

# Socialization of disabled people with sports activities and their problem encountered in participating in sports activities

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## Abstract

The purpose of this research is to determine the encountered problems of people with disabilities who live in Malatya and participate in sportive activities the aged 10-15 years. For this purpose, a total of 35 parents of individuals 11 diagnosed with autism, 6 diagnosed with physical disability, 10 diagnosed with Down's syndrome and 8 diagnosed with mild mental disability participated in the study. This study was a qualitative study and it was provided that face-to-face interviews with parents of disabled individuals were made, considering that disabled people would not be able to give correctly answers. In the process of obtaining the data, in-depth qualitative interviews were conducted with the parents through semi-structured open-ended questions. Parents of people with Down's syndrome and mild mental disability have expressed a positive view of the fitness of sports facilities, while the parents of autistic and physically handicapped individuals indicate that their facilities and equipment are insufficient. In addition, all parents have expressed that their children willingness to participate in sports activities but they stated that the trainers were inadequate in terms of knowledge, competence and equipment. As a result, the parents are satisfied with participation of their children with disability in sports activities and they are socialized with sports, there are positive changes in their clothing, walking and talking, the facilities are partly sufficient but children's coaches are inadequate knowledge, experience and equipment, suffer from the communication problems with the municipality staff in the vehicle when traveling.

**Keywords:** Disabled Individual, Sports Activity, Sport Facilities.

## INTRODUCTION

Inactivity has been major problem not only for disabled people but also for non-disabled individuals. As the source of energy and oxygen consumption in the body decreases due to inactivity, the number of heart beats decrease, so the blood flow also slow down. This result in a variety of diseases, particularly in immune systems of persons with disabled, depending on their low resistance. Sports and physical activities are effective for people in terms of sociologically, psychologically and physiologically, so activities are an important factor in controlled the feelings of aggression, anger and jealousy of these individuals with disabled as well as by improving at the mental state of disabled people(9).The levels of socialization of disabled people participating regularly in sportive activities

were found to be higher (8).Visually and orthopedically disabled individuals' participation in physical activity, acquisition of participation habits have importance to improve and maintain sports habits. However, when compared with the general population, disabled people can't participate in physical activities adequately because of personal or social inadequate. In this context, the irregularities of the pavements for the disabled people, the construction works in the surrounding areas, irregular moldings and uncontrolled sewers became environmental obstacles. Participants stated that they used different way routes to overcome these obstacles. (11). It is important for disabled people to encourage regular physical activity and participate in sports, to live a healthy and happy life and have positive feelings (5, 18). Disabled people have a

general health problem, this situation is causing new expenditures. When we think of the positive effects of physical activity on the health people with disabled, the expenditures also be reduced (14).

Chinn et al. (2006) stated that, the most common problems encountered by disabled people in participating in sports activities are longer process of adaptation, personal health problems, and the lack of physically working together with peer (2).

Heller et al. (2002) showed that these individuals did not participate in physical activity because of transportation cost, transportation problem, unknown where to do physical activity, unknown how to use physical activity tools, anxiety about the possibility of mocking people and lack of equipped coaches (6). Anderson et al. (2005) conducted a survey that showed that girls with physical disabilities did not participate in physical activity because of their physical disability and the society had different perspectives (1).

## MATERIAL & AND METHOD

This research is a qualitative study aimed at identifying the problems faced by people with disabilities in participating in sporting activities and face-to-face talks were held with the parents of individuals participating in sporting activities. The universe of the research in accordance with the designated purpose has created the parents of disabled individuals in Turkey. The sample of the study consisted of a total of 35 parents of individuals, n: 11 autistic, n: 6 physically disabled, n: 10 down syndrome, n: 8 mild mental disabled people, aged between 10 and 15 years, who reside in Malatya and participate in sports activities. Individuals participating in the activities were randomly determined. This study lasted 16 weeks. At the end of the 16th week, negotiations were held with parents. After informing the parents about the research, a voluntary consent form was signed by all the parents. The parents participated in the survey were asked questions such as; income situation, problems encountered in going to sports facilities, sufficiency of facilities, coach and equipment

qualification in facilities, willingness to participate in sporting activity of disabled person, rely on to coach, expenditures made while participating in sporting activity and sports, what kind of social changes are in your child.

## Data Analyses

Data obtained in the study were analysed using IBM-SPSS Statistics 22.0 software. The level of motoric and performance parameters were assessed pre and post treatment using the Dependent t test and between the groups with the Independent t test. Results of the measured values were stated as mean  $\pm$  standard deviation. In the power analysis performed, assuming that the difference between pre-treatment and post-treatment was 1 unit with  $\alpha = 0.05$  and  $1-\beta$  (power) = 0.80, at least 30 parents participated the survey were required for the sample. A value of  $p < 0.05$  was accepted as statistically significant.

## RESULTS

A total of 35 parents of individuals (n: 11 autistic, n: 6 physically disabled, n: 10 down syndrome, n: 8 mild mental disabled) participated in this study.

Monthly income levels of the families participating in the survey are given in Table 1 in detail. Table 1 presents 17.1% of the families have monthly income less than 1000 TL, 14.3% of the income is between 1001-2000 TL, 42.9% of the income is between 2001-2500 TL, 11.4% 's income is between 2501-3000 TL and 14.3% is between 3001-3500 TL. According to the results of Table 1, most of the families (15 families) have income of 2001-2500 TL. This suggests that the families participating in the survey have middle income.

Table 1. Monthly Income Level of Family

Income Level of Family	f	%
1000 TL and Lower	6	17,1
1001-2000 TL	5	14,3
2001-2500 TL	15	42,9
2501-3000 TL	4	11,4
3001-3500 TL	5	14,3
Total	35	100,0

Table 2 presents 54.3% (n=19) of the families participated in the survey stated that they had problems with their children while they were having access to the sports facilities. 45.7% (n=16) of the families stated that they experienced any problems during transportation to sports facilities. The reason for the families living with their children to reach sports facilities with their children is that their houses are away from sports facilities.

Table 2. Situations of the Problems of the Family During Transportation with the Sports Facilities with Their Children

	f	%
Yes	19	54,3
No	16	45,7
Total	35	100,0

Table 3. Opinions of Families in terms of Adequacy of Sport Facilities

	f	%
Enough	6	17,1
Partially Enough	12	34,3
Inadequate	17	48,6
Total	35	100,0

Table 4 presents 57.1% (n = 20) of the participating families indicated that their equipments were inadequate because they were loud with their children during sports events and did not know how to communicate with disabled people; 20.0% (n = 7) of the families stated that the coaches were good intentions and that they saw the children as partially adequate for their liking. 22.9%

Table 4. Opinions Parents in terms of Coaches and Equipment Sufficiency

	f	%
Enough	8	22,9
Partially Enough	7	20,0
Inadequate	20	57,1
Total	35	100,0

(n = 8) of the families were equipped with coaches from the sport sciences faculties and their children the trainers stated that they would be satisfied because they wanted to spend more time with coaches from the sports sciences faculty. According to Table 4, the coaches participating in the activities from the Faculty of Sports Sciences are more well-equipped in the field.

Table 5 presents all of the families participating in the survey (100% n = 35) stated that their children were very eager to participate in sporting activities.

Table 5. Opinions of the Children of Families About Situations in Attending Sportive Activities

	f	%
Willing	35	100,0
Unwilling	0	0,0
Total	35	100,0

Individuals with mental disabilities attribute to sport activities.

According to Table 3, 48.6% (n=17) of the families participating in the survey stated that the facilities where the sporting activities were held were not designed according to the disabled people, so the facilities were dangerous for the disabled children and that it was caused by the inadequacy; 34.3% (n=12) of the families stated that the facilities were partly sufficient, 17.1% (n=6) of the families stated that the facilities were sufficient.

According to Table 6, 68.6% (n = 24) of the families stated that they did not trust the coaches because they were inadequate in the field of exercise training for the disabled children; 31.4% (n = 11) stated that they were safe in their coaches. Most of the coaches worked in sports facilities were not trained in the exercise for disabled people. Coaches participating in activities from the sports sciences faculty are better equipped to exercise in children with disabilities.

Table 6. Opinions of Families about Confidence in Coaches

	f	%
I Trust	11	31,4
I Don't Trust	24	68,6
Total	35	100,0

Table 7 presents 37.1% (n=13) of the families participating in the survey stated because of the participation of children in sports activities; transportation, private vehicle and clothing expenses. 62.9% (n = 22) of the parents stated that their children were less sick because they participated in sports activities and therefore their expenditures did not increase due to the diminish of health expenditures. At the results of Table 7,

participation in sporting events does not affect negatively the budget of the families.

Table 7. Opinions Of Parents About Increasing Of Their Expense Because Of Children's Participation In Sporting Events

	f	%
Yes	13	37,1
No	22	62,9
Total	35	100,0

According to Table 8, participation of all the families (% 100 / n = 35) believe that their children are social because of the development of their speaking skills and their ability of interpreting. In addition, the formation of different friendships in the field of sporting activity, the passing of the activities within the scope of the game provide life at home and social environments improve the socialization of individuals.

Table 8. Opinions of the Family about Positive Effects on the Socialization of Children Participating in Sportive Activities

	f	%
Yes	35	100,0
No	0	0,0
Total	35	100,0

Table 8. Opinions of the Family about Positive Effects on the Socialization of Children Participating in Sportive Activities

	f	%
Yes	35	100,0
No	0	0,0
Total	35	100,0

Table 8. Opinions of the Family about Positive Effects on the Socialization of Children Participating in Sportive Activities

	f	%
Yes	35	100,0
No	0	0,0
Total	35	100,0

## DISCUSSION

This study investigated socialization of disabled people with sports activities and their problem encountered in participating in sports activities. To the best of our knowledge, this is the first study to socialize of disabled people with sports activities and their problem encountered in participating in sports activities.

In the direction of the research findings, the parents and wives stated that they are willing to participate in the sports activities of the mentally disabled individuals who regularly participate in sports activities, but that they do not have coaches equipped with the relevant area, that the facilities are partly sufficient, that the problems in transportation do not matter, but that participation in sportive activity positively contributes to the socialization of the individual. Many studies have been carried out on the socialization of disabled people in sports activities. Gencöz (1997) also found that basketball education had positive effects on the behaviours of the mentally disabled children on behaviours of children with disabilities (4). Considering the views of the parents, it can be said that when we work with the equipped coaches, positive results will be obtained (4). The physical and motor development of disabled people is slower than their peers. Ozdemir and his colleagues concluded that participation in sports activities has a positive effect on the physical development, motor development and social skills of disabled individuals (12). When we look at the results of our work, it is expressed by the parents that disabled people are willing to participate in sporting activities. When participation in sporting events is considered to have an impact on disabled individuals, problems with participation in the activities need to be resolved. In their study, Kirchner et al. (2008) found that disabled people were affected by construction work on the roadway, unsuitable sidewalks, uncontrolled sewer pits, and changed their route due to these obstacles as they travelled to sporting activities (11). It is also stated by the parents that environmental factors are very effective in participating in sports activities in the work we do. In their study of adults with Down's syndrome, Heler and colleagues (2002) stated that it is from the reasons for not being able to participate in physical activity to know where, when and how to perform physical activity (6). Physical activity is a tool by which disabled people can express themselves and thus they can forget their obstacles and even reduce their disability. Along with sports

activity, the disabled person communicates with the environment, establishes social relations, learns to share, develops self-esteem (10). Sögüt (2006) concluded that physical activities were effective in the socialization of physically challenged individuals when done regularly (17). Ozdemir and his friends. (2018) have indicated that the inability of mentally disabled individuals to participate regularly in physical activity would lead to an inactive lifestyle (13). Rimmer and colleagues found that transport problems, disillusionment, the cost of a physical activity program, and the lack of knowledge of where to place physical activity were the reasons for not participating in physical activity (15). In a similar but broader study, Rimmer and his colleagues conducted various interviews with disabled individuals, architects, fitness and recreation specialists and city planners in ten states in the United States and investigated what were the obstacles to participation in physical activity for disabled people. As a result of the research, they found elements such as irregular structures, obstacles caused by natural surroundings, economic status of families, personal obstacles, inadequacy of sports equipment, inadequacy of educators, negative attitudes and behaviours of non-disabled individuals, confusion of authority in bureaucracy and inadequacy of resources (16). Some researchers have argued that the loss of motor development of mentally disabled individuals is caused by the inability of individuals to participate in physical activity as competently as they are, and that they are not given enough play opportunities. (3, 7).

## CONCLUSION

As a results of this research, the views of the parents and similar studies in the related area are taken into consideration, the importance of regular physical activity emerges. However, families of people with disabilities encountered various difficulties when moving their children to physical activity areas. Environmental factors, urban traffic, different perspectives on society, economic structure of the family are some of the difficulties . Families of disabled people continued to take their children to

activities despite the obstacles. They encountered in participating in regular physical activity, both environmental and systemic and bureaucratic obstacles.

Sufficient facilities for individuals with autism and physical disabilities should be established and trained to provide suitable training for these individuals. In this context, the Departments of Exercise and Sports Education in the Disabled People attached to Sports Sciences Faculty of Physical Education and Sports High School should be multiplied and supported. Transportation problems should be solved by local administrations, relevant legal arrangements should be made and disabled people should reach to sports facilities smoothly and easily. Sports facilities should be designed for the use of disabled people. The negative perception in society should be tackled.

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