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## An Examination of Athletes' Attitudes Toward Sport and Their Quality of Life Levels Across Different Sports Disciplines



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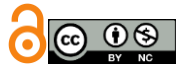
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### ABSTRACT

**Objective:** This study aimed to examine the relationship between athletes' attitudes toward sport and their quality of life, as well as to explore differences across selected demographic variables among university athletes.

**Methods and Materials:** A total of 201 students (52.7% female, 47.3% male; mean age =  $23.25 \pm 5.17$  years) participated in this cross-sectional study. Data were collected using the Attitude Toward Sport Scale and the WHOQOL-BREF, and analyzed using non-parametric statistics.

**Results:** The results revealed statistically significant positive correlations between attitudes toward sport and all dimensions of quality of life ( $p < .01$ ), with correlation coefficients ranging from  $r = .19$  to  $r = .52$ . Strong relationships were observed among attitude sub-dimensions, particularly between interest in sport and sport-life integration ( $r = .71$ ) and active participation ( $r = .67$ ). No significant differences were found between team and individual sports in most variables ( $p > .05$ ); however, a significant difference was observed in the environmental dimension of quality of life in favor of team sports ( $U = 3971.50$ ,  $p = .015$ ). Gender differences were identified in physical health ( $U = 3979.00$ ,  $p = .010$ ) and environmental factors ( $U = 4004.00$ ,  $p = .012$ ), favoring male participants, while no significant differences were found in attitudes toward sport ( $p > .05$ ). Marital status showed significant differences in psychological state ( $U = 1512.00$ ,  $p = .011$ ), general health ( $U = 1299.00$ ,  $p = .001$ ), and social relationships ( $U = 1543.50$ ,  $p = .015$ ), as well as in interest in sport ( $U = 1504.00$ ,  $p = .010$ ) and sport-life integration ( $U = 1203.00$ ,  $p = .001$ ). Duration of sport participation significantly affected physical health ( $H = 10.204$ ,  $p = .017$ ), environmental factors ( $H = 12.267$ ,  $p = .007$ ), and interest in sport ( $\chi^2 = 8.128$ ,  $p = .043$ ).

**Conclusion:** Overall, the findings indicate that more positive attitudes toward sport are associated with higher levels of quality of life.

**Keywords:** attitude toward sport, quality of life, university athletes, sport participation.

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## 1. Introduction

Sport has increasingly been recognized as a multidimensional phenomenon that extends beyond physical activity to encompass psychological, social, and cultural dimensions (1, 2). In modern societies, sport is not only associated with physical fitness and performance but also plays a critical role in promoting overall well-being and social integration (3, 4). As emphasized by Ünver, Kara, and Kocaman (2019), sport contributes to the development of motor skills while simultaneously supporting individuals' physical and mental health (5). Similarly, Yavuz and Yücel (2019) highlight that sport facilitates interpersonal interaction and strengthens individuals' connection to society, thereby functioning as a key mechanism for social cohesion (6). In this context, sport can be understood as a holistic construct that influences multiple aspects of human life.

One of the central constructs associated with sport participation is quality of life (QoL), which has been widely studied in health and behavioral sciences. Quality of life is defined as individuals' perception of their position in life within the context of their cultural and value systems, encompassing dimensions such as physical health, psychological state, social relationships, and environmental conditions (7, 8). Given its multidimensional nature, QoL provides a comprehensive framework for evaluating human well-being. Previous research has consistently demonstrated that engagement in sport and physical activity contributes positively to various aspects of quality of life, suggesting that sport serves as an important determinant of both physical and psychosocial health.

In parallel, the concept of attitude toward sport has gained increasing attention as a key psychological factor influencing individuals' engagement in sport and their broader well-being. Attitudes are defined as relatively stable psychological tendencies reflecting individuals' evaluations of specific objects, situations, or behaviors (9). These tendencies include cognitive, affective, and behavioral components and play a central role in guiding human behavior (10, 11). In the context of sport, positive attitudes toward sport are associated with increased motivation, greater participation, and the adoption of sport as a lifestyle (12, 13). Therefore, attitudes toward sport may represent a critical mechanism through which sport influences individuals' quality of life. Empirical studies have provided evidence supporting the relationship between sport attitudes and quality of life. For example,

Çoban, Bayazıt, and Uca (2020) reported that university students with more positive attitudes toward sport exhibited higher levels of quality of life (14). Similarly, Önal et al. (2017) identified a significant positive relationship between these variables, indicating that sport-related attitudes contribute to individuals' well-being (8). Han and Polat (2022) further demonstrated that athletes with higher levels of commitment to sport tend to experience greater life satisfaction (15). However, some studies have reported relatively weak or inconsistent relationships, suggesting that the strength and nature of this association may vary depending on contextual and individual factors (16). These mixed findings highlight the need for more comprehensive investigations.

Despite the growing body of literature, several important limitations remain. First, previous research has largely focused on behavioral aspects of sport participation, such as frequency and intensity, while relatively neglecting the psychological dimension, particularly attitudes toward sport as a multidimensional construct. Second, many studies have treated quality of life as a global or unidimensional variable, failing to examine its distinct components. This approach limits the ability to understand how different dimensions of QoL—such as physical health, psychological state, social relationships, and environmental factors—are differentially associated with sport-related attitudes. Third, the role of demographic and experiential variables, including gender, marital status, and duration of sport participation, has been inconsistently addressed in the literature (6, 17). Finally, although some studies have attempted to compare different types of sport participation, these analyses are often limited in scope and lack an integrated theoretical framework.

In light of these gaps, there is a clear need for an integrative approach that simultaneously examines attitudes toward sport, multidimensional quality of life, and relevant demographic and experiential factors. Addressing this need is particularly important in contemporary contexts marked by increasingly sedentary lifestyles and declining levels of physical activity, both of which adversely affect physical and mental health. A better understanding of how psychological engagement with sport relates to broader well-being outcomes may offer valuable guidance for the development of effective interventions and policies. Accordingly, the present study investigates the relationship between athletes' attitudes toward sport and their quality of life among university students who are actively engaged in sport. It also explores whether these variables differ

according to demographic characteristics, including gender, marital status, and income level, as well as experiential factors such as duration of sport participation and type of sport. By adopting a multidimensional perspective and integrating psychological and health-related constructs, this study seeks to provide a more comprehensive understanding of the role of sport in shaping individual well-being. More specifically, it is expected that attitudes toward sport will show a positive and statistically significant association with overall quality of life and with each of its sub-dimensions, that quality of life will vary across demographic groups, that attitudes toward sport will differ according to both demographic and experiential variables, and that the relationship between sport attitudes and quality of life will remain consistent across different forms of sport participation, including team and individual sports.

## 2. Methods and Materials

### 2.1 Research Design

This study employed a cross-sectional, quantitative research design using a descriptive survey approach to examine the relationship between athletes' attitudes toward sport and their quality of life. A cross-sectional framework was considered appropriate, as the primary objective was to explore associations among variables at a single point in time without manipulating any conditions. The study adhered to a correlational design, aiming to identify both relationships and group-based differences across selected demographic and experiential variables.

### 2.2 Participants and Sampling

The target population consisted of undergraduate students enrolled in the Faculty of Sports Sciences at Muş Alparslan University during the 2025–2026 academic year. A total of 201 students voluntarily participated in the study (106 females, 52.7%; 95 males, 47.3%), with a mean age of 23.25 years (SD = 5.17). Participants were recruited using a convenience sampling method, which is commonly applied in survey-based research within educational settings. Eligibility criteria required participants to be actively engaged in sport, either in team-based or individual disciplines, to ensure relevance to the study objectives. The sample included individuals involved in a range of sports branches, thereby allowing for meaningful comparisons

based on sport type (team vs. individual) and duration of participation.

### 2.3 Measures

Data were collected using three instruments: a Personal Information Form, the World Health Organization Quality of Life Scale–Brief Version (WHOQOL-BREF), and the Attitude Toward Sport Scale. The Personal Information Form was designed to capture demographic and contextual variables, including age, gender, marital status, monthly income, duration of sport participation, and type of sport. The WHOQOL-BREF was used to assess participants' quality of life across four primary domains: physical health, psychological well-being, social relationships, and environmental conditions. The Turkish version of the scale, adapted by Eser et al. (1999), was employed (18). The instrument consists of 27 items rated on a five-point Likert scale, with higher scores indicating better perceived quality of life. Previously reported Cronbach's alpha coefficients for the Turkish version range from 0.53 to 0.83 across sub-dimensions, indicating acceptable internal consistency. The Attitude Toward Sport Scale, originally developed by Şentürk (2012) and adapted by Varol (2017), was used to evaluate participants' attitudes toward sport (19, 20). The scale comprises 25 items structured across three dimensions: interest in sport, sport–life integration, and active participation. Responses are recorded on a five-point Likert scale, with higher scores reflecting more positive attitudes.

### 2.4 Procedure

Data collection was conducted through self-administered questionnaires distributed to participants in an academic setting. Participation was voluntary, and respondents were informed about the purpose of the study and assured of the confidentiality and anonymity of their responses. Ethical approval for the study was obtained from the relevant institutional ethics committee prior to data collection.

### 2.5 Statistical Analysis

All statistical analyses were performed using IBM SPSS Statistics (Version 27). Prior to inferential analyses, the normality of the data distribution was assessed using Kolmogorov–Smirnov and Shapiro–Wilk tests, along with skewness and kurtosis values. As the data did not meet normality assumptions, non-parametric statistical methods

were employed. Differences between two independent groups (e.g., gender, type of sport, and marital status) were analyzed using the Mann–Whitney U test. For comparisons involving more than two groups (e.g., income level and duration of sport participation), the Kruskal–Wallis H test was applied. In cases where statistically significant results were obtained, group-level differences were interpreted based on mean rank distributions. Associations between attitudes toward sport and quality of life dimensions were examined using Spearman’s rank-order correlation coefficient ( $\rho$ ). Correlation strength was interpreted as low (0.00–0.29), moderate (0.30–0.69), and high ( $\geq 0.70$ ). Statistical significance was set at  $p < 0.05$  for all analyses.

### 3. Results

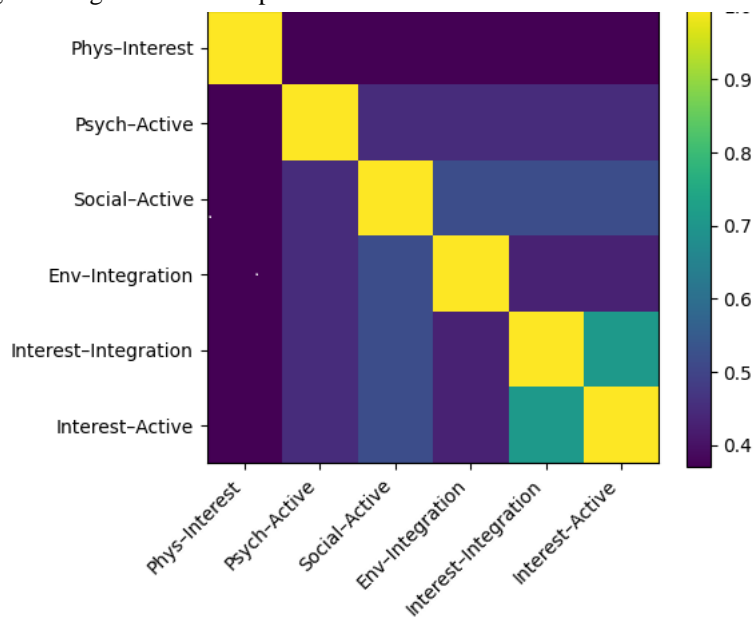
The results are presented in accordance with the study hypotheses, integrating correlation analyses and group comparisons. As shown in Table 1, statistically significant positive relationships were observed between attitudes toward sport and all dimensions of quality of life ( $p < .01$ ), with correlation coefficients ranging from  $r = .19$  to  $r = .52$ . Strong interrelationships were also identified among attitude sub-dimensions, particularly between interest in sport and sport–life integration ( $r = .71$ ), and active participation ( $r = .67$ ), indicating a coherent structure of the attitude construct.

**Table 1.** Correlations Between Attitudes Toward Sport and Quality of Life Dimensions

Relationship	r
Physical Health – Interest in Sport	0.37
Psychological State – Active Participation	0.45
Social Relationships – Active Participation	0.52
Environmental Factors – Sport–Life Integration	0.43
Interest – Sport–Life Integration	0.71
Interest – Active Participation	0.67

As illustrated in Figure 1, the heatmap visualization highlights the strength and consistency of these associations, demonstrating that higher levels of positive

attitudes toward sport are systematically related to improved quality-of-life outcomes across multiple domains.



**Figure 1.** Heatmap of correlations between sport attitudes and quality-of-life dimensions

**Table 2.** Differences Based on Type of Sport

Variable	Statistic	p
Environmental QoL	U=3971.50	0.015
Physical Health	ns	>0.05
Psychological State	ns	>0.05

As shown in Table 2, no statistically significant differences were observed between team and individual sports across most variables ( $p > .05$ ). However, a

significant difference was found in the environmental dimension of quality of life, favoring team sport participants ( $U = 3971.50, p = .015$ ).

**Table 3.** Gender and Marital Status Differences

Variable	Statistic	p
Physical Health (Gender)	U=3979.00	0.010
Environmental QoL (Gender)	U=4004.00	0.012
Psychological State (Marital)	U=1512.00	0.011
General Health (Marital)	U=1299.00	0.001
Social Relationships (Marital)	U=1543.50	0.015

Table 3 indicates that gender differences were significant in physical health and environmental quality of life, both favoring male participants. In contrast, marital

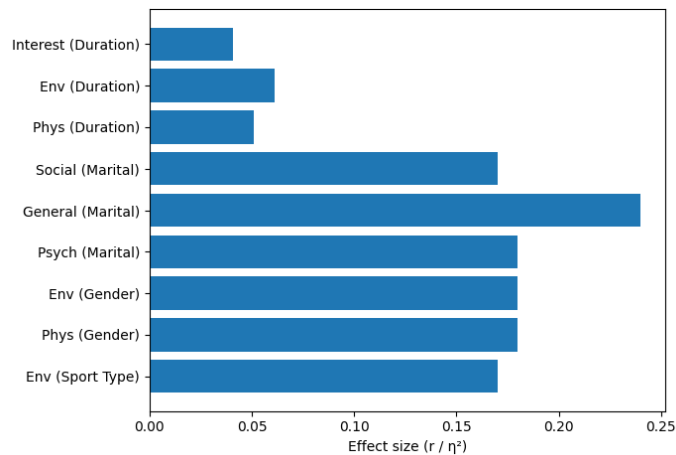
status was associated with significant differences in psychological state, general health, and social relationships, with married participants reporting higher levels.

**Table 4.** Effects of Duration of Sport Participation and Income

Variable	Statistic	p
Physical Health (Duration)	H=10.204	0.017
Environmental QoL (Duration)	H=12.267	0.007
Interest in Sport (Duration)	$\chi^2=8.128$	0.043
Income Effects	ns	>0.05

As shown in Table 4, duration of sport participation significantly influenced physical health, environmental quality of life, and interest in sport. However, income level did not produce significant differences across any variables

( $p > .05$ ). Figure 2 presents the magnitude of significant group differences using effect sizes, providing a clearer interpretation of the strength of these findings.



**Figure 2.** Effect-size plot of significant group differences

#### 4. Discussion and Conclusion

The present study investigated the relationship between athletes' attitudes toward sport and their quality of life across different sports disciplines and selected demographic variables. The findings demonstrated that attitudes toward sport were positively and significantly associated with all dimensions of quality of life, including physical health, psychological state, general health, social relationships, and environmental factors. These results reinforce the view that sport should not be regarded merely as a form of physical activity, but rather as a multidimensional psychosocial resource that contributes to broader well-being. In particular, the moderate positive correlations between sport-related attitudes and multiple domains of quality of life suggest that the meaning individuals attribute to sport may play an important role in shaping their overall life experience, a pattern that is broadly consistent with previous studies reporting positive links between sport engagement, life satisfaction, and quality of life (8, 14, 15). A notable finding of the study was the strong interrelationship among the sub-dimensions of attitudes toward sport, especially between interest in sport and sport-life integration, as well as between interest in sport and active participation. This pattern indicates that positive attitudes toward sport may reflect more than simple enjoyment or preference; rather, they may represent a broader lifestyle orientation in which sport becomes embedded in daily living. This interpretation aligns with previous research emphasizing that attitudes are relatively stable psychological tendencies that influence participation, continuity, and behavioral commitment (9, 10). When sport is internalized as part of one's lifestyle, its effects may

extend beyond physical health and contribute to psychological resilience, stronger social relationships, and a more favorable evaluation of one's environment. The results further showed that type of sport did not significantly differentiate most dimensions of quality of life or attitudes toward sport, with the exception of the environmental dimension of quality of life, which favored team sport participants. This finding may be explained by the social and structural nature of team sports, which often provide athletes with greater access to organized facilities, peer support, and a sense of belonging. Such conditions may positively influence how individuals perceive the quality and supportiveness of their environment. At the same time, the absence of broader differences between team and individual sports suggests that the beneficial role of sport attitudes may be relatively stable across sport contexts. In other words, whether athletes participate in team or individual disciplines, a positive orientation toward sport appears to be associated with higher well-being.

Gender differences were observed only in the physical health and environmental dimensions of quality of life, both in favor of male participants, while no significant gender differences emerged in attitudes toward sport. This finding may suggest that female and male athletes share relatively similar levels of sport-related interest, engagement, and integration, even if they evaluate some life-quality domains differently. Marital status, on the other hand, was associated with significant differences in psychological state, general health, social relationships, interest in sport, and sport-life integration, with married participants reporting more favorable scores in several areas. Although this may reflect the stabilizing role of social support and life structure, such interpretations should

be treated cautiously. The findings related to the duration of sport participation are also noteworthy. Longer participation was associated with better physical health, more favorable environmental perceptions, and greater interest in sport, suggesting that sustained engagement in sport may have cumulative benefits. This is consistent with earlier studies indicating that regular and prolonged involvement in sport can strengthen both psychosocial adaptation and healthy lifestyle behaviors (6, 17). By contrast, income level did not produce significant differences in either quality of life or attitudes toward sport, implying that within this sample, sport-related well-being may be shaped more strongly by experiential and psychological factors than by economic variation. Despite these important contributions, the findings should be interpreted within the limitations of the study. First, the cross-sectional design does not allow causal inferences; therefore, it cannot be concluded whether positive attitudes toward sport lead to higher quality of life or whether individuals with better quality of life develop more positive attitudes toward sport. Second, the sample was limited to students from a single Faculty of Sports Sciences, which restricts the generalizability of the findings to other student populations, non-athlete groups, or athletes from different institutional and cultural contexts. Third, the use of convenience sampling and voluntary participation may have introduced sampling bias. Finally, because all data were collected through self-report instruments, the results may have been influenced by social desirability and perceptual bias. Nevertheless, the study offers a meaningful contribution by demonstrating that positive attitudes toward sport are systematically linked to multidimensional quality of life among university athletes, while also highlighting the value of adopting a more integrated perspective on sport and well-being.

### Authors' Contributions

Study Design: Ali Türker, Atakan Aksu, Muhammet Bas, Tuba Fatma Karadağ, Rıdvan Erensayın, Gürkan Tanoglu

Data Collection: Ali Türker, Muhammet Bas, Tuba Fatma Karadağ, Rıdvan Erensayın

Statistical Analysis: Ali Türker, Rıdvan Erensayın, Gürkan Tanoglu

Manuscript Preparation: Ali Türker, Atakan Aksu, Muhammet Bas, Tuba Fatma Karadağ, Rıdvan Erensayın, Gürkan Tanoglu

All authors have read and approved the final version of the manuscript.

### Declaration

Artificial intelligence-assisted language support was used during the drafting and linguistic refinement of the manuscript. All conceptual decisions, interpretation of findings, verification of citations, and final approval of the manuscript were carried out by the authors, who take full responsibility for the content.

### Transparency Statement

The data supporting the findings of this study are available from the corresponding author upon reasonable request.

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### Declaration of Interest

The authors report no conflict of interest.

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### Ethical Considerations

Ethics Committee: Muş Alparslan University Ethics Committee; Date/Protocol Number: 11.02.2026-234640

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