

## Deaf Football Players' Perception of the Coaches' Occupational Skills

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**KEYWORDS** Attitude. Deaf Athletes. Perception. Trainers

**ABSTRACT** The aim of this study is to find the differences in deaf football players' perception of the coaches with and without hearing impairment. The subject group comprised of 19 females and 106 males, in total of 125 deaf football players who attended the 2011 European Deaf Football Championship and 2012 World Deaf Football Championship. The 'Trainer Evaluation Scale for Deaf Athletes' was used for data collection. Statistically significant differences were found in the sub-dimensions of technique and competition between groups in terms of the number of coaches ( $p < 0.05$ ). While the differences in terms of gender in technical and social sub-dimensions were found statistically significant, statistically significant differences were not found in the competition sub-dimension ( $p > 0.05$ ). In terms of coaches' impairment variable, the differences between groups were statistically significant in all subdimensions indicating evidence in favor of the coaches without hearing impairment. The results revealed that deaf football players preferred coaches without hearing impairment.

### INTRODUCTION

The term 'hearing impaired people' (Friend 2006) refers to the ones having difficulty in hearing (Hallahan and Kauffman 2000). 'Hearing impairment' is the incapacity of the perception of the acoustic information such as talking or other sounds around the person (Quinsland 1993).

The hearing impairment which requires special education is divided into two different groups namely, the hearing impaired people and the people with hearing problems. The hearing impaired people are described as the people having a loss of hearing capacity with more than seventy percent who cannot use their hearing ability in their education in spite of all the affords. The people with hearing problem are those with 25-70 db hearing loss but can utilize their hearing ability in their education using special hearing aids (Acak 2011). Acak (2015) in his study carried out upon on 142 male students, who took part in the Turkish Championship for the Deaf held in the 2013-2014 school year, reported that 69.01 percent of the athletes communicated with their trainers using sign language, 21.08 percent with reading lips and only 9.91 percent used translators.

The hearing impaired people are described as socially underdeveloped or the backward section of the society due to their lack of communication skills, which causes them to have insuffi-

cient interaction with their parents and coaches (Antia 1985; Antia et al. 1993). The sporting activities enable them to be socialized, promote their sense of belonging to a certain group and share and coordinate their skills with others.

The participation in sport activities is of great importance for the people with hearing complications and they can benefit from these activities not only to improve their physical conditions but also enable them to develop social or individual skills (Stewart 1991). For many deaf people the participation in a sporting activity is an important socialization tool (Stewart and Ellis 2005).

The first summer Deaflympics was held in 1924 and the first winter Deaflympics was organized in 1949. The summer and winter Deaflympics are among the fastest growing sporting organizations in the world. More than 4,000 deaf athletes and officials from 77 nations participated in the 21<sup>st</sup> Summer Deaflympics in Taipei, Chinese Taipei, in September 2009. 21<sup>st</sup> summer Deaflympics held in Taipei in China in 2009 saw the participation of more than 4000 hearing impaired athletes and administration staff from 77 countries. The 16<sup>th</sup> winter Deaflympics held in Salt Lake City in the USA in 2007 accommodated more than 600 hearing impaired athletes and the administrative staff from 23 countries. In order to participate the national and international com-

petitions, the athletes should be among the people with hearing loss of 55 db in both ears. The use of hearing aids is not allowed. This corresponds a noise level of 50-65 db at a distance of 6 feet (Stewart and Ellis 2005). However, most of the coaches and the umpires in the competitions between the hearing impaired athletes are the normal people.

Coaches are the sports people who merge their conceptual knowledge with their experience to prepare, orient, train and lead the athletes for the competitions (Silva and Stevens 2002).

According to Simpson, a coach must be an expert in his/her field and equipped with strategic, motivational, social and teaching skills to be a role model for the athletes (Simpson 1984). When all these conditions are satisfied the coach is expected to lead the team and the players. The decisions of the coaches before anything else must be based upon, firstly, the welfare of the sportsmen and women, and then to increase the chance of winning the related competition (Martens 1998).

Woodman (1993) proved that the features of the coaches are equally important as the features of the athletes in the relation between the players and the coaches (Woodman 1993; Weinberg and Gould 1995; Weinberg and Gould 1998). They also clearly stated the effective strategies for coaches and athletes. According to them, the athletes are expecting appreciative and encouraging words from the coaches when they do the things right. They stated that the coaches must use appreciation frequently in order to establish an effective training style and they emphasized that even a small smile as the sign of appreciation would be enough to motivate the players (Weinberg and Gould 1999).

The players expect an effective organizational skill from the coaches to motivate them for the coming competition. Zhang et al. (2000) state that there is a positive correlation between the performance of the players and variables such as the suitability of the schedule, day, hour, climatic conditions and the spectators. What the athletes expect from the coach in addition to those mentioned above are organizing social activities such as excursions, leisure time and sports related activities, and allowing the athletes to choose their roommates during camping periods. Also, the choice of camping site, which is easy to reach, has a positive effect upon the performance of the athletes (Konter 1995). In conclusion, it can

be easily said that the psychological factors are very important in the athlete-coach relation and both sides must know the individual traits of each other in order to establish a solid interaction between them (Cakiroglu 1987).

### Objectives

The present study was carried out to answer the following questions:

- How athletes with hearing impairment think about these?
- What are the differences between a normal coach and the coach with hearing impairment?
- Why do athletes with hearing impairment opt for coaches without hearing impairment?

### MATERIAL AND METHODS

In this study, the 'Trainer Evaluation Scale for Deaf Athletes', which was developed by Acak and Kandemir (2011) was used for data collection. The scale consists of two parts. The first part comprises the questions about the country, branch, the number of coaches, age, gender, the duration of sporting experience, educational status of the athletes, the type of relationship between the athletes and the coaches and whether their coaches have hearing impairment or not. The second part consists of 12 questions and three dimensions. The first dimension comprises four questions, which measure the technical capacity of the coaches. The second dimension contains four questions inquiring about the behavior of the coach before, during and after the competition. The third dimension comprises four questions about the social side of the coaches. The questions of the scale are brief and clear. The questions 1-4, 5-8 and 8-12 were related to the technical capacity, the behaviors before, during and after the competitions and social responsibilities of the coaches, respectively. The questions 3, 5, and 7 are reversed items. The athletes are asked to mark each item on the scale as 'never', 'occasionally', 'very often' or 'always'.

Linguists translated the scale into English, German, French, Italian, Spanish, Russian, Croatian, Hebrew, Persian, Dutch, Swedish and Turkish. During the administration of the scale, translators of international sign language were present to help with the questions not comprehended. All the participants in the subject group volun-

teered to participate in the study. The researchers administered the scale by permission from the coach of the team and the administrators.

16 female and 106 male athletes who played on behalf of Turkey, Russia, the USA, Ukraine, Ireland, Germany, Belgium, the UK, Poland and Italy in the World Deaf Football Championships, which were held between 2011 and 2012 (27 June to 9 July 2011, Odense/Denmark, and 16 to 28 July 2012, Ankara/Turkey) volunteered to participate in this study.

The data, which was obtained from 125 deaf athletes through the survey, was analyzed in SPSS [17.0] for these statistical analyses:

1. Percentage and frequency calculations were carried out for demographic distribution of the sample group.
2. Paired comparisons and the multi comparisons were carried out through the independent t-test and one-way variance analysis (ANOVA) respectively, in order to define the variation of the points scored in the test in relation to the independent variables. In cases where there were differences (LSD), Scheffe tests were used to find the origin of the difference. The statistical significance level alpha ( $\alpha$ ) was accepted to be  $p < 0.05$ .

## RESULTS

The results of demographic variables – age groups, educational status and sporting experience are represented in Table 1. The participants are more in age group 21-25 (35.2%), followed by 16-20 (30.4%) and 26-30 (24.8%). The educational status of maximum participants are from high school (79.2%) and in the sporting experience the highest frequency is observed with 7-9 years followed by 10+ (38.4%).

**Table 1: The analysis results of demographic variables**

Variable	Number (n)	Percentage
<i>Age</i>		
16-20	38	30.4
21-25	44	35.2
26-30	31	24.8
31-above	12	9.6
<i>Educational Status</i>		
Secondary	13	10.4
High school	99	79.2
College or university	13	10.4
<i>Sporting Experience</i>		
1-3 years	2	1.6
4-6 years	21	16.8
7-9 years	54	43.2
10 years or above	48	38.4

According to the data listed in Table 2, there were statistically significant differences in technical and competitiveness behavior subdimensions regarding the number of coaches ( $p < 0.05$ ). The athletes who had three coaches were observed to adapt a more positive attitude in the evaluation of the coaches (Table 2).

According to the gender variable, the difference in the technical and social sub-dimensions were found to statistically significant, while in competitiveness behavior subdimension there was no significant difference ( $p > 0.05$ ). The females were observed to make more positive evaluations (Table 3).

The analysis of the research group according to the educational status revealed that there were statistically significant differences regarding to technical sub-dimension mainly the people between with elementary education and secondary education and the people with college education and postgraduate education ( $p < 0.05$ ) (Table 4).

**Table 2: The analysis results of the sample according to number of trainers (ANOVA)**

Sub-dimensions	Number of coaches	N	X	Sd	F	p	Diff. (LSD)
<i>Technical</i>	(a) 1	11	14.24	2.33	5.069	.008	c>a,b
	(b) 2	89	14.35	2.77			
	(c) 3	25	16.16	1.17			
<i>Competitiveness Behavior</i>	(a) 1	11	14.63	2.65	3.509	.033	b<c
	(b) 2	89	14.79	3.08			
	(c) 3	25	16.48	2.06			
<i>Social</i>	(a) 1	11	16.45	2.29	1.768	.175	
	(b) 2	89	15.97	3.29			
	(c) 3	25	17.24	1.80			

**Table 3: The results obtained according to gender variable (t-test)**

Sub-dimension	Gender	N	X	Sd	T	P
Technical	Male	106	14.37	2.58	-3.860	.000
	Female	19	16.73	1.48		
Competitiveness Behavior	Male	106	15.04	3.07	-.654	.514
	Female	19	15.52	1.95		
Social	Male	106	15.97	3.04	-2.707	.008
	Female	19	17.94	2.14		

**Table 4: The results obtained according to educational status (ANOVA)**

Sub-dimension	Educational status	N	X	sd	F	P
Technical	Elementary	29	14.10	3.01	2.941	.023
	Secondary	33	14.09	2.40		
	High school	17	14.35	2.42		
	College	31	15.74	2.36		
	Post graduate	15	15.73	1.98		
Competitiveness Behavior	Elementary	29	14.51	3.20	1.384	.244
	Secondary	33	15.75	3.47		
	High school	17	15.88	3.40		
	College	31	14.48	2.03		
	Post graduate	15	15.33	1.63		
Social	Elementary	29	15.37	3.31	1.463	.218
	Secondary	33	16.03	3.29		
	High school	17	16.23	3.25		
	College	31	17.12	2.29		
	Post graduate	15	16.80	2.48		

The analysis made according to the impairment level showed that there was no statistically significant difference between the groups regarding any of the sub-dimensions ( $p > 0.05$ ) (Table 5).

The analysis of the research group according to the impairment level of the coach showed statistically significant differences between the groups in all sub-dimensions ( $p < 0.05$ ). The evaluation of the coaches with a hearing aid was much more negative (Table 6).

The analysis according to the means of communication with the coach the difference between the groups regarding to the technical, competitiveness and social sub-dimensions were found to be statistically different ( $p < 0.05$ ). The results

showed that the evaluations of the athletes who could only communicate with the coach with the sign language were more negative (Table 7).

**DISCUSSION**

Although in studies examining the deaf athletes was emphasized, the researching of the relationship between deaf athletes and coaches is not available. Brancaleone and Shingles (2015) propose to study this issue. The fact that the experimental sample was consisting the athletes coming from different parts of the world enabled the researchers to investigate the perception of the hearing impaired players about occupational

**Table 5: The analysis of the sample according to the impairment level (t-test)**

Sub-dimension	Level of impairment	N	X	sd	F	P
Technical	I can't hear at all	79	14.82	2.21	.447	.656
	I can hear with the help of a hearing aid	46	14.58	3.15		
Competitiveness Behavior	I can't hear at all	79	15.10	2.88	-.093	.926
	I can hear with the help of a hearing aid	46	15.15	3.04		
Social	I can't hear at all	79	16.44	3.04	.833	.406
	I can hear with the help of a hearing aid	46	15.97	2.94		

**Table 6: The analysis of the research group according to the impairment level of the trainer (ANOVA)**

<i>Sub-dimensions</i>	<i>The impairment level of the coach(s)</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>X</i>	<i>Sd</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>Diff. (LSD)</i>
<i>Technical</i>	(a) Normal	102	15.51	1.81	61.680	.000	a>cb>c
	(b) completely deaf	4	15.25	2.62			
	(c) can hear with the help of a hearing aid	19	10.42	1.83			
<i>Competitiveness Behavior</i>	(a) Normal	102	16.01	2.22	58.215	.000	a>cb>c
	(b) completely deaf	4	15.00	1.63			
	(c) can hear with the help of a hearing aid	19	10.31	1.45			
<i>Social</i>	(a) Normal	102	17.36	1.78	103.945	.000	a>b,cb>c
	(b) completely deaf	4	14.50	3.69			
	(c) can hear with the help of a hearing aid	19	10.78	1.68			

**Table 7: The analysis of the sample according to the means of communication with the trainer (ANOVA)**

<i>Sub-dimensions</i>	<i>The means of communication with the trainer</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>X</i>	<i>Sd</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>Diff. (LSD)</i>
<i>Technical</i>	(a) with sign language	55	13.23	2.67	16.229	.000	a<b,c,d
	(b) with a translator	54	15.79	1.50			
	(c) with sign language-translator	8	17.25	2.12			
	(d) with sign language-translator-written notes	8	15.37	2.77			
<i>Competitiveness Behavior</i>	(a) with sign language	55	14.41	3.77	2.854	.040	a<b
	(b) with a translator	54	15.90	1.80			
	(c) with sign language-translator	8	15.62	1.18			
	(d) with sign language-translator-written notes	8	14.12	2.53			
<i>Social</i>	(a) with sign language	55	14.67	3.39	11.815	.000	a<b,c,d
	(b) with a translator	54	17.53	1.88			
	(c) with sign language-translator	8	17.87	1.64			
	(d) with sign language-translator-written notes	8	17.12	2.29			

skills of their coaches according to the demographic distribution.

The study was participated in by (16 female and 105 male) a total of 125 athletes coming from all over the world. The mean age of the players was 25.42 ±5.3 years ranging between 6 to 38 years. Among the participants, 10.4 percent of them had completed secondary school, 79.2 percent high school and 10.4 percent were university graduates. 81.6 percent of them were found to have been doing active sports for 7 years or more. In the literature, the most of deaf athletes participating in the studies seemed to be a high school graduate (Karademir 2015; Acak 2016).

The questions were asked using the sign language to the players who were not able to read the survey. Despite the fact that all of the participants had taken academic education, 22.4 percent of the athletes were not able to read the scale, which is a serious problem, which the authorities must be concerned about. Seventy-two

percent of the players had normal coaches. Among these coaches, fifty-six percent knew the sign language and forty-four percent were using the translators. Deaf people mostly spend time together but do not communicate because deaf and hearing people tend to choose friends like themselves (English 2002). Deaf people can consider themselves as a part and members of the society and compare themselves (emotionally and physically) with the members of the same group (deaf society and culture), thus they can have a positive attitude about themselves. According to researchers, the similar levels of the fear of negative evaluation of both groups (deaf and hearing football players) and the lack of statistically significant difference result from the comparison of members of the both groups with other members within the same group (Karademir 2011).

The analyses made according to the number of coaches' variable showed that there were sig-

nificant differences regarding the technical and competitiveness sub-dimensions and the players who had three coaches were much more positive in their assessments than the others. This result shows that the hearing impaired athletes need more than one coach.

The analyses made according to the gender variable revealed that there were significant differences in the technical and social sub-dimension ( $p < 0.05$ ). The competitive behavior sub-dimension did not show any appreciable change ( $p > 0.05$ ). The female athletes were observed to be more positive than the males.

The data obtained from the analysis carried out according to the educational status of the participants revealed the fact that there were significant differences between the groups regarding technical sub-dimension.

The analyses made according to the level of the impairment of the coaches there were significant differences in all sub-dimensions. The players were much more negative towards the coaches using a hearing aid. The participants stated that the coaches without hearing impairment are the best with technical capacities and the competitiveness attitudes.

### CONCLUSION

The results showed that the hearing impaired athletes should be coached by the coaches without hearing impairment. The people with impairment appeared to accept the coach ethics declared by the coaches associations of many countries. The data related to the means of communication with the coaches revealed the fact that there were statistically significant differences regarding all the sub-dimensions. The assessment of the coaches using only the sign language was found to be much more negative.

### RECOMMENDATIONS

The athletes with hearing impairment demand that the coaches should use different communication. The coaches are the role models for the athletes with their capacities and personalities. Their behaviors are constantly monitored and assessed by the players. Therefore, the coaches must show utmost care to adhere to the sports ethics in their behaviors.

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**Paper received for publication on January 2015**  
**Paper accepted for publication on July 2016**