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The Positive Perception Levels of Athletics Coaches in Terms of Some Variables

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Abstract

Positive perception status increases one's worthiness, self-confidence and perspective towards time positively (Icerson & Pines, 2013). The present study aims to examine the positive perception levels of the trainers, who participated in the second level athletics training course opened by the Turkish Athletics Federation at different times in 2021, in terms of some variables. A total of 246, 139 men and 107 women (Age Avg.=31 .04±7.37), constitute the sample of the study for athletics training courses. Personal information questionnaire developed by the researcher and Positive Perception Scale adapted to Turkish by Akın and Kaya (2015) were applied to the trainers. The skewness-kurtosis normality distribution test was used to determine whether the measurements were suitable for the normal distribution. According to the Skewness-Kurtosis technique, it did not show a normal distribution for the total positive perception and positive perception of the past time sub-dimensions, but showed a normal distribution for the positive perception of human nature and positive perception of the self. According to the results of the research, it can be said that the total and sub-dimension levels of the participants' positive perception scale are high. While there was no significant difference in terms of age and place of residence of the participants participating in the research, a statistically significant difference was found in terms of gender, working time, and duration of doing sports.

Keywords: Sport, Positive Perception, Athletics

1. Introduction

The science of psychology deals with all the behaviors that people have. It examines the mental structure of the person together with the conscious or unconscious, that is, involuntary behaviors of people and investigates their internal and external causes. In addition, it also examines the behavior of animals in order to understand and interpret the voluntary or involuntary behaviors of humans better (Azboy et al.2017). Psychologically sound individuals are the most resistant to stress. In other words, it is expressed as people who are not physically or emotionally depressed in the face of major stressful events (Atkinson et al . 1999).

Sports psychology; deals with the issues of how to maximize the performance of individuals in team sports and individual sports by investigating the psychological characteristics of individuals (Azboy et al. 2017). The reason

why sports psychology is aimed especially at elite athletes and to increase the performance of these athletes is because not only physical work but also mental development and work have an effect on success (Ercan, 2013). Accordingly, many psychological factors play an important role in the performance of athletes.

Weinberg and Gould (2011) define sports and exercise psychology as a branch of science that scientifically researches the behaviors of people involved in sports activities and applies the obtained information to sports environments, and sees sports psychology as a branch of kinesiology.

It is an important factor for the success of the athletes to use their psychological state in the best way. How does sports psychology help athletes perform better?
1. It helps to develop focus.
2. It helps the athletes to develop their self-confidence.
3. It enables us to cope with problems and new situations.
4. It helps us to choose areas in line with our own tendencies and characteristics in the sport we do.
5. It helps us to create harmony and communication within the team.
6. It increases motivation for high performance.
7. It allows you to return to the competition in case of any injury or mutilation.
8. It develops game-specific strategies and game plans (Azboy et al. 2017).

Perception is one of the most important sensory factors that shape the lives of individuals (Uzbaş, 2015). Perception, on the other hand, can be defined as the individual's recognizing external stimuli, making sense of them and evaluating them. In perception, the human brain perceives in accordance with the expectations arising from the individual's situation; experiences, different senses from the sense organs, and social and cultural values (Cüceloğlu, 2006).

If we want to define positive perception in general terms, we can say that it is a form of communication. As a matter of fact, it affects how individuals who communicate perceive each other, their attitudes towards each other and the quality of communication. (Kepekçioğlu, 2015). Positiveness, defined as having a positive disposition or positive thinking, refers to the hidden dimension that underlies life satisfaction, self-esteem, and optimism that is influenced by people's cognition, emotions, and actions. Positivity means that individuals have a positive orientation or positive evaluations towards themselves, the future and past experiences (Yıldız 2016).

The ability to respond positively to failures and negative obstacles is crucial to a successful athlete. Sports psychologists, as well as trainers around the world, put emphasis on positive thinking. However, despite its perceived importance, it has a relatively recent history in which researchers have identified four types of sport-oriented positive thinking: psychiatry, anxiety control, confidence-boosting, and instructional. Studies have determined that positive thinking positively affects the athlete towards sportive performance (Döklü, 2018).

In individual sports, the communication between the trainer and the athlete is experienced more intensely. Therefore, the positive perception levels of the trainers are important for the athletes to prepare well for the competition and for the athletes to make the right choices during the competition. When the literature was reviewed, it was seen that the number of studies was limited since positive perception in sports is a new subject. In addition, while there were a few positive perception studies on athletes, no studies on the positive perception levels of trainers were found. Accordingly, this research that we have done is important. In the study, it was aimed to examine the positive perception levels and mental endurance levels of athletic trainers in terms of variables such as age, gender, place of residence and etc.

2. Method

This research is a descriptive study aiming to examine the predictor of the positive levels of athletics trainers who participated in the second level athletics trainging course opened by the Turkish Athletics Federation at different times in 2021, according to some variables. The descriptive method is a research method that aims to describe the existing event/phenomenon without the intervention of the researcher (Karasar, 1995). Descriptive studies aim to

define the typical features of a certain group, to predict how people in a certain group will behave in certain situations and to make inferences on this subject (Borg - Gall, 1989). The data were collected by face-to-face interviews on the basis of random method and voluntariness.

2.1. Research Group

The research group; while the universe was composed of 248 athletic trainers who participated in the 2nd level athletics training courses opened by the Turkish Athletics Federation at different times in 2021, 139 of these trainers were male and 107 were female (Age Avg.= 31.04 ± 7.37). 246 of them constitute the sample of our research. The research scale was applied on a voluntary basis by interviewing the athletes face to face at the place where the competitions were held.

2.2. Data Collection

First of all, the available information about the purpose of the research is given in a systematic way by scanning the literature. Thus, a theoretical framework was formed on the subject. Second, Akin et al. (2015) and the "Positive Perception Scale" and an information form were used to collect the personal information of the participants.
The data collection tools necessary to achieve the determined aims of the research are given below, respectively:

2.2.1. Personal Information Form

In order to collect information about the personal characteristics of the participants and to create the independent variables of the research, an information form consisting of 6 (Gender, Age, etc.) items was prepared by the researcher.

2.2.2. Positive Perception Scale

Validity and reliability of the Turkish Form of the Positive Perception Scale s a result of the confirmatory factor analysis applied for the construct validity of the scale, Akın, A., & Kaya, M. (2015) revealed that the scale has three dimensions (positive perception of self, positive perception of past time, positive perception of human nature) as in the original form (x^2 =24.28, sd =16, RMSEA=.045, NFI= .96, NNFI=.97, IFI=.99, RFI=.93, CFI=.99, GFI=.98 and SRMR= .032). The factor loads of the items ranged from .57 to .95. Cronbach's alpha internal consistency reliability coefficients of the Positive Perception Scale were found to be .80 for the positive perception of the past time subscale, .71 for the positive perception of human nature and .75 for the positive perception of the self. Positive Perception Scale adjusted item-test correlations ranged from .55 to .65. Positive perception of self is =6.8; positive perception of past times is =1,2,4,7; and positive perception of human nature is= 3,5. There is no reverse coded item.

Internal consistency (Cronbach Alpha) reliability coefficients of this study; was found to be .80 for positive perception of self, .66 for positive perception of past time, .81 for positive perception of human nature, and .73 for total positive perception.

2.3. Analysis of Data

During the analysis and evaluation of the data; the data were analyzed using Spss 25.0 for windows package program arranged in Microsoft Excel 2003 program. Percentage and frequency methods were used to determine the distribution of personal information of the participants. The Skewness-Kurtosis (Skewness - Kurtosis) normality distribution test was used to determine whether the measurements were suitable for the normal distribution. According to the Skewness-Kurtosis technique, it did not show a normal distribution for the total positive perception and positive perception of the past time sub-dimensions, but showed a normal distribution for the positive perception of human nature and positive perception of the self. As a result, the t-test for normal distributions and the One way - Anova tests were applied and POST HOCK Sheff tests were used to determine

the source of the difference. Mann Whitney U and Kruskal Wallis Tests were applied for sub-dimensions that did not show normal distribution, and Independent Samples tests were used to determine the source of the difference.

Table 1: Skewness/Kurtosis Normality Test Regarding Total Positive Perception and Sub-Dimensions of Individuals Participating in the Research

	Total Positive Perception	Positive Perception for Past Time	Positive Perception for Human Nature	Positive Perception of Self
n	246	246	246	246
Skewness	-,974	-1,611	-1,025	-,543
Kurtosis	1,646	3,474	,717	-,156

When Table 1 is examined, it is seen that according to the Skewness-Kurtosis technique, it does not show a normal distribution for the total positive perception and positive perception of the past time sub-dimensions, but it shows a normal distribution for the positive perception of human nature and positive perception of the self. If the Skewness and Kurtosis values are between -1.5 and +1.5, the relevant test scores or the group are considered to have a normal distribution (Özer & Engeç, 2015).

3. Results

3.1. Personal Characteristics of the Research Group

The data and comments on the demographic characteristics of the trainers participating in the research are given below.

Table 2: Distribution of The Sample Group Participating in The Research in Terms of Demographic Characteristics

Personal Characteristics of Participants		n	%
Gender	Male	139	56.5
	Female	107	43.5
Age	Ages 22-26	90	36.6
	Ages 27-31	62	25.2
	Ages 32-36	34	13.8
	Ages 37-41	37	15.0
	Age 42 and +	23	9.3
Living Place	Metropolis	124	50.4
	City	72	29.3
	District	40	16.3
	Town/Village	10	4.1
Working time	0-3 Years	151	61.4
	4-7 Years	56	22.8
	8-11 Years	39	15.9
Doing Sports Status	Yes	199	80.9
	No	47	19.1
Exercise Time	none	47	19.1
	1 Day per Week	40	16.3
	2 days in a week	69	28.0
	3 days a week and +	90	36.6

The demographic characteristics of the participants were interpreted as follows.

According to the gender distribution of the participants, 139 (56.5%) were male and 107 (43.5%) were female. According to age variables, 90 (43.5%) of them are in the 22-26 age range, 62 (25.2%) are in the 27-31 age range, 34 (13.8%) are in the 32-36 age range, 37 (15.0%) and 23 (9.3%) are 42 years old and over. According to their living place, 124 (50.4%) live in metropolis, 72 (29.3%) live in cities, 40 (16.3%) live in districts, 10 (4.1%) live in villages and towns. In their distribution according to the variable of working time, 151 (61.4%) had a working period of 0-3 years, 56 (22.8%) had a working period of 4-7 years and 39 (15.9%) had a working period of 8-11 years. In the distribution of the participants according to the variable of doing regular sports, it was seen that 199 (80.9%) of them do sports regularly, while 47 (19.1%) do not do sports regularly. While 90 (36.6%) of the participants who do regular sports do sports 3 days or more a week, 69 (28.0%) do 2 days a week, 40 (16.3%) do sports once a week, 47 (% 19.1) of them did not do any regular sports.

Table 3: Results of Participants' Positive Perception Levels and Sub-Dimensions

	n	Cover.	ss	min	Max
Positive perception of self	246	12,3293	1,25897	2.00	14.00
Positive Perception of the Past Times	246	24,2033	3,46636	4.00	28.00
Positive Perception of Human Nature	246	11.0447	2,48630	2.00	14.00
Total Positive Perception	246	47,5772	5,63735	8.00	56.00

In Table 3, positive perception means scores of the participants in general and their sub-dimensions were examined. As a result of this review; the mean score of the total positive perception levels of the athletes participating in the research is 47.58, the mean score of the positive perception levels regarding the self is 12.33, the mean score of the positive perception levels related to the past times is 24.20, and the mean score of the positive perception levels regarding the human nature is 11.04 and all dimensions appears to be at a high level.

Table 4: T-Test Results on the Sub-Dimensions of the Trainers' Positive Perception Scale According to the Variable of Gender Variable

	Gender	n	$\overline{X}$	ss	sd	t	p -value
Positive Perception of Self	Male	139	12,4173	1.18505	244	1,251	,212
	Female	107	12,2150	1.34605			
Positive Perception of Human Nature	Male	139	10.7698	2,58288	244	-1,989	,045
	Female	107	11,4019	2,31834			

*p<.05

In Table 4, whether the mean scores of the trainers' positive perception scale sub-dimensions and the total differ according to the gender variable was examined using the t-test. As a result of the examination, the mean score of positive perception about human nature of male participants was X̄= 10.77, while the mean score of women was X̄= 11.40, and a statistically significant difference was found between women and men in favor of women in terms of positive perception scores about human nature (*t:-1.989 p<0.05*).

Table 5: F-Test Results Regarding the Sub-Dimensions of Positive Perception According to the Variable of Working Time of Trainers

		n	$\overline{X}$	ss	sd	F	p -value	
Positive Perception of Self	0-3 Years	151	12,2715	1,30094				-
	4-7 Years	56	12.4286	1,09307	243	,412	,663	
	8-11 Years	39	12,4103	1,33215				
Positive Perception of Human Nature	0-3 Years	151	10.7285	2,73723				1-2
	4-7 Years	56	11.6071	1,81588	243	3,261	,040	
	8-11 Years	39	11.4615	2.11319				

*p<.05

In Table 5, whether the mean score of the trainers' positive perception scale sub-dimensions and the total differs according to the variable of working time was examined with the F test. As a result of the examination; While the mean score of positive perception about human nature of the participants between 0-3 years is X̄= 10.73, the mean score of positive perception about the nature of the participants between 4-7 years is X̄= 11.61 and the mean score of the participants who are between 8-11 years of age is X̄= 10.73. While the mean positive perception score was X̄= 11.46, a statistically significant difference was found between the participants with 0-3 years and 4-7 years of experience in terms of positive perception scores regarding human nature (F:3,261 $p<0.05$).

Table 6: T-test results on Positive Perception Sub-Dimensions of Trainers According to the Variable of Doing Sports

		n	$\overline{X}$	ss	sd	t	p -value
Positive Perception of Self	Yes	199	12,4623	1.18805	244	3,487	,001
	No	47	11.7660	1,40206			
Positive Perception of Human Nature	Yes	199	11,1407	2,50258	244	1,247	,213
	No	47	10.6383	2.39951			

*p<.05

In Table 6, whether the trainers' positive perception scale sub-dimensions and mean scores of the total differ according to the variable of doing sports was examined by t-test. As a result of the examination, the positive perception score average of the participants who do sports was X̄= 12.46, while the mean score of those who did not do sports was X̄= 11.77, and there is a statistically significant difference between the participants who do sports and those who do not in terms of positive perception scores regarding self. (*t:3,487 p<0.05*).

Table 7: Mann-Whitney U Test Results on Total and Sub-Dimensions of Positive Perception According to the Variable of Doing Sports of Trainers

		n	Rank Average	Rank Sum	Z	p
Positive Perception of Past Time	Yes	199	132.51	26370,00	-4,144	,000
	No	47	85.34	4011,00		
Total	Yes	199	132.86	26438.50	-4,252	,000
	No	47	83.88	3942.50		

* p<.05

As it can be understood from the table, as a result of the non -parametric Mann Whitney-U test, which was performed to determine whether the scores of the trainers' positive perception scale positive perception of the past time sub-dimension differ significantly according to the variable of not doing sports, there was a statistically significant difference between the groups in favor of the group doing sports. There was a significant difference at the $p<0.05$ level.

In non -parametric Mann Whitney-U test, which was conducted to determine whether the scores of the trainers from the total dimension of the positive perception scale differ significantly according to the variable of whether or not to do sports, a statistically significant difference at the $p<0.05$ level was found between the groups in favor of the group doing sports.

Table 8: Kruskal-Wallis H Test Results on Positive Perception Sub-Dimensions According to the Variable of Frequency of Doing Sports of Trainers

		n	Average rank	sd	Mean	p	Difference
Positive Perception of Past Time	1 Day per Week	40	86.23	3	18,990	,000	1-3
	2 days in a week	69	115.35				2-3
	3 days a week and +	90	141.63				
	none	47	132.47				
Total	1 Day per Week	40	90.66	3	11,942	,008	1-3
	2 days in a week	69	121.28				
	3 days a week and +	90	136.21				
	none	47	130,37				

* p<.05

As can be seen from the table, as a result of Kruskal Wallis-H, which was performed to determine whether the positive perception scale mean scores for the past time show a significant difference according to the variable of frequency of doing sports, the difference between the mean scores of the frequency of doing sports groups was found to be statistically significant (x2=18,990; sd =3;p<0.05). After this process, complementary comparison techniques were used to determine which groups resulted from the significant difference determined after Kruskal Wallis-H. Independent Samples Test, which is a special test technique used for this purpose, was applied. As a result of the analyzes, it was determined that the difference was in favor of the participants who did sports 3 days a week between those who did sports 1 day a week, 2 days a week and 3 days a week.

As a result of Kruskal Wallis-H, which was done to determine whether the total size mean score of the positive perception scale differs significantly according to the variable of frequency of doing sports, the difference between the mean scores of the frequency of doing sports groups was found to be statistically significant (x2=11.94; sd =3; p< 0.05). As a result of the analysis, it was determined that the difference was in favor of the participants who did sports 3 days a week between those who did not do sports 1 day a week, 2 days a week and 3 days a week.

4. Discussion and Conclusion

Total and sub-dimension (Positive Perception of Self, Positive Perception of Human Nature, and Positive Perception of Past Time) of the trainers participating in the study were examined. As a result of this examination, it was concluded that the positive perception scale total and sub-dimension levels of the participants included in the study were at high levels.

While there was no significant difference in terms of age and living place of the participants participating in the research, a statistically significant difference was found in terms of gender, working time, and duration of doing sports.

According to this; It has been concluded that female participants from the trainers participating in the research have more positive perceptions of human nature than male participants. It can be said that this is because they are mothers and they value aesthetic concerns, love, communication and beauty much more than men.

It was concluded that the participants with a working period of 4-7 years had more positive perceptions about the nature of human beings than the participants with a working period of 0-3 years. From this point of view, it can be said that experience has an important effect on human life.

According to the trainers' doing sports variable, it was concluded that the participants who do sports have more positive perceptions of self, positive perceptions of the past and total positive perception levels compared to the participants who do not do sports. It can be said that the reason for this is that sports have a positive effect on people's lives, as in everything else.

According to the variable of the frequency of doing sports of the trainers, it was concluded that the participants who do sports 3 days a week have more positive perceptions of the past and total positive perception levels than the participants who do sports 2 and 1 days a week. Therefore, the frequency of doing sports plays an important role in terms of positive perception.

The results of the current study are considered in terms of the positive perception levels of the trainers according to some variables; it is understood that while some studies support the current study, some studies do not support it.

In the study conducted by Temel et al., (2019) to determine the positive perception levels of the athletes, they concluded that the positive perception levels of the athletes were above the medium level.

When the study conducted by Dinç (2018) was examined, it was understood that there was no significant difference between the age variable and positive perception levels, although the participants were not athletes.

Considering the results of very few studies, in terms of general psychological well-being levels, and when evaluated together with the findings obtained from the current study; it is understood that some studies support the current study, but some studies do not support it.

5. Suggestions

In this section, suggestions developed according to the results of the research and the experiences gained by the researcher are given.
The correlation or the effect of the positive perception levels of the trainers who are training in various branches can be examined.

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