

## The Relationship between Personality and Sportspersonship Orientations

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**ABSTRACT** The purpose of this study was to examine the relationship and interaction between personality traits and sportspersonship orientations according to gender differences. 510 (235 female, 275 male) professional athletes from various team sports voluntarily participated in this study. The revised version of Eysenck's Personality Questionnaire and Multidimensional Sportspersonship Orientations Scale were used to collect data. The results of this study revealed that female athletes obtained higher scores when compared to males in extraversion-concern and respect for social conventions, respect for rules and officials and commitment towards sport participation subscales. In conclusion, the results of this study indicated that there was a significant relationship between personality subscales and sportspersonship orientation. In addition, personality subscales significantly effected sportspersonship orientations according to gender.

### INTRODUCTION

Besides achieving high performance in sports, sportsmanlike behavior is expected from athletes with diverse personalities (Falcao et al. 2012; Rudd and Gordon 2010). Recent studies have shown that as the significance of a game for an athlete increases, it is likely that there would be alterations with sportsmanlike behavior (Davis and Parker 1998; Pappas et al. 2004). Therefore, it is possible to assume that sportsmanlike behavior would be difficult to display when the athlete is confronted with challenging circumstances. Winger (2007) stated that athletes participate in sports for variable motives such as social acceptance, personal goals and intrinsic motivation. Recent studies have shown that if an athlete feels any kind of threat towards their motivation, it is likely that they will display unsportsmanlike behavior (Daniels and Leaper 2006; Long and Caudill 1991). Thus, sportsmanlike behavior would require certain personality traits as well as unsportsmanlike behavior. One of the most commonly used personality trait assessment questionnaire is the revised version of Eysenck's Personality Questionnaire. This questionnaire consisted of neuroticism-stability and extraversion-introversion subscales until the psychoticism subscale was added into the revised version (Lewis et al. 2002). While extraversion represents being sociable and impulsivity, individuals with such personality traits are likely to display communicative skills and companionship. However, neuroticism represents emotional in-

consistency, anxiousness, depressive and nervous behavior. On the other hand, psychoticism represents aggressive, insecure, callous and insensitive behavior (Eysenck and Eysenck 1975). It is fairly easy for one to observe such personality traits in sports competitions. The observation of such behavior could provide clues about any athletes personality. Powell (1994) stated that an athlete's sportspersonship orientation was determined by the behavior that they displayed when confronted with an undesirable situation during a sports competition. In conclusion, if an athlete displays aggressive and depressive behavior, it will be difficult for them to be amicable and merciful. There arent any studies that have issued the relationship between sportspersonship and personality. The hypothesis of this study was twofold. First, the purpose of this study was to examine the relationship and interactions between personality traits and sportspersonship orientations among team sports players. Second, while examining the relationship also, examine the gender differences.

### METHODOLOGY

#### Participants

Five hundred ten (235 female, 275 male) professional athletes from various team sports such as Soccer (34.5%), Basketball (22.4%), Volleyball (19.4%) and Handball (23.7%) teams in Turkey/Izmir participated in this study. The participants

mean age values for females were  $20.72 \pm 3.11$ ,  $22.10 \pm 4.02$  for males.

## Measures

### *Eysenck Personality Questionnaire Revised/Abbreviated Form (EPQR-A)*

The EPQR-A is a self-reported questionnaire (Eysenck et al. 1985; Francis et al. 1992). The adaptation and validation of the scale was conducted by Karanci et al. (2007). It has 48 items, 12 for each of the traits of neuroticism, extraversion, psychoticism and lie. Each question has a binary response, "yes" or "no". Each dichotomous item was scored 1 or 0, maximum possible score being 12 and minimum 0. The internal consistency coefficient values; .78, .65, .42, .64. The test re-test reliability values; .84, .82, .69, .69.

### *Multidimensional Sport Orientation Scale (MSOS)*

The Multidimensional Sport Orientation Scale (Vallerand et al. 1997) was used to measure sportpersonship orientations. The adaptation and validation of the scale was conducted by Sezen-Balcikanli and Yildiran (2011). While the original scale consisted of 25 items rated on a 5 point Likert scale, the adapted version consisted of four dimensions. The Cronbach's alpha values for a) concern and respect for rules and officials; 0.86, b) concern and respect for one's opponent; 0.82, c) concern and respect for social conventions in sport; 0.86, d) concern and respect for one's full commitment towards sport participation; 0.91. The scale anchors ranged from 1 (strongly agree) to 5 (strongly agree).

## Procedure

Participants for this study were recruited randomly from various sports teams located in Izmir/

Turkey. They were asked to respond to the questionnaire's before their practices and was collected by the researcher upon completion.

## RESULTS

The descriptive statistics and cronbach alpha values of the participants are shown in Table 1.

Results of the t-test which was conducted to reveal the means between personality and sportpersonship orientation scores are shown in Table 2.

According to these scores, there was a significant difference between the means of male and female athletes "extraversion" ( $t=2.14, p<.05$ ) subscale and "concern and respect for social conventions" " $t=4.05, p<.001$ ", "concern and respect for rules and officials" ( $t=4.25, p<.001$ ), "concern and respect for one's full commitment towards sport participation" ( $t=1.99, p<.05$ ). In other words, female athletes scores were significantly higher than male athletes.

Results of the Pearson correlation coefficients which was conducted to reveal the relationship between personality and sportpersonship orientations are shown in Table 3.

Extraversion subscale was significantly and positively correlated at a low level with "concern and respect for social conventions" ( $r=.165, p<0.01$ ), "concern and respect for rules and officials" ( $r=.120, p<0.01$ ) and "concern and respect for one's full commitment towards sport participation" ( $r=.210, p<0.01$ ). Neuroticism was significantly and negatively correlated at a low level with all of the subscales of the sportpersonship orientations ( $p<0.01$ ). Also, psychoticism was significantly and negatively correlated at a low level with "concern and respect for rules and officials" ( $r=-.202, p<0.01$ ) and "concern and respect for one's full commitment towards sport participation" ( $r=-.136, p<0.01$ ).

**Table 1: Descriptive statistics and Cronbach's alpha values of subscales**

Scales	Sub-scales	M	SD	Skewness	Kurtosis
<i>Eysenck Personality Questionnaire</i>	Extraversion	4.24	1.71	-.816	-.222
	Neuroticism	3.10	1.66	-.116	-.777
	Psychoticism	1.81	1.24	.527	.201
<i>Multidimensional Sportpersonship Orientations Scale</i>	Concern and respect for social conventions	3.91	.929	-.924	.355
	Concern and respect for rules and officials	3.84	.792	-.661	.094
	Concern and respect for one's full commitment towards sport participation	4.30	.724	-1.50	2.27
	Concern and respect for one's opponent	3.53	.878	-.418	-.079

$\bar{X}$  = Arithmetic mean; SD = Standard deviation

**Table 2: T-test results according to the gender variable**

Scales	Sub-scales	Female (N=235)		Male (N=275)		T
		M	SD	M	SD	
		Eysenck Personality Questionnaire	4.41	1.69	4.09	
Multidimensional Sportspersonship Orientations Scale	Neuroticism	3.16	1.58	3.04	1.72	.803
	Psychoticism	1.76	1.18	1.86	1.29	-.968
	Concern and respect for social conventions	4.09	.772	3.76	1.02	4.05**
Sportspersonship Orientations Scale	Concern and respect for rules and officials	4.00	.690	3.70	.849	4.25***
	Concern and respect for one's full commitment towards sport participation	4.37	.667	4.25	.765	1.99*
	Concern and respect for one's opponent	3.61	.774	3.47	.955	1.76

\*p<.05, \*\*p<.001

**Table 3: Results of the Pearson Correlation Coefficients**

	1	2	3	4	5	6
1. Extraversion	-					
2. Neuroticism	-.217**	-				
3. Psychotism	.037	.012	-			
4. Concern and respect for social conventions	.165**	-.223**	-.079	-		
5. Concern and respect for rules and officials	.120**	-.200**	-.202**	.697**	-	
6. Concern and respect for one's full commitment towards sport participation	.210**	-.210**	-.136**	.575**	.583**	-
7. Concern and respect for one's opponent	.077	-.126**	-.030	.671**	.558**	.439**

\*\*p<.01

A multiple regression analysis was conducted in order to reveal at which level personality effected sportspersonship orientations. The results indicated that extraversion ( $\beta=.126$ ;  $t=2.86$ ;

$p=.004$ ) was positively the predictor of “concern and respect for social conventions” while neuroticism negatively predicted ( $\beta=-.195$ ;  $t=-4.43$ ;  $p=.001$ ) (Table 4).

**Table 4: Summary of regression analysis**

Model	B	Beta	t	P	R <sup>2</sup>	Adjust R <sup>2</sup>
<i>Concern and Respect for Social Conventions</i>						
(Constant)	4.07		26.47	.000	.07	
Extraversion	.068	.126	2.86	.004		
Neuroticism	-.109	-.195	-4.43	.000		
Psychoticism	-.060	-.08	-1.88	.060		
<i>Concern and Respect for Rules and Officials</i>						
(Constant)	4.16		32.05	.000	.08	.08
Extraversion	.041	.089	2.04	.041		
Neuroticism	-.085	-.178	-4.09	.000		
Psychoticism	-.129	-.203	-4.77	.000		
<i>Concern and Respect for One's full Commitment Towards Sport Participation</i>						
(Constant)	4.36		36.886	.000	.09	.08
Extraversion	.075	.178	4.110	.000		
Neuroticism	-.074	-.170	-3.915	.000		
Psychoticism	-.081	-.140	-3.305	.001		
<i>Concern and Respect for One's Opponent</i>						
(Constant)	3.64		24.428	.000	.02	.01
Extraversion	.028	.054	1.191	.234		
Neuroticism	-.060	-.114	-2.518	.012		
Psychoticism	-.022	-.031	-.707	.480		

\*p<.05, \*\*p<.01, \*\*\*p<.001

## DISCUSSION

The purpose of this study was to determine the relationship and interactions of personality traits and sportspersonship orientations while examining the gender variable among team sports players. The results indicated that extraversion scores were found higher in female athletes when compared to male athletes. Cavallera and Passerini (2013) found that gender had a significant role in the extraversion personality trait. This could potentially mean that female athletes are more communicative and sociable than male athletes which supports the findings of previous research (Haghi 2014). In addition, females scored higher in “concern and respect for social conventions”, “concern and respect for rules and officials” and “concern and respect for one’s full commitment towards sport participation” subscales when compared to males. This could mean that female athletes are likely to be more sportsmanlike than male athletes. However, recent studies have indicated that the role of gender differences was insignificant among personality traits (Lopez and Santelices 2011; Singh et al. 2013). Shields et al. (2007) argued that male athletes are more likely to ignore sportsmanlike behavior due to the fact that they are more aggressive while doing their sport. There are many studies that support this theory (Coulomb Cabagno and Rasclé 2006; Tsai and Fung 2005). In contrary, Miller, Roberts and Ommundsen (2005) have found that male athletes scored higher in “concern and respect for one’s full commitment towards sport participation” when compared to female athletes which supports previous research findings.

## CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the results of this study indicated that athletes with extraversion personality traits are likely to display sportsmanlike behavior and while seeking justice, they follow the rules and behave with respect. The results of this study indicated that neurotic and psychotic athletes are likely to experience difficulties in obeying the rules and respecting coaches, referee’s etc. In addition, the results of this study supported that personality traits effect sportsmanlike behavior.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

This research was restricted with athletes only in Izmir/ Turkey. In order to achieve more per-

suasive and accurate data, this study could be conducted with more cities in Turkey. It is considered generally that Turkey has variable demographics in every city, we can assume that the results will differ. This study could also be conducted among only elite athletes. In addition, there are many other inventories that assess personality traits. This study could also be conducted with other inventories. This might give a chance for the researchers to understand athletes with different personality traits. This study emphasis on the significance of determining those athletes with neurotic and psychotic personality traits and the results indicate that athletes with neurotic and psychotic traits should seek psychological help. Further research could explain the significance of psychological help in sports.

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