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EXAMINING MOTIVATION LEVELS OF FEMALE VOLLEYBALL PLAYERS AND COACH -PLAYER RELATIONSHIPS

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Abstract

The aim of this study is to examine player-coach relationships and its relevance to motivational processes. The participants of the study were 93 players who played in the matches qualifying for Turkish 1st Women's Volleyball League in 2018. The study used Player-Coach Relationship Inventory and Motivation in Sports Scale as the data collection instruments. The data obtained were analyzed by using SPSS 20 software, descriptive statistics and Pearson Correlation analysis. The findings of the study revealed no statistically meaningful relationship between player-coach relationship and external motivation and amotivation. However, there was a meaningful relationship between player-coach relationship and internal motivation ($r=, 246$). Similarly, a meaningful relationship was found between “the duration of player-coach relationship” and the sub dimensions of player-coach relationship, which are “commitment” ($r=, 293$), “closeness” ($r=, 325$) and “complementarity” ($r=, 325$). In short, it can be concluded that as the relationship between players and the coach improves, motivation increases, and as the duration of this relationship increases, player-coach relationship is affected positively.

Keywords: Women; Volleyball; Coach; Motivation.

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1. Introduction

Throughout history, sports have always been a part of human life- though for different purposes. People are interested in sports in two main ways: as “audience” or as a “participant” (Bull,1991). The overall goal of players – who are a group of “participants” – is to improve their performance levels through practices (Abakay and Kuru 2013). Another group in “participant” category is coaches. They guide the players to success, help them develop their personality characteristics and try to increase their motivation levels. Players' talents and willingness to work do not alone guarantee achievement, they also need the experiences and knowledge of their coach so that they can be successful players (cited by Yücel 2010 from Alper, 1988).

The feelings, ideas and behaviors of coaches and players are casually related to each other (Jowett and Ntoumanis, 2004). Therefore, the relationship between players and the coach is a determining factor in their performance levels. Coach and players are always dependent on each other. This mutual dependency stems from players' wish to improve their knowledge, to compete and to benefit from the coach's experiences as well as the coach's wish to make use of his knowledge and talent to achieve success and high performance. A coach is supposed to know certain information about his/her players such as personality traits, the reasons for taking up sports, family structures, values, life styles, needs, financial status, social status and friendship relationships. Moreover, he should be aware of their motivational characteristics and motivation levels as well as the specific ways to motivate each player (Abakay and Kuru, 2013). Coach-player relationship has important effects on discipline and performance outcomes. Similarly, this relationship plays an important role not only in the improvement of performance and talent (winning medals and breaking records) but also in personal and social development (feeling of satisfaction, self-confidence and feeling valuable). The coach's and the player's agreeing on the same goals and conditions are crucial in this relationship (Jowett and Ntoumanis, 2004).

Player motivation is an important factor for the following situations: improved and sustainable performance; patience and endurance during an exhausting training session; and optimum performance during competitions and tournaments. It is necessary for a coach to get know his players well and access accurate information regarding their needs so that the performance of particular players improves considerably. Players should be well-motivated in order to be psychologically and physiologically ready for competitions (İnal, 2003).

It is also important for players to motivate themselves prior to a match. A well-motivated player has high levels of self-confidence, low levels of anxiety and a relaxed mind. Self-motivation is not sufficient here, and players need to be motivated by their coach as well. When a coach motivates his/her players to do their best during a match, this can boost their performance to win. When a team loses a game, the players are often demoralized at the end of the match. The reactions of coaches in such situations vary depending on whether the coach is able to understand their psychology or not. In addition, efficient training sessions highly depends on the effectiveness and quality of the relationship between the coach and players (Güven, 1996).

The role of a coach is not confined to display some specific moves for training purposes Coaches are also supposed to have a strong personality in addition to be a successful trainer. Players often expect their coach to support them not only for the game-related problems but also for their personal problems (Güzel, 2008).

It is possible to access considerable amount of information about "being a good coach" from various resources. However, what affects success or failure is the way a coach adopts and applies this information. The magical atmosphere created by a coach strengthens the confidence of players on the coach and his / her reliability (Yücel, 2010).

The success in performance-based sports highly depends on a quality and effective coach-player relationship (Philippe and Seiler, 2006). The studies focusing on this issue found more than one factors affecting the motivation of players. The most important factor is coach-player relationship, which is quite likely to affect players' motivation and performance (Mageau and Vallerand, 2003).

Accordingly, the aim of this study is to examine the relevance between player-coach relationships and players' motivation levels.

2. Materials and Methods

The study was conducted with 93 female players who played in the matches qualifying for Turkish 1st Women's Volleyball League in 2018 (Age, \bar{X} : 23.98±4.60).

The study used two main data collection instruments, "Coach-Player Relationship Inventory", which was developed by Jowett and Ntoumanis (2004) and adapted to Turkish language by Altıntaş et.al (2012); and "Motivation in Sports Scale", which was developed by Pelletier et.al (1995) and adapted to Turkish language by Kazak Toros (2004).

The data was collected from the female volleyball players who played in the matches qualifying for Turkish 1st Women's Volleyball League in 2018 in Kütahya on March 2018. The participants were asked to reply to the data collection instruments mentioned above.

The data obtained from the study were analyzed by using descriptive statistics and Pearson correlation analysis.

3. Results and Discussions

The following are the tables for the player-coach relationship and motivation scale.

Table 1: Descriptive Statistics

Variables	N	Min.	Maks.	\bar{X}	Ss
Age	93	16	37	23,98	4,606
Sports Age	93	4	25	12,58	4,682
Duration of working with the current coach (Months)	93	1	84	18,14	17,943

According to Table 1, descriptive statistics for the data used in the study are shown. The average age of female volleyball players \bar{X} =23,98, sports age \bar{X} =12,58 and duration of working with the current coach (month)

\bar{X} = 18,14.

Table 2: Pearson Correlation Analysis of Player-Coach Relationship and Internal Motivation Scores

		Internal Motivation
Player-Coach Relationship	r	,246
	p	,018
	N	93

When Table 2 is examined, we can see that there is a meaningful relationship between coach-player relationship and internal motivation scores ($p<.05$; $r=.246$).

Table 3: Pearson Correlation Analysis of Player-Coach Relationship and External Motivation Scores

		External Motivation
Player-Coach Relationship	r	,156
	p	,135
	N	93

According to Table 3, there is not a meaningful relationship between player-coach relationship and external motivation scores ($p > .05$).

Table 4: Pearson Correlation Analysis of Player-Coach Relationship and Amotivation Scores

		Amotivation
Player-Coach Relationship	r	-,094
	P	,370
	N	93

According to Table 4, there is not a meaningful relationship between player-coach relationship and amotivation scores ($p > .05$).

Table 5: Pearson Correlation Analysis of Player-Coach Relationship and the Duration of Working with the Current Coach Scores

		The duration of working with the current coach
Player-Coach Relationship	r	,321
	P	,002
	N	93

When Table 5 is examined, it can be said that there is a meaningful relationship between player-coach relationship and the duration of working with the current coach scores ($p < .05$; $r = .321$).

Table 6: Pearson Correlation Analysis of the Scores for Duration of Working with the Current Coach and Commitment, which is a sub dimension of Player-Coach Relationship

		The Duration of Working with the Current Coach
Commitment, a sub dimension of Player-Coach Relationship	r	,293
	p	,004
	N	93

When Table 6 is examined, it can be said that there is a meaningful relationship between the scores of “duration of working with the current coach” and “commitment”, which is a sub dimension of player-coach relationship ($p < .05$; $r = .293$).

Table 7: Pearson Correlation Analysis of the Scores for Duration of Working with the Current Coach and Closeness, which is a sub dimension of Player-Coach Relationship

		Duration of Working with the Current Coach
	r	,325

Closeness, which is a sub dimension of Player-Coach Relationship	p	,001
	N	93

According to Table 7, there is a meaningful relationship between the scores of “duration of working with the current coach” and “closeness”, which is a sub dimension of player-coach relationship ($p < .05$; $r = .325$).

Table 8: Pearson Correlation Analysis of the Scores for the Duration of Working with the Current Coach and Complementarity, which is a sub dimension of Player-Coach Relationship

		The Duration of Working with the Current Coach
Complementarity, which is a sub dimension of Player-Coach Relationship	r	,225
	p	,030
	N	93

As shown by Table 8, there is a meaningful relationship between “complementarity”, which is a sub dimension of Player-Coach Relationship, and the “duration of working with the current coach” scores ($p < .05$; $r = .225$).

4. Conclusions and Recommendations

This study examined the connection between player-coach relationship and players’ motivation. When the relationship between motivation types was examined, it was found that internal motivation is more common than external motivation. This finding contradicts with the findings of the study conducted with 153 American football players by Erdem (2008), which revealed that internal motivation is observed less when compared to external motivation.

Pearson correlation values calculated for player-coach relationship and motivation revealed a positive relationship between coach-player relationship and internal motivation, which a sub dimension of motivation in sports. However, no meaningful relationship was found between coach-player relationship and external motivation and amotivation sub dimensions. Under the light of these findings, it can be said that a quality relationship between players and coaches leads to a positive development of internal motivation. Riley and Smith (2011), in their study carried out with 211 basketball players living in the USA, found that player-coach relationship is closely related to motivation. Similarly, Adie and Jowett (2010), in their study conducted with 197 British athletes, concluded that coach-player relationship is closely related to internal motivation, external motivation and amotivation, which are the sub dimensions of motivation. The findings mentioned above suggest that meaningful relationship between player-coach relationship and internal motivation might be due to the fact that the study was conducted with the players playing in the qualifying matches, which means that they have high levels of anxiety and concentration. Since such qualifying matches are more important than regular season matches, and coaches are more likely to make motivating speeches to encourage wins, these players are quite likely to have high levels of internal motivation. In addition, since players worked hard throughout the season for these qualifying matches and were quite close to achieve their goals, they might have already motivated themselves to get what they deserved for their hard work rather than merely thinking about possible awards or punishment.

Pearson correlation analyses regarding the duration of working with the current coach and the sub dimensions of player-coach relationship revealed meaningful and positive relationship in all sub dimensions. The study conducted by Selağzı and Çepikkurt (2014) with 75 athletes attending Mersin University revealed that as the duration of working with the current coach and the time they spent together increased, commitment sub dimension scores also increased, which is consistent with the findings of our study.

In other words, this finding implies that increased working time with the coach positively affects players' commitment to their coach. If the coach and players get to know each other well, he/she can understand their excitement and happiness. Considering that a volleyball season lasts 10 months, it is expected that the teams with fewer cases of – if not any- coach changes will have more positive coach-player relationship. Such a positive relationship is quite likely to result in more effective crisis management skills as a step taken towards achievement.

Since this study is one of the few studies focusing on this issue, it is believed to provide the players, coaches and administrators in Turkey with useful information regarding player-coach relationship and its connection with motivational processes.

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