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The Determinant Role of Self-Confidence Sources Management on Challenge and Threat Levels in Combat Athletes

Dövüş Sporcularında Kendine Güven Kaynakları Yönetiminin Mücadele ve Tehdit Düzeyleri Üzerindeki Belirleyici Rolü

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THE DETERMINANT ROLE OF SELF-CONFIDENCE SOURCES MANAGEMENT ON CHALLENGE AND THREAT LEVELS IN COMBAT ATHLETES

ABSTRACT

This study aimed to investigate athletes' self-confidence in resource management and their levels of challenge and threat. The sample of the study consisted of 259 athletes, 100 female and 159 male, who were doing sports in private and public fight clubs in Ağrı, Batman, Muş and Van provinces. In the data collection part of the study, "Personal Information Form" prepared by the researchers, "Sources of sport-Confidence Questionnaire" adapted into Turkish by Miçooğulları and Kirazcı and "The Challenge and Threat in Sport Scale" adapted into Turkish by Gürbüz et al. were used. Pearson's correlation coefficient was used to examine the relationship between athletes' sources of self-confidence and their challenge s and threat, and a regression test was used to determine the effect. The results showed a positive and moderate relationship between SSCQ and challenge (r=.517 p=.001, one of the sub-dimensions of the CAT-Sport. The total score (R2=.231 p=.001), expertise (R2=.258 p=.001), and physical and mental preparation (R2=.245 p=.001) sub-dimensions of the SSCQ showed a positive effect on the challenge sub-dimension of the CAT-Sport. These statements can be considered to positively affect athletes' performance by turning into challenge if they can manage their self-confidence resources correctly. These findings suggest that athletes' self-confidence resources, especially physical and mental preparation and perceptions of expertise, play an important role in increasing their challenge levels. In this context, it is suggested that strategies to improve athletes' self-confidence resources may increase their ability to cope with challenge.

Keywords: Combat Sports, Threat, Challenge, Self-Confidence Sources.

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DÖVÜŞ SPORCULARINDA KENDİNE GÜVEN KAYNAKLARI YÖNETİMİNİN MÜCADELE VE TEHDİT DÜZEYLERİ ÜZERİNDEKİ BELİRLEYİCİ ROLÜ

ÖZ

Bu çalışmanın amacı, sporcuların kendine güven kaynakları yönetiminde mücadele ve tehdit algı düzeylerini incelemektir. Araştırmanın örneklemini Ağrı, Batman, Muş ve Van illerindeki özel ve resmi dövüş kulüplerinde spor yapan 100 kadın ve 159 erkek olmak üzere toplam 259 sporcu oluşturmaktadır. Araştırma-

nın veri toplama bölümünde araştırmacılar tarafından hazırlanan "Kişisel Bilgi Formu", Miçooğulları ve Kirazcı tarafından Türkçeye uyarlanan "Sporda Kendine Güven Kaynakları Ölçeği" ve Gürbüz ve arkadaşları tarafından Türkçeye uyarlanan "Sporda Mücadele ve Tehdit Ölçeği" kullanılmıştır. Sporcuların kendine güven kaynakları ile mücadele ve tehdit algıları arasındaki ilişkiyi incelemek için Pearson korelasyon katsayısı ve etkiyi belirlemek için regresyon analizi yapılmıştır. Sonuçlar, SSCQ ile CAT-Sport'un alt boyutlarından biri olan Mücadele (r=0,517 p=0,001) arasında pozitif ve orta düzeyde bir ilişki olduğunu göstermiştir. SSCQ'nun toplam puanı (R2=0,231 p=0,001), uzmanlık (R2=0,258 p=0,001), fiziksel ve zihinsel hazırlık (R2=0,245 p=0,001) alt boyutları CAT-Sport'un Mücadele alt boyutu üzerinde pozitif bir etki göstermiştir. Bu ifadelerin, sporcuların özgüven kaynaklarını doğru yönetebilmeleri halinde mücadeleye dönüşerek performanslarını olumlu yönde etkileyeceği düşünülebilir. Bu bulgular, sporcuların özgüven kaynaklarının, özellikle fiziksel ve zihinsel hazırlık ile uzmanlık algılarının, meydan okuma düzeylerini artırmada önemli bir rol oynadığını göstermektedir. Bu bağlamda, sporcuların özgüven kaynaklarının geliştirilmesine yönelik stratejilerin, meydan okuma ile başa çıkma becerilerini artırabileceği önerilmektedir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Dövüş Sporları, Tehdit, Mücadele, Kendine Güven Kaynakları.

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INTRODUCTION

Self-confidence is one of the factors that affects and determines performance in sports (Vealey et al., 1998). Self-confidence contributes to sports when it can be associated with qualities such as mental endurance, composure, determination, and courage. (Hays et al., 2009). In this respect, sports self-confidence is defined as the degree of belief or certainty that individuals have about their ability to succeed in sports (Vealey, 1986) and is seen as an important tool for success (Feltz, et al. 2008). Therefore, sources of athletes' self-confidence, such as encouragement from family and loved ones, a good playing experience, a strong belief about oneself, and environmental conditions (Tahki, 2015), are vital for understanding how they can influence an athlete's confidence, cognition, emotion, behavior, and performance (Sampan & Gomez, 2015). The selection of these resources can be partly explained by athletes' perceptions of success or their ability to manage goal orientations (Magyar & Duda, 2000). In other words, what the athlete chooses as a source of confidence and how he/she perceives it varies as he/she goes through a management process (Chi-der et al., 2003). For self-confidence to increase in the sports environment, the individual is expected to be able to manage the goals that the individual or his/her close environment expects correctly. As athletes achieve short-term goals, their sense of self-confidence increases (Işık, 2018).

When athletes feel under pressure in a competition (Seery, 2011), they review their needs and coping abilities (Blascovich, 2008). When they perceive themselves to have sufficient confidence resources, they see the situation as a challenge. In contrast, athletes who decide that they do not have the necessary coping resources consider the environment an area of concern (Seery, 2013; Erim & Küçük, 2017). More importantly, challenge and threat are not recognized as bipolar states but as efforts of a unipolar continuum (Brimella et al., 2018). It is emphasized that states of challenge and threat only occur during times of motivated performance when commitment to the task is experienced (Blascovich, 2013), which is particularly important for sport scenarios where athletes are motivated to reach their peak and will be evaluated based on these performances (Sammy, et al., 2020; Blascovich, 2013). However, research suggests that the ability to manage self-confidence resources meets or exceeds the demands of challenge and threat (Tomaka et al., 1993). In this context Although existing research acknowledges that demographic, personality, and organizational factors affect the sources of self-confidence in sports used by university, first-year, and master athletes (Vealey et al., 1998; Wilson et al., 2004; Hays et al., 2007), the limited number of studies on how competitive athletes, such as combat sports, react under difficulty and pressure while managing the factors that are thought to create threat and challenge needs to manage their sources of confidence reveals the importance of our research. From this perspective, the aim of this study was to examine the effect of self-confidence sources on the levels of challenge and threat in combat athletes.

METHOD

Research Model

In this study, relational screening model was used. The relational screening model is a type of research model that aims to determine whether or not there is a relationship between two and more variables and/or the degree of relationship (Fraenkel & Wallen, 2011).

Research Group

The participant research group consists of a total of 259 athletes, 100 female and 159 male, who were determined by simple random sampling method, practicing sports in private and public fight clubs in Ağrı, Batman, Muş and Van provinces. Data were collected online, and individuals who read and approved the informed consent form were included in this study (Büyüköztürk, 2018).

Data Collection Tools

In this study, The personal information form, Sources of Sport-Confidence Questionnaire, and The Challenge and Threat in Sport Scale were utilized. The personal information form created by the researcher to determine the demographic characteristics of the athletes included questions on sex, age, educational status, sportive achievement, sport branch, sport age, and national sportsmanship status. Survey data were applied online to the participants.

Sources of Sport-Confidence Questionnaire (SSCQ)

The Source of Sport Confidence Questionnaire (SSCQ), developed by Valley et al. (1988) and adapted into Turkish by Miçooğulları and Kirazcı (2010), consists of 43 items grouped under 9 sub-dimensions (expertise, skill presentation, physical and mental preparation, physical self-presentation, social support, coach/coach leadership, empathy experience, environmental comfort, situational suitability). The item distributions of the sub-dimensions of the inventory are as follows: expertise (5, 15, 23, 32, 42), skill presentation (11, 20, 29, 36, 40), physical and mental preparation (3, 4, 13, 22, 31, 38), physical self-presentation (8, 17, 26), social support (1, 10, 19, 28, 35, 39), coach/coach leadership (9, 18, 27, 34, 43), empathy (12, 21, 30, 37, 41), environmental comfort (7, 14, 24, 33), and situational appropriateness (6, 16, 25). The internal consistency coefficients of the nine sub-dimensions in the scale varied between .41 and .78, and the overall internal consistency coefficient of all items was at an acceptable level of.94. A 7-point likert system was used for the evaluation.

The Challenge and Threat in Sport Scale (CAT-Sport)

Developed by Rossato et al. (2018) and adapted into Turkish by Gürbüz et al. (2021), the Challenge and Threat in Sport Scale consists of 11 items grouped under 2 sub-dimensions (Threat and Challenge). The item distribution of the sub-dimensions that make up the inventory is as follows; Threat (1,2,3,4,5,6), Challenge (7,8,9,10,11). It is stated that the internal consistency coefficients of the 2 sub-dimensions in the scale vary between .80 and .84 and the general internal consistency coefficient of all items is at an acceptable level with .82 (Miçooğulları & Kirazcı, 2010). The survey questions were answered as follows: Strongly Disagree", "disagree", "neutral", "agree" or Strongly Agree". The lowest score obtained on the total scale was 11, and the highest score was 55. In addition, the lowest score in the worry sub-dimension of the scale was 6 and the highest score was 30, while the lowest score in the Challenge sub-dimension was 5 and the highest score was 25.

Research Publication Ethics

Ethics committee permission was obtained with the decision of the Ağrı İbrahim Çeçen University Ethics Committee dated 25.05.2023 and numbered 122.

Data Analysis

In this study, gender, sportive success status, sports branch, and success status were determined as independent variables, and descriptive statistics, percentages, and frequencies are given as tables. The normality of the distribution of the sub-dimension scores of the self-confidence sources scale and the scores of the Challenge and Threat scale in combat athletes was examined using Skewness and Kurtosis coefficients. The internal consistency coefficients of the scales were determined using Cronbach's alpha reliability analysis. Pearson's Correlation test was applied to reveal the relationship between the scores obtained from the scales for each subdimension. In this study, regression analysis was used to determine the effects of competition orientation and achievement motivation on combat athletes. Statistical analyses were performed using the SPSS 27 software.

FINDINGS

In this part of the study, frequency distributions, socio-demographic characteristics, sources of self-confidence, and correlation and regression were tabulated to examine the relationship and impact in terms of Challenge, Threat, and sub-dimensions.

Table 1. Distribution of Participants According to Demographic Characteristics

		n	%
Gender	Female	100	38.6
	Male	159	61.4
	Total	259	100.0
Achievement	International	59	22.8
	National	200	77.2
	Total	259	100.0
Sport Branch	Boxing	92	35.5
	Kickboxing	116	44.8
	Muaytai	51	19.7
	Total	259	100.0

According to the gender of the participants; 38.6% were female, 61.4% were male, sporting success status; 22.8% international success, 77.2% national success, according to the sport branch; 35.5% boxing, 44.8% kickboxing, 19.7% muaytai (Table.1).

Table 2. Normality Distributions of Variables

Measuring Tools	Min	Max	SS	Skewness	Kurtosis
Sources of Sport-Confidence Questionnaire	11.00	55.00	8.12	.390	-.612
The Challenge and Threat in Sport Scale	49.00	301.00	41.20	-1.545	1.950

As a result of the normality analysis performed to determine the normality of the distribution of the data, Skewness and Kurtosis coefficients were between -2 and +2 (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2001). The data were normally distributed (Table. 2).

Table 3. Correlation values of sources of self-confidence and threat and challenge

	r/p	CAT-Sport	Threat	Challenge
SSCQ	r	.295	.082	**.517**
	p	<.001	.023	**<.001**
Specialization	r	.209	-.045	**.568**
	p	<.001	.212	**<.001**
Skill Presentation	r	.239	.036	**.491**
	p	<.001	.326	**<.001**
Physical and Mental Preparation	r	.239	.019	**.516**
	p	<.001	.603	**<.001**
Physical Self Presentation	r	.281	.120	**.413**
	p	<.001	.001	**<.001**
Social Support	r	.260	.101	**.397**
	p	<.001	.005	**<.001**
Coach Leadership	r	.226	.037	**.444**
	p	<.001	.307	**<.001**
Empathy Experience	r	.218	.067	**.382**
	p	<.001	.062	**<.001**
Environmental Comfort	r	.258	.111	**.378**
	p	<.001	.002	**<.001**
Situational Relevance	r	.324	.186	**.367**
	p	<.001	<.001	**<.001**

According to the results of the correlation test, a low-level positive relationship (r=.295 p=.000) was found between the SSCQ and CAT-Sport at the 5% significance level. There was a low-level positive correlation between the SSCQ and concern (r=.082 p=.023) and a moderate positive correlation with challenge (r=.517 p=<.001). In addition, the sub-dimensions of SSCQ were expertise (r=.568 p=<.001), skill presentation (r=.491 p=<.001), physical and mental preparation (r=.516 p=<.001), physical self-presentation (r=.413 p=<.001), social support (r=.397 p=<.001), coach/coach leadership (r=. 444 p=<.001), empathy experience (r=.382 p=<.001), environmental comfort (r=.378 p=<.001), situational fitness (r=.367 p=<.001), and challenge among the sub-dimensions of CAT-Sport.

Table 4. Challenge and anxiety regression values with sources of self-confidence

Variables		Std	R_2	β	t	p
SSCQ	**CAT-Sport**	38.20	.115	.340	998	<.001
SSCQ	Threat	40.29	.016	.128	356	<.001
	Challenge	35.62	.231	.481	1515	<.001
Specialization	Threat	5.67	<.001	.022	.601	.548
	Challenge	4.89	.258	.508	16.29	<.001
Skill Presentation	Threat	5.55	.011	.103	2.87	.004
	Challenge	5.06	.179	.423	12.90	<.001
Physical and Mental Preparation	Threat	6.21	.004	.062	1.72	.085
	Challenge	5.41	.245	.495	15.74	<.001
Physical Self Presentation	Threat	3.29	.020	.140	3.92	<.001
	Challenge	3.01	.176	.420	12.78	<.001
Social Support	Threat	6.46	.021	.145	4.04	<.001
	Challenge	6.06	.140	.375	11.16	<.001
Coach Leadership	Threat	5.70	.014	.120	3.34	.001
	Challenge	5.30	.147	.384	11.48	<.001
Empathy Experience	Threat	6.16	.014	.120	3.34	.001
	Challenge	5.87	.106	.326	9.52	<.001
Environmental Comfort	Threat	4.33	.014	.118	3.27	.001
	Challenge	4.08	.127	356	10.52	<.001
Situational Relevance	Threat	3.24	.044	210	5.94	<.001
	Challenge	3.10	.125	.354	10.45	<.001

According to the results of the regression test, as a result of the regression analysis conducted to determine the effect between the SSCQ and CAT-Sport, it was seen that the regression model established at 5% significance level was significant at p<.05. It has been determined that the SSCQ has a weak positive significant effect on the CAT-sport. The R2 value, expressed as the explanatory power of the

model, was calculated to be .115 (R2=.115 p=<.001). This value shows that 11.5% of the variable (variance) of the SSCQ is explained by the independent variable in the CAT-Sport model. The beta coefficient of the independent variable included in the regression model was ß=.340 (p=<.001). Accordingly, as p<.05, SSCQ had a significant effect on CAT-sport. The total score (R2=.231 p=<.001), specialization (R2=.258 p=<.001), and physical and mental preparation (R2=.245 p=<.001) subdimensions of the SSCQ had a weak positive significant effect on the challenge subdimension of the CAT-Sport.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

According to the results of the correlation test, there was a low positive correlation (r=.295 p=<.001) between SSCQ and CAT-Sport at the 5% level. This may mean that, to the extent that the athlete can manage the resources that he/she trusts, he/she will achieve success based on challenge or perceive threats and fail.

It was determined that there was a low level positive relationship between SSCQ and CAT-Sport sub-dimensions of anxiety (r=.082 p=.023) and a moderate level positive relationship with challenge (r=.517 p=<.001). This situation may lead to the conclusion that when athletes cannot get the support they want from trust sources, they may have attitudes that perceive a threat against their opponents in the competition.

In addition, the SSCQ sub-dimensions of expertise (r=.568 p=<.001), skill presentation (r=.491 p=<.001), physical and mental preparation (r=.516 p=<.001), physical self-presentation (r=.413 p=<.001), social support (r=.397 p=<.001), and coach/coach leadership (r=. 444 p=<.001), empathy experience (r=.382 p=<.001), environmental comfort (r=.378 p=<.001), situational fitness (r=.367 p=<.001), and the CAT-Sport sub-dimensions of challenge (Table 3). This situation can be interpreted to mean that athletes exhibit a combative attitude as a result of the support they receive from their family and close friends as well as the self-confidence that comes from feeling competent in their branches. Veroff (2009) revealed that factors such as coach leadership, mastery of skills, and displaying talent have the highest average among the sources of self-confidence, and that task-oriented individuals' desire to compete increases as a result of presenting mastery of skills and social support as a factor in creating self-confidence by managing them correctly. Athletes who make skill presentations before the competition show a higher level of challenge (Levy et al., 2015), and those who think that they are experts in their sports branches increase their challenge and performance (Vealey, 2001). It is argued that manageable sources of self-confidence have the ability to be successful in performing tasks and special sports skills that affect the emotional and behavioral reactions of athletes in anxiety situations in competition (Bandura, 1997;

Bandura, 2001). The According to the results of the regression test, as a result of the regression analysis conducted to determine the effect between SSCQ and CAT-Sport, it was seen that the regression model established at 5% significance level was significant at p<.05. It was determined that the SSCQ had a weak positive significant effect on CAT-Sport. The R2 value expressed as the explanatory power of the model was calculated as .115 (R2=.115 p=<.001). This value shows that 11.5% of the variance in the SSCQ variable (variance) is explained by CAT-Sport, which is the independent variable in the model. The beta coefficient of the independent variable included in the regression model was ß=.340 (p=<.001). Accordingly, the SSCQ had a significant effect on CAT-Sport (p<.05. SSCQ total score (R2=.231 p=<.001), specialization (R2=.258 p=<.001), and physical and mental preparation (R2=.245 p=<.001) sub-dimensions were found to have a weak positive significant effect on the combat sub-dimension of CAT-Sport. According to Lopes (2008), when a player continuously interacts with a structured environment (teammates, opponents, spectators, light or wind conditions, and type of surface), they develop behavioral patterns towards the process of managing self-confidence resources, thus minimizing or eliminating the psychological imbalance that often prevents performance by keeping them calm and relaxed during competition. It has been argued that self-confidence resources refer to belief and confidence in the ability to control oneself and the environment to strengthen athletes' perceived ability to manage anxiety and negative emotions in sports competitions (Burton, 1998; Woodman & Hardy, 2001), the lack of which can cause athletes to have less influence over their anger, which inevitably leads to problems such as anxiety. (Hanton & Connaughton, 2002; Craft, et al., 2003; Hanton et al., 2003; Robazza & Bortoli, 2007), self-confidence resource management in sports has a positive correlation with anger control and combat success and has a positive effect on controlling and maintaining the situation during competition (Hanton & Connaughton, 2002; Hanton et al., 2003; Robazza & Bortoli, 2007; Ursin & Eriksen, 2004). Bandura (1977) stated that out of the four main skills of athletes (tactical, mental, technical, and physical skills), self-confidence resources turn into challenge or anxiety depending on the way they are managed (Firestone, 2018). It has been stated that when there are deficiencies in the management of self-confidence resources, low perceived control is encountered and the desired levels of performance cannot be achieved because of an increase in anxiety levels (Eysenck & Calvo, 1992; Hanton & Jones, 1997; Hanton & Connaughton, 2002). All athletes rely on social support from coaches, peers, and family members as sources of trust (Hays et al., 2007, 2009). These findings emphasize that social support is an indispensable part of challenge and success by defining it as a highly effective source of trust for adolescents participating in sports (Vealey et al., 1998) and physical education (Chase, 1998; Thomas et al., 2021).

As a result, in our study, it can be stated that the level of manageability of self-confidence sources is decisive in deciding whether the reactions of combat athletes in a competition situation will turn into challenge or threat. In addition, it can be said that the fact that coaches and managers have sufficient information about which confidence sources athletes can manage better leads to a decrease in the perception of threat against the opponent by causing the desired challenge attitude to be exhibited. In particular, it can be thought that athletes feel adequate and ready in their fields, creating a significant source of confidence and increasing their desire to fight. Thus, our research may be important in terms of contributing to the field. In order for the self-confidence sources of the athletes to positively affect their challenge and threat levels, first of all, it is necessary to determine which confidence sources the combat athletes can manage more effectively individually by the experts and necessary information should be provided to the coaches and managers. Thus, it may be appropriate to emphasize expectations by including the family and close environment in the process. Based on this research, in addition to conducting studies in different regions of the country by making changes for age groups, the results can be compared by conducting research on team sports.

Conflict of Interest

All personal and financial conflicts of interest within the scope of the study does not exist.

Author Contribution Rates

Design of Study: ÜS(%60), MV(%40)

Data Acquisition: ÜS(%40), MV(%30), MÖ(%30)

Data Analysis: ÜS(%40), MV(%30), MÖ(%30)

Writing Up: ÜS(%30), MV(%30), MÖ(%20), MM(%20)

Submission and Revision: ÜS(%30), MV(%30), MÖ(%20), MM(%20)

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