

Perspectives of Parents of Faculty of Sports Sciences Students towards Sports for the Disabled

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Abstract

The individual is influenced by their environment; parents are the primary role models for them, followed by friends, family, and teachers. These individuals teach them the importance of sports, how it benefits disabled individuals, and how to have positive attitudes regarding disability. Using a qualitative, phenomenological approach, this study aimed to investigate parents of students studying sports sciences' opinions regarding sports for people with disabilities. Data were gathered through semi-structured interviews with 20 parents (9 female, 11 male). Educational backgrounds ranged from primary school (n = 4) and middle school (n = 4) to secondary school (n = 5) and university (n = 7). Only three participants reported having a disabled family member or close acquaintance. Interview transcripts were coded and thematically analyzed in NVivo 11. The majority of participants, according to the results, were aware of disabilities and the advantages—both social and physical—of sports for those with disabilities. Parents emphasized the importance of integrating disabled individuals into society and employing sports science graduates to support special needs. They also highlighted the success of ongoing projects but suggested the need for new, creative initiatives to reach a broader audience.

Keywords: Viewpoint, Impairment, Family, Sports for the disabled

Introduction

Each individual constituting society is composed of various physiological systems such as blood, muscles, and the skeletal structure, and these systems function in a state of harmonic collaboration. In addition to this, it is possible to talk about the existence of larger systems that sometimes directly and sometimes indirectly affect each other by adding some emotional and mental systems. Individuals adopt the motto of “active lives” in order for these systems to work more harmoniously and efficiently, and in this direction, they establish connections with various physical activities, exercises or, more broadly, sports. Therefore, thanks to this active life, individuals can benefit from many positive effects of sports activities such as weight control, brain health, reducing the risk of cardiovascular diseases and some types of cancer, strengthening muscles, overcoming type 2 diabetes (CDC, 2021; Warburton et al, 2006), overcoming problems such as social phobia and anxiety disorders (Jayakody et al., 2020), getting rid of the feeling of loneliness (Pels & Kleinert, 2016), personal development, social adaptation and change (Wankel & Berger, 1990), decreased stress or depression levels and higher quality sleep (Stubbs et al., 2018; Sallis et al., 2020), increased mental development or learning new things faster (Zhao et al., 2017, Gülünay & Savaş, 2022).

While it is relatively easy and nearly always possible to achieve these benefits under almost any condition for many individuals with typical development, the situation can be quite different for those who live with various disabilities due to certain developmental characteristics. According to the World Health Organization (WHO, 1995), everyone has the right to the highest standard of physical, mental and social well-being. In addition, the desire of these individuals to benefit from sports within the framework of the "active living" motto, both in terms of their special and typical needs, is just one of their educational rights. The Constitution of the Republic of Türkiye, Article 42 (1982), explicitly states that education is a right for everyone and that necessary measures will be taken to ensure that individuals with special educational needs can contribute to society. In this context, sports have a very important and valuable place among the opportunities offered to individuals with special needs. Sport is a biological, pedagogical and social phenomenon that improves the individual's health in a physiological and psychological context, shapes their social behavior, and brings them to a certain level in mental and motor terms (Demir & İlhan, 2020). In other words, with sports, disabled individuals can have higher self-esteem, better relationships with the environment and better mental health (İlhan, 2010), and a better mood and higher sense of self-efficacy with the decrease in anxiety and stress levels. In a declaration published by the United Nations on disabled people and sports (U.N., n.d.), it is stated that with sports, labeling of individuals due to their disabilities can be prevented by highlighting their skills rather than the person, and even attitudes towards these individuals can become more positive. Stangova et al. (2022) stated that as a result of their study with nine disabled individuals, these individuals talked about not only the improvement in their physical condition but also some mental and social improvements after they started sports. Rimmer and Rowland (2008) stated in their study that sport is an important element especially for young people with disabilities, and that it provides many benefits such as improving cardiovascular health, reducing the risk of obesity and better mental health outcomes, and that considering the positive results, participation in sports by these groups should be encouraged. Blauwet and Willick (2012) emphasize the physical, psychological and social benefits of the Paralympic Movement on disabled athletes, and mention that sport is also a wide-ranging tool that can be used for the rights and social integration of disabled individuals. Palmer and Harley (2012) stated that sports provide great benefits in improving the general health status of individuals with

disabilities and that sports participation has positive physical, social and psychological reflections.

In this process, it may be directly related to parents that individuals with special needs benefit from sports in a healthy and maximum way. While parents have a significant influence on this issue, they can act as both facilitators and hinderers of their athletic aspirations. It can be said that the behaviors of parents who have no connection with sports and who are unaware of the high importance of sports for individuals with special needs have a latent power that will directly affect their children in their social lives. Lack of support within the family or negative perception of disability may limit an individual's participation in sports by leading to decreased self-esteem and motivation, as stated by Shapiro and Martin (2010). Supportive families can provide not only emotional encouragement but also practical resources such as transportation, financial assistance, and information about adaptive sports options. Parents' perspectives on sports can provide profound benefits to children with disabilities by significantly shaping their overall development and quality of life. When parents see sports as a valuable and inclusive activity, they will be more likely to encourage participation. Groff, Lundberg, and Zabriskie (2009) show in their studies that parental support is crucial in developing a child's interest in sports, helping to increase the child's self-confidence, and encouraging a sense of competence and self-worth. Jaarsma et al. (2014) reported that families who demonstrate positive attitudes toward sports can greatly increase the likelihood of continued participation and success in athletic activities for individuals with disabilities. Additionally, Shields et al. (2016) emphasize that parental involvement in sports is a critical determinant of the participation levels of children and adolescents with disabilities. Therefore, the family environment serves as a fundamental element in determining the opportunities and challenges that individuals with disabilities face in the field of sports. Furthermore, parents who recognize the importance of sports often make efforts to access adaptive sports programs and resources. According to Shields et al. (2016), such an effort is necessary to break down barriers to participation and ensure that children with disabilities have opportunities to develop their skills, enjoy social participation, and experience the joy of competition and teamwork. Lauruschkus et al. (2017) emphasize that parental encouragement is closely linked to increased participation and social inclusion among children with disabilities, especially those with conditions such as cerebral palsy. This ongoing participation not only aids physical development, but also fosters resilience and self-efficacy, which are crucial to overcoming disability-related challenges. Similarly, research by Murphy and Carbone (2008) highlights the role of parents in creating a supportive environment that encourages both physical activity and social interaction, which are key components in the overall development of children with disabilities. Therefore, parents' perspectives and actions are crucial in creating an environment that supports a child's participation in sport, ultimately impacting their holistic development and long-term well-being.

Individuals' participation in sports and physical activities is related to how their parents view these pursuits. The biggest influence of the family on socialization is determining whether or not they will participate in sports activities and, if so, how they will participate (Turhal et al., 2022). If these children have a disability that requires special education, they can be on the benefiting side, if not, they can be on the opposite side with the role of a sports instructor who deals with this work and thus guides them to provide the benefit. Examples of research findings include that children whose families are active in sports behave similarly to their families (Lee, 2004), that the family's attitudes towards physical education and sports can be seen in children in a very similar way, and children from families with high attitudes are more likely to participate in sports activities (Suna & Özkan, 2022), and children can be positively

affected by sports becoming a part of the family's daily life and can be involved in sports in some way (Durmuş, 2020), and the family's attitudes and behaviors are very important in this regard. Except for attitudes or direction to sport, family environment is also important in choosing a profession. Atli and Gür (2019) in their study explained that in choosing the suitable profession the family as the decision maker is very important. Yavrutürk (2023) also mentioned in his study that when students try to choose a profession family affect is a factor needed to be evaluated. Korkut-Owen et al. (2012), in their study stated that for university students, even though family environment is not in the first place to decide about the suitable department for their future profession, it has high importance. Sav (2008) in her study explained that family environment is an indicator in career planning. In this context, as mentioned before, the employment of these people in such a field will be provided by various guidance, awareness and attitudes seen in the person's immediate environment, so the parental views on this subject form the basis of the study. It is of great importance for individuals with disabilities to benefit from the multi-dimensional advantages offered by sports, but all of this will be possible with individuals who have received sports training to guide them. When the related literature is examined, it is seen that there is no similar study to this, and the situation reflects its originality. Therefore, this research aims to examine the perspectives of parents of students studying at the Faculty of Sports Sciences towards sports for the disabled.

Material and Method

Ethics Committee Permission

The research was implemented after the ethics committee decision of Karabük University dated 29.03.2023 and numbered 2023/03 was obtained.

Research Design

In the study, qualitative research methods were used to examine the perspectives of parents of students studying at the Faculty of Sports Sciences on sports. In this context, phenomenological design was adopted within the scope of qualitative research in the study and the interview technique was chosen to collect the data. The phenomenological design is defined as the explanation of facts or events that are aware of but do not have an in-depth understanding (Yıldırım and Şimşek, 2016). It is also generally stated that it is an approach that allows for the evaluation of past or potential experiences (Jasper, 1994). In this context, the parents of students studying at the Faculty of Sports Sciences and taking at least one compulsory or elective course related to disabled sports were determined as the focal point. Interview techniques vary as structured, unstructured, semi-structured, ethnographic interviews and focus interviews depending on the availability of sources and the characteristics of the data to be reached (Büyüköztürk et al., 2014). In this study, a semi-structured interview technique was used.

Research Group

The research group consists of parents of students who are studying at Afyon Kocatepe University Faculty of Sports Sciences and were selected through purposive sampling method. Purposive sampling is a method that allows selecting information-rich cases for in-depth studies that address specific characteristics of the sample group. This method is applied in order to obtain richer data and increase the credibility of the research (Flick, 2014; Marshall & Rossman, 2014; Patton, 2014). These criterias are taken into account for forming the research group; parents of students who take sports or adapted physical education and sports lessons for the disabled, parents who follow the developments in their children's field, parents who take on the role of spectator in their children's competitions.

Although the number of participants and minimum sample sizes are not specified in qualitative studies, qualitative data are generally collected until a certain level of data saturation is reached or no new data is received (Creswell, 2014). In this context, the opinions of a total of 20 parents, 9 females and 11 males, were obtained. Demographic information about the participants is given in Table 1. The participants are coded with the letter "P" (participant) as seen on the table.

Table 1. Demographic information of the participants

Variables	Level	n	%
Gender	Female (P1, P3, P7, P11, P12, P13, P17, P19, P20)	9	45.0
	Male (P2, P4, P5, P6, P8, P9, P10, P14, P15, P16, P18)	11	55.0
Educational Status	Primary school	4	20.0
	Middle school	4	20.0
	Secondary school	5	25.0
	University	7	35.0
Presence of a Disabled Person in the Family/Relative	Yes	3	15.0
	No	17	85.0
Type of disability if available	Mental disability	2	66.67
	Physical disability	1	33.33

Data Collection

In the study, "Semi-Structured Interview Questions", which were created by obtaining expert opinions, were used in order to predict the perspectives of the parents of students of the Faculty of Sports Sciences regarding sports for the disabled. Yıldırım and Şimşek (2018, pp. 137-145) made some suggestions for the preparation of interview questions and explained these suggestions with some special items. The first of these is that the questions to be created should be easily understandable by the participants. Open-ended questions are asked, directions are avoided while asking the questions and waiting for answers, more than one or independent multi-dimensional questions are not asked at the same time, alternative questions are created considering the characteristics of the participants and individual differences, different types of questions are created, questions are organized in a logical framework and questions can be developed.

In this study, these relevant suggestions were taken into consideration when creating questions. Thus, in order to obtain data from the research group, questions were developed as a result of expert opinions and the data collection tool took its final form. For expert opinions, competent scientists, one of whom continues his studies in the field of Educational Sciences and the other in the field of Sports Sciences, were consulted.

During the interviews, ethical principles such as "obtaining the consent of the participants, respecting their private lives, not harming them in any way, and not misleading them" must be taken into consideration (Yıldırım and Şimşek, 2016). In line with this information, after being informed about the research and receiving voluntary consent form approval, the interviews were recorded with a voice recorder and transferred to the computer as data with the listen, stop and write steps.

For the interviews, a previously prepared empty classroom in the Faculty of Sports Sciences and the Zoom program, which was for the participants who were out of town, were used and face-to-face and online interviews were based. Flexibility was tried to be provided for fluent conversation. In order to respect copyrights, participants were assured that their personal information would not be used in any way, and that nicknames or coding would be used

instead. Interviews with participants lasted an average of 37 minutes for each participant. The interviews continued until the data saturation point was reached.

Data Collection Tools

It is stated that the main data collection tool in phenomenological studies is interview (Yıldırım and Şimşek, 2016). In this study, the semi-structured interview technique was taken into consideration. Semi-structured interview is the preparation of questions in a way that is as understandable as possible with preliminary preparation and the editing of questions to the participant in case the questions are not understood during the interview or in case of pending situations (Karasar, 2015; Polat, 2022).

The questions asked to parents in the interviews are given below;

1. What is disability for you? How do you define the concept of disability?
2. What are the types of disabilities?
3. What are the contributions of sports activities to the development of disabled individuals? What do you think about this?
4. If you had a disabled child or a relative, would you consider directing them to sports? Why?
5. Would you like your child or a relative to work with disabled individuals?
6. What are your views and suggestions regarding the field of education and employment for disabled people in the field of sports?

Data Analysis

In the analysis of the data, descriptive analysis method was used to address the perspectives of parents on sports for the disabled. Content analysis is considered an in-depth analysis technique with coding based on certain rules. This technique aims to reveal previously unknown themes, analyze and interpret the obtained data (Koca, 2017).

The reliability formula developed by Miles and Huberman (1994) was taken into account in the reliability calculation of the data. The formula in question is $\text{Reliability} = \frac{\text{Consensus}}{(\text{Consensus} + \text{Disagreement})}$. According to the formulation, the reliability of the study was recorded as 84%. The data obtained were coded by taking the opinions of 2 experts and analyzed with the Nvivo 11 Software.

In order to ensure the validity and reliability of the findings, a member check was conducted with 7 randomly selected participants from the study group. In line with the feedback from the participants, the categories were reviewed, and necessary corrections were made.

Ethical Approval

The necessary ethics committee permissions were obtained at the meeting of Karabük University Social and Human Research Ethics Committee dated 29.03.2023 and numbered 2023/03.

Findings

In line with the research objectives, the perspectives of the parents of students studying at the faculty of sports sciences towards sports for the disabled were examined and the findings are given below.

1. Participants' views on how they define disability

Participants were asked the question, “What is disability for you? How do you define the concept of disability” The answers to this question are given in the model below (Figure 1).

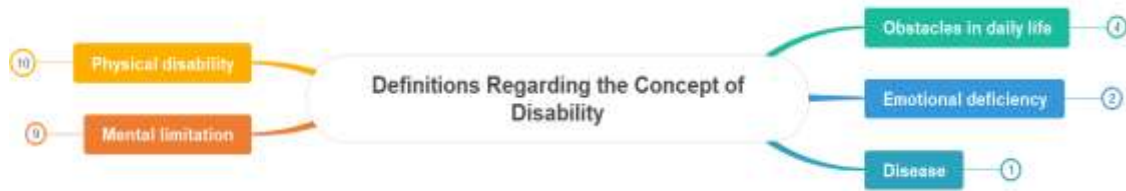


Figure 1. Themes created for the first question

According to Figure 1, differences were seen in the answers. 10 of the participants' answers were gathered under the theme of "physical disability", 9 under the theme of "mental limitation", 4 under the theme of "obstacles in daily life", 2 under the theme of "emotional deficiency" and 1 under the theme of "disease".

In this context, some of the answers given by the participants regarding the first question are as follows:

Participant 1: These are disruptions in every aspect of an individual's life due to physical or mental disabilities.

Participant 6: It is a limitation of movement and lack of decision-making ability. It is not only physical, but also mental, and sometimes even an emotional disability.

2. Participants' ideas about what types of disabilities there are

Participants were asked the question, “What are the types of disabilities?” The answers to this question are given in the model below (Figure 2).

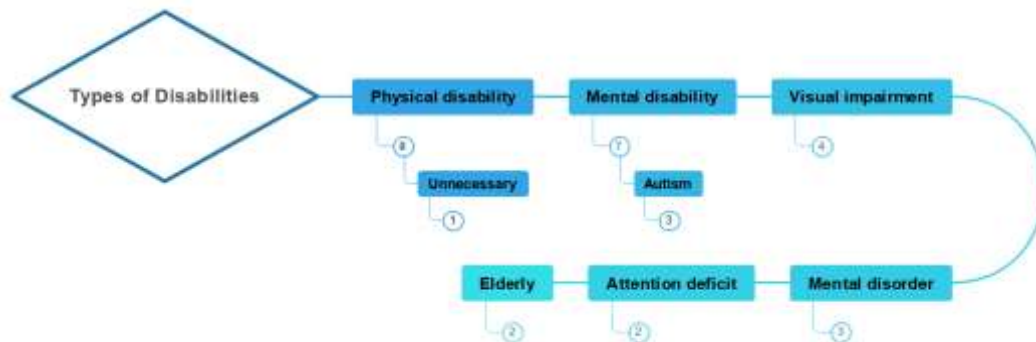


Figure 2. Themes and subthemes created for the second question

According to Figure 2, differences were determined in the answers to this question. 8 of the participants' answers were gathered under the theme of "physical disability", 7 under the theme of "mental disability", 4 under the theme of "visual impairment ", 3 under the theme of "mental disorder", 2 under the theme of "attention deficit" and 2 under the theme of "elderly", 1 under the theme of "unnecessary" and 3 under the sub-theme of "autism".

Some of the answers regarding the second question are as follows:

Participant 9: Mentally disabled, visually impaired, those with mental and emotional illnesses, those with attention deficit. They all have needs.

Participant 17: Types of disabilities are divided into three categories: physical, intellectual, and psychological. Individuals who are unable to perform certain vital functions to maintain

their own lives require special needs, but this does not mean that all people with disabilities require special needs.

3. Participants' ideas about the contributions of sports activities to the development of the disabled

Participants were asked the question, "What are the contributions of sports activities to the development of disabled individuals? What do you think about this?" The answers to this question are given in the model below (Figure 3).



Figure 3. Themes created for the third question

According to Figure 3, differences were determined in the answers. 7 of the participants' answers were gathered under the theme of "healthy life", 6 "socialization", 5 "self-confidence", 3 "happiness", 3 "stress management and relaxation", 3 "motivation", 2 "success" and 1 "fun".

Some of the answers given by the participants regarding the third question are as follows:

Participant 2: It gives them confidence. They understand that they should not be deprived of activities because of their disabilities. As they are able to do things, they become more accepting of their disabilities, and it helps them not to dwell on it too much.

Participant 6: It increases their self-confidence and enables them to establish a social environment so that they can play a happier and more active role in life.

Participant 13: It contributes to positive development. It enables the individual to be more social, more harmonious and healthier.

4. Participants' ideas about directing a disabled child or relative to sports

Participants were asked the question, "If you had a disabled child or relative, would you consider directing him/her to sports? Why?" The answers to this question are given in the model below (Figure 4).



Figure 4. Model, themes and subthemes created for the fourth question

According to Figure 4, differences were determined in the answers. All participants gave answers related to directing a disabled child to sports. In this context, 8 of the answers given were gathered under the themes of "personal development", 4 under "physical development",

6 under “psychological well-being”, 4 under “mental development” and 2 under “communication”, 4 under the sub-themes of “self-confidence”, 3 under “socialization”, 1 under “self-awareness”, 3 under “motor skills” and 1 under “posture”.

Some of the answers given by the participants regarding the fourth question are as follows:

Participant 1: Yes, because it contributes spiritually, physically and socially.

Participant 4: I would definitely direct them. Just like every person, a disabled individual should also have physical activities. Engaging in physical activities is very beneficial for both the body and mental health.

Participant 20: I would definitely direct them. This situation is a great need both for embracing the disability and overcoming it. With the work of the mind and body, sports provide not only muscle development but also mental development and relaxation. In addition, pushing the boundaries drawn under the name of disability can be promising in terms of saving the person from this situation. Even small successes achieved can restore self-confidence and make it easier to hold on to life. Physical development can be beneficial for the disabled to take many steps to make their lives easier and to do their daily work.

5. Participants' opinions on the idea of your child/relative working with disabled individuals after graduating from university

Participants were asked the question, “Would you like your child or a relative to work with disabled individuals?” The answers to this question are given in the model below with the number of people (Figure5).

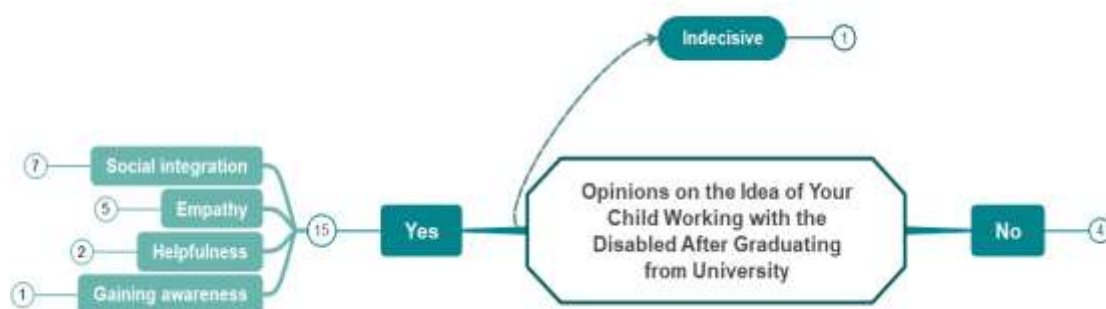


Figure 5. Model and themes created for the fifth question

According to Figure 5, differences were determined in the answers. 15 of the participants' answers were "yes", 4 were "no", and 1 was “indecisive”. Of the participants who answered yes, 7 of their opinions were gathered under the themes of "social integration", 5 were "empathy", 2 were "helpfulness", and 1 was "gaining awareness".

Some of the answers given by the participants regarding the fifth question are as follows:

Participant 3: Yes, I would like that. It teaches them how to empathize, guides them, helps others, and both sides grow and develop.

Participant 16: Maybe, they also need to be integrated into society.

Participant 20: I would like that because helping them is a source of pride for the person. Just as society should support one another in all aspects, it is important to show kindness and understanding towards special needs and disabled children.

6. Participants' opinions and suggestions regarding the field of education and employment for the disabled in the field of sports

Participants were asked the question “What are your views and suggestions regarding the field of education and employment for the disabled in the field of sports?” The answers to this question are given in the following model with the number of people (Figure 6).

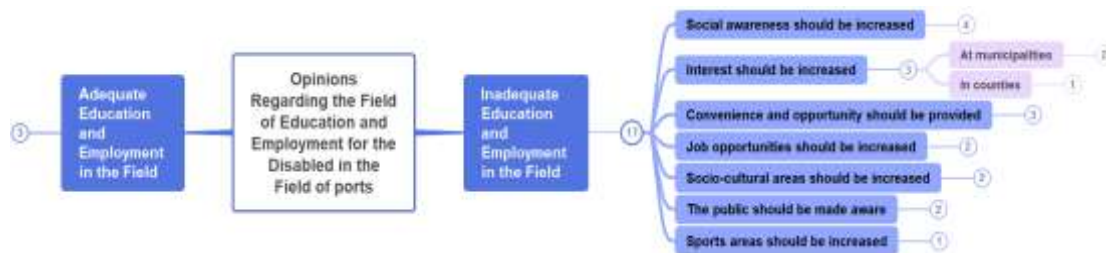


Figure 6. Model, themes and subthemes created for the sixth question

According to Figure 6, differences were determined in the answers. 3 of the participants' answers were under the theme of " Adequate education and employment in the field", 17 of them were under " Inadequate education and employment in the field". Within the scope of the opinion " Inadequate education and employment in the field ", 4 of the participants' answers were gathered under the themes "social awareness should be increased", 3 of them "interest should be increased", 3 of them " Convenience and opportunity should be provided ", 2 of them "job opportunities should be increased", 2 of them "socio-cultural areas should be increased", 2 of them " The public should be made aware " and 1 of them "sports areas should be increased", 2 of them "interest at municipalities should be increased" and 1 of them "interest in counties should be increased".

Some of the answers given by the participants regarding the sixth question are as follows:

Participant 4: Plans and programs for sports activities should be increased in places where they take place.

Participant 7: They should have more opportunities. Even though there are many sports areas, I find it insufficient to focus on and talk about this issue. It is also insufficient in terms of employment and should definitely be improved.

Participant 8: More socio-cultural areas should be created. I think that everyone should have easy access to these opportunities regardless of socio-economic level.

Discussion and Conclusion

The aim of the study was to examine the perspectives of parents of students studying at the Faculty of Sports Sciences on sports for the disabled, and the data obtained were discussed with various literature data.

When participants' answers to the question about defining disability were examined, it is seen that the majority of the participants interpret disability as a limitation of the individual physically and mentally, while others approach it in different ways. According to the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (2020), disability is any physical or mental limitation that makes it difficult for an individual to undertake certain tasks and interact with their environment. According to the World Health Organization (WHO, 2001), disability is defined as a mental or physical impairment, such as loss of limbs, loss of vision, loss of memory, activity restriction, such as difficulty in seeing, hearing, or running, as well as a restriction on participation in work, social, or recreational activities. According to the Law on People with Disabilities (2005), a person with a disability is defined as someone affected by attitudes and environmental conditions that prevent their full participation in society on an equal basis with others due to varying degrees of loss in their physical, mental, psychological,

or sensory capacities; according to the Turkish Foundation for the Support and Education of People with Disabilities (n.d.), a person with a disability is someone who, due to various prenatal or postnatal conditions, experiences some functional losses in their psychological, physical, mental, or emotional capacities and faces challenges in adapting to society and meeting basic needs. When the definitions made are compared with the participant responses, it is seen that the keywords match to a large extent and that they are aware of this context.

When the answers given to the question about the types of disabilities were examined, it was noted that the majority were knowledgeable about the types of disabilities, while a small portion were unaware of the subject. The Australian National University (n.d.) categorizes types of disabilities as visual impairments, autism spectrum disorders, hearing impairments, intellectual disabilities, and physical disabilities. Similarly, the United Nations Secretary for the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (2007) reports these categories generally as physical, mental, intellectual, or sensory disabilities. Additionally, the Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities, Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment, India (2017) classifies disabilities into primary categories of physical, mental, and those caused by various conditions. In this context, comparing the participants' responses reveals that the majority are aware of the types of disabilities. This suggests that increasing and expanding awareness efforts about disabilities to reach individuals of all ages could play a role in further improving this awareness rate.

Participants' answers for the question about the benefits of sports for the disabled were examined, all participants have been seen to have a positive approach in terms of benefits, and the majority talk about cognitive and social gains. And also, the participants were asked the question, "If you had a disabled child or relative, would you direct them to sports?", all participants answered yes. According to Figure 4, differences were determined in the answers. All participants gave answers related to directing a disabled child to sports. This question was also answered similarly on the basis of physical and social development, and a small portion also touched on mental development. When the studies are examined, sports can help people with disabilities learn important social skills, gain independence, communicate and cooperate effectively, respect others, and strengthen them physically and mentally and increase their independence (United Nations, 2020). Kızar et al., (2015) reported that sports contribute to social adaptation and psychological well-being, reducing loneliness levels. Vanderstraeten and Oomen (2010) reported that sports provide physical benefits, minimize the diseases that disabled individuals may encounter due to sedentary living conditions, create a state of psychological well-being, and contribute to disabled individuals' high self-confidence by providing social benefits. In their study, Darcy and Dowse (2013) concluded that participation in sports provides significant social benefits for individuals with disabilities, particularly in terms of fostering a sense of belonging and building friendships. In his study with parents of children with disabilities, İlhan (2009) reported that the parents emphasized that physical education and sports should be an integral part of special education and these activities provide various benefits for their children. Güngör, Yılmaz and İlhan (2019) stated that sports provide physical, psychological and social benefits to individuals with special needs, thus improving their quality of life. Considering the study results, it is seen that sports provide multifaceted benefits to disabled individuals, and parental opinions are also on the same denominator with these results.

When parents were asked whether they wanted their children or relatives to work with disabled individuals, most of the participants answered "yes". In communities where family structure and opinions have important tendencies in career planning like in Türkiye, family perspectives are seen as important as individuals' own opinions. When the literature is

reviewed, families have a significant role in shaping their children's future. In other words, the participants may have a say in their children's choices. Erme (2014) in his study, concluded that family factors are decisive in the career choices of individuals. Hariko and Anggriana (2019) stated that parents play a significant role to support for the development of their career. Pascariati and Ali (2022) also indicates that family has effects on decisions of their children's future plans. Even though individuals experience some directions in the family, they still have their own ideas and these ideas may be in the same way with these directions or not. These ideas may relate to their educational status. Stewart (1990) argued in his study with students who took adapted physical education courses that students developed positive attitudes towards working with disabled individuals. Similarly, in their study with preservice physical education teachers, Özer and Süngü (2016) stated that the attitudes of students towards sports in the disabled increased positively as a result of the practices carried out by the students who took the "Physical Education and Sports Course for the Disabled". Sniatecki, Perry, and Snell (2015) reported in their study examining faculty attitudes toward students with disabilities that the majority of faculty members exhibited positive attitudes and they were also highly interested in professional development opportunities such as what to do/not to do with disabilities, assistance in the classroom, assistance with accommodations, and selection of best practices for specific disability groups in order to work more effectively with students with disabilities. In their study with undergraduate students, Hergenrather and Rhodes (2007) observed that participants' attitudes towards individuals with disabilities varied depending on social contexts such as work life, marriage, and dating. The participants expressed comfort in socializing with a colleague with a disability in the workplace and indicated that they would marry a loved one even if that person had a disability. All in all, these studies highlight that people who grow up in a family where they experience positive directions and who are equipped with knowledge about individuals with disabilities, may have positive tendencies to work with the disabled.

Finally, the answers to the question about education or employment opportunities in sports for individuals with disabilities were examined. In this regard, the Ministry of Family and Social Services organizes various workshops, seminars and projects within the framework of the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities (Ministry of Family and Social Services, n.d.), and local governments also make some arrangements for the participation of individuals with disabilities in social life (Emini & Ayaz, 2019). Sørensen and Kahrs (2006) stated that sport governing bodies are increasingly encouraging the inclusion of people with disabilities in sports, and Kitchin and Howe (2014) suggested that incentives should be provided for greater involvement of people with disabilities in such activities rather than just disability-specific sports organizations. Harada and Siperstein (2009) argued that public awareness campaigns should be organized to inform community members about the contributions of sports to individuals with disabilities. Block and Obrusnikova (2007) stated that more investments should be made to enable disabled individuals to better benefit from sports facilities. As a result of their study, Fitzgerald and Stride (2012) stated that in order for disabled individuals to benefit more from sports, employing candidates who have received training in this field is essential for a successful process. Shapiro and Malone (2016) also advocated the employment of specialized staff and reported that training in sports for the disabled would also increase success in terms of safety and effective guidance. Martin (2013); Rimmer, Wang and Smith (2008) emphasize that in order for disabled individuals to benefit maximum from sports, sports educators must work with high disability awareness and be open to new methods and practices. While the study results are similar to each other, it is seen that the issue of sports education and employment

for sport for the disabled is open to development and more importance should be given to this area.

In conclusion, when participants' perspectives towards sports for people with disabilities were evaluated, the vast majority were aware of the concept and types of disability. Many also identified numerous physical and social benefits of sport for disabled individuals. Participants expressed support for their children or relatives working with disabled people and agreed that employment in this field should be increased. They recognized the general benefits of active living and its positive effects on people with disabilities, and although they felt current initiatives and awareness-raising events were useful, they believed such efforts should be expanded to reach wider audiences. Complementing these findings, contemporary research underscores a biopsychosocial view of disability that situates functional limitations in a dynamic interplay with environmental barriers (WHO, 2001). Systematic reviews show that well-structured physical-activity programmes produce meaningful gains in self-efficacy, social participation and mood among people with disabilities (Shields et al., 2012; Jaarsma et al., 2014b). Autonomy-supportive contexts further enhance adherence (Ryan & Deci, 2000), and service-learning that brings sport-science students into sustained contact with disabled athletes increases their likelihood of pursuing inclusive coaching careers (Case et al., 2020). These converging lines of evidence validate participants' calls for expanded awareness initiatives, targeted professional training and dedicated employment pathways to translate positive parental attitudes into accessible, sustainable sport opportunities for all.

When evaluating the research results, it is suggested that the study be applied to a broader sample group, comparisons be made with parents of university students from different regions, and various socio-cultural factors such as place of residence and income level be included in the study to gain a deeper understanding of the background of parents' opinions. In addition, for families with lower awareness of disabled individuals, their attention can be drawn to this issue by organizing various conferences, trainings and events through various collaborations between local governments and non-governmental organizations. Virtual reality simulations, inviting famous disabled athletes to events to raise awareness, and social awareness activities where disabled and non-disabled individuals can do sports together, such as wheelchair basketball, can be suggested to help people understand the difficulties experienced by disabled individuals.

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