

The effect of communication skills on team and individual sports

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Abstract

The purpose of this study is to determine the effect of communication skills on team and individual sports. A total of 251 students/athletes studying in the School of Physical Education and Sports of Niğde University during the academic year of 2015-2016 and are involved in any team or individual sports have participated in this study. "Communication Skills Evaluation Scale" (CSES), developed by Korkut, was carried out to the subjects in the study. A significant difference was detected between the students' gender and communication skills ($p=0.132$). No significant difference was determined between the students' departments and communication skills ($p=0.614$).

Keywords: Communication skills, individual sports, team sports.

INTRODUCTION

In the rapidly developing world of sports, every sports club is in need of competitive individuals who are endowed with creative characteristics, able to think and move quickly and who develop and unify their talents with skill. Sports club managements wish to own such athletes and trainers who have these characteristics (1).

The evaluation of a team's success is determined by the good communication between the trainer and athlete and the flow of the trainer's rewarding behavior towards the athlete. At the same time, good communication provided between the trainer and athlete can also provide the formation of a realistic concept of self-criticism (4).

Many factors are determinant when it comes to the performance of athletes such as the relationships within the team, them being guided properly, a high level of motivation and the rousing of the necessary excitement. In addition to these factors, the communication skills between the athlete and his/her trainer and teammates also play a large role. The education of sports cannot be kept apart from effective communication just like any other field of education. The effective communication between the trainers and their athletes and among the teammates will result in peace and confidence within the team and the development of the athletes' mental and

emotional health. Increasing the environmental quality within sports clubs can be possible with the prevention of communication mistakes among the team and athletes (5).

For every relationship, communication is like the base of a building. Good communication provides positive criticism and a continuous interaction among athletes. Communication skills provide the formation of various results such as informing the athlete about his/her performance, interaction within the club, motivation and peacemaking. The earlier an athlete learns the techniques peculiar to his/her branch, the more his/her status within the team is to rise. However, the most distinct indicator in seeing that our country is deficient on this matter is the absence of resource books on the determining the effects the communication among manager, trainer and athlete and sturdily built communication have on the team's performance and success in sports (8).

The requirements of a successful and effective communication process are:

- The message to be conveyed should attract the attention of the target-receiver,
- In coding the message; it should be known by the target-receiver who is expected to receive and decode it as well as the source that delivers it,

- The message should appeal to the needs of the target-receiver,
- In order to achieve the desired attitude change in the target-receiver, the attitudes and values of the target-receiver should be known. Doing so, the expectations and patterns of them should not be conflicted,
- The most suitable way-channel to reach the target-receiver should be known,
- The message should be conveyed to the target-receiver in such a way that it should suit the life experiences to which he/she is accustomed if the content is new information to the receiver,
- The subjects that are difficult to convey in communication should be conveyed after increasing the information and perception level of the target-receiver through preparatory communication process,
- It should not be forgotten that there may be some resistances in communication which may not be broken through preparatory communication process, and basic values, in particular, should not be attacked indirectly (12).

It is clear to see the importance of effective communication in terms of the team when we think of the fact that the trainer will be able to work effectively once he/she earns the athletes' respect and trust within the team. In reality, it takes time to earn the trust of an athlete. In this sense, the trainer must ask a lot of questions to the athletes individually and take the time to listen to them. The trainer must have information about the individuals' relationships, interests, hobbies, phobias, and their thoughts about success. He/she must take their opinions on related subjects such as pressure caused by practices or games, personal doubts, trust, awareness, consistency and self-confidence. Additionally, he/she must also be informed of the influencing factors of their lives outside of sports (6).

Along with helping young individuals improve their level of communication skills, sports also, with no doubt, make a great contribution in helping them socialize. Nowadays, the phenomenon of sports is one of the easiest ways to earn membership in a community, provide interdependence, make teamwork easier and helps people improve physically, emotionally, and socially. With a proper education, conflict in communication can be prevented by showing people the mistakes they make when communicating and having them

comprehend exactly how they should communicate (7). For example, in a game of sports, if a supporter or athlete doesn't accept the opponent team's win, doesn't approve of their success, cannot admit being defeated, acts in an aggressive manner; during the given education, if the individual is taught that being defeated is as possible as defeating, to accept the opponent team or athlete's success, to congratulate and to help the opponent in cases of injury he/she can change the unacceptable behaviour into the expected behaviour. This way, the communication will develop more positively and conflicts will decrease.

MATERIAL & METHOD

The purpose of this study is to determine the effect communication skills have on team and individual sports. A total of 251 students/athletes studying in the School of Physical Education and Sports of Niğde University during the academic year of 2015-2016 and are involved with any team or individual sports have participated in this study.

This is a descriptive and comparative study which aims to determine whether certain factors in perception of communication skills of athletes who work for the branches of team sports (Soccer, Volleyball) and individual sports (Wrestling, Athletics, Taekwondo) statistically make significant differences or not.

The athletes were given a "Communication Skills Evaluation Scale" (CSES) and a "Personal Information Form" in the club house. Along with the given instructions before conducting the survey they were also informed with a verbal explanation. The survey was conducted to the participant athletes of the study during practice hours at the club house with the permission of their trainers. A total of 251 athletes have participated in the study. The obtained data were evaluated with the software package SPSS (Version 18).

In order to collect information related to the perception of communication skills of students who study in the School of Physical Education and Sports, "Communication Skills Evaluation Scale" developed by Korkut (10) was used in the study. In determining the demographic characteristics of the students studying in the School of Physical Education and Sports, a "Personal Information Form" which was prepared by a researcher was used in the study.

“Communication Skills Evaluation Scale” (CSES), used in the study for data gathering purposes, was developed by Korkut (10) at first for high school students. Later on, it was implemented on college students and 61 adults. CSES is a 5 point likert scale. It is a form consisting of 25 items.

In this form that contains the instructions, there are graded options as the following: “always (5), generally (4), sometimes (3), rarely (2) and never (1).” On the contrary, a high score on the scale that does not have the items means the individual has evaluated his/her own communication skills positively.

Related to determining the study’s independent variables, with data gathering purposes, a Personal Information Form was prepared by a researcher to determine the demographic characteristics of the athletes that are dealing with Wrestling, Soccer, Volleyball, Athletics and Taekwondo. In the Personal Information Form, the athletes who are dealing with Wrestling, Soccer, Volleyball, Athletics and Taekwondo are asked questions related to their gender, age, branch, club, whether they are dealing with any branch of sports or not, the place they live, the high school they graduated from, the department they graduated from in high school, whether they willingly chose the department they are studying in college or not, the condition of their parents (step/birth, dead/alive), the marital status of their parents, the educational background and occupation of their parents, the number of siblings they have and their family’s monthly income.

RESULTS

According to Table 1, 41% of the students are female and 58.6% are male. 28.7% of the students are 20 years old, 23.9% of them are 22 years old and 23.5% of them are 21 years old. While 21.1% of the students are dealing with the branch of soccer, 19.5% with the branch of athletics, 10% with the branch of volleyball and 6.4% are dealing with the branch of basketball. While 59.8% of the students are studying in the department of Physical Education and Sports Teaching 40.2% of them are studying in the department of Sports Management.

According to Table 2, while 49.8% of the students are indicating that they do not do sports on a regular basis, 20.3% of them indicated that they do sports on a regular basis but are not licensed and 17.5% of them indicated that they are licensed in a club and do sports regularly.

Table 1. The athletes’ sex, age, branch and department information.

Variables		N	%
Gender	Female	103	41.0
	Male	147	58.6
Age	19	26	10.4
	20	72	28.7
	21	59	23.5
	22	60	23.9
	23	21	8.4
	24	7	2.8
	25+	6	2.4
Branch	Basketball	16	6.4
	Badminton	12	4.8
	Athletics	49	19.5
	Soccer	53	21.1
	Judo	1	0.4
	Volleyball	25	10.0
	Wrestling	5	2.0
	Handball	2	0.8
	Swimming	5	2.0
	Boxing	2	0.8
Department	Other	4	1.6
	Physical Education and Sports Teaching	150	59.8
	Sports Management	101	40.2

Table 2. The students’ status of doing sports.

Variables	N	%
No, I do not do any sports	125	49.8
Yes, I am on the school’s team	30	12.0
Yes, I am a licensed player in a club	44	17.5
Yes, I am not licensed but I do sports on certain days	51	20.3
Other	1	0.4

Table 3. Where the students lived for an extended period of time, the high school they graduated from, the high school department they graduated from and the way they chose the department they are studying in college.

		N	%
Place of settlement	Village	6	2.4
	Town	8	3.2
	County	34	13.5
	City	118	47.0
	Metropolis	85	33.9
The graduated high school	Regular high school	163	64.9
	Anatolian high school and equivalent schools	31	12.4
	Vocational high school	52	20.7
	Teacher training high school	2	0.8
	Other	3	1.2
High school department	Verbal	44	17.5
	Mathematical	38	15.1
	Turkish-mathematics	158	62.9
	Language	2	0.8
	Sports	1	0.4
	Other	7	2.8
The way the college department was chosen	Yes	213	84.9
	No	37	14.7

According to Table 3, 47% of the students lived a large part of their lives in a city, 33.9% of them in a metropolis and 13.5% of them in a county. 64.9% of the students graduated from a regular high school, 20.7% of them from a vocational high school and 12.4% of them from an Anatolian high school and equivalent schools. In the high schools they graduated from, 62.9% of the students graduated from the Turkish-Mathematics department, 17.5% from the verbal department and 15.1% from the numeric department. 84.9% of the students willingly chose the department they are currently studying and 14.7% of them did not willingly choose the department they are currently studying.

Table 4. Analysis of the relationship between the students' gender and communication skills.

Gender	N	Mean	SD	t	p
Female	103	103.38	9.85	1.495	.132
Male	147	101.21	12.21		

* p<0.05

According to Table 4 no significant difference was obtained between the students' gender and communication skills (p=0.132).

Table 5. Analysis of the relationship between the students' branch and communication skills.

Resource of Variance	Sum of Squares	df	Mean of Squares	F	P
Between Groups	10011.412	13	770.109	6.493	.000
Within Groups	18975.944	160	118.60		
Total	28987.356	173			

According to Table 5 a significant difference was obtained between the students' branch and communication skills.

Table 6. The analysis of the relationship between the students' departments and communication skills.

Department	N	Mean	SD	t	p
Physical Education and Sports Teaching	150	102.47	13.11	.499	.614
Sports Management	101	101.74	8.12		

* p<0.05

According to Table 6 no significant difference was obtained between the students' departments and communication skills (p=0.614).

DISCUSSION

Among the students who participated in the study 41% is female and 58.6% is male. 28.7% of the students are 20 years old, 23.9% of them are 22 years old and 23.5% of them are 21 years old. While 21.1% of the students deal with the branch of soccer, 19.5% with the branch of athletics, 10% with the branch of volleyball and 6.4% with the branch of basketball. While 59.8% of the students study in the department of Physical Education and Sports Teaching, 40.2% of them study in the department of Sports Management.

While 49.8% of the students indicated that they do not play sports on a regular basis, 20.3% of them indicated that they play sports on a regular basis but are not licensed and 17.5% of them indicated that they are licensed in a club and play sports regularly.

47% of the students lived a large part of their lives in a city, 33.9% of them in a metropolis and 13.5% of them in a county. 64.9% of the students graduated from a regular high school, 20.7% of them from a vocational high school and 12.4% of them from an Anatolian high school and equivalent schools. In the high schools they graduated from, 62.9% of the students graduated from the Turkish-Mathematics department, 17.5% from the verbal department and 15.1% from the numeric department. 84.9% of the students willingly chose the department they are currently studying and 14.7% of them did not willingly choose the department they are currently studying.

No significant difference was determined obtained between the students' gender and communication skills (p=.132).A significant difference was obtained between the students' branch and communication skills (p=.000). No significant difference was obtained between department and communication skills (p=.614). It can be accepted that the educational differences between branches have an impact on the communication skills of the individuals. Furthermore, the relationships between teammates, trainer-athlete, athlete-supporter, athlete-media among the branches also affects communication skills at a considerable extent. In the study carried out by Yılmaz et al. (15), a statistically significant difference was obtained that trainers of individual sports (X=4.36) have a higher level of communication skills when compared to trainers of team sports (X=4.15). Whereas in Şahin's (14) study, by evaluating the communication skills of athletes

who are involved in team sports and athletes who are involved in individual sports, they looked to see if there was a difference between the two in terms of communication skills and in accordance with the obtained results, although the score of communication skills are high for both groups no statistically significant difference was obtained between athletes who are involved in team sports and athletes who are involved in individual sports ($p>0.05$).

In the validity study carried out by Korkut (10) when developing the Communication Skills Evaluation Scale (CSES), the scores of male and female groups were compared and among the scores there was a significant difference at a high level in favor of the female group ($t=3.00$; $p<0.01$). Later on, Korkut & Bugay (11) developed the Communication Skills Scale (CSS) and once again obtained the findings that female students have a higher score of communication skills in a significant level when compared to the male students.

In the study carried out by Gölönü & Karcı (9), the difference between the mean score of communication skills in accordance with gender was tested with a t-test in independent samples with a confidence level of 5% in total and 3 sub-dimensions. The results were found significant and the related H_0 hypothesis was rejected ($p<0.05$). The mean communication skills score of female students is higher than the average communication skills score of male students. It is possible to say that the communication skills of female students are more developed than those of male students. This shows that female students are more successful in effective communication.

Ceyhan (3) carried out a study on the general, social and personal compliance estimates of college students who are able to perceive communication skills at a high level and significantly got the results of higher scores from all of them.

In a study from a doctoral thesis by Şahin (13), using the CSES developed by Korkut (10), a training program on communication skills of 12 sessions was prepared. Experimental activities were also carried out during the program. The findings of the study revealed that the communication skill levels of the students who attended the training program on communication skills were higher than of those who did not attend the program.

Whereas in the study carried out by Bingöl & Demir (2) on School of Health students, there was a significant association between the academic success levels of the students in the departments they attend per se and their perception related to communication skills. It was also pointed out that there were not any significant differences between the other variables and the perception related to communication skills.

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