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### Sports Character and Criminal Behaviors Among High School Athletes

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**Sports Character and Criminal Behaviors Among High School Athletes****Fatma Şeyda Yıldız<sup>1</sup>, Mehtap Yıldız<sup>2</sup>****ARTICLE INFORMATION**

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**Volume:** 6, No: 1**Pages:** 17-34**ABSTRACT**

The aim of this study is to investigate the correlation between sports characters and criminal behaviors of high school students who play sports according to certain demographic variables. The sample of this survey model consists of 427 student-athletes determined through simple random sampling from high school students in Konya province during the 2019-2020 Academic Year. The "Demographic Information Form", the "Sport Character Scale (SCS)", the "Improper Behavior Scale (IBS)" were used in the study. Descriptive statistics, t-test, one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA), Tukey HSD test, and Pearson Moment Correlation Coefficient were employed in the data analysis. The study results revealed a significant correlation between the sub-dimensions of the Improper Behavior Scale and variables such as grade level, gender, living with parents status, and school disciplinary status. In addition, a significant correlation was found between the sub-dimensions of the Sport Character Scale and grade level, gender, mother's occupation, parents living together status, doing team/individual sports, and school disciplinary status. A significant correlation was found between the sub-dimensions of the Sports Character Scale and the sub-dimensions of the Improper Behavior Scale. As a result of the regression analysis, it was determined that the sub-dimensions of honesty, antisocial, sportsmanship and justice had a significant effect on the sub-dimensions of the Improper Behavior Scale. It was determined that the independent variable of compassion did not have a significant effect on the sub-dimensions of the Improper Behavior Scale. It has been concluded that sports increase the level of honesty, compassion, sportsmanship and justice that constitute the character of sports and prevent irregular behavior in schools. Character education programs can be organized for the character development of athletes, and awareness training such as drama, theater, and short films can be organized for students to prevent criminal behavior in schools.

**Keywords:** Crime, Improper Behavior, Sports, Sports Character.

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## INTRODUCTION

It has been well recognized that sports is a medium for learning certain values such as sportspersonship, fairness, team loyalty, teamwork, collaboration with teammates, consultation, and problem-solving in ethical dilemmas (Jang, 2013). As sports activities promote individual responsibility, they can help individuals implement these adopted responsibilities, and these activities redirect individuals toward constructive endeavors rather than aggressive behaviors. Furthermore, sports activities play a significant role in personality and moral development, enabling individuals with physical and sports education to behave consistently with social values (Tazegül, 2014).

From a social perspective, the notion of character is associated with values such as sacrifice, loyalty, good citizenship, commitment, and teamwork among sports managers, trainers, and sports people. Moreover, sports scientists define character from an ethical point of view as the ability to adopt values such as impartiality, honesty, fairness, truthfulness, and justice in one's behavior (Camire & Trudel, 2010). While the positive effects of sports on societies and character have been highlighted continually, it is essential to mention that when personal decision-making processes come into play, there are also some moral shortcomings and negative situations in this field (Görgüt & Tuncel, 2017).

An individual's character develops naturally and consciously and unconsciously within his/her social environment such as family, school, and external surroundings. An individual can find the motivation and dynamism required to develop his/her character within the national, cultural, and religious values of the society in which s/he lives, together with his/her own conscience. Based on this dynamism, transformation of these values into virtues in individual's own selves depends on his/her personal preferences. In this sense, in order for individuals' moral behaviors to become a character trait, individuals should express these behaviors based on their decisions and preferences, consistently and coherently, everywhere and at all times (Kanger, 2007).

Sports are accepted as the most important and most appropriate method in the development and education of children. Because the characteristics and principles of sports, which are accepted as a term of morality, also determine morality or way of life. The idea that sports build character has been around for centuries, and the word character is often used synonymously with sportsmanship, fair play, or morality in sports. At the same time, sport and character are also associated with the ability of an individual to adopt values such as impartiality, honesty, integrity and justice in their behavior (Camire & Trudel, 2010; Aydoğan, Özyürek & Akduman, 2015; Erdemli, 2016; İmamalı & Ünver, 2018; Weiss, Smith, & Stuntz, 2008).

The period of high school is a crucial phase in the formation of an individual's personality. It is believed that teenagers' experiencing identity crises and acquiring negative habits during this period will negatively impact their adulthood. Therefore, sports activities play a central role in keeping individuals away from harmful habits, providing them with self-confidence, self-control, and many other positive qualities, and thus have a significant role in character development. The lack of research examining the relationship between sports and criminal behavior, especially during adolescence when personality begins to develop, and the fact that previous research has been conducted on sports character and athlete psychology increases the importance of this research. Within this context, the aim of this study is to investigate the correlation between sports characters and criminal behaviors of high school students.

Depending on this general purpose, the following questions will be answered. These are:

1. Do the sports characteristics of high school students who do sports differ according to the students' gender, grade level, living with parents status, and school disciplinary status?
2. Do the criminal behaviors of high school students who participate in sports differ according to the students' gender, grade level, living with parents status, and school disciplinary status?
3. Is there a significant relationship between the sports character and improper behavior of high school students who participate in sports?

## METHOD

### Research Model

This study adopts a descriptive survey model that examines the sports characters and criminal behavior of high school students who play sports according to certain demographic variables. In the study, descriptive method, one of the quantitative research methods, was used and evaluated with the relational screening model, one of the general screening models. Relational screening models aim to determine the change and degree between two or more variables (Karasar, 2003; Büyüköztürk et al., 2008).

### Population and Sample of the Study

The population of this study consists of 3006 student-athletes who have a license among the 65813 students studying in high schools in Konya province during the 2019-2020 Academic Year. These numbers were reached through data received from the Konya Provincial Directorate of National Education and the Konya Provincial Directorate of Youth and Sports. The sample of the study was determined through simple random sampling from the population (Büyüköztürk et al., 2008) and involved 427 licensed student-athletes. Among the participants, 157 were female, and 270 were male. Ural and Kılıç (2005) stated that 375 people would be sufficient for a 0.05 tolerance error in selecting a sample from a universe of 11,000 people.

### Data Collection Tools

In order to collect the data, the researcher used the "Demographic Information Form" developed by the researchers, the "Sport Character Scale (SCS)" developed by Jang (2013) and translated into Turkish by Görgüt and Tuncel (2017), and the "Improper Behavior Scale (IBS)" developed by Kaner (2001).

**Sport Character Scale (SCS):** The validity and reliability study of the SCS was conducted with a total of 693 students, 123 of whom were high school students and 570 were university students. The scale, consisting of 27 items in a five-point Likert type, take places five sub-dimensions: honesty, antisocial, compassion, sportsmanship and justice. The confirmatory factor analysis of the scale determined that the fit indices ( $\chi^2/df= 3.97$ , GFI= 0.88, AGFI= 0.86, CFI= 0.97, NNFI = 0.96, NFI = 0.95, IFI= 0.97, RFI= 0.95, RMR= 0.05, SRMR= 0.05, RMSEA= 0.06) were at perfect and acceptable fit levels. For reliability, split-half reliability method was used. While the total internal consistency of the scale was 0.90, split-half test reliability was determined as 0.93. The internal consistency and split-half reliability results of the sub-dimensions were determined as 0.81/0.85 for the honesty sub-dimension, 0.78/0.79 for the antisocial sub-dimension, 0.76/0.78 for the compassion sub-dimension, 0.78/0.76 for the sportsmanship sub-dimension and 0.84/0.82 for the justice sub-dimension (Görgüt and Tuncel, 2017).

**Improper Behavior Scale (IBS):** IBS was developed by Kaner (2001) to identify behaviors that are not reflected in official institutions among young people, but many of which would be considered crimes if they were caught and could bring the young person into conflict with the law. The validity and reliability study of the IBS was conducted with 896 students between the

ages of 15 and 18. IBS is a four-point Likert-type scale consisting of 9 sub-dimensions and 38 items. The Cronbach alpha reliability coefficient of the scale was found to be 0.93, and the split-half reliability coefficient calculated with the Spearman-Brown formula was found to be 0.89. The sub-dimensions of the scale are status offense and violating school rules, theft, inability to control anger and fighting, petty theft, attention-seeking vandalism, status offense and deceiving others, drug and violence offenses, damaging buildings, and cheating in exams. The scale options are determined as “never” (1 point), “once or twice” (2 points), “three or four times” (3 points), “five or more” (4 points). Getting a high score on the scale indicates that there are many undesirable behaviors (Kaner, 2001).

### Data analysis

The skewness and kurtosis values of the data indicated that they had a normal distribution within the range of -1.5 to +1.5 (Tabachnick, Fidell, & Ullman, 2007).

Due to the presence of a sufficient number of groups for parametric tests (at least 3 groups and 15 participants in each group) in demographic variables such as grade level, number of siblings, mother's educational status, father's educational status, mother's occupation, father's occupation, and family income, one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) was employed, and Tukey HSD test was used to determine which groups showed significant differences. On the other hand, an independent samples t-test conducted for gender, parents living together status, and school disciplinary status due to the presence of 2 groups and at least 15 participants in each group (Büyüköztürk, 2021). In addition, SPSS 21 was used for data analysis, the significance level was set at 0.05, and the confidence interval for results was considered as 95%.

## FINDINGS

This section presents the results of the correlation between the sub-dimensions of the SCS and IBS which were analyzed according to the students' demographic profiles.

**Table 1**

*Independent Samples t-Test Results for the Sub-Dimensions of the Sportsmanship Character Scale (SCS) by Gender*

| Sub-dimension | Gender | n   | $\bar{X}$ | Sd   | t    | p     |
|---------------|--------|-----|-----------|------|------|-------|
| Honesty       | Female | 157 | 4,03      | ,748 | 1,58 | ,114  |
|               | Male   | 270 | 3,91      | ,843 |      |       |
| Antisocial    | Female | 157 | 4,15      | ,775 | 4,69 | ,000* |
|               | Male   | 270 | 3,72      | 1,11 |      |       |
| Compassion    | Female | 157 | 4,01      | ,785 | ,719 | ,473  |
|               | Male   | 270 | 3,95      | ,895 |      |       |
| Sportsmanship | Female | 157 | 4,25      | ,835 | ,995 | ,320  |
|               | Male   | 270 | 4,16      | 1,03 |      |       |
| Justice       | Female | 157 | 4,20      | ,816 | 2,29 | ,022* |
|               | Male   | 270 | 3,99      | 1,04 |      |       |

\*= p<0,05

According to the findings in Table 1, significant differences were found between males and females in the sub-dimensions of the SCS, namely antisocial and justice ( $p < .05$ ). The average scores of females in the antisocial ( $M=4.15$ ) and justice ( $M=4.20$ ) sub-dimensions were significantly higher than those of males in the antisocial ( $M=3.72$ ) and justice ( $M=3.99$ ) sub-dimensions ( $p < .05$ ).

**Table 2***Independent Samples t-Test Results for the Sub-Dimensions of the IBS Scale by Gender*

| Sub-dimension                             | Gender | n   | $\bar{X}$ | Sd   | t     | p     |
|---|--------|-----|-----------|------|-------|-------|
| Status offense and violating school rules | Female | 157 | 1,42      | ,486 | -3,24 | ,001* |
|   | Male   | 270 | 1,61      | ,708 |       |       |
| Theft                                     | Female | 157 | 1,07      | ,198 | -4,71 | ,000* |
|   | Male   | 270 | 1,23      | ,515 |       |       |
| Inability to control anger and fighting   | Female | 157 | 1,45      | ,538 | -3,61 | ,000* |
|   | Male   | 270 | 1,68      | ,778 |       |       |
| Petty theft                               | Female | 157 | 1,13      | ,253 | -4,44 | ,000* |
|   | Male   | 270 | 1,31      | ,560 |       |       |
| Attention-seeking vandalism               | Female | 157 | 1,11      | ,240 | -3,96 | ,000* |
|   | Male   | 270 | 1,27      | ,579 |       |       |
| Status offense and deceiving others       | Female | 157 | 1,25      | ,383 | -8,75 | ,000* |
|   | Male   | 270 | 1,75      | ,788 |       |       |
| Drug and violence offenses                | Female | 157 | 1,09      | ,282 | -4,23 | ,000* |
|   | Male   | 270 | 1,27      | ,607 |       |       |
| Damaging buildings                        | Female | 157 | 1,09      | ,272 | -3,88 | ,000* |
|   | Male   | 270 | 1,26      | ,601 |       |       |
| Cheating in exams                         | Female | 157 | 2,28      | 1,06 | -,495 | ,621  |
|   | Male   | 270 | 2,33      | 1,12 |       |       |

\*= $p < 0,05$ 

Table 2 indicates that there were significant differences in the sub-dimensions of the IBS, specifically status offense and violating school rules, theft, inability to control anger and fighting, petty theft, attention-seeking vandalism, status offense and deceiving others, drug and violence offenses, and damaging buildings ( $p < .05$ ). It was found that males had higher levels of such improper behaviors compared to females. On the other hand, no significant difference was found in the sub-dimension of cheating in exams ( $p > .05$ ).

**Table 3***ANOVA Results for the Sub-Dimensions of the Sportsmanship Character Scale (SCS) by Grade Level*

| Sub-dimension | Grade Level | n   | $\bar{X}$ | Sd   | F    | p     | Difference        |
|---------------|-------------|-----|-----------|------|------|-------|-------------------|
| Honesty       | A Grade 9   | 101 | 4,17      | ,605 | 3,55 | ,014* | A>C<br>A>D        |
|               | B Grade 10  | 100 | 3,95      | ,801 |      |       |                   |
|               | C Grade 11  | 106 | 3,89      | ,837 |      |       |                   |
|               | D Grade 12  | 120 | 3,83      | ,914 |      |       |                   |
| Antisocial    | A Grade 9   | 101 | 3,98      | 1,11 | ,785 | ,503  |                   |
|               | B Grade 10  | 100 | 3,79      | ,983 |      |       |                   |
|               | C Grade 11  | 106 | 3,81      | 1,09 |      |       |                   |
|               | D Grade 12  | 120 | 3,93      | ,904 |      |       |                   |
| Compassion    | A Grade 9   | 101 | 4,17      | ,671 | 2,43 | ,065  |                   |
|               | B Grade 10  | 100 | 3,88      | ,917 |      |       |                   |
|               | C Grade 11  | 106 | 3,94      | ,885 |      |       |                   |
|               | D Grade 12  | 120 | 3,91      | ,898 |      |       |                   |
| Sportsmanship | A Grade 9   | 101 | 4,50      | ,615 | 4,52 | ,004* | A>B<br>A>C<br>A>D |
|               | B Grade 10  | 100 | 4,13      | 1,07 |      |       |                   |
|               | C Grade 11  | 106 | 4,12      | 1,08 |      |       |                   |
|               | D Grade 12  | 120 | 4,06      | ,968 |      |       |                   |

|         |   |          |     |      |      |      |       |                   |
|---------|---|----------|-----|------|------|------|-------|-------------------|
| Justice | A | Grade 9  | 101 | 4,36 | ,760 | 4,27 | ,005* | A>B<br>A>C<br>A>D |
|         | B | Grade 10 | 100 | 3,96 | 1,05 |      |       |                   |
|         | C | Grade 11 | 106 | 4,02 | 1,00 |      |       |                   |
|         | D | Grade 12 | 120 | 3,95 | ,976 |      |       |                   |

Note. A = Grade 9, B = Grade 10, C = Grade 11, D = Grade 12. \*p < .05

As displayed in Table 3, significant differences were seen among groups in the dimensions of honesty, sportsmanship, and justice in the SCS ( $p < .05$ ). In order to determine between which groups this difference existed, a post hoc (Tukey) test was performed. The honesty sub-dimension scores of 9th graders ( $M=4.17$ ) were higher than those of 11th graders ( $M=3.89$ ) and 12th graders ( $M=3.83$ ). Similarly, the sportsmanship ( $M=4.50$ ) and justice ( $M=4.36$ ) sub-dimension scores of 9th graders were higher than the sportsmanship ( $M=4.13$ ;  $M=4.12$ ;  $M=4.06$ ) and justice ( $M=3.96$ ;  $M=4.02$ ;  $M=3.95$ ) sub-dimension scores of 10th, 11th, and 12th graders.

**Table 4**

*ANOVA Results for the Sub-Dimensions of the Inappropriate Behavior Scale (IBS) According to Grade Level*

| Sub-dimension                             | Grade Level | n   | $\bar{X}$ | Sd   | F    | p     | Difference        |
|---|-------------|-----|-----------|------|------|-------|-------------------|
| Status offense and violating school rules | A Grade 9   | 101 | 1,30      | ,516 | 6,60 | ,000* | A<B<br>A<C<br>A<D |
|   | B Grade 10  | 100 | 1,60      | ,694 |      |       |                   |
|   | C Grade 11  | 106 | 1,61      | ,712 |      |       |                   |
|   | D Grade 12  | 120 | 1,63      | ,576 |      |       |                   |
| Theft                                     | A Grade 9   | 101 | 1,09      | ,275 | 1,60 | ,187  |                   |
|   | B Grade 10  | 100 | 1,21      | ,444 |      |       |                   |
|   | C Grade 11  | 106 | 1,20      | ,548 |      |       |                   |
|   | D Grade 12  | 120 | 1,17      | ,419 |      |       |                   |
| Inability to control anger and fighting   | A Grade 9   | 101 | 1,56      | ,686 | 1,11 | ,345  |                   |
|   | B Grade 10  | 100 | 1,70      | ,751 |      |       |                   |
|   | C Grade 11  | 106 | 1,57      | ,771 |      |       |                   |
|   | D Grade 12  | 120 | 1,55      | ,623 |      |       |                   |
| Petty theft                               | A Grade 9   | 101 | 1,18      | ,402 | ,758 | ,518  |                   |
|   | B Grade 10  | 100 | 1,27      | ,479 |      |       |                   |
|   | C Grade 11  | 106 | 1,27      | ,543 |      |       |                   |
|   | D Grade 12  | 120 | 1,26      | ,477 |      |       |                   |
| Attention-seeking vandalism               | A Grade 9   | 101 | 1,19      | ,471 | ,393 | ,758  |                   |
|   | B Grade 10  | 100 | 1,18      | ,414 |      |       |                   |
|   | C Grade 11  | 106 | 1,25      | ,603 |      |       |                   |
|   | D Grade 12  | 120 | 1,22      | ,451 |      |       |                   |
| Status offense and deceiving others       | A Grade 9   | 101 | 1,48      | ,659 | 2,97 | ,031* | A<B<br>D<B        |
|   | B Grade 10  | 100 | 1,74      | ,783 |      |       |                   |
|   | C Grade 11  | 106 | 1,58      | ,735 |      |       |                   |
|   | D Grade 12  | 120 | 1,49      | ,645 |      |       |                   |
| Drug and violence offenses                | A Grade 9   | 101 | 1,13      | ,402 | 1,27 | ,283  |                   |
|   | B Grade 10  | 100 | 1,22      | ,570 |      |       |                   |
|   | C Grade 11  | 106 | 1,27      | ,625 |      |       |                   |
|   | D Grade 12  | 120 | 1,21      | ,452 |      |       |                   |
| Damaging buildings                        | A Grade 9   | 101 | 1,17      | ,492 | ,224 | ,880  |                   |
|   | B Grade 10  | 100 | 1,19      | ,476 |      |       |                   |
|   | C Grade 11  | 106 | 1,19      | ,533 |      |       |                   |
|   | D Grade 12  | 120 | 1,22      | ,541 |      |       |                   |
|   | A Grade 9   | 101 | 1,99      | 1,02 |      |       |                   |

|                   |   |          |     |      |      |      |       |     |
|-------------------|---|----------|-----|------|------|------|-------|-----|
|                   | B | Grade 10 | 100 | 2,49 | 1,10 |      |       |     |
| Cheating in exams | C | Grade 11 | 106 | 2,32 | 1,14 | 4,19 | ,006* | A<B |
|                   | D | Grade 12 | 120 | 2,42 | 1,08 |      |       | A<D |

Note. A = Grade 9, B = Grade 10, C = Grade 11, D = Grade 12. \* $p < .05$

According to the findings in Table 4, significant differences were found among groups in the sub-dimensions of status offense and violating school rules, status offense and deceiving others, and cheating in exams ( $p < .05$ ). A post hoc (Tukey) test was employed to determine between which groups this difference was. The status offense and violating school rules sub-dimension scores of 9th graders ( $M=1.30$ ) were lower than those of 10th ( $M=1.60$ ), 11th ( $M=1.61$ ), and 12th graders ( $M=1.63$ ). The status offense and deceiving others sub-dimension scores of 10th graders ( $M=1.74$ ) were higher than those of 9th ( $M=1.48$ ) and 12th graders ( $M=1.49$ ). In addition, the cheating in exams sub-dimension scores of 9th graders ( $M=1.99$ ) were lower than those of 10th ( $M=2.49$ ) and 12th graders ( $M=2.42$ ). It was observed that while 9th graders exhibited fewer status offense and violating school rules and cheating in exams behaviors compared to higher-grade students, 10th graders performed more status offense and deceiving others behavior.

**Table 5**

*t-Test Results of the SCS Sub-Dimensions Based on Living with Parents Status*

| Sub-dimension | Parents Living Together | n   | $\bar{X}$ | Sd   | t     | p     |
|---------------|-------------------------|-----|-----------|------|-------|-------|
| Honesty       | Parents live together   | 381 | 3,96      | ,798 | ,888  | ,375  |
|               | Parents live separately | 44  | 3,85      | ,926 |       |       |
| Antisocial    | Parents live together   | 381 | 3,86      | 1,01 | -,495 | ,621  |
|               | Parents live separately | 44  | 3,95      | 1,07 |       |       |
| Compassion    | Parents live together   | 381 | 4,01      | ,810 | 2,25  | ,029* |
|               | Parents live separately | 44  | 3,61      | 1,13 |       |       |
| Sportsmanship | Parents live together   | 381 | 4,23      | ,936 | 2,00  | ,051  |
|               | Parents live separately | 44  | 3,86      | 1,18 |       |       |
| Justice       | Parents live together   | 381 | 4,08      | ,942 | ,736  | ,465  |
|               | Parents live separately | 44  | 3,94      | 1,19 |       |       |

\* $p < .05$

Table 5 shows that there was a significant difference among groups in the sub-dimension of compassion ( $p < .05$ ). The compassion sub-dimension mean score of students whose parents live together ( $M=4.01$ ) was significantly higher than those of students whose parents live separately ( $M=3.61$ ).

**Table 6**

*t-Test Results of the IBS Sub-Dimensions Based on Living with Parents Status*

| Sub-dimension                             | Parents Living Together | n   | $\bar{X}$ | Sd   | t     | p     |
|---|-------------------------|-----|-----------|------|-------|-------|
| Status offense and violating school rules | Parents live together   | 381 | 1,53      | ,642 | -,805 | ,421  |
|   | Parents live separately | 44  | 1,62      | ,652 |       |       |
| Theft                                     | Parents live together   | 381 | 1,17      | ,436 | ,164  | ,870  |
|   | Parents live separately | 44  | 1,16      | ,434 |       |       |
| Inability to control anger and fighting   | Parents live together   | 381 | 1,57      | ,694 | -2,13 | ,034* |
|   | Parents live separately | 44  | 1,81      | ,793 |       |       |
| Petty theft                               | Parents live together   | 381 | 1,24      | ,469 | -,157 | ,875  |
|   | Parents live separately | 44  | 1,26      | ,567 |       |       |
| Attention-seeking vandalism               | Parents live together   | 381 | 1,21      | ,484 | -,587 | ,557  |
|   | Parents live separately | 44  | 1,25      | ,537 |       |       |



|                                     |                         |     |      |      |       |      |
|-------------------------------------|-------------------------|-----|------|------|-------|------|
| Status offense and deceiving others | Parents live together   | 381 | 1,55 | ,702 | -1,01 | ,309 |
|                                     | Parents live separately | 44  | 1,67 | ,754 |       |      |
| Drug and violence offenses          | Parents live together   | 381 | 1,20 | ,522 | -1,01 | ,311 |
|                                     | Parents live separately | 44  | 1,28 | ,506 |       |      |
| Damaging buildings                  | Parents live together   | 381 | 1,19 | ,506 | -,822 | ,412 |
|                                     | Parents live separately | 44  | 1,26 | ,565 |       |      |
| Cheating in exams                   | Parents live together   | 381 | 2,31 | 1,22 | -1,12 | ,261 |
|                                     | Parents live separately | 44  | 2,53 | 1,15 |       |      |

\*p < .05

As presented in Table 6, a significant difference was identified among groups in the sub-dimensions of inability to control anger and fighting ( $p < .05$ ). The inability to control anger and fighting sub-dimensions mean score of students whose parents live together ( $M=1.57$ ) was lower than those of students with separated parents ( $M=1.81$ ). It was found that students with separated parents show more inability to control anger and fighting behavior compared to students whose parents live together.

**Table 7**

*t-Test Results of the SCS Sub-Dimensions Based on School Disciplinary Status*

| Sub-dimension | Disciplinary Status | n   | $\bar{X}$ | Sd   | t     | p     |
|---------------|---------------------|-----|-----------|------|-------|-------|
| Honesty       | Yes                 | 41  | 3,57      | 1,00 | -2,62 | ,012* |
|               | No                  | 386 | 3,99      | ,779 |       |       |
| Antisocial    | Yes                 | 41  | 3,44      | 1,26 | -2,37 | ,022* |
|               | No                  | 386 | 3,92      | ,983 |       |       |
| Compassion    | Yes                 | 41  | 3,91      | ,989 | -,481 | ,631  |
|               | No                  | 386 | 3,98      | ,841 |       |       |
| Sportsmanship | Yes                 | 41  | 3,82      | 1,27 | -2,03 | ,047* |
|               | No                  | 386 | 4,23      | ,923 |       |       |
| Justice       | Yes                 | 41  | 3,73      | 1,20 | -1,94 | ,058  |
|               | No                  | 386 | 4,10      | ,936 |       |       |

\*p < .05

As it is presented in Table 7, regarding the honesty sub-dimension, no significant difference was found between students who performed disciplinary actions in the school and students who did not have disciplinary actions ( $p < .05$ ). The honesty ( $M=3.57$ ), antisocial ( $M=3.44$ ), and sportsmanship ( $M=3.82$ ) sub-dimension scores of students who had disciplinary actions in the school were significantly lower than the honesty ( $M=3.99$ ), antisocial ( $M=3.92$ ), and sportsmanship ( $M=4.23$ ) sub-dimension scores of students who did not perform disciplinary actions in the school.

**Table 8**

*t-Test Results of the IBS Sub-Dimensions Based on School Disciplinary Status*

| Sub-dimension                             | Disciplinary Status | n   | $\bar{X}$ | Sd   | t    | p     |
|---|---------------------|-----|-----------|------|------|-------|
| Status offense and violating school rules | Yes                 | 41  | 1,90      | ,901 | 2,78 | ,008* |
|   | No                  | 386 | 1,50      | ,596 |      |       |
| Theft                                     | Yes                 | 41  | 1,35      | ,703 | 1,76 | ,086  |
|   | No                  | 386 | 1,15      | ,392 |      |       |
| Inability to control anger and fighting   | Yes                 | 41  | 1,92      | ,839 | 2,66 | ,011* |
|   | No                  | 386 | 1,56      | ,684 |      |       |
| Petty theft                               | Yes                 | 41  | 1,40      | ,665 | 1,58 | ,121  |
|   | No                  | 386 | 1,23      | ,452 |      |       |

|                                     |     |     |      |      |      |       |
|-------------------------------------|-----|-----|------|------|------|-------|
| Attention-seeking vandalism         | Yes | 41  | 1,49 | ,782 | 2,49 | ,016* |
|                                     | No  | 386 | 1,18 | ,438 |      |       |
| Status offense and deceiving others | Yes | 41  | 2,12 | ,820 | 4,57 | ,000* |
|                                     | No  | 386 | 1,51 | ,673 |      |       |
| Drug and violence offenses          | Yes | 41  | 1,55 | ,845 | 2,81 | ,007* |
|                                     | No  | 386 | 1,17 | ,459 |      |       |
| Damaging buildings                  | Yes | 41  | 1,31 | ,756 | 1,07 | ,290  |
|                                     | No  | 386 | 1,18 | ,478 |      |       |
| Cheating in exams                   | Yes | 41  | 2,51 | 1,20 | ,959 | ,338  |
|                                     | No  | 386 | 2,31 | 1,22 |      |       |

\*p < .05

According to the findings in Table 8, significant differences were observed among groups in the sub-dimensions of status offense and violating school rules, inability to control anger and fighting, attention-seeking vandalism, status offense and deceiving others, drug and violence offenses ( $p < .05$ ). The status offense and violating school rules ( $M=1.90$ ), inability to control anger and fighting ( $M=1.92$ ), attention-seeking vandalism ( $M=1.49$ ), status offense and deceiving others ( $M=2.12$ ), drug and violence offenses ( $M=1.55$ ) sub-dimension mean scores of students who had disciplinary actions in the school were higher than the status offense and violating school rules ( $M=1.50$ ), inability to control anger and fighting ( $M=1.56$ ), attention-seeking vandalism ( $M=1.18$ ), status offense and deceiving others ( $M=1.51$ ), drug and violence offense ( $M=1.17$ ) sub-dimension mean scores of students who did not have disciplinary actions in the school. It was clear that students having disciplinary actions in the school showed more rule-violating behaviors.

**Table 9**

*Pearson Correlation Coefficients Between the Sub-Dimensions of the Sportsmanship Character Scale (SCS) and the Inappropriate Behavior Scale (IBS)*

|   | Honesty  | Antisocial | Compassion | Sportsmanship | Justice |
|---|----------|------------|------------|---------------|---------|
| Status offense and violating school rules | r ,298** | ,181**     | ,171**     | ,222**        | ,225**  |
| Theft                                     | r ,256** | ,249**     | ,177**     | ,163**        | ,164**  |
| Inability to control anger and fighting   | r ,260** | ,204**     | ,167**     | ,148**        | ,151**  |
| Petty theft                               | r ,324** | ,184**     | ,238**     | ,231**        | ,221**  |
| Attention-seeking vandalism               | r ,256** | ,159**     | ,163**     | ,154**        | ,166**  |
| Status offense and deceiving others       | r ,257** | ,242**     | ,180**     | ,156**        | ,184**  |
| Drug and violence offenses                | r ,363** | ,236**     | ,290**     | ,241**        | ,256**  |
| Damaging buildings                        | r ,277** | ,280**     | ,317**     | ,281**        | ,217**  |
| Cheating in exams                         | r ,101   | ,142**     | -,015      | -,024         | ,012    |

\*\*p < .01

Table 9 depicts that the SCS honesty sub-dimension had a weak significant correlation with these IBS sub-dimensions; status offense and violating school rules ( $r=.298$ ), theft ( $r=.256$ ), inability to control anger and fighting ( $r=.260$ ), attention-seeking vandalism ( $r=.256$ ), status offense and deceiving others ( $r=.257$ ), damaging buildings ( $r=.277$ ). Likewise, the honesty sub-dimension of SCS showed a weak significant correlation with petty theft ( $r=.324$ ) and drug and violence offenses ( $r=.363$ ) sub-dimensions.

The antisocial sub-dimension of the SCS had a very weak significant correlation with these IBS dimensions; status offense and violating school rules ( $r=.181$ ), theft ( $r=.249$ ), inability to control anger and fighting ( $r=.204$ ), petty theft ( $r=.184$ ), attention-seeking vandalism ( $r=.159$ ), status offense and deceiving others ( $r=.242$ ), drug and violence offenses ( $r=.236$ ), and cheating in exams ( $r=.142$ ). Similarly, there was a weak significant correlation between the

antisocial sub-dimension of the SCS and the damaging buildings sub-dimension of the IBS ( $r=.280$ ).

The compassion sub-dimension of the SCS had a very weak significant correlation with the IBS sub-dimensions, including status offense and violating school rules ( $r=.171$ ), theft ( $r=.177$ ), inability to control anger and fighting ( $r=.167$ ), petty theft ( $r=.238$ ), attention-seeking vandalism ( $r=.163$ ), status offense and deceiving others ( $r=.180$ ), drug and violence offenses ( $r=.290$ ), and damaging buildings ( $r=.317$ ).

It was found that there was a very weak significant correlation between the sportsmanship sub-dimension of the SCS and the IBS sub-dimensions, including status offense and violating school rules ( $r=.222$ ), theft ( $r=.163$ ), inability to control anger and fighting ( $r=.148$ ), petty theft ( $r=.231$ ), attention-seeking vandalism ( $r=.154$ ), status offense and deceiving others ( $r=.156$ ), drug and violence offenses ( $r=.241$ ). In addition, the sportsmanship sub-dimension of the SCS had a weak significant correlation with damaging buildings sub-dimension of the IBS ( $r=.281$ ).

A very weak significant correlation was observed between the justice sub-dimension of the SCS and the IBS sub-dimensions, including status offense and violating school rules ( $r=.225$ ), theft ( $r=.164$ ), inability to control anger and fighting ( $r=.151$ ), petty theft ( $r=.221$ ), attention-seeking vandalism ( $r=.166$ ), status offense and deceiving others ( $r=.184$ ), and damaging buildings ( $r=.217$ ). There was a weak significant correlation between the justice sub-dimension of the SCS and the drug and violence offenses sub-dimension of the IBS ( $r=.256$ ).

**Table 10**

*Multiple Linear Regression Analysis of the Relationship Between SCS and IBS Sub-Dimensions*

| <b>Dependent Variable: IBS</b> |                                    |                       |          |          |
|--------------------------------|------------------------------------|-----------------------|----------|----------|
| <b>Independent Variables</b>   | <b>Beta</b>                        | <b>Std. Deviation</b> | <b>t</b> | <b>p</b> |
| <b>Honesty</b>                 | -,254                              | ,040                  | -3,67    | ,000*    |
| <b>Antisocial</b>              | -,291                              | ,021                  | -6,35    | ,000*    |
| <b>Compassion</b>              | ,048                               | ,043                  | ,611     | ,541     |
| <b>Sportsmanship</b>           | -,283                              | ,041                  | -3,34    | ,001*    |
| <b>Justice</b>                 | ,195                               | ,041                  | 2,31     | ,021*    |
| <b>P= ,000</b>                 | <b>adjusted R<sup>2</sup>=,215</b> | <b>F= 24,27</b>       |          |          |

As presented in Table 10, a multiple linear regression analysis was executed to investigate the effects of honesty, antisocial, compassion, sportsmanship, and justice as independent variables on the IBS. The adjusted R<sup>2</sup> value, representing the explanatory power in the multiple regression model, was calculated as .215. The results of the analysis revealed that there was a significant difference between dependent and independent variables ( $p<.05$ ). It was found that the independent variables of honesty, antisocial, sportsmanship, and justice had a significant effect on the dependent variable, IBS. On the other hand, it was explored that compassion, an independent variable of the SCS, did not have a significant effect on the IBS ( $p<.05$ ).

## DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

When the mean scores of the SCS according to gender in Table 1 are examined, it was seen that there was a significant difference between groups in the sub-dimensions of antisocial attitude and justice. Accordingly, based on the finding that females tended to exhibit more antisocial behaviors compared to males, it can be expressed females living under male-dominated norms might feel more suppressed and thus display more antisocial behaviors in a patriarchal society. In the sub-dimension of justice, it can be discussed that the patriarchal societal structure leads women to internalize the sense of justice more.

Yıldız and Özmaden (2019), İmamalı and Ünver (2018) have found that female athletes tend to be more antisocial than male ones. Similarly, Yazıcı (2021) study showed that female

athletes exhibit higher levels of honesty, antisocial and justice compared to male athletes. However, this finding of the present study does not align with the findings of Kavussanu et al. (2009) study which revealed that male soccer players had more antisocial behaviors compared to female soccer players.

Regarding the mean scores of the IBS by gender displayed in Table 2, there was a statistically significant difference between the mean scores of female and male students in the sub-dimensions of status offenses and violating school rules, theft, inability to control anger and fighting, petty theft, attention-seeking vandalism, status offense and deceiving others, drug and violence offenses, and damaging buildings. This suggests that, except for cheating in exams, female students engaged in all sub-dimensions of delinquent behavior less frequently than their male peers. This finding can be attributed to the possibility that males growing up in a patriarchal society are raised to be more independent than females, and that they approach negative situations more courageously in social relations. Moreover, differences in societal roles assigned to males and females may also contribute to these results. It is also possible that social approaches that consider delinquent behaviors in males as a sign of courage, and that treat males who show these behaviors with tolerance can also have an impact on this finding.

In the literature, there are studies that highlight male students perform more improper behaviors compared to female students (Aras et al., 2007; Balkaya & Ceyhan, 2007; Bulut, 2010; Delikara, 2001; Yilmaz, 2000). Relatedly, Lilly et al. (2002) associated the finding that girls had lower levels of improper behaviors to Hagan's Power Control Theory. Hagan suggested that girls in patriarchal families are more restricted than boys, leading boys to have a freer upbringing and a greater tendency toward improper behaviors compared to girls. In other words, boys who are given more freedom by their families may feel more inclined to engage in improper behaviors compared to girls (Lilly, Cullen, & Ball, 2002).

When the mean scores of SCS by grade level are examined in Table 3, a significant difference is observed in the sub-dimensions of honesty, sportsmanship, and justice between groups. The average scores of 9th graders in the sub-dimensions of honesty, sportsmanship, and justice were significantly higher than those of 10th, 11th, and 12th graders. This result suggests that 9th graders maintain positive attitudes towards honesty, sportsmanship, and justice, while these positive attitudes decrease with increasing age and grade. It can be discussed that this decrease can be resulted from the fact that students internalize dishonest, unsportsmanlike, and unfair behaviors they observe in their environment over time.

Although there is no study specifically investigating the correlation between sports character and grade level, there exist studies focusing on the correlation between sports character and age, and the results of these studies do not correspond to that of the present study. For example, in Öztürk (2018) conducted with arm wrestling and bodybuilding athletes, and Kaplan and Akyüz (2020) study, involved soccer players, studies, it was found that older athletes had more positive attitudes regarding sports character.

In light of the average IBS scores by grade level in Table 4, it is clear that there was a significant difference in the sub-dimensions of status offense and violating school rules, status offense and deceiving others, and cheating in exams among students based on their grade levels. In the sub-dimension of status offense and violating school rules, a significant difference was found between the 9th graders and all other graders. The 9th graders had lower average scores for violating school rules compared to the 10th, 11th, and 12th graders. This indicates that 9th graders perform these behaviors less than students in higher grades. This finding can be due to the fact that 9th graders are newcomers to the school and belong to the youngest age group.

The 10th graders had a significantly higher average score in the sub-dimension of status offense and deceiving others compared to the 9th and 12th graders. 10th graders tended to have the behavior of deceiving others more frequently than 9th and 12th graders. In addition, the average scores for the sub-dimension of cheating in exams for 9th graders were lower than those of 10th and 12th graders. It was determined that 9th graders exhibited violating school rules and cheating in exams behaviors less than upper-grade students, while 10th graders tended

to have the behavior of status offense and deceiving others more than other grades. The 9th graders are the farthest age group from the university entrance exam, which occurs at the end of the 12th grade. It is believed that test anxiety, especially in behaviors like cheating in exams, plays an important role. These findings can be interpreted as students adopting more improper behaviors as their grade levels increase.

Aksu (2015) found that there is a significant correlation between the tendency to commit offenses and the grade levels of high school students. 9th graders tended to have a lower tendency to commit offenses compared to students in other grade levels. They had behaviors such as escaping from school, lying, cheating in exams, and skipping classes less frequently than students in other grade levels. Additionally, 10th graders tended to exhibit more anger and aggression behaviors compared to students in other grade levels, which is consistent with the findings of the current study.

In Table 5, when examining the average SCS scores based on the parents living together status, a significant difference was observed in the sub-dimension of compassion among the groups. On the other hand, the average scores of students whose parents live together were significantly higher than those with separated parents in the sub-dimension of compassion. It can be discussed that children living with their parents exhibit more important values related to sports character development compared to those with separated parents.

In Table 6, when examining the IBS sub-dimensions based on the parents living together status, a significant difference was found in the sub-dimensions of inability to control anger and fighting. That is, the average scores of students whose parents live together are lower than those of students with separated parents in the sub-dimension of inability to control anger and fighting. It was determined that students with separated parents exhibited more inability to control anger and fighting behaviors compared to those living with both parents. This finding indicates that lack of attention and control over children with separated parents may lead to an increase in these behaviors.

Bayoğlu (2013) explored that children with fragmented families had higher tendency to involve in crimes. Similarly, Bowlby (1982) who suggests that fragmented families lead to criminal behavior, found that individuals who have committed crimes had experienced complete or prolonged maternal separation during their first 5 years of life. Yavuzer (2009) determined that 47% of children involved in crime were forced to be separated from their parents for various reasons, and 22% came from broken or incomplete families.

When the mean scores of SCS by school disciplinary status are examined in Table 7, a significant difference was seen in the sub-dimensions of honesty, antisocial, and sportsmanship. The average scores of students who received punishments from school were significantly lower than those who did not have in the sub-dimensions of honesty, antisocial, and sportsmanship. This result indicates that non-penalized athletes tend to show more honest and sportsmanlike behaviors but also more antisocial behaviors compared to penalized ones. Additionally, this situation can be explained by the fact that individuals who start to have behaviors that are not welcomed by the society do not pay much attention to fair and sportspersonlike competition in sports.

Table 8 displays the IBS scores based on the school disciplinary status. There was a significant difference in the sub-dimensions of status offense and violating school rules, inability to control anger and fighting, attention-seeking vandalism, status offense and deceiving others, drug and violence offenses. It was observed that students who received punishments from school tend to perform more improper behaviors. In light of the fact that students exhibiting improper behaviors at schools can face certain sanctions from school administration, it is believed that the findings of this study are not coincidental.

In Table 9, it was determined that the honesty sub-dimension of SCS had a low level and significant correlation with the IBS sub-dimensions of status offense and violating school rules, theft, inability to control anger and fighting, attention-seeking vandalism, status offense and deceiving others, damaging buildings. Additionally, the honesty sub-dimension of SCS had a

moderate and significant correlation with petty theft and drug and violence offenses. Given that a high score is associated with less exhibited behavior according to the IBS, it can be stated that as integrity character increases, petty theft and drug and violence offenses decrease. Güvendi (2019) underscored that as the tendency to endorse cheating increases, antisocial behaviors increase; as the desire to win fairly increases, antisocial attitudes increase; and positive behaviors such as honesty and sportsmanship also increase.

The antisocial sub-dimension of SCS had a low and significant correlation with the IBS sub-dimensions of status offense and violating school rules, theft, inability to control anger and fighting, petty theft, attention-seeking vandalism, status offense and deceiving others, drug and violence offenses, damaging buildings, and cheating in exams. When a high score is associated with less exhibited behavior according to the IBS, it can be discussed that as the antisocial character increases, behaviors such as damaging buildings, drug and violence offenses, and theft decrease.

Contrary to the findings of this study, having investigated the cases of committing crime, Noyan (2008) found that 93.3% of antisocial individuals had been convicted and punished for at least one crime, and that there was a positive and significant correlation between aggression and antisocial behavior in these individuals. Similarly, antisocial individuals were more likely to misuse psychoactive substances and engage in self-harming and suicidal behaviors compared to others. In the same vein, Cloninger et al. (1993) highlighted that the self-harm and substance use status of antisocial individuals were significantly higher than the other group in their study. The findings of Hare (1983) study in prisons showed that there was a positive and significant correlation between aggression and antisociality. One of the possible reasons that the findings of the present study do not align with the studies conducted by Hare (1983) and Noyan (2008) may be that those studies were conducted on individuals diagnosed with higher-level antisocial personality disorder.

There was a low-level significant correlation between the SCS sub-dimension of compassion and the sub-dimensions of IBS including status offense and violating school rules, theft, inability to control anger and fighting, petty theft, attention-seeking vandalism, status offense and deceiving others, drug and violence offenses. On the other hand, compassion sub-dimension had a moderate-level significant correlation with damaging buildings sub-dimension. As compassion increases, it can be said that behaviors such as damaging buildings, drug and violence offenses, and petty theft decrease. The concept of compassion involves the emotional energy that arises during empathetic reactions directed towards others, enabling individuals to determine how to behave (Batson & Shaw, 1991). At its core, compassion involves feeling the pain of others on an emotional level. As a result of experiencing this discomfort, individuals will strive to alleviate the pain of others in order to regulate their own emotions (Miller, Grimes, McMullen, & Vogus, 2012).

Regarding the SCS sub-dimension of sportsmanship, there was a low level significant correlation with the IBS sub-dimensions of status offense and violating school rules, theft, inability to control anger and fighting, petty theft, attention-seeking vandalism, status offense and deceiving others, drug and violence offenses, and damaging buildings. It can be expressed as sportsmanship increases, behaviors such as damaging buildings, drug and violence offenses, and petty theft decrease.

Balcioğlu et al. (2016) stated that personal motivation factors and character traits significantly influence athletes' tendencies toward aggressive behavior. Relatedly, Perry (2014) determined that sportsmanship behavior had a positive correlation with moral behavior and a negative correlation with antisocial behavior. Barkoukis et al. (2011) emphasized that individuals with lower sportsmanship scores also tend to have lower levels of adherence to social norms, rules, regulations, and ethical attitudes. Similarly, Yıldız (2019) found a negative correlation between athletes' divergence from morality and their sportsmanship tendencies. Moreover, Berkowitz (1989) identified a negative correlation between aggressive behavior and sportsmanship behavior, suggesting that teenagers with unsportsmanlike attitudes are more

prone to easier expression of aggressive behavior due to lower levels of anger control and self-control. Chantal, Robin, Vernat, and Bernache (2005) accentuated that individuals who prioritize sportsmanship and possess a determined personality tend to adhere more to the rules of the sport they practice, show more respect for their opponents' personality and desire to engage in sports, and are less inclined toward aggressive actions. They, on the other hand, found that individuals with lower sportsmanship averages tend to be more prone to incompatible and aggressive behaviors. Similarly, Koç (2017) found a negative correlation between sportsmanlike behavior in physical education classes and students' tendencies toward violence. Koç and Güllü (2017) indicated a negative correlation between aggressive behavior and sportsmanship tendencies.

Within the realm of sports, it has been widely encountered that there are situations in which feelings of both adhering to sportsmanship and disregarding it. In the literature, there are studies demonstrating that athletes exhibit aggressive attitudes and fall into ethical dilemmas (Bebetsos et al., 2008; Bebetsos and Konstantoulas, 2006; Christoforidis et al., 2010; Kavussanu & Ntoumanis, 2003; Konstantoulas et al., 2006).

With respect to the SCS sub-dimension of justice, there was a low-level and significant correlation with the IBS sub-dimensions of status offense and violating school rules, theft, inability to control anger and fighting, petty theft, attention-seeking vandalism, status offense and deceiving others, drug and violence offenses, and damaging buildings. It can be mentioned that as the sub-dimension of justice increases, behaviors such as damaging buildings, drug and violence offenses, and petty theft decrease.

According to the results of the analysis in Table 10, a significant difference was observed between dependent and independent variables. It was determined that the independent variables of honesty, antisocial, sportsmanship, and justice had a significant effect on the dependent variable IBS. On the other hand, it was found that the independent variable of compassion did not have a significant effect on IBS. Overall, it can be concluded that the sub-dimensions of SCS significantly predict the sub-dimensions of IBS.

### **Recommendation**

Based on the findings of the present study, it is recommended to implement character education programs for athletes character development, organize coach training for ethical character development among athletes, and train students to prevent their potential criminal behaviors. Additionally, awareness-raising activities such as drama, theater, and short films can be conducted.

### **Limitations**

The research is limited to the data to be collected from high school students who do sports and study in Konya province in the 2019-2020 Academic Year.

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