

A Study on the Awareness of Secondary School Students in Turkey about Youth Centers

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Abstract

The aim of this study is to reveal how much the secondary school students in Turkey know about the programs and activities carried out by the Ministry of Youth and Sports [Gençlik ve Spor Bakanlığı (GSB)] and to find out how many of them have ever participated in the activities led by GSB-affiliated Youth Centers. The research uses the data obtained from a 2014 GSB project titled "Mobile Youth Center-Young Volunteers Movement" carried out in 55 towns and villages of 33 different cities ". A semi-trailer and a caravan were rented to implement the project, and these vehicles were changed into mobile youth centers. The trailer was filled with educational, audiovisual, and sporting materials to offer to the service of young people in places to be visited, where no youth centers were available. The caravan served as an office where counseling services were offered to young students. In the study, a questionnaire was conducted to 1,500 secondary school students voluntarily participating in the research. The results analyzed by the SPSS program revealed that the ratio of secondary school students who know about GSB activities and programs was 35.5%, and the percentage of those participating in a program organized by provincial-district youth centers over the past year was 30.5%. The findings suggest that young people living in disadvantaged areas are not well informed about the programs organized by GSB and the participation rates in programs offered by youth centers are not sufficient.

Keywords: Youth Center, Social Work, Mobil Youth Center, Secondary School Students, Ministry of Youth and Sports

1. Introduction

The concept of youth has several definitions with various age ranges. The Turkish Language Institution says that youth is "the period between adolescence and middle age of human life" (TDK, 2016). The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization states that people aged 15-24 are young (UNESCO, 2016), whereas Yörükoğlu (2007) believes that youth starts with the very first signs of puberty and includes 12-21 years of age. GSB stated in its "National Youth and Sport Policy Document" (UGSPB) published in 2013 that considering the conditions in Turkey, the target group in youth policies is the individuals in the 14-29 age group, (Resmi Gazete, 2013a).

It is a fact that Turkey has a young population. According to the report "Youth with Statistics" prepared by the Turkish Statistical Institute (TUIK) in 2014, the number of young

people in Turkey, aged between 15-29 years, is 19.055.583, and this figure will rise to 19.326.145 in 2023. The report also stated that the proportion of the young population to the total population in Turkey is 24.8%, while it is 17% in Germany, 17.9% in France and 15.6% in Spain (TUIK, 2015).

This research by TUIK shows that the number of young people in Turkey is higher than the total population of many countries. The density of the young population causes many problems, especially employment. Although this situation seems to be a disadvantage for Turkey, the young population, the best guarantee for the country's future, will turn into an advantage for the nation in the long term with the necessary investments and good education. (Yücel, 2006). Societies that regard young people as a great opportunity and wealth for the continuation of the country in economic and social fields give importance to raising knowledgeable, hardworking, and productive generations with national and spiritual values (MEB, 2011a).

The 20th century, where rapid and continuous developments in science and technology took place, is "the information age", which is defined as the "third wave" by Toffler, and the society is "the information society" (Balbay, 2004), thus education is required in every field of life and learning should be lifelong learning. Education for lifelong learning should not be limited to school age and school buildings. Education should be considered as a component of all educational activities, including both formal and informal education (Odabaş and Polat, 2008). South Korea, as a country that utilizes education in all aspects of life, has not only achieved success on the international scene in terms of the in-school education and school-based education indicators, but also, they have learned to educate the young people outside the school, reintegrating them into society, and helping them develop an identity sense (Turk, 2013a). Japan is also an advanced country in terms of science and technology, attaching importance to the education of children and young people, adopting the lifelong education philosophy. Lifelong education in Japan is carried out by both public and private organizations. Public clubs, youth centers, nature centers for children, museums, libraries, physical education, and recreation centers are among the important organizations that organize common education activities (Uçar ve Uçar, 2004).

The Bologna Process triggered life-long learning studies in Turkey. In this framework, policies and investments have been made to support the personal and social development of children and young people outside school, by helping them with leisure time activities, encouraging them to avoid bad habits and to get them to adopt sports habits, thus forming a young information society as the information age requires. Among these investments are youth centers, operating alongside educational institutions, like in many of the developed countries of the world.

Youth Centers are facilities open to public that offer young people the opportunity to spend their leisure time by doing useful activities (Duden, 2016). These centers are not only organizations that help young people spend their leisure time doing sporting, artistic or cultural activities, but also, they play an important role in solving adaption and communication problems of young people who have moved to big cities from disadvantaged settlements and have difficulty adapting urban culture. These centers also help refugee/asylum-seeking young people who have had to leave their countries for different reasons such as war with adapting to

the country's culture and help prevent them from being involved in criminal activities, alcohol and drug use, extortion, and violence.

In Turkey, most youth centers are run by GSB, but there are also youth centers where different activities carried out by local administrations and nongovernment organizations (NGOs). Youth centers run by the GSB are institutions that help young people to join the society as active citizens, giving them the opportunity for recreational activities like social, cultural, artistic, and sporting activities according to their interests, desires and abilities. They also aim to protect youth from harmful habits. Individuals aged 12-24 may register with youth centers. In Youth Centers, the following activities are organized in general terms: applied fine arts, handicrafts, first steps in different sports branches, chess, scouting, library services, preservation of natural and historical environment, educational studies, language education, scientific and technological studies, celebrations, competitions, environmental trips, exhibitions, and press-publications (Resmi Gazete, 2013b).

In 2014, a total of 759 thousand participants in 182 youth centers of GSB took part in educational and cultural activities such as Quran education, Ottoman Turkish, Calligraphy, ornamentation, marbling art, reading, drama, wooden painting, fabric painting, stained glass, philography, painting, folk dances, music, computer operation, physics and history (Kadioğlu, 2014a).

All Youth Centers around the world carry out similar activities. In Germany, the Children and Youth Center, which operates in the city of Hennef Municipality, carries out modelling activities to develop manual skills and sporting activities for children aged 7-13 years, while the Youth Cafe organizes sporting and cultural activities for youth aged between 12 and 18. In addition, there are pedagogues dealing with the problems of children and young people and consulting them. While the center provides "day care for school children" between 11-16 hours every day on weekdays, it regularly organizes holiday programs (Hennef, 2012). Brighton Youth Center, founded in 1917, is one of the youth centers in the UK that organizes activities and support programs for children and young people between the ages of 5-19. With associate institutions, the center carries out projects for disabled youth, young caregivers, young criminals, young parents and homeless youth, beside organizing sporting, social and cultural activities, and offering pedagogical support and health counseling services (Brighton, 2016). Bopfingen and Neresheim Youth Centers of the German Red Cross organization operating in the Aalen region serve as a meeting point for children and young people to do activities in their spare time. The Youth Centers provides internet cafes, help book exchanges, and organize cooking classes according to the wishes of young people, workshops, handicrafts, cinema nights, sports and cultural events (Deutsches Rotes Kreis, 2016). The Gwangjin District Youth Education Center in South Korea is a local government-affiliated youth center and offers general and special educational programs for 9-24-year-olds. There are about 600 courses within the scope of the center's general events. In addition to these activities, programs organized under the roof of special events provide training in the fields of Space Science, Sexual Education and Internet Addiction protection. There are also relevant post-school orientation trainings for young people. Gwangjin District Youth Education Center is a youth center, noted for its thematic trainings, also organizes various volunteer activities and festivals (Türk, 2013b).

Mobile Youth Center Project

Youth Centers in Turkey are generally established in provincial centers. Since these centers are not located in many districts, small settlements and villages, a large proportion of young people living there do not know what kind of activities the Youth Centers organize, nor do they benefit from the activities carried out. The Mobile Youth Center project, realized in 2014 by the International Relations and EU Coordination Office of Kirikkale University, was the first in Turkey to draw attention to this problem. The project "Mobile Youth Center - Young Volunteers Movement" was financially supported by GSB within the scope of "2013 Social Involvement Project Call". The project required hiring a semi-trailer truck, a caravan and a car, which all traveled across 55 towns and 9 villages of 33 cities in Turkey for 2 months. First, the outer surfaces of the trailer and caravan were covered with canvas with the project title, pictures, brochures and banners printed on it. The trailer was filled with educational, audiovisual, and sporting materials to offer to the service of young people in places to be visited. The objective of the project, financed by GSB with a budget of 300.000 Liras, was to travel across the towns and villages where youth centers were either too far or not available at all, and to inform young people about youth centers and their projects and activities, to encourage them to participate in such events, to do sports, and to prevent them from bad habits. There were volunteer students from Kirikkale University travelling in the car to support the project. In each settlement where the activities were carried out, the activity materials on the trailer were presented to the children and young people in areas allocated by the local governments for the project. The volunteer university students participated themselves in many sporting, educational and cultural events such as face painting, music listening, video screening, table tennis, volleyball, basketball, football, cycling, darts, badminton, and chess together with the children and young people, beside informing them about GSB's programs and projects. At the end of the project Kirikkale University held a Youth Week consisting of a photo exhibition and a conference. The volunteer youths participating in the project shared the experience they gained in the project and encouraged other young students to organize such social work. The faculty members of the university were also informed about the project, which was the first in Turkey in terms of providing mobile social services with a mobile youth center.

2. Literature Review

Youth Centers are organizations carrying out political, social, educational, sporting and cultural activities. The Council of Europe has established two Youth Centers to support the activities in Europe and the active role of young people in society (Avrupa Konseyi, 2012). The European Youth Centers, established in Strasbourg in 1972 and Budapest in 1995, under the Youth Department of the Council of Europe, have been operating based on the co-management principle between governments and youth organizations. These youth centers also organize activities on international youth mobilization, participation of young people in public and public affairs, informal education, non-racist education, intercultural learning, organized community in Europe and the development of civil society in member states. These issues are also part of the main objective of "contributing to democratic security policies" in Member States of the Council of Europe (Yilmaz and Bahçeci, 2014). Germany is a leading member where youth centers operate extensively. In Germany, local governments, churches, NGOs, or organizations such as the Red Cross run youth centers. According to a statistical study of 2010, the number of "children and youth centers" in Germany is 7,661. The total number of people employed in

these centers is 24.963, and the number of people employed full time is 13.622 (Hirschberg et al., 2012). In South Korea, the Ministry of Sexual Equality and Family has imposed an obligation to open youth centers for all local governments. Approximately 20% of the population of the country is between 9-24 years old and 750 youth centers have been established in South Korea to serve this age range (Türk, 2013c). In 2002, the number of Youth Centers in Turkey was 111, 81 in provincial centers and 30 in district centers (24) (MEB, 2011b). Today there are 233 Youth Centers of GSB across the country, and the number of the participants is 1.528.948 (Kadioğlu, 2014b).

Among other reasons why Youth Centers are established are to protect the traditions and values of minority communities living in other lands. For instance, the Assyrians living in Armenia founded 'Aşşur Youth Center" in June 1997 to protect their national and cultural identity, to be in cultural touch with other national minorities living in Armenia, to be active in the social and political life of the country, to cooperate with international youth organizations, to help develop the Assyrian language, and to cooperate with the Assyrian organizations abroad (Cabbarli, 2014).

Larson believes that young people spend most of their time with school life and unstructured "leisure time" activities, which, especially in the 21st century, is insufficient for personal development (Larson, 2000). Youth centers are facilities established with good intentions in terms of their purpose and duties. However, the programs to be offered here need to be carried out by experts through appropriate training methods according to the ages and needs of young people. Pisarczyk (1993) says that leisure time activities offered at youth centers can only achieve educational and visible success if young people can meet their leisure needs. In other words, activities offered in youth centers should be fun and also, they should be making positive contribution to the personal development of young people. Researching the effect of the programs carried out by the youth centers on the participants, Bilgen (2014) stated that in the communication and social skills of young people participating in the courses conducted at the Ankara Yenimahalle Youth Center, there were significant differences after the course depending on the absenteeism and gender. Baş, in his study (2016), demonstrated that the activities in general make positive contribution to the socialization of young people, their personal development and their educational life. In another study, statistically significant positive correlations were determined between the duration of participation in the activities of the youth center, the frequency of continuing to the youth center, the youth center itself and the level of leisure satisfaction (Sönmezoğlu et al., 2014). Youth centers are also meeting points where young people come together. One responsibility of the centers is to try to keep young people away from bad habits and criminal elements. However, these centers might turn into undesired meeting points for unwished purposes due to lack or indifference of the employees or some other reasons. In a survey conducted in Germany, 50.9% of the young people stated that they belonged in a group (clique). 70.2% of them stated that they found each other at school, 21.4% at sport clubs and 16.2% at youth centers. 26,5% of those boys claiming they met at school and 44,5% of the boys saying they met at the youth center confessed that they were members of a deviant group (Pfeiffer and Wetzels, 2007). Therefore, it is the authorities' duty to ensure that youth centers are safe and clear places for children and young people.

Most youth centers operate in a building; however some youth centers offer mobile services. Mobile youth work in Germany dates to the 1960s. The mobile youth services,

supported by the Baden-Württemberg State Department of Labor and Social Affairs, were started in 1967. The aim is to deal with young people with social and family problems, who cannot find jobs or homes due to inadequate education and financial reasons. Another aim of the mobile youth services is to support young people of foreign origin by helping them improving their life standards. There are 94 mobile youth service vehicles in Baden-Württemberg, and 164 staff members in charge (Baden-Württemberg, 2005). In Germany in the 1970's the Mobile Play Car was developed. Various automobiles, minibuses, buses, or trucks were transformed into playgrounds and put into service in the open spaces of the city, like school gardens. The purpose was to entertain and talk to the target children and young people. It was a useful project because it allowed children and young people to think creatively and move freely (Kraft, 2011). Demiel (2005) with a different point of view, described them as Mobile Educational Cars because children and young people could have time to talk to each other and spend time in harmony.

Mobile projects have recently become popular in Turkey. Many institutions and organizations depend on mobile projects to reach large masses. The research part that constitutes the main frame of this study was also carried out within the scope of such a mobile project. A questionnaire was conducted to the students, on a volunteer basis, who participated in the activities of the mobile project in 7 regions of Turkey. The volunteers were informed before the questionnaire was conducted.

3. Method

This descriptive study uses the screening model to investigate the level of knowledge of secondary school students about the programs organized by the GSB, and the participation rate in programs run by youth centers. Screening models aim to describe a present or past situation as it is or was. In the screening model, the aim is to describe the situation, the individual or the object as they are within their own conditions (Karasar, 2003).

The population of the study comprises all fifth, sixth, seventh and eighth graders enrolled in official secondary schools in the academic year 2014-2015. Since it was impossible to reach the whole population, the stratified sampling method (a kind of Purposive Sampling) was used in the study. The sampling was made from students who participated in the project titled "Mobile Youth Center-Young Volunteers Movement". Therefore, the selections were made in 11 provinces in the Black Sea region, 5 provinces in the Mediterranean region, 4 provinces in the Eastern Anatolia, 1 province in the Southeastern Anatolia, 2 provinces in the Central Anatolia, 6 provinces from the Aegean region and 4 from the Marmara region. To collect the data, the questionnaire developed by the researcher himself, titled, "Survey of Sporting Habits of Secondary School Students in Turkey" was used. A total of 1,500 questionnaires were conducted. 214 of them were excluded because of missing or incorrect information. The data obtained from the 1286 questionnaires were analyzed by the SPSS package program.

4. Findings

This study presents findings about students who participated in the Project "Mobile Youth Centre-Young Volunteers Movement" carried out in 55 towns and villages in Turkey. The study considers the gender of the children, the region where they live, the income and educational

status of the parents while seeking answers to the questions “whether they are informed about GSB programs and activities” and “if they have ever participated in activities of youth centers”.

Table 1: Distribution of Students by Region

Regions	N	%
Central Anatolia	33	2,6
Aegean Region	191	14,9
Eastern Anatolia	205	15,9
Southeastern Anatolia	52	4
Marmara Region	214	16,6
The Mediterranean Region	217	16,9
The Black Sea Region	374	29,1
Total	1286	100

Distribution of students according to regions: 2.6% Central Anatolia Region, 14.9% Aegean Region, 15.9% Eastern Anatolia Region, 4% Southeastern Anatolia Region, 16.6% Marmara Region, 16.9% Mediterranean Region, 29,1% of the Black Sea Region. The regions with the highest participation in the survey were the Black Sea, Mediterranean and Marmara regions and the regions with least participation were the Central Anatolia and Southeastern Anatolia.

Table 2: Distribution of Students by Gender

Gender	N	%
Female	454	35,3
Male	832	64,7
Total	1286	100

Table 2 shows that a total of 1286 students participated in the survey. Gender distribution of the students: 35.3% female students and 64.7% male students.

Table 3: Distribution of Students by Age

Age	N	%
10	58	4,5
11	380	29,5
12	324	25,2
13	280	21,8
14	244	19
Total	1286	100

Table 3 demonstrates the ages of the students participating in the survey. The age distribution is as follows: 4,5% 10 years; 29,5 %: 11 years; 25,2% 12 years; 21,8% 13 years, and 19% 14 years. The age group with the highest participation is 11 while the group with lowest is 10.

Table 4: Distrubution of the Students' Parents by Education Level

	Education Level	n	%
Mother	Illiterate	93	7,2
	Primary School	449	34,9
	Secondary School	331	25,7
	High School	273	21,2
	University	140	10,9
	Total	1286	100
Father	Illiterate	44	3,4
	Primary School	322	25,0
	Secondary School	324	25,2
	High School	392	30,5
	University	204	15,9
	Total	1286	100

The education distribution of the mothers: No literacy: 7,2%; Primary school: 34,9 %; Secondary School: 25,7%; High School 21,2%; University: 10,9%.

The education distribution of the fathers: No literacy 3,4%; Primary School 25%; Secondary School 25,2%; High School 30,5%; University 15,9%.

Table 5: Distribution of Families by Monthly Income Levels

Monthly Income (TL)	n	%
500-1000	407	31,6
1001-1500	440	34,2
1501-2000	183	14,2
2001-2500	110	8,6
2501 and over	146	11,4
Total	1286	100

The lowest-income family percentage is 31.6% while the highest-income family percentage is 11.4%.

Table 6: Awareness Levels about Activities and Programs offered by Ministry of Youth and Sports (in General)

	Choices	n	%
Do you know about activities and programs offered by Ministry of Youth and Sports?	Yes	458	35,5
	No	828	64,5
	Total	1286	100

When asked if they knew about the activities and programs run by GSB, 458(35, 5%) of the students said they did, while 828(64,5%) of them said they did not. The reason why most students do not know about these programs and activities might be that they are not sufficiently informed, thus schools will have to play a more important role on informing students about these programs.

Table 7: Awareness Levels about Activities and Programs offered by Ministry of Youth and Sports by Region

Do you know about programs and activities offered by Ministry of Youth and Sports?						
Regions	Yes		No		n	%
	n	%	n	%		
Central Anatolia	10	30,3	23	69,7	33	100
Aegean Region	77	40,3	114	59,7	191	100
Eastern Anatolia	92	44,9	113	55,1	205	100
Southeastern Anatolia	9	17,3	43	82,7	52	100
Marmara Region	76	35,5	138	64,5	214	100
The Mediterranean Region	56	25,8	161	74,2	217	100
Black Sea Region	138	36,9	236	63,1	374	100
Total	458	35,5	828	64,5	1286	100

p=,000

As seen in Table 7, the awareness ratios of GSB programs and activities are found to be low in all regions. The number of students in Southeastern Anatolia (82.7%), Mediterranean Region (74.2%) and Central Anatolia (69.7%) who are not aware of the activities is higher. The Chi-square test (χ^2) demonstrates that there are significant differences between the students' awareness levels by region ($p < ,01$).

Table 8: Awareness Levels about Activities and Programs offered by Ministry of Youth and Sports by Gender

Do you know about programs and activities offered by Ministry of Youth and Sports?						
Gender	Yes		No		n	%
	n	%	n	%		
Female	141	31,1	313	68,9	454	100
Male	317	38,1	515	61,9	832	100
Total	458	35,5	828	64,5	1286	100

p=,015

As seen in Table 8, the awareness ratios of GSB programs and activities were found to be 38.1% for male students and 31.1% for female students. While 68.9% of the female students were not well-informed about GSB programs and activities, it was found that this ratio was 61.9% for male students. The Chi-square (χ^2) test also demonstrates that there is a significant difference in the awareness levels between male students and female students ($p < 0.05$ for χ^2 test).

Table 9: Awareness Levels about Activities and Programs offered by Ministry of Youth and Sports by Education Levels of Mothers

Do you know about programs and activities offered by Ministry of Youth and Sports?						
What is your mother's education level	Yes		No		Total	
	n	%	n	%	n	%
Illiterate	25	26,9	68	73,1	93	100
Primary School	140	31,2	309	68,8	449	100
Secondary School	116	35,0	215	65,0	331	100
High School	115	42,1	158	57,9	273	100
University	62	44,3	78	55,7	140	100
Total	458	35,5	828	64,5	1286	100

p=,002

Table 9 shows the distribution of students' awareness of GSB activities and programs by educational levels of mothers. The Chi-square (χ^2) test found that there is a very important relation between the level of education of the mother and the student's awareness about the program and activities of the GSB ($p < ,01$). The higher the the education level of the mother is, the higher the awareness level of the student is.

Table 10: Awareness Levels about Activities and Programs offered by Ministry of Youth and Sports by Education Levels of Fathers

Do you know about programs and activities offered by Ministry of Youth and Sports?						
What is your Father's education level	Yes		No		Total	
	n	%	n	%	n	%
Illiterate	9	20,5	35	79,5	44	100
Primary School	97	30,1	225	69,9	322	100
Secondary School	114	35,2	210	64,8	324	100
High School	148	38,8	244	62,8	392	100
University	90	44,1	114	55,9	204	100
Total	458	35,5	828	64,5	1286	100

p=,001

Table 10 shows the distribution of students' awareness of GSB activities and programs by educational levels of fathers. The Chi-square (χ^2) test found that there is a very important relation between the level of education of the father and the student's awareness about the program and activities of the GSB ($p < ,01$). The higher the the education level of the father is, the higher the awareness level of the student is.

Table 11: Awareness Levels about Activities and Programs offered by Ministry of Youth and Sports by monthly Income

Do you know about programs and activities offered by Ministry of Youth and Sports?						
	Yes		No		Total	
What is your monthly income? (TL)	n	%	n	%	n	%
500-1000	122	30,0	285	70,0	407	100
1001-1500	165	37,5	275	62,5	440	100
1501-2000	69	37,7	114	62,3	183	100
2001-2500	46	41,8	64	58,2	110	100
2501 and over	56	38,4	90	61,6	146	100
Total	458	35,5	828	64,5	1286	100

p=,070

Table 11 shows the level of awareness of students about the activities and programs of the GSB by the monthly income level of the family. The Chi-square (χ^2) test showed that there is not much difference between the monthly income level of the family and the level of the student's awareness about GSB programs and activities ($p>, 05$).

Table 12: Participation of the Students in Any Program Organized by Any Youth Center over the Past Year

	Choices	n	%
Have you participated in any program in the provincial-district youth centers during the last year?	Yes	392	30,5
	No	894	69,5
	Total	1286	100

As seen in Table 12, 392 (30.5%) students participated in a program while 894 (69.5%) students did not at all over the past year, which means that most of the students did not participate in any program within the last one year in province-district centers. As Table 6 shows that 64.5% of the students were not even aware of GSB activities and programs. Thus, it

is important that GSB take measures to reach more students about the programs and activities it provides.

Table 13: Participation of the Students in Any Program Organized by Any Youth Center in the Last Year by Region

Have you participated in any program in the provincial-district youth centers during the last year?						
Region	Yes		No		n	%
	n	%	n	%		
Central Anatolia	6	18,2	27	81,8	33	100
Aegean Region	55	27,8	136	71,2	191	100
Eastern Anatolia	78	38,0	127	62,0	205	100
Southeastern Anatolia	6	11,5	46	88,5	52	100
Marmara Region	66	30,8	148	69,2	214	100
The Mediterranean Region	57	26,3	160	73,7	217	100
The Black Sea Region	124	33,2	250	66,8	374	100
Total	392	30,5	894	69,5	1286	100

$p=,001$

Table 13 shows the figures and ratios of secondary school students regarding participation in any program in the province-district youth centers over the past year according to the regions. According to the figures, the least participation over the past year was realized in Southeastern Anatolia (88.5%), Central Anatolia (81.8%) and Mediterranean Regions (73.7%). In general, participation rates in programs are low. The chi-square (χ^2) test demonstrates that the difference in the participation in Youth Centers programs between the regions is significant. ($p < ,01$).

Table 14: Participation of the Students in Any Program Organized by Any Youth Center over the Past Year by Gender

Have you participated in any program in the provincial-district youth centers during the last year?						
Gender	Yes		No		n	%
	n	%	n	%		
Female	103	22,7	351	77,3	454	100
Male	289	34,7	543	65,3	832	100
Total	392	30,5	894	69,5	1286	100

p=,000

Table14 shows the figures and ratios of secondary school students regarding participation in any program in the province-district youth centers over the past year according to the gender. Male students' participation rate was 34.7% while female participation rate was 22.7%. The chi-square (χ^2) test shows that there is a significant difference between students' participation in a program in Youth Centers according to the genders ($p < 0.01$).

5. Conclusion

In the survey conducted within the scope of the Mobile Youth Center Project, 64.5% of the surveyed students were found to be ignorant of the activities and programs of GSB, and 69.5% of the students did not participate in any program in the provincial youth centers over the past year. When the distribution of students' awareness of GSB activities and programs by gender is examined, it can be seen that 38.1% of male students and 31.1% of female students know about programs offered by youth centers. The participation rate in any program by gender shows that male students have a participation rate of 34.7% in the programs while 22.7% of the girls took part in an activity over the past year. The parents' educational levels play an important role on the student's awareness as the related table shows that the higher the education level of the parents is, the higher the awareness of the student is. A similar survey was conducted in Germany by the Municipality of Hennef in 2012, in which 663 forms were evaluated. The survey demonstrated that only one third of the young people knew about the Youth Center of the Municipality, and that the Youth Park is better known to the young people. The expectations from the Youth Center were more sporting activities, more cooking and a "chilling room" (Hennef, 2013). The results suggest that Youth Centers should promote themselves better and organize more appealing programs for young people. To publicize, youth centers should work coordinately with the Ministry of National Education, and they should open exhibition stands or organize information meetings. Particularly, parents should be invited to the meetings. More promotional activities should also be carried out through public spots, social media, visual and printed materials.

In addition to promotional activities of youth centers in Turkey, it is necessary to increase the number of these centers and to provide these services with mobile youth centers in places where centers cannot be constructed. Since the Ministry of Youth and Sports was founded in 2011, important steps have been taken in this direction and the number of youth centers, 111 in 2002, was raised to 233 in 2017. It was announced in the "Investment Package" for the Eastern and Southeastern regions that 15 new youth centers would be established in the region and 40 more mobile youth centers would be put into service (Hürriyet, 2016). Despite such positive developments in recent years, the number of youth centers remains low compared to the developed countries. The Turkish Government should speed up and encourage NGOs and local governments to open more youth centers.

The Mobile Youth Service system, that is streetwork, should also be launched in Turkey for young people who have family, social or financial problems, who do not know how to shape their future with the what kind of education or who need counseling for any problems. In this respect, the faculty members of the Psychological Guidance and Counseling and Social Services departments of the universities should help the government; the students of these departments should be given internship and working opportunities in such youth centers.

The State should take the necessary measures to ensure that the young people in need, whose rights are guaranteed by the Constitution, also benefit from equal opportunities.

6. Recommendations

In the light of the above findings and conclusion of the study, the following therefore is recommended:

1. GSB should inform students and teachers about its programs in cooperation with the Ministry of National Education.
2. GSB should carry out publicity activities especially for parents with low educational level.
3. Youth Centers should organize attractive programs for students.
4. Social media tools should be used in promoting Youth Centers.
5. Where Youth Centers do not exist, these services should be provided with Mobile Youth Centers.
6. The state should encourage municipalities and NGOs to open youth centers and provide financial support.
7. GSB and Youth Centers should take measures to ensure that girls get more participation in the programs, and if necessary, "programs for girls only" should be organized. Parents should also be convinced that participation of their daughters in such activities is important.

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