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Original Article

University Students' Approaches to Nutrition

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Abstract

The evaluation of nutritional habits is important for the development of healthy and quality life as well as for nutrition education for all individuals. This study aimed to examine the relationship between gender, department at school and the status of being an active athlete with eating habits of the students of Manisa Celal Bayar University Sports Faculty. A total of 366 students, 118 females and 248 males, studying at MCBU Sports Faculty, participated in this study. Age, height, body weight values of the students were determined, body mass index (BMI) values were calculated and eating habits test questionnaire was applied. SPSS 20 software was used to analyze the data. An independent t test was used to determine the difference between students' eating habits and gender and professional athlete status, and a one-way Anova test was used to determine the relationship between nutritional habits and departments. Mean age, height, body weight, and body mass index (BMI) of the students were found to be 22.14 ± 2.22 years in females, 23.89 ± 4.11 years in males; 168.49 ± 7.38 cm in females and 179.04 ± 12.56 cm in males; 62.68 ± 11.85 kg in females and 78.6 ± 10.64 kg in males; 22.37 ± 3.63 (kg/m2) in females and 24.67 ± 2.98 (kg/m2) in males, respectively. Nutritional habits score (NHS) was found as 113.59 ± 27.96 in females and 111.9 ± 19.31 in males. There was no statistically significant relationship between gender and eating habits ($p>0.05$) and between male and female students' eating habits. it was found that there was no difference between the nutritional habits of the students of the Faculty of Sports Sciences of MCBU, when evaluated according to their gender, their department at school, and their status of being an active athlete. In conclusion, it was observed that students have neutral eating habits, that is, they practice healthy nutritional habits as much as unhealthy eating habits. It can be said that students alternate between healthy eating and unhealthy eating habits and their healthy eating levels are at a risky level.

Keywords: Nutritional habits, sports, student.

Introduction

Nutrition is the use of nutrients in the body for growth, the maintenance of life, and the protection of health. It is necessary to provide sufficient and balanced energy and nutrients for individuals to be healthy. It has been scientifically demonstrated that when any of these items are not taken or taken more or less than necessary, growth and development slow down and health deteriorates. While nutrition constitutes the basis of health in every period of life, the importance of nutrition has been realized more and more every day. One of the periods in which adequate and balanced nutrition is very important in human life is the period of adolescence, which is growth and development accelerate, the child develops mentally, and gender characters are acquired. In this period, individuals' nutritional requirements increase (1).

Food requirement is affected by factors such as age, gender, physical activity, existing diseases, and

genetic makeup. The amount of energy and required nutrients higher in adolescence than higher adults (2). Inadequate and unbalanced nutrition is an important problem in Turkey, and university students are one of the groups with the most nutritional problems. University life is the beginning of a new era in terms of nutrition similar to many other issues in the lives of young people. In this period, in addition to adapting to a new life style, students become more open to external influences due to contact with many new people and they may exhibit different behaviors during this period than they normally show. During this period, their lives become faster, which also causes an increase in unhealthy and irregular eating behaviors (3). In this period, young people may display different health behaviors, such as smoking, exercising, continuous dieting, and alcohol use (4). Changing nutritional behaviors may affect the mental and physical state of university students as well as, indirectly, their school performance. Determining the nutritional habits of students is important to regulate these habits and to prevent problems caused by irregular nutrition habits and malnutrition (3). Studies on the nutritional habits of young people in our country show that there are very serious problems with nutrition during this period (5).

Sport has great importance in raising young people sound and healthy in every way because it affects the mental and social health as well as the health of the body. Energy and nutritional requirements of young people performing sports are higher than those who do not perform sports at that age (6). Nutrition for athletes means that they consume food in a sufficient and balanced manner following their gender, age, and daily physical activities, and make conscious adjustments during training and competition periods according to the sports they play (7). Macronutrients, micronutrients, and appropriate amounts of fluids are essential to provide energy for growth and activity. To optimize performance, young athletes need to learn what, when, and how to eat and drink before and after the activity (8,9). In the past, only elite athletes were concerned with the role of nutrition in athletic performance. Today, most athletes understand that optimal nutrition and a suitable training program are integral. However, most college athletes remain poorly trained in healthy eating practices and are inadequate to make appropriate daily dietary choices (10). Athlete must meet their nutritional needs outside the camps with their knowledge and tools. For this reason, the knowledge and habits they form regarding nutrition should be based on healthy choices (11).

Athletes do not possess nutritional information for their performance needs despite their high interest in nutrition. In general, they tend to seek nutritional information from magazines, health food store staff, coaches, gym owners, teammates, parents, supplement manufacturers, and other athletes. Because athletes know that they have unique nutritional needs, they often seek guidance or accept prescribed diets. They tend to refer to resources other than health professionals, who can lead to continued good nutrition education. Unfortunately, many of these sources are not appropriate and information is occasionally unreliable, which only boost the myths surrounding nutrition that can affect the athletes' diet (8, 12). One of the primary strategies to help athletes consume an adequate diet is to provide nutritional education. The goal of nutritional education is to let athletes know what to eat and how to select and prepare a wide variety of foods necessary for a healthy diet (12, 13). Therefore, athletes should be given appropriate information about diet so that they can make healthy food choices (8, 14).

Individual, physiological, and psychological characteristics, training status, nutritional status, health status, and environmental factors play an important role in ensuring a high-level sportive performance. However, it is an undeniable fact that an athlete to expect high performance without a correct and high-quality diet (15). A diet suitable for an athlete aims not only to maximize exercise capacity and performance during competition, but also to promote physiological adaptations to training, aiding recovery, maintaining immune function, and overall health. Changes in dietary intake can change the body composition required by most athletes to improve performance (16). At the same time, timely identification of regular physical activities and eating habits in childhood and adolescence and attempts to adjust the negative ones (17) can be transformed into a healthy and quality life philosophy (18).

This study aimed to examine the relationship between gender, department at school, and the status of being an active athlete with eating habits of the

students of Manisa Celal Bayar University Sports Faculty.

Material and Method

A total of 366 students, 118 females and 248 males, studying at the Faculty of Sport Sciences of Manisa Celal Bayar University (MCBU), participated in this study. Detailed information about the study was given to the students and their approval was obtained. Research procedures were carried out by the human research ethical standards of the 2008 Helsinki Declaration.

Height measurements of the students were obtained while they were in bare foot and using a Sega brand height measuring device with a sensitivity of 0.01 cm. Body mass measurement was made with a Baster scale with a sensitivity of 0.1 kg. Body Mass Index (BMI) was calculated with the formula: body weight (kg) / height (m^2).

A Likert scale, adapted by Mahmoud and Taha (19) (cited in Güneş et al., (20)), with five points, indicating how often they practiced eating habits, was administered: 'Often', 'Generally', 'Sometimes', 'Rarely', and 'Never', with a score ranging from 1 to 5. Also, the department in which the students studied, and their active sports status were added to the scale.

The scale includes the following subsections: 13 items unhealthy eating habits (scores between 13 and 65), 9 items healthy eating habits (scores between 9 and 45), 8 items monitoring healthy eating habits (scores between 8 and 40), and 7 items healthy eating planning (scores 7 to 35).

The total scores of the eating habits questionnaire are 37 x 5 = 185 points. The scores are classified as follows:

* 37-86: unhealthy eating habit
* 87-135: neutral dietary habits (meaning that healthy eating habits and unhealthy eating habits are equal).
* 136 -185: healthy eating habits.

SPSS 20 software was used to analyze the data. In order to determine which parametric and non-parametric analysis will be used to determine the differences between groups, whether the data were normally distributed or not was first examined with skewness and kurtosis . Descriptive statistics (frequency, percentage, arithmetic mean, and standard deviation) were used to describe subject characteristics, including descriptive statistics and correlation coefficients, sociodemographic data, and dietary habits as answers to the research questions. An independent t-test was used to determine the difference between male and female students' nutritional habits and professional athlete status, and One-way ANOVA was performed to determine the relationship between nutritional habits and their department at school.

Results

Descriptive statistics of students are given in Table 1.

Nutrition score of the students: 113.59 ± 27.96 for females, 111.9 ± 19.31 for males; in Physical Education Teaching Department students: 113.66 ± 27.33 for females, 110.35 ± 17.44 for males; in Coaching Education Department students: 110.89 ± 32.67 for females, 112.37 ± 21.56 for males; in Sports Management Department students: 116.4 ± 20.2 for females, 114.85 ± 11.6 for males; In Recreation Department students: 122.11 ± 15.4 for females, 119.61 ± 17.89 for males; in students engaged in active sports: 109.06 ± 32.33 for females, 112.99 ± 20.06 for males; and students who do not do active sports: 116.81 ± 24.12 for females and 111.02 ± 18.72 for males (Table 1, 2).

In this study, no statistically significant relationship was found between students' gender, department at school, being an active athlete, and their eating habits ($p>0.05$).

Discussion

In this study, it was found that there was no difference between the nutritional habits of the students of the Faculty of Sports Sciences of MCBU in terms of their gender, the department at school, and the status of being an active athlete. It was observed that

Table 1. Students' demographic characteristics, nutritional scores, department at school, and the status of being an active athlete.

	Age (year)	**Height (cm)**	**Weight (kg)**	**BMI (kg/m²)**	**Nutritional Score (NS)**
Female (n-118)	22,14±2,22	168,49±7,38	62,68±11,85	22,37±3,63	113,59±27,96
Male (n-248)	23,89±4,11	179,04±12,56	78,6±10,64	24,67±2,98	111,9±19,31
Department					
	Physical Education Teaching	**Coaching Education**	**Sports Management**	**Recreation**	**Active Athelete Yes/No**
Female (n-118)	44 (%37,78)	46 (%38,98)	16 (%3.55)	10 (8.89)	49 (%41,52) / 69 (%58,48)
Male (n-248)	50 (%20.16)	129 (%52.01)	31 (%12,5)	38 (%15.32)	111(44.75)/ 137 (55.25

Table 2. Distribution of the students according to their healthy eating habits

Gender N-	**Eating healthy foods**	**Never %**	**Rarely %**	**Occasionally %**	**Often %**	**Repeatedly %**
	Eat breakfast daily.	1.2%	22.3%	17.2%	24.4%	36.2%
	Eat more vegetables.	1.2%	14.4%	17.8%	42.9%	22.7%
	Eat more fruits.	1.1%	12.2%	26.3%	41.5%	17.9%
Female	Eat or drink more dairy foods.	1.9%	10.5%	15.8%	51.4%	19.4%
N-118	Eat more whole grain foods.	3.5%	11.7%	37.3%	36.3%	9.2%
	Eat low-fat salad dressing.	1.5%	19.1%	42.3%	28.3%	8.8%
	Eat breakfast purposefully .	1.3%	13.5%	38.5%	31.3%	15.2%
	Eat three meals every day.	2.3%	25.9%	23.1%	33.2%	10.5%
	Meals contain all food elements	2.3%	21.3%	37.2%	28.9%	4.3%
	Eat breakfast daily.	3.6%	24.1%	15.8%	22.8%	19.7%
	Eat more vegetables.	1.9%	23.4%	36.3%	26%	10.4%
	Eat more fruits.	2.4%	13.1%	40.7%	29.6%	9.2%
Male	Eat or drink more dairy foods.	3.8%	15.9%	25.2%	35.3%	17.7%
N-248	Eat more whole grain foods.	3.2%	26.1%	35.7%	20.2%	11.8%
	Eat low-fat salad dressing.	1.1%	29%	35.2%	25.6%	5.1%
	Eat breakfast purposefully .	1.9%	14.5%	40.9%	25.3%	12.4%
	Eat three meals every day.	3.6%	18.4%	31.2%	27.5%	17.3%
	Meals contain all food elements	2.2%	22.4%	32.1%	26.2%	13.1%

students have neutral eating habits, that is, they practice healthy eating habits as much as unhealthy eating habits. It can be said that students alternate between healthy eating and unhealthy eating habits and their healthy eating levels are at a risky level.

In our study, no statistically significant difference was found between the eating habits of male and female students. Cheung et al. (2007) reported that the nutritional habits scores of students do not differ based on gender. Similarly, Monir et al. (2010) reported no significant statistical relationship between students' gender and eating habits. In the study by Manippa et al. (2017) examining the difference between the food preferences of women and men, it was determined that the nutrition score of women was higher than that of men. Malkoç et al. (2020) reported that women have higher nutritional attitudes than men in terms of nutritional knowledge and positive eating habits.

Table 3. Distribution of the students according to their unhealthy eating habits

Gender N-366	Unhealthy eating habits	Repeatedly %	Often %	Occasionally %	Rarely %	Never %
	Eat fast food	2%	17.4%	33.9%	25.8%	7.2%
	Eat fatty food	1.7%	23.1%	26.6%	29.6%	6.1%
	Eat frying food	1%	25.7%	42.3%	32.9%	1.5%
Female	Eat dessert.	12.7%	30.8%	35.3%	19.6%	3.6%
N-118	Eat food from restaurants.	2.3%	20.6%	47.2%	32.4%	7.5%
	Drink fizzy with meals.	2%	23,98%	21,88%	31,80%	2,78%
	Drink tea or coffee after meals.	13.4%	22.6%	21.3%	30.5%	14.2%
	Eat snakes between meals	9,1%	19,4%	27,3%	35,3%	7,2%
	Eat salty food	3%	12.3%	42%	26%	11%
	Eat canned food	7.3%	24.7%	38.7%	26.4%	7.9%
	Eat under cocked food	11,5%	29,3%	32,3%	17,5%	5,5%
	Eat spicy food	11,5%	29,2%	32,6%	17,1%	5,5%
	Eat fast food	5.3%	16.1%	31.7%	19.4%	1.6%
	Eat fatty food	4.2%	16.7%	38.4%	22.6%	1.1%
	Eat frying food	4.6%	31.8%	50.1%	16.1%	1.4%
Male	Eat dessert.	10.7%	27.1%	42.2%	19.6%	1.4%
N-248	Eat food from restaurants.	15%	22%	36%	22%	3%
	Drink fizzy with meals.	3,8%	21,6%	46,9%	26,1%	2,6%
	Drink tea or coffee after meals.	8.1%	16.8%	35.3%	31.4%	29.7%
	Eat snakes between meals	3,8%	28,8%	38%	24,5%	3,1%
	Eat salty food	7.3%	24.8%	38.3%	26.1%	7.5%
	Eat canned food	2,8%	11,8%	42%	26,3%	13,2%
	Eat under cocked food	5,7%	22,6%	45,1%	21,7%	7,4%
	Eat spicy food	5,7%	22,6%	45,1%	21,7%	7,4%

Table 4. The Relationship Between Eating Habits and the Status of being an Active Athlete in Faculty of Sport Sciences Students

	Active Athlete	Student	t	p
Female NS	109.06±32.33	116.81±24.12	1.420	0.159
Male NS	112,99±20,06	111,02±18,72	0.792	0.429

$P < 0.05$

Table 5. The Relationship Between Nutrition Habits and the Department at School in Faculty of Sport Sciences Students

	Physical Education Teaching	Coaching Education	Sports Management	Recreation	F	P
Female	113.66±27.33	110.89±32.67	116.4±20.2	122.11±15.4	0.501	0.682
Male	110.35±17.44	112.37±21.56	114.85±11,61	119.61±17.89	1.921	0.126

$P < 0.05$

Table 6. The Relationship Between Nutrition Habits and Gender, The Status of Being an Active Athlete, and the Department at School in Faculty of Sport Sciences Students

	Female NS	Male NS	t	p
Active Athlete	109.06±32.33	112,99±20,06	0.751	0.362
Student	116.81±24.12	111,02±18,72	1.626	1.106
Physical Education Teaching	113.66±27.33	110.35±17.44	0.681	0.497
Coaching Education	110.89±32.67	112.37±21.56	0.285	0.776
Sports Management	116.40±20.20	114.85±11,61	0.274	0.777
Recreation	122.11±15.40	119.61±17.89	0.440	0.665

$P < 0.05$

In a similar study conducted in university students, it was found that some dietary habits of the students differ based on gender. Besides, the frequency of consumption of meat products was high in female and male students, and it was found that 25.46% of students regularly consumed red meat, and 19.7% of them regularly consumed white meat. Orak et al. (2006) stated that the nutritional habits of university students differ by gender and the frequency of consuming bread, pastry, and cereal products in the previous month did not differ significantly based on gender; however, the frequency of consumption of some nutrients differed significantly by gender. Male students' consumption frequency of red meat, chicken, turkey, and offal was higher than female students. On the other hand, female students' frequency of eating sausage, salami, and chocolate were higher than male students. In addition, female students consume hamburgers, pizza, fish, eggs, legumes, bread, bulgur, rice, pasta, frozen foods, margarine, butter, oil, milk desserts, pastry, biscuits, cakes, instant soups, and canned foods was high. Also, their consumption frequency of tea, coffee, fruit juice, energy drink, cola, and other carbonated beverage consumption during the day was high. However, it was found that the frequency of the students' consumption of these drinks did not differ significantly based on the gender variable. Onurlubaş et al. (2015) found that students' consumption frequency of chips, popcorn, chocolate, biscuits, cakes, pastry, pastry desserts, cornflakes, and milk desserts were high during the day, but the frequency of the students' consumption of these foods did not depend on their gender.

While the habit of students having breakfast every day was 24.4% frequently and 36.2% very frequently in females, 24.1% rarely and 22.8% frequently in males; and the habit of eating three meals a day was found to be 25.9% rarely, 23.1% occasionally, and 33.2% frequently in females, and 31.2% occasionally and 27.5% frequently in males. Females' rate of eating breakfast was found to be higher than males. Breakfast, which is one of the main meals, is of great importance in people's nutrition. When skipping meals is turned into a habit, the person is prevented from eating enough and problems occur due to malnutrition (30). Considering the nutritional habits of university students in many studies, it has been determined that they skip meals and the most skipped meal is breakfast (31, 32, 33, 34, 35). Altıncı (2017) reported that most of the athletes (85.4%) stated that they had breakfast regularly and 14.6% of them did not. In a study conducted by Göktaş (2010) with active national athletes, 88.9% of the athletes did not skip meals and 11.1% skipped meals, and 72.3% of the skipped meals were breakfast. Özdoğan et al. (2012) reported that 50.1% of the students did not eat three meals a day, 84.5% skipped the main meals, and the most skipped meal was breakfast. Zileli et al. (2016) reported that 85.1% of the students skipped meals and the most skipped meals were breakfast with 44.9% and lunch with 35.4%. Yılmaz and Özkan (2007), in a study on the eating habits of university students, reported that 90.3% of the students skipped meals and that the most skipped meal was lunch with 65.8%. Özütürker et al. (2016) reported that 43.7% of the male students and

26.7% of the female students at the university skipped breakfast. Onurlubaş et al. (2015) found that 42.4% of the students skipped breakfast. Janout and Janoutova (2004) reported that 60.2% of the students ate three meals, 33.3% skipped meals, and breakfast took first place among skipped meals with 62.9%. Koldaş (2017) reported that the meals students missed: breakfast ranked first (41.29%) and lunch (30.52%) ranked second. Orak et al. (2006), in a study involving 712 male and female college students, found that while most of the students ate two meals, they often skipped breakfast and university students skipped breakfast due to lack of time. In another study in which university students' habits of eating breakfast were assessed, it was observed that students consumed most white bread, bagel-pastry, biscuit-cake at breakfast in the cereal group (43). In contrast to the literature, the ratio of 3 meals of nutrition and breakfast habits of MCBU sports faculty students is high. It seems that students are more aware of nutrition because they are both athletes and receive sports education.

In this study, students' daily eating habits were found to be 17.8% occasionally, 42.9% frequently, and 22.7% very frequently among females, and 23.4% rarely, 36.3% occasionally, and 26% frequently among males. Fruit-eating habit was determined as 26.3% occasionally, 41.5% frequently, and 22.7% very frequently in females, and 40.7% occasionally and 29.6% frequently in males. It is recommended to consume at least 5 portions of fruits and vegetables every day for adequate and balanced nutrition (Aydoğan et al., 2016). Škėmienė et al. (2007) reported that medical students› consumption of fresh fruits and vegetables was at very low rates. Kartal (2017) reported that while 30.2% of female students and 17.5% of male students consumed vegetables every day, this rate was 27.3% and 14.3%, respectively, in fruit consumption. Ayhan et al. (2012) reported that students consumed 28.1% fruit and 20.0% vegetables every day. Onyiriuka et al. (2013) reported that a minority of the students had a habit of eating fruits and vegetables. Güleç et al. (2008) reported that students preferred vegetables and fruits with a maximum frequency of 25.3% for main meals, and that vegetables and fruits were not consumed in the desired frequency and amount. Turan et al. (2009) found that 36.5% of the students always consumed fruit and vegetable dishes.

Milk and dairy products habit of MCBU students every day was found to be 15.8% occasionally, 51.4% frequent in females, and 25.2% occasionally 35.3% in males. It was observed that the milk and dairy eating habits in our study were particularly high among females students. In a study conducted in university students, the eating habits of the students studying in different departments were examined, and it was found that 46.9% of the students regularly consumed cheese and 32% consumed yogurt (46); 27.4% of them consumed milk or yogurt drink (47), and students' consumption of fruit, yoghurt, yogurt drink, and milk were found to be comparatively less (Yılmaz & Özkan, 2007). Güleç et al. (2008) reported the rate of consumption of milk and dairy products in main meals as 19.7%. Kartal (2017) reported that 5.8% of male students and 7.6% of females students did not consume milk and yogurt at all, and daily milk and yoghurt consumption rate was 20.9% and 20.2%, respectively, for females and male students. In another study in which the milk consumption of university students was examined, it was found that the daily milk consumption frequency of the students was below the recommended value (51). In our study, the rate of milk and dairy products habit of students is higher than other studies. Milk and dairy products are important food groups for muscle and bone development. Milk, which is the source of calcium and phosphorus, is especially necessary for the formation and development of bones and teeth, and for the protection of their healthy structure, heart, nerve and muscle cells.

Although the rate of fast-food consumption was not high in our study, previous studies have shown that university students in Turkey did not pay attention to meal patterns, they mostly preferred fast-food consumption, consumed milk and dairy products insufficiently, and behaved selectively in vegetable meals. Furthermore, it was reported that young people have insufficient nutritional knowledge, so insufficient knowledge cannot turn into habit or behavior (Aydoğan et al., 2016). Aksoydan and Çakır (2011) reported that 15.4% of the students regularly consumed fast-food every day, and the most frequently

purchased foods from the school cafeteria were chocolate and candy (23.4%), carbonated drinks (13.3%), biscuits (12%), pastry/panini (12%), hamburger (10%), chips (9%), and fruit juice (8%). Females consumed fast food more than males and their frequency of skipping main meals was higher. Özdinç (2004) stated that students' consumption of fast-food was 87.7%, and these products are preferred because they do not require much time to prepare and consume, and they are delicious and affordable. In another study, it was determined that the majority of university students preferred fast-food, especially females (54).

The habit of students to consume tea or coffee every day for females 22.6% frequently, 21.3% occasionally, 30.5% rarely, while males 16.8% frequently 35.3% occasionally 31.4% rarely;22.6% frequently, 21.3% occasionally, 30.5% rarely in females; 16.8% frequently, 35.3% occasionally, and 31.4% rarely in males; and the consumption of carbonated beverages among females was 23.98% frequently, 21.88% occasionally, 31.80% rarely; and 21.6% frequently, 46.9% occasionally, and 26.1% rarely in males. Tea is the most widely consumed beverage in Turkey. While it is consumed especially with breakfast, it is also consumed immediately after other meals. Most of the students (72.3%) prefer tea for breakfast (55). Yılmaz and Özkan (2007) reported that, with snacks, 65.7% of the university students consumed tea, 45.7% fruit juice, 42.9% coffee, and 33.7% of acidic beverages. Işkın and Sarıışık (2011) reported that a significant percentage of the students consumed these drinks every day (25.5%), and 40.4% drink 1-2 glasses a week. Orak et al. (2006) reported that 72.14% of the students consumed tea every day and that tea consumption was usually at breakfast. Ayhan et al. (2012) reported that 6.5% of students consumed coke every day. Haşıl and Korkmaz (2010) reported that 37.2% of the students consumed 1-2 cups of tea a day, 34.2% consumed 1-2 cups of coffee a day, and 28.2% consumed 1-2 cups of milk a day. Korkmaz (2010) stated that 65.4% did not drink milk and 55.6% did not drink coffee at all, and they found that they mostly consumed tea, 3-4 cups a day (24.8%). When our study was compared with the literature, it was observed that the rate of tea and coffee consumption of students was low and they did not prefer these drinks.

In this study, students' habit of consuming sweet foods every day was 30.8% frequently and 35.3% occasionally in females, and 27.1% frequently, 31.7% occasionally, and 42.2% rarely in males. The habit of consuming whole-grain foods was 37.3% occasionally and 36.3% frequently among females, and 26.1% rarely and 35.7% occasionally in males. The habit of consuming low-fat foods was 42.3% occasionally and 28.3% frequently among females, and 29% rarely and 35.2% occasionally in males. The habit of consuming fatty foods was 42.3% occasionally and 28.3% frequently among females, and 31.7% occasionally and 19.4% rarely in males. The habit of consuming junk food between meals 27.3% occasionally, 35.3% occasionally in females, 28.8% frequently and 38% occasionally in males, and the habit of consuming 3 meals was 25.9% rarely, 23.1% occasionally, and 33.2% frequently in females, and 18.4% rarely, 31.2% occasionally, and 27.5% frequently in males. The habit of consuming all kinds of food in my meals (e.g., soup, meat, pasta or rice, vegetable dishes with olive oil, salad, dessert) 21.3% rarely, 37.2% occasionally, and 28.9% often in females, and 22.4% rarely, 32.1% occasionally, 26.2% frequently in males. Kutlu (2020) found that students frequently consumed foods like bagels, pastries, eggs, cheese, oatmeal, pita, lahmajun, dried legumes, rice, pasta, bulgur, bread, pastry, and cereals in their meals. Orak et al. (2006) reported that 29.07% of the university students consumed legumes, 59.85% flour, pasta and rice, 15.87% cake and biscuit, and 24.27% dessert. Onurlubaş et al. (2015) reported that 71.6% of the students had bagel-bread, 56.8% olive, 56.8% salami-sausage, 32.1% honey-jam-molasses, 1% margarine, and 7.2% corn cereal. Korkmaz (2010) reported that 16.8% of the students consumed snacks once a day, 41.4% twice a day, 20.4% three times a day, 5.4% four times a day, and 6% more than four times a day. They found that students consumed 10.8% fruit, 33% beverage, 27.8% wafer/chocolate, and 20.2% bagel-pastry as snacks. Excessive sugar consumption is a risk factor for chronic diseases such as obesity, diabetes, and dental caries. In another study, it was found that more than half of the male and female students usually added sugar to hot drinks. Also, it was reported that students consumed at least 1 glass of acidic sweetened drink every day, and although it was more common among

girls, most of the students consumed chocolate, sugar, and sweet biscuits every day (Aydoğan et al., 2016). Hull et al. (2016) reported that 49.2% of the students used sugary foods 1-2 times a week. Coutinho et al. (2016) found that 30% of athletes consumed sugary drinks five or more times a week. Hull et al. (2016) reported that 54.1% of the athletes consumed dried legumes five or more times a week. Coutinho et al. (2016) stated that 95% of the athletes consumed dried legumes five or more times a week, on the other hand, 74% consumed vegetables once a week or less. With the start of university education, a new era begins in students' nourishment, as they leave the family environment they have been accustomed to until then, become more open to external influences and begin to make their own free choices more clearly. However, it is thought that economic problems and a new life order negatively affect eating habits.

Conclusion

Students at the Faculty of Sport Sciences are involved in sports, and nutrition is of great importance for these students, as they are prospective Physical Education Teachers, Sports Managers, or Coaches, and they will share information on this subject as part of their professional life. In our study, it was observed that the students had neutral eating habits. This result is thought to be due to the lack of nutritional information, living away from family, and economic reasons. Such a young population should be encouraged and informed of healthy lifestyle behaviors and healthy diets. Compulsory nutrition courses in the Faculty of Sport Sciences should be included in the curriculum, seminars and trainings on this subject should be organized at universities. Conferences, panels and talks should be provided on nutrition issues at regular intervals at universities, and healthier diet options should be offered to students in the places they live with in cooperation with other institutions.

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