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AN INVESTIGATION OF THE EMPATHY LEVELS OF TEAM ATHLETES DURING THE COMPETITION IN TERMS OF CERTAIN VARIABLES

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ABSTRACT

The aim of the study is to investigate the empathy levels of team athletes during the competition in terms of some variables. In the study, the "empathy in sports environment" scale developed by Erkus and Yakupoglu (2011) was used to determine the empathy levels of team athletes during the competition. The universe of the research consists of the athletes attending the Faculty of Sport Sciences of Usak University in the 2020-21 academic year. The sample, on the other hand, consisted of 243 team athletes. In the study, it was determined that the empathy levels of the team athletes were at a good level. Again, according to various variables, a difference was found between general empathy, cognitive empathy, and emotional empathy levels. For the trainers to communicate more effectively with their athletes, it has been suggested to use creative drama techniques in their in-service training that they will participate with their athletes.

Keywords: Sports, Coach, Team Sports, Empathy, Communication

INTRODUCTION

Today, communication is a process that helps trainers to understand their athletes and athletes to understand trainers. In communication between coach and athlete; It is important for the trainer to know what to say, to decide when and where to say it, to have ideas about how best to say it, to be able to speak fluently with the athlete by eye contact, to concentrate his attention and to check whether the athlete can understand the message. For the trainers, empathy means that the trainer puts himself in the athlete's position and looks at the events within the sports activity from the athlete's point of view, understands and feels the feelings and thoughts of the athlete correctly, and conveys this situation to the athlete. Team sports coaches should consider the two sub-dimensions of the empathy concept, the most widely accepted cognitive and emotional (Hoffman, 1987; Esienberg & Ark, 1987; Jolliffe et al, 2006;). Cognitive empathy for the trainer is to understand the thoughts and needs of the athlete in front of the trainer. In other words, the coach can recognize the feelings of the athlete without experiencing the athlete's feelings. Emotional empathy for the coach is to be able to react emotionally to the athlete's life in the sports activity and to feel the emotions of the athlete. In this respect, it is very important to ensure that trainers can communicate effectively with their athletes through empathy (Bayansalduz, 2012; Avci and Bayansalduz, 2020).

Our study aims to determine the cognitive and emotional empathy levels of various team athletes in terms of socio-cultural variables so that team sports trainers can communicate more effectively with their athletes in Usak.

Conceptual Dimension of Empathy

The concept of empathy is an abstract concept as it expresses the way in which an object perceived by the senses is formed. Because it shows not the individual sub-dimensions, but the quality of the communication between these sub-dimensions, which emerged from the relationship of these sub-dimensions. The concept of empathy is not only general but also a concept of class. This means that the singles in that class are homogeneous due to their common characteristics. On the other hand, it is a concept that looks like a general concept but is not a class of homogeneous singulars. The sub-dimensions of empathy (cognitive empathy, emotional empathy) are its heterogeneous singularities belonging to different classes. The heterogeneous singular sub-dimensions have come together due to a few common features and have formed the intimacy indicated by empathy. The scope of empathy is to understand what people hear and do from their perspective, to enter their private world, and to grasp it as they see it and its contribution to social cohesion. In other words, the ontological meaning of empathy is distributed

to the sub-dimensions of empathy. Therefore, its meaning can be determined according to its sub-dimensions. It is also a distributor concept, as it derives its meaning from combining the attributes of the sub-dimensions into itself. It is also a concept that allows us to recognize its subject (its object / as an important variable for effective communication).

On the other hand, when we look at the various definitions of empathy; It derives from the Greek word *empathia* and etymologically the word “em” means “in, inside”; The equivalent of “pathia” suffix is “feeling” (Arkonac, 1999). The concept of empathy was first used by Theodor Lipps in 1897 as the equivalent of the German word “Einführung”. Lipps defined *Einführung* as follows: “It is the process of a person projecting himself onto an object before him, feeling himself in it and understanding that object by absorbing/assimilating it in this way”. The word “Einführung”, which is used for empathy in German, means the ability to replace someone else. In English, an expression such as “being able to wear someone else's shoes” is used (Basch, 1983; Sharma, 1992). Empathy has been named differently in other languages and cultures. In most cultures, it does not have a specific counterpart. “A sympathetic penetration”, “affection” and recently “*empathie*” in French; In Italian, “*simpatico*” is an idiom that has been used instead of empathy for a long time. In Japanese, “*omoiyari*” is used instead of a concept similar to empathy (Shlien, 1999; O'Hara, 1999). Empathy was first featured in Aristotle's *Rhetoric* (Sharma, 1992; Wispe, 1990). The term “*einführung*” used by German aesthetics was defined in 1873 as “reflection of the person into a beautiful object”. In the psychology literature, the concept of empathy was first used by Lipps in 1897. This concept, which is called *einführung* in German, is defined as the state of reflecting oneself to the object and establishing identification with the object while examining and observing an object (Barret-Lennard, 1981). The *einführung*, as defined here, occurs in a person's perception of an object in front of him. In his work after 1897, Lipps mentioned that *einführung* may appear during the perception of people as well as objects. When the international literature is examined, it is seen that researchers firstly argue that empathy is a concept that has only a cognitive or only emotional dimension (Hogan, 1969; Mehrebian & Epstein, 1972). Later, it was stated that the concept of empathy was multidimensional (Davis, 1980; Hoffman, 1987). An approach has been reported that empathy has four sub-dimensions: perspective-taking, empathic concern, fantasy, and personal stress (Davis, 1980). The most accepted and continuing approach today is the one that claims that empathy has two sub-dimensions, cognitive and emotional (Hoffman, 1987; Eisenberg & Strayer; Joliffe and Farrington, 2006). For a person to empathize with the other person, he/she must first be able to distinguish himself from the other person cognitively and cognitively distinguish the emotional state of the other person (Hoffman, 1984). In

addition to the cognitive dimension, the authors who examined the development of empathy emphasized the importance of the emotional dimension and stated that from birth, a person perceives the emotions of those around him cognitively and reacts emotionally (Thompson and Gullone, 2003).

We can see that the concept of empathy is not yet fully defined. There are two reasons for this. The first is the principle of non-contradiction, and the second is the principle of identity. According to the contradiction theorem; the concepts of sensory perceived objects are not clear. Because a sensory object could potentially have much more than the properties we detected, or even unlimited properties. In addition, our ability to be heard does not always enable us to fully recognize property in an object. According to the identity theorem; The sub-dimensions of the concept of empathy, which is defined as mental, are perceived as different sets of information and determine the object (meaning) of the concept of empathy as different phenomena. When these sub-dimensions are examined epistemologically, it is inherent in the human sense that the object (meaning) of empathy will expand.

Empathy is a positive concept. Because he reports that there is a quality in what he points to. Empathy makes the proposition in which it is included positive, even if it is shown with concepts that do not have any positive affix or tag. Empathy reports presence. Existence refers to the need to have a feature and to have that feature. In terms of epistemology, it is the determination of the presence of this feature in the object (meaning) that the concept indicates through experimentation. As our knowledge of empathy increases, its volume will steadily expand. So empathy can be compared to a warehouse. Due to its repository feature, the language certainly has a potential that cannot find its full expression. As a result, the quality of the concept of empathy does not change, but its content may change with experimental studies on this subject.

METHODOLOGY

This research is designed as a “screening and description model”. Scanning models are research models that aim to define a situation that is ongoing today or has existed in the past. The main goal in these models can be expressed as describing the existing situation as it is. The most important point is to determine the situation to be understood properly (Karasar, 2005) The universe of the study consists of individuals who do team sports in the Department of Coaching Education and Physical Education and Sports Education Department of Usak University Sports Sciences Faculty in the academic year 2020-21. As for the sample, there are 124 team athletes, 92 male and 32 female, who voluntarily participated in the questionnaire application from Usak University, Faculty of Sport Sciences, Department of Coaching Education in the 2020-21 academic year.

There are a total of 119 team athletes, 50 male and 69 female, who voluntarily participated in the survey from the Department of Physical Education and Sports Education. Participants are 243 team athletes, 101 women and 142 men in basketball, handball, volleyball and football branches. In the socio-cultural information form; There are questions prepared by the researcher to determine the age, gender, department, class, sports branch, how many years they have been doing team sports, the professions of their mothers and fathers and the educational status of their parents. In order to determine the cognitive and emotional empathy levels of team athletes, the “empathy in sports environment” scale developed by Erkus and Yakupoglu (2011) was used. In the sports environment, the empathy scale is a 16-item and 2-sub-dimension tool. In the scale 1., 5., 7., 9. and 11th items measure emotional empathy in sports and other items measure cognitive empathy in sports. The scale has a 4-point Likert-type rating such as “Never”, “Sometimes”, “Generally”, “Always”. In the validity analysis made by us, it was determined that the Cronbach’s alpha value was at an acceptable level with 887. Normality test was applied for the obtained data. Since it was determined that the data did not show a normal distribution, the Mann-Whitney U and Kruskal Wallis tests, which are non-parametric tests used for differences in mean ranks in the analysis of the data, were applied at a significance level of 0.05.

FINDINGS

In this section, there are tables and comments determined as a result of different statistical tests on the data obtained during the research process.

Table 1. Descriptive Statistics on Individuals

Variables	Groups	f	%
Gender	Female	101	41,6
	Male	142	58,4
Departments	Coaching	124	51
	Physical Education and Sports Teaching	119	49
Class Level	1st Grade	22	9,1
	2nd Grade	46	18,9
	3rd Grade	62	25,5
	4th Grade	113	46,5
Sports Branches	Football	73	30
	Basketball	61	25,1
	Handball	47	19,3
Ages	Volleyball	62	25,5
	18-23 Age Group	157	64,6
Occupational Status of the Mother	24 and Over Age Group	86	35,4
	Not Working	87	35,8
	Worker	36	14,8
	Self-Employment	45	18,5

	Officer	54	22,2
	Retired	21	8,6
	Not Working	12	4,9
Occupational Status of the Father	Worker	38	15,6
	Self-Employment	64	26,3
	Officer	61	25,1
	Retired	68	28
Education Status of the Mother	Analphabetic	19	7,8
	Primary School	88	36,2
	High School	85	35
	University	51	21
Education Status of the Father	Analphabetic	5	2,1
	Primary School	59	24,3
	High School	108	44,4
	University	71	29,2
Sports Age	0-5 years	111	45,7
	6-10 years	107	44
	11 years and over	25	10,3
	A.Avg.		sd
Level of Empathy	50,74		±7,27
Cognitive Empathy	34,68		±5,24
Affective Empathy	16,05		±2,74

As can be understood from Table 1 regarding information on the socio-economic levels of team athletes, the population consists of 58.4% men and 41.6% women. 51.0% of the students are students in coaching and 49.0% in physical education teaching. 9.1% of them are 1st class, 18.9% of them are 2nd class, 25.5% of them are 3rd class and 46.52% of them are 4th class. 30.0% are in Football, 25.1% in Basketball, 19.3% in Handball and 25.5% in Volleyball. 64.6% of them are in the 18-23 age group, 35.4% are in the 24 and over age group. 45.7% is 0-5 years, 44.0% is 6-10 years, 10.3% is 11 and above sports age years. 35.8% of their mothers are unemployed, 14.8% are workers, 18.5% are self-employed, 22.2% are civil servants, 8.6% are retired. 4.9% of their fathers do not work, 15.6% are workers, 26.3% are self-employed, 25.1% are civil servants, 28.0% are retired. 7.8% of their mothers were analphabetic, 36.2% were primary school graduates, 35.0% were high school graduates, 21.0% were university graduates. 2.1% of their fathers were analphabetic, % 24.3% of them are primary school graduates, 44.4% of them are high school graduates and 29.2% of them are university graduates.

The general empathy level of the team athletes participating in the study (A.Ort: 50.74; Std.S: ± 7.27) is a good level. Cognitive empathy levels (A.Ort: 34.68; Std.S: ± 5.24) are at a good level. Emotional empathy levels (A.Ort: 16.05; Std.S: ± 2.74) are at a good level. When we look at the range of change of empathy levels, it was found that the empathy levels of all three empathy levels show a distribution in the middle-high empathy range. These results show that there is a balance between the cognitive empathy levels and emotional empathy levels of the individuals who do team sports in the Usak region.

Table 2. *Kruskal Wallis Test Regarding the Differences in Branches and Empathy Levels of Team Athletes*

Ranks	Branch	N	Mean Rank	Chi-Square	df	p
Level of Empathy	Football	73	100,08	5,519	2	0,005
	Basketball	61	127,11			
	Handball	47	121,82			
	Volleyball	62	142,93			
	Total	243				

There is a significant difference between the branches of team athletes and their empathy levels ($p < 0.05$).

Table 3. *Kruskal Wallis Test on the Differences of Team Athletes' Branches and Cognitive and Emotional Empathy Levels*

Ranks	Branch	N	Mean Rank	Chi-Square	df	p
Cognitive Empathy	Football	73	102,98	9,552	3	0,023
	Basketball	61	125,68			
	Handball	47	123,29			
	Volleyball	62	139,8			
	Total	243				
Emotional Empathy	Football	73	103,79	11,904	3	0,008
	Basketball	61	124,47			
	Handball	47	117,03			
	Volleyball	62	144,77			
	Total	243				

There is a significant difference between the branches of team athletes and their cognitive empathy levels ($p < 0.05$). There is a significant difference between the branches of team athletes and their emotional empathy ($p < 0.05$).

Table 4. *Mann-Whitney U Test for the Difference of Team Athletes Between Age Groups and Empathy Levels*

Ranks	Age Groups	N	Mean Rank	Mann-Whitney U	p
Empathy Levels	18-23 Age Group	157	128,23	5773	0,062
	24 and Over Age Group	86	110,63		
	Total	243			

There is no significant difference between the age groups and empathy levels of team athletes ($p > 0.05$).

Table 5. Mann-Whitney U Test on the Difference Between Team Athletes' Age Groups and Cognitive and Emotional Empathy Levels

Ranks	Age Group	N	Mean Rank	Mann-Whitney U	p
Cognitive Empathy	18-23 Age Group	157	125,19	6250	0,338
	24 and Over Age Group	86	116,17		
	Total	243			
Affective Empathy	18-23 Age Group	157	134,46	4795,5	0,000
	24 and Over Age Group	86	99,26		
	Total	243			

There is no significant difference between the age groups and cognitive empathy levels of team athletes ($p > 0.05$). There is a significant difference between the age groups and emotional empathy levels of team athletes ($p < 0.05$).

Table 6. Kruskal Wallis Test for the Difference Between Team Athletes' Exercise Time and Empathy Levels

Ranks	Exercise Time of the Individual	N	Mean Rank	Chi-Square	df	P
Empathy Level	1-5 years	109	144,22	23,392	2	0,000
	6-10 years	107	109,69			
	11 Years and Over	27	81,06			
	Total	243				

There is a significant difference between team athletes' exercise time and their empathy levels ($p < 0.05$).

Table 7. Mann-Whitney U Test for the Difference Between Team Athletes' Education Department and Empathy Levels

	Department	N	Mean Rank	Mann-Whitney U	P
Empathy Level	Coaching	124	121,09	7265,5	0,837
	Physical Education and Sports Teaching	119	122,95		
	Total	243			
Cognitive Empathy	Coaching	124	121,62	7331	0,931
	Physical Education and Sports Teaching	119	122,39		
	Total	243			
Affective Empathy	Coaching	124	118,5	6944	0,424
	Physical Education and Sports Teaching	119	125,65		
	Total	243			

There is no significant difference between the department where team athletes are trained and their empathy levels ($p > 0.05$). There is no significant difference between the department where team athletes are trained and their cognitive empathy levels ($p > 0.05$). There is no significant difference between the department where team athletes are trained and their emotional empathy levels ($p > 0.05$).

Table 8. Mann-Whitney U Test for the Difference Between Team Athletes' Gender and Empathy Levels

	Gender	N	Mean Rank	Mann-Whitney U	P
Empathy Level	Female	101	126	6767	0,454
	Male	142	119,15		
	Total	243			
Cognitive Empathy	Female	101	127,14	6651,5	0,335
	Male	142	118,34		
	Total	243			
Affective Empathy	Female	101	122,76	7094,5	0,886
	Male	142	121,46		
	Total	243			

There is no significant difference between the gender and empathy levels of team athletes ($p > 0.05$). There is no significant difference between the gender of team athletes and their cognitive empathy levels ($p > 0.05$). There is no significant difference between the gender and emotional empathy levels of team athletes ($p > 0.05$).

Table 9. Kruskal Wallis Test for the Difference Between Team Athletes' Mothers' Occupations and Empathy Levels

	Occupation of the Mothers	N	Mean Rank	Chi-Square	df	p
Empathy Level	Not Working	87	130,28	7,437	4	0,115
	Worker	36	119,58			
	Self-Employment	45	97,82			
	Officer	54	125,34			
	Retired	21	135,05			
	Total	243				
Cognitive Empathy	Not Working	87	131,83	8,012	4	0,091
	Worker	36	119,38			
	Self-Employment	45	96,7			
	Officer	54	126,83			
	Retired	21	127,55			
	Total	243				

	Total	243				
Affective Empathy	Not Working	87	132,23	9,795	4	0,044
	Worker	36	115			
	Self-Employment	45	96,33			
	Officer	54	124,63			
	Retired	21	139,86			
	Total	243				

There is no significant difference between the occupations and empathy levels of the mothers of team athletes ($p > 0.05$). There is no significant difference between the occupations of the mothers of team athletes and their cognitive empathy levels ($p > 0.05$). There is a significant difference between the occupations and emotional empathy levels of the mothers of team athletes ($p < 0.05$).

Table 10. *Kruskal Wallis Test for the Difference Between Team Athletes' Fathers' Occupations and Empathy Levels*

	Occupation of the Fathers	N	Mean Rank	Chi-Square	df	p
Empathy Level	Not Working	12	133,71	6,207	4	0,184
	Worker	38	133,68			
	Self-Employment	64	105,14			
	Officer	61	120,2			
	Retired	68	130,89			
	Total	243				
Cognitive Empathy	Not Working	12	134,96	5,67	4	0,225
	Worker	38	133,13			
	Self-Employment	64	105,51			
	Officer	61	121,57			
	Retired	68	129,4			
	Total	243				
Affective Empathy	Not Working	12	140,67	13,004	4	0,011
	Worker	38	129,68			
	Self-Employment	64	98,21			
	Officer	61	119,34			
	Retired	68	139,19			
	Total	243				

There is no significant difference between team athletes' fathers' occupations and their empathy levels ($p > 0.05$). There is no significant difference between team athletes' fathers' occupations and their cognitive empathy levels ($p > 0.05$). There is a significant difference between team athletes' fathers' occupations and their emotional empathy levels ($p < 0.05$).

Table 11. *Kruskal Wallis Test for the Difference Between the Educational Status and Empathy Levels of the Mothers of Team Athletes*

	Educational Status of the Mothers	N	Mean Rank	Chi-Square	df	p
Empathy Level	Analphabetic	19	105,97	1,212	3	0,751
	Primary School	88	122,15			
	High School	85	125,58			
	University	51	121,74			
	Total	243				
Cognitive Empathy	Analphabetic	19	106,97	1,223	3	0,748
	Primary School	88	120,66			
	High School	85	126,24			
	University	51	122,84			
	Total	243				
Affective Empathy	Analphabetic	19	120,89	0,282	3	0,963
	Primary School	88	119,31			
	High School	85	124,89			
	University	51	122,24			
	Total	243				

There is no significant difference between the educational status and empathy levels of the mothers of team athletes ($p > 0.05$). There is no significant difference between the educational status of the mothers of team athletes and their cognitive empathy levels ($p > 0.05$). There is no significant difference between the educational status and emotional empathy levels of the mothers of team athletes ($p > 0.05$).

Table 12. *Kruskal Wallis Test for the Difference Between Team Athletes' Fathers' Educational Status and Empathy Levels*

	Educational Status of the Fathers	N	Mean Rank	Chi-Square	df	p
Empathy Level	Analphabetic	5	78,6	3,506	3	0,320
	Primary School	59	126,14			
	High School	108	126,86			
	University	71	114,22			
	Total	243				
Cognitive Empathy	Analphabetic	5	89,3	2,008	3	0,571
	Primary School	59	125,08			
	High School	108	125,71			
	University	71	116,1			
	Total	243				

Affective Empathy	Analphabetic	5	85,1	3,064	3	0,382
	Primary School	59	125,5			
	High School	108	127,07			
	University	71	113,97			
	Total	243				

There is no significant difference between the educational status and empathy levels of the fathers of team athletes ($p > 0.05$). There is no significant difference between the educational status of the fathers of team athletes and their cognitive empathy levels ($p > 0.05$). There is no significant difference between the educational status of the fathers of team athletes and their emotional empathy ($p > 0.05$).

Table 13. *Kruskal Wallis Test for the Difference Between Team Athletes' Class Levels and Empathy Levels*

	Class Level	N	Mean Rank	Chi-Square	df	p
Empathy Level	1st grade	22	115,41	1,274	3	0,735
	2nd grade	46	130,47			
	3rd grade	62	116,41			
	4th grade	113	122,9			
	Total	243				
Cognitive Empathy	1st grade	22	113,91	2,151	3	0,542
	2nd grade	46	129,15			
	3rd grade	62	112,81			
	4th grade	113	125,7			
	Total	243				
Affective Empathy	1st grade	22	120,48	1,041	3	0,791
	2nd grade	46	131,16			
	3rd grade	62	121,52			
	4th grade	113	118,83			
	Total	243				

There is no significant difference between the level of education and empathy levels of team athletes ($p > 0.05$). There is no significant difference between team athletes' level of education and their cognitive empathy ($p > 0.05$). There is no significant difference between team athletes' level of education and their emotional empathy ($p > 0.05$).

DISCUSSION

In this part of the study, the findings obtained as a result of statistical analysis are discussed. The research scale we use is based on the idea that empathy in the

sports environment should be in three areas. The first is that the player shows empathy to his teammate, the second is that the player can read the feelings and behaviors of his coach, and the last is that the player can read the feelings and behaviors of his opponents in team matches. The benefits to be provided by these three areas, in turn, enable the formation of team spirit and act accordingly by reading the feelings and thoughts of the teammate in the game. He can make arrangements according to him during the game and being able to read the opponent's feelings and thoughts enable him to take appropriate precautions and act.

As can be understood from Table 1, the general empathy levels, cognitive empathy levels, and emotional empathy levels of the team athletes participating in the study are good. When we look at the range of change of empathy levels, it was found that the empathy levels of all three empathy levels show the distribution in the middle-high empathy range. According to these results, it can be said that there is a balance between the cognitive empathy levels and emotional empathy levels of the team athletes in Usak Province.

As can be understood from Table 2, there is a significant difference between the branches of team athletes and their empathy levels. The reason for this difference is that while football players have the lowest empathy level, volleyball players have the highest empathy level.

As can be understood from Table 3, when the empathy levels of different team athletes are examined, there is a significant difference between the branches of the team athletes and their empathy levels. There is a significant difference between the branches of team athletes and their cognitive empathy levels. As can be understood from Table 3, the source of this difference is that football players have the lowest cognitive empathy level while volleyball athletes have the highest level of cognitive empathy. There is a significant difference between the branches of team athletes and their emotional empathy levels. As can be understood from Table 3, the source of this difference is that football players have the lowest cognitive empathy level while volleyball players have the highest level of cognitive empathy. In a similar study, Erkus and Yakupoglu (2001) found that football players have lower empathic skill levels compared to basketball and handball players. Gencoglu and Namli (2020) found that the cognitive empathy levels of individual athletes were higher than team athletes in their study titled "Psychological Strength and Empathy Levels of Individuals Studying at the Faculty of Sports Sciences: Example of Erzurum Technical University". One of the main reasons why participation in sports increases the level of empathy is that especially team athletes try to make joint decisions with their teammates, and individual athletes try to determine strategies by analyzing the thoughts of their opponents. In addition, considering that sports is a social phenomenon and supports communication, integration, and cohesion among people, it can be said

that it is an expected result that individuals with athletic personalities have higher empathic tendencies than sedentary individuals.

As can be understood from Table 4, there is no significant difference between the age groups of team athletes and their cognitive empathy levels. Again, as can be understood from Table 5, there is a significant difference between the age groups of team athletes and their emotional empathy levels. The source of this difference is that the age group 24 and over has lower emotional empathy levels than the 18-23 age group. Korkmaz (2001) did not find a significant relationship between the empathic skill levels of the individuals in his study, which he conducted by considering the age groups of female and male physical education and sports college students. Accordingly, it can be said that there is no interaction between age variables and empathic tendency, and communication skills.

As can be seen from Table 6; there is a significant difference between team athletes' duration of doing sports and their empathy levels. The empathy level of team athletes for 1-5 years is higher than the empathy level of 6-10 years and 11 years and over team athletes. In other words, as individuals' duration of team sports increases, their empathy levels decrease. The high level of empathy of team athletes for 1-5 years plays an important variable in establishing effective and healthy communication between their teammates and rival team athletes as well as between coaches and referees. On the other hand, the low empathy levels of team athletes of 6-10 years and over 11 years is an indicator that their effective communication has decreased. It is clear that the indicators of empathic (effective communication) behavior in the sports environment should be different. For this reason, empathy should be situational empathy in the sports environment, with the distinction between empathy being continuous and situational (Unger & Thumulul, 1997). Especially in team sports, the use of empathic skills (effective communication) of the player's teammates, coach, and opponent players can be an important factor in the team's success due to the formation of team spirit in predicting how they will behave. From this point of view, measuring empathy in the sports environment makes a significant contribution to sports sciences and especially to trainers.

As can be understood from Table 7, there is no significant difference between the departments of the individuals participating in the study and their level of empathy. Erkmén (2017) concluded that individuals studying at the department of physical education and sports teaching at Selçuk University School of Physical Education and Sports have higher levels of empathy in terms of their mean scores compared to individuals studying in the department of coaching and sports management. Arslanoglu's (2012) study on the empathy levels of individuals studying in physical education and sports colleges concluded that there is a significant difference in terms of the department variable and that the difference is

in favor of the individuals studying in the teaching department. In the study conducted by Yigiter et al. (2011), it was concluded that there was no difference between the empathy levels of individuals who were educated in the departments of teaching, coaching, management, and recreation at the school of physical education and sports. In addition, Sakar (2012), in his study on the empathy levels of individuals studying in different departments, concluded that individuals studying in other departments other than physical education teaching have higher empathy levels. As can be understood from the studies, it can be said that individuals who study mainly in the department of physical education teaching have higher levels of empathy than those who study in other departments.

As can be understood from Table 8, there is no significant difference between the gender and empathy levels of the individuals participating in the study. Korkmaz (2001) did not find a meaningful relationship between the empathic skill levels of the students in his study, which he conducted by considering the gender difference of female and male physical education and sports college students. This result supports the finding of our study. In their study, Dorak and Vurgun (2006) evaluated the empathy levels of athletes doing different team sports in terms of gender and found that the empathy means a score of women was higher than that of men. McClelland stated that there is no relationship between people's empathy skills and their gender; Kallipuska stated that mothers have more empathy skills compared to fathers and women than men (Aydin, 1996). According to the results of the studies conducted by Karakaya (2001), Duru (2002), and Uygun (2006), it was seen that the empathic skills of women were more developed than men. Dokmen (2005) explains the fact that women's empathy skills are higher than men's empathic skills with the concept of "female sensitivity".

As can be understood from Table 9 and Table 10, there is a significant difference between the professions of the mothers and fathers of the team athletes and their emotional empathy levels. The source of this difference is that individuals whose parents are self-employed have higher levels of emotional empathy than others. In the study of Beyaz (2016), which is one of the studies conducted on this subject, no statistically significant difference was found between teacher candidates' empathy tendency and empathy skill score averages according to their mothers and fathers' occupational status.

As it can be understood from Table 11 and Table 12, there is no significant difference between the parents' educational status and empathy levels of the individuals participating in the study. In the study conducted by Dorak and Vurgun (2006), taking into consideration the mother education of athletes who do team sports, the empathy levels of athletes whose mothers received higher education were found to be higher than those with low education. This finding is important in that it is data that the height of maternal education also increases the empathy

level of athletes. Again, in the study conducted by Korur (2014) for physical education teacher candidates, it was determined that the variable of the education status of the mother and father caused a significant difference in the empathy level of the individuals. In the study conducted by Dorak and Vurgun (2006) considering the mother education of team athletes, it was found that athletes with higher education level of maternal education have higher empathy levels compared to athletes with lower education. According to the results of the study conducted by Karabulut and Pular (2013) on the empathy levels of top-level tennis players; While there is no difference in empathy levels of individuals in terms of father education levels, it has been determined that individuals with higher education levels have higher levels of empathy than individuals with lower education levels. Empathy skill is a skill that can be developed through education (Dokmen 1990; Sezen-Balcikanli 2009). Rogers (1975) states that empathy skill develops with experience and that this skill can be learned through education and emphasizes that empathy skill can be learned from empathetic people. Considering that the empathy behaviors of the trainers will reflect on their athletes, trainers have a great role in developing the empathy skills and prosocial behaviors of athletes. The studies conducted also support this situation (Hodge, Lonsdale, 2011; Bolter, Kipp, 2016; Chen, et al., 2016).

As can be understood from Table 13, there is no significant difference between the class level and empathy levels of the individuals participating in the study. Gencoglu and Namli (2020), in their study named "Psychological Resilience and Empathy Levels of Individuals Studying at the Faculty of Sports Sciences / Erzurum Technical University Example"; It was observed that there was no significant difference between the class levels of the individuals participating in the study and their psychological resilience, cognitive empathy and emotional response sub-dimensions of the empathy level, while a significant difference was found between the Social Skills levels of the sub-dimensions of the empathy scale. According to the results, the social skills of the individuals who attended the 1st grade were found to be statistically higher than the individuals who attended the 2nd grade. Ozturk et al. (2004) found no significant difference between education and empathic approach in the study titled "Investigation of the empathy of trainers and referees". In the study of Yildirim et al., Marmara University School of Nursing I, II, III and IV. The empathic skill scores of the individuals attending the class were compared and they found that there was a significant difference between them (Pismisoglu, 1997). We can say that the level of education of team athletes in Usak Province does not affect their empathy levels. With the creative drama technique, the already high empathy levels of variables with significant differences can be raised higher. This situation can make the communication of team sports trainers with their athletes more efficient because one of the variables that affect effective

communication is the high level of empathy of the source person and the target person.

SUGGESTIONS

The most appropriate approach that can be used in the in-service training of trainers is the creative drama technique. Creative drama is the enactment of a purpose, a thought, using techniques such as improvisation, role-playing, etc., with a group or based on the lives of the group members. These enactment processes are based on spontaneity, the here and now principle, pretending, while guided by an experienced leader/instructor, and each creative drama directly benefits from the general features of the game. According to San (1996), creative drama studies were performed with the participation of athletes, improvisation, role-playing, etc. under the leadership of an expert in empathy training of trainers. It should be done by making use of theater and creative drama techniques. In the form of group work, a sports event, a social event in the club, a sportive thought, a training program, and sometimes an abstract concept related to sports, through the rearrangement of old cognitive patterns, in the form of "playful" processes in which experiences, observations, and experiences are reviewed. must be done. Creative drama has direct and implicit aims to improve the skills of team sports trainers. In creative drama work, the trainer empathizes with his athletes by playing the role of the athlete, understanding him, and feeling his emotions. In athletes, by playing the role of their coach, understanding him, and feeling his emotions, he empathizes with his trainers. This is one of the results targeted in creative drama studies. In role-play and improvisation exercises, the trainer can find himself in the role of any sports activity that he has never had before or just observed. Entering into the identity of the role and identifying with it enables the development of empathic skills.

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