Examination of anxiety and assertiveness levels of sporters participating in interuniversity volleyball competitions in turkey

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ABSTRACT

Assertiveness, which can be described as the way individual expresses himself/herself, is considered as one of the most important determinants for the relations of the individual with his/her environment. Continued anxiety is defined as the proneness of the individual to the anxiety experience. In this context, it can be stated as the predisposition of the individual to perceive or interpret the situations he/she is in as stressful. Based upon these notions, in this study it is aimed to examine assertiveness and anxiety levels of sporters participating in interuniversity volleyball competitions. 34 female and 43 male sporters from 112 sporters, participated in Turkish Interuniversity 2nd League C group Volleyball Competitions, took part in our research voluntarily. As data collection instruments, “Personal Information Form” is used to acquire personal information of volleyball players participating in the research, and Rathus Assertiveness Schedule (Rathus, 1973) assertiveness inventory which is adapted into Turkish is utilized to assess their level of assertiveness; and “Continued Anxiety Inventory” developed by Spielberg et al. (1970) and adapted into Turkish by Öner and Le Compte (1983) is used to determine their Anxiety Level. Data acquired is evaluated by means of SSPS statistics package program and significance level is considered to be (p<0.05). As a result, when the effect of personal information consisting of “gender, age, class, sporting year” variables is statistically examined according to the levels of assertiveness and anxiety; it is observed that there is no significant change on the assertiveness level, whereas important differences are observed on the anxiety level according to the age and class variables.

Key words: Sporter, Volleyball, Assertiveness, Anxiety, Competition

Introduction

Everyone doing sportive activities is faced with both physiological and psychological loading. These loadings should be in the level and quality that would cause changes in the organism positively. In the trainings, psychological features that are necessary to succeed are ignored while efforts are concentrated on to improve the conditional, technical and tactic features [1].

It can be said that an individual gives reaction in his/her relations by choosing one of the three behavior patterns being compliant (passive), offensive (aggressive) and assertive [2]. Assertiveness that forms the base of social development and can be accepted as one of the most important behavior patterns, is defined as individual expressing his/her feelings, requirements and thoughts by considering the other people and protecting his/her rights. [3].

In general, assertiveness is a way of constituting an open, direct and honest communication within a proper framework. As a result of its role in strengthening the social status of an individual, and enabling him/her to be more impressive among the other people, assertiveness is one of the social communication skills that increases the self-confidence of an individual and helps him/her to increase the respect the other people feel for him/her, and increases the chance of constituting honest relations, gives the feeling that the control of daily events is within his/her hands, and that has an importance in balancing of the flow of communication between the persons[4].

In their study where they examined the importance of exercise and nutrition on the prevention of diseases and support of health, Akandeet al. have stated that sports improved the creative expression, self-confidence, self-concept and assertiveness; and thus increased the success obtained in school, work and sports. [5].

A great number of sporters can not show the same performance under pressure and stressed competing conditions. One of the most important reasons of this situation is the anxiety level of the sporter as a psychological determinant. [6].

Anxiety is the state when warnings that do not arouse fear sensations normally give rise to certain
fear reactions [7]. And continued anxiety is defined as the proneness of the individual to the anxiety experience. In this context, it can be stated as the predisposition of the individual to perceive or interpret the situations he/she is in as stressful [8].

Unhappiness, discontentedness, pessimism, vulnerability are observed as a result of continued anxiety. These individuals also experience state anxiety more frequently and intensely than the others [9].

Sports psychologists agree that sporters should have a certain anxiety level in order to achieve a high performance. Being above or below this level influences the performance in a negative way. Fairly high anxiety level and low start excitement give cause for inertia. In general, high anxiety is experienced when the sporter comes near to the borders of his/her performance capacity. In other words, intensity of anxiety increases as the border of performance capacity is approached [10].

Many high level sporters owe their skills to their psychological characteristics besides their physical and physiological capacities. These sporters have excellent skills in preparing themselves psychologically for the competition, motivating themselves, managing their anxiety, concentrating and determining targets [11].

Methodology:

Study Group:

Volunteer 34 female and 43 malesporters from 112 sporters, participated in TurkishInteruniversity 2nd League C group Volleyball Competitions, constituted our study group.

Data Collection Instruments:

Questions in the personal information form and Rathus Assertiveness Schedule [12] assertiveness inventory were utilized with the aim to measure assertiveness levels. This inventory was adapted into Turkish by Voltan [13]. “Continued Anxiety Inventory” of Spielberger was used to determine the anxiety levels [14]. This inventory developed by to measure continued anxiety levels of individuals was adapted into Turkish by [15].

Data Analysis:

Parametric tests were utilized for the analysis of data obtained in the research. SPSS statistics package program was used for the performance of analyses. Frequency distribution, arithmetic mean, t test and One-Way Anova were used by means of SPSS and Tukey test results were utilized to determine among which groups the difference was. Error level was accepted as 0.05 in the study.

Findings:

When the values in Table 1 are examined, it is observed that there is no statistically important difference in the comparison of values of Assertiveness and Anxiety Levels of Volleyball Players according to the gender variable (p>0.05).

Table 2: Statistical Distribution Values of “Assertiveness and Anxiety” Levels of Volleyball Players according to the Age Variable.

If the values in Table 2 are examined, it is observed that there is no statistically significant difference in the assertiveness levels of Volleyball players participated in the research according to the age variable (p>0.05). It is specified that anxiety level of volleyball players between ages 18 and 20 is higher in comparison to the volleyball players between ages 21 and 23 and above 24 years old, and statistically important difference is determined in the significance level (p<0.02).

When the values in Table 3 are investigated, it is specified that there is no statistically important difference in the comparison of values of Assertiveness and Anxiety Levels of Volleyball Players participated in the study according to the class variable (p>0.05).
Table 3: Statistical Distribution Values of “Assertiveness and Anxiety” Levels of Volleyball Players according to the Class Variable.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Class</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>(\bar{x})</th>
<th>Ss</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>p</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>89.46</td>
<td>18.07</td>
<td>1.15</td>
<td>0.33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.00</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>98.67</td>
<td>17.67</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assertiveness</td>
<td>3.00</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>94.33</td>
<td>13.58</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4.00</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>95.10</td>
<td>8.43</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>95.06</td>
<td>15.70</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>40.60</td>
<td>5.80</td>
<td>1.60</td>
<td>0.19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anxiety</td>
<td>2.00</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>42.89</td>
<td>6.04</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3.00</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>44.45</td>
<td>4.70</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>43.07</td>
<td>5.59</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4: Statistical Distribution Values of “Assertiveness and Anxiety” Levels of Volleyball Players according to the Sporting Year Variable.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sporting Year</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>(\bar{x})</th>
<th>Ss</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>p</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1-3 Years</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>98.12</td>
<td>16.74</td>
<td>0.69</td>
<td>0.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4-5 Years</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>94.71</td>
<td>20.10</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assertiveness</td>
<td>More Than 5 Years</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>93.30</td>
<td>13.27</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>95.06</td>
<td>15.70</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1-3 Years *</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>40.54</td>
<td>5.39</td>
<td>7.40</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anxiety</td>
<td>4-5 Years *</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>41.21</td>
<td>5.72</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>More Than 5 Years**</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>45.30</td>
<td>4.83</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>43.07</td>
<td>5.59</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

When values in Table 4 are examined, it is determined that there is no statistically significant difference in the assertiveness level of Volleyball players participated in the study according to the sporting year variable (p>0.05). On the other hand, it is observed that anxiety level of volleyball players who are doing sports for more than 5 years, is higher than the volleyball players who are doing sports for 1-3 years and 4-5 years, and statistically important difference is specified in the significance level (p<0.02).

Discussion, Result:

According to the study results of 77 individuals, it is found that in general assertiveness level of volleyball players is high, and their continued anxiety level is low. Discussion and interpretation of findings of the study are performed in accordance with the sequence of inferior problems.

It is specified that there is no significant difference when assertiveness and continued anxiety levels of volleyball players participating in the research are examined according to the gender variable (p>0.05, Table 1). When similar studies are investigated, [16,17,30,18] have found in their studies that assertiveness does not differ with gender [16,17,18,19]. In his study, Girgin [20] has found that gender variable played a significant role in the anxiety level of the individuals. Saban et al. [21] have established in their study that anxiety levels of female students are higher than the anxiety levels of male students [20,21].

When assertiveness levels of volleyball players participated in the research are examined according to the age variable, it is seen that there is no significant change (p<0.05, Table 2). However, when we examine effect of age variable on the anxiety level, it is observed that anxiety level of volleyball players between ages 18 and 20 is higher than the volleyball players between ages 21 and 23 and above 24 years old, and statistically important difference is determined in the significance level (p<0.02).

If we examine different studies of assertiveness that support our research, it is seen that for example Büyükyazı et al. [17] have compared assertiveness levels of sedentary and veteran athletes over age 40 and concluded that age variable does not cause a significant change in the assertiveness level. Görüş [23] has also obtained the same result in his research. On the other hand, in the researches performed by Gacar and Coşkuner [24,30], an increase in the level of assertiveness is found as the age variable increases. When we examine the studies realized on the continued anxiety levels: Bilge and Pektaş [26] have found a slight difference in the continued anxiety levels of students between ages 19-22. Cambaz and others [27] have found in their researches on apprentices between ages 15 and 24 that continued anxiety point averages are higher than the state anxiety point averages. However Korkut could not determine any relation between age and anxiety in children between ages 13 and 18 in the study realized in 1991. These researches support our study. [22,23,24,25,26,27,28,29].

When the points of Assertiveness and Anxiety Levels are compared in line with the class variable, a statistically significant difference is observed (p>0.05, Tablo 3). This study is show consistency with the researches realized by Kaya [28], Güler and Koç [18] on assertiveness, on the other hand it is inconsistent with the studied performed by Tan [29].
and Tatiker [30]. In the research performed by Akbot (1990) to determine and compare the state-continued anxiety levels of pre-service teachers and to specify their areas of anxiety; a group of first and fourth year university students were selected as the participants. It is specified that female students have statistically higher anxiety in comparison to the male students.[29,30,31,32,33,34,35].

No significant difference is determined when the assertiveness levels of volleyball players are investigated according to the variable of years of doing sports (p>0.05, Table 4). When we examine the effect of sporting years on the continued anxiety level, it is observed that volleyball players doing sports for more than 5 years have a higher anxiety level in comparison to the volleyball players doing sports for 1-3 years and 4-5 years, and statistically important difference is determined in the significance level (p<0.02). In the researches on the same subject, Kapirkiran [36,37,38] have indicated that sports activities play a role in individuals becoming assertive persons by making important contributions in improving the physical, mental and personality structure, and strengthening the willpower, building trust and checking oneself. In another study, Şahin [40] have observed no statistically important difference between state anxiety and continued anxiety of candidates entering to the exams of Physical Education and Sports according to the sport branch they are doing. In his research in which 279 sported participated, Engür [41] has evaluated the experiences the sporters have in their own branches in terms of “state anxiety” levels average points, and as a result, it is determined that there is not a statistically significant differentiation in the “state anxiety” average points when experiences of sporters are discussed. Erman et al. [743] have investigated the effect of university students’ level of doing sports on their continued anxiety level, thus it is concluded that continued anxiety level of the group of which its level of doing sports is determined to be high, is lower.

As a conclusion:

As it can be seen from our study as well as the other researches, personal characteristics influence the assertiveness and continued anxiety level of the sporters. There is a relationship between the sports success and levels of assertiveness and continued anxiety. It is considered that coaches and physical education teachers should also perform activities aimed at improving the psychological skills of the sporters besides development of their physical and technical skills.

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