



## FOOTBALL REFEREES' VALUE ORIENTATIONS AND THEIR VIEWS ON VALUES EDUCATION<sup>\*\*</sup>

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### Abstract

The objective of the research is to determine football referees' value orientations and their views on values education. The study was evaluated with a qualitative research design and carried out with the interview method. The research group consists of 17 football referees. The research group was determined by maximum variation sampling, one of the non-probability sampling strategies and purposive sampling methods. Data were collected through a semi-structured interview form, and content analysis method was used in the analysis. According to the research results, it was determined that football referees are guided by characteristics such as praying, wearing jerseys believed to bring good luck, entering the field with the right foot, believing that a whistle given as a gift brings good luck, listening to music, being motivated by thinking, making self-criticism, a sense of justice and national feeling, that sports develop values such as being disciplined, being calm, being physically and spiritually dynamic, self-confidence, being able to empathize, being aware of responsibility, establishing dominance over the group, being ambitious, being patient, strengthening social relations, communication skills, gaining sports culture, being gentlemanly and sharing, and that it is important to include universal and national values in referee trainings and to apply psychological tests on value education.

**Keywords:** football, referee, value, education



## **Introduction**

Football is one of the most popular sports branches in the world, which many people follow with interest (Göksel et al., 2016). Football, which gives sports a prominent position in the world, is more than just a game; it provides people with a universe where they can find joy, sadness, power, pride and identity. In addition to supporting the development of personality, football has an important place in providing communication between people and enabling people to be influenced by each other (Talimciler, 2008).

The game of football is divided into stakeholders: those who play the sport, those who watch the sport and those who manage the sport. Among these stakeholders, it can be said that referees, who determine the fate of the competition with their decisions, are in an important position (Pepe et al., 1999). Referees are responsible for the "fair" progress of organizations. Referees are at the centre of the competition and play an important role in performing their duties in a fair manner. They are at the centre of the competition to such an extent that they can direct the reactions of players and fans with their decisions and actions. Referees are obliged to be consistent in their decisions. The responsibility that social pressure imposes on the referee is a management style that is objective, decisive, self-confident, within the framework of fair play, that is a pleasure to watch, that allows actions in accordance with sports ethics, and that is objective in every aspect (Çelik, 2004). In line with this information, it can be said that the values that guide the attitudes and behaviours of football referees, who have an important place in the phenomenon of football in order for football in Turkey to gain the place it deserves and for football competitions to gain a more watchable dimension (Yıldız & Güven, 2019), have an important place. After all, a referee who does not have a universal value such as justice awareness within his/her personality cannot be expected to establish justice in the competitions he/she is in charge of. Therefore, it is thought that knowing the values of football referees have would eliminate the negative discussions that arise in the phenomenon of football.

In this regard, it can be said that the values of football referees who have to manage the matches despite these negative conditions (Yıldız and Yıldız, 2020a) have a great impact on the development of today's football. In this context, considering the moral corruption in sports in recent years, it is predicted that football referees' thoughts on values will be important and will offer effective ideas about the corruption in the context of values in football (Yıldız and Yıldız, 2020b).

In conclusion, it is very important to know the value orientations of football referees and have them gain the values accepted by the society through values education in the football competitions, which is one of the most important areas of sports organisations. From this point of view, this study aims to determine the value orientations of football referees in Turkey and their views on values education. It is thought that this research will contribute to the literature since there is a limited number of studies on the values of football referees in the literature.

## **Materials and Methods**

### ***Research Model***

Qualitative research method was used in the study. Qualitative research is an approach that prioritizes the examination and understanding of social phenomena in the environments they are related to, with understandings towards theory building (Glaser, 1978).



In this research, the interview method, which is frequently used in qualitative research designs, was used in the research in order to hear the experiences of the participants directly from the them (Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2018). The interview method is carried out in the form of face-to-face conversations with the people determined by the researcher in the field where the research will be conducted in a formal or conversational style so that they can transfer the subject to each other (Kümbetoğlu, 2005).

### **Research Design**

In this study, phenomenology, one of the qualitative research designs, was used (Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2018). Phenomenology is a qualitative research method that enables people to express their understanding, feelings, perspectives and perceptions about a particular phenomenon or concept and to describe how they experience this phenomenon (Rose et al., 1995; Patton, 2014).

### **Research Group**

The research group consisted of 17 football referees (15 Male, 2 Female) who were actively working in various regions of Turkey in the 2020-2021 Football Season.

Due to the research topic being "examining the value orientations of football referees and their views on values education"; targeting a certain group and the researcher's aim to reach detailed information about this group guided the sample selection. For this reason, the purposeful sampling method (Merriam, 2018), which is one of the most frequently used non-probability sampling strategies suitable for qualitative research (Altındaş & Ergin 2018; Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2018), and the maximum variation sampling method, one of these purposeful sampling methods, were used in the study.

The distribution of the information about the pseudonym codes, age, education level, classification level, refereeing tenure, profession and date of interview of the football referees constituting the research group is given in Table 1.

**Table 1:** Distribution of the information about the pseudonym codes of the football referees constituting the research group, age, education status, classification level, referee tenure, profession and date of interview

Codes	Age	Education Status	Classification Level	Referee Tenure	Profession	Interview Date
H1	25	MA	RR	5	Academician	05.03.2021
H2	28	BA	RAR	7	Teacher	15.03.2021
H3	32	BA	RR	7	Teacher	25.03.2021
H4	26	BA	PR	6	Teacher	01.04.2021
H5	29	BA	RAR	9	Private Sector	10.04.2021
H6	24	MA	RR	6	Academician	15.04.2021
H7	25	BA	RR	5	Teacher	20.04.2021
H8	31	BA	RAR	8	Officer	29.04.2021
H9	26	BA	RAR	5	Teacher	05.05.2021
H10	27	BA	RAR	6	Private Sector	15.05.2021
H11	26	BA	RAR	5	Teacher	24.05.2021
H12	28	BA	PR	6	Teacher	31.05.2021
H13	27	BA	RAR	7	Teacher	06.06.2021
H14	26	BA	PR	7	Teacher	12.06.2021
H15	29	BA	PR	7	Teacher	18.06.2021
H16	31	BA	RR	11	Teacher	22.06.2021
H17	24	BA	PR	4	Teacher	28.06.2021



BA= Bachelor's Degree  
RR= Regional Referee

MA= Master's Degree  
RAR= Regional Assistant Referee

PR= Provincial Referee

### ***Data Collection Tools***

In this study, "Personal Information Form" and "Semi-structured Interview Form" developed by the researcher were used as data collection tools. In the personal information form, there were 5 questions meant to gather qualitative data (age, classification, tenure, education level and occupation) were included and 4 open-ended questions were included in the semi-structured interview form. These questions are as follows:

1. If you have a colleague who you look up to as a football referee in Turkey or abroad, which characteristics of that referee have influenced you?
2. What are your moral values/beliefs that you think that guide you before or during the competition?
3. Which values do you think football refereeing and sports have developed in your life?
4. What are your thoughts on giving trainings on values education (love, respect, tolerance, responsibility, empathy, etc.) to football referees?

In the development phase of the interview form prepared for the purpose of conducting the interview in qualitative research methods, the literature was scanned, the sub-problems of the research were analyzed and the data needed to answer these sub-problems were investigated. Attention was paid to arranging the questions to be asked to the participants in an orderly and meaningful manner, preparing questions that would focus on individuals, avoiding multi-dimensional questions and directions, and not asking questions that would cause short answers. In addition, the questions were graded as "necessary", "needs correction" or "unnecessary" and evaluated by experts, and a question pool consisting of 6 items was created. Later, 4 participants similar to the sample to be applied were interviewed and their reactions were measured. At the end of the trial, it was determined that there was no problem in the functioning of the interview form and the 4 most appropriate questions that were suitable for the purpose of the research were determined by taking into account the expert opinions.

### ***Data Collection Process***

In the study, the implementation of the semi-structured "Interview Form" developed by the researcher was started in March 2021 by obtaining permission and appointment from the participants and was completed in June 2021. Interviews were conducted on a voluntary basis in environments where the participants could be comfortable.

The interviews were recorded with the permission of the participants and with a recording device to prevent data loss. The estimated duration of an interview was 25-30 minutes. At the beginning and at the end of the study, the researcher explained to the participants that the research would be used only for scientific purposes and that all personal data would be kept confidential in order to eliminate problems that could lead to ethical problems, and the researcher kept all data with intact originality.

### ***Data Analysis***

In order to reach a conclusion based on the interviews conducted in the research, the interview forms were transferred to the electronic environment in the exact accuracy to the recording



and this way, a written document was created in an organized manner. The football referees (15 male, 2 female) who participated in the interview were given different pseudonyms within the scope of confidentiality of their personal information (Table 1).

In the study, the data were evaluated by content analysis method. Content analysis consists of four stages: coding the data, finding themes, organizing the data according to codes and themes, defining and interpreting the findings (Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2018). All these steps were meticulously carried out by the researcher during the analysis process.

### **Validity and Reliability of the Study**

Validity and reliability in research are important concepts in terms of revealing the scientificity, credibility, measurability, generalizability and reproducibility of that study (Kılınç, 2018). In this context, in order to ensure the validity and reliability of this research credibility, long-term interaction, depth-oriented data collection, expert review, participant confirmation, confirmability, transferability, and consistency strategies frequently used in qualitative research were utilized (Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2018; Creswell, 2013; Merriam, 2018).

The reliability of the data in the context of the codes was calculated using Miles and Huberman's (1994) formula. This formula is as follows.

$$"[Theme\ of\ agreement / (Theme\ of\ agreement + Theme\ of\ disagreement)] \times 100"$$

The result of the above formula, which is intended to test the conformity between the coding experts, is expected to be higher than 70% (Miles & Huberman, 1994; Patton, 2014). As a result of the application of the formula, 43 of the 47 codes proposed by the experts were approved, and  $43 / (43+4) * 100=91.4\%$  consensus was reached on the appropriateness of the coding. The 4 codes on which there was no consensus were combined with other appropriate codes. As a result, it can be said that the data analysis is reliable.

### **Results**

In this section of the study, findings based on the results of the analysis of qualitative data are presented.

**Table 2:** Findings Related to the Referees' Views on Which Characteristics of a Football Referee They Take as an Example in Turkey and Abroad and How These Characteristics Affect Them

Themes	Codes	Participants	Frequency
Dominant Personality Structure	✓ Determination	H4, H6, H7, H8, H10, H12	6
	✓ Being Authoritarian	H1, H3, H12, H14, H17	5
	✓ Becoming Successful	H2, H5, H13, H16	4
	✓ Self-confidence	H6, H7, H10	3
	✓ Game Control	H3, H9, H15	3
	✓ Keep Calm	H6, H7, H13	3
Total			24
Expressive Personality	✓ High Communication Skills	H3, H6, H9, H10 H11, H12, H13, H14, H15	9
	✓ Respect and Admiration	H6, H11	2
Total			11
Athletic Ability	✓ Being in the Right Place at the Right Time	H1, H2, H3, H11, H12, H13, H14, H16	8



	✓	Running Style	H2, H14	2
Total				10
Athletic Personality	✓	Physical Appearance	H4, H6, H12, H16	4
Total				4
Informational Readiness	✓	Rule Knowledge	H3, H5, H6, H13	4
Total				4

According to Table 2, the themes determined in terms of objectives and the codes that make up these themes are listed below as headings according to the frequency of repetition and are supplied with sample sentences that best explain the participants' views on the subject.

**Theme 1: Dominant Personality (f:21)**

**Code 1: Determination (f:6);** "...Standing behind his decisions are the characteristics that impress me. (H7)", **Code 2: Being Authoritarian (f:5);** "...Reflecting that he has the dominance and power on the field... (H12)", **Code 3: Becoming Successful (f:4);** "Italian referee Nicola Rizzoli being successful on the field is a good example for me... (H16)", **Code 4: Self-confidence (f:3);** "...I was seriously impressed by the confidence of Firat Aydinus. (H6)", **Code 5: Game Control (f:3);** "...Game control is a characteristic that I take as an example... (H3)", **Code 6: Keep Calm (f:3);** "Super league assistant referee Serkan Ok's calmness during the match. (H13)"

**Theme 2: Expressive Personality (f:11)**

**Code 1: High Communication Skills (f:9);** "...Strong communication skills with players, coaching staff and spectators... (H12)", **Code 2: Respect and Admiration (f:2);** "Tarik Ongun. He is a referee who has a very special place in my heart and whom I respect... (H11)"

**Theme 3: Athletic Ability (f:10)**

**Code 1: Being in the right place at the right time (f:8);** "...the referee being in the right place at the right time... (H2)", **Code 2: Running Style (f:2);** "...Felix Brych's running style is what I look up to... (H14)"

**Theme 4: Athletic Personality (f:4)**

**Code 1: Physical Appearance (f:4);** "...Nicola Rizzoli is an important factor in my role modelling with his posture, charisma and appearance...(H16)"

**Theme 5: Informational Readiness (f:4)**

**Code 1: Rule Knowledge (f:4);** "...I like English referees because they are very well equipped and have a good knowledge of the rules...(H5)"

**Table 3: Findings Related to Referees' Views on Values/Beliefs that They Think Guide Them Before or After the Competition**

Themes		Codes	Participants	Frequency
Spiritual Value	✓	Prayer	H3, H5, H6, H7, H8, H10, H13, H14	8
	✓	Belief	H4, H5, H9, H14	4
Total				12
Personal Value	✓	Listening to Music	H4, H6	2
	✓	Motivated Thinking	H1, H12	2
	✓	Self-Criticism	H17	1
Total				5



Universal Value	✓	Sense of Justice	H2, H3, H15, H16	4
Total				4
Sociocultural Value	✓	National Emotion	H11	1
Total				1

According to Table 3, the themes determined in terms of objectives and the codes that make up these themes are listed below as headings according to the frequency of repetition and are supplied with sample sentences that best explain the participants' views on the subject.

### Theme 1: Spiritual Value (f:12)

**Code 1: Prayer** (f:8); "...I definitely pray for the competition to go well. (H10)", **Code 2: Belief** (f:4); "...I have beliefs that entering the competition field with the right foot and wearing the yellow jersey gives energy. (H4)",

### Theme 2: Personal Value (f:5)

**Code 1: Listening to Music** (f:2); "...While preparing for the competition, music is constantly playing in the background...(H6)", **Code 2: Motivated Thinking** (f:2); "...I prepare mentally before the competition and get motivated... (H12)", **Code 3: Self-criticism** (f:1); "...After the competition, I question myself and make self-criticism about what I did wrong... (H17)"

### Theme 3: Universal Value (f:4)

**Code 1: Sense of Justice** (f:4); "...To be just without being unfair against a team... (H16)"

### Theme 4: Sociocultural Value (f:1)

**Code 1: National Emotion** (f:1); "...Values that emphasize national feelings such as flag and anthem give me strength. (H11)"

**Table 4:** Findings Related to Referees' Views on Which Values Football Refereeing and Sports Developed in Their Lives

Themes	Codes	Participants	Frequency
Individual Values	✓ Being Disciplined	H2, H8, H9, H11, H13, H14, H16, H17	8
	✓ Fast and Accurate Decision Making	H3, H10, H11, H13, H14	5
	✓ Keeping Calm	H6, H10, H11, H12	4
	✓ Being Physically and Mentally Dynamic	H10, H11, H17	3
	✓ Self-confidence	H9, H11, H17	3
	✓ Empathize	H6, H7	2
	✓ Awareness of Responsibility	H16	1
	✓ Establishing Dominance over the Group	H4	1
	✓ Ambition	H17	1
	✓ Patience	H3	1
Total			29
Social Values	✓ Strengthening Social Relationship	H5, H6, H8, H10, H12, H13, H14, H15	8
	✓ Communication Skills	H1, H4, H6, H10, H13	5
	✓ Acquisition of Sports Culture	H4, H6, H8, H9	4
	✓ Fairness	H3, H12	2
	✓ Chivalry	H12	1
	✓ Respectability	H10	1
	✓ Sharing	H12	1



Total	22
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According to Table 4, the themes determined in terms of objectives and the codes that make up these themes are listed below as headings according to the frequency of repetition and are supplied with sample sentences that best explain the participants' views on the subject.

**Theme 1: Individual Values (f:29)**

**Code 1: Being Disciplined** (f:8); "*Football refereeing and sports taught me discipline... (H9)*", **Code 2: Fast and Accurate Decision Making** (f:5); "*...It improved my quick thinking and accurate decision making... (H10)*", **Code 3: Keeping Calm** (f:4); "*...It allows us to get away from conflict environments and be calm... (H12)*", **Code 4: Being Physically and Mentally Dynamic** (f:3); "*...It has a very beneficial effect both physically and mentally... (H11)*", **Code 5: Self-confidence** (f:3); "*...It made me more self-confident... (H17)*", **Code 6: Empathize** (f:2); "*...It contributed significantly to the development of my ability to empathize and think like other people... (H6)*", **Code 7: Awareness of Responsibility** (f:1); "*Football refereeing contributed to the value of responsibility in me... (H16)*", **Code 8: Establishing Dominance over the Group** (f: 1); "*It contributed positively to my ability to establish dominance over the group... (H4)*", **Code 9: Ambition** (f: 1); "*...It teaches me to be ambitious. (H17)*", **Code 10: Patience** (f:1); "*...Refereeing taught me patience... (H3)*"

**Theme 2: Social Values (f:22)**

**Code 1: Strengthening Social Relationship** (f:8); "*...It increases socialization by establishing good relationships with people. (H12)*", **Code 2: Communication Skills** (f:5); "*...I can say that my communication has improved. (H13)*", **Code 3: Acquisition of Sports Culture** (f:4); "*...It has made doing sports permanent by placing sports culture in my life... (H9)*", **Code 4: Fairness** (f:2); "*...Refereeing taught me to be fair... (H3)*", **Code 5: Chivalry** (f:1); "*...It developed value concepts such as chivalry. (H12)*", **Code 6: Respectability** (f:1); "*...It gave me respectability... (H10)*", **Code 7: Sharing** (f:1); "*...It contributes to the person to be sharing rather than being selfish... (H12)*"

**Table 5:** Findings Related to Referees' Opinions on Providing Trainings on Value Education to Football Referees

Themes	Codes	Participants	Frequency
Planning the Training Process	✓ Continuous Trainings	H1, H4, H6, H8, H9, H13, H14	7
	✓ Providing Trainings to All Sports Stakeholders	H2, H3, H5, H16	4
	✓ Getting Support from Expert Educators	H6, H7, H17	3
	✓ Including Universal and National Values in Education	H12	1
	✓ Application of Psychological Tests on Values Education	H12	1
Total			16
Impact of Value Education	✓ Importance of Trainings for Referee Development	H6, H10, H11	3
Total			3
Overview of the Education Process	✓ Successful Delivery of Trainings	H10, H11, H15	3
Total			3





According to Table 5, the themes determined in terms of objectives and the codes that make up these themes are listed below as headings according to the frequency of repetition and are supplied with sample sentences that best explain the participants' views on the subject.

### **Theme 1: Planning the Training Process (f:16)**

**Code 1: Continuous Trainings (f:7);** *"I think that trainings should be provided continuously because I think that these values are an integral part of football refereeing. (H4)"*, **Code 2: Providing Trainings to All Sports Stakeholders (f:4);** *"...Trainings should be provided not only to referees but also to the sports community in general... (H5)"*, **Code 3: Getting Support from Expert Educators (f:3);** *"...I have the opinion that support should be received from experts of their fields. (H17)"*, **Code 4: Including Universal and National Values in Education (f:1);** *"...Universal and national values can be included in referee trainings... (H12)"*, **Code 5: Application of Psychological Tests on Values Education (f:1);** *"...Referees should be applied psychological tests on values education at certain intervals... (H12)"*

### **Theme 1: Impact of Value Education (f:3)**

**Code 1: Importance of Trainings for Referee Development (f:3);** *"...Trainings help referees to look at the situations from a different perspective and improve themselves... (H11)"*

### **Theme 1: Overview of the Education Process (f:3)**

**Code 1: Successful Delivery of Trainings (f:3);** *"...I think the trainings were successful... (H15)"*

## **Discussion**

When the results in Table 2 are examined, it is seen that the referees' opinions on which characteristics of a football referee they take as an example in Turkey and abroad have an effect on them, were relayed under five distinct categories. Under the theme of "Dominant Personality Structure"; "Being Decisive", "Being Authoritarian", "Being Successful", "Self-confidence", "Game Control" and "Being Calm" were mentioned. Under the next theme of "Influential Personality Structure"; "High Communication Skills" and "Respect and Admiration" were mentioned while under the theme of "Athletic Ability"; "Being in the Right Place at the Right Time" and "Running Style" were the topics that referees talked about. Furthermore, under the theme of "Athletic Personality Structure"; "Physical Appearance" was mentioned and under the theme of "Informational Readiness"; "Knowledge of Rules" was the main topic.

It is known that people can take values from not only their own characteristics but also from the value concepts adopted by people who are accepted in society, and in emulation of these people their values into one's own life. Because the most important factor in the success of successful people is their value phenomena. It can be said that the more the person has values that are embraced and welcomed by the society, the more people will emerge who will take him/her as an example and adopt those characteristics. According to Bradshaw et al. (2001), values guide and help people to make choices in their lives. The individual determines a system of values for himself/herself while living his/her social life, and this personal system of values is shaped by the culture that the individual shares with other members of the society in which he/she lives. It can be said that the findings of this study reveal aligned with this view. Accordingly, it is seen that football referees generally look up to referees who are



successful, have an authoritative demeanour, have high self-confidence, have strong communication skills and are admired, and they make efforts to acquire such values. In this context, it can be stated that the aforementioned values have an important place in the lives of referees and are a phenomenon that directs their efforts. In line with this information, it can be concluded that the fact that the football referees, who are the subject of the research, are influenced by the referees who are at higher levels in terms of position and take their attitudes and behaviours as an example directs the value orientations of the football referees.

When the literature is examined, Yıldız (2019) determined the values gained by national wrestlers through sports as patience, respect, love, equality, empathy, sportsmanship and tolerance. Again, Yıldız and Karakullukçu (2019) determined that professional football players gained values such as self-confidence, responsibility, leadership, socialization and protection from bad habits through sports. In his study, Devenci (2018) determined that football referees behaved ethically while officiating competitions and that referee reported that they considered the value of being fair, which is the most needed value in the refereeing profession, as important. Based on these explanations, it can be said that values are common structures that all people need and guide their behaviours, not only in the context of referees. Therefore, it can be stated that all these studies support the findings of this study.

When the results in Table 3 are examined, it is seen that in the opinions of the football referees participating in the research regarding their thoughts on the values/beliefs that they think guide them before or after the competition were relayed under four themes. Under the theme of "Spiritual Value"; "Praying" and "Belief" topics were mentioned and under the theme of "Personal Value"; "Listening to Music", "Being Motivated by Thinking" and "Self-criticism" were the topics the referees mentioned. Furthermore; under the theme of "Universal Value", "Sense of Justice" was the main topic and under the theme of "Sociocultural Value"; "National Emotion" was the primary referees relayed opinions about.

It is known that the understanding of prayer, which exists in Turkish culture as in many cultures, is among the values that guide people's expectations. By praying, individuals expect from their creators for situations such as being successful or not having bad events happen to them. It can be stated that football referees, who are the subject of the research, are also known and seen to pray secretly or openly before and after the competition. Since the prayer here is to ensure justice on behalf of the teams, it can create a serious pressure on the referees. Because a wrong decision made in the competition with the slightest distraction can cause great actual and moral losses to the teams. In this context, it is known that it is difficult to ensure justice in a real sense with a referee's opinion. Çakmak (2019) stated that praying for success before each game is an important value in the context of athletes.

It is known that superstitions have a certain dominance over people in all cultures from past to present. So much so that these superstitions sometimes become such that all behaviours of people are shaped according to these beliefs. To give an example; especially in Turkish societies, it can be said that a superstitious belief that the horseshoe brings luck, attracts all bad deeds and gives peace to the household and that the evil eye bead prevents the evil eye is dominant in almost all segments of society. However, it can be thought that these beliefs from the past to the present have actually emerged through coincidences and have reinforced such beliefs and ensured their continuity until today. This situation can be clarified as follows: A striker in football accidentally touches the posts of the opponent's goal before the start of the competition and after the start of the competition, as a result of his team's superior success and scoring a goal, the athlete connects his own success to this event by establishing a link



between touching the post and success, and exhibiting the same behaviour in subsequent competitions is just one of the examples that can be given to superstitious beliefs in the context of sports. Ofori et al. (2012) stated in their study that all stakeholders in the football game show superstitious behaviours. In this context, in the results of the study, it can be interpreted that football referees preferably wear their favourite jerseys, which are believed to bring good luck, use whistles and similar equipment they like, and enter the field with their right foot are superstitious beliefs that arise with the reinforcement of behaviour after a coincidental event. Çakmak (2019) stated that athletes shape their behaviours according to superstition at all costs, and that athletes "kiss and touch the lucky object before the game, perform ablution before the game, enter the field with the right foot, sleeping in the match jersey the night before the match and believing that certain pitches bring good luck, putting lucky signs on shoes, wearing a lucky charm/necklace on game days, taping the body or a part of it even if there is no injury" and that they believe that these superstitious beliefs affect their sportive success.

In order to have a desired level of performance and therefore to achieve success, whether in sports environments or not, individuals need to be mentally prepared in a psychological context. This preparation primarily requires focus. In order to focus on the competition, especially in sports environments, the motivation level of athletes must be at a sufficient level. In the context of athletes, it can be said that this motivation can be achieved through various criteria. As stated in the results of this study, the music listening behaviour of football referees is one of the factors that direct their behaviour and motivate them. Indeed, music listening behaviour is one of the relaxation exercises frequently used for athletes to achieve success, especially in the field of sport psychology. Çelik and Karabilgin (2022) stated that the effect of music in increasing performance in the field of sports is quite high, and the use of music by athletes during exercise affects situations such as self-confidence, self-worth, focusing on the subject, and exercising more. Apart from these, football referees can engage in various behavioural tendencies to motivate themselves. One of these behavioural tendencies is the tendency to focus on the competition by retreating to a quiet environment. In his study, Çakmak (2019) determined that athletes need silence / distancing before the game in order to be motivated and determined the situation as a superstitious belief. Accordingly, athletes choose this way to fully focus on the competition. Again, in the research results, it is seen that one of the ideas that football referees direct themselves is centred around the view of self-criticism. Self-criticism is indeed important for all individuals. Because self-criticism enables an individual to realize his/her mistakes, not to miss a possible opportunity on the career ladder and to be successful by being fully aware of his/her own self-awareness. In this context, it can be said that self-criticism of football referees after their mistakes and taking corrective measures in this regard will increase their success.

One of the views that direct the behaviour of football referees in the research results is gathered around the view of national emotion. National emotions, while revealing the heroism of a society and the negative situations it has experienced, actually ensure that we do not forget the events of the past and make more correct and more constructive decisions in the face of occurring events. In this context, it can be said that national emotions directing the behaviour of football referees is among the expected results.

When the literature is examined, Kanbir (2022) found in his study that athletes tend to adopt superstitious beliefs in order to satisfy the expectations of themselves and their environment and to achieve status depending on their socio-economic status, and that the prominent



superstitious belief tendencies in athletes consist of feeling the impending success, believing that a colour or a number will bring good luck, and fortune telling. In their study, Yıldız and Karakullukçu (2019) determined that the opinions of football players about the values/beliefs that guide them before the competition were gathered around values such as "praying to Allah, equality and justice, mother's prayer, wishing for referee luck, being motivated, conscience, reading Surah Fatiha, performing ablution, going out on the field with the right foot, thinking about your daughter and asking for prayer, and listening to music in the locker room". Stork et al. (2015) concluded that listening to music can increase participation in high intensity training such as sprint interval training and facilitate motivation. From this point of view, it can be said that all these studies support the findings of the current study.

When the results in Table 4 are examined, we see that there are only two main themes are present in which the football referees who participated in the research relayed their opinions on; namely "Individual Values" and "Social Values". Under the theme of "Individual Values"; "Being Disciplined", "Making Fast and Accurate Decisions", "Being Calm", "Being Physically and Mentally Dynamic", "Self-confidence", "Empathizing", "Awareness of Responsibility", "Dominating the Group", "Being Ambitious", "Being Patient" were the main topics and under the theme of "Social Values"; "Strengthening Social Relationships", "Communication Skills", "Acquiring Sports Culture", "Being Fair", "Being a Gentleman (aka Chivalry)", "Being Respectful", "Being Sharing" were the subthemes they related opinions about.

There are some criteria that football referees should pay attention to when applying the rules of the game. It can be said that the correct application of these criteria will increase the professional value of referees. In this context, it can be said that the referees' ability to make fast and correct decisions on the field, to be physically dynamic, to be calm and to maintain discipline towards the people on the field will lead to a healthy end of the competitions. In particular, the fact that referees should always be fair when making decisions is one of the most important value indicators expected by the society. According to Deveci (2018), there are undoubtedly various difficult aspects of football refereeing. Accordingly, the difficult part of the job here is that the football refereeing task is performed in front of spectators who are not fully familiar with the actual rules of football. Add to this the managers, coaches and athletes who have a tradition of constantly objecting to the referee's decisions, and the difficulties faced by referees become apparent. Because the two teams who are only interested in winning, and their supporters who are not fully aware of the actual rules of the game, there is often information pollution in the media. The right or wrong decisions made by the referee in the media agenda are evaluated with subjective views due to lack of information, which leads to different opinions. Especially for the spectators, most of the decisions against the team they are rooting for are unfair and therefore disregard the value of fairness. According to IFAB (2016), football referees should be respected and accepted by all stakeholders on the field, be reliable, decisive, consistent and upright, not be influenced by others, not avoid making unpleasant decisions, maintain their authority on the field from the beginning to the end of the match, use communication techniques to the maximum, read the players well, The IFAB (IFAB, 2016) stated that criteria such as the profile of the referee in the match (strong-willed, courageous, patient, calm and predictable, no surprise decisions, prudent and unpretentious) and the ability to use body language as an effective tool to help him/her control the match are necessary to maximize his/her performance (IFAB, 2016). In the light of this information, it can be said that football refereeing brings many values to the individual and



the individual should protect and develop these values. This is because football refereeing is a profession group that is a favourite of many segments of the society and is followed carefully. For this reason, it can be said that football referees should pay attention to the behaviours they exhibit on and off the field, and football referees should reflect the values they have gained in the best way in order to make a good impression on the society.

When the literature is examined, Guillén and Feltz (2011) concluded in their study that an ideal football referee should be consistent, decisive, equal, honest, calm, and reassuring, as well as observing and applying the rules of the game. In their study, Gülle et al. (2017) determined that football referees have high self-confidence in decision-making and that referees use decision-making styles more effectively. In their study, Yıldız and Güven (2019) found that sports develop socialization, self-confidence and responsibility values in the lives of national athletes. Yıldız (2019) concluded that individuals in sports environments gain the value of equality. From this point of view, it can be said that all these studies support the findings of the current study.

When the results in Table 5 are examined, it can be seen that in the opinions of the football referees participating in the research used three themes regarding their thoughts on providing trainings on value education to football referees. First, under the theme of "Planning the Process of Training"; "Continuous Trainings", "Providing Trainings to All Sports Stakeholders", "Getting Support from Expert Trainers", "Including Universal and National Values in Trainings" and "Applying Psychological Tests on Values Education" were mentioned. Second, under the theme of "Impact of Value Education"; "Trainings are Important for Referee Development" topic was used. Lastly, under the theme of "Overview of the Training Process"; "Successful Delivery of Trainings " was the subtheme they related opinions about.

It can be stated that values are not something that people are born with, but something that they acquire through education. Therefore, it can be said that individuals can raise themselves throughout their lives, complete their personal development and gain the values they want to impose on themselves through education. In this context, it can be said that the foundation of value education starts in the family, as in many other subjects, and that values provide information about the development of people's attitudes and behaviours, as well as their ideas. According to Mehmedoğlu (2006), the main purposes of conducting research on values are to determine the value orientations of individuals and to examine the phenomenon that directs the attitudes and behaviours of individuals. In the light of this information, based on the reflection of values on individuals in particular and society in general, it can be said that it is necessary for societies to attach importance to the issue of value, which is a building block in the formation of the desired culture in a society, and that it is appropriate to provide value education to individuals in a planned-programmed manner.

In order to increase the effectiveness of values education in sports, it is necessary to create a sports culture in our society. It can be said that sports culture has a significant impact on the structure and value of society. It can be stated that the importance given to sports culture in sports is quite high. Because the establishment of a sports culture that is accepted by the society in general is important in terms of ensuring social harmony and social integrity. According to Biçer (2017), sports culture gives individuals the spirit of struggle, teaches them to compete in competitions in a principle-centred, rules-based manner, inculcates them to overcome their own limits, prevents them from harming themselves and their surroundings, encourages them to be wise, glorifies and develops humanity, and emphasizes virtue and it is



a general phenomenon that supports the formation and development of values such as joyfulness with the aspect of pleasure and entertainment, unifying, ennobling with its moral dimension, egalitarian, sharing, showing the rival as a peer rather than an enemy, embracing, considering it a virtue to accept all kinds of results, honourable, rejecting injustice, deception and inequality, etc. It is a general phenomenon that supports the formation and development of such values.

It is known that values have an important place in football refereeing and these values have an important place in increasing the prestige of football referees. Because it can be said that the role of football referees in the society is influenced by their values such as fair decisions in the competition, ensuring discipline and showing leadership qualities on the teams. Therefore, football referees can only gain respect if they have these values. In the opposite situation, they become the subject of weeks-long discussions in the media. In the light of this information, it can be said that training football referees within the framework of values education will increase the respect of the society towards the refereeing institution. According to Aydın (2012) and Ekin (2019), values education aims to develop the characteristics of individuals that will enable them to choose the good, justice and truth at every crossroads where they have to make decisions. In line with this information, it can be said that value trainings given to football referees are very important in terms of further development of referees and increasing their performance after the trainings received, and that value trainings will play an effective role in the formation and development of sports culture. However, it can be stated that the value trainings to be given to football referees should be given not only in a personal sense, but also in terms of universal and national values that are accepted throughout the society.

The results of the study show how important value education is. The more the referees are able to improve themselves in terms of values after the trainings given, the more the referees will not only make a gain for themselves, but will also ensure that the institution they are affiliated with is respected in the eyes of the society. Because referees will ensure that the respectability of this profession is established in the society with the decisions they make and their personality on the field.

When the literature is examined, Drewe (1988) stated in his study that the parties who play a role in the development of sports should fulfil their duties and responsibilities in accordance with universal values such as justice, impartiality, respect, honesty, openness and sports ethics. In addition, in the current study, it was concluded that the main purpose of establishing sports ethics is to exhibit universal values accepted by everyone for all areas of sports as a behaviour in the sports fields, and that physical education teachers and coaches, who are a tool in transferring and adopting universal values, should be conscious at a level that has been trained in sports ethics and transformed these principles into their behaviours. Aköz (2018) found that values education aimed at developing sensitivity to values such as cooperation, benevolence, respect, empathy and solidarity has a general effect on society. Therefore, it can be said that all these studies support the findings of this study.

As a result, when the referees' opinions on which characteristics of a football referee they look up to in Turkey and abroad affect them, it was concluded that characteristics such as being decisive, being authoritative, being successful, self-confidence, game control and calmness, communication skills, respect and admiration, being in the right place at the right time, running style, physical appearance and finally knowledge of the rules affect the football referees who participated in the research.



In the study, when the referees' views on the values/beliefs that they think guide them before or after the competition were examined, it was concluded that characteristics such as praying, wearing jerseys that are believed to bring good luck, entering the field with the right foot, believing that the whistle given as a gift brings good luck, listening to music, being motivated by thinking, self-criticism, sense of justice and finally national feeling guide the referees.

In the study, when the referees' opinions on which values football refereeing and sports develop in their lives were examined, it was concluded that football refereeing and sports develop values such as being disciplined, making fast and accurate decisions, being calm, being physically and mentally dynamic, self-confidence, empathy, sense of responsibility, dominating the group, being ambitious, being patient, strengthening social relations, communication skills, gaining sports culture, being fair, being a gentleman, respectability and being sharing. In the opinions of the football referees participating in the research on providing trainings on value education to football referees, it was determined that the football referees stated that the trainings should be continuous, trainings should be given to all sports stakeholders, support should be received from expert educators, universal and national values should be included in the trainings, psychological tests on values education should be made and training plans should be prepared with consideration of all these aforementioned principles. In addition, it was determined as a result of the participant opinions that value trainings have an important place in the development of football referees and that the trainings given are successfully implemented.

### **Conclusions**

The research was limited to 17 football referees (15 male, 2 female) who were actively working in various regions of Turkey in the 2020-2021 Football Season.

In the study, when the referees' opinions on which characteristics of a football referee they take as an example both abroad and at home affect them; it was concluded that characteristics such as being decisive, being authoritative, being successful, self-confidence, game control and calmness, communication skills, respect and admiration, being in the right place at the right time, running style, physical appearance and finally the knowledge of the rules affect the football referees participating in the study.

When the referees' views on whether they think the spiritual values/beliefs guide them or not either before or after the competition were examined; it was concluded that they indeed guide the football referees.

When the opinions of the referees on which values football refereeing and sports develop in their lives were examined, it was concluded that football refereeing and sports develop values such as being disciplined, making fast and accurate decisions, being calm, being physically and mentally dynamic, self-confidence, empathy, sense of responsibility, dominating the group, being ambitious, being patient, strengthening social relations, communication skills, gaining sports culture, being fair, being a gentleman, respectability and sharing.

In the opinions of the football referees participating in the research on the provision of trainings on value education to football referees; it was determined as a result of the participant opinions that value education has an important place in the development of football referees and that the trainings provided are successfully implemented.

Overall, this research has investigated value orientations of football referees and added value to the literature of sports research and sports education by showing potential advantages of



values education. An applied solution that can be derived from this result is that values education can be given in seminars to all shareholders, in order to gain many beneficial results. Also, referees and football players who display exemplary behaviour can be rewarded in order to support development of such desired behaviour in sports communities, e.g. fair-play awards can be extended in reach to more of the shareholders.

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