



EXAMINATION OF ALTRUISM, SELF-ESTEEM AND COMMUNICATION SKILLS IN STUDENTS TAKING CIVILIAN INVOLVEMENT PROJECTS

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Abstract

The aim of the study is to examine altruism, self-esteem and communication skills of students in sports management and recreation departments of Akdeniz University, Sport Sciences Faculty in relation with taking Civilian Involvement Projects (CIP) courses. Population of the study consisted of 268 students and 222 students returned the questionnaires (rate of return =83%). Data collection tool consisted of four parts. In the first part demographic information was inquired. In the second part "Altruism scale", in the third part "Self-esteem scale" was used. The last part of the questionnaire consisted of "Communication skills" scale. When the mean scores that participants obtained from "Altruism" and "Communication skills" scales were considered, it was found out that the highest scores were from "Helping sub scale" with $3,73\pm 0,72$ which was followed by "Altruism scale" total mean scores with 3.65 ± 0.70 . All subscales yielded results over an average level according to 5th type Likert Scale. This result shows that our students had scores above the average in altruism and communication skills. The participants had high level of self-esteem (90,5%). Some variables were compared according to taking a CIP course. In the group that had taken CIP, 82,7% thought of joining voluntary activities in the future. In the other group this level was 69,4% ($p<0,05$). The level of helping in altruism scale was higher in the group that had taken a CIP course ($p<0,05$).

Keywords: Sport Management, Recreation, Altruism, Self-esteem, Communication Skills.

INTRODUCTION

Besides scientific research and education, universities also have a mission for using the knowledge for being in service of the society. To reach this mission some universities put social responsibility projects into their curriculum in order to create awareness and sensitivity to the problems of the society. In these projects students learn team work, take initiative, communicate with "other" people. From 1999 on Sabancı University integrated these projects into the curriculum. Akdeniz University, School of Physical Education and Sport initiated civilian involvement projects as a course from 2004 on in the curriculum of Sport Management department. After 2006 Education Faculties integrated these Projects under the name of "Community Service Practice" courses. After the integration of these courses officially academicians from Education field began inquiring about the application of these projects (Saran, Coşkun, Zorel & Aksoy, 2011) or contribution of these projects to the development of students (Elma et al., 2010; Kocadere and Seferoğlu, 2013) There are also some studies which inquire the matter from the viewpoint of lecturers (Kesten, 2012; Ergül ve Kurtulmuş, 2014).

An important concept related with participating in voluntary activities, community service or social responsibility is altruism. Altruism is one of the prosocial behaviours defined as the belief of helping and providing benefit to others and show behaviours of interest, care without expecting any return (İşmen and Yıldız, 2005). Social justice, equality, duty of goodness, feeling of guilt can be some of the factors causing altruism behaviour (Yaylacı, 2016). Altruism explains that an individual considers the situation of the other people meanwhile he/she sacrifices the time, costs, energy while giving a voluntary service (Ümmet, Ekşi, & Otrar, 2013). Altruism behaviour is not only helpful to the society but also helpful to the individual as he/she can focus on others, get out of the load of daily problems by widening the point of view. As a result he/she doesn't feel these problems as difficult as before. (Kasapoğlu, 2013). Altruism may provide that people contribute to the society by joining community services, social responsibility projects or other voluntary activities. However, as it is stated in a study by Yöntem and İlhan (2013) altruism levels of individuals who participate in voluntary activities in various associations were found to be higher than individuals that do not participate in such activities. Another concept that is related with participating in voluntary activities is communication skills. Communication is defined the exchange of emotions and ideas between human beings (Çetinkaya and Alparlan, 2011). Human beings are in a need of communicating with others and communication between individuals result from the need of having relationships and trying to reach various targets mutually (Ersanlı and Balcı, 1998). Communication skills facilitate forming relationships with others and this situation increases the importance of the functions of these skills in the interpersonal context (Erözkan, 2007). Especially when the individual has a profession that requires intensive interaction with people, communications skills become more important (Kumcağız, Yılmaz, Çelik, Avcı, 2011). There are studies in literature showing evidence about the development of communication skills after "Community Service Practices" courses (Sönmez, 2010). In another study participants notices development in their creativity, communication and cooperation abilities (Gökçe, 2011). Self-esteem was another construct examined in this study in relation with participating in CIP courses. Self-esteem refers to a positive or negative orientation toward the self (Rosenberg, 1965) and reflects one's feelings of self-regard and self-worth (Chen, Cheung, Bond & Leung, 2006). In a broader definition self-esteem is feeling oneself as proud, eager, efficient and succesful. It is a feeling after judging and evaluating the self (Özkan, 1994) and a judgement that shows the extent that an individual sees himself/herself valuable (Baumeister, Campbell, Krueger & Vohs, 2003). Self-esteem is found to be important for a successful and satisfying life as being a central aspect of well-being (McAuley et al., 2005). High self-esteem was reported as the one of the strongest predictors of well-being (Cheng & Furnham, 2003).

University education is the last step taken towards business life and family life full of responsibilities. Before becoming a part of the society as an adult students should develop awareness and empathy for the part of the society that needs care, tenderness and attention. So under the light of the abovementioned literature, the aim of his study is to to examine altruism, communication skills and self-esteem of students in Sport Management and Recreation department in Akdeniz University in relation with taking CIP courses.

METHOD

This study is designed as descriptive and cross-sectional study.

Population and Sample

Sample of the study consisted of 222 among 269 Sport Management and Recreation Department Students in Akdeniz University who are regularly attending to classes (A rate of return of 83 %). Mean age of participants was 21.64± 2.15. Demographic information about participants were presented in Table 1.

Table 1: Demographic Information of the Participants

Demographic Information		n	%
Gender	Men	127	57.2
	Women	95	42.8
	Total	222	100.0
Place of Birth	City	180	81.1
	Town	28	12.6
	Village	14	6.3
	Total	222	100.0
Perceived Socio-Economical Status	Very Low	2	.9
	Low	18	8.1
	Middle	157	70.7
	High	37	16.7
	Very High	8	3.6
	Total	222	100.0
Level of Income	≤2000 TL.	75	33.8
	2001-3000 TL.	66	29.7
	3001-4000 TL.	44	19.8
	4001-5000 TL.	13	5.9
	≥5001 TL	24	10.9
	Total	222	100.0

Data Collection Tool

Data collection tool of the study is a questionnaire consisting of five parts. In the first part demographic information, in the second part voluntary activity participation are inquired. The third part of the data collection tool is "Altruism" scale developed by Ruhston et al. (1981) and adapted to Turkish language by Tekeş and Hasta (2015). The scale consisted of 20 questions of 5-point Likert type that made up two dimensions "Helping" and "Philanthropy". "Helping" dimension includes behaviours with instantenous characteristics which are encountered in daily life. "Philanthropy" dimension is related with behaviours resulting with costs. Higher scores in this scale shows higher levels of altruism. In reliability analyses, Cronbach alpha levels of the scales were .81 and .70 respectively. Also split half reliability and item total correlations were found satisfactory. According to exploratory factor analysis 35.58% of variance is explained. Confirmatory factor analysis was also applied and goodness of fit indexes confirmed the structural validity (GFI= .84, AGFI= .81, NNFI= .73, CFI= .86, RMSEA = .09). In this study, Cronbach alpha levels of the subscales were .876 and .817 respectively. The fourth part of the questionnaire consisted of communication skills inventory developed by Ersanlı and Balcı (1998). The scale consisted of 45 Likert 5 type questions. Cronbach alpha reliability was found as .72 for the scale. Exploratory factor analysis revealed 3 subscales named as "Mental", "Emotional" and "Behavioural". In the fifth part of the questionnaire, the subscale of Rosenberg Self Esteem Scale measuring self-esteem developed by Rosenberg (1965) and adapted to Turkish language by Çuhadaroğlu (1986) was utilized. According to the scoring of the scale 0-1 shows high self-esteem, 2-4 intermediate self-esteem and 4-6 low level of self esteem.

Statistical Analysis

Statistical analysis was carried out by SPSS 18.0. Besides descriptive statistics, Mann Whitney U test , Kruskal Wallis tests were used as data showed non-parametrical distribution. Chi-square tests and non-parametrical Spearman Correlation test were utilized.

FINDINGS

In the findings section of the study, findings concerning voluntary activity participation, altruism levels, communication skills and self-esteem levels of the participants are presented. In Table 2 information concerning participating in voluntary activities were given.

Table 2: Information About Participating in Voluntary Activities or Social Responsibility Projects

	Participating in Voluntary Projects	Frequency	%
I participated in social responsibility projects	Not yet	60	27.0
	1-2 times	100	45.0
	3-4 times	33	14.9
	5 times and more...	29	13.1
	Total	222	100.0
In the future I am planning ...	To participate in another project	164	73.9
	Not to participate in another project	58	26.1
	Total	222	100.0
Have you taken the CIP course?	Yes	147	66.2
	No	75	33.8
	Total	222	100.0

According to Table 2, majority of students participated in social responsibility projects 1-2 times (45.0%) and in the future they are thinking of participating in another Project (73.9%). 66.2% of the students have taken the CIP courses in their curriculum.

Table 3: Descriptive Statistics Obtained from Scales

Scales	n	\bar{X}	Sd
<i>Altruism</i>	222	3.66	.70
Helping	222	3.74	.72
Philanthropy	222	3.47	.84
<i>Communication Skills</i>	222	3.42	.42
Mental	222	3.49	.47
Emotional	222	3.26	.47
Behavioural	222	3.50	.46

According to the results in Table 4, received the highest scores from "helping" subscale of altruism scale. When communication skills are considered, the highest score was obtained from behavioural subscale.

When self-esteem results were considered it was found out that 90.5% of students had high self-esteem and 9.5 % had a medium level of self-esteem.

Table 4: Attitudes of Participants Towards Contributing to Voluntary Projects According to Taking CIP Course

		Do you plan to join social responsibility projects in the future?		
		Yes	No	Total
Have you taken CIP course?	No	Frequency 102	45	147
		% 69,4%	30,6%	100,0%
	Yes	Frequency 62	13	75
		% 82,7%	17,3%	100,0%
Total		Frequency 164	58	222
		% 73,9%	26,1%	100,0%

According to Table 5, 82.7% of students who participated in CIP courses plan to join social responsibility projects in the future. Meanwhile this percentage in students who had not participated in CIP courses is 69.4%. The difference was statistically significant ($\chi^2=4.537$, $p<0.05$).

Table 5: Altruism and Communication Skills of Participants According to Taking CIP Courses

		Have you taken CIP course?	N	Mean	Standard Deviation	Z (p) Values
<i>Altruism Scale</i>	<i>Yes</i>		75	3,768667	,6737738	-1.261
	<i>No</i>		147	3,601701	,7131931	(0,207)
-Helping *	Yes		75	3,897143	,6965204	-2,096
	No		147	3,657920	,7223726	(0,036)
-Philantropy	Yes		75	3,455556	,7761136	-0.455
	No		147	3,470522	,8681539	(0.649)
<i>Communication Skills Scale</i>	<i>Yes</i>		75	3,389926	,3745008	-1.366
	<i>No</i>		147	3,429327	,4474781	(0.172)
-Mental	Yes		75	3,440889	,4137129	-0.491
	No		147	3,511565	,4957760	(0.624)
-Emotional	Yes		75	3,220444	,4025405	-1.218
	No		147	3,273923	,4975513	(0.223)
-Behavioural	Yes		75	3,508444	,4276865	-0.435
	No		147	3,502494	,4807574	(0,664)

According to Table 6, students who had taken CIP course had higher scores in Helping subscale of Altruism Scale ($p<0.05$). The other results were not statistically significant. Also self-esteem levels of participants were compared according to taking CIP course, but significant results were not obtained.

Table 6: Correlations between Altruism and Communication Skills of Participants

	<i>Altruism Scale</i>	<i>Helping</i>	<i>Philantropy</i>	<i>Communication Skills</i>	<i>Mental</i>	<i>Emotional</i>	<i>Behavioral</i>
<i>Altruism Scale</i>	r 1,000	,952**	,826**	,458**	,459**	,303**	,460**
	p .	,000	,000	,000	,000	,000	,000
	n 222	222	222	222	222	222	222
Helping	r ,952**	1,000	,647**	,372**	,387**	,231**	,371**
	p ,000	.	,000	,000	,000	,001	,000
	n 222	222	222	222	222	222	222
Philantropy	r ,826**	,647**	1,000	,477**	,445**	,343**	,492**
	p ,000	,000	.	,000	,000	,000	,000
	n 222	222	222	222	222	222	222
<i>Communication</i>	r ,458**	,372**	,477**	1,000	,906**	,829**	,908**

	<i>Altruism Scale</i>	<i>Helpin g</i>	<i>Philantro py</i>	<i>Communicati on Skills</i>	<i>Mental</i>	<i>Emotion al</i>	<i>Behavior al</i>
<i>Skills Scale</i>	<i>p</i> ,000	,000	,000	.	,000	,000	,000
	<i>n</i> 222	222	222	222	222	222	222
<i>Mental</i>	<i>r</i> ,459**	,387**	,445**	,906**	1,000	,638**	,753**
	<i>p</i> ,000	,000	,000	,000	.	,000	,000
	<i>n</i> 222	222	222	222	222	222	222
<i>Emotional</i>	<i>r</i> ,303**	,231**	,343**	,829**	,638**	1,000	,652**
	<i>p</i> ,000	,001	,000	,000	,000	.	,000
	<i>n</i> 222	222	222	222	222	222	222
<i>Behavioural</i>	<i>r</i> ,460**	,371**	,492**	,908**	,753**	,652**	1,000
	<i>p</i> ,000	,000	,000	,000	,000	,000	.
	<i>n</i> 222	222	222	222	222	222	222

According to the correlation analysis between altruism and communication skills scales and subscales, all subscales showed positive significant correlations ($p < 0.05$). This shows that the two concepts can affect each other positively. This relation could be further analysed.

Table 7: Altruism and Communication Skills of Participants According to Frequency of Participating in Social Responsibility Projects

Frequency of Participating in Social Responsibility Projects		N	Mean	Standart Deviation	Kruskal Wallis Chi square (p) value
<i>Altruism Scale*</i>	<i>None</i>	60	3,416667	,7019746	29.337 (.000)
	<i>1-2 times</i>	100	3,557500	,6654297	
	<i>3 times and more</i>	62	4,054032	,6019298	
	<i>Total</i>	222	3,658108	,7030651	
<i>Helping*</i>	<i>None</i>	60	3,453571	,7182487	25.320 (.000)
	<i>1-2 times</i>	100	3,679286	,6776686	
	<i>3 times and more</i>	62	4,110599	,6430103	
	<i>Total</i>	222	3,738739	,7211369	
<i>Philantrophy*</i>	<i>None</i>	60	3,330556	,8063377	23.621 (.000)
	<i>1-2 times</i>	100	3,273333	,8042117	
	<i>3 times and more</i>	62	3,905914	,7620441	
	<i>Total</i>	222	3,465465	,8364548	
<i>Communication Skills Scale*</i>	<i>None</i>	60	3,374815	,3862128	10.158 (.006)
	<i>1-2 times</i>	100	3,346222	,3958657	
	<i>3 times and more</i>	62	3,568455	,4677418	
	<i>Total</i>	222	3,416016	,4237850	
<i>Mental</i>	<i>None</i>	60	3,453333	,3971272	4.908 (.086)
	<i>1-2 times</i>	100	3,439333	,4570039	
	<i>3 times and more</i>	62	3,598925	,5393772	
	<i>Total</i>	222	3,487688	,4699075	
<i>Emotional*</i>	<i>None</i>	60	3,252222	,4553249	8.892 (.012)
	<i>1-2 times</i>	100	3,176000	,4647406	
	<i>3 times and more</i>	62	3,388172	,4605413	
	<i>Total</i>	222	3,255856	,4673807	
<i>Behavioural*</i>	<i>None</i>	60	3,418889	,4207592	15.849 (.000)
	<i>1-2 times</i>	100	3,423333	,3965480	
	<i>3 times and more</i>	62	3,718280	,5331174	
	<i>Total</i>	222	3,504505	,4625434	

Altruism and communication scales and subscales were compared according to frequency of social responsibility projects participation. According to the results, altruism, helping, philanthropy, communication skills, emotional and behavioural mean scores showed different results. In all these variables individuals who participated in social responsibility activities 3 times and more had highest scores.

Table 8: Altruism and Communication Skills of Participants According to Ages

	Ages	N	Mean	Standard Deviation	Z (p) values
<i>Altruism Scale</i>	<i>≤ 21 years old</i>	109	3,699083	,7131042	-1.114
	<i>>21 years old</i>	113	3,618584	,6941141	(.265)
Helping	≤ 21 years old	109	3,745740	,7140496	-.180
	>21 years old	113	3,731985	,7310240	(.857)
Philanthropy*	≤ 21 years old	109	3,590214	,8581287	-2.578
	>21 years old	113	3,345133	,8004577	(.010)
<i>Communication skills Scale*</i>	<i>≤ 21 years old</i>	109	3,519266	,4290829	-3.015
	<i>>21 years old</i>	113	3,316421	,3955476	(.003)
Mental*	≤ 21 years old	109	3,593884	,4606795	-2.960
	>21 years old	113	3,385251	,4577147	(.003)
Emotional*	≤ 21 years old	109	3,370642	,4776857	-3.135
	>21 years old	113	3,145133	,4310591	(.002)
Behavioural*	≤ 21 years old	109	3,593272	,4809066	-2.224
	>21 years old	113	3,418879	,4290511	(.026)

Altruism and communication scales and subscales were compared according to ages. Philanthropy subscale of Altruism scale was higher in the group ≤ 21 years old. When communication skills scale was considered, the mean scores of total scale, mental, emotional and behavioural subscales are higher in the group who are younger than ≤21 years old.

Altruism and communication scales and subscales were compared according to gender and no significant results were obtained.

Table 9: Altruism and Communication Skills of Participants According to Perceived Economical S tatus

		N	Mean	Standart Deviation	Kruskal Wallis Chi Square (p values)
<i>Altruism Scale*</i>	Low	20	3,212500	,8319089	6.458 (.040)
	Medium	157	3,699682	,6778666	
	High	45	3,711111	,6748644	
	Total	222	3,658108	,7030651	
Helping	Low	20	3,342857	,8066586	5.410 (.067)
	Medium	157	3,771611	,7110476	
	High	45	3,800000	,6779047	
	Total	222	3,738739	,7211369	
Philanthropy*	Low	20	2,908333	,9830062	7.758 (.021)
	Medium	157	3,531847	,8017817	
	High	45	3,481481	,8127940	
	Total	222	3,465465	,8364548	

<i>Communication Skills Scale</i>	Low	20	3,427778	,4931697	2.896
	Medium	157	3,391932	,4250628	(.235)
	High	45	3,494815	,3846493	
	Total	222	3,416016	,4237850	
Mental	Low	20	3,513333	,5222981	4.489
	Medium	157	3,447134	,4663773	(.106)
	High	45	3,617778	,4434484	
	Total	222	3,487688	,4699075	
Emotional	Low	20	3,260000	,5623260	1.628
	Medium	157	3,236943	,4652846	(.443)
	High	45	3,320000	,4331235	
	Total	222	3,255856	,4673807	
Behavioural	Low	20	3,510000	,5316971	.773
	Medium	157	3,491720	,4676067	(.680)
	High	45	3,546667	,4181730	
	Total	222	3,504505	,4625434	

Altruism and communication scales and subscales were compared according to perceived economical status. In overall mean scores of altruism scale individuals with higher economical status had higher levels of altruism scores ($p < 0.05$). But no difference was obtained in communication skills.

DISCUSSION AND RESULTS

The aim of this study is to examine altruism, communication skills and self-esteem of students in Sport Management and Recreation department in Akdeniz University according to taking CIP courses. 222 students participated in this study with a mean age of $21.64 \pm 2,150$. Participants were born in cities, perceived their economical status as medium and men had a higher percentage in the sample. Students take CIP courses after the 6th semester and 66.2% stated that they had taken the course. 27% of the participants had never joined voluntary activities, 45% joined 1-2 times and, 14.9% joined 3-4 times and 13.1% more than 4 times. Most of the participants 73.9% plan to contribute to social responsibility projects.

According to the comparison made between participants between the ones who had taken CIP courses with the other group, it was found out that 82.7% of the group who had taken CIP courses plan to contribute to other social responsibility projects ($p < 0.05$). This is one of the positive effects that was expected to achieve from this course when it was installed in the curriculum of sport management and recreation programmes. In a study conducted to teacher candidates, participants stated that in a similar course named "Community Service Practices" their sensitivity to the problems of the society increased (Gökçe, 2011). Additionally participating in such a course increased the awareness of the importance of being voluntary in such projects (Çetin and Sönmez, 2009).

Students who had taken CIP course had higher scores in Helping subscale of Altruism Scale ($p < 0.05$). But no significant results were obtained in Communication skills. There are studies in literature showing evidence about the development of communication skills after "Community Service Practices" courses (Sönmez, 2010). In another study participants notices development in their creativity, communication and cooperation abilities (Gökçe, 2011). The type of education is also claimed to develop communication skills in a study conducted to engineering and law. Students in law faculty showed higher skills of communication (Toy, 2007).

Altruism and communication scales and subscales were compared according to frequency of social responsibility projects participation. According to the results, altruism, helping, philanthropy, communication skills, emotional and behavioural mean scores showed different results. In all these variables individuals who participated in social responsibility activities 3 times and more had highest



scores. In a study by Yöntem and İlhan (2013) altruism levels of individuals who participate in voluntary activities in various associations were found to be higher than other individuals.

Altruism and communication scales and subscales were compared according to ages. Philanthropy subscale of Altruism scale was higher in the group ≤ 21 years old. In a study by Ak (2013) no relationship was obtained between age and altruism. But Mutafçılar (2008) obtained a weak positive relationship between age and altruism. It can be expected that as people gain experience and feeling of responsibility the level of altruism also increases. But in this study younger individuals had higher levels in Philanthropy. When communication skills scale was considered, the mean scores of total scale, mental, emotional and behavioural subscales are higher in the group who are younger than ≤ 21 years old.

Significant results could not be obtained when altruism and communication scales and subscales were compared according to gender. In studies conducted to university students no significant differences were found between genders in altruism levels (Ak, 2013; Avcı, Aydın and Özbaşaran, 2013). In another study a comparison of communication scales was realized between genders and women students achieved significantly higher scores in mental, behavioural and temotional subscales (Gölönü and Karıcı, 2010). A sample from three different university students were examined according to their communication skills and women students had higher communication skills (Korkut Owen, Bugay, 2014). Different faculty students were compared according to their communication skills and women students showed higher scores. Meanwhile in another study, communication skills were found higher in men (Uğurlu, 2012).

Altruism and communication scales and subscales were compared according to perceived economical status. In overall mean scores of atruism scale individuals with higher economical status had higher levels of altruism scores ($p < 0.05$). A similar result was obtained in philanthropy level. But no diffence was obtained in communication skills. This result was consistent with other studies where no significant result was obtained in communications skills compared according to socio-economical status (Gölönü and Karıcı, 2010; Toy, 2007). Meanwhile in a study by Uğurlu (2012), the group with higher level of income showed lower level of communication skills.

As a result taking courses of social service practices or participating in social responsibility projects increases altrusim levels and communication skills of university students. As university education is the last step taken towards business life and family life full of responsibilities. Before becoming a part of the society as an adult students should develop awareness and empathy for the part of the society that needs care, tenderness and attention. In order to obtain this target, university departments can include social responsibility projects into their curriculum and follow the succesfull applications in other universities.

For future studies different varibles might be included into this study such as psychological well-being or empathy. Benefits of taking such courses could be understood more clearly if prospective studies are conducted instead of cross-sectional studies.

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