



## Investigation of the personality, anger and anxiety situation of the professional and amateur football players and the veteran footballers

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### ARTICLE INFO

#### Article History:

Received 12.03.2020

Received in revised form

01.04.2020

Accepted 13.05.2020

Available online

04.05.2020

### ABSTRACT

The aim of this study is to investigate the anger, personality and anxiety levels of the football players who actively play football and the football players who have left football. A total 496 football players, 162 women and 334 men, participated in the research in Istanbul in 2018. Spielberger's Anger Style scale, the Eysenck Personality Inventory short form, and Spielberger's continuous anxiety inventory were used as data collection tools. The percentage distribution and frequency values of the athletes participating in the research were determined with descriptive statistics and Shapiro Wilk test was applied as the normality test. Depending on the athletes' situation, Mann Whitney U test was performed to compare the anger, personality and anxiety levels of the athletes. Kruskal Wallis test was used to compare the anger, personality and anxiety levels of the athletes depending on the level of the athlete, and Tamhane was used as the second level test to identify meaningful groups. Spearman correlation test was used to determine the relationship between the anger, personality and anxiety levels of the athletes. All the tests performed were done at  $\alpha = 0.05$  significance level. Microsoft Excell 2017 for Windows was used to enter the data into the computer environment and SPSS 25 package program was used to create graphics and tables. As a result of the findings obtained from the study, it was observed that there were significant differences between anger and inward anger scores according to the athletes' status, and anger, personality and trait anxiety dimensions according to the level of athletics. On the other hand, it was seen that there was a significant relationship between anger, personality and trait anxiety levels of the athletes participating in the research. As a result, it was determined that normal athletes were angrier than veteran athletes, and professional footballers had better level of anger controls and anger levels than amateur athletes. On the other hand, it has been determined that the personality and anxiety levels of professional athletes are higher than amateur athletes.

Keywords:

Football, Anxiety, Personality, Anger, Veteran.

### 1. Introduction

Sports gives individuals a personal and social identity besides physical activities. Sport is an event where important interactions take place that enable people to socialize and to be accepted in their environment. The various personalities and characters that individuals encounter help them draw a different route. Thanks to the sport, new friends are made, and if the personality and character match overlap, these friendships can turn into long-term friendship. In the concept of personality, intelligence is an important detail that attracts attention. Through recent research, emotional intelligence enables expansions in different areas. The studies in this area are followed by topics related to the development of emotional intelligence in terms of determining his abilities about defining and measuring emotional intelligence (Yeşilyaprak, 2001).

Today, as we can talk about how important personality is in choosing sports branches, sports branches also have an undeniable effect on personality. Today, experts have not been able to agree on a common definition of personality. Personality traits are patterns that distinguish people from other people and exhibit consistent

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<http://dx.doi.org/10.17220/ijpes.2020.02.016>

behaviors on certain topics, in other words, all of the reactions that lead people's mental, physical and emotional life (Burger, 2006). Despite the fact that hundreds of definitions have been made by many academics for almost a century, there is no definition of a personality that fully expresses the personality.

In terms of personality traits, the performance and success levels of the players are influenced by the control of thoughts, emotions and mental processes in line with the body-mind interaction as well as genetic structure and training in a certain order (Syer & Connolly, 1998). High communication value in some of the sports branches has an accelerating effect on individual and social development. It can be said that this is more evident especially in sports branches where physical contact is intense (Gibson, 1975).

Anger, which has an important place in human emotions, generally occurs due to problems such as work, family, health problems, legal restrictions. The feeling of anger is an innate emotional state that is felt by everyone. The social environment and economic situation in which people live play a decisive role in the formation of this situation. Moreover, recently it has been discussed in the literature that genetics plays an important role in anger emotion.

Today, anger has become one of the issues of high importance, explored by social science experts. When all the studies related to this subject are examined, it is seen that there is a scientific interest in the concept of anger that started with Navoco in 1975. Nacova said in his researches that anger has a positive effect along with a negative effect on human life. Tahran states that anger removes the individual from mistakes and dangers (Karadal, 2009).

In order for the anger to be fully experienced and controlled, first of all, this emotional state must be internalized, that is, the acceptance of the person, the reasons and types of this emotional state must be understood, and also clearly transferred and internalized (Tuna, 2012). There are many studies in the literature on anxiety. In this study, we include the anxiety states of veteran and active athletes. The place and meaning of anxiety in sports is very important. The change in anxiety levels undeniably manifests itself, especially when athletes see winning as the primary focus and realize that things are not going well. There are many factors that affect anxiety levels of young athletes. It is possible to gather some of them under the headings such as social environment, family, friend environment, personality traits.

It is known that coaches play a certain role in athlete's performances. The behaviour and attitude of the coaches against the athletes may affect the anxiety of the players as well as their performance positively or negatively. Spielberger dealt with this situation in two ways: State Anxiety and Trait Anxiety. State Anxiety is defined as a form of anxiety which is caused by the stress experienced by metabolism depending on the environmental conditions in humans, mostly based on logical reasons, accepted by others and depending on the temporary situation in which every person can live (Öner & Le Compte 1985).

An increase in anxiety generally causes athletes in any branch to perform below the standards they have always shown. For many athletes anxiety contains very familiar feelings such as fear, inspiration, anxiety, and tension (Karageorghis & Terry, 2015).

Anxiety has a noticeable effect on athletes when the studies are reviewed. Athletes must learn to keep this emotional state under control in order to be able to compete and achieve success. For this, sports psychologists work in professional clubs. It can be said that the athletes are more successful in controlling these emotional states thanks to the therapies they see. In this study, we tried to reveal the level of anxiety emotions of athletes after and before quitting football. The place of the concept of personality in sports is very important. Athletes can shape their personalities according to their branch. The answer to two questions is needed to accurately reveal the sports personality relationship: Is there a change in the personality of individuals who do sports and what kind of importance do people's personality traits have in order to perform a type of sport? In the field of sports psychology, many studies have been conducted to investigate the personality traits, similarities and differences of successful and unsuccessful athletes. Personality tests were applied in various fields and afterwards a result analysis was made. The results have produced contradictory situations every time.

If the researchers know their personality of elite athletes traits when determining them, or if the personality traits of the athletes who will compete in any sport branch are suitable for that branch, it will be possible to raise more athletes and champions (Teşneli, 2007; Tiryaki, 2000).

Başer (1998) mentioned a number of factors that may affect the emotions and behaviors of the athlete: Despite all kinds of negative external factors, the athlete must increase his capacity physically and spiritually in order to achieve the performance he wants to achieve (Başer, 1998; Teşneli, 2007). Athletes must follow the training program to succeed and make the necessary sacrifices. Sport affects people both mentally and physically. The performances shown in training and competitions may differ from each other. Community pressure is obvious on athletes. The type and severity of oppression may result from policy, economy and social reasons. The athlete competes in a hostile atmosphere (Peabody & Goldberg, 1989; Teşneli, 2007). Under such frustration and pressure, athletes must be able to demonstrate their performance and be in control. There are examples of different behaviors that athletes cannot control their anger and act aggressively.

## 2. Method

In 2018, a total of 496 football players, 162 women and 334 men, participated in the research in Istanbul. Spielberger's Anger Style scale, the Eysenck Personality Inventory short form, and Spielberger's trait anxiety inventory were used as data collection tools. The percentage distribution and frequency values of the athletes participating in the research were determined with descriptive statistics and Shapiro Wilk test was applied as the normality test. Depending on the athlete situation, Mann Whitney U test was performed to compare the anger, personality and anxiety levels of the athletes. Kruskal Wallis test was used to compare the anger, personality and anxiety levels of the athletes depending on the level of the athlete, and Tamhane was used as the second level test to determine meaningful groups. Spearman correlation test was used to determine the relationship between the anger, personality and anxiety levels of the athletes. All the tests performed are done at the level of  $\alpha = 0.05$  significance. Microsoft Excell 2017 for Windows was used to enter the data into the computer environment and SPSS 25 package program was used to create graphics and tables.

## 3. Findings

**Table 1.** Distribution By Age

Age Groups	%	n
21-25 Age	24,6	122
26-30 Age	16,5	82
31-35 Age	17,5	87
36-40 Age	18,5	92
41 Age and over	22,8	113
<b>Group total</b>	100	496

When the distribution by age was analyzed, it was seen that 24,6% of the participants were 21-25 years old, 16,5% of them were 26-30 years old, 17,5% of them 31-35 years old, 18,5% of them 36-40 years old and 22,8 % of them 41 years old or older.

**Table 2.** Distribution by Athlete Status

Athlete Status	%	(n)
Normal Athlete	52,2	259
Veteran Athlete	47,8	237
<b>Group Total</b>	100	496

When the distribution of the athletes participating in the research was analyzed, it was seen that 52,2% were normal athletes and 47,8% were veterans.

**Table 3.** Distribution by Educational Level

Education Level	%	(n)
High School	24,4	121
Universty	66,3	329
High Licence or Doctorate	9,3	46
<b>Total Group</b>	100	496

When the distribution of the athletes participating in the research according to their education levels was analyzed, it was seen that 24,4% were at high school, 66,3% at university and 9,3% at graduate and doctorate levels.

**Anger Scores of Athletes Participating in the Study**

**Table 4.** Trait Anger Points by Athlete Status

Anger	Athlete Status	N	$\bar{X}_{line}$	$\Sigma_{line}$	U	z	p
<b>Trait</b>	<b>Normal</b>	259	262,91	68093,50	26959,500	-2,346	<b>0,019</b>
	<b>Veteran</b>	237	232,75	55162,50			

It was observed that there was a significant difference between the trait anger scores of the individuals participating in the study, depending on the sports situation ( $Z_{0.05}$ ; -2.346;  $P < 0.05$ ).

**Internal Anger Scores by Athlete Status**

**Table 5.** Internal Anger Scores According to the Athlete's Status

Anger	Athlete Status	N	$\bar{X}_{line}$	$\Sigma_{line}$	U	z	p
<b>Internal</b>	<b>Normal</b>	259	236,97	61376,50	27706,500	-1,876	0,061
	<b>Veteran</b>	237	261,09	61879,50			

There was no significant difference in the anger scores of the individuals who participated in the study depending on the athletic status ( $Z_{0.05}$ ; -1.876;  $P > 0.05$ ).

**Table 6.** External Anger Scores by Athlete Status

Anger	Athlete Status	N	$\bar{X}_{line}$	$\Sigma_{line}$	U	z	p
<b>External</b>	<b>Normal</b>	259	256,38	66401,50	28651,500	1,287	0,198
	<b>Veteran</b>	237	239,89	56854,50			

It was observed that there was no significant difference between the external anger scores of the individuals participating in the study, depending on the sports situation ( $Z_{0.05}$ ; -1.287;  $P>0.05$ ).

**Table 7.** Anger Control Scores by Athlete Status

Anger	Athlete Status	N	$\bar{X}_{line}$	$\sum_{line}$	U	z	p
Anger Control	Normal	259	258,25	66887,50	28165,500	- 1,592	0,111
	Veteran	237	237,84	56368,50			

There was no significant difference between the anger control scores of the individuals participating in the study, depending on the sports situation ( $Z_{0.05}$ ; -1.592;  $P>0.05$ ).

**Table 8.** Trait Anger Scores by Level of Athletics

Anger	Athletics Level	N	$\bar{X}_{line}$	Chi Square	df	p	
Trait Anger	1- Amateur	225	272,90	25,437	2	0,000	1-2 2-3
	2- Professionel	154	200,48				
	3-National Athlete	117	264,79				

It was observed that there was a significant difference between the anger scores of the individuals participating in the study depending on the level of sportsmanship ( $X^2$  (2),  $n=496$ , 25,437  $P<0,05$ ). Tamhane was used as a second level test for non-parametric data to determine in which groups the significant difference was detected.

**Table 9.** Trait Anxiety Points by Athlete Status

Anxiety	Athlete Status	N	$\bar{X}_{line}$	$\sum_{line}$	U	z	p
Trait Anxiety	Normal	259	255,28	66118,50	28934,500	-1,103	0,270
	Veteran	237	241,09	57137,50			

It was observed that there was no significant difference between the trait anxiety scores of the individuals participating in the study, depending on the sports situation ( $Z_{0.05}$ ; -1.103;  $P>0.05$ ).

### Anger, Personality and Anxiety Correlation of Athletes

**Table 10.** Anger, Personality and Anxiety Correlation Scores of Athletes

Sperman correlation	Constant anger	anger towards the inside	outward anger	anger control	neuroticism	extraversion	psychotism	lie	constant anxiety
Constant anger									
Anger towards the indside	-3,39								
Outward anger	0,589	-166							
Anger Control	0,738	-340	0,635						
Neuroticis	0,449	-0,445	0,361	0,352					
Extraversion	0,302	-0,208	-0,002	0,258	0,36				
Psychotis	0,308	-2,99	0,208	0,314	0,065	0,343			
Lie	0,432	0,193	-324	-0,372	-0,24	-0,275	-0,442		
Constant anxiety	0,416	-0,487	0,436	0,365	0,646	-0,084	0,171	-0,186	

\*\* Refers to situations where  $P < 0.05$

Spearman correlation test was applied at  $\alpha = 0.05$  significance level to determine the relationship between anger, personality and anxiety scores of the athletes participating in the research. In the test results, there was a high level of positive ( $r = 0.738$ ;  $P < 0.05$ ), trait anger and anger control and a positive moderate correlation was observed between trait anger and external anger ( $r = 0.589$ ;  $P < 0.05$ ), external anger and anger control ( $r = 0.635$ ;  $P < 0.05$ ) neurotism and trait anxiety ( $r = 0.646$ ;  $P < 0.05$ ) scores.

#### **4. Discussion**

334 of the total 496 players participating in the research are male and 162 are female. While the number of veteran footballers participating in the research is 237, the number of football players who continue their professional and amateur football life is 259. 121 of the footballers are high school, 329 university, 46 of them are doctorate and graduate degree.

According to the findings obtained from this study, it was observed that the normal anger scores of the normal athletes were higher than the veteran athletes. It was observed that there was a significant difference between the trait anger scores of the individuals participating in the study depending on the sports situation ( $Z_{0.05}$ ; -2.346;  $P < 0.05$ ). Test results show that normal athletes ( $18.64 \pm 4.428$ ) have significantly higher trait anger scores than veterans ( $17.94 \pm 5.043$ ).

Yıldız et al. (2008) in their parallel study, they found a significant difference in the trait anger, anger and anger control dimensions of the footballers that they examined in terms of educational status variable. They stated that as the level of education increased, football players were more successful in anger control (Yıldız, Güçlü, & Bayraktar, 2008). In their study about adolescents, Kesen et al. (2007), as their age progresses, it is stated that the anger level of adolescents has a significant increase in their anger and their outward expression (Kesen, Deniz, & Durmuşoğlu, 2007).

There is a significant difference between anger control scores of the individuals participating in the study depending on the level of sportsmanship ( $X^2(2)$ ,  $n = 496$ ,  $27,840$   $P < 0,05$ ). Tamhane was used as a second level test for non-parametric data to determine between which groups the significant difference was detected. The test results show that anger control scores of professional athletes ( $13.82 \pm 3.440$ ) are significantly lower than national ( $15.61 \pm 3.306$ ) and amateur ( $15.53 \pm 4.068$ ) athletes, respectively.

Contrary to this study, Yıldız (2008) stated that there is no variation in anger control due to the long or short time of the athletes as a result of the study they carried out on football players (Yıldız, 2008).

In the research, it was found that there was no significant difference in self-confidence, self-sufficiency, self-respect, trait anger, internal anger, external anger and anger control depending on whether the athletes were national or not. Özer (1994); Balkaya and Şahin (2003) and Özkamalı (2005) investigated the relationship between anger and education in their research and stated that the level of education was an important factor in the control and tolerance of anger (Balkaya and Şahin, 2003; Özer, 1994; Özkamalı, 2005).

In our study, we can associate the biggest factor in the difference of anger control levels with the training of athletes. Apart from this, it can be thought that the leagues played by the athletes and their social status are among the factors that change this situation. It is seen that there is no significant difference between the trait anxiety scores of the individuals participating in the study depending on the sports situation ( $Z_{0.05}$ ; -1.103;  $P > 0.05$ ). The test results show that normal athletes ( $40.54 \pm 6.945$ ) have a significantly higher scores of trait anxiety than veterans ( $39.51 \pm 8.032$ ).

As a result of the research conducted by Civan et al. (2010) with individual and team athletes, there was no significant difference in terms of trait anxiety scores in terms of gender status (Civan et al., 2010).

Determined that the problem solving skills of physical education teachers did not change according to the duration of service in the profession (Pehlivan and Konukman, 2004).

Kutunis and Tuna (2013), in their study with nurses, did not reveal a significant relationship between working time in the profession and their anxiety scores (Kutunis and Tuna, 2013).

Başaran et al. (2009), in their study with different branch athletes, showed that there was a relationship between the trait anxiety score of the duration of doing sports and that the athletes with less sports years have significantly higher scores than those who have more sports years (Başaran, 2009).

In this study, the proximity of the veteran athletes and the trait anxiety scores of the players who continue their active life can be associated with the environment, time and place in which the athletes are located. It can be said that personality and self-respect are one of the determining and important factors against this situation. In the study, it was observed that there was a positive high level relationship ( $r = 0.738$ ;  $P < 0.05$ ) between trait anger and anger control scores. It can be said that the athletes act directly with success in the competitions and have difficulties in maintaining trait anger and anger controls in case of a situation. In addition, it is possible for them to bill the negative result and the negative result of losing to others.

It was observed that there was a moderate positive relationship between trait anger and external anger ( $r = 0,589$ ;  $P < 0.05$ ). Athletes may not keep their anger under control in the face of the events they encounter. Athletes who cannot control their anger status may have to export. This situation may increase or decrease according to the action status of the athletes. In our study, the positive moderate significance in the anger and external anger situations can be considered as the determinant of the violent situation of the athletes.

It was observed that there was a moderate positive relationship between external anger and anger control ( $r = 0,635$ ;  $P < 0.05$ ). It is thought that personalities play a decisive role in the anger of the athletes. Therefore, athletes who have difficulty in dominating themselves during the competition may lose their anger control and express their anger status. In the research conducted, it can be thought that the reason for the failure of the athletes to control their anger controls is related to the success of the competitions. In case of not being successful, it can be said that they externalize this feeling and could not control it. As a result, it was determined that normal athletes were more enraged than veteran athletes; the anger controls and anger levels of the professional athletes were better than the amateur athletes. On the other hand, it was determined that the level of personality and anxiety of professional athletes was better than that of amateur athletes.

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