation of University Students' Burnout Levels in Sports**

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### **Abstract**

Burnout, which is one of the situations where an individual feels psychologically bad, is a situation that university students often experience. For this reason, the aim of this study is to examine the burnout status of university students who do physical activity in sports. In this study, the sports burnout scale developed by Sorkkila et al., (2017) and adapted into Turkish by Çam et al., (2019) was used. The data were collected by convenience sampling method. Statistical analyzes were made with the SPSS program. In addition, to reduce the error rate, FDR analysis was performed with the Graphpad 9 program with a rate of 5%. When this analysis was done, the data were free of type I error. As a result, it is seen that as participation in physical activity increases, burnout in sports decreases.

**Keywords:** Burnout, Sport, Sociology of Sport.

## **Introduction**

Burnout is a state of psychological, emotional, and sometimes physical withdrawal from sports participation as a result of chronic stress. Burnout is among the important problems of young athletes. A significant number of young athletes suffer from burnout each year. Unfortunately, the literature review shows that sports scientists show little interest in burnout (Googger et al., 2007).

Sports burnout is a multidimensional syndrome defined as physical and psychological exhaustion, which tends to decrease the performance of individuals, reduces their interest in sports and affects them psychologically negatively (Goodger Jones, 2012; Langan et al., 2015). The design and programming of interventions that increase participation, thereby promoting motivation and protecting athletes against burnout, has gained particular attention in the field of sport psychology. While this study analyzes the role of motivation in the emergence of burnout and commitment, it also plays an important role in the relationship between the motivation of athletes and burnout. This situation shows that burnout in sports has a negative relationship with motivation (Graña et al., 2021). However, sport mostly allows individuals to feel good psychologically (Gülü ve Ayyıldız, 2022; Gülü ve Yapıcı, 2022).

Physical exhaustion, sports depreciation and a reduced sense of accomplishment. The development of ABQ has contributed significantly to the development of research on burnout among athletes (Seong, 2002). There are several reasons why athletes end their athletic careers. However, burnout is one of the main causes (Smith, 1986). The aim of this study is to examine the burnout levels of university students in sports.

## **Material and Method**

### **Research Group**

The research group of this study consists of university students engaged in physical activity. A total of 388 people, 247 men and 141 women, agreed to participate in the study voluntarily.

### **Data Collection Tool**

The data collection tool consists of two parts. Personal information form was used in the first part, and the sports burnout scale developed by Sorkkila et al., (2017) and adapted into Turkish by Çam et al., (2019) was used in the second part. The scale consists of 10 items and

three sub-dimensions in total. These sub-dimensions are; depersonalization, exhaustion and inadequacy. Items 3, 5, 8, 9 and 10 in the scale are reverse scored.

**Table 1.** Descriptive Statistics

Variable	Grup	f	%	Total
Gender	Female	141	36.3	388
	Male	247	63.7	
Age	18-19 years	107	27.6	388
	20-21 years	176	45.4	
	22 years and older	105	27.1	
Frequency of physical activity	Rarely	115	29.6	388
	Sometimes	121	31.2	
	Always	152	39.2	

When Table 1 is examined, it is seen that 36.3% of the participants are female (n=141) and 63.7% (n= 247) are male. Considering the age variable, there are 107 (27.6%) people in the 18-19 age range, 176 (45.4%) in the 20-21 age range, and 105 (27.1%) people aged 22 and over. In the frequency of exercise; The number of those who exercise all the time was 115 (29.6%), the number of those who exercise occasionally was 121 (31.2%), and the number of those who rarely exercised was 152 (39.2%).

## Results

In the homogeneity test, skewness-kurtosis values were found in the range of -2+2. This result shows that the data are homogeneously distributed. In addition, according to the results of the Cronbach alpha reliability analysis, all horse dimensions were found above .70. This result shows that our data is reliable.

Table 2. Independent t-test analysis results for gender variable

Variable	Gender	N	$\bar{x}$	SS	p
<b>Inadequacy</b>	Female	141	2.67	.78	.000
	Male	247	2.24	.42	
<b>Exhaustion</b>	Female	141	2.20	.26	.000
	Male	247	2.42	.58	
<b>Depersonalization</b>	Female	141	2.84	.73	.000
	Male	247	2.14	.30	

p<0.001

According to the results of Table 2 analysis, while there was a significant difference in favor of women in the sub-dimensions of inadequacy and depersonalization, there was a significant difference in favor of men in the sub-dimension of exhaustion ( $p < 0.001$ ).

**Table 3.** Anova test analysis by age variable

Variable	Grup	N	$\bar{x}$	ANOVA	
				P	Benferoni
<b>Inadequacy</b>	18-19 years (1)	107	3.26	.000	1>2>3
	20-21 years (2)	176	3.00		
	22 years and older (3)	105	2.00		
<b>Exhaustion</b>	18-19 years (1)	107	2.18	.000	2-3>1
	20-21 years (2)	176	2.45		
	22 years and older (3)	105	2.31		
<b>Depersonalization</b>	18-19 years (1)	107	2.89	.000	1>2>3
	20-21 years (2)	176	2.33		
	22 years and older (3)	105	2.02		

$p < 0.01$

When Table 3 is examined, it is seen that there is a significant difference in the sub-dimensions of inadequacy and depersonalization as the age increases. In addition, it is seen that the participants aged 20 and over have a significantly higher level of burnout than the participants aged 18-19 ( $p < .001$ ).

**Table 4.** Anova test analysis according to exercise frequency variable

Variable	Grup	N	$\bar{x}$	ANOVA	
				P	Benferoni
<b>Inadequacy</b>	Rarely (1)	115	2.68	.000	1>2>3
	Sometimes (2)	121	2.47		
	Always (3)	152	2.12		
<b>Exhaustion</b>	Rarely (1)	115	2.46	.000	2-3>1
	Sometimes (2)	121	2.44		
	Always (3)	152	2.17		
<b>Depersonalization</b>	Rarely (1)	115	2.69	.000	1>2>3

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Sometimes (2)	121	2.46
Always (3)	152	2.11

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p<0.01

When Table 4 is examined, it is observed that as the frequency of exercise increases, there is a significant difference in the sub-dimensions of inadequacy and depersonalization. In addition, it is seen that the participants who exercise occasionally and all the time have a significantly higher level of exhaustion than the participants who rarely exercise (p<.001).

### Discussion and Conclusion

The more stressful an individual's life situations are, the higher the degree of burnout. Consistent with this result, individuals reporting higher levels of stress are more likely to experience burnout. Among the investigated variables, perceived stress has the strongest correlation with the individual's burnout (De Francisco, 2016; Tabei, 2019).

When the effect of burnout on gender was examined, no significant difference was found in some studies (Koustelios, 2001; Raanes et al., 2019; Yenihan et al., 2018). However, there are studies where the burnout level of men is higher than that of women (Aypay ve Sever, 2011; Eroğlu et al., 2009). This situation is similar to our study. In our study, it was observed that males were significantly higher in the exhaustion sub-dimension. This situation shows that male students wear themselves out more.

It has been concluded that men's depersonalization and competence thoughts are higher than women's (Eroğlu et al., 2009). This view differs from our study. The reason for this may be the difference in the sample group and having different environmental conditions.

It is observed that burnout increases with increasing age (Buğdaıcı et al., 2004; Veysel ve Şahan, 2015). In addition, while there are studies in which there is no significant difference in the level of depersonalization (Kaya et al. 2007), there is a study that concluded that depersonalization decreases with increasing age (Buğdaıcı et al., 2004). In the results of our study, it was concluded that as age increases, burnout and depersonalization decrease. It is thought that the fact that the participants are university students and that the majority of them are away from their families for the first time (in the periods of 18-19 years) begin to increase in their state of exhaustion with stress. In addition, it is thought that the human being, who does not become more individual as the age increases, may be more insensitive.

As the level of physical activity increases, burnout decreases (Toker ve Biron, 2012). This result shows parallelism with our study. Looking at the results, it is seen that physical activity reduces burnout. It is thought that burnout is low because the individual both includes himself/herself in a social group and feels better physically.

As a result, in order to reduce the sense of burnout, organizing sportive activities in environments where young people are present will provide significant benefits (Gündoğmuş, 2017). The dissemination of sports and the creation of a sports culture throughout the society will cause a decrease in the feeling of burnout. The fact that the sports clubs of the universities are active and the sports environments are accessible will allow the students to feel better in the time left behind from the intense course tempo.

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