# **ORIGINAL ARTICLE**

# Investigation of Benevolence and Happiness Levels of Team and Individual Athletes in Secondary Education

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# ABSTRACT

**Aim:** The purpose of the study is to examine the relationship between benevolence and happiness levels of secondary school students who have done individual and team sports in the Mediterranean Region and explain whether their benevolence levels predict happiness.

**Methods:** The research is a descriptive study in a relational survey model. The study sample consisted of 268 (46.7%) females and 306 (53.3%) males, 574 students. Benevolence Scale and Oxford Happiness Scale were used as data collection tools in the study. Research data were analyzed using SPSS 25.00 statistical package program. Descriptive statistics, correlation, and statistical regression techniques were used in the analysis of the data.

**Results:** According to the study's findings, it was observed that the benevolence and happiness levels of the students who did individual and team sports were at a moderate level. According to the gender variable, It was observed that there was a significant difference in favor of men between the happiness levels of the students who did individual sports and a significant difference in favor of women between the benevolence levels of the students who did team sports. A low-level positive relationship was found between benevolence and happiness. Benevolence explains 3.6% of the variance regarding happiness levels. According to the standardized regression coefficient, the contribution of benevolence to the prediction of happiness level was found to be statistically significant.

**Conclusion:** It was determined that individuals' benevolence and happiness levels were at medium levels. It was found that there is a low-level positive correlation between the benevolence and happiness levels of the participants, and their benevolence levels are a predictor of happiness. **Keywords:** Help, Benevolence, Happiness, Individual Sports, Team Sports

## INTRODUCTION

Education is expressed as a process that helps the individual's personal development, prepares the person for life, and enables them to gain the necessary knowledge, skills, and behaviors. The primary purpose of education is to provide qualified staffing. A person who has developed himself mentally and physically has the qualities of spending time with other people and establishing social relationships. It should not be forgotten that educational institutions have an essential place in achieving educational goals and providing value to learning<sup>1</sup> Also, sports centers have become essential institutions in training qualified people. Understanding sports is explained by the psychological, sociological, physiological, and spiritual aspects that individuals do for their physical, mental, and mental health and well-being, solidarity, and benefits in society<sup>2,3,4</sup>. Sport, which has an essential place in education, is divided into two types as an individual (swimming, tennis, gymnastics, etc.) and team (football, basketball, volleyball, etc.) sports. In individual sports, young people set their personal goals and compete with other group members to achieve them. Given these sports' individual nature, young people may continue to focus on their individual performance and therefore less prone to benevolence. In team sports, young people should work and cooperate to achieve common goals. Therefore, young people in team sports can form stronger bonds with their teammates and be more prone to human behaviors<sup>5</sup>.

Benevolence is a value that unites society and strengthens our solidarity. It is necessary to transfer this value to our children's lives, who make up the society of

tomorrow<sup>6</sup>. Helpful and generous people are both happier and healthier. Michael Norton of Harvard Business School has analyzed data from 130 countries. He states that, as a result of the study, people who give something from them in all countries, whether rich or poor, are much happier. This is a "universal psychology" that is inherent in human beings, independent of culture<sup>7</sup>. Goodness, as much as it makes the other party happy, also makes the person doing good happy. Because when good is done, a positive environment occurs, and positive emotions such as joy, pleasure, trust, and honor are experienced. These feelings give peace of mind and calmness to the individual. When he does well, the pleasure and reward center is stimulated in the individual's brain. Beyond that, in an environment where goodness, kindness, understanding, and helpfulness are present, emotions such as anger and aggression decrease or disappears. All these increase the happiness (subjective well-being) in the individual<sup>8,9</sup>. During the pandemic process, it has been seen that it is necessary to fight all people together as a team to prevent the spread of the epidemic and eliminate its adverse effects. Therefore, benevolence has become an essential factor for people to cope with the pandemic process. In this case, it is thought that determining the students' benevolence perception and developing this feeling positively will positively affect their happiness. Since people have positive expectations from life for the future, it will also ensure that the perception of happiness is positively affected. In this study, the emotional state levels of high school students who had to take a break from their sports due to the pandemic, which had done individual and team sports before the pandemic, were

examined. Determining the students' benevolence and happiness levels and whether benevolence predicts happiness or not was determined as the primary purpose. As a result of the literature review on the subject, although there are studies that examine the relationship between benevolence and happiness together, there is no study examining these two variables in terms of sports types. In this respect, it is thought that the study will contribute to the literature.

The research has been tried to be explained with the following problems.

- 1. What were the benevolence and happiness levels of secondary school students who have done individual and team sports?
- 2. Do the happiness and helpfulness levels of secondary school students who have done individual and team sports differ by gender?
- 3. Do the benevolence levels of secondary school students who have done individual and team sports predict happiness?
- 4. Is there a relationship between benevolence and happiness levels of secondary school students who have done individual and team sports?

#### Literature Review

#### Benevolence:

Help is the use of one's strength and means for the good of others. Helping individuals in difficult situations is a value that every individual in society should have. To help those in need or to donate to various social organizations established for this purpose, not to hesitate to help others, to do without waiting for help, to help needy animals, to work voluntarily in charities, to help older people, to encourage people to help each other, not forgetting the help, helping the orphans, helping the poor, treating people well, in short, wanting to help are indicators of the value of benevolence<sup>10,11,12,13,14,15</sup>.

On the other hand, benevolence can be explained as doing good, doing valuable things to someone with the means at your disposal without expecting anything in return, and philanthropy. A person or someone in need can be provided financially or morally<sup>16</sup>. Benevolence is defined as the assurance that the other will not exploit one's vulnerability or take undue advantage of one, even if the opportunity is present<sup>17</sup>. Hoy and Tschannen-Moran<sup>18</sup> also defined benevolence as having the other side's interests by heart and the confidence to protect them by showing compassion, sincerity, prudence, goodwill, empathy, fairness, and sacrifice. According to another definition, benevolence is a form of behavior that can be put forward by virtuous people who believe that good values and financial opportunities will increase as they are shared. It is the situation of voluntarily providing financial or moral assistance to those who need it without any interest<sup>19</sup>. According to Adam Smith<sup>20</sup>, benevolence is expressed as care and attention and other-oriented tendencies or behaviors for the well-being, welfare, and development of others<sup>21</sup>.

The concept of benevolence in society is used in the same sense or different meanings with many terms. Benevolence is a value that unites society and strengthens our solidarity<sup>6</sup>. It can be stated that benevolence is related

to the concepts of empathy, benevolence and philanthropy, altruism, compassion, social responsibility, volunteering, sharing, and cooperation dimensions. Benevolence is an example of solidarity and cooperation among sensitive individuals, based on volunteering, that develops societies and includes all kinds of goodness that should be done in every person<sup>10</sup>.

**Happiness:** Happiness, which dates back to human beings' existence, is a difficult concept to explain, even though many people have tried to understand, capture, and define it. Happiness, by definition, depends on feeling good, enjoying life<sup>22,14</sup>, experiencing positive emotions often, less negative emotions<sup>23,24</sup> and psychological processes that include individual values and goals<sup>25</sup>.

When happiness, which is also expressed as subjective well-being or well-being, is generally evaluated, it is defined as experiencing more joy, trust, hope than negative emotions such as anxiety, pessimism, sadness, and anger<sup>26</sup>. People experience happiness when they experience many positive emotions or little negative emotions, engage in engaging activities, experience minor pain, and are satisfied with their lives<sup>27</sup>.

Happiness; is defined as a positive assessment of a person's overall quality of life<sup>28</sup>. The concept of happiness is an essential value throughout all individuals, and individuals aim to achieve happiness. Also, Sonny Lyubomirsky, who has many research types on happiness, revealed happiness levels as a percentage. According to him, the happiness level determined by birth or genetics constitutes 50% of happiness. Conditions such as marriage, earnings, or appearance determine 10% of happiness. The remaining 40% of happiness means that this is due to conscious activities or what we can do to change our happiness level<sup>29</sup>. Other factors that affect the level of individual happiness are the situations the individual is in. These are geographical location, culture, social support, job, education, health, and gender conditions<sup>30</sup>.

Happiness provides many benefits besides feeling good. According to the findings obtained from scientific research, it has been determined that happy people make friends, happy people are healthier, their immune systems work better, and they enjoy interpersonal relationships. Also, happiness, expressed as a state of satisfaction and pleasure, is closely related to self-realization, using one's potential and power in the best way, obtaining better gains, finding meaning in life, and living a virtuous life<sup>31,32,33</sup>.

Although some experts have suggested that having money can help determine the level of happiness, no universal truth has been found on this subject. Because research has revealed that poor people are happier when fleeing poverty, but the link between money and happiness is broken when they deprive them<sup>29</sup>. In fact, it has been determined that one's wealth is not a function that increases happiness. The situation that creates this has been associated with people's desire always to want better. Because after people adapt to the materials they have, they want better from these materials. So the more people win, the more they tend to want. This situation prevents the person from being happy with what they have and causes them to constantly strive to achieve better<sup>34,35</sup>.

### **MATERIAL & METHODS**

**Research Goal:** Since the research aims to explain the relationship between the two variables, it was designed in a relational survey model in quantitative research design<sup>36</sup>. Studies conducted in the scanning model are studies that try to explain the characteristics of large masses<sup>37</sup>. In this study, the relationship between benevolence and happiness levels of secondary school students who did individual and team sports were examined. In this respect, the study displays the features of the relational screening model. The research also examined whether benevolence predicts happiness or not.

Sample and Data Collection: The universe of the study was composed of secondary school students in different institutions who had done individual (swimming, tennis, gymnastics, athletics, etc.) and team (football, basketball, volleyball, etc.) sports before the pandemic in the Mediterranean Region but had to take a break due to the pandemic. The study sample was formed according to the appropriate sampling method, starting with the participants who are the easiest to reach. The appropriate sampling method is the sampling method in which the sampling is completed, starting with the easiest to reach participants in order to reach the required number of participants in the study<sup>37</sup>. The study sample consisted of 268 (46.7%) females and 306 (53.3%) males, 574 students. 250 (43.6%) of the participants stated that they do individual sports and 324 (56.4%) stated that they do team sports. The average age of the students participating in the study was calculated as (16.49+1.837).

**The Benevolence Scale:** The Benevolence Scale was developed by Demirci<sup>38</sup> to measure individuals' perceptions of benevolence. The scale consists of one dimension and 7 items. The 2nd item in the scale is reverse coded. The scale scoring is made according to a 5-point (1 = Not suitable for me, 5 = entirely suitable for me) grading system. As a result of the scale, the total score range varies between 7 and 35. The higher the scores on the scale, the higher the level of benevolence. The Cronbach's Alpha internal consistency coefficient of the scale was found as .76. The Cronbach's Alpha internal consistency coefficient for this study was calculated as .85.

**Oxford Happiness Questionnaire:** It is a self-report scale developed by Hills and Argyle<sup>39</sup> to measure individuals' happiness. The adaptation study of the scale into Turkish was done by Doğan and Çötok<sup>40</sup>. The scale is a 7-item and 5-point Likert type consisting of a single dimension. Items 1 and 7 are scored in reverse. The lowest score obtained from the scale is 7, and the highest score is 35. High scores obtained from the scale individual. The Cronbach's Alpha internal consistency coefficient of the scale was found as .74. The Cronbach's Alpha internal consistency coefficient was calculated for this research as .72.

**Analyzing of Data:** The data of the research were analyzed using the SPSS 25.00 statistical package program. Pearson Correlation analysis to determine whether there is a relationship between benevolence and happiness in analyzing the data; Simple regression analysis was performed to determine whether benevolence levels predicted happiness level. Also, descriptive statistics were used to determine the helpfulness and happiness levels of individuals.

#### RESULTS

The frequency and percentage analysis results of the participants' demographic information in the study are given in Table 1.

Table 1: Frequency and percentage analysis of students' demographic information

	Female		Male		Total	
	f	%	f	%	f	%
Individual Sports	134	53,6	116	46,4	250	43,6
Team Sports	134	41,4	190	58,6	324	56,4

The descriptive statistical analysis results of the benevolence and happiness levels of secondary school students who have done individual and team sports in the study are given in Table 2.

2. Analysis of the happiness and helpfulness levels of the students according to the types of sports

			Min	Мах	x	SD
Individual Sports	Happiness	250	20,00	29,00	24.07	2.44
	Benevolence	250	26,00	35,00	30.83	2.76
ts	Happiness	324	20,00	29,00	24.63	2.36
	Benevolence	324	26,00	35,00	30.79	2.60

In Table 2, it is stated that the happiness level of the students who have done individual sports is medium ( $\bar{x}$ = 24.07; SD = 2.44); It was determined that the happiness level of the students who did team sports was at a medium level ( $\bar{x}$  = 24.63; SD = 2.36). However, it was observed that the happiness levels of the students who did team sports were higher than the students who did individual sports.

The benevolence levels of the students who have done individual sports are above the middle level ( $\bar{x} =$ 30.83; SD = 2.76); It was determined that the benevolence levels of the students who did team sports were also at a medium level ( $\bar{x} =$  30.79; SD = 2.60). However, It has been observed that the benevolence levels of the students who have done individual sports are higher than the students who have done team sports.

In the study, the participants' benevolence and happiness levels according to their gender were examined by t-test analysis, and the analysis results are given in Table 3.

When Table 3 is examined, there is a significant difference in favor of males between the happiness levels of the students who have done individual sports according to the gender variable (t = 3.533; p > .01). It was observed that there was no significant difference between the benevolence levels of the students who did individual sports according to the gender variable (t = -.502; p < .05).

It was observed that there was no significant difference between the happiness levels of the students

who did team sports according to the gender variable (t = .229; p> .05). It has been observed that there is a significant difference in favor of females between the benevolence levels of the students who have done team sports according to the gender variable (t = 3.570; p <.01).

Table 3. Analysis of the happiness and helpfulness levels of the students according to the gender variable

		Gender	Ν	x	SD	t	р
	наррі-	Male	116	24,64	2,37	0.50	.00
ual		Female	134	23,57	2,40	3,53	
vid	ness Benevo- Ience	Male	116	30,74	2,81	50	.61
Spo Spo		Female	134	30,91	2,73	-,50	
am Sports	Happi- ness	Male	190	24,61	2,38	00	.81
		Female	134	24,67	2,33	-,22	
	Benevo- lence	Male	190	30,36	2,58	0.57	.00
		Female	134	31,39	2,52	3,57	

\*\*p< .01

Table 4. Analysis results of the relationship between benevolence and happiness

Happiness					
Banavalanaa	r	.191**			
Benevolence	р	.000			
**p< .01					

The relationship between the participants' benevolence and happiness in the study was examined by simple partial correlation analysis, and the analysis results are given in Table 4.

When Table 4 was examined, it was seen that there was a significant relationship between variables. A positive and low-level significant relationship was found between benevolence and happiness (r = .191, p < .01).

The results of simple regression analysis to examine the predictive role of benevolence in happiness level are given in Table 5.

Table 5. Simple regression analysis results on how benevolence predicts happiness

	В	Sh	β	t	р	R	R <sup>2</sup>
Constant	19.08	1.14		16.68	.00	.191	.036
Benevo- lence	.17	.037	.40	4.65	.00		

F=21.657 \*\*p< .01 \*p< .05

When Table 5 is examined, it is seen that benevolence scores (R=.19, R2=.03, F=21.65, p<.001) significantly predict happiness levels. In this case, benevolence explains 3.6% of the variance regarding happiness levels. According to the standardized regression coefficient ( $\beta$ ), the contribution of benevolence in predicting happiness level was found to be statistically significant ( $\beta$ =.191, t=4.657, p<.001).

#### DISCUSSION

The purpose of this study is to examine the relationship between benevolence and happiness levels of secondary school students who had done individual and team sports before the pandemic but had to take a break due to the pandemic and to determine whether benevolence predicts happiness. It was also aimed to determine the benevolence and happiness levels of secondary school students.

According to the results obtained in the study, it was seen that the benevolence levels of the students who did individual and team sports were above the middle level. Also, it was determined that the benevolence levels of the students who did individual sports were higher than the students who did team sports. However, it can be concluded that the students' benevolence perceptions in both sports types are at a reasonable level. In this case, it is understood that secondary school students, who had done individual and team sports before the pandemic, struggled to be beneficial to people, despite the difference between their benevolence levels, and would support people in need in troubled situations. As a result of the literature review, no similar studies directly supporting this situation were found. Memis and Gedik<sup>41</sup> examined the values orientation of classroom teachers and found that classroom teachers attach importance to the value of universality the most and follow it in their benevolence. As seen in the study conducted before the pandemic, it can be said that individuals' perceptions of benevolence are at a good level. In this case, it can be concluded that the pandemic does not affect individuals' perceptions of benevolence.

It has been determined that the happiness levels of the students who have done individual and team sports are at medium levels. Although the participants' happiness levels were at medium levels, it was observed that the happiness levels of the students who did team sports were higher than the students who did individual sports. From this situation, it can be concluded that students are satisfied with their lives. They feel mentally vigorous and happy. However, the fact that students engaged in team sports are happier than individual athletes can be explained by the positive effect of spending time with their teammates and socializing. Similar studies were found as a result of the literature review. Bahrami et al.42 reported that 65% of university students have high happiness and 35% have moderate happiness. Ulukan et al.<sup>1</sup>, due to their research on the happiness levels of students studying sports management, determined that the students' happiness levels were above the middle level. Kuyumcu and Yıldız43 found that students studying in health sciences were moderately happy with a rate of 48% for nursing, 52.8% for physical therapy, and 50% for midwifery, respectively. As before the pandemic, it can be said that the happiness levels of the individuals are at a moderate level after the pandemic. From this situation, it can be concluded that individuals are not significantly affected by the epidemic. Also, it is thought that the students are satisfied with their departments and that doing sports has a positive effect.

In the study, it was observed that there was a significant difference in favor of males between the happiness levels of the students who did individual sports according to the gender variable. At the same time, there was no significant difference between the happiness levels of the students who did team sports. Also, it was observed that female students' level of happiness who did team

sports was higher than that of female students who did individual sports. The happiness levels of male students who have done individual sports are higher than male students who have done team sports. Thus, it can be said that women who have done team sports are happier and more helpful than women who have done individual sports. It is understood from this situation that women who have done team sports are in solidarity, believe that life is rewarding for them, are aware of the beauties around them, and can find time for everything they want to do. While it was observed that there was no significant difference between the benevolence levels of the students who did individual sports according to the gender variable, it was observed that there was a significant difference in favor of women between the benevolence levels of the students who did team sports. Also, it is observed that female students' benevolence levels who have done team sports are higher than female students who have done individual sports. In comparison, male students' benevolence levels who have done individual sports are higher than male students who have done team sports. Thus, it can be said that men who did individual sports were happier and more helpful than male students who did team sports. Considering that participation in sports is motivating for happiness, it is thought that the happier men who have done individual sports are due to the achievement of their personal goals. The fact that men who have done individual sports are more helpful can be explained by developing their understanding of solidarity, such as helping an individual in need and sharing personal resources. Çelik and Avci44 examined the effect of family relationships on benevolence and found that women scored higher than men. Ulukan and Esenkaya<sup>45</sup>, in their study on students who received distance education during the pandemic process, found that benevolence did not affect gender. Still, the benevolence levels of men were higher than women. Demir<sup>46</sup> determined that there is a significant difference in favor of males between gender and charity due to the study group's religiousness-benevolence of the sample relationship determined by the simple random method in the city center and rural areas of Malatya. The higher understanding of men's benevolence than women can be explained by the pandemic process. In the studies conducted before the pandemic, it was observed that the understanding of benevolence of women was higher. As a reason, it can be said that women are more compassionate and compassionate. However, it was observed that the perceptions of men's benevolence were higher during the pandemic proces. It is thought that the reason for this situation is that the perceptions of benevolence have increased with the importance of defense understanding due to their responsibilities.

A low-level positive correlation was found between benevolence and happiness. In this case, it can be said that as the helpfulness levels of the students who have done individual and team sports increase, their happiness levels will also increase. Sahinler et al.<sup>47</sup>, as a result of their research investigating the happiness and benevolence levels of the supporters during the pandemic process, found that there was a low-level positive relationship between benevolence and happiness. Özdemir and Koruklu<sup>48</sup> examined the relationship between values and happiness in university students and found a significant relationship. In the researches conducted before and after the pandemic, it was seen that there were similar results to the findings of our study. This situation can be explained by the fact that the people who help the person to be happy by helping an individual in need under all conditions also experience happiness. As a matter of fact, in some studies, it is known that people who help experience more happiness than the person they help.

It is seen that the benevolence scores of the students significantly predicted their happiness level. According to the simple regression analysis, it was found that benevolence has an effect of 19.1% on happiness. Benevolence explains 3.6% of the variance regarding happiness levels. According to the standardized regression coefficient, the contribution of benevolence to the prediction of happiness level was found to be statistically significant. Özdemir and Koruklu<sup>48</sup> concluded that benevolence values are one of the most substantial value orientations in predicting happiness according to the multiple regression analysis of their study on university students. As before the pandemic, benevolence is an essential predictor of happiness during the pandemic process. From this situation, it can be concluded that individuals' perceptions of helpfulness will increase, and their happiness level will also increase.

## CONCLUSION

According to the results of the study, it was seen that the benevolence levels of the students who did individual and team sports were above the middle level. Also, it has been determined that the benevolence levels of the students who have done individual sports are higher than the students who have done team sports. However, it can be concluded that the students' benevolence perceptions in both sports types are at a reasonable level. It has been determined that the happiness levels of the students who have done individual and team sports are at medium levels. Although the participants' happiness levels were at medium levels, it was observed that the happiness levels of the students who did team sports were higher than the students who did individual sports. In the study, it was observed that there was a significant difference in favor of males between the happiness levels of the students who did individual sports according to the gender variable, while there was no significant difference between the happiness levels of the students who did team sports. Also, it was observed that the level of happiness of female students who did team sports was higher than that of female students who did individual sports. The happiness levels of male students who have done individual sports are higher than male students who have done team sports. While it was observed that there was no significant difference between the benevolence levels of the students who did individual sports according to the gender variable, it was observed that there was a significant difference in favor of women between the benevolence levels of the students who did team sports. In addition, it is observed that the benevolence levels of female students who have done team sports are higher than female students who have done individual sports, while the benevolence levels of male students who have done individual sports are higher than male students who have done team sports. Thus, it can be said that men who have done individual sports are happier and more helpful than male students who have done team sports. A low-level positive correlation was found between benevolence and happiness. In this case, it can be said that as the helpfulness levels of the students who have done individual and team sports increase, their happiness levels will also increase. It is seen that the benevolence scores of the students significantly predicted their happiness level. According to the simple regression analysis, it was found that benevolence has an effect of 19.1% on happiness. Benevolence explains 3.6% of the variance regarding happiness levels. According to the standardized regression coefficient, the contribution of benevolence to the prediction of happiness level was found to be statistically significant.

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