

## North Cyprus Leagues Soccer Players Evaluation on Coaching Behaviors

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### ARTICLE INFORMATION

Original Research Paper

Doi:

Received September.. 2020

Accepted January. 2021

#### Keywords:

Soccer  
soccer player  
coach  
coach behavior  
North Cyprus

### ABSTRACT

The aim of this study is to determine how the players of different criteria in the Northern Cyprus evaluate their coaching behaviors. 300 licensed soccer players who played in soccer teams in North Cyprus participated in the study. In the study, Coach Behavior Assessment Scale developed by Yapar and İnce (2014) was used to determine the opinions of soccer players about coach behaviors. As a result of the analysis, Cronbach Alpha value was found to be 0.949 and it was found that the scale could be used at an excellent level.

SPSS 25.0 software was used for statistical analysis of the obtained data. Descriptive statistics of the data are given as percentage, frequency, average and standard deviation. The compliance of the data to the normal distribution was determined by Kolmogorov-Smirnov test, QQ graph and kurtosis-skewness values and it was found that it conforms to the normal distribution. Parametric hypothesis tests were used to compare the scores obtained from the scale. The independent sample t test was used if the independent variable was in two groups, and variance analysis (ANOVA) was applied if it consisted of more than two groups and Tukey test was used as post-hoc test. Significance levels were determined as  $p < 0.05$ . As a result of the statistical analysis, age group, education level, marital status, league played, team played, number of times in the first 11, ranking of the team, time in the team, time worked with the coach and the region variables with the physical training and Planning, Technical Skills, Mental Preparation, Goal Setting, Competition Strategy, Positive Trainer Behavior, Negative Trainer Behavior sub-dimensions were found to be significant at  $p < 0.05$  level, while working status, position variable and 7 sub-dimensions of the scale were not significantly different. was determined.

As a result of this study, it was found that the coaches in the North Cyprus Super League and First League scored the lowest score from the players especially in terms of physical training and planning and needed to develop themselves and train in this direction

### Introduction

Coaches are intelligent leaders directing the players to the common purpose (Tatar, 2009) Also, by using the training methodology, coaches are educated individuals to develop physical, psychological, mental, emotional and social characteristics and prepare the soccer players for competition (Konter 1996).

Coaching seems to be the most primary factor that has an influence area in soccer for any time (Martens 1990). Coaches are essential for the player's physical and psychological development and motivation (Abakay and Kuru 2013). Coaches also should emphasize and allow time to develop mental skills besides physical and physiological features. While doing these, they should have a good communication relationship with players and show leadership characteristics (Konter 2006).

Coaching is a primary factor in becoming successful in many sports in the present day. Coaches play a significant role in either team sports or individuals sports. Professionally they are responsible for talent identification and development in soccer as being the most popular sports in the world (Lobinger and Musculus, 2018).

In Larousse coach defined as a person that prepare athletes, swimmers, boxers individuals or team for competitions or races. Turkish Language Institution defines a coach as a person who develops the athletes. According to this, the coach should be an educator who can be a good organizer, effective manager, and motivator. They should also help athletes to gain independence and proficiency (Sevim et al., 2001).

Coaches are responsible for increasing the performances of the athletes. Coaches already have abilities to impress the soccer players, and should prepare them for competitions by increasing the motivation levels through developmental practices. Coaches have a significant role and should have excellent communication with athletes to be successful in this issue (Ulukan, 2006). Coaches can be divided into six groups according to their characteristics. These are disciplined and authoritarian, flexible and good character, tense and dynamic, liberal, diligent, cooperative and agreeable

(Kasap and Erdem, 2009)

This research aims to investigate the evaluation of soccer players from various criteria about coaches' behaviors and to study the diversity according to their demographic characteristics like age group, position, education level, marital status, profession, league, club, playing in starting team, the position of the team in the league standing, playtime, the amount time working with the coach and region.

## Methods

### *Research Model*

The study is quantitative research, which is descriptive screening methods used to identify the relationship between the soccer players and their coaches.

### *Population and Research Sample*

The population of the study consists of soccer players who are playing in 16 Super League and 1. division clubs' first team and U21 teams, which are under Cyprus Turkish Football Federation. (Total 1152 Licenced soccer players). The sample of the study is the soccer players of 6 Super League clubs first and U21 teams from 6 regions and the players of 1. division clubs first and U21 teams from 4 different regions. (Total 300 Licenced players)

### *Data Collection Tool*

Scale form consists of two parts used in data collection. Personal Information: The questions for determining characteristics like players' social-demographical features, game positions, and their teams were in the first part of the scale form.

Coaching Behavior Evaluation Scale for Athletes: In this study, The scale form Coaching Behavior Evaluation Scale for Athletes translated by Yapar and Ince 2014 in the Turkish language of the Coaching Behavior Assessment System scale form developed by Smith, Smoll, and Hunt 1997 to determine the soccer player's opinions about coaches' behavior used in this study. The Coaching Behavior Evaluation Scale for Athletes consists of 47 items prepared by using 7 Likert types and 7 sub-items. The items in the scale graded from 1-7 (1 never, 7 always). The total variance was

calculated as % 68.29. Confirmatory factor analysis results ( $F2/sd = 3.630$ ,  $NFI = 0.90$ ,  $RMSEA = 0.071$ ,  $CFI = 0.98$  and  $IFI = 0.92$ ,  $GFI = 0.91$ ) indicated that there was an acceptable fit index values between 7 factor model. Cronbach's alpha value of the 7 dimensions of the scale was between .79 and .87. The results of the study showed that the Turkish version of the CBS-S has good internal consistency and construct validity to use in related studies. Cronbach Alfa test used to examine the internal consistency of data collected in this study. The Cronbach Alpha coefficient regarding sub-items found between 0,831 and 0,913

## Procedure

### *Collection of the Data*

The subject of the study and detailed information about the fulfilling process of the scale form explained to coaches. Scale forms completed by the players before and after the training session collected on the same day. The study was done in February and January 2019 during the 2018-19 soccer season of the Cyprus Turkish soccer Federation.

### *Data Analysis*

SPSS 25.0 statistical package program used to analyze the data of the study. The player's socio-demographical, playing positions and their team characteristic's distribution determined by using the frequency analysis

Descriptive statistics are given to scores taken from soccer player's coaches' behavior scale.

The Cronbach Alpha coefficient is .949 obtained by the Cronbach Alpha test used for measuring the reliability of the results of the soccer player's coaches' behavior scale.

Kolmogorov-Smirnov test, QQ graphics, and skewness-kurtosis values examined for determining the normal distribution compatibility of the scores taken by the Coaching Behavior Evaluation Scale for Athletes scale of soccer players who participated in this study. Normal distribution detected in this study.

Due to the compatibility of the normal distribution of the scale scores, the parametrical hypothesis tests were used for comparison of scores from the Coaching Behavior Evaluation Scale for Athletes scale according to soccer players' sociodemographic characteristics, positions of players and their teams. Independent t-test for two groups independent variables, variance analysis (ANOVA) for more than two group variables applied, and for advance analysis Tukey test used as (post-hoc) test.

## Findings

**Table 1.** soccer Players Socio-demographical Characteristics Distribution (n=300)

	Number (n)	Percentage(%)
Age Group		
Age 18 and Under	110	36,67
Age 19-23	100	33,33
Age 24 and Over	90	30,00
Educational Status		
Elemenary/High School	146	48,67
Undergraduate/Master Degree	154	51,33
Marital Status		
Married	39	13,00
Single	261	87,00

Proffesion		
Employed	163	54,33
Unemployed	137	45,67

Table 1 shows the distribution of sociodemographic characteristics of the soccer players who participated in this study. It can be seen from Table 1 that soccer players' age groups are %36,67 18 years and under, %33,33 19-23 years old and %30 24 years and older. Their education levels are %48,67 Elementary or High School and %51,33 undergraduate or master's degree graduates. %13,0 of the players are married, and %87,0 single and finally, %54,33 are employed while %45,67 is not working in any job.

**Table 2. soccer Player's Positions and Clubs Characteristics Distribution (n=300)**

	Number (n)	Percentage(%)
<u>Position</u>		
Defence	86	28,67
Central Midfield	73	24,33
Wing	66	22,00
Forward	39	13,00
Goalkeeper	36	12,00
<u>League</u>		
Super League	178	59,33
1. Division	122	40,67
<u>Team</u>		
First Team (Seniors)	150	50,00
U 21. Division (Juniors)	150	50,00
<u>Being in Starting team for the games</u>		
Under 4	100	33,33
Between 5-10	67	22,33
Over 11	133	44,33
<u>The position of the team in Standings in 1.period of the season</u>		
Between 1-3	79	26,33
Between 4-10	135	45,00
Over 11	86	28,67
<u>The amount of time period being in the team</u>		
1 year and under	95	31,67
2-3 years	99	33,00
4 years and over	106	35,33
<u>The amount of time period of working with the coach</u>		
1 year	183	61,00
2 year	85	28,33
3 year and over	32	10,67
<u>The region of the club</u>		
Nicosia	59	19,67

Kyrenia	60	20,00
Güzelyurt	60	20,00
Famagusta	62	20,67
İskele	29	9,67
Lefke	30	10,00

**Table 3.** The scores of layers' responses for Coaching Behavior Evaluation Scale for Athletes (n=300)

	<b>n</b>	<b><math>\bar{x}</math></b>	<b>s</b>	<b>Min</b>	<b>Max</b>
Physical Training and Preparation	300	5,00	1,08	1,86	7,00
Technical Skills	300	5,12	1,26	1,25	7,00
Mental Preparation	300	5,19	1,23	1,00	7,00
Goal Setting	300	5,09	1,24	1,00	7,00
Competition Strategy	300	5,77	1,04	2,29	7,00
Positive Coaching Behaviors	300	5,63	1,12	1,83	7,00
Negative Coaching Behaviors	300	3,13	1,43	1,00	7,00

**Table 4.** The comparison of the scores of soccer players' responses for Coaching Behavior Evaluation Scale for Athletes according to their league of the teams. (n=300)

	<b>League</b>	<b>n</b>	<b><math>\bar{x}</math></b>	<b>S</b>	<b>T</b>	<b>p</b>
<b>Physical Training and Preparation</b>	Super League	178	4,71	1,07	-6,073	0,000*
	1. Divison	122	5,44	0,95		
<b>Technical Skills</b>	Super League	178	4,77	1,32	-6,217	0,000*
	1. Divison	122	5,64	0,97		
<b>Mental Preparation</b>	Super League	178	4,91	1,34	-4,842	0,000*
	1. Divison	122	5,59	0,93		
<b>Goal Setting</b>	Super League	178	4,76	1,30	-5,866	0,000*
	1. Divison	122	5,57	0,96		
<b>Competition Strategy</b>	Super League	178	5,53	1,11	-5,024	0,000*
	1. Divison	122	6,12	0,80		
<b>Positive Coaching Behaviors</b>	Super League	178	5,34	1,20	-5,686	0,000*
	1. Divison	122	6,05	0,82		
<b>Negative Coaching Behaviors</b>	Super League	178	3,13	1,21	0,082	0,935
	1. Divison	122	3,12	1,72		

\*p&lt;0,05

**Tablo 5.** The comparison of the scores of soccer players' responses for Coaching Behavior Evaluation Scale for Athletes according to their teams (1. Team Seniors or Under 21 Years old Juniors (n=300)

	Takım	n	$\bar{x}$	S	t	p
<b>Physical Training and Preparation</b>	1. Team	150	5,17	1,06	2,769	0,006*
	Under 21	150	4,83	1,08		
<b>Technical Skills</b>	1. Team	150	5,26	1,26	1,862	0,064
	Under 21	150	4,99	1,26		
<b>Mental Preparation</b>	1. Team	150	5,34	1,27	2,087	0,038*
	Under 21	150	5,04	1,19		
<b>Goal Setting</b>	1. Team	150	5,26	1,23	2,419	0,016*
	Under 21	150	4,92	1,23		
<b>Competition Strategy</b>	1. Team	150	5,86	0,98	1,428	0,154
	Under 21	150	5,69	1,09		
<b>Positive Coaching Behaviors</b>	1. Team	150	5,74	1,03	1,626	0,105
	Under 21	150	5,53	1,19		
<b>Negative Coaching Behaviors</b>	1. Team	150	3,04	1,50	-1,011	0,313
	Under 21	150	3,21	1,36		

\*p<0,05

**Tablo 6.** The comparison of the scores of soccer players' responses for Coaching Behavior Evaluation Scale for Athletes according to their education level (Elementary/High School or Undergraduate/Master degree) (n=300)

	Eğitim Durumu	n	$\bar{x}$	S	t	P
<b>Physical Training and Preparation</b>	Elementary/High School	146	4,86	1,15	-2,251	0,025*
	Undergraduate/Master degree	154	5,14	1,00		
<b>Technical Skills</b>	Elementary/High School	146	5,15	1,29	0,400	0,689
	Undergraduate/Master degree	154	5,10	1,24		
<b>Mental Preparation</b>	Elementary/High School	146	5,22	1,22	0,500	0,617
	Undergraduate/Master degree	154	5,15	1,25		
<b>Goal Setting</b>	Elementary/High School	146	5,09	1,24	-0,082	0,935
	Undergraduate/Master degree	154	5,10	1,24		
<b>Competition Strategy</b>	Elementary/High School	146	5,71	1,05	-1,034	0,302
	Undergraduate/Master degree	154	5,83	1,02		
<b>Positive Coaching Behaviors</b>	Elementary/High School	146	5,62	1,15	-0,153	0,879
	Undergraduate/Master degree	154	5,64	1,08		
<b>Negative Coaching Behaviors</b>	Elementary/High School	146	3,31	1,42	2,193	0,029*
	Undergraduate/Master degree	154	2,95	1,43		

\*p<0,05

## Discussion

The scores from the Physical Training and Planning subscale of the soccer players Coach Behavior Evaluation Scale is  $5,00 \pm 1,08$  points; the technical skills sub-dimension is  $5,12 \pm 1,26$  points, the mental preparation sub-dimension is  $5,19 \pm 1,23$  points, from the goal-setting sub-dimension is  $5,09 \pm 1,24$  points, from the competition strategy sub-dimension is  $5,77 \pm 1,04$  points, from the positive coaching behavior sub-dimension is  $5,63 \pm 1,12$  points. Finally, from the negative coaching behavior, sub-dimension is  $3,13 \pm 1,43$  points (Table 3). In the field of physical training and planning, where soccer players give the lowest score on the scale of evaluating coaching behaviors for athletes, they may think that their coaches do not have the exact equipment, interest, and practice and in this field compared to other areas. It may be assumed that they looked at their trainers more negatively on this issue. In this case, we can believe that coaches may need the training to get players to train physically challenging and satisfying. On the other hand, the field of competitive strategy with tactical elements appears as the most successful behavior set. soccer players may think that their coaches are tactically sufficient and successful and look at them more positively. There were statistically significant differences ( $p<0,05$ ) between the scores obtained from the Physical Training and Planning, Technical Skills, Mental Preparation, Goal Setting, Competition Strategy, and Positive Coaching Behaviors sub-dimensions according to the League where the soccer players played (Table 4). The scores of the players who played in the 1st League in the Physical Training and Planning, Technical Skills, Mental Preparation, Goal Setting, Competition Strategy, and Positive Coaching Behavior sub-dimensions were found higher than the players in the Super League. In this case, the players playing in the Super League can be thought to approach the coaches with a more critical perspective. Soccer players in the super League may think that their coaches do not have sufficient equipment, training, knowledge, and experience compared to the players in the 1st League. Because, it has been revealed that Super League soccer players give negative opinions from the trainers' planning, physical training, technical skill training, mental preparation exercises, helping them set goals and creating a competitive strategy. Soccer players in the 1st League think more positively towards their coaches and talk about them with an optimistic point of view. There is no statistically significant difference between the Negative Coaching Behavior sub-dimension scores according to the League where the soccer players are playing (Table 4) It was determined that there were statistically significant differences between the scores obtained from the Physical Training and Planning, Mental Preparation, and Goal Setting sub-dimensions in the Coach Behavior Evaluation Scale according to the team played by the soccer players ( $p < 0,05$ ). The Physical Training and Planning, Mental Preparation, and Goal Setting scores of the players playing in the A team are higher than those playing in the U21 League. It was determined that there were no statistically significant differences between the scores obtained from Technical Skill, Competition Strategy, Positive Coaching Behaviors, and Negative Coaching Behavior sub-dimensions (Table 5). It can be thought that this result is since the players of team A work with a more intense schedule than the players playing in the U 21 league. It can also be thought that young team coaches do not have the potential and knowledge to physically train their players, the experience that will prepare them mentally, and the capacity to help them set goals.

Dilek (2017) found in her studies that as the sports experience age of the participants increased, they evaluated the behavior of the coaches as positive at a higher level. These findings obtained in the studies are similar to the findings of this study. It was determined that there are statistically significant differences between the scores of the soccer players from the physical training and planning sub-dimension and the negative coach behavior sub-dimension according to their educational status ( $p < 0,05$ ). The results of the soccer players with an undergraduate / graduate level of education got higher scores from the physical training and planning sub-dimension than the players with secondary / high school education, and lower scores from the negative coach behavior sub-dimension. It was determined that the difference between the sub-dimensions of technical Skills, mental preparation, goal setting, competition strategy, and positive trainer behaviors was not statistically significant (Table 6). Players who have undergraduate and postgraduate education think

that their coaches are more successful in the field of physical training and planning than footballers with secondary and high school education, and they think that their training is more beneficial and satisfactory in this direction. It reveals that those with postgraduate education give lower scores on negative coaching behavior compared to middle school and high school graduates and they think more positively on this issue. This shows us that footballers with secondary and high school education are more critical of their coaches (Table 6).

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