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Original article

EVALUATION OF EMPATHIC TENDENCY LEVELS OF ACTIVE FOOTBALL REFEREES OF ANKARA REGION

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Abstract

Objective: The study was designed in survey model in order to investigate empathic tendency levels of the individual who were active football referees of Ankara region.

Methods: The sample of the study were composed of 49 football referees (8 female referees and 41 male referees) who were football referees in Ankara region for the last one year, were recruited using random sampling method, whose mean age was 23±3.64 years. As the data collection tool; Empathic Tendency Scale (ETS) developed by Dökmen (1988) Scale was used. Empathic Tendency Scale (ETS) was developed to measure individuals' potentials to empathize in daily life. The lowest score to be obtained from the scale is 20 while the highest score is 100. High scores indicate high level of empathic tendency while low scores indicate low level of empathic tendency. For the statistical analyses of the data; arithmetic means, standard deviations, Mann-Whitney U and Kruskal Wallis tests were used. Significance level was .05.

Results: In the study findings; no statistically significant correlation was detected between gender variable and Empathic Tendency Level. But, there was statistically significant correlation between referee degree and refereeing-year, and Empathic Tendency Level. In light of the study results;

Conclusions. Although no statistically significant correlation existed in Empathic Levels in terms of gender, it was seen that those who refereed for ≥ 7 years had higher Empathic Levels than those who refereed for ≤ 6 years and that those who were regional referees had higher Empathic Levels than those who were HIF (Football For Everyone) referees.

Keywords: Football, Football Referee, Empathy.

Introduction

Man is a social creature constantly advancing in his relationship associated with environment. In the daily lives of individuals learning to be respectful and be tolerant of other individuals' views and ideas is very important in terms of creating a democratic society (Cüceloğlu, 1993). Communication is one of the most significant aspects of living together and it is hardly possible to think of a world without it (Balçık, 2000). Communicating is an inevitable activity of men's daily, private, social and organizational lives (Tutar, 2001). In order to communicate in a healthy way, human should also have necessary communication skills. In the studies, it is realised that among the communication skills, being respectful, clear, concrete and empathic to others is very important for well interpersonal relationships. In interpersonal relationships, it is acknowledged that empathic ability is a substantial part of general communication skills (Barnett, 1990; Cüceloğlu, 1994; Voltan-Acar,

1994). With the most general terms, empathy is one's process of seeing from different point of view by stepping into someone's shoes and understanding and feeling other person's emotions and ideas and reflecting this situation to him (Rogers 1983). In the process of empathy, it is very important to be able to understand in a good way and correctly the emotions and ideas of the person with whom you communicate as well as reflecting correctly the perception existing in the person showing empathy (Redmond, 1989; Albiero et al., 2009). High empathic abilities help you to understand others better (Barr, 2011). Empathy is identified with two sides as Empathic Tendency (ET) and Empathic Ability (EA). ET states individual's potential ability to show empathy and can be also considered as the ability of understanding clients feelings and being affected with their emotional experiences and desire to help. The people with high empathic tendency are said to reflect their helping behaviour much more. Obtaining empathic tendency determining the helping level of an individual in daily life requires extended period of time. On the other hand ET is a process in

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which a person steps into the others' shoes and understands his feelings and ideas correctly and reflects this situation to the others correctly. If a person really has ability of showing empathy, he has to listen to client actively, to consider what he has heard and to evaluate what client has said in a certain sense of reality and accuracy. The people with high empathique ability and tendency have high level of communication with their environment. For this reason, empathy has a key position in practice (Yigitbas et al. 2013). Empathique behaviors of individuals have a key position in sportive activities as well as in social life. Empathy affects communication ability level of sportsmen, satisfaction of trainers, pleasure of supporters and professional sport lives (Zekioğlu and Tatar, 2006). One of the people ensuring that sport competitions will pass successfully and smooth is referee. In refereeing, personality traits and physiologic factors are more important than kinesis performance. An effective conduct is related to personality of referee, his self-esteem, calmness and even kindness (Sellin, 2003). As conducting a competition, such perfections as being able to identify sportsmen, being in a good communication, being able to understand them and to control their feeling requires emotional intelligence, regulation, leadership and efficient communication ability. At this point, referee's ability to understand just own feelings and desires and to control them in competitions confronts us as a deficiency and inadequacy. One of the heading factors that affects referees' performance as to be at the highest or lowest level is whether referees have the communication ability or not (Sülün, 2013). Our needs and motivations affect our decisions and perceptions. So even if audience are in hopeless manner, they also want their team to win and at this circumstance they see that the ball would be inside the pitch, though line judge would announce it is outside. So, excessive sympathy, passion and ignorance prevent today's people from saying stop their emotions and winning desire. In this circumstance, a deviant fanaticism emerges. Therefore a sport is not an instrument any more but a goal to win. Also in sport platform, there is both excessive anxiety and stressful atmosphere with regard to audience and sportsmen. In this existential exciting atmosphere, the physical manners of sportsmen, trainers, referees, audience is often ignored. Because of only intensifying towards success aim, such factors as fair play, spirit of Olympic, physiology, sportive morality could be passed over (Öztürk et al., 2004). Empathique behaviour is also important to decrease aggressive behaviors in sportive atmospheres. It is estimated that

in addition to sportsmen making the best of a bad situation, trainers and referees, audiences' understanding each other and being in a good relationship have a positive effect so as to decrease these kinds of behaviors. As empathy is considered one of the important elements of effective communication, investigating of referees' empathique tendency is highly significant.

Methods. Pattern of the research

Research is a survey model aiming to investigate Empathique Tendency Level of individuals working as active football referee in Ankara region.

Research Group. Samples of this research consist of totally 49 referees, 8 female and 41 male active football referees whose average ages $23 \pm 3,64$ selected randomly among referees working in Ankara region for the last one year.

Data Acquisition Device

In this research Empathique Tendency Scale developed by Dokmen (1988) (ETS) is used as data acquisition device. Empathique Tendency Scale (ETS) is developed in order to quantify individuals' potential to show empathy in daily life. It is a Likert kind of scale and consists of 20 questions and each question grades from 1 to 5. When the points are calculated, questions 3,6,7,8,11,12,13,15 are calculated diversely. The lowest score is 20 and the highest score is 100. Total score means empathique tendency score of participant. The high score means that empathique tendency is high; the low score means that empathique tendency is low. Reliability Study of ETS was applied twice by Dökmen (1988) to 70 students every three weeks, the relationship between these two scores obtained from these applications is $r=.82$. In this study cronbach alpha reliability index is obtained as .88. EST's reliability study however 'Understanding Emotions' part of ETS and Edwards Personal Preference Inventory was applied by Dökmen (1988) to 24 people and analogue scales index is calculated as $r=.68$.

Analysis of Data

In the analysis of data, of the descriptive statistics methods frequency, percentage, arithmetic mean and standard deviation are used for individual information. In order to realise difference; Among Non-Parameter tests, Mann-Whitney U and Kruskal Wallis tests are applied as normal distribution and homogeny conditions are not occurred in gender, referee degrees and refereeing years variances. Meaningfulness level is determined as .05.

Results

Table 1. Demographic Variances of Research Group

Variances	N	%	
Gender	Female	8	16,3
	Male	41	83,7
	Total	49	100
Referee degree	HIF	27	55,1
	Region	22	44,9
	Total	49	100
Referee year	1-3	5	10,2
	4-6	7	14,3
	7*	37	75,5
	Total	49	100

Table 2. According to Research Group's Gender Variances the Results of Mann-Whitney U Test related to Empathique Tendency Levels

Variances	N	X	Range averages	Mann-Whitney U Test
Gender	Female	8	7,37	23,00
	Male	41	,37	25,39
	Total	49		

As understand from obtained data in Table 2, the empathique tendency scores of sportsmen differ greatly in terms of their gender variances [$t(49) = 148$; $p > 0,5$].

Table 3. According to Variances of Refereeing Degrees of Research Group the Results of Mann-Whitney U Test related to Empathique Tendency Levels

Variances	N	X	Range Averages	Mann-Whitney U Test
Refereeing range	HIF	27	7,32	21,26
	Region	22	,50	29,59
	Total	49		

As understand from obtained data in Table 3, empathique tendency scores of sportsmen differs greatly in terms of variances of refereeing degrees [$t(49) = ,196$; $p < 0,5$]. The scores of HIF referees ($x=7,32$) is determined as higher in comparison with scores of region referees ($x= ,50$).

Table 4. According to Variances of Refereeing Years of Research Group the Results of Kruskal Wallis Test related to Empathique Tendency Levels

Variances	N	Range Averages	sd	X ²	p	
Refereeing year	1-3	5	34,70	2	1,178	,028*
	4-6	7	34,50			
	7	37	21,89			

As understand from obtained data in Table 4, the empathique tendency scores of sportsmen differ greatly according to refereeing year variances [$t(49) = 7,178; p < 0.5$]. The scores of referees working more than seven years ($\bar{X} = 1,89$) are lower than the scores of 4-6 yearly referees ($\bar{X} = 34,50$) and the scores of 1-3 yearly referees ($\bar{X} = 34,70$).

is increasing, the empathique tendency is decreasing. This research also supports findings.

Conclusions

In order to reach more explanatory and satisfactory results and contribute to sport science by investigating related literature in consideration of discussions, the results obtained from this research, when considered that it includes active football referees in Ankara can offer bellow suggestions;

- Similar researches may be done by enhancing the number of samples,
- Empathique tendency levels may increase with different variances of referees,
- The relationship between behaviors of applying game rules while referees are conducting matches and empathy level may be investigated,
- The differences between the empathique tendency of other branch referees and the empathique tendency of football referees may be investigated,
- In refereeing training, the information about 'Empathy' concept may be increase

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Discussion

Samples of this research consist of totally 49 referees, 8 female and 41 male active football referees whose average ages $23 \pm 3,64$ selected randomly among referees working in Ankara region for the last one year. 55% of referees are working as HIF referee and 44,9 % of referees are working as region referee. 1-3 yearly referees constitute 10,2 %, 4-6 yearly referees constitute 14,3 % and 7 and more yearly referees constitute 75,5 % of the group. In the conducted study, the Empathique Tendency Scale scores of active female football referees are found higher than male referees, yet the difference between them is not considerable as statistic. In different studies were carried out by Eisenberg and Lenon (1983), Schireman and Gundy (2000), Lennon and Kopriva (1991), Myyry and Helkama (2001), Duru (2002), Toussaint and Webb (2005), Durak and Vurgun (2006), Karabulut and Pular (2013) on different groups, it is realised that female referees have higher empathique tendency in comparison with male referees. These findings support research findings. This result can be explained on the ground that women response the situations more emotionally than men; furthermore women are regarded as calmer, more moderate and more thoughtful by society and at last with 'woman sensibility' (Dökmen 2005). However in the statistic data in the chart 3, it is understood that there is a considerable relationship between refereeing degrees and ETS scores. The tendency of HIF referees another words, of beginner nominee referees is higher than the scores of region referees who are more veteran than themselves. On account of being new in the field and having fresh memory if they play football in previous life, their empathique behaviors may have affected this emerging result. In chart 4, it is understood that there is a considerable relationship between refereeing year variance and the scores of empathique tendency scale. As the working years of referees increase, it is realised that empathique tendency get lower and they display less empathique behaviors. This result can be explained on the ground that referees can behave more comfortable in front of the audience as a result of increasing experiments with growing older, and they can behave more individually with this comfort so the empathy may also decrease (Dorak and Vurgun 2006). In the study undertaken on a different group. Karabulut and Bahadır (2013), has found that as the empathy



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