

Physical Education and Sports Course: The Content Analysis

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Abstract

Physical education plays an important role in improve students' health. Therefore, the main objective of the present study is to examine the PhD level and Masters level thesis submissions and dissertations that are related to physical education and sports studies in the context of Turkey. To this end, the researcher conducts a content analysis. For the present study, a regional scanning model was applied in which 58 PhD and Masters level dissertations are selected. These dissertations are part of Turkey's Higher Education Institution's dissertations database and have been examined in terms of the year, institution, research model, method, data collection instrument, department, research topic, sampling group and applied education level. In the present study, pie charts and frequency tables have been used to illustrate the results of the data. It is shown that these quantitative methods have been mostly used in the dissertations written between 2015 and 2020, while qualitative methods have been used to a lesser degree. The present study makes significant contributions in terms of enriching the theoretical and managerial perspectives on the subject.

Keywords: physical education, sports, PhD thesis, higher education, Turkey.

Introduction

Every development around the globe is directly or indirectly, both influenced and influences human activity. Therefore, the individual assumes a central position. Particularly, interpretation of different individual experiences ultimately determines their overall individual life trajectory and outlook. This dynamic and complicated process takes a time. In this situation, physical education plays an important role. The basic purpose of physical education is to educate young people and children through learning experiences which allow them to be engaged in physical activities in order to provide them the information they need to stay motivated. Moreover, physical education courses also provide them social, intellectual and moral training and education. Therefore, researchers have paid a considerable of attention to the aspect of physical education as compared to other branches.

Education is expressed and sustained as a controlled process carried out in accordance with social norms and the rule of law, while taking into account predispositions and the learning environments, with a view to develop positive behaviour, knowledge and expertise (Coskun & Edward, 2020). Physical education and sports courses aim at strengthening students' bodies, protecting their health and gaining social predisposition (Bartek & Bartkova, 2018; Petkova, Nikolov & Nikolov, 2020). Physical education and sports activities are designed to help

students develop the behaviours and skills necessary to take their place in social life and that they develop their personalities, gain a competitive spirit and adopt a healthy lifestyle that is also a source of personal enjoyment. Attitude towards physical education and sports courses include components such as reinforcement, facilitation and predisposition, and creativity (Chen, Bennett, Hypnar, & Mason, 2018; Kalashi et al., 2020).

Individuals' primary needs can be categorized as vital and psychological needs (Starshinova & Pankova, 2018). Vitals needs are related to ensuring continuity whereas psychological needs are related to shaping needs. The psychological needs of individuals can be defined perceptually. Epistemologically speaking, psychological needs can be defined as personal approaches to their behavioural preferences. Well-being can be observed in mental, physical, and perceptual states based on the needs to be fulfilled (Rivera, Christy, Kim, Vess, Hicks, & Schlegel, 2019).

Basic psychological needs can be explained in three categories, which are relationality, competence, and autonomy needs (Tukaiev et al., 2019; Romanova et al., 2021). Relationality needs are the needs of the individual to perceive his/her interaction with the society as sufficient; competence need is the need of the individual to perceive his/her behaviours as sufficient; and autonomy need is the need of the individual to exercise his/her free will in relation to his/her life (Brown, 2014). Physical education and sports courses are planned in a way that

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takes these needs into account. Meeting the physical needs of the students paves the way for meeting the basic psychological needs driving their personal development (Riga, Ioannidi & Papayiannis, 2020).

Today, physical education and sports course emerge as one of the indispensable elements of an educational curriculum in terms of both, structure and meaning. These courses are based on a strong foundation of ideas and practices that are built upon, and have been refined over a seamless developmental process that has taken centuries. The incorporation of physical education and sports courses into the educational curriculum dates back to as early as the 18th century (Böke, 2016).

Physical education and sports course take their place in the curriculum starting from the rudimentary levels of education such as pre-kindergarten, kindergarten and primary school. It is during these periods that the students acquire self-consciousness, adopt a relatively stable idea of their personality traits and dispositions, and start to feel like valuable and competent individuals (Belinskaya et al., 2020). Hence, with the incorporation of the physical education and sports courses into the curriculum during these periods, it is expected to support and facilitate the developmental and growth processes of children (Hekim, 2015b).

During physical education and sports lessons in primary school, students are commonly taught mechanical principles, how to use their bodies actively, and how to act according to basic rules (Alp, Oz & Horozo ÄYlu, 2018). Most of the basic movements taught or physical activities carried out during primary education involve gymnastics and aim at the acquisition of the necessary experience of using the body in a balanced and time-efficient manner. Commonly, physical education and sports courses are taught by classroom teachers and in line with other courses being taught. In this way, students acquire the necessary skills to perform the movements that are required of them during physical education and sports courses in secondary education (NALÇAKAN, 2015).

Nevertheless, there are some problems commonly encountered in practice. These problems are a result of the irregularities and deficiencies in the education system as well as from the way that physical education and sports lessons are taught (Boke, 2016). These problems are that:

- there is not enough introductory content and material available in educational institutions,
- there are no physical education teachers with sufficient qualifications available in some educational institutions,
- there are deficiencies in terms of materials and facilities required to conduct the lessons smoothly,

- the incompetence of classroom teachers in terms of teaching physical education and sports lessons in primary school,
- the latest innovations and developments in the field are generally not incorporated in the educational set-up available in schools,
- the pre-service teachers that are trained to become physical education and sports teachers are not provided with special training for teaching physical education and sports lessons to students enrolled at pre-kindergarten and kindergarten levels, and
- insufficient promotion and lack of coverage of in-school sports activities in the media.

Out-of-school activities associated with the physical education and sports course should be carried out in a planned and efficient manner (Boke, 2016). The areas to be associated with the physical education and sports course should be determined and the necessary feasibility work has to be conducted to get the best efficiency from the course and to minimize the problems encountered.

The fact that the students are in adolescence period as well as their gender-based differences should be taken into account in respect of both physical education and sports lessons and the extra-curricular and out-of-school activities associated with physical education and sports learning (Bicen et al, 2021; Radid et al, 2020). Accordingly, the course load should be well-adjusted and the students should be grouped according to their educational and developmental characteristics, particularly in contingent situations or activities. Physical education instructors and sports teachers should be prepared to deal with students unwilling to participate in the lesson or physical activity, or students exhibiting fatigue, excessive sweating or no sweating at all (Karaoglu & Yalcin, 2020).

In primary education, physical education and sports lessons progress in line with life sciences lessons. There are games and activities common to both courses. Games and activities have a central place in the lives of students from this age bracket (Gursel, 2018). Their social and mental abilities develop and perfect through games. Thus, games must be incorporated into the schema of lessons to be taught within the scope of elementary education.

To prevent muscle and joint injuries that might adversely affect the physical development of students, movements that would force the muscles and joints should be avoided during static exercises.

Attention must be paid to extracurricular activities associated with physical education and sports courses, which involve exercises suitable for a given physical environment and which help ensure the development and growth of individual students. Exercises should be chosen

from among exercises such as jumping, spinning, swinging, swimming, stretching, etc. and should be based on whether they are to be performed indoors or outdoors, on a sunny or rainy day, and in a cold or warm environment. It is important to carry out physical activities outdoors as far as circumstances permit as clean air and sunlight are crucial for the healthy development and growth of children. For this reason, even in schools with indoor sports facilities and gyms, lessons should occasionally be held outdoors especially in conditions of good weather.

It is also important that the curriculum is not unengaging or too dull for students who participate in physical education and sports lessons. If an individualized approach is not used and the whole class is taught at the same level and pace, unsurprisingly, some students will lose interest after a while (Savas & Celik Kayapinar, 2019). For this reason, activities that address the majority of the class and reinforce the right acquisitions and skills should be chosen and a variety of teaching methods should be employed as that will pique the interest of students (Krtalić, Morović, Kasumović, Spasović, Muslić, & Milanović, 2020).

Literature Review

To enhance the health of the student, physical education at school plays a key role. For the youth to take advantage of physical education at school, more than 50% of lessons at the school must have physical activities. The physical education of the student plays an important role in promoting a positive attitude and knowledge among students. Another important element of the physical education of students is student engagement which they learn through physical activities. Whereas, the students also learn how to deal with individuals from diversified backgrounds. It is key that physical education has to meet several diverse goals for which it must be integrated with different goals (Laxdal, Johannsson, & Giske, 2020).

Educators who are involved in physical education must be able to understand the mental capability of their students and be able to deliver lessons effectively. On the other hand, the experience of students in physical education must be enjoyable. Students must be encouraged to take part in physical activities as well. This is so because students having a high level of perceived level of enjoyment in physical excitement will enhance the involvement of students in these activities (Curran, & Standage, 2017). As a result, the intrinsic motivation of students to use physical education will be increased.

The history of physical education goes back to the Ottoman Empire in 1939. At that time, classes of physical

education began with the name of gymnastics. Later, the Ottoman Empire started to organize the educational activities of the General Education Regulation, and gymnastics was started in schools under the name of physical education activities. The Tanzimat period is accepted as the period when the first step is taken towards modernization of the discipline. In physical education, the diversity of activities, quality of facilities, and types of equipment play a central role (Hekim, 2015).

Diversity of activities are the activities to be carried out within the scope of physical education and sports courses which should be designed at a level that supports the social, sensory, mental and physical development needs of the students. These activities should be cascaded and divided into several parts in a way that it is easy and feasible for implementation in practical terms. The movements to be taught should be coherent and meaningful as a whole. Regional geographical and climate features should be taken into account when preparing physical education lesson plans and modules (Hekim, 2015).

Certain sports and basic games can be performed to teach movement skills during physical education and sports lessons (Nebioğlu, 2006). The achievements of students, even if they concern the same movement, should be assessed based on their age period, as the physical education and sports course starts at kindergarten and primary education level, and continues till the end of secondary education, and in the case of some countries, even throughout their higher education.

Equipment, materials and facilities are required to teach physical education and sports course following the targets and goals of the course. These should be readily available in educational institutions where physical education and sports course are taught. Individualized education programs should be initiated which are designed in light of the individual difference in psychological, motor and physical capacities of students (Al-Jarrah, Jarrah, Talafhah & Bashir, 2019). Thus, physical education and sports curriculum and associated teaching techniques should be developed taking these differences into consideration. Student needs: it is also important that physical education and sports curriculum should also be based on individual students' needs. A course that does not address the needs of the students is bound to be ineffective and futile (Gabdrakhmanova, Turetayeva & Doszhanova, 2020). Engaging activities: Physical education and sports activities should be engaging and should be chosen from among the activities that are more likely to be perceived as interesting by students.

In primary education, physical education and sports courses mostly include physical activities and games,

whereas at the secondary education level, the focus is more so on the acquisition of basic skills involving muscular development. Accordingly, the main objectives of physical education and sports courses in primary education are student-centric. They include comprehending and explaining the objectives of the physical education and sports course set forth by Atatürk and other thinkers, maintaining their organs and muscles at the best possible or optimal level, ensuring the coordination of their joints, nerves and muscles, adopting a proper posture, developing psychomotor skills through physical activities accompanied by music or rhythm, gaining knowledge and skills regarding folk dances, participating in Independence Days and National Holidays, learning the positive effects of the physical education and sports course on their health, engaging in sports in their leisure time, benefiting from the sun in the open air and developing a love for nature, developing the ability to act in cooperation and together, developing decision-making skills, assuming responsibility of their actions, adopting a wholesome philosophy of life in accordance with the principles of a democratic society, playing friendly, winning a competition, admitting defeat, appreciating the opponent, and resisting injustice as well as acquiring better awareness of how to protect public property and using given resources in the most efficient way possible.

According to researchers, the key objectives of the physical education and sports course in secondary education are that the students; comprehend and explain the objectives of the physical education and sports course set forth by Atatürk and other thinkers, acquire the knowledge and skills outlined in the acquisitions of the physical education and sports course, improve their psychomotor skills through physical activities accompanied by music or rhythm, gain skills and knowledge through folk dances, benefit from the sun in the open air and develop a love for nature, improve learning skills and the skills required for collaborative work and teamwork, develop a sense of responsibility and duty, improve their problem-solving and decision-making skills, admit defeat, oppose injustice and win in a friendly manner, demonstrate good behaviour and exercise the rights stipulated by a democratic competition, and increase their level of knowledge pertaining to sports equipment and facilities (Boke, 2016). On the other hand, researchers claim that the specific objectives of the physical education and sports training from the perspective of students are that they (Nebioğlu, 2006): improve their physical development, physical capacities and physiological functions, encourage them to adopt healthy living habits in order to lead a healthy life, help them develop motor skills by performing physical

activities in daily life, train students to adopt a proper posture and embrace the importance of physical education and sports activities, facilitate development of new movement skills, instil the value of creativity, imagination, character and a constructive approach, provide an opportunity for students to enjoy physical exercises and make participation in physical activities a habit, teach them desired social skills and improve their ability to adapt to their environment, help them develop a sense of cooperation through group studies and teamwork, afford students a chance to observe set rules and learn to respect authority, recognize their strengths and weaknesses and know their limitations while getting into a habit of using their leisure time in a constructive manner.

Physical education and sports courses are unique in the overall schema of educational modules in that they aim to increase their quality of life by getting students to adopt healthy living habits and lifestyles.

It has shown through research that the quality of life of a person is enhanced through exercise. Moreover, the health related problems of an individual are also mitigated through regular exercise. Exercise for the person becomes important because the health crisis always tends to increase with time. Therefore, exercise has become important for individuals of all ages including young adults of college (Ogden, Margaret, Curtin, Lamb, & Flegal, 2010; Nicklas, Jill, Legault, Leng, & Rejeski, 2012). Physical education programs of the schools play an important role in prepare them for the transition period. This is important for college students whose health keeps on declining without exercise over the passage of time (Kulinna, Corbin, & Yu, 2018).

Therefore, it is concluded that universities and colleges play an important role in promoting good health among young people. As a result, the reputation of the college is affected as well. Along with improving the physical health of students, several researchers have pointed that physical health plays an important role to improve the psychological well being of the student (Twohig-Bennett, C., & Jones, A. (2018). Researchers have also reported that one of the reasons for exercise cited by educationists is to improve the health of the students. Whereas, the students who are not engaged in regular exercise often experience setbacks to their good health. As a result, the behaviour of the student is also impacted as well. Some of the other mentioned negative effects of lack of exercise include low level of socioeconomic status, inconvenience, perception of being educated and poor health (Easty, 2018).

According to Hünük, Öztürk, Yanık, Savucu, & İnce (2018), physical education and sports courses aim at the development of the sensory, social and cognitive skills of students. Hence, physical education and sports lessons

should be designed, planned and scheduled while taking into account the physical and behavioural development of individual students.

Because of the foregoing, it is clear that it is important to efficiently plan and implement physical education and sports lessons during the course of education. Accordingly, the objective of this study is to analyze the content of master's theses and doctorate dissertations on the subject of physical education and sports learning, as published from 2015 to 2020 in the Republic of Turkey. The assessment of the research methodologies used to develop the said theses and dissertations is important in terms of encouraging the development of new and more efficient study methods. Among other features of the theses and dissertations analyzed are the type of the document, year of publication, departments, institutes and universities that granted the master or doctorate degrees in connection with the theses and dissertations subject to analysis, research design, type of sample/study group, data collection tools, levels of education featuring the investigated physical education and sports course as well as research subject.

Research Methodology

A documentary survey model was used to collect the relevant data for this research. Accordingly, a total of 58 master's theses and doctorate dissertations have been accessed from the database of the Council of Higher Education of the Republic of Turkey. These theses and dissertations have been analyzed and the researcher has derived significant findings on the basis of this data. These data indicator include, the type of the document, year of publication, departments, institutes and universities that granted masters or doctorate degrees in connection with the theses and dissertations subject to analysis, research design, research method, type of sample/study group, data collection tools, levels of education featuring the investigated physical education and sports course, and research subject. 2010 Microsoft Excel software was used to keep a record of the theses and dissertations accessed from the database of the Council of Higher Education of the Republic of Turkey. The collected research data were subsequently expressed as frequencies and pie charts.

Results

The theses and dissertations included in this study have been analyzed in terms of year of publication, type of document (master's thesis or doctoral dissertation), the departments, institutes and universities that granted

master's or doctorate degrees in connection with the theses and dissertations subject to analysis, research design, research method, type of sample/study group, data collection tools, levels of education featuring the investigated physical education and sports course, and research subject.

Types of Documents Subject to Analysis

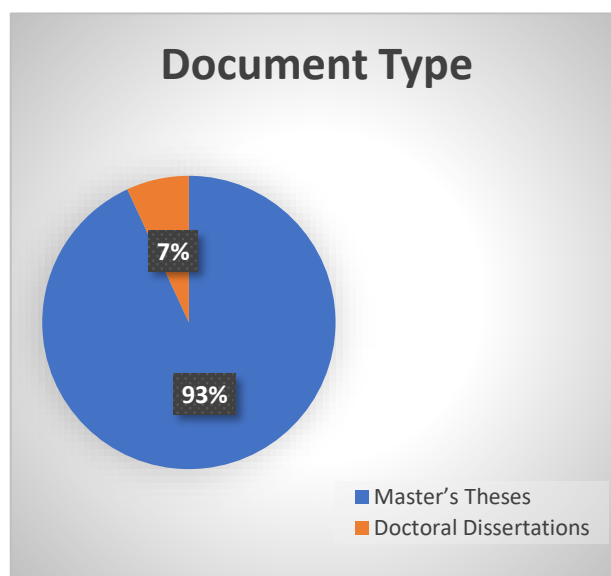
The distribution of the types of documents that have been analyzed within the scope of this study is given in Table 1.

Table 1

Distribution of the Types of Documents on Physical Education and Sports Course

Document Type	Frequency	Percentage
Master's Theses	54	93%
Doctoral Dissertations	4	7%
Total	58	100%

According to the data shown in Table 1, 54 of the documents that have been published during the period of 2015 to 2020 and analyzed within the scope of this study in relation to the physical education and sports course are master's theses, and doctoral dissertations. Accordingly, it can be seen that physical education and sports course is studied less within the scope of doctoral dissertations (i.e. 7%) as compared to master's theses (i.e. 93%).



Year of Publication of the Theses and Dissertations Subject to Analysis

Distribution of the master's theses and doctoral dissertations on physical education and sports course according to year of publication is given in Table 2.

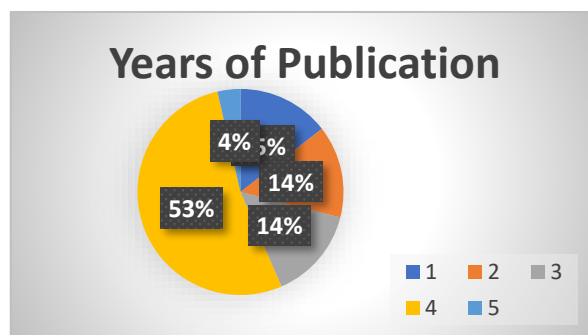
Table 2

Distribution of the Theses and Dissertations on Physical Education and Sports Course by Year of Publication

Year of Publication	Frequency	Percentage
2015	3	5.2%
2016	8	13.8%
2017	8	13.8%
2018	8	13.8%
2019	29	50%
2020	2	3.4%
Total	58	100%

According to the data shown in Table 2, it can be seen that after 3 consecutive years of the same number of master's theses and doctoral dissertations on the physical education and sports course, the highest number of theses and dissertations was recorded in 2019 i.e 53%. On the other hand, the least number of master's theses and doctoral dissertations on the physical education and sports course was recorded in 2020 i.e 5%, which was attributed to the limitations imposed by the Council of Higher Education of Republic of Turkey in terms of access to the theses and dissertations. It is estimated that the number of theses and

dissertations on the physical education and sports course will continue to increase in the coming years along with the trends in education and the advances in the use of technology.



The Universities That Granted Master's or Doctorate Degrees in Connection with the Theses and Dissertations Subject to Analysis

The universities that granted master's or doctorate degrees in connection with the theses and dissertations published between 2015 and 2020 and subject to analysis within the scope of this study, and the cities, where these universities are located, are given in Table 3.

Table 3

Distribution of the Theses and Dissertations on Physical Education and Sports Course by Universities/Cities

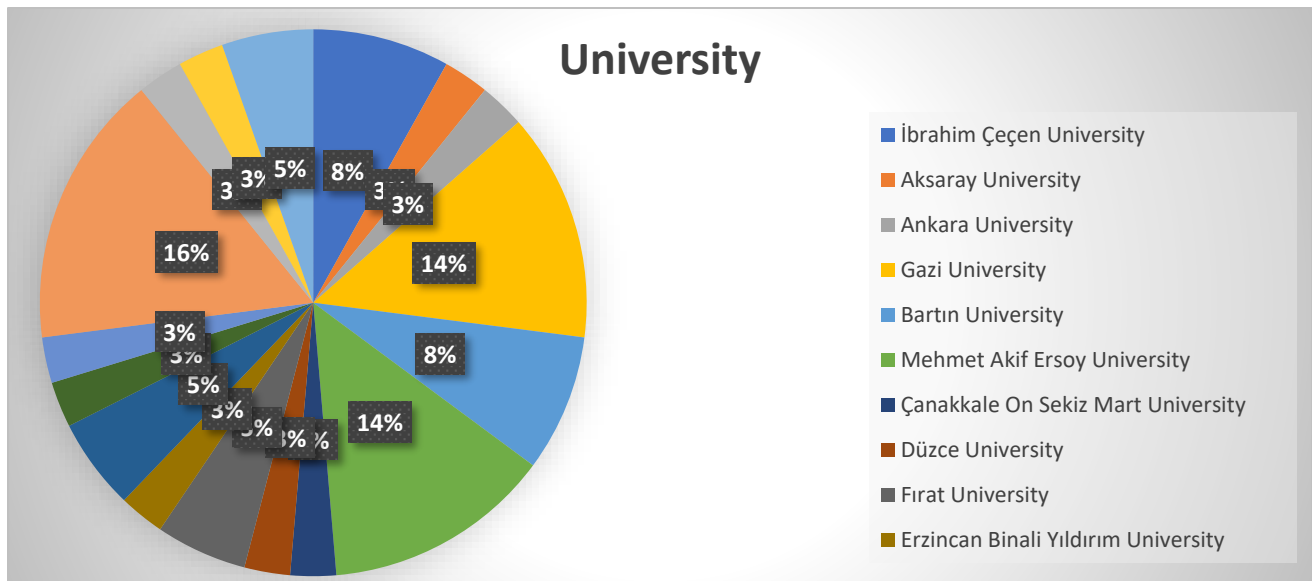
City	University	Frequency
Ağrı	İbrahim Çeçen University	3
Akasya	Aksaray University	1
Ankara	Ankara University	1
Ankara	Gazi University	5
Bartın	Bartın University	3
Burdur	Mehmet Akif Ersoy University	5
Çanakkale	Çanakkale On Sekiz Mart University	1
Düzce	Düzce University	1
Elâzığ	Fırat University	2
Erzincan	Erzincan Binali Yıldırım University	1
Erzurum	Atatürk University	2
Eskişehir	Anadolu University	1
İstanbul	Gelişim University	1
İstanbul	Marmara University	6
Kahramanmaraş	Kahramanmaraş Sütçü İmam University	1
Karaman	Karamanoğlu Mehmet Bey University	1
Kars	Kafkas University	2
Total		

According to the data shown in Table 3, it can be seen that physical education and sports courses were subject to theses and dissertations in many universities in the Republic of

Turkey during the period of 2015 to 2020. The highest number of master's and doctoral degrees based on the theses and dissertations on physical education and sports courses are

granted by Marmara University of Istanbul, which granted 16% such master's and doctoral degrees. Mehmet Akif Ersoy University of Burdur and Gazi University of Ankara followed

the Marmara University of Istanbul, in that each granted 14% master's and doctoral degrees based on the theses and dissertations on physical education and sports courses.



The Institutes That Granted Master’s or Doctorate Degrees in Connection with the Theses and Dissertations Subject to Analysis

The institutes that granted master’s or doctorate degrees in connection with the theses and dissertations published between 2015 and 2020 and have been subject to analysis within the scope of this study are given in Table 4.

Table 4

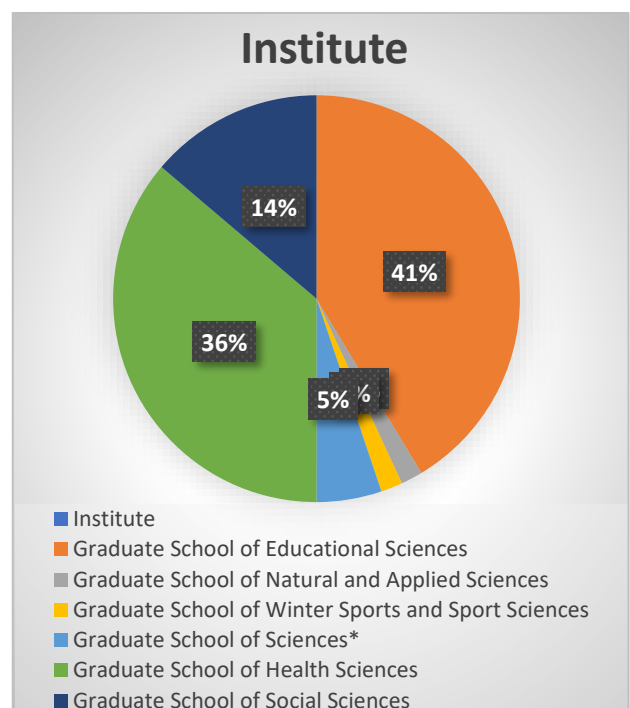
Distribution of the Theses and Dissertations on Physical Education and Sports Course by Institutes

Institute	Frequency	Percentage
Graduate School of Educational Sciences	24	41.4%
Graduate School of Natural and Applied Sciences	1	1.7%
Graduate School of Winter Sports and Sport Sciences	1	1.7%
Graduate School of Sciences*	3	5.1%
Graduate School of Health Sciences	21	36.2%
Graduate School of Social Sciences	8	13.8%
Total	58	100%

*Graduate School of Sciences is a type of graduate school founded as a result of the merger of the graduate schools available in a university for various reasons.

According to the data shown in Table 4, it can be seen that physical education and sports courses produced theses and dissertations in a wide range of graduation schools in the

Republic of Turkey during the period of 2015 to 2020. The highest number of master's and doctoral degrees generating theses and dissertations on physical education and sports courses are granted by the Graduate Schools of Educational Sciences, which have granted 41% of such master's and doctoral degrees. Graduate Schools of Health Sciences followed the Graduate Schools of Educational Sciences, in that they granted 36% master's and doctoral degrees based on the theses and dissertations on physical education and sports courses.



The Departments That Granted Master's or Doctorate Degrees in Connection with the Theses and Dissertations Subject to Analysis

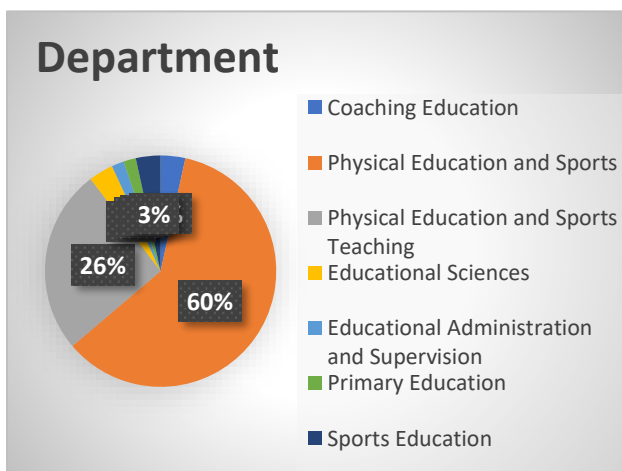
The departments that granted master's or doctorate degrees in connection with the theses and dissertations published between 2015 and 2020 and have been analyzed within the scope of this study are given in Table 5.

Table 5

Distribution of the Theses and Dissertations on Physical Education and Sports Course by Departments

Department	Frequency	Percentage
Coaching Education	2	3.5%
Physical Education and Sports	35	60.3%
Physical Education and Sports Teaching	15	25.8%
Educational Sciences	2	3.4%
Educational Administration and Supervision	1	1.7%
Primary Education	1	1.7%
Sports Education	2	3.5%
Total	58	100%

According to the data shown in Table 5, it can be seen that physical education and sports courses were subject to theses and dissertations in a wide range of departments in the Republic of Turkey during the period of 2015 to 2020. The highest number of master's and doctoral degrees based on theses and dissertations on physical education and sports courses were granted by the Physical Education and Sports Departments, which account for 60% of such master's and doctoral degrees. They granted 26% master's and doctoral degrees based on the theses and dissertations on physical education and sports courses. Another interesting finding points to the low number of such master's and doctoral degrees granted by the Coaching Education and Sports Education Departments, with each having granted only 3.5% such master's and doctoral degrees. This result can be attributed to the relatively low number of these departments in Turkey.



Research Design

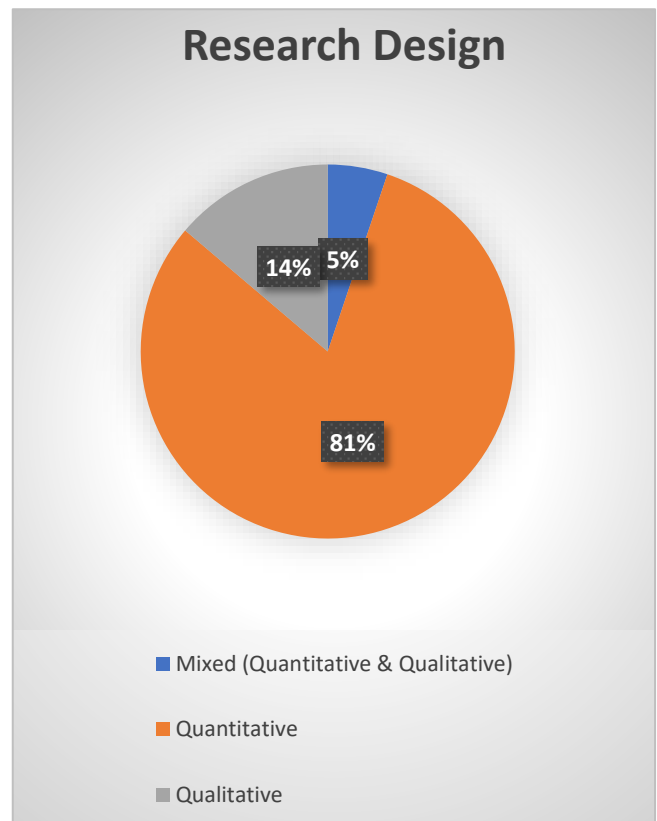
Distribution of the research designs of the theses and dissertations that have been analyzed within the scope of this study is given in Table 6.

Table 6

Distribution of the Theses and Dissertations on Physical Education and Sports Course by Research Design

Research Design	Frequency	Percentage
Mixed (Quantitative & Qualitative)	3	5.1%
Quantitative	47	81%
Qualitative	8	13.7%

According to the data shown in Table 6, it can be seen that mostly quantitative methods (i.e. 81%), followed by 14% qualitative and 5% mixed method have been selected as the research design by authors developing theses and dissertations on physical education and sports courses published in the Republic of Turkey during the period of 2015 to 2020.



Research Method

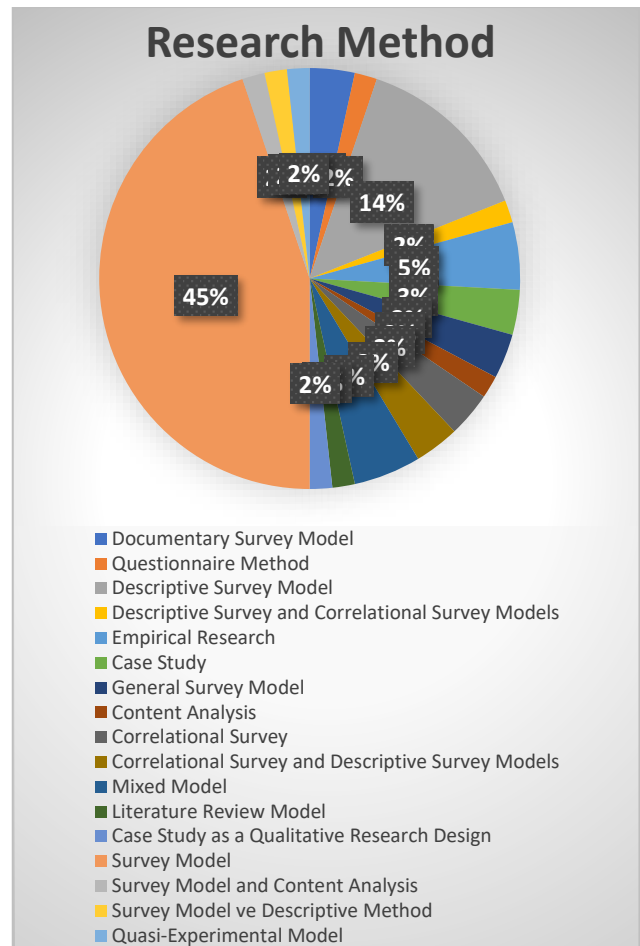
Distribution of the research methods of the theses and dissertations that have been analyzed within the scope of this study is given in Table 7.

Table 7

Distribution of the Theses and Dissertations on Physical Education and Sports Course by Research Method

Research Method	Frequency
Documentary Survey Model	2
Questionnaire Method	1
Descriptive Survey Model	8
Descriptive Survey and Correlational Survey Models	1
Empirical Research	3
Case Study	2
General Survey Model	2
Content Analysis	1
Correlational Survey	2
Correlational Survey and Descriptive Survey Models	2
Mixed Model	3
Literature Review Model	1
Case Study as a Qualitative Research Design	1
Survey Model	26
Survey Model and Content Analysis	1
Survey Model ve Descriptive Method	1
Quasi-Experimental Model	1

According to the data shown in Table 7, it can be seen that mostly the survey model (45%) has been chosen as the primary research method in theses and dissertations on physical education and sports courses published in the Republic of Turkey during the period of 2015 to 2020. The descriptive survey model, the second most used research method overall, was the mostly used research method.



Type of Sample/Study Group

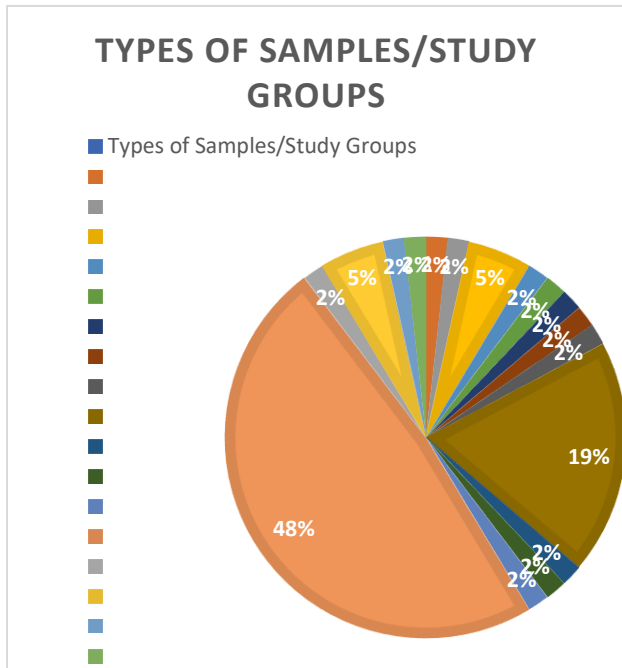
Distribution of the types of samples/study groups of the theses and dissertations that are analyzed within the scope of this study is given in Table 8.

Table 8

Distribution of the Theses and Dissertations on Physical Education and Sports Course by Types of Samples/Study Groups

Types of Samples/Study Groups	Frequency
Theses&Dissertation, Articles, Books on Physical Education and Sports	1
Elementary School Physical Education Teachers	1
Elementary School Students	3
Elementary School Students and Parents	1
Elementary and Middle School Physical Education Teachers	1
Elementary and Middle School Students	1
Primary and Secondary Education Students	1
Primary Education Physical Education Teachers	1
High School Students	11
Gifted Students Studying at a School Affiliated to the Ministry of National Education and Receiving Education in Science and Art Centers	1
Students of the Science and Art Center affiliated to the Ministry of National Education	1
Secondary Education Physical Education Teachers	1
Secondary Education Students	28
Secondary Education Students and Physical Education Teachers	1
Secondary Education Students and Parents	3
Parents of Students Receiving Education in Special Education and Practice Schools	1
Students Receiving Education in Special Education and Practice Schools	1

According to the data shown in Table 8, it can be seen that the theses and dissertations on physical education and sports courses published in the Republic of Turkey during the period of 2015 to 2020 mostly featured secondary education students as the sample/study group followed by high school students.



Data Collection Tool

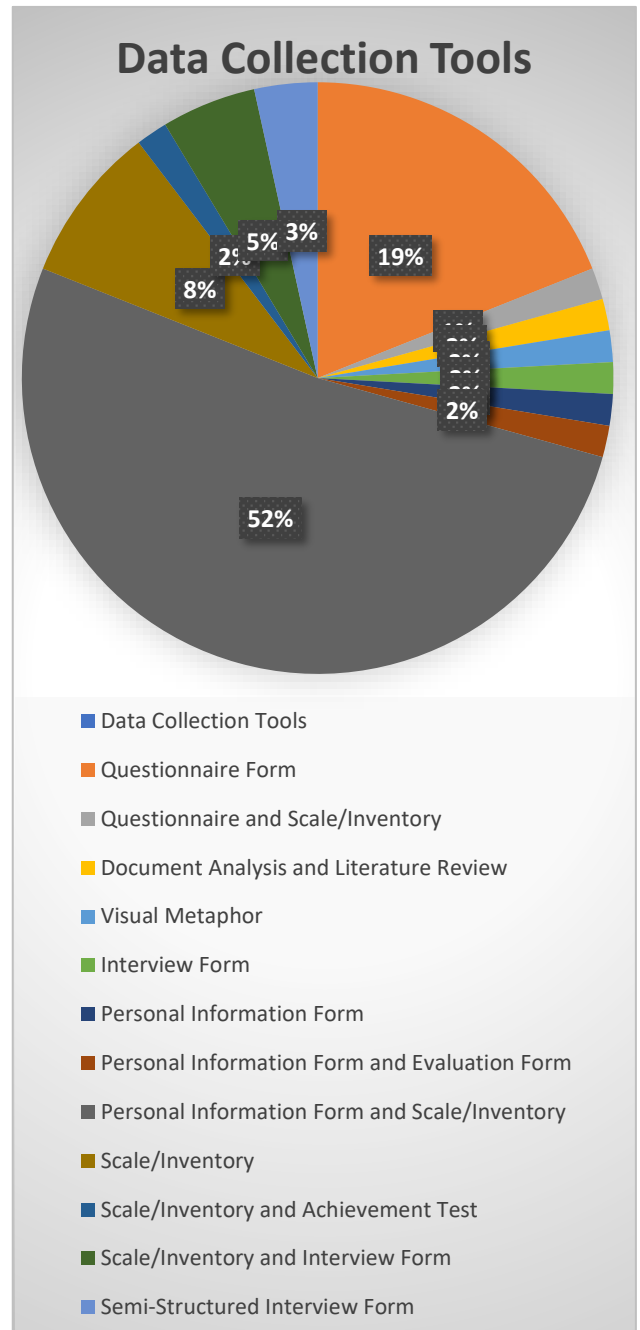
Distribution of the data collection tools used in the theses and dissertations that were analyzed within the scope of this study is given in Table 9.

Table 9

Distribution of the Theses and Dissertations on Physical Education and Sports Course by the Data Collection Tools

Data Collection Tools	Frequency
Questionnaire Form	11
Questionnaire and Scale/Inventory	1
Document Analysis and Literature Review	1
Visual Metaphor	1
Interview Form	1
Personal Information Form	1
Personal Information Form and Evaluation Form	1
Personal Information Form and Scale/Inventory	30
Scale/Inventory	5
Scale/Inventory and Achievement Test	1
Scale/Inventory and Interview Form	3
Semi-Structured Interview Form	2

According to the data shown in Table 9, it can be seen that personal information forms and scales/inventories together are the most frequently used data collection tools in the theses and dissertations on physical education and sports courses published in the Republic of Turkey during the period of 2015 to 2020 followed by questionnaire forms.



Level of Education Featuring the Investigated Physical Education and Sports Course

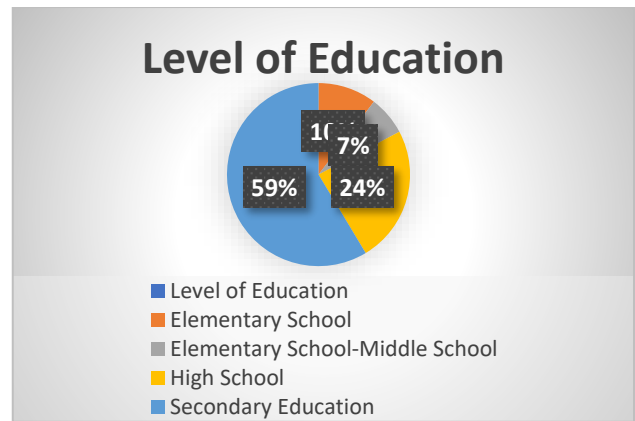
Distribution of the levels of education featuring the investigated physical education and sports course is given in Table 10.

Table 10

Distribution of the Theses and Dissertations on Physical Education and Sports Course by the Level of Education Featuring the Investigated Physical Education and Sports Course

Level of Education	Frequency
Elementary School	6
Elementary School-Middle School	4
High School	14
Secondary Education	34

According to the data shown in Table 10, it can be seen that it is mostly the physical education and sports courses included in the curricula of secondary education (i.e. 59%) which are investigated within the scope of the theses and dissertations physical education and sports course published in the Republic of Turkey during the period of 2015 to 2020.



Research Subject

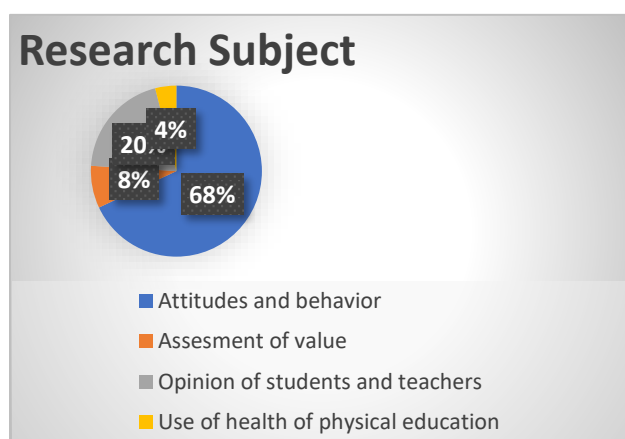
Distribution of research subjects investigated in said theses and dissertations that are analyzed within the scope of this study is given in Table 11.

Table 11

Distribution of the Theses and Dissertations on Physical Education and Sports Course by the Research Subjects

Research Subject
Assessment of the Secondary School Students' Attitudes towards Physical Education and Sports Course and Their Attitudes in the Cognitive Process
Assessment of the Opinions of the Vocational Courses Teachers and Physical Education and Sports Teachers Serving at Imam-Preacher Middle Schools About Physical Education and Sports Course
Assessment of the Parents' Attitudes towards Their Children's Participation in Physical Education and Sports Course
Assessment of the Disciplinary Approaches Adopted in Physical Education and Sports Lessons
Assessment of the Extent and Physical Activity Levels of the Parents of Secondary Education Students towards Physical Education and Sports Course
Assessment of the Middle School Students' Attitudes towards Physical Education and Sports Course
Assessment of the Self-Regulated Learning Strategies of the 8 th Grade Students in Physical Education and Sports Lessons
Implementation of the Differentiated Instructional Approach in Physical Education and Sports Lessons
Assessment of the Secondary Education Physical Education and Sports Course by Sports Teachers
Impact Assessment of the Interactive Sports Education Program Based on the Students' Attitudes towards, and Access to, the Program
Assessment of the Secondary School Students' Attitudes Towards the Physical Education and Sports Lessons and Their Physical Activity Levels during these Lessons
Assessment of the Attitudes of Middle School Students and Their Parents towards Physical Education and Sports Course (Şanlıurfa Province, Halfeti District)
Assessment of the Extent that the 12 th Grade Students' Expectations in respect of the Physical Education and Sports Course are Met
Comparison of Attitude Successes of Secondary Education Students of 7 th and 8 th Grades towards Physical Education and Sports Course
Assessment of the Attitudes Towards Physical Education and Sports Course in Terms of Variables (Elâzığ Mustafa Kemal Middle School)
Physical Education and Sports Course Training Program Curriculum Assessment
Assessment of the Visual Metaphors of the Secondary Education Students Receiving Physical Education and Sports Course
Assessment of the Various Aspects of the Middle School Students' Behaviors in relation to the Physical Education and Sports Course
Assessment of the Various Aspects of the Parents' Attitudes Towards the Participation of Their Children Studying at Imam-Preacher Secondary School Students in the Physical Education and Sports Course
Assessment of the Various Aspects of the Attitudes of Students Studying at the Middle Schools Located in the Muş Province Towards the Physical Education and Sports Course
Assessment of the Attitudes of Students Studying at Different Types of Secondary Schools towards Physical Education and Sports Course (Van Province)
The Effect of the Physical Education and Sports Course on Students' Basketball Skills Based on Portfolio Evaluation
Opinions of School Administrators and Teachers About the Problems Encountered in the Practice of Physical Education and Sports Lessons
Assessment of the Self-Regulated Learning Strategies of the 8 th Grade Students in Physical Education and Sports Lessons
The Attitudes of the Students Studying at Public and Private Secondary Schools Affiliated with the Ministry of National Education towards Physical Education and Sports Course
Assessment of Middle School Students' Opinions About the Outcomes of the Physical Education and Sports Course
Determination and Evaluation of the Level of Achievement of the Targeted Acquisitions on Critical Thinking Skills Stipulated in the Curriculum of Physical Education and Sports Course
Use of Physical Activities for the Education of the Same Age Groups in Physical Education and Sports Lessons
Secondary School Students' Engagement in the Physical Education and Sports Course vs. Their Engagement in School
Assessment of the Values Attributed by the Middle School Students to the Physical Education and Sports Course
Opinions of Teachers and Students About the Physical Education and Sports Course Curriculum
Assessment of the Effects of Middle School Students' Attitudes Towards Physical Education and Sports Course on Socialization
Assessment of the Values Attributed by the Imam-Preacher School Students to the Physical Education and Sports Course
Assessment of the Attitudes of Gifted Students Studying at Mainstream Schools Towards the Physical Education and Sports Course
Determination of the Attitudes of the Middle School Students Towards the Physical Education and Sports Course
Attitudes of Gifted and Non-Gifted Students Towards the Physical Education and Sports Course
Assessment of Middle and High School Students' Attitudes Towards the Physical Education and Sports Course
Comparison of Opinions of Students Studying at Different High Schools Towards the Physical Education and Sports Course
High School Students' Attitudes towards the Use of Smart Boards in Physical Education and Sports Lessons

According to the data shown in Table 11, it can be seen that a wide range of research subjects have been investigated within the broader schema of the theses and dissertations on physical education and sports course published in the Republic of Turkey during the period of 2015 to 2020. Theses and dissertations that assess the attitudes of secondary school students towards physical education and sports courses and the participation of the secondary school students in the physical education and sports lessons (i.e. 68%) outnumber theses and dissertations focusing on other research or topic areas.



Discussion

In the past, individuals had to physically perform their daily works, whereas, in today's world, the advancements in technology are increasingly leading people to live sedentary and less physically active life. Countries have started to implement specific programs to keep their citizens active and mobilized, thereby reducing associated health problems. From this point of view, physical education is particularly important in minimizing health problems associated with unhealthy lifestyles. A review of the relevant literature shows that physical activities carried out and taught in the physical education and sports courses play an important role in combating a number of health-related problems (Aras, 2013)

Training qualified manpower is one of the main objectives of the national education systems. To this end, physical education and sports courses have an important role in achieving this objective. Regular exercise supports individuals in many ways and gives them the strength needed to physically adapt (Heper, 2012). Academic motivation of students is only possible if they are physically active. The physical activities that individuals engage in during adolescence and their growth period support the development of sensory-social skills (Aras, 2013; Canpolat, 2019).

Physical education and sports lessons positively affect the school environment and out-of-school interactions from cognitive, sensory and physical aspects. During the physical education and sports lessons, students socialize and establish better relationships by fraternizing with each other, acquire good habits and become happy and healthy, provided that the targeted acquisitions are achieved (Kaya, 2018).

Physical education and sports lessons help students to gain their true personalities and socialize (Turgut, 2021). The range of sports and games included in the physical education and sports lessons help students to develop specific skills and get into form. Physical education and sports lessons play an important role in encouraging and facilitating the mental, physical and social maturation of students (Keskin, Hergüner, Dönmez, Berisha, & Üçan, 2017).

During the course of physical education and sports lessons, students learn about their abilities and get to know their weaknesses and strengths. They comprehend the value of being healthy and having a healthy body, learn the necessary skills to use their bodies to the best of its abilities and in the most efficient way as well as acquire the habits, behaviours and knowledge required to lead a happy and healthy life.

World Health Organization (WHO) recommends that children and adolescents between the ages of five and seventeen should walk at least three kilometres per week and exercise at least sixty minutes per week for the healthy development of their bone and muscle structures. However, unfortunately, the majority do not observe these recommendations, failing to perform regular exercise, which ultimately affects the ability of their bodies to prevent many diseases and infections in the future.

Higher the participation of students in sports activities, the stronger the positive effects they exert on young people and children (Cloes, 2021). For this reason, it is important to keep the content of physical education and sports courses up-to-date with the latest advancements in the field and to adopt new teaching methods to ensure students' participation in physical education and sports classes as well as to train them efficiently (Keskin, 2020).

The importance of physical education and sports courses in basic educational curricula cannot be underestimated. It should be reiterated that these courses should not be included in the curriculum just to allow students an opportunity to enjoy but as part of a carefully curated effort to develop their individual abilities (Keleş 2019). Physical education and sports courses aim to raise individuals who are physically, emotionally and mentally healthy, as well as individuals who have completed their social development

in a balanced and holistic way.

Students who participate in physical education and sports lessons are more likely to develop a sense of responsibility and be willing to take part in socially oriented tasks. Physical education and sports lessons enable students to:

- recognize their bodily abilities,
- introduce themselves to other people in the outside world and realistically express themselves,
- become aware of their skills and knowledge, thereby recognizing their weaknesses and strengths and to work on them accordingly, and
- effectively use their individual abilities to learn new skills.

Physical education and sports learning can be defined as a process of gaining the emotional, spiritual and physical skills necessary to lead a quality life (Yanık, 2018).

Teachers in charge of physical education and sports courses should know the factors that affect students' learning when teaching them the moves and the rules of the games played. Learning is considered to have occurred when an associated behavioural change occurs permanently as a result of the experiences gained (Baykara, & Orhan, 2020). Factors that affect learning are listed as follows;

1. Attitudes toward learning: Students must be ready to learn spiritually, physically and mentally for active and effective learning to take place. Hence, students will learn a move or behaviour, only if they are motivated to do so. The role of the physical education teacher in achieving the desired level of motivation in students by stimulating their relevant skills is crucial (Yanık, 2018).
2. Motivation: Encouragement of the students to learn refers to removing the barriers in the learning environment that prevent them from learning. Accordingly, students should be provided feedback in line with their level of learning, and their achievements should be rewarded so that they sustain their achievements (Uhlirva, 2018).
3. Practice: For behavioural changes to occur, learning must take place in full. For this reason, the content taught must be regularly practised to ensure that the targeted behaviour is achieved permanently.
4. Characteristics of the behaviours aimed to be taught: The behaviours to be taught should be determined in accordance with the students' beliefs, values, culture, socio-economic status, gender and age. For this reason, physical education teachers should make sure that the behaviours or sports activities they would like to teach are in line with the personal characteristics of the students (Yanık, 2018).

Accordingly, the effects of physical education and sports

course on students can be categorized into four different categories in terms of their effects on students' physical, psychomotor, mental, sensory and social development.

a) The effect of physical education and sports course on the physical development of students:

One of the salient features of a physical education and sports course is that it contributes to the physical development of the students more so than their mental development, unlike other courses in the curricula that focus on the mental development or intellectual growth of the students (Kilic & Yildirim, 2020). The urge to move is an instinctive necessity of human beings. Hence, physical education and sports lessons conducted in line with a pre-prepared comprehensive social plan will produce better results. Participation in regularly held sports activities will help the students to develop physical strength. Students that participate in sports activities develop a sense of belonging and gain social recognition, while children who have inadequate physical skills tend to experience more difficulties in establishing positive and social relationships (Keleş 2019).

b) The effect of physical education and sports course on the psychomotor development of students:

Physical education and sports lessons allow students to use their muscular system in coordination with their nervous system and excel in skills related to psychomotor development such as jumping, catching, holding, climbing a tree, dribbling and running, etc (Aarabi, Abdi & Heydari, 2018). Thus, individuals who have completed their psychomotor development can perform specific actions or movements more aesthetically, easily and while consuming minimum energy (Bedir, Erhan, Bedir, & Yazici, 2018).

c) The effect of physical education and sports courses on the mental development of students

The ability of an individual to adapt to the external environment is an indicator of mental development. Learning, understanding, planning and problem-solving skills are among some of the skills developed through physical education and sports lessons by engaging with the rules of the games played and the physical moves taught (Atalay, 2016).

d) The effect of physical education and sports courses on the sensory and social development of students

In the physical education and sports lessons, students adopt the values important to society and learn to respect the rights of others and comply with the rules (Aarabi, Abdi & Heydari, 2018). The fact that certain sports activities are performed individually and some as a team and that these activities are also events viewed by an audience points to the social aspect of these activities.

Students get the opportunity to reflect their thoughts and feelings to their teammates and members of the audience. The fact that most activities carried out in the physical education and sports lessons are performed as teams allows students to develop a sense of belonging and establish lasting and meaningful social relationships.

Conclusion

Several findings have been obtained as a result of the content analysis of the master's theses and doctoral dissertations on the physical education and sports course published from 2015 to 2020 in the Republic of Turkey. It is observed that master's theses on physical education and sports courses published during the said period outweigh the doctoral dissertations and that the number of master's theses and doctoral dissertations on physical education and sports course has increased over the years. The fact that the number of theses and dissertations on physical education and sports course published in 2020 is low may be attributed to the limitations imposed by the Council of Higher Education of the Republic of Turkey in respect of access to the theses and dissertations. It is estimated that there will be more theses and dissertations published on physical education and sports course in the coming years. As a reason, the COVID-19 pandemic process accelerated the use of new technologies such as computers, laptops, phone, etc. in education and training, as well as the use of appropriate learning resources, effective learning methods, and support services for teachers and students.

Additionally, it is found that the highest number of master's and doctoral degrees based on the theses and dissertations on physical education and sports courses are granted by the Marmara University of Istanbul, which granted 6 such masters and doctoral degrees. Mehmet Akif Ersoy University of Burdur and Gazi University of Ankara followed the Marmara University of Istanbul, in that each granted 5 masters and doctoral degrees based on the theses and dissertations on physical education and sports courses. Furthermore, it is found that the highest number of master's and doctoral degrees based on the theses and dissertations on physical education and sports courses are granted by the Graduate Schools of Educational Sciences, which have granted 24 such masters and doctoral degrees. Graduate Schools of Health Sciences followed the Graduate Schools of Educational Sciences, in that they granted 21 masters and doctoral degrees based on the theses and dissertations on physical education and sports courses. It is also found that mostly, quantitative methods have been chosen as the research design and that survey model has been chosen as the research method in theses

and dissertations on physical education and sports courses published in the Republic of Turkey from 2015 to 2020.

The descriptive survey model, the second most used research method overall, was the most used research method in theses. Another finding of this study indicates that it was mostly physical education and sports courses included in the curricula of secondary education that is chosen as the research subject to be investigated within the scope of the theses and dissertations published in the Republic of Turkey from 2015 to 2020. Thus, the choice of physical education and sports courses included in the curricula of primary education as the research subject in future studies will be beneficial in terms of the determination of the attitudes towards the physical education and sports course. Additionally, investigating the role of parenting with respect to their children's participation in physical education and sports lessons in future studies can also be beneficial in terms of determination of the factors which have an effect on the outcomes of the course. Lastly, it is found that a wide range of research subjects have been investigated within the scope of the theses and dissertations on physical education and sports course published in the Republic of Turkey from 2015 to 2020.

Theoretical and Practical Contribution

The present study covers theses and dissertations on physical education and sports course in the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus (TRNC). This study will be beneficial in terms of planning and the curricular assessment of physical education and sports classes in TRNC. Moreover, this study fills the gap literature as there are only limited studies focusing on physical education to have been conducted in past.

Limitations of the study

There were a number of limitations in this study. This study only focuses on the data for a period of 5 years i.e. dissertations and thesis from years 2015 to 2020. Moreover, there are very limited aspects for which theses and dissertations have been analyzed which are the type of the document, year of publication, departments, institutes and universities that granted masters or doctorate degrees in connection with the theses and dissertations subject to analysis, research design, type of sample/study group, data collection tools, levels of education featuring the investigated physical education and sports course, and research subject.

Recommendations

For future studies, it is recommended to overcome the above mentioned limitations so they can contribute more, both, theoretically and managerially. As there are a limited number of studies that have been carried out in the Higher Education Council on physical education, health and sports policies in the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus (TRNC), there is a visible need for more qualitative and quantitative studies in this area. Moreover, in the case of the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus, it is recommended to carry out studies with the content of

basic education in terms of school curriculum within the scope of Basic education (1-8) to effectively implement physical education and sports policies. Physical education, health and sports classes, should be the primary purpose of such a government-led program. For future studies, it is also recommended that researchers should work on the theses, dissertations, conference proceedings and articles on physical education and sports courses in the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus (TRNC); doing so would be beneficial in terms of the planning and curricular assessment of the physical education and sports classes in TRNC.

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