Examination of Athletes' Achievement Motivation in Sports with Respect to Various Variables

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study is to examine the achievement motivation of individuals who continue their sporting careers as licensed athletes in various sports branches. The research involved 258 randomly selected volunteers who are actively engaged in various sports at the high school and university levels. The data collection instruments used in the study were the 'Sports Achievement Motivation Scale', developed by Willis (1982) and adapted to Turkish by Tiryaki and Gödelek (1997), and a personal information form prepared by the researcher. The personal information form consisted of 6 questions aimed at obtaining information about the participants' gender, age, educational status, sports branch, athletic background, and personal development book reading habits.Statistical analyses of the obtained data were performed using the SPSS 27.0 package program. Personal information, total inventory scores, and factor scores of the candidates were presented using frequency (f) and percentage (%) values. One-way analysis of variance (LSD) test statistics were used to compare the scores obtained from the scales.The results revealed significant differences based on age, educational status, athletic background, and personal development book reading habits ($p<0.05$). However, no significant differences were found in terms of gender and sports branch variables ($p>0.05$). When examining the overall achievement motivation averages of the athletes, it was determined that they possessed low levels of achievement motivation.

Keywords: Sports, Achievement, Motivation

INTRODUCTION

Athletes, coaches, club managers, fans, and those closely involved with sports, as well as those who engage in sports in neighborhoods or between institutions, all strive to achieve success in sports. Globally, there are frequent organizations where athletes can showcase their talents and performances. In fact, success in sports has become a means of prestige and competition for countries in the international arena, leading states to formulate sports-oriented policies and make substantial investments (Aktaş, Çobanoğlu, Yazıcılar & Er, 2008). However, in today's world, only a certain proportion of the tens of thousands or even millions of young athletes with equal physical abilities and training opportunities in sports-leading countries and other nations engaged in sporting activities can reach elite performance levels (Yavuz Eroğlu & Eroğlu, 2019).

While ever-evolving technologies, training methods, and materials are considered primary factors in an individual's path to success, the athlete's desire to win and achieve holds a significant place among all elements. This aspect, important within sports science, has been attempted to be defined by psychology through the term motivation (Yılmaz, A., Kırımoğlu, H., Kaynak, K., 2019). Sports scientists assert that achieving and maintaining elite-level performance is influenced by several factors, categorized as primary and secondary. The primary factors for elite performance include genetics, training, and psychological factors, while secondary factors encompass socio-cultural aspects, athlete fatigue levels, and the number of competitions participated in. Parallel to these factors, successful athletes demonstrate high levels of self-confidence and concentration, as well as less distractibility as psychological factors. Moreover, high-performing athletes possess more comprehensive and detailed knowledge about their performance. Additionally, these athletes experience lower anxiety levels before and during competitions and can control their anxiety levels to maintain their high performance (Aydoğdu, Şahan, Erman, 2018).

In other words, motivation is an element that encompasses three fundamental characteristics: initiating human action towards a determined goal, providing the ability to sustain that action, and directing it positively. It also means encouraging individuals to work, mobilizing them, and inspiring them (Balkis, 2019). Furthermore, we can define motivation as the direction and scope of effort exhibited. To understand motivation, it is necessary to evaluate the individual and the situation, as well as how they interact with each other. To increase positive motivation, it is not sufficient to understand or influence the athlete's personality; it is also necessary to understand and influence the interaction between personal and situational characteristics (Zorlu, Algün Doğu, Yıldız, Yılmaz, 2020).

To achieve high performance in sports, it is necessary to be mentally and emotionally strong and prepared, in parallel with physical and physiological strength. Numerous theories have been proposed to define the power required for athletes to execute and maintain high-level performance training. Achievement motivation is just one of these theories (Kuru, E., Abakayı, U., 2009). Achievement motivation has been defined as undertaking a task with perfectionism, mastering it, overcoming encountered obstacles and problems, and performing the task better than others in order to reach a goal through one's own efforts. It is characterized by an individual's determination to succeed in any subject, persistence in the face of difficulties, and progress driven by the pride to be gained upon reaching the goal. The theory of achievement motivation explains why a person participates in an activity for a specific purpose, why they persist in the face of challenges, and why they maintain this attitude for an extended period (Yaşar, Sönmez, B., 2018:23).

Competitiveness and rivalry, fundamental elements of sports, are thought to stem from achievement motivation. The achievement need theory emphasizes that some individuals derive greater pleasure from success-oriented activities rather than merely achieving success. However, it is crucial to note that each individual has a unique perception of success. Consequently, if the outcome is performance-based, we can call it success when considering it as the athlete's determination, persistence, and skill. On the other hand, if the same performance-based result is attributed to the athlete's incompetence or insufficient effort and determination, it is termed as failure. Therefore, what is called success for one athlete may be considered failure for another (Özgün, A., Yaşartürk, F., Ayhan, B., Bozkuş, T., 2017).

Sports are often associated with motivation due to their inherent qualities of consistency, work, and effort. Indeed, an athlete's or individual's success is directly proportional to their motivation for the activity they are engaged in. To understand the concept of success in sports and the variability of success among individuals, it is necessary to examine the role and types of motivation in sports (Eri, E., 2018). Among these motives, the Power Demonstration Motive manifests as "an individual's influence over other athletes and appearing stronger than others." Another type of motive we encounter is the Approach to Success Motive, which can be described as "the positive impact capacity that an individual expects to achieve success in a competitive environment." Lastly, the Avoidance of Failure motive can be defined as "the factors that determine an individual's participation in competitive environments." These factors are directly proportional to an individual's inherently anxious nature (Türkmen, M., Zekioğlu, A., Yıldız, K., Göral, M., 2013).

This study aims to determine the sport-specific achievement motivation of active licensed athletes studying at high school and university levels.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Study Group

This research employs a relational survey model. This survey model can be defined as "research models aiming to determine the existence and/or degree of covariance between two or more variables" (Karasar, 2015). The research is descriptive in nature as it aims to assess the sport-specific achievement motivation levels of athletes studying at high school and university levels.

Data Collection Tools

During the administration of the surveys to participants, the researchers attempted to create an adequate evaluation process for each candidate, providing ample time, without rushing, making necessary explanations, and ensuring a sufficient assessment period for the participants. Moreover, appropriate conditions were provided for candidates to complete the forms in a comfortable environment. The data collection tools used in the research were the Sport-Specific Achievement Motivation Scale (SSAMS), developed by Joe D. Willis (1982) and adapted for Turkish athletes by Tiryaki and Gödelek (1997), and a socio-demographic information form.

Formation of Volunteer Groups

The research will be conducted on the study group. The study group consists of 258 students studying at high school and university levels in Istanbul Province, selected through random sampling.

Table 1. Socio-Demographic Characteristics of Participants

	Variable	N	%
Gender	Male	161	62,4
	Female	97	37,6
Age	15-17	109	42,2
	18-20	97	37,6
	21-23	32	12,4
	24-26	20	7,8
Educational Status	High School	150	58,1
	University	108	41,9
Sports Branch	Football	109	42,2
	Volleyball	28	10,9
	Basketball	25	9,7
	Combat Sports	45	17,4
	Athletics	19	7,4
	Other	32	12,4
Years in Sports	0-2	13	5,0
	3-5	81	31,4
	6-8	92	35,7
	9 and above	72	27,9
Personal Development Book Reading Status	Yes	153	59,3
	No	105	40,7

Socio-demographic Information Form

In developing the socio-demographic information form for this study, research involving sports motivation scales and socio-demographic information forms in the literature were examined, and a pool of characteristics

to be identified in athletes was created. Subsequently, with the assistance of statistical experts, the socio-demographic information form was constructed. This form comprises six questions designed to obtain information such as gender, age, educational status, sports branch, years of athletic experience, and personal development book reading status.

Sport-Specific Achievement Motivation Scale (SSAMS)

Developed by Joe D. Willis (1982), the scale consists of 40 items and 3 sub-dimensions, prepared according to a five-point rating system. These five points are expressed as "Never, Very Little, Sometimes, Quite Often, and Always". In the original scale, the Cronbach's Alpha value for the three sub-dimensions was reported to be between .76 and .78, and the test-retest reliability coefficient was between .69 and .75. SSAMS was adapted for Turkish athletes by Tiryaki and Gödelek (1997). The Cronbach's Alpha value for the adapted scale was reported as .81 for the Power Motive sub-dimension, .82 for the Motive to Approach Success sub-dimension, and .80 for the Motive to Avoid Failure sub-dimension. For this study, the overall Cronbach's Alpha value was calculated as .74, and for the three sub-dimensions, it ranged between .65 and .72.

Table 2. Sub-dimensions and Items of the Sport-Specific Achievement Motivation Scale

Sub-dimensions	Items in Sub-dimensions	Number of Items
Power Motive	1,3,5,7,9,10,11,13,21,29,30,35	12
Motive to Approach Success	4,6,8,12,16,18,19,20,23,24, 26,31,32,33,36,38,39	17
Motive to Avoid Failure	2,14,15,17,22,25,27,28,34,37,40	11

Data Analysis

Personal information, total inventory scores, and factor scores of the candidates were presented using frequency (f) and percentage (%) values. Skewness and Kurtosis values were examined to determine the distribution of scores obtained from the scales. The results showed that the distribution of data was within the +/-2 range. Cooper-Cutting (2010) interprets skewness and kurtosis values within the ± 2 range as appropriate for normality. Based on these results, parametric test statistics were used to compare the obtained data. While an independent T-test was used for pairwise comparisons of scores from the scales, one-way analysis of variance was used for comparing three or more variables. For sub-dimensions where significant differences were detected as a result of one-way analysis of variance, the LSD test statistic was used for pairwise comparisons in cases of homogeneous distribution and unequal group numbers.

FINDINGS

Table 3. Descriptive Statistics of Athletes' Scores from the Sport Achievement Motivation Scale

Scale	N	Minimum	Maksimum	M±Sd	Skewness	Kurtosis
Power Motive	258	20,00	50,00	36,03±4,26	-,251	,263
Motive to Approach Success	258	50,00	80,00	63,18±4,79	-,163	-,386
Motive to Avoid Failure	258	25,00	50,00	35,88±4,73	,081	-,321
Total Achievement Motivation	258	105,00	160,00	136,06±9,76	-,356	,232

Examining Table 3, it was determined that the mean score of the power motive sub-dimension was 36.03±4.26, the motive to approach success sub-dimension was 63.18±4.79, the motive to avoid failure sub-dimension was 35.88±4.73, and the total achievement motivation sub-dimension was 136.06±9.76.

Table 4. Comparison of Sport-Specific Achievement Motivation Scale Scores According to Athletes' Gender

Scale	Sub-dimensions	Gender	N	M±Sd	t	p
Sport-Specific Achievement Motivation	Power Motive	Male	161	36,10±4,50	,351	,716
		Female	97	35,91±3,84		
	Motive to Approach Success	Male	161	63,36±4,63	,770	,433
		Female	97	62,88±5,04		
	Motive to Avoid Failure	Male	161	35,52±5,02	-1,582	,099
		Female	97	36,47±4,15		
	Total Achievement Motivation	Male	161	136,04±9,88	-,031	,975
		Female	97	136,08±9,60		

Examining Table 4, no significant differences were found in the sub-dimensions of power motive, motive to approach success, motive to avoid failure, and total achievement motivation according to the athletes' gender ($p>0.05$).

Table 5. Comparison of Sport-Specific Achievement Motivation Scale Scores by Athletes' Ages

Scale	Subdimensions	Age	N	M±Sd	F	p	Difference (LSD)
Sport-Specific Achievement Motivation	Power Motive	15-17	109	34,90±4,37	7,612	**,000**	**a<c** **a<d**
		18-20	97	36,14±4,06			
		21-23	32	37,94±3,37			
		24-26	20	38,55±3,80			
	Motive to Approach Success	15-17	109	62,69±4,54	1,307	,273	-
		18-20	97	63,16±5,11			
		21-23	32	63,97±4,60			
		24-26	20	64,65±4,64			
	Motive to Avoid Failure	15-17	109	36,66±4,65	3,513	**,016**	**a>d**
		18-20	97	35,60±4,83			
		21-23	32	35,78±3,82			
		24-26	20	33,10±5,08			
	Total Achievement Motivation	15-17	109	134,75±10,18	2,246	,083	-

		18-20	97	135,98±9,86			
		21-23	32	139,34±5,86			
		24-26	20	138,30±10,91			

When Table 5 is examined, a statistically significant difference was found in the power motive subdimension and the motive to avoid failure subdimension based on the athletes' ages ($p<0.05$). However, no significant difference was detected in the motive to approach success subdimension and the total achievement motivation subdimension ($p>0.05$).

Table 6. Comparison of Sport-Specific Achievement Motivation Scale Scores According to Athletes' Educational Status

Scale	Sub-dimensions	Educational Status	N	M±Sd	t	p
Sport-Specific Achievement Motivation	**Power Motive**	High School	150	34,94±4,28	-5,061	***,000***
		University	108	37,54±3,75		
	Motive to Approach Success	High School	150	62,73±4,88	-1,794	,071
		University	108	63,81±4,61		
	Motive to Avoid Failure	High School	150	36,73±4,71	3,506	***,001***
		University	108	34,69±4,51		
	Total Achievement Motivation	High School	150	135,01±10,47	-2,052	***,035***
		University	108	137,52±8,51		

Analysis of Table 6 reveals statistically significant differences in the power motive subdimension, motive to avoid failure subdimension, and total achievement motivation scores based on athletes' educational status ($p<0.05$). However, no significant difference was observed in the motive to approach success subdimension ($p>0.05$).

Table 7. Comparison of Sport-Specific Achievement Motivation Scale Scores According to Athletes' Sport Disciplines

Scale	Subdimensions	Sport Discipline	N	M±Sd	F	p	Difference (LSD)
Sport-Specific Achievement Motivation	**Power Motive**	Football	109	36,24±4,62	,769	,573	-
		Volleyball	28	36,86±3,10			
		Basketball	25	35,04±4,28			
		Combat Sports	45	36,24±3,76			
		Athletics	19	35,42±4,57			
		Other	32	35,41±4,33			
	Motive to	Football	109	63,59±4,66	,857	,511	-

	Approach Success	Volleyball	28	64,14±3,95			
		Basketball	25	62,52±4,41			
		Combat Sports	45	62,78±5,33			
		Athletics	19	63,00±5,52			
		Other	32	62,13±4,94			
	Motive to Avoid Failure	Football	109	35,72±4,99	1,550	,175	-
		Volleyball	28	36,04±3,55			
		Basketball	25	34,76±3,89			
		Combat Sports	45	37,20±4,94			
		Athletics	19	34,21±5,13			
		Other	32	36,28±4,55			
	Total Achievement Motivation	Football	109	136,76±9,72	1,385	,230	-
		Volleyball	28	138,07±7,75			
		Basketball	25	132,76±9,14			
		Combat Sports	45	136,96±10,04			
		Athletics	19	133,53±10,11			
		Other	32	134,72±10,95			

Examination of Table 7 indicates no statistically significant differences in the power motive, motive to approach success, motive to avoid failure, and total achievement motivation subdimensions based on athletes' sport disciplines (p>0.05).

Table 8. Comparison of Sport-Specific Achievement Motivation Scale Scores According to Athletes' Years of Experience

Scale	Subdimensions	Years of Experience	N	M±Sd	F	p	Difference (LSD)
Sport-Specific Achievement Motivation	**Power Motive**	0-2	13	34,46±4,41	6,296	**,000**	**a<d** **b<d** **c<d**
		3-5	81	35,88±4,28			
		6-8	92	35,07±4,18			
		9 and above	72	37,71±3,83			
	Motive to Approach Success	0-2	13	61,23±4,51	2,026	,111	-
		3-5	81	62,62±4,56			
		6-8	92	63,22±4,72			
		9 and above	72	64,11±5,05			
	Motive to	0-2	13	33,15±3,02	1,845	,139	-

	Avoid Failure	3-5	81	36,00±5,13			
		6-8	92	36,35±4,67			
		9 and above	72	35,63±4,48			
	Total Achievement Motivation	0-2	13	130,08±9,69	4,470	**,004**	**a<d c<d**
		3-5	81	135,44±9,52			
		6-8	92	135,10±10,38			
		9 and above	72	139,06±8,45			

Analysis of Table 8 reveals statistically significant differences in the power motive subdimension and total achievement motivation scores based on athletes' years of experience ($p<0.05$). However, no significant differences were observed in the motive to approach success and motive to avoid failure subdimensions ($p>0.05$).

Table 9. Comparison of Sport-Specific Achievement Motivation Scale Scores According to Athletes' Personal Development Book Reading Status

Scale	**Sub-dimensions**	**Personal Development Book Reading Status**	**N**	**M±Sd**	**t**	**p**
Sport-Specific Achievement Motivation	**Power Motive**	Yes	153	36,66±4,04	2,877	**,004**
		No	105	35,10±4,42		
	Motive to Approach Success	Yes	153	63,66±4,68	1,947	,051
		No	105	62,48±4,88		
	Motive to Avoid Failure	Yes	153	35,43±4,59	-1,811	,068
		No	105	36,52±4,87		
	Total Achievement Motivation	Yes	153	137,08±8,62	1,961	**,041**
		No	105	134,56±11,08		

Examination of Table 9 indicates statistically significant differences in the power motive subdimension and total achievement motivation scores based on athletes' personal development book reading status ($p<0.05$). However, no significant differences were observed in the motive to approach success and motive to avoid failure subdimensions ($p>0.05$).

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

Analysis of our research findings revealed no statistically significant difference between participants' gender groups and achievement motivation subdimensions. Examination of the obtained data showed that female participants had higher mean scores in the motive to avoid failure compared to male participants, while male participants demonstrated higher mean scores in the motive to approach success and power motive compared to female participants.

A review of the literature reveals findings parallel to our study. Kartal et al. (2017), in their investigation of the relationship between imagery use and achievement motivation among team athletes, found no significant difference between gender groups and achievement motivation subdimensions. They observed that female

athletes had higher mean scores in the motive to avoid failure compared to males, while males had higher mean scores in the power motive compared to females. Similarly, Özgün et al. (2017), in their study on sport-specific achievement motivation among handball players, reported no significant difference between gender and sport achievement motivation, while noting that male athletes had higher mean scores than female athletes, which supports our findings.

However, the literature also includes studies that do not align with our results. Balkis, F. (2019), in a study conducted on tennis players, identified a significant relationship between gender and sport achievement motivation. In another study, Yanar et al. (2017) found that women had higher total scores in sport achievement motivation compared to men. The reason for obtaining such a result in our study is thought to stem from the fact that the feeling of achieving success in sports holds an important place for everyone, and a certain motivation is provided by everyone to achieve this.

Examination of the relationship between participants' age groups and achievement motivation subdimensions revealed statistically significant differences in the power motive and motive to avoid failure subdimensions. According to the results, athletes under 20 years of age had lower mean scores in the power motive and motive to avoid failure subdimensions compared to athletes over 20 years of age. On the other hand, no significant difference was detected in the motive to approach success subdimension.

In the literature, parallel to our study, Kartal et al. (2017) found significant differences between younger and older athletes in the power motive subdimension of achievement motivation in their research on the relationship between imagery use and achievement motivation among team athletes . Contrary to our study, Yanar et al. (2017) reported no statistically significant difference between participants' age groups and sport achievement motivation subdimensions. Can et al. (2010), in their study examining the relationship between family-coach-club support and achievement motivation in elite taekwondo athletes, found no statistically significant difference between participants' age groups and achievement motivation subdimensions. Similarly, Kılınç et al. (2011), in their research on motivational levels of team sport athletes according to different variables, found no statistically significant difference between participants' age groups and sport achievement motivation subdimensions.

Although our research findings indicate differences in mean scores between sports branch groups and achievement motivation sub-dimensions in sports, this result does not constitute a statistically significant difference.

Our research findings reveal a statistically significant difference between participants' education level groups and their achievement motivation sub-dimension scores in sports. Upon examination of the results, it is observed that participants with university-level education have statistically higher total mean scores in the Power Motive and Fear of Failure Motive sub-dimensions compared to participants with high school-level education. No statistically significant difference was detected between participants' achievement motivation approach to success sub-dimension and the education level variable. These results parallel the findings regarding the relationship between age group variable and achievement motivation sub-dimensions.

A review of the literature supports our findings. In his master's thesis titled "Comparison of Achievement Motivation Levels between Professional Male Football Players and Amateur Male Football Players (Izmir-Manisa Sample)", Türkmen, M. (2005) reported that participants with university-level education had statistically higher mean scores in the power motive and fear of failure motive sub-dimensions compared to participants with high school-level education, when examining the relationship between participants' education level variable and achievement motivation sub-dimensions in sports. However, he noted no statistically significant difference in the mean scores of the approach to success motive sub-dimension in relation to the participants' education level variable.

Our research findings indicate a statistically significant difference between participants' athletic background variable and their achievement motivation sub-dimension scores in sports. According to the obtained data, participants with an athletic background of 9 years or more have statistically significant higher mean scores in the power motive sub-dimension compared to those with less than 9 years of athletic experience. Participants

with 2 years or less athletic background have lower total scores in the fear of failure motive sub-dimension compared to those with more than 2 years of athletic experience. However, there is no statistically significant difference between the total mean scores of the approach to success motive sub-dimension and athletic background groups.

A review of the literature reveals findings parallel to our study. Balkis, F. (2019) found that tennis players with 10 or more years of sports experience had higher scores in the power motive and approach to success motive sub-dimensions compared to participants with 1 year or less sports experience. Türkmen, M. (2005) determined that experienced football players had significantly different scores in the power motive and fear of failure motive sub-dimensions of sports achievement motivation compared to inexperienced players, but found no significant difference in the approach to success motive sub-dimension scores. This can be attributed to experienced athletes' developed desire and courage to demonstrate power and exert pressure on opponents, while their cautious approach to avoiding failure may stem from a reluctance to take risks and anxiety about the possibility of failure, leading to hesitancy in decision-making.

Contrary to our findings, Can et al. (2010) found no significant relationship between sports achievement motivation and years of sports experience groups. Zorlu et al. (2020), in their study examining the effect of personality traits on achievement motivation in athletics, found no significant difference between participants' sports achievement motivation sub-dimension scores and their years of sports experience. Tozkar, E. (2019) determined no significant difference between student-athletes' sports backgrounds and their achievement levels.

Our research findings reveal a significant difference between athletes' personal development book reading groups and the power motive sub-dimension of sports achievement motivation. According to the results, the mean scores of those who read personal development books are statistically significantly higher than those who do not. This can be attributed to the fact that personal development books enhance an individual's ability to express themselves better, emphasize leadership qualities, and promote assertiveness, which manifests as a power motive in sports. No significant difference was detected between participants' personal development book reading variable and the fear of failure motive or approach to success motive sub-dimensions of sports achievement motivation. A literature review did not yield any studies specifically addressing the relationship between "reading personal development books" and "Sports-Specific Achievement Motivation."

The results of our study indicate that university-level athletes have higher mean scores in the power motive sub-dimension of Sports-Specific Achievement Motivation compared to high school-level students, while their total mean scores in the fear of failure motive sub-dimension are lower than those of high school students. This suggests that university-level athletes, being older, have likely gained more experience compared to high school-level athletes. As each experience positively contributes to maturity, decision-making, and self-expression, this could explain the higher scores in the power motive sub-dimension. Conversely, the lower scores in the fear of failure motive sub-dimension among high school students might be attributed to their relative inexperience and lack of self-confidence due to their younger age.

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