Impact of academic consulting quality on academic knowledge levels of graduate students in sports sciences

İhsan Kuyulu and Enes Beltekin*

Physical Education and Sport School, Bingol University, Bingol, Turkey.

ABSTRACT

This research was carried out to examine the effect of graduate students' perceived academic advisory quality on their academic knowledge levels. A total of 130 graduate students, 50 of whom were masters and 80 were doctorates, who studied in the field of sports sciences, participated in the study during the 2019-2020 academic year. In the research, survey technique was used as a data collection tool. "Ideal Counseling Scale" and "Teachers' Research Literacy Skills Scale" were used to collect data for the purpose of the research. The analysis of the data obtained at the end of the research was made in the SPSS22 statistical program and the degree of significance among the variables was taken as 0.05. In order to get an idea about the distribution of the data, firstly, the normality of the distributions, and then skewness and kurtosis tests were examined. According to test results, Mann Whitney-U analysis was performed in binary comparisons, Kruskal Wallis analysis in multiple comparisons, and multiple regression analysis was performed to test the relationships between variables in a holistic way. According to the answers given by the graduate students to the scales, it was determined that doctorate students are better known by their academic advisors and there is a better communication between them and there is a significant difference in academic knowledge levels in favor of doctoral students. It has been determined that the majority of graduate students are satisfied with their academic advisors and they want to work with the same advisors if they have the opportunity to get graduate education again and there is a difference in favor of those who say yes in their academic knowledge competence. It has been determined that students' perceptions of academic counseling quality do not differ according to the learning stage variable, but there is a significant difference in favor of those who are at the level of academic knowledge. As a result, the quality of academic counseling significantly affects the academic knowledge levels of graduate students, good communication between the student and the advisor, and the counselor's student's knowledge plays an important role in this.

Keywords: Academic counseling, knowledge level, sports sciences.

*Corresponding author: E-mail: ens_bltkn@hotmail.com

INTRODUCTION

The understanding of contemporary education necessitates the implementation of flexible programs, which can vary within themselves in order to respond to the differentiation of talent and interest observed in students in educational institutions. In addition to common compulsory courses, there are courses that students can choose according to their abilities, interests and needs, and a separate program should be created for each student. For this reason, in education institutions implementing diversified programs, education officers should be closely interested with their students in order to determine their educational needs. In higher education institutions, this service awaits from the academic staff assigned as "Advisors" (Kuzgun at al., 1997).

Counseling ("mentoring") is an intense, sensitive, complex, professional and dynamic relationship between

the counselor ("mentor") and the client ("mentee or protégé") (Ehrich and Hansford, 1999). This relationship is based on the consultant's ideal desire to help and the success of the client in his professional life (Hayden, 2006). In this relationship, the consultant shares his resources, knowledge, expertise, values, skills and attitudes to facilitate the client's professional development. The consultant is also the teacher, guide ("counselor"), motivator ("motivator"), supportive ("sponsor"), coach, mentor ("advisor"), resource person ("referral agent"), role model, confidant ("Confidant") and also has features such as listener, tolerance and always accessible ("door opener") (Kram, 1983; Tobin, 2004).

The educational process is not limited only to academic teaching in the classroom, but also includes out-of-class student-faculty relations, the educational program, and academic counseling and guidance of the instructor. Therefore, determining the students' views on the educational process should cover all these dimensions (Dolmans et al., 2003). In-class and out-of-class relationships between the student and the instructor have a significant impact on the student (Kuh and Hu, 2001). The out-of-class relationships between the student and the instructor play an important role in the personal, social and intellectual development of the students (Endo and Harpel, 1982), their academic achievements in the courses (Thompson, 2001), their perceptions of themselves, their self-confidence and their self-worth (Kuh, 1995). Students who meet with instructors outside the course express that this communication forces them to think more about their future careers, increases their level of satisfaction with their educational experiences, and gains on their intellectual development (Clark et al., 2002). The evaluation of the university students on education services includes both student-instructor relationships in the classroom and conditions and behaviors that facilitate learning. Student satisfaction research on the educational process reveals that learning is very strongly related to the satisfaction of the course (Guolla, 1999). Academic counseling, on the other hand, is regarded as an important part of academic service and is seen as a process that exposes students ' life and career goals or helps them discover those goals (King, 1993). Quality counselors play an important role in the academic process, not only in the selection of courses, but also in making students aware of new situations to be directed (Raushi, 1993). Good academic counseling has a positive and significant impact on the student's academic performance and satisfaction with their experience at the University (Ramos, 1993). All of these make the educational process a process in which the social, academic and professional interests of the student are revealed as a whole (Ekinci and Burgas, 2007).

In this context, one of the periods where the quality of academic advice given to students is most important is the counseling given during the graduate education process. As a result of a quality consultancy service provided during this process, some students continue their academic careers in a more self-taught manner; unfortunately, students with bad counseling perception have to end their academic lives before they start, or even if they continue their academic careers because they do not have the full scientific equipment, they do not sign quality studies or continue their academic lives in a way that is dependent on other people. The aim of this study is to examine the impact of the quality of academic advice received by graduate students studying in Sports Sciences on the academic knowledge levels of graduate students.

METHODOLOGY

The research was carried out in descriptive survey model (Karasar, 2006). This model is a research pattern used to describe features such as abilities, knowledge, beliefs, attitudes, and opinions belonging to sampling rather than the entire population (Fraenkel and Wallen, 2009).

Purpose and importance of the study

This research was carried out to examine the effect of the quality of academic counseling perceived by graduate students on their academic knowledge levels. This research is important for the evaluation of the quality of application of academic counseling service in Turkey for graduate students, which affects the academic development of academic candidates and, if any, to reveal its deficiencies and to demonstrate what needs to be done to provide more efficient and effective counseling.

Study group

A total of 130 graduate students, 50 of whom are masters, 80 of whom are doctorate students, participated in the study in the 2019-2020 academic year. It was determined that 59.2% of the students participating in the study were male and 40.8% were female. It was determined that 37.7% of the students participating in the study were in the course period, 9.2% in the proficiency exam period and 53.1% in the thesis preparation period. Again, it was determined that 88.5% of the students participating in the study trust their academic advisors' scientific knowledge level, and 11.5% of them do not trust their academic advisors' scientific knowledge level.

Data collection tools

In the research, survey technique was used as a data collection tool. In the first part of the research, there are

11 questions that will reflect the demographic information of the participants (gender, graduate education level, etc.). In the second part of the study, "Ideal Counseling Scale" developed by Rose (2003) and adapted to Turkish by Seçkin et al. (2014) was used. The scale consists of 6 sub-dimensions and 30 questions, including guidance, honesty, relationship, comfortable personality, getting to know the student and allocating time for the student. For the purpose of our research, only the sub-dimensions of the scale to guide, get to know and devote time to the student were used. In the study conducted by Seçkin et al. (2014), the internal consistency coefficients (Cronbach's alpha) of the sub-dimensions of the scale were determined as .91 in the guidance dimension, .73 in the dimension of knowing the student and finally .75 in the allocating time for the student. In the third and last part of the research, "Research Literacy Skills Scale of Teachers (ÖAOB)" developed by Yıldız et al. (2019) was used. The scale research process consists of 4 sub-dimensions and 26 questions: preparation for research, methodology and accessing resources. In the study conducted by Yıldız et al. (2019), the internal consistency coefficients of the sub-dimensions of the scale (Cronbach alpha) were determined as .92 in the research process dimension, .89 in the preparation for research dimension, .90 in the methodology dimension, and finally in the dimension of accessing the resources .83. . The statements in the scales are rated as 5-point Likert.

Statistical analysis

The data collected through the scales used to examine the effect of the quality of academic counseling perceived by graduate students on academic knowledge levels were analyzed through the statistical package program SPSS.22 program and the results were interpreted. Descriptive statistics including arithmetic mean, standard deviation, frequency and percentage distributions are presented in order to gain insight into demographic information and other group questions. In order to determine the relationship between graduate students' perceptions of academic counseling quality and academic knowledge levels with some demographic variables, the distribution of the distributions (Kolmogorov-Smirnov) and then Skewness and Kurtosis tests were examined Osborne and Amy (2004) expressed "normal" expression scores as Z value ranging from -3 to +3, and "extreme values" as scores outside the range of -3 to +3. However, the kurtosis value of ± 1 is considered perfect for most psychometric measurements, but a value in the range of ±2 is also acceptable, depending on a particular application (George and Mallery, 2012). According to test results, Mann Whitney-U test was used in independent binary comparisons and Kruskal Wallis tests were used in multiple comparisons between demographic variables. In case of differences between groups in multiple comparisons between demographic variables, Mann Whitney-U tests were used to determine which group or groups originated from this difference. In addition, multiple regression analysis was used to test the relationships between variables in a holistic way. The results were evaluated at 95% confidence interval and significance level at p < 0.05.

FINDINGS

This section explained the section the statistical results of the study. Statistical analyzes made according to the demographic characteristics of the people participating in the research will be included.

When Table 1 is analyzed, while there is a significant difference between in perceived academic counseling quality sub-dimensions according to the education levels of the graduate students participating in the research, there was a significant difference between the groups in between the academic knowledge level total scores and the academic knowledge level sub-dimensions research process and accessing resources sub-dimensions (p < 0.05).

When Table 2 is analyzed, while a significant difference was found between the groups in all of the sub-dimensions of academic counseling quality and perceived academic counseling quality according to the desire to study with the current academic advisor, there was a significant difference between the academic knowledge level total scores and academic knowledge level sub-dimensions only in the Preparation for Research sub-dimension (p < 0.05).

When Table 3 is analyzed, while there is no significant difference between the groups in the perceived academic counseling quality total scores and sub-dimensions according to the educational stage variable of the graduate students participating in the research, there was a significant difference between the academic knowledge level total scores and academic knowledge level sub-dimensions only in the Research Process sub-dimension between the groups (p < 0.05).

When Table 4 is examined, while there is a significant difference between the groups in the guidance sub-dimension only from the perceived academic counseling quality sub-dimensions according to the titles of the academic advisors of the graduate students participating in the research, there was a significant difference between the academic knowledge level total scores and the academic knowledge level subscales in the Research Process and Preparation for Research sub-dimensions (p < 0.05).

When Table 5 is examined, according to the results of multiple regression analysis conducted to test whether academic consultancy quality sub-dimensions have an effect on students 'academic knowledge levels (p = 0.000) and Knowing Students sub-dimension has a

Table 1. Comparing the academic counseling quality and academic knowledge levels perceived by the graduate students participating in the research according to the education level variable.

		Graduate education level?	N	X	S.D	U	p
Perceived academic counseling quality sub-dimensions	Guiding	Master	50	3.51	1.205	1820.000	.388
		Doctorate	80	3.73	1.035		
	Knowing students	Master	50	3.88	.929	1504.000	**.015***
		Doctorate	80	4.22	.944		
	Allocate time to students	Master	50	3.99	1.032	1895.000	.605
		Doctorate	80	4.07	1.034		
Academic knowledge level sub-dimensions	Research process	Master	50	4.14	.620	1473.500	**.011***
		Doctorate	80	4.40	.524		
	Preparation for research	Master	50	4.12	.621	1724.500	.186
		Doctorate	80	4.25	.580		
	Knowledge of methodology	Master	50	3.76	.816	1606.500	.058
		Doctorate	80	4.02	.801		
	Accessing resources	Master	50	3.94	.858	1575.000	**.038***
		Doctorate	80	4.27	.651		
Perceived academic counseling quality total score		Master	50	3.67	1.029	1766.500	.263
		Doctorate	80	3.90	.918		
Academic knowledge level total score		Master	50	4.04	.589	1501.500	**.017***
		Doctorate	80	4.26	.546		
			130				

p < 0.05*

Table 2. Comparison of the academic counseling quality and academic knowledge levels perceived by the graduate students participating in the research according to their desire to work again with the current academic advisor.

		Would you like to work with your current advisor if you had a chance to study for a postgraduate degree again?	N	X	S.D	U	p
Perceived academic counseling quality sub-dimensions	Guiding	Yes	100	4.07	.764	199.000	**.000***
		No	30	2.23	.861		
	Knowing Students	Yes	100	4.41	.681	306.000	**.000***
		No	30	3.03	.956		
	Allocate time to students	Yes	100	4.36	.794	393.500	**.000***
		No	30	2.96	1.008		
Academic knowledge level sub-dimensions	Research Process	Yes	100	4.33	.609	1173.000	.070
		No	30	4.20	.438		
	Preparation for Research	Yes	100	4.25	.626	1002.500	**.006****
		No	30	4.03	.455		
	Knowledge of Methodology	Yes	100	3.93	.857	1385.000	.523
		No	30	3.89	.657		
	Accessing Resources	Yes	100	4.20	.757	1177.500	.070
		No	30	3.95	.709		
Perceived academic counseling quality total score		Yes	100	4.19	.646	130.000	**.000***
		No	30	2.53	.714		

Table 2. Continues.

			N	X	S.D	X²	p
Academic knowledge level total score		Yes	100	4.21	.604	1125.500	**.038***
		No	30	4.05	.429		
			130				

p < 0.05*, p < 0.01**, p < 0.001***

Table 3. Comparison of the academic counseling quality and academic knowledge levels perceived by the graduate students participating in the research according to the educational stage variable.

		What stage are you in postgraduate education?	N	X	S.D	DF	X²	p
Perceived academic counseling quality sub-dimensions	Guiding	Course Period	49	3.79	.912			
		Proficiency Period	12	3.61	1.345	2	.579	.748
		Thesis Period	69	3.55	1.187			
	Knowing students	Course Period	49	4.10	.805			
		Proficiency Period	12	4.52	.626	2	3.151	.207
		Thesis Period	69	4.00	1.070			
	Allocate time to students	Course Period	49	4.22	.918			
		Proficiency Period	12	4.08	1.018	2	2.249	.325
		Thesis Period	69	3.90	1.099			
Academic knowledge level sub-dimensions	Research process	Course Period	49	4.10	.628			
		Proficiency Period	12	4.34	.329	2	10.572	**.005***
		Thesis Period	69	4.43	.531			
	Preparation for research	Course Period	49	4.06	.617			
		Proficiency Period	12	4.16	.547	2	5.603	.061
		Thesis Period	69	4.30	.578			
	Knowledge of methodology	Course Period	49	3.73	.891			
		Proficiency Period	12	3.78	.875	2	4.997	.082
		Thesis Period	69	4.08	.718			
	Accessing resources	Course Period	49	3.97	.784			
		Proficiency Period	12	4.30	.717	2	4.863	.088
		Thesis Period	69	4.24	.720			
Perceived academic counseling quality total score		Course Period	49	3.93	.798			
		Proficiency Period	12	3.89	1.032	2	.639	.726
		Thesis Period	69	3.71	1.059			
Academic knowledge level total score		Course Period	49	4.00	.617			
		Proficiency Period	12	4.16	.511	2	8.394	**.015***
		Thesis Period	69	4.30	.520			
			130					

p < 0.05*, p < 0.01**

Table 4. Comparison of academic counseling quality and academic knowledge levels perceived by the academic advisors of the graduate students participating in the research according to their titles.

		The title of your advisor?	N	X	S.D	DF	X²	p
Perceived academic counseling quality sub-dimensions	Guiding	Dr. Lecturer	18	3.13	1.187			
		Associate Professor	36	3.50	1.232	2	6.397	**.041***
		Professor	76	3.84	.977			

Table 4. Continues.

	Knowing students	Dr. Lecturer	18	3.79	.984			
		Associate Professor	36	4.19	.990	2	3.260	.196
		Professor	76	4.11	.919			
	Allocate time to students	Dr. Lecturer	18	3.83	1.028			
		Associate Professor	36	4.16	1.088	2	2.390	.303
		Professor	76	4.03	1.007			
Academic knowledge level sub-dimensions	Research process	Dr. Lecturer	18	3.85	.745			
		Associate Professor	36	4.33	.436	2	9.017	**.011***
		Professor	76	4.39	.545			
	Preparation for research	Dr. Lecturer	18	3.82	.680			
		Associate Professor	36	4.30	.539	2	9.434	**.009****
		Professor	76	4.24	.576			
	Knowledge of methodology	Dr. Lecturer	18	3.63	.838			
		Associate Professor	36	4.04	.718	2	3.170	.205
		Professor	76	3.93	.842			
	Accessing resources	Dr. Lecturer	18	3.74	.897			
		Associate Professor	36	4.25	.777	2	5.403	.067
		Professor	76	4.18	.678			
Perceived academic counseling quality total score		Dr. Lecturer	18	3.39	.984			
		Associate Professor	36	3.76	1.071	2	4.305	.116
		Professor	76	3.93	.887			
Academic knowledge level total score		Dr. Lecturer	18	3.79	.694			
		Associate Professor	36	4.25	.499	2	8.257	**.016***
		Professor	76	4.18	.678			
			130					

$p < 0.05$*, $p < 0.01$**

Table 5. Multiple regression analysis reflecting the effect between the academic counseling quality sub-dimensions and academic knowledge levels perceived by the graduate students participating in the research.

		Variables	Beta (ß)	S. Error	t	p	F	R^2	p
Independent variables Dependent variable	Guiding Academic knowledge level	G»AKL	.034	.063	.547	.586			
Independent variables Dependent variable	Knowing students Academic knowledge level	KS»AKL	.171	.071	.284	**.018**	8.959	.17	**.000****
Independent variables Dependent variable	Allocate time to students Academic knowledge level	ATS»AKL	.062	.070	.111	.381			

$p < 0.001$***

positive effect on graduate students' academic knowledge levels detected ($R2 = .17$, $p = .018$). According to the results obtained, the level of academic advisors 'knowing of graduate students and their knowledge of the points where their students are sufficient or insufficient in terms of academic knowledge have a positive effect on students' academic development.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

This study was carried out with the aim of examining the effect of the quality of academic counseling received by

students studying in the field of sports sciences on the level of academic knowledge of graduate students. A total of 130 graduate students, 50 of whom are Master's student and 80 are doctorate students, participated in the research. It was determined that 59.2% of the students participating in the study were male and 40.8% of them were female. It was determined that 37.7% of the students participating in the study were in the course period, 9.2% in the proficiency exam period and 53.1% in the thesis preparation period. Again, it was determined that 88.5% of the students participating in the study trust their academic advisors' scientific knowledge level, and 11.5% of their academic advisors do not trust their scientific knowledge level.

According to other findings obtained from the research; according to the education levels of graduate students participating in the study, there was a significant difference between groups' perceived academic counseling quality sub-dimensions, in knowing the student sub-dimension, while there was a significant difference between the academic knowledge level sub-dimensions, research process and accessing resources sub-dimensions. Although Master's education is considered as a gateway to the world of science for students, the positions of Doctorate students have always been different in terms of transition to doctorate education more difficult and those who have completed their doctorate can find themselves in the world of science. It can be said that the time spent in the doctorate process and the academic infrastructure from the Master period in scientific sense may cause the advisors to know doctorate students better. Again, according to the results of the research, a significant difference was found in favor of doctorate students in the academic knowledge level total scores, research Process and accessing resources. The reason for this difference may be due to the fact that doctorate students have both academic infrastructure from the Master period and spend more time in the academic process and consequently have more academic knowledge. When the literature is examined, Seçkin et al. (2012) found that in their research, students who have received doctorate education and that those who have master education do not agree on 'formality'. According to the researchers, it is expected that a friendly environment will be created among Doctorate students and faculty members, as the doctorate program is a longer and deeper study program than the Master program, more time is spent with faculty members and more intensive work with academic studies (Seçkin et al., 2014).

In another finding of the research, a significant difference was found between the groups in all of the sub-dimensions of academic counseling quality and perceived academic counseling quality according to the desire to study again with the current academic advisor, while there was a significant difference between the academic knowledge level total scores and academic

knowledge level sub-dimensions only in the Preparation for Research sub-dimension between the groups. According to this result, as the academic counseling quality given by the advisors increases, that is, when they guide their students well, get to know their students in every subject and allocate enough time to their students, they are satisfied with the counseling quality and therefore they want to work with the same counselor if they have the chance to have a postgraduate education again. When the literature is examined in literature, Seçkin et al. (2014) differ in their opinions according to their education level in terms of "relationship", "knowing the student" and "time allocation". 'Knowing the student' and 'time allocation' are more important for Doctorate students than Master students. In his master's thesis in Aksarı (2019), items that "The consultancy services provided by the faculty members are sufficient." were found to be at the highest level (Aksari, 2019). These studies support our study.

According to the education stage variable of the graduate students participating in the study, there was no significant difference between the groups in terms of academic knowledge level scores and sub-dimensions of academic knowledge level, but only in the Research Process sub-dimension. It is seen that the results are mostly in favor of students who are at the thesis stage. This can be said to increase the level of academic knowledge at the same rate as the duration of graduate education is prolonged and actively found in academic life.

According to the titles of the academic advisors of the graduate students participating in the research, there was a significant difference between the groups perceived academic counseling quality sub-dimensions only in the guidance sub-dimension, whereas there was a significant difference between the academic knowledge level sub-dimensions and the Research Process and Preparation for Research sub-dimensions. Considering the perception of academic advisory quality, the advisors of guiding in the sub-dimensions of academic advisory quality it was determined that the students with Lecturer had low Guiding. In addition, according to the findings, it was determined that the quality of academic counseling decreased according to the titles of the counselors, with a high level of associate professorship and a decrease in professorship period. It is thought that the reason for this is that the advisors could not allocate enough time for their students due to the lack of experience at the level of Dr. Lecturer, and the advisors' duties in the administrative or other field during the professorship period. In the period of associate professor, it can be said that they spent more time and shared more academically with their graduate students since they were the period of cooking and preparation for professors.

In the last finding of our research, according to the results of multiple regression analysis conducted in order to test whether academic counseling quality sub-

dimensions have an effect on students' academic knowledge levels, it was determined that there was a significant effect on the academic knowledge levels of graduate students. According to the results obtained, the level of academic advisors' recognition of graduate students, their students' knowledge about the points they are sufficient or insufficient in terms of academic knowledge, and the advisors' involvement of students in their academic studies, positively affect the academic development of students.

As a result, people often choose their teachers or teachers from the university as role models during their student life. In this context, it is necessary to be aware of this for all educators. Sometimes a word or a little behavior is a subtle touch of people's lives. Such little things can move that person up and down very low. In this respect, guidance and effective counseling are very important for people's future in every period of education and training life. One of the basic building blocks of citizens' prosperity and advanced civilization is being scientifically ahead. Here, too, one of the main roles belongs to academics that train new generation scientists and advise these candidate scientists. The better students are trained and added to the new values of the country, the more socially it can go.

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