

INVESTIGATION OF EMPATHIC TENDENCY AND PROBLEM SOLVING SKILLS OF JUDO ATHLETES (SAMPLE OF CENTER OF OLYMPIC PREPERATION IN TRABZON)¹

JUDO SPORCULARININ EMPATİK EĞİLİM VE PROBLEM ÇÖZME BECERİLERİNİN İNCELENMESİ (TRABZON OLİMPİYAT HAZIRLIK MERKEZİ ÖRNEĞİ)

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Öz: Bu araştırmanın amacı, Trabzon Olimpiyat Hazırlık Merkezindeki Judocuların empatik eğilim ve problem çözme becerilerinin incelenmesidir. Araştırma grubunu, Trabzon Olimpiyat Hazırlık Merkezindeki aktif olarak judo sporu ile uğraşan 60 sporcu oluşturmaktadır. Veri toplama aracı olarak Dökmen (1988) tarafından geliştirilmiş olan Empatik Eğilim Ölçeği ve Heppner ve Peterson (1982) tarafından geliştirilen, Türkçeye uyarlaması ise Şahin, Şahin ve Heppner (1993) tarafından yapılan Problem Çözme Ölçeği kullanılmıştır. Elde edilen verilere tanımlayıcı istatistik işlemler yapıldıktan sonra, Bağımsız Örneklem T-Testi, Tek Faktörlü Varyans Analizi ve Pearson Korelasyon Testi uygulanmıştır. Araştırma sonucunda; Judocuların empatik eğilim düzeyi puanlarına baktığımızda ise, değişkenlerin hiçbirinde anlamlı bir farklılık bulunmamıştır ($P>0.05$). Judocuların cinsiyet ve millî sporcu olma değişkeni üzerinden problem çözme becerileri puanlarına bakıldığında, cinsiyet değişkeni üzerinde anlamlı bir fark bulunmuştur ($P<0.05$). Yine yaş, eğitim durumu, antrenman yaşı ve antrenör ile çalışma yılına baktığımızda ise eğitim durumu değişkeninde anlamlı farklılık söz konusudur ($P<0.05$).

Anahtar Kelimeler: Judo, Empatik Eğilim, Problem Çözme

Abstract: In this study, the purpose of research is judo athletes investigation of empathic tendency and problem solving skills levels at Center of Olympic Preparation in Trabzon. The research group is constitutes of 60 judo athletes. As data collection tools, consisting, Empathic Tendency Scale that developed by Dökmen (1988). Problem Solving Scale developed by Heppner and Peterson (1982), and adapted to Turkish by Şahin, Şahin and Heppner (1993) was used. The data was analyzed using Descriptive Statistic, Independent Samples T-Test, One Way Anova and Pearson Correlation Test. As a result of this study, judo athletes empathic tendency was compare according to all of variables, its no found statistically significant all of variables ($P>0.05$). Also, problem solving skills was compared according to the gender and being a national team athlete. While it was founding statistically significant of gender ($P<0.05$), it wasn't found being a national team athlete ($P>0.05$). If we compare age, training background, year of training with a trainer and education background, While it was found statistically significant of education background ($P<0.05$), it wasn't found other variables ($P>0.05$).

Key Words: Judo, Empathic Tendency, Problem Solving

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INTRODUCTION

Communication is one of the most essential components of living together and it is not possible to imagine a world without it (Balçık 2000: 1-3). Communication is of critical importance in terms of interpersonal interaction of man as a social being that affects all fields of human life. It is a must to know people in order to communicate. At this point, the term “empathy” that we have often come across in recent years gains importance (Güleç, Doygun 2012: 1124-1129).

Empathy is a significant notion in psychiatry and psychology. Research studies on empathy have been conducted in both psychiatry and several fields of psychology especially in clinical and social psychology in the fields of developmental, counselling, school and communication psychology and a great deal of data have been gathered (Dökmen 2005: 152-154). Carl Rogers, who became famous in psychotherapy field for the skill to communicate empathetically, defines empathy as the process in which a person puts himself in another’s place and understands the events from that person’s perspectives, correctly interprets and feels that person’s emotions and thoughts and conveys this situation to that person (Dökmen 2005: 339-341).

The origin of empathy is consciousness. The more open an individual is to another person’s feelings, the more he can read that person’s feelings. The fact that the person has no idea about his own

feelings causes that person not to understand other people’s feelings around him. People rarely put their feelings into words. Mostly, the key to perceive what other people feel is to be able to understand their tone of voice, mimics, gestures, facial expressions and similar nonverbal expressions (Goleman 1995: 126).

Thanks to showing empathy, a person gets the chance to become a trustworthy friend in another person’s life. To be an empathic person requires to come into the other person’s life without judging him. When empathy is used in communication properly and sensibly, the person who is shown empathy would feel more comfortable and express his own feelings deep inside, senses and make his interpretation of events more freely (Vincent 2002: 35-44).

Problem solving is defined as the process with cognitive and psychological dimensions that includes a series of attempts to eliminate problems occurring while reaching a definite goal (Oğuzkan 1989: 7-30).

Problem solving skill is what we do in times when we have a goal but don’t know how to reach it. In addition, it is an enjoyable engagement that includes generating new ideas to solve the problem and developing strategies. Also, problem solving is a basic starting point to develop the first adaptation behaviours related to human creation. (Düzakın 2004). In certain times of his life, an individual faces lots of different types of



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problems either big or small and the reactions given to these problems vary from person to person. Many different people attempt to solve the same problem in different ways and while some are successful, some others are not. When the point in question is problem, it is not only the mathematical problems that come to our minds. Life requires the solution of a serious of problems. Problems come out when there are obstacles that prevent the individual from reaching his goal (Cüceloğlu 2004: 219-277). Problem solving skill is the state in which a person acquires the rules that will lead to the solution and makes use of them when necessary in case of a problem (Bilen 2006).

Judo, one of the oldest martial arts, is similar to wrestling in some points. Japanese Jigoro Kano formed the sport judo in 1882 by eliminating some techniques of Jiu-jitsu, a traditional martial art, as these techniques give harm to people. Judo combat is a physical effort that includes one to one struggle, is noncyclical and has intervals and high levels of violence, in which two judo athletes, in accordance with the same goal, try to pin the opponent down to the ground or control him on the ground and apply various chokeholds or joint locks until submission (Hernandez-Garcia et al. 2009: 145-151).

Accordingly, in order to increase performance in sports and become successful, sports scientists should have the aim of understanding human behaviours. Also, we should help sportsmen to

become individuals who can correctly interpret events occurring out of their own control and can interact and communicate with the people around; and with all these approaches, by emphasizing the notions ideal man, ideal sportsman, we should struggle to increase the awareness of sportsmen.

METHODS

The sample of the study consists of a total of 60 sportsmen, 24 female and 36 male, who are occupied with judo sport actively in Trabzon Olympic Preparation Centre. The data was analyzed using Descriptive Statistic, Independent Samples T-Test, One Way Anova and Pearson Correlation Test.

Materials

In order to measure their potential level of showing empathy in their daily life, a scale developed by Dökmen (1988) namely Empathic Tendency Scale was used. The scale is a likert type scale consisting of 20 items.

In the study, Problem Solving Scale developed by Heppner and Peterson (1982), and adapted to Turkish by Şahin, Şahin and Heppner (1993) was used. The scale is a 6 point likert scale consisting of 35 questions. Individuals answer each item considering how often they behave as in the item. Some of the items consist of positive expressions while some others are negative.



RESULTS

Table 1. Demographic Information of The Sample Group

Variables	Sub categories	N	%	Total
Age	14-16	35	58,3	60-100
	17-19	20	33,3	
	20+	5	8,3	
Gender	Female	26	43,3	60-100
	Male	34	56,7	
Education Background	Secondary School	11	18,3	60-100
	High School	44	73,3	
	University	5	8,3	
Being a National Team Athlete	Yes	41	58,3	60-100
	No	19	31,7	
Training Background	1-4	17	28,3	60-100
	5-8	33	55,0	
	9+	10	16,7	
Year of training with a trainer	1-4	44	73,3	60-100
	5-8	14	23,3	
	9+	2	3,3	

As seen in Table 1, the age range of 58,3% of the athletes in the sample group of the study is between 14 and 16 while 8,3% of them are 20 and above. 43,3% of these athletes are female and 56,7% are male. %18,3 of the athletes are graduates of secondary school, 73,3% of them high school and 8,3% university. While %58,3 of the athletes are national team athletes, 31,7%

of them are not. 28,3% of athletes have 1-4 years of training, 55,0% of them 5-8 years, 16,7% of them 9 year and above. When it comes to the year of training with a trainer, 73,3% of the athletes have been working with the same trainer for 1-4 year, 23,3% of them for 5-8 years, 3,3% of them 9 years and above.



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Table 2. T-Test Table of Empathic Tendency Levels of The Judo Athletes According to Being A National Team Athlete and Gender Variables

		N	M	SS	F	P
Being a national team athlete	Yes	41	65,93	7,811	,016	,101
	No	19	62,53	7,035		
Gender	Female	26	65,96	7,681	,004	,332
	Male	34	64,00	7,687		

Table 2 shows that no significant difference was found in the Judo athlete's Empathic Tendency Levels according to being national sportsman and gender variables ($P>0.05$).

Table 3. One-Way Analysis of Variance of The Judo Athletes' Empathic Tendency Levels According to Age, Education, Year of Training and Year of Training with A Trainer

		KT	Sd	KO	F	P
Age	Inter group	298,964	2	149,482	2,677	,077
	In-group	3182,686	57	55,837		
Educational Background	Inter group	60,055	2	30,027	,500	,609
	In-group	3421,595	57	60,028		
Year of Training	Inter group	66,721	2	33,361	,557	,576
	In-group	3414,929	57	59,911		
Year of Training with a trainer	Inter group	96,527	2	48,263	,813	,449
	In-group	3385,123	57	59,388		

Table 3 demonstrates that no significant difference was found in Judo athletes' Empathic Tendency Levels according to Age, Education, Year of Training and Year of Training with a trainer ($P>0.05$).



Table 4. T-Test Results of The Judo Athletes' Problem Solving Skills According to Being A National Team Athlete and Gender Variables

		N	M	SS	F	P
Being a National Team Athlete	Yes	41	95,07	16,230	2,566	,427
	No	19	99,63	21,998		
Gender	Female	26	90,165	20,104	3,374	,034*
	Male	34	101,00	15,410		

Table 4 displays that while there is no significant difference in problem solving skills of the Judo athletes according to being a national team ath-

lete ($P > 0.05$), a significant difference was found according to gender variable ($P < 0.05$).

Table 5. One-Way Analysis of Variance of The Judo Athletes' Problem Solving Skills According to Age, Education, Year of Training and Year of Training with A Trainer

		KT	Sd	KO	F	P
Age	Inter groups	477,612	2	238,806	,715	,494
	In-group	19039,371	57	334,024		
Education Background	Inter groups	4527,388	2	2263,694	8,608	,001*
	In-group	14989,595	57	262,975		
Year of Training	Inter groups	1074,915	2	537,457	1,661	,199
	In-group	18442,069	57	323,545		
Year of Training with a trainer	Inter groups	182,837	2	91,419	,270	,765
	In-group	19334,146	57	339,196		

As can be seen in Table 5, while there is no significant difference in problem solving skills according to age, year of training and year of training with a trainer ($P > 0.05$), a significant

difference was found according to educational background ($P < 0.05$)



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Table 6. Correlation Between Empathic Tendency and Problem Solving Skills of Judo Athletes

	N	Mean	SS	F
Empathic Tendency	60	64,85	7,682	,004
Problem Solving	60	96,52	18,188	

Table 6 shows that there is no relationship between empathic tendency and problem solving skills of Judo Athletes ($P > 0.01$).

DISCUSSION and CONCLUSION

The study was conducted in order to investigate the empathic tendency levels and problem solving skills of judo athletes. The results suggest that no significant difference was found in empathic tendency levels of Judo athletes according to being a national team athlete and gender. Also, there was no significant difference in the athletes' empathic inclination levels according to age, educational background, year of training and year of training with a trainer.

In the study conducted by Güleç and Doygun (2012: 1124-1129), in which empathic tendency levels of 7th and 8th grade students were investigated according to different variables, it was found that no significant difference was found in empathic tendency according class, gender, parent education status and working status of parents.

Karabulut et al. (2014: 238-242), in their study on the investigation of empathic tendency levels of active football referees, found no significant

difference according to gender variable. However, in the same study, a significant difference was found according to refereeship level and the year of refereeship.

No significant difference according to gender, age and department variables was found in the study carried out by Erkmén (2007) in which empathic tendency and leadership behaviour of Physical Training and Education faculty students were analysed.

In the study, while there is no significant difference in problem solving according to being a national team athlete, a significant difference was found according to gender variable. The average point of problem solving skills according to gender is $101,00 \pm 15,410$ in male athletes, it is $90,165 \pm 20,104$ in female athletes. Accordingly, the average problem solving point of male athletes is higher compared to female judo athletes and a significant difference was found in problem solving skills for the benefit of male athletes. The reason underlying this situation can stem from the fact that female athletes approach events more sensitively and because of the nature of this sport, since it is based on combating and



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tests the endurance and physical limits, it can be expected that male athletes have higher problem solving skills than females.

In the study, it can be seen that while there is no significant difference in problem solving skills of the judo athletes according to age, year of training and year of training with a trainer, a significant difference was found according to educational background. Therefore, it can be inferred that when a person has higher educational background, he or she can have a wider perspective and interpret events from different viewpoints. That is, higher education level means that individuals can overcome problems easily and have better problem solving skills. That's why, this significant difference according to educational background is a meaningful one.

In his study with taekwondo trainers, Bezci (2010) reported that he found a significant difference according to gender variable, so problem solving skills of female taekwondo trainers is higher than male taekwondo trainers.

In their study conducted on university students, Şahin, Şahin and Heppner (1993: 379-383) investigated if there is a significant difference between female and male university students in terms of Problem Solving Inventory and its subdimensions with the effect of culture and as a result of the study, they found out that American males are more confident while Turkish males have more inclinations towards their problem.

The inclination, compromise and personal control points of Turkish females and their total problem solving inventory points are found to be lower compared to American females. Accordingly, they reported that American females have better problem solving skills than Turkish females, and so they show more inclinations towards their problems and they have more powerful personal control. On the other hand, when Turkish males are compared with Turkish females, it was seen that although their points showed similarity, females have more confidence in problem solving. The reason underlying this finding is just because Turkish female students that continue their education are more positive and they are a selected group who are more self confident compared to other Turkish females.

In the study conducted on problem solving skills of Turkish Military Academy students, problem solving skill perception and problem solving attitudes of students were investigated according to class variable and no significant difference was found (Ferah 2000).

In the study, no relationship between empathic tendency and problem solving skills of Judo athletes was found. This finding indicates that empathic inclination and problem solving skills are not correlated with each other.

As a result, this study is on Judo, an individual sport, and so with other individual sports different findings can be obtained. If a variety of differ-



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ent psychological factors that are an important component to increase sports performance are applied to different branches, age groups and so on and necessary analyses are carried out, different results can be obtained.

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