Perception of Trainers for The Athlete

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Abstract

The aim of this research is to determine the perceptions of the trainers in different sports branches on the athletes through metaphors. The sample of study consists of 72 trainers in different sports branches. For the collection of data in the study, “metaphor form” was prepared to determine the participants’ views on the concept of athletes. In the metaphor form, the athletes were asked to complete the sentence of "Athlete is like...; Because ...". In this study, phenomenological design from qualitative research approaches is used. In the analysis of the data, content analysis technique was used. For the reliability of the analysis of the research data, the reliability coefficient was calculated between the participants and this value was found to be 93%. With the evaluation of the data, it was seen that the sports club members produced 32 metaphors. These metaphors were collected in 4 different categories. While the trainers were determined to develop metaphors most in the category of "openness to development" and "value" for the concept of athlete, these categories were followed by categories of "responsibility" and "being hardworking". The most produced metaphors of the trainers are diamond, baby, sapling, bee, rough mine and gold. Trainers often used live and tangible metaphors for the concept of athlete. Considering the data obtained, the participants pointed to the basic characteristics that should be in the ideal athlete. These characteristics represent a structure that has the capacity to develop and has a value and a sense of responsibility.

Keywords: Sports, Athlete, Trainer, Metaphor, Qualitative Research Method.

INTRODUCTION

Sport is the intense efforts to improve the physical and mental health of the individual, to fight within the dimensions of competition according to certain rules, to be excited, to be competitive, to be superior and to increase the power of success in the real sense and to increase it to the highest level in a personal sense(1). However, although it is carried out for many different purposes such as competition, pleasure, health, aesthetics, entertainment, game, advertising, propaganda, profession, science, leisure time, it is also important in terms of organizing personal and social relations. The basic element of sport is human. Therefore, it has become an indispensable social phenomenon in terms of whether it is to create a society with high productivity or to raise the young, creative and healthy youth of the future or to be a tool that can resist social segregation and alienation (2).

Nowadays, while increasing the sphere of influence on human life, sports is becoming more and more important in terms of place and importance in society. People who do sports in an individual sense develop in terms of physical and mental abilities. It is known that it strengthens the interpersonal social ties and socializes the individual in terms of its social aspect (3). It is possible to say that sportive activities contribute to the multi-faceted development of individuals. In particular, it is evident that it contributes to the development of personality structure of the individual, improves physical and mental health and contributes to display positive behaviors (4,5,6). Increased interest in physical activity and sport in recent years can be related to the positive contributions of sports to both body and mental health of the individual (7).

This growing interest in physical activity and sport has drawn attention to the importance of trainers who has the role of being an educator. It is because the trainer is an exemplary teacher for athletes, the person who demonstrates the good direction of influence on the team. At the same time, in addition to being a sociological person who implements effectively the training programs, which is prepared for the long run, to carry the athletes to success, and teaches athletes the life while implementing the program, and s/he is also a person who is looking for new ways and methods to sustain the development of sports and athletes (8,9). In
short, trainers are important keystones in the
development of sports and athletes. It is surely
beyond doubt that for the trainers, the athletes are
like a mine to be processed. There are many
acquisitions that a good trainer can offer to the
athlete and/or athletes. After a certain point, this
process acquires a mutually continuity. For this
reason, the point of view of trainers to athletes is
important for opening a correct communication
channel.

In the research, metaphors were produced in
order to provide a different perspective on the
concept of “athletes”. Metaphor is an analogy that
defines an object by imagination with the help of
another object (10).

When the literature is examined, it is observed
that metaphors related to many concepts are
produced (11,12,13). However, while the number of
studies examining the metaphors related to the
concept of sports is limited (14,15,16), there is no
research about the metaphors related to the concept
of athlete. In these studies carried out with different
sample groups, sports and sports branch concepts
were examined through metaphors. However, a
research conducted on the concept of athletes and
trainers who have a very important role in the sport
is not present in the literature. In this context, the
aim of the research is to express the concept of
athlete from the point of view of the trainers. For
this reason, the research is important in order to fill
the gap in the relevant field literature, to determine
the opinions of the stakeholders involved in sports
for the concept of athlete and to enable the trainers
to express their opinions about the concept of
athletes in a detailed manner.

MATERIALS & METHODS

In this study, phenomenological design, one of
the qualitative research methods, was selected. The
sample of this study conducted in 2019 consists of 72
trainers working in different sports branches (tennis,
gymnastics, basketball) in Ankara. The study group
was selected through criterion sampling method
according to purposeful sampling method. In this
context, the criteria such as the fact that the trainers
are still working and willing to participate
voluntarily were taken into consideration.

In this study, data were collected with semi-
structured interview form which is used very
frequently in metaphor studies(17,18,19). At this
point, the trainers were asked to indicate and
explain a metaphor describing the athlete. The
trainers were asked to complete the sentence of
“Athlete is like...; Because...” and as a result, it was
determined that only one metaphor was specified by
the participants and the explanations of these
metaphors were made.

Data analysis is the process of exporting the
meaning of data. In other words, it consists of
statements of the participants and the combination
and interpretation of what the researchers has seen
and read (20). Therefore, in the data analysis of this
study, numbers from 1 to 72 were first given to
papers. Data were analyzed by content analysis
method. Content analysis is the categorization of
data (21). Content analysis was carried out in 8
stages. These are (1) examination of forms and
elimination of inappropriate forms, (2) recompilation of forms, (3) numbering forms (4)
examination of metaphors, (5) development of
categories, (6) the stage of providing validity and
reliability, (7) calculation of frequencies of obtained
metaphors, and (8) interpretation of metaphors
(22,23,24).

In the first stage, the trainers’ expressions were
investigated and whether there were any blank parts
or not was examined in general and there was no
form with missing part. In the second stage, the
metaphors in the forms were listed and tabulated. In
the third stage, the numbering from P1 to P72 was
made after organizing the metaphors according to
their frequency. In the fourth stage, the metaphors
were re-examined. In the fifth stage, the metaphors
for the concept of athlete were examined in terms of
their common features. As the metaphors stated by
the trainers were emphasized in a way that they
could be included in several categories at the same
time, the metaphors were placed in the relevant
categories according to the trainers’ statements.

The sixth stage is about the reliability and
validity. In this stage, the process of analyzing the
data obtained from the trainers and how the codes
associated with the categories were directly
presented to the reader with the trainers’ statements.
In the research, samples of trainer views were
selected and included in the findings section (25). In
order to ensure the reliability of the study, data were
analyzed by 3 field experts and the results of the
analysis were compared. In the reliability of data
analysis, the formula developed by Miles and
Huberman in 1994 was used. A total of 32
metaphors were produced and on 2 metaphors (machine, work) there were a dissensus. The mean reliability of the encoders was found to be 93% \( \frac{30}{(30+2)} \times 100 = 93\% \). According to these results, the research has the desired reliability level (26).

**FINDINGS**

This section includes the metaphors of the participants working as a trainer in different sports branches, the categories and explanation examples.

| Table 1: The Metaphors Developed by the Trainers for the Concept of Athlete |
|---------------------------------------------------------------|------------------|
| Metaphor Order | Metaphor Name    | f  | Metaphor Order | Metaphor Name         | f  |
| 1          | Diamond          | 9  | 18             | Child                | 1  |
| 2          | Baby             | 6  | 19             | Raw materials        | 1  |
| 3          | Sapling          | 5  | 20             | Statue               | 1  |
| 4          | Bee              | 5  | 21             | Dough                | 1  |
| 5          | Rough Mine       | 4  | 22             | Structure            | 1  |
| 6          | Gold             | 4  | 23             | Iron                 | 1  |
| 7          | Seed             | 3  | 24             | Work                 | 1  |
| 8          | Ant              | 3  | 25             | Ore                  | 1  |
| 9          | Tree             | 3  | 26             | Aged Wine            | 1  |
| 10         | Garden           | 3  | 27             | Private Individual   | 1  |
| 11         | Plant            | 2  | 28             | Father               | 1  |
| 12         | Coal             | 2  | 29             | Waiter               | 1  |
| 13         | Treasure         | 2  | 30             | Lion                 | 1  |
| 14         | Staff            | 2  | 31             | Responsible Individual | 1 |
| 15         | Manager          | 2  | 32             | Machine              | 1  |
| 16         | Parrot           | 1  |                |                      |    |
| 17         | Paper            | 1  |                | TOTAL OPION          | 72 |

When Table 1 is examined, it is seen that the trainers produced 32 different metaphors for the concept of “athlete” and stated 72 opinions for this. Diamond (32), Baby 68), Sapling (5), Bee (5), Rough mine (4) and Gold (4) metaphors were the most stated metaphors. It is thought that according to frequencies, most of the metaphors are towards the fact that athletes are the individuals who are open to innovation and development. When the metaphors developed by the trainers in relation to the athlete concept are evaluated together with their explanations, the classification as four categories is shown in Table 2.

| Table 2: Distribution of Metaphors Developed by Trainers according to Categories |
|---------------------------------------------------------------|------------------|
| Categories                      | Number of Metaphor (f) | %   |
| 1. Openness to Development      | 16              | 50,00 |
| 2. Value                        | 7               | 21,87 |
| 3. Responsibility               | 6               | 18,75 |
| 4. Being Hardworking            | 3               | 9,37  |
| TOTAL                            | 32              | 100.0 |

According to Table 2, trainers indicated the metaphors under four categories for the concept of athletes. These categories are openness to development (16-50.00%), value (7- 21.87%), responsibility (6% 18.75) and being hardworking (3% 9.37%).
When the total of 16 metaphors and explanations stated in the “openness to development” category in Table 3 are examined, it is understood that the participants stated that the trainers are an important element in training the successful athletes, emphasizing the aspects of the athletes that are open to continuous development.

As shown in Table 4, a total of 7 metaphors are mentioned in the “value” category for the athlete concept. As stated in the explanations, it is understood that participants developed metaphors for athletes’ characteristics of being a privileged and valuable individual.

As shown in Table 5, a total of 6 metaphors are mentioned in the category of “responsibility” for the concept of athletes. As stated in the statements, it is understood that the participants emphasize that the athletes are responsible especially to themselves and also their families, their trainers and even society.

As shown in Table 6, a total of 3 metaphors are mentioned in the category of “being hardworking” for the concept of athletes. As stated in the explanations, it is understood that the participants emphasize that the athletes are responsible especially to themselves and also their families, their trainers and even society.

Table 3: Metaphors of the Category of “Openness to Development” and Explanations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Number of Metaphor (f=16)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Openness to Development</td>
<td>Baby (6), Sapling (5), Rough mine (4), Garden (3), Tree (3), Seed (3), Plant (2), Coal (2), Parrot (1), Paper (1), Raw Material (1), Statue (1), Dough (1), Structure (1), Iron (1), Child (1)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Quotations from the description examples of trainers:
Baby; The athlete grows in the hands of a trainer, and if the trainer begins training the athlete from an early age, he keeps the athlete’s technique, thoughts and all life in his hands (P20).
Sapling; When it is in the hands of a gardener who knows how to grow it well, it becomes a century-old tree (P23).
Rough mine; Its value increases as it is processed (P35).
Seed; You plant the seed in the field, you water it, you grow it and you get a product. You reach many people with your product (P18).
Parrot; The more his owner is interested in it, the more words it learns (P2).

Table 4: Metaphors of the Category of “Value” and Explanations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Number of Metaphor (f=7)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2. Value</td>
<td>Diamond (9), Gold (4), Treasure (2), Ore (1), Aged Wine (1), Work (1), Private Individual (1)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Quotations from the description examples of trainers:
Diamond; It is very valuable (P37).
Gold; It never loses value (P44).
Aged wine; Over the years, its value increases (P47).
Treasure; It is sought everywhere but it is revealed difficultly (P55).

Table 5: Metaphors of the Category of “Responsibility” and Explanations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Number of Metaphor (f=6)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3. Responsibility</td>
<td>Manager (2), Personnel (2), Father (1), Waiter (1), Lion (1), Responsible Individual (1)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Quotations from the description examples of trainers:
Manager; Just as the manager has responsibilities to the organization and its employees, the athlete has responsibilities towards himself, his family, his trainers and the community (P61).
Personnel; S/he has responsibilities for the workplace where he works (P57).
Father; He sacrifices his own life and is responsible to his family and children. This is the case for the athlete (P56).
Lion; He has responsibilities for protecting his/her living space and is aware of this (P62).

Table 6: Metaphors of the Category of “Being Hardworking” and Explanations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Number of Metaphor (f=3)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4. Being Hardworking</td>
<td>Bee (5), Ant (3), Machine (1)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Quotations from the description examples of trainers:
Arı; While working, it makes honey and produces something (K64), it is hardworking and does its works day to day (P65).
Ant; It works for something constantly until it dies (P69).
Machine; Athletes are also working like machine (P72).
As shown in Table 6, a total of 3 metaphors are mentioned in the category of "being hardworking" regarding the concept of athletes. As it is understood from the explanations, it is understood that the participants emphasized the athletes’ characteristics of being hardworking by likening them to bees and ants which are the most hardworking animals.

**DISCUSSION & CONCLUSION**

In this study, it was aimed to determine the emotions and thoughts of the participants, who are training in different branches, by means of analogy. According to the data obtained, the perceptions of the participants about the concept of athlete were interpreted.

It was concluded that participants produced a total of 32 metaphors related to the concept of athletes. These are the categories of openness to development, value, responsibility and being hardworking. A total of 16 metaphors were identified in the category of "openness to development". From the statements, such as: He is like a Sapling, when it is in the hands of a gardener who knows how to grow it well, it becomes a century-old tree, it is like a Rough mine, its value increases as it is processed, it is like a Seed, you plant the seed in the field, you water it, you grow it and you get a product. You reach many people with your product, it is seen that how important the trainer is in the career development of an athlete. The trainer is the person who tries to make the athlete work in unity and solidarity within the team. S/he takes on the role of a craftsman for the development of the athlete. S/he plans and works in order to bring the athlete step-by-step to the targeted level within a certain process. The athlete is aware of this process and walks on the same path with his trainer to achieve his goal. The process is focused on process development through this communication channel maintaining mutually. In this context, it can be stated that trainers are an important building block when considering the development of athletes. When the studies carried out in the near disciplines are examined, it is seen that metaphors are produced under the theme of openness to development in the studies in which there are facts similar to the trainer and athlete relationship. In their study, with the theme of informative and formative teacher, Yılmaz, Esentürk, Tekkürşun-Demir & İlhan (2017) with the development provider theme, Demirtaş & Çoban (2014) with the theme of changing/developing instructors emphasized that the participants produced metaphors about the fact of openness to development and stressed the importance of development in the educational process.

It is seen that participants produced 7 metaphors in the "value" category for the athlete concept. These metaphors formed the relevant category with the statements such as: It is like a diamond, it is very valuable, it is like Gold, it never loses its value, it is like the aged wine, its value increases over the years, it is like the treasure, it is sought everywhere, but it is revealed difficultly. From the analogies of valuable ores for the concept of athlete, it can be stated that the concept of athlete is a valuable fact for the trainers. In the literature, Demirtaş & Çoban (2014) determined also in their studies that the participants produced metaphors such as Flower Garden, Angel, Mexicana and Daffodil under the theme of value. Another category that emerged according to the research results is the category of "responsibility". A total of 6 metaphors were produced in this category. Statements for the metaphors in the relevant category, such as; s/he is like Manager, just as the manager has responsibilities to the organization and its employees, the athlete has responsibilities towards himself, his family, his trainers and the community, s/he is like a Personnel, s/he has responsibilities for the workplace where he works, s/he is like a father, he sacrifices his own life and is responsible to his family and children, s/he is like a Lion, he has responsibilities for protecting his/her living space and is aware of this, reveal the necessity of the acquisition of responsibility among the characteristics of the athletes as a duty when the athletes are evaluated with the point of view of the trainers.

The last category that the participants produced for the athlete concept is the category of “hardworking” and a total of 3 metaphors were produced. With metaphors, there are statements such as; S/he is like a bee, it makes honey while working, produces something, s/he is like an ant, s/he works for something continuously until its death, s/he is like a machine, athletes work constantly like a machine. When the metaphors produced by the participants in the relevant category were examined, it was revealed that the athletes should have a characteristic such as being hardworking. This is because the athlete must achieve a continuous rhythm of work in order to achieve a determined career goal. Otherwise, the temporary achievements will remain in the shadow of the targets. It is important for the trainers to draw attention to this issue in order for athletes to
determine the parameters to be taken into consideration while aiming their own development. However, in the summer of the field, determined that the theme of being hardworking were revealed among the metaphors produced, and that being hardworking was important when dealing with a parameter related to the educational process.31,32

As a result, trainers tried to express the concept of athletes with a different perspective through the metaphors they produced. Considering the data obtained, the participants pointed to the basic characteristics that should be in the ideal athlete. These characteristics represent a structure that has the capacity to develop and has a value and a sense of responsibility. It is possible to say that the characteristics stated are the acquisitions that each trainer demands from the athlete to have. In this context, the research described the characteristics, which the ideal athlete should have, with the point of view of the trainers. In addition, the most striking descriptions of the coaches for the concept of athletes were in the development parameter. They defined the concept of athlete as a phenomenon that developed through an accurate training process. However, in the studies to be carried out, it is recommended to plan metaphor studies for the concept of athlete from the point of view of all the stakeholders involved in the sport.

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