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## The effect of 12 weeks of tennis education on accuracy performance

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#### Abstract

This study aimed to investigate the effect of a 12-week tennis education program on the accuracy performance of students aged 20-25 who were enrolled in the Faculty of Sports Sciences at Hitit University. A total of 40 students, comprising 23 females (age range: 20-24 years) and 21 males (age range: 20-26 years), volunteered to participate in the study. Descriptive data of the participants, such as age, height, and body weight, were used for characterization. In this study, which employed a pre-test-post-test model, the accuracy performance of both male and female participants was measured after 12 weeks of tennis training. SPSS 21 software was used for the statistical analysis of the data. Arithmetic mean and standard deviation were used for the analysis of descriptive values, while the Wilcoxon Signed Ranks Test was used to analyze the pre-test and post-test values of accuracy performance by gender. According to the analysis results, there was a significant difference in accuracy performance between the pre-test and post-test results in terms of gender following the 12-week tennis training program (p<0.001). In conclusion, it was observed that a 12-week tennis training program resulted in a positive improvement in tennis-specific accuracy performance in both females and males when consistently pursued. Additionally, it can be suggested that tennis-specific training, when applied with more repetitions over a longer time period, can further enhance accuracy performance by perfecting tennis-specific strokes.

**Keywords:** Forehand-backhand, performance, tennis

### 12 haftalık tenis eğitiminin isabet performansına etkisi

#### Öz

Bu çalışma 20-25 yaş arası tenis eğitimi alan öğrencilerin 12 haftalık tenis dersi öğreniminin isabet performanslarına etkisini incelenmek amacıyla yapılmıştır. Çalışmaya Hitit Üniversitesi Spor Bilimleri Fakültesinde öğrenim gören 23 kadın (yaş; 20-24 yıl) ve 21 erkek (yaş; 20-26 yıl) toplam 40 öğrenci gönüllü olarak katılmıştır. Çalışmaya katılan öğrencilerin tanımlayıcı verilerin belirlenmesinde yaş, boy uzunluğu ve vücut ağırlığı gibi ölçümler kullanılmıştır. Ön test-son test modeliyle yürütülen bu çalışmada, katılımcıların 12 haftalık tenis eğitimi sonrası kadın ve erkeklerin isabet performansları ölçülmüştür. Verilerin istatistiksel analizinde SPSS 21 paket programı kullanılmıştır. Betimsel değerlerin analizinde aritmetik ortalama ve standart sapma kullanılırken, isabet performanslarının cinsiyetlere göre ön test ile son test değerlerinin analizinde Wilcoxon Signed Ranks Testi kullanılmıştır. Analizi sonuçlarına göre 12 haftalık tenis eğitiminin cinsiyet faktörü ön test-son test sonuçları arasında anlamlı farklılık bulunmuştur (p<0.001). Sonuç olarak 12 haftalık tenis eğitimin hem kadınlarda hem de erkeklerde düzenli olarak sürdürülmesi neticesinde tenise özgü yapılan isabet performanslarına olumlu düzeyde gelişim sağladığı görülmüştür. Bununla beraber tenise özgü yapılan eğitiminin daha geniş bir zaman diliminde fazla antrenmanlar uygulanarak, tenise özgü yapılan vuruşların çok tekrarla mükemmelleştirilmesi sağlanıp isabet oranında daha fazla geliştirebileceği söylenebilir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Forehand-backhand, performans, tenis

**Sorumlu Yazar/ Corresponded Author**: Abdurrahim KAPLAN, **E-posta/ e-mail:** kaplan.arahim@gmail.com Genişletilmiş Türkçe Özet, makalenin sonunda yer almaktadır.

### INTRODUCTION

Tennis, as a sport, has been gaining increasing popularity both in our country and around the world, positioning itself as one of the most popular rackets sports every day. Moreover, the organization of the four major Grand Slam tennis tournaments (Wimbledon, France, Australia, and the US Open) throughout the year is widely recognized as playing a significant role in promoting tennis and garnering millions of viewers (Gelen et al., 2009). Tennis is primarily a technical sport, but it has evolved into a more explosive discipline, encompassing various motor skills. Consequently, it has become a more dynamic and fast-paced game. In this context, higher shots and accuracy in tennis-specific strokes are considered essential skills for a successful tennis player (Fernandez-Fernandez et al., 2023).

Especially in tennis, the inclusion of competitive and aesthetic movements as a whole makes the sport more enjoyable and contributes to its popularity among various disciplines. Like all sports, tennis requires technical, tactical, and physical attributes and demands high effort from athletes (Brody, 1987; Barber-Westin et al., 2010). Recognizing that even the simplest technique can positively impact performance with proper training, it is evident that numerous factors influence tennis performance. Among these factors, anthropometric and kinanthropometric variables such as body structure, body composition, body weight, and height are considered crucial in motor functions and tennis performance. Norms have been established for tennis and sports based on factors such as gender, age, body weight, and height. These norms are beneficial for determining whether children and adolescents participating in various physical activities meet the norm values. The relationship between anthropometric and kinanthropometric variables and motor performance has been observed, highlighting potential differences in athletic performance (Akça & Müniroğlu, 2006).

Training quality is a critical factor in measuring the development of athletes' competitive ability and the quality of their education. These training sessions, used for diagnosing and evaluating athletes, also significantly impact the coaching ability and teaching skills of coaches and educators. In the process of creating and developing top-level athletes, scientific and systematic training serves as a foundation. It also plays a pioneering role in improving sports skill performance for beginners, connecting training with competitive ability. Evaluating the quality of training can be approached from various perspectives, including technical tactics, pre-game adaptation, and sports performance evaluation. However, it has been noted that the evaluation of tennis training in the context of gender-specific performance assessments is

relatively weak in the literature and does not fully reflect practical issues related to training quality (Surujlal, 2013; Ke, 2014; Huang, 2018; Hernández-Davó, et al., 2021; Cai et al., 2022).

In addition to maximizing performance in tennis, maintaining it at that level is crucial. Tennis is a sport where attention, focus, and concentration have a significant impact on performance. Players must make quick decisions about where the ball is going to land with each shot from their opponent to score points (Ünver et al., 2023). In tennis, there are two primary strokes: forehand and backhand. Players must react quickly and use their concentration and attention correctly to respond as swiftly as possible to both challenging and fast-coming balls. It is essential for tennis players to hit the designated areas of the court quickly and accurately, whether it's a forehand or backhand technique. Therefore, in studies aimed at achieving this goal, the court is divided into three equal parts behind the opponent's court, and players are encouraged to hit the balls to these areas with both forehand and backhand techniques (Sahan & Erman, 2009). In this context, this study examines how a 12-week tennis-specific training program affects shot performance in both men and women.

### **METHOD**

## Research model and sample

In this study, an experimental model known as the pre-test-post-test model was used. A specially designed tennis accuracy test was administered to the participants in both the pre-test and post-test phases of the study. The study included 40 students from the Faculty of Sports Sciences at Hitit University. Among the participants were 23 women (age: 21-24 years) and 21 men (age: 21-24 years) who had not received tennis training before. The inclusion criteria for participants stipulated that they had not received tennis training previously, had regularly attended tennis training sessions held every week, and had not suffered any injuries or health problems that would prevent their participation in the study within the past six months. Before starting the study, all participants were informed about the details of the research, and trial measurements were conducted. Informed voluntary consent forms, approved by the local ethics committee, were obtained from each participant. The Helsinki Declaration was followed at every stage of the study. During the tennis training, all participants were instructed and practiced all tennis strokes (forehand, backhand, volley, and serve) and techniques (footwork, grip, preparatory steps) in the same format, regardless of gender. Approval for the research was received from Hitit University, Non-invasive Research Ethics Committee, with the decision dated 27/09/2023 and numbered 2023/13.

### Specially designed tennis accuracy test protocol

Participants were instructed to make shots into three equally numbered areas (1-2-3) drawn on the opponent's court behind the service line. Two expert tennis players stood on either side of the court, feeding the ball to the participant with a racket. Each participant made a total of 40 shots, consisting of 20 forehand and 20 backhand shots, as directed by the expert tennis players. The expert tennis players randomly called out a zone number (1-2-3) as the ball crossed the net, and the participant was required to make an accurate shot into the specified area. One (1) point was awarded for each successful shot into the designated area, with a total of 40 points possible.

## Tennis training program

All participants received 2 hours of tennis training per week for 12 weeks, focusing on fundamental tennis strokes (backhand, forehand, volley, and serving). The intensity and repetition numbers of these movements were applied in the same manner regardless of gender.

### Data analysis

SPSS 21 software package was used for the statistical analysis of research data. Descriptive statistics, including mean and standard deviation, were calculated for participants' age, height, and body weight. The Wilcoxon Signed Ranks Test was used to analyze the data. Additionally, the percentage change between the post-test and pre-test was calculated.

FINDINGS

Table 1. Descriptive data for participants

Descriptive Statistics						
	Gender	N (%)	Min	Max	X	SS
Men _	Age (years)	21 (47.7)	21.00	26.00	21.90	1.30
	Body weight (kg)		60.00	95.00	73.86	8.77
	Height (cm)		171.00	193.00	177.38	5.46
Women	Age (years)		20.00	24.00	21.35	1.23
	Body weight (kg)	23 (52.3)	50.00	68.00	58.57	6.74
	Height (cm)		155.00	17.,00	162.57	5.99

Table 1 presents the physical characteristics of the participants by gender. The average age for males is 21.90, with an average body weight of 73.86 and an average height of 177.38. For females, the average age is 21.35, with an average body weight of 58.57 and an average height of 162.57.

Table 2. Comparison of pre-test and post-test accuracy averages by gender

Gender	N	Pre-test and Post-test	X	SS	p
Men	21	Pre-test	8.81	4.644	0.001*
	21	Post-test	14.81	5.528	
Women	22	Pre-test	10.35	4.754	- 0.001*
	23	Post-test	15.74	4.741	

<sup>\*=</sup>p<0,001

Table 2 presents a comparison of participants' accuracy performance in the pre-test and post-test by gender. For males, the pre-test mean was 8.81, which increased to 14.81 in the post-test. For females, the pre-test mean was 10.35, which increased to 15.74 in the post-test. In both genders, the differences between the pre-test and post-test are statistically significant (p < 0.001).

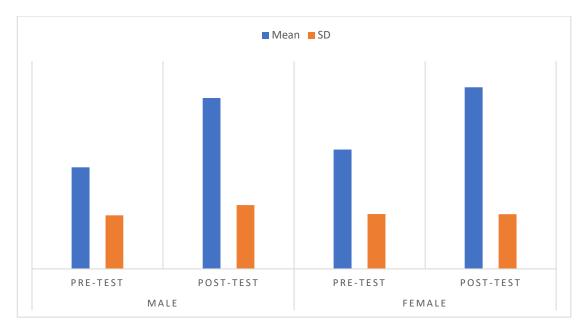


Figure 1. Pre-test and post-test accuracy averages by gender

Figure 1 displays the participants' pre-test and post-test accuracy averages.

Table 3: Differences in accuracy performance values between pre-test and post-test averages by gender

	Pre-test and Post-test	Men (N=21)	Women (N=23)
Accuracy —	Pre-test	8.81	10.35
	Post-test	14.81	15.74
	Difference	6	5.39
	Percentage change (%)	68.1	52.1

Table 3 presents the differences in accuracy performance between the pre-test and post-test for male and female participants. The pre-test mean accuracy score for males was 8.81, which increased to 14.81 in the post-test, representing a percentage change of 68.1%. For females, the pre-test mean accuracy score was 10.35, which increased to 15.74 in the post-test, indicating a percentage change of 52.1%. Based on this data, it can be observed that the accuracy performance of males improved to a greater extent in the post-test, but females also showed positive improvement.

### DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

This study aimed to examine the effects of a 12-week tennis training program on participants' accuracy in shot performance.

The average age of the students who participated in the research is 21.90 for males, with an average body weight of 73.86 and an average height of 177.38. For females, the average age is 21.35, with an average body weight of 58.57 and an average height of 162.57. When considering the impact of anthropometric and kinanthropometric variables on tennis performance, variables such as body structure, body composition, body weight, and height are considered important factors in motor functions and tennis performance. These features occasionally contribute positively or negatively to skill acquisition in tennis (Unierzyski, 2013).

Upon reviewing the literature, it is observed that there are not many studies comparing training and competition shot performances between genders in the field of tennis. Findings in the existing literature align with the results of our study.

Erman and colleagues (2013) found that a 4-week tennis training positively affected both forehand and backhand performance. Similarly, Ulbricht et al. (2016) found that tennis training programs had a positive impact on pre-test to post-test performance values for both female and male tennis players. Additionally, Çoşkun and Eyupoğlu (2020) reported a significant relationship between pre-test and post-test scores in tennis skill tests following a 12-week basic tennis training program.

In another study, it was found that 8 weeks of tennis-specific training resulted in positive changes in technical targeting performance for participants with an average age of 21 who were new to tennis (Turan, 2018).

In our study, a 12-week tennis training program was found to positively influence shot performance in both males and females, with significant differences observed within each group (p < 0.001). The percentage change in shot performance was 68.1% for males and 52.1% for females. It can be concluded that the tennis training had a greater impact on males.

In tennis, as in all sports, coaches and educators should explore different training protocols and perspectives to improve athletes' performance levels and teach new skills while maintaining the motivation to have fun throughout the training.

In tennis, the advancement of technical skills, in addition to motor skills, is directly related to the repetition and execution of many technical shots. This study's 12-week tennis-specific training appeared to have had a positive effect on achieving the desired goal and increasing the accuracy of basic stroke techniques over time.

Research has shown that basic tennis training programs have positive effects on tennis skills and effective shot abilities (Rave et al., 2008). Similarly, several studies have reported that tennis training programs specific to the sport have positively influenced tennis shot performance in both males and females. Research on the effect of skill-building exercises on forehand and backhand abilities parallels the data in our study (Rave et al., 2008; Yüksel, 2014; Genevois et al., 2015; Budak et al., 2016; Keskin et al., 2016; Ant, 2020; Fett et al., 2020; Satıcı, 2022).

In conclusion, the main findings of this study indicate that a 12-week tennis training program had a positive impact on shot performance within the framework of tennis rules for both female and male students. Considering the test measuring shot accuracy performance conducted within the scope of the study, it is thought that diversifying field tests to simulate situations encountered during real matches, which are related to some performance content and components during competitions, will positively contribute to performance measurement. Shot accuracy success does not cover the entirety or components of a tennis match; it is part of technical skills. The data obtained in this study may serve as a reference for coaches and educators in tennis and provide a foundation for individuals interested in tennis to improve their training and competition performance by thoroughly analyzing the sport-specific training components.

# GENIŞLETİLMİŞ ÖZET

## **GİRİŞ**

Tenis hem ülkemizde ve dünyada yaygınlığı oldukça artan bir spor branşı olarak her geçen gün raket sporları arasındaki en popüler olma noktasında yerini almakta. Tenis oyunu öncelikle tekniğe dayalı bir spor olmakla beraber birçok motorik özelliği barındırarak daha fazla patlayıcı bir spora dönüştü. Bu bağlamda daha yüksek vuruşlar, hızlı ve baskılı oyun içerisinde tenise özgü vuruşlarda isabet performansının başarılı bir tenis oyuncusu için olması gereken becerilerden biri olarak kabul edilir (Fernandez-Fernandez ve ark., 2023) Tenis oyununda forehand (el önü) ve backhand (el arkası) olmak üzere iki ana vuruş çok önemlidir. Oyuncu maç içerisinden rakip tarafından atılan topların ister el önü vuruş (forehand) ister el arkası vuruş (backhand) tarafına gelen her hızlı topun, rakibin pozisyonuna ve mesafesine göre ani karar vererek tenis sahasının puana dahil olan alanlarına hızlı bir şekilde göndermek zorunda. Bunun için hem baskı altında hem de zor ve hızlı gelen toplara karşı mümkün olan en hızlı şekilde karşılık vermesi gerekir (Sahan & Erman 2009). Bu amaç doğrultusunda 12 haftalık tenise özgü yaptırılan eğitimin kadın ve erkeklerde atış performanslarını nasıl etkilediği incelenmiştir.

#### YÖNTEM

Bu calısmada, deneysel modellerden ön test-son test modeli kullanılmıştır. Calısmanın ön test ve son testinde katılımcılara özel tasarlanmış tenis isabet testi uygulanmıştır. Çalışmaya Hitit Üniversitesi Spor Bilimleri Fakültesinde okuyan 40 öğrenci çalışmaya dahil edilmiştir. Çalışmada daha önce tenis eğitimi almamış 23 kadın (yaş; 21-24 yıl) ve 21 erkek (yaş; 21-24 yıl) öğrenci yer almıştır. Tüm katılımcılara 12 hafta boyunca, haftada 2 saat tenis eğitimi verilmiştir ve eğitim kapsamında tenis temel vuruşları, (backhand, forehand vole ve servis atışları) yer almıştır. Belirtilen hareketlerin eğitim içindeki yoğunlukları ve tekrar sayıları cinsiyet fark etmeksizin aynı şekilde uygulanmıştır. Katılımcılardan rakip sahada servis atılan alanın gerisinde 3 eşit alana çizilmiş 1-2-3 diye numaralandırılmış alana atış yapması istenmiştir. Sahanın her iki kenarlarında katılımcıyı raketle topla besleme yapan iki uzman tenisçi bulunmuştur. Katılımcıya uzman tenisçi tarafından atılan toplara 20 forehand ve 20 backhand olmak üzere toplamda 40 vuruş yaptırılmıştır. Uzman tenisçilerin attığı topun karşıya geçmesiyle atış yapacak kişiye rastgele alan numarası (1-2-3) yüksek sesle söylenmiş ve belirtilen alana isabetli atış yapması istenmiştir. Belirtilen alana başarı ile yapılan her bir atış için 1 (bir) puan verilerek toplamda 40 (kırk) puan almaları istenmiştir. Araştırma verilerin istatistiksel analizinde SPSS 21 paket programı kullanılmıştır. Katılımcıların yaş, boy ve vücut ağırlığı betimsel değerler için aritmetik ortalama ve standart sapma analizi yapılmıştır. Verilerin analizinde Wilcoxon Signed Ranks Testi kullanılmıştır. Ayrıca son-test ve ön-test arasındaki yüzdelik değişim oranı hesaplanmıştır.

#### **BULGULAR**

Araştırmaya katılan öğrencilerin yaş ortalaması; erkeklerin 21,90, vücut ağırlığı ortalaması 73,86 ve boy uzunluğu ortalaması 177,38 ile kadınların yaş ortalaması 21,35, vücut ağırlığı ortalaması 58,57 ve boy uzunluğu ortalaması 162,57 olarak tespit edilmiştir. Yaptığımız çalışmada 12 haftalık tenis eğitim uygulamasının hem kadınlarda hem de erkeklerde ön tes-son test sonuçlarının atış performanslarında her ikisinde de olumlu yönde gelişim sağladığı görülürken, her iki grubun kendi içerisindeki karşılaştırmasında anlamlı farklılık olduğu tespit edilmiştir (p<0,001). Artış oranlarına bakıldığında ise erkeklerde %68,1'lik bir yüzdelik değişim gösterirken, kadınlarda bu oran %52,1'lik bir yüzde ile gerçekleşmiştir.

### TARTIŞMA VE SONUÇ

Bu çalışma 12 hafta boyunca yapılan tenis eğitimin katılımcıların atış isabet performanslarına etkilerini incelemek amacıyla gerçekleştirilmiştir. Tenis branşında antropometrik ve kinantropometrik değişkenlerin tenis performansa etkisi ele alınacak olursa bedensel yapı, vücut kompozisyonu, vücut ağırlığı ve boy gibi değişkenler motor işlevlerde tenis performansında önemli değişkenler olarak ele alınmaktadır. Bu özelliklerin teniste beceri öğrenimine zaman zaman pozitif veya negatif katkı sağladığı da sayılan faktörler arasındadır (Unierzyski, 2013). Erman ve arkadaşları (2013) yaptığı çalışmada 4 hafta boyunca yaptıkları tenis antrenmanın hem forehand hem de backhand performanslarını olumlu yönde etkilediğini bulmuşlardır. Yine Ulbricht ve arkadaşları (2016) yapıkları çalışmada tenis branşına yönelik yapılan antrenmanların kadın ile erkek tenisçilerde ön test-son test performans değerlerinde olumlu yönde gelisim sağladıkları tespit edilmistir. Yine Coskun ve Eyupoğlu (2020) calısmasında 12 haftalık temel tenis eğitimi sonucunda katılımcıların tenis beceri testlerinde aldıkları ön test-son test puanların, atış performanslarında anlamlı bir ilişki olduğunu bildirmişlerdir. Başka bir çalışmada 8 haftalık tenise özgü yapılan antrenmanların bazı değişkenlere olan etkisinin incelenmesi sonucunda yaş ortalaması 21 yıl olan ve tenise yeni başlayan katılımcılarda teknik hedefleme performanslarında olumlu yönde artışların olduğu saptanmıştır (Turan, 2018). Yapılan bir çalışmada temel tenis antrenman çalışmalarının tenis yeteneklerine ve etkili atış becerilerine pozitif etkilerin olduğu (Rave ve ark., 2008). Benzer şekilde birçok çalışmada tenis sporuna özgü yapılan antrenman eğitimin hem erkeklerde hem de kadınlarda tenis atış performanslarını olumlu yönde etkilediğini bildirmekle beraber, beceri geliştirici çalışmaların forehand ve bachand yeteneğine etkisini araştıran çalışmaların yaptığımız çalışmadaki verilerle paralellik göstermektedir (Rave ve ark., 2008; Yüksel 2014; Genevois ve ark., 2015; Budak ve ark., 2016; Keskin ve ark., 2016; Ant, 2020; Fett ve ark., 2020; Satıcı, 2022). Sonuç olarak bu çalışmanın ana bulguları, 12 haftalık tenis eğitiminin hem kadın hem de erkek öğrencilerin tenis kuralları çerçevesinde yapılan atış performansları üzerinde olumlu bir katkı sağladığı sonucunu vermektedir.

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KATKI ORANI CONTRIBUTION RATE	AÇIKLAMA EXPLANATION	KATKIDA BULUNANLAR CONTRIBUTORS		
Fikir ve Kavramsal Örgü	Araştırma hipotezini veya fikrini oluşturmak	Abdurrahim KAPLAN		
Idea or Notion	Form the research hypothesis or idea	Abdultallili KAI LAIV		
Tasarım	Yöntem ve araştırma desenini tasarlamak	Abdurrahim KAPLAN		
Design	To design the method and research design.	Abdultailiii KAFLAN		
Literatür Tarama	Çalışma için gerekli literatürü taramak	Abdurrahim KAPLAN		
Literature Review	Review the literature required for the study	Abdultallili KAFLAN		
Veri Toplama ve İşleme	Verileri toplamak, düzenlemek ve raporlaştırmak	Abdurrahim KAPLAN		
Data Collecting and Processing	Collecting, organizing and reporting data	Abdultanini KAPLAN		
Tartışma ve Yorum	Elde edilen bulguların değerlendirilmesi	Abdurrahim KAPLAN		
Discussion and Commentary	Evaluation of the obtained finding	AUGUITAIIIII KAPLAN		
Destek ve Teşekkür Beyanı/ Statement of Support and Acknowledgment				

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This research was conducted with the decision of Hitit University Ethics Committee numbered 2023-13.



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