



The Relationship Between Body Appreciation And Orthorexia Nervosa In Students Of Sports Science

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Citation: Taner Akbulut et.al (2024), The Relationship Between Body Appreciation And Orthorexia Nervosa In Students Of Sports Science..., Educational Administration: Theory And Practice, 30(5), 3713-3719

Doi 10.53555/kuey.v30i5.3522

ARTICLE INFO

ABSTRACT

It is known that lifestyle affects individuals physically, physiologically, mentally and psychologically. It is thought that people's expectations and wishes also affect their lifestyle and behavior. In this context, in the current research, it was aimed to investigate the relationship between orthorexia nervosa and body appreciation status of students of sports sciences. While the universe of the study was composed of students of sports sciences, the sample consisted of 720 volunteer participants studying in sports sciences at Firat University and Bitlis Eren University. Personal information form was used to obtain demographic information of the participants. The "ORTO-11 Scale" developed by Anlı et al. (2015) was used to determine the orthorexia nervosa tendencies of the participants, and the "Body appreciation scale" developed by Arusoğlu et al., (2008) was used to determine the level of body appreciation. SPSS program was used in the analysis of the data. It was determined that ORTO-11 and BAS scores did not differ by gender and BMI values ($p > 0.05$). It was determined that ORTO-11 scores changed according to the class, department, exercise habits and the importance given to appearance ($p < 0.05$). It was determined that BAS scores differed according to the department and exercise habits ($p < 0.05$). In addition, it was determined that there was a statistically negative relationship between ORTO-11 and BAS ($p < 0.05$). As a result; It has been determined that ORTO-11 and BAS scores may differ depending on some variables. However, it can be said that there is a significant relationship between the increase in orthorexic tendency and body appreciation.

Anahtar Kelimeler: ORTO-11, Body, Appreciation, BMI, Exercise

Introduction

Body perception is expressed as the self-evaluation of positive or negative emotional states of individuals towards body parts and their functions. (Uskun and Şabaplı, 2013). At the same time, body perception is related to self-esteem as well as how the individual's body, which you visualize in your mind, is (Karakuş, 2016). Body perception; It starts at the first age when children begin to distinguish themselves from those who are not their own and continues to develop continuously throughout the life of the individual. In general, people begin to encounter the view that their physical characteristics are important from an early age. This is generally the handsome, beautiful, strong people in the storybooks that children read and these people always have an ideal physique (Tezcan 2009). In order for individuals to have ideal physical structures, they should have adequate and balanced nutrition habits as well as regular exercises. As with all people in the society, university students also have the ideal body characteristics determined by the general society, so changes in the diet and wrong diet practices can cause inadequate and unbalanced nutrition in individuals. Especially in people, the desire for bodybuilding causes eating disorders because it is perceived as being aesthetically pleasing, looking thin, and being beautiful and healthy (Demir, 2006). Eating disorder (ED) is a problem with a psychological background that is observed much more often in women than in men. Although this problem is a life-threatening problem that has existed for many years, it is increasing day by day, especially among young people. In addition to the number of individuals diagnosed with eating disorders, the number of individuals approaching the level of being diagnosed is too high to be underestimated (Ulaş et al., 2013). An association

was established in the USA to determine the causes and conditions of this disease. Through this association, information about the conditions related to the disease is constantly reviewed and updated. ED is seen when the attitudes of individuals in eating and drinking situations become abnormal. Generally, it is examined in two basic classes as 'Anorexia Nervosa (AN)' and 'Bulimia Nervosa (BN)'. AN; refusal of food intake, BN; It is defined as inability to resist food intake and vomiting after food intake. Although there are many reasons for the formation and progression of problems in eating disorders, the most basic problem is the abnormal disturbances that individuals feel about the increase in body weight. Since the concept of beauty, which is accepted in today's living conditions, is to be weak and thin, people, especially women, constantly fall into the thought of being thin, and by taking this thought to a further dimension, they suffer from eating disorder. Developing technology and digital platforms that have become popular in recent years, and social media networks, family and friend circles put pressure on people, and they affect the body image of individuals more (Çelik ve ark., 2016). All these reasons lead individuals to wrong eating habits and eating disorders. The term orthorexia derives from the words orthos (right) and "orexis" (appetite) and means the obsession with healthy and suitable nutrition (Bustamante, 2012). Orthorexia nervosa (ON) is a new area that researchers have focused on whether to define it as a disorder that has attracted attention in recent years. Whether orthorexia should be considered under anorexia nervosa or obsessive compulsive disorder or as a separate disorder is a case that requires questioning. Considering the similar features of orthorexia nervosa and anorexia nervosa; perfectionism, high level of anxiety, intense effort to be in control, and weight loss. People in these two groups are generally success-oriented, seeing adherence to their diets as an expression of self-discipline and considering breaking the diet as not being able to control themselves. Unlike orthorexia, eating disorders such as AN and BN are expressed quantitatively (for example, the amount of food consumed) while ON is expressed qualitatively (Şengül and Hocaoğlu, 2019). Although orthorexia nervosa is not defined as a psychiatric disorder, it is usually associated with a marked deterioration. A diet initiative to achieve optimum health; malnutrition, loss of social relationships, and deterioration in quality of life (Evcimen and Ayyıldız, 2020). In orthorexia, people first aim to improve health, treat disease or reduce body weight, but later on, diet takes place as an important part of their lives. Although Orthorexia nervosa is not yet included in the DSM-V criteria, it is one of the nutritional behavior obsessions with an increasing incidence and especially affecting certain occupational groups at a higher level. Risk groups include females, adolescents, individuals doing sports, university students, health workers, and dietitians. Especially during university years, environmental impact, lifestyles, being liked by others, body image and accordingly the diets that are constantly applied cause students to be in this risk group (Oğur, 2015). Based on this information, the idea of whether there is a relationship between body appreciation and orthorexic tendencies has come to the fore. In line with this idea, it was hypothesized that there was a significant relationship between body appreciation and orthorexia nervosa. For this reason, in the current research, it was aimed to investigate the relationship between body appreciation and orthorexia nervosa of students in sports departments of universities.

Methods

This study was conducted to investigate the relationship between orthorexia nervosa and body appreciation levels of students of sports sciences. The research was prepared and conducted in accordance with the relational screening model. In the study, the Helsinki declaration guidelines were followed, and the participants were included in the study on a voluntary basis. In addition, Bitlis Eren University Ethical Principles and Ethics Committee approval was obtained before starting the study (2023/04-25).

Participants

While the universe of the study was composed of students of sports sciences, the sample consisted of 720 (356 Male, 364 Female) volunteer participants of sports sciences at Firat University and Bitlis Eren University in the spring term of 2022-2023.

Data Collection Tools

In accordance with the purpose of the study, a "Personal Information Form" was created and this form included questions regarding the participants' age, height, weight, class, department, regular exercise habits and whether they attach importance to their appearance. The "ORTO-11 Scale" was used to determine the ON tendencies of the participants, and the "Body appreciation scale" was used to examine the level of body appreciation.

ORTO-11 Scale

The Turkish version of the ORTO-15 scale consisting of 15 items developed to examine the orthorexia nervosa tendencies of the research group was used (Donini et al, 2005). Turkish adaptation of the scale was done by Arusoğlu et al. (2008). During its adaptation into Turkish, four items with low factor loads were removed. It was rearranged as the ORTO-11 scale with 11 items and a Cronbach alpha value of .62. In the current study, the Cronbach alpha value was calculated as .74. The ORTO-11 Scale is in 4-point Likert format. The sum of all scores gives the ORTO-11 scale score, and the 3rd, 6th and 10th questions on the scale are reverse scored. The

decrease in the score obtained from the scale indicates that the tendency to orthorexic is high (Arusoğlu et al., 2008).

Body Appreciation Scale (BAS)

Developed by Tylkaa and Wood-Barcalow (2015) and adapted into Turkish by Anlı et al. (2015), it is a 10-item, single-sub-dimension and five-point Likert-type scale. A low score from the scale indicates a low body appreciation level, and a high score indicates a high body appreciation level. The Cronbach alpha value for the scale was determined as $.90$ by Tylkaa and Wood-Barcalow (2015) and $.88$ by Anlı et al. (2015). In the present research, the Cronbach alpha value was calculated as $.93$.

Statistical Analysis

The data obtained from the research were analyzed using the SPSS program. In order to test the normality of the distribution, histogram, skewness and kurtosis values were examined. Accordingly, it was determined that there were no extreme values in the obtained data, and the skewness and kurtosis values of the scale scores were in the range of $-2 > \dots < +2$ (Table 1). In the analysis, mean and standard deviation (SD) were used. Independent samples t test was used to compare two groups, analysis of variance (One Way ANOVA) was used to compare multiple groups. Pearson Correlation test was used to detect relationships. The significance level for all tests was accepted as $p < 0.05$.

Table 1. Skewness and Kurtosis Values for Scales

Scales	Mean	SD	Skewness	Kurtosis
ORTO- 11	26,34	5,01	-,001	,037
BAS	41,13	7,75	-,866	,258

SD: Standard Deviation

It was determined that the skewness and kurtosis values of both scales were in the range of $-2 > \dots < +2$, and it was concluded that the data were in accordance with the normal distribution (George and Mallery, 2010).

RESULTS

Table 2. Descriptive Information of the Research Group

Variables	N	%
Gender		
Male	356	49,4
Female	364	50,6
Class		
1	226	31,4
2	122	16,9
3	182	25,3
4	190	26,4
Department		
Physical Education and Sports Teaching	126	17,5
Coaching Education	294	40,8
Sports Management	194	26,9
Recreation	106	14,7
Do you exercise regularly?		
Yes	334	46,4
No	386	53,6
Is appearance important to you?		
Yes	652	90,6
No	68	9,4
BMI		
Underweight	326	45,3
Normal range	376	52,2
Owerweight	18	2,5
Variables	Ort	Ss
Age (Year)	21,35	1,69
Height (Cm)	171,96	8,98
Weight (Kg)	65,53	12,36

In the Table 2; it is seen that the mean age of the participants in the study group is 21.35 ± 1.69 , the average height is 171.96 ± 8.98 , and the average body weight is 65.53 ± 12.36 . When the BMI distributions are examined, it is understood that 45.3% of the participants are underweight, 52.2% are in the normal range category, and 2.5% are in the owerweight category. On the other hand, 49.4% of the research group was male, 50.6% was female, 31.4% 1st class, 16.9% 2nd class, 25.3% 3rd class and 26.4% It was determined that the rate was

composed of 4th grade students. According to the department they studied, it was distributed as 17.5% Physical Education and Sports Teaching, 40.8% Coaching Education, 26.9% Sports Management and 14.7% Recreation Department. While 46.4% of the participants answered yes to the question of "Do you exercise regularly," and 53.6% answered no, it is seen that 90.6% said yes to the question of whether appearance is important to you, and 9.4% said no.

Table 3. Comparison of Scale Scores by Gender Variable

Scales	Male	Female	t	p
	Mean±SD	Mean±SD		
ORTO-11	26,26±5,03	26,41±4,99	-,396	0,69
BAS	40,97±8,08	41,29±7,42	-,552	0,58

According to Table 3; it was determined that there was no significant difference between the scores of ORTO-11 and BAS by the gender variable ($p > 0,05$).

Table 4. Comparison of Scale Scores by Class Variable

Scales	Class	Mean±SD	F	p	Difference
ORTO-11	1. ¹	27,60±5,08	7,362	0,000	1>2,3,4
	2. ²	25,63±5,28			
	3. ³	25,59±4,75			
	4. ⁴	26,02±4,73			
BAS	1.	41,60±7,51	0,903	0,439	
	2.	40,37±8,60			
	3.	40,75±7,89			
	4.	41,44±7,32			

According to Table 4, while the mean BAS scores did not differ according to the class variable ($p > 0,05$), the mean scores of ORTO-11 were statistically different ($p < 0,05$). It is seen that this difference stems from the 1st class students. In this case, it can be said that first year students have less orthorexic tendency.

Table 5. Comparison of Scale Scores by Department Variable

Scales	Department	Mean±SD	F	p	Difference
ORTO-11	Physical Education and Sports Teach ¹	25,46±5,12	8,120	0,000	4>1,2,3
	Coaching Education ²	25,73±4,83			
	Sports Management ³	26,87±5,05			
	Recreation ⁴	28,11±4,79			
BAS	Physical Education and Sports Teach ¹	40,55±8,24	2,656	0,048	4>1,2,3
	Coaching Education ²	40,87±7,39			
	Sports Management ³	40,86±7,66			
	Recreation ⁴	43,07±8,12			

In the Table 5; it has been determined that there are significant differences in terms of both ORTO-11 and BAS score averages in terms of the department variable ($p < 0,05$). It is seen that the difference for both scales is due to the Recreation department. From this point of view, it is understood that the students of this department both show less orthorexic tendency and have higher scores in body appreciation.

Table 6. Comparison of Scale Scores for the question Do you exercise regularly?

Scales	Yes	No	t	p
	Mean±SD	Mean±SD		
ORTO-11	25,28±4,89	27,64±4,99	-5,396	0,000
BAS	42,02±7,68	40,36±7,74	2,882	0,004

It was determined that there was a significant difference between the scores of ORTO-11 and BAS ($p < 0,05$), (Table 6). From this point of view, it is seen that individuals who exercise regularly have a higher orthorexic tendency and have higher scores in body appreciation.

Table 7. Comparison of Scale Scores for the question Is Appearance Important to You?

Scales	Yes	No	t	p
	Mean±SD	Mean±SD		
ORTO-11	26,13±4,96	28,32±5,10	-3,447	0,001
BAS	41,12±7,63	41,29±8,86	-,154	0,878

It was determined that there was no significant difference between the mean BAS scores ($p > 0.05$), but there were significant differences in terms of the mean ORTO-11 score ($p < 0.05$), (Table 7). In this case, it can be said that individuals who care about their appearance show a higher tendency to orthorexic.

Table 8. Comparison of Scale Scores by BMI Variable

Scales	Category	Mean±SD	F	p
ORTO-11	Underweight	26,68±4,81	1,971	0,140
	Normal range	26,12±5,22		
	Owerweight	24,77±3,28		
BAS	Underweight	41,88±7,05	2,919	0,055
	Normal range	40,55±8,21		
	Owerweight	39,66±9,15		

In the Table; it was determined that there was no difference in terms of both ORTO-11 and BAS score averages in terms of BMI ($p > 0,05$).

Table 9. Correlation Analysis

		ORTO-11	BAS
ORTO-11	Pearson correlation (r)	1	-0,090
	p		0,016

When Table 9 is examined; the correlation analysis show that it was determined that there is a significant relationship between ORTO-11 and BAS ($p < 0,05$). At the same time, it was determined that this relationship was negative ($r: -0.090$). In this case, it can be said that the increase in orthorexic tendency (decrease in ORTO-11 score) and the increase in body appreciation (increase in BAS score) are related to each other.

Discussion

In current research, it was conducted to examine the relationship between body appreciation and orthorexia nervosa of students in sports departments of universities. According to the research results; orthorexia nervosa tendencies and body appreciation scores of female students in the study were higher than male students. In terms of the department of the study group, it was determined that the participants studying in the recreation department had higher orthorexia nervosa tendencies and body appreciation scores than the students studying in other departments. In addition, it has been observed that students who exercise regularly have a higher orthorexic tendency and have higher scores in body appreciation. Moreover, it has been determined that students who attach importance to their appearance have higher orthorexic tendency and have lower scores in body appreciation. When the previous studies are examined; Duran (2016) have reported that there was no difference in terms of gender, and that male students had higher orthorexia nervosa mean scores than female students in a study in which health school students determined the risk of orthorexia nervosa and its affecting factors. Alhaj et al., (2022), in their study in which they identified peer-based eating disorders among university students, stated that eating disorder tendencies were high among students, and that the tendency for eating disorders increased as the BMI ratio increased. In their study, Dalmaz and Tekdemir Yurtdaş (2015) have reported that there was no difference between the participants' gender, BMI, marital status and education, and orthorexia nervosa score averages, that female participants had a higher average score than male participants, and that individuals who did sports were higher than those who did not do sports. They determined that they have orthorexic tendencies. Barnes and Caltabiano (2017) stated that there was no significant difference between gender and the avarage ORTO-15 score, and that eating disorder behaviors, overweight and appearance orientation were indicators of orthorexia nervosa. Çuhalcık and Durat (2017) have reported that male participants showed more orthorexic tendencies than female participants, the desire to reach ideal body weight causes an obsession with healthy eating in men, and among female participants, it is related to orthorexic tendencies about the dimension of skepticism. In the other study by Baysal and Kızıltan (2020), it was found that there was no difference between gender and ORTO-11 score averages, male had higher average scores than female, 32.1% of male individuals and 27.8% of female individuals showed orthorexic tendency. and orthorexia nervosa not only affect the eating habits of individuals, but also their exercise behaviors. Parra Carriedo et al., (2020) stated in their study that participants have a higher tendency to orthorexia nervosa, and female students have a higher tendency to eat disorders than male students. Yazkan and Uğurlu (2022) found in their study that there was a significant difference in gender and age and orthorexic tendencies, there was no difference in BMI and orthorexic tendencies, and male participants had a higher average score than female participants. In a different study, Bebek and Yıldızhan (2022) determined that there was a difference significantly between age, marital status and BMI of female participants, body appreciation

and recreation awareness, and there was a linear and low level relationship between body appreciation and recreation awareness. Brytek-Matera et al., (2020) In a study in which students at European universities examined orthorexia nervosa and eating disorders; They determined that Polish students had a higher tendency to orthorexia nervosa and eating disorders than Spanish students. Arslan (2020), on the other hand, stated in her study that the body image levels of the participants included in the research were low, their eating attitude behaviors were deteriorated and their eating attitude behaviors were mostly in the obese group.

In conclusion; It was seen that the tendency of orthorexia nervosa and body appreciation of the research group was higher, female students had lower orthorexia nervosa tendencies than male students, and their body appreciation levels were higher. In addition, it was observed that students with regular exercise, low BMI had higher scores on orthorexic disposition and body appreciation. In line with this information, the results obtained from the research; It would contribute to the diagnosis of orthorexia and eating disorders. In addition, it is thought that researches to be conducted with participants from different universities of the country will help prevent orthorexia and eating disorders, which are especially common among the young population.

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