

The Effect of Trainers' Pedagogical Competencies on Emotion Regulation: A Study on Young Judo Athletes

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Abstract

It's known that our relationship with others affect the way we view ourselves. The effects of trainer characteristics on athletes in the sports environment is a very important and common research topic. Therefore, this study was conducted to determine the relationship between the pedagogical competence perceived by the athletes from their trainers and the emotion regulation strategies they use. A total of 107 young judo athletes, 64 male and 43 female with a mean age of 15.85±1.32, participated in the study. "Trainers' Pedagogical Competencies Scale" was used to measure the pedagogical competence perceived by the athletes from their trainers, and the "Emotion Regulation Scale for Athletes" was used to determine which emotion regulation strategies they used. Pearson correlation test was used to determine the relationship between trainer pedagogical competence and emotion regulation, and multiple linear regression analysis (enter method) was used to determine whether trainer pedagogical competence was a significant predictor of emotion regulation strategies. Moderately positive and significant relationships were found between empathy-attention and target-oriented training, which are sub-dimensions of the instructor pedagogical competence scale and cognitive reappraisal and suppression, which is one of the emotion regulation strategies. In addition, empathy and attention were found to significantly predict cognitive reappraisal. Again, it was determined that the variables of prevention of support and solidarity and education for the purpose significantly predicted the suppression strategy. As a result, it can be said that some parameters of the pedagogical competence of the trainer are effective on the emotion regulation strategies preferred by the athletes.

Keywords: Trainer, Suppression, Cognitive reappraisal, Emotion regulation, Pedagogical competence.

Antrenör Pedagojik Yeterliliđin Duygu Düzenleme Üzerindeki Etkisi: Genç Judo Sporcuları Üzerine Bir Arařtırma

Öz

Başkalarıyla olan ilişkilerimizin kendimiz ile ilgili görüşlerimizi etkilediđi bilinmektedir. Spor ortamında da antrenör ait olan özelliklerin sporcu üzerindeki etkileri oldukça önemli ve yaygın bir araştırma konusudur. Bu sebeple sporcuların antrenörlerinden algıladıkları pedagojik yeterlilik ile başvurdukları duygu düzenleme stratejileri arasındaki ilişkiyi saptamak adına mevcut araştırma yürütülmüştür. Arařtırmaya yaş ortalamaları 15,85±1,32 olan 64'ü erkek, 43'ü kız olmak üzere toplamda 107 genç judo sporcusu katılmıştır. Sporcuların antrenörlerinden algıladıkları pedagojik yeterliliđi ölçmek için "Antrenör Pedagojik Yeterlik Ölçeđi", hangi duygu düzenleme stratejilerini kullandıklarını belirlemek içinse "Sporcular İçin Duygu Düzenleme Ölçeđi" kullanılmıştır. Antrenör pedagojik yeterlilik ile duygu düzenleme arasındaki ilişkiyi saptamak adına pearson korelasyon testi, antrenör pedagojik yeterliliđin duygu düzenleme stratejilerinin anlamlı bir yordayıcısı olup olmadığını saptamak içinse çoklu doğrusal regresyon analizi (enter yöntemi) kullanılmıştır. Antrenör pedagojik yeterlilik ölçeđi alt boyutlarından olan empati-dikkat ve hedef odaklı antrenman ile duygu düzenleme stratejilerinden olan bilişsel yeniden düzenleme ve bastırma arasında orta düzeyde pozitif yönlü anlamlı ilişkiler tespit edilmiştir. Ayrıca empati ve dikkatin, bilişsel yeniden değerlendirmeyi pozitif yönde anlamlı bir şekilde yordadığı tespit edilmiştir. Yine destek ve dayanışmanın engellenmesi ile hedef odaklı antrenman deđişkenlerinin bastırma stratejisini anlamlı bir şekilde yordadığı saptanmıştır. Sonuç olarak antrenörün pedagojik yeterliliđine ait bazı parametrelerin sporcuların tercih ettikleri duygu düzenleme stratejileri üzerinde etkili olduđu söylenebilir.

Anahtar kelimeler: Antrenör, Bastırma, Bilişsel yeniden değerlendirme, Duygu düzenleme, Pedagojik yeterlilik

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INTRODUCTION

The relationship established between the trainer and the athletes plays an important role in the physical and psychosocial development of the athletes (Gervis & Dunn, 2004; Jowett & Cockerill, 2002; Jowett & Poczwardowski, 2007). Therefore, the relationship established between the trainer and the athlete is crucial and the trainer must inhold some characteristics. According to Walsh (2004), one of the four characteristics that trainers working with young people should possess is being equipped with pedagogical knowledge. The content of pedagogical knowledge here can be listed as organizing learning environments, management, planning, organization, and communication. Again, it was emphasized by Armour (2011) that trainers working with young people should also be effective teachers or, to use a more inclusive term, pedagogues. Zetter (2008), who developed the scale used in the current study, argued on the other hand that the trainer should have pedagogical competency and formulated the trainer's pedagogical competency as follows: Trainers working with youngsters; should empathize with them and establish communication with attention, provide positive feedback and social support, not hinder support or solidarity, provide democratic training climate and coach target-oriented training.

The relationship between the trainer and the athlete is one of the most important topics that researchers examine. As a matter of fact, there are scale development and adaptation studies to measure this relationship (Jowett & Ntoumanis, 2004; Yang & Jowett, 2012). In addition, the relationship between the bond established between the trainer and the athlete and the number of medals won (Jowett, Cockerill, 2003), the leadership of the trainer, and the team's success (Vella et al., 2013) were studied by the researchers. Another dimension of this relationship, the pedagogical aspect was examined by Zetter (2008). Again, the number of studies on the pedagogical aspect of sports is increasing (Armour, 2014; Cronin & Armor, 2018; Harvey et al., 2014; Şirin & Sevilmiş, 2020).

Athletes often use the word "emotion" when they want to describe their athletic performance. Some of these are; "There were ups and downs in our emotions during the match.", "Emotions ran high in the exciting last minutes.", "He was in the action zone and managed to control his emotions at the last moment.", "The emotional chemistry of the team had deteriorated and thus the result was a drop in performance." (Connolly, 2019). When these statements are examined, it is seen that the sports environment offers an ideal natural environment opportunity for the examination of emotions, which are an important part of human life. As a matter of fact, anger, satisfaction, disappointment or joy can be experienced in any sporting event. Besides, it is accepted by athletes, trainers, and practitioners that psychological variables such as emotion are of great importance in athletic performance (Ruiz, 2004). It is even known that athletes should be in the optimal emotional range in order to reflect the desired performance in the arena. One way they reach their optimal emotional range is through emotion regulation. Particularly in the last 20 years, researchers have examined the issue of emotion regulation in sports (Martinent et al., 2015; Stanley et al., 2012; Uphill et al., 2012).

Emotion regulation aims to change the reactions that are expected to emerge after the positive or negative emotions felt by the person. These changes can be listed as reducing, increasing, or maintaining the reaction (Gross, 1999; Richards & Gross, 2000). Although this definition is similar to the concept of coping, they are different from each other. Indeed, while coping

typically involves controlling or reducing negative emotions associated with stress (Kowalski & Crocker, 2001), emotion regulation involves up- and down-regulating both positive and negative emotions (Gross, 1998). It is thought that there are more than 400 strategies used to regulate emotions (Gross, 2002). However, two emotion regulation strategies have received intense attention in the psychology literature. One of them is cognitive reappraisal and the other is suppression (Gross, 2002; Gross & John, 2003). Regulating emotions through cognitive reappraisal, one of these two strategies, means changing the way one thinks about the situation (Gross, 2002; Gross & John, 2003). To explain further with an example; the athlete may try to perceive an upcoming competition as an exciting opportunity rather than a stressful situation. The other strategy, suppression, is the avoidance of expressing emotions (Gross, 2002; Gross & John, 2003). For example, even if athletes feel nervous before an upcoming competition, they can suppress this anxiety and indirectly prevent their opponents watching them from gaining confidence. While suppression strategy is correlated with more negative emotions, reappraisal is correlated with more positive and pleasant emotions (Jones, 2003; Robazza et al., 2022). However, there are also studies detected that the suppression strategy in the sports environment is not correlated with positive or negative emotions. (Uphill et al., 2012) Based on this, it is argued that if athletes can perceive unpleasant emotions as beneficial in sports environments (for example, interpreting anxiety as readiness), it may not be harmful to feel these emotions (Kim & Tamminen, 2022).

In current studies in the literature, there are studies on how the relationship between young athletes, who constitute the sample group, and coaches, affects the athlete and the sports environment. When looked at, it is concluded that the attitudes and behaviors of the coaches are effective in the tendency of young athletes to behaviors that are described as positive (Vella et al., 2013). It is known that the level of trust of the coach in his athletes has an effect on individual success and team success (Hampson & Jowett, 2014). There are also studies on the effects of the coach-athlete relationship on the psychological parameters of the athlete. As a matter of fact, the relationship established between the coach and the athlete; It has been determined that it affects psychological variables such as motivation (Olympiou et al., 2008), burnout (McGee & DeFreese, 2019), pleasure from sports and focus (Stirling & Kerr, 2013). For this reason, in this study, the relationship between the pedagogical competence perceived by the athlete from his trainer and emotion regulation strategies, which is another psychological factor, is included.

Yet studies have shown the importance of emotion regulation for young athletes (Kim & Tamminen, 2022), there is a need to understand what emotion regulation strategies are correlated with important antecedents (the antecedent in this research is the trainer's pedagogical competency), as well as the extent to which they use cognitive reappraisal or suppression strategies. Although there are studies in the literature determining the correlation between the emotional regulation of athletes and self-compassion (Doorley et al., 2022), mindfulness and coping skills (Josefsson et al., 2017), and mental toughness (Mohebi et al., 2017); no research that examines the effects of trainer characteristics, which are of great importance for the athlete, on the emotion regulation skills of the athlete, has been encountered. For these reasons, the current study was conducted to examine the correlation between the pedagogical competency perceived by young judoists from their trainers and the emotion regulation strategies they apply and to test the predictor of a trainer's pedagogical competency on emotion regulation.

METHODS

Research Model

In the present study, the correlational research method is used as the research method. Correlational research is a research that examines the variables thought to be related without the intervention of researchers (Büyüköztürk et al., 2021). A correlational research model is used to test the hypothesis of "variable A predicts variable B." (Fraenkel & Wallen, 2006). The main hypothesis in the current study is "Trainer's pedagogical competency is an important predictor of emotion regulation strategies."

Population and Sample

The population of the study consists of judoists in Gaziantep. Therefore, the simple random sampling method, which is one of the random sampling methods, was used as each sample unit was given an equal probability of being selected in the study. Fraenkel and Wallen (2006) have recommended using random methods as much as possible in correlational research. A total of 107 active judoists, 64 male (59.8%) and 43 female (40.2%), aged between 15 and 18 (15.85 ± 1.32) participated in the study. In addition, the mean age of judoists in the judo branch is 4.82 ± 2.14 , and the mean of training years with their current trainers is 4.51 ± 2.19 .

Data Collection Tools

Personal Information Form: A personal information form was prepared by the researchers to determine the demographic characteristics (age, gender) of the judoists.

Trainers' Pedagogical Competencies Scale: It was developed by Zetter (2008) to determine whether their trainers are pedagogically competent from the point of athletes. The study of adaptation to the Turkish population was conducted by Şirin and Sevilmiş (2020). The scale is a 5-point Likert type and structured as "always (5)", "usually (4)", "sometimes (3)", "rarely (2)" and "never (1)". It consists of 27 questions and 6 sub-dimensions.

Table 1. Cronbach Alpha (α) values of the scale

Sub-Dimensions	Original Scale	Scale Adapted to Turkish	Current Research
1	0,78	0,80	0,79
2	0,72	0,65	0,72
3	0,71	0,65	0,74
4	0,66	0,72	0,70
5	0,65	0,63	0,78
6	0,49	0,62	0,71

1=Empathy and Attention, 2=Hindering Support or Solidarity, 3=Positive Feedback, 4= Social Support, 5=Democratic Training Climate, 6=Target-oriented Training

Emotion Regulation Scale: Originally developed by Gross and John (2003), the scale was adapted into Turkish by Eldeleklioğlu and Eroğlu (2015). It was adapted for athletes by Tingaz and Ekiz (2021). The scale is 7-point Likert type and structured as 1 strongly disagree and 7 strongly agree. It consists of 8 questions and 2 sub-dimensions. Tingaz and Ekiz (2021), who applied the scale to athletes, have emphasized that each dimension should be evaluated within itself and that two sub-dimensions should not be used by adding together due to the theoretical infrastructure of the scale.

Table 2. Cronbach Alpha (a) values of the scale

Sub-Dimensions	Original Scale	Scale Adapted to Turkish	Current Research
1	0,80-0,82	0,73	0,70
2	0,73-0,76	0,65	0,76

1= Cognitive Reappraisal 2= Suppression

Ethical Approval

Prior to the study, ethics committee approval was obtained from Kilis 7 Aralık University Ethics Committee with the decision numbered 2022/23 on 12/20/2022.

Data Collection and Analysis

The questionnaire form prepared on the online platform was sent to the judoists in Gaziantep and they were asked to answer the questions on a voluntary basis. The collected data were transferred to the SPSS 22 program. Then, a normality test was performed to determine whether the data showed a normal distribution (See Table 1). As the skewness and kurtosis values were between -1.5 and +1.5, the scales and their sub-dimensions were determined to show a normal distribution (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2013). Therefore, parametric tests were preferred. Pearson correlation test, which is one of the parametric tests, was used to determine the correlation between a trainer's pedagogical competency and emotion regulation. Multiple linear regression analysis (enter method) was preferred to determine whether a trainer's pedagogical competency is an important predictor of emotion regulation strategies. Prior to testing the models, there should be no multicollinearity problem between the independently determined variables. For this reason, the values expressed as tolerance values should be taken into consideration in addition to the variance inflation factor (VIF) in the constructed model. For all the multicollinearity problems, VIF values should be less than 10 and tolerance values should be greater than 0.10 (Hair et al., 2006). In addition, the Durbin-Watson model shows whether the errors are independent (autocorrelation) (Özdamar, 2002). Therefore, it has been stated that Durbin-Watson values should be close to two, even should be between 1.5 and 2.5 (Öztürk, 2005).

Table 3. Test for normal distribution

Scales	Sub-Dimensions	Skewness	Kurtosis
Trainers' Pedagogical Competencies Scale	Empathy and Attention	-,646	,283
	Hindering Support or Solidarity	-,523	-,823
	Positive Feedback	-,152	-,997
	Social Support	,163	,244
	Democratic Training Climate	-,210	-,513
	Target-oriented Training	-,843	,076
Emotion Regulation Scale	Suppression	-,710	,211
	Cognitive Reappraisal	-,665	,890

RESULTS

Table 4. Descriptive data on scales and sub-dimensions

Variables	Min.	Max.	M	SD
Empathy and Attention	1,17	5,00	3,59	,846
Hindering Support or Solidarity	1,00	4,00	2,68	,780
Positive Feedback	1,67	5,00	3,65	,982
Social Support	1,00	5,00	3,28	,875
Democratic Training Climate	1,00	5,00	3,43	,982
Target-oriented Training	1,00	5,00	3,94	,975
Suppression	1,00	6,50	4,36	1,127
Cognitive Reappraisal	1,25	7,00	4,76	1,084

According to Table 4, while target-oriented training, which is one of the pedagogical criteria of the trainer, has the highest average, hindering support or solidarity, which is another criterion, has the lowest average. The mean of cognitive reappraisal, one of the emotion regulation strategies of young judo athletes, is higher than the suppression strategy.

Table 5. Correlation analysis between variables

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1	1	-,328**	,457**	,236*	,494**	,571**	,363**	,475**
2		1	-,327**	-,384**	-,288**	-,103	,114	-,260**
3			1	,437**	,439**	,486**	,212*	,323**
4				1	,486**	,179	-,029	,170
5					1	,379**	,179	,259**
6						1	,456**	,317**
7							1	,500**
8								1

*p<.05 **p<.001

1=Empathy and Attention, 2=Hindering Support or Solidarity, 3=Positive Feedback, 4= Social Support, 5=Democratic Training Climate, 6=Target-oriented Training, 7=Suppression, 8= Cognitive Reappraisal

According to Table 5, statistically significant relationships were found between empathy and attention, positive feedback, target-oriented training, which are sub-dimensions of trainers' pedagogical competence, and suppression and cognitive reappraisal, which are sub-dimensions of emotion regulation. In addition, it is seen that the correlation coefficients of the trainers' pedagogical competence sub-dimensions, which are accepted as independent variables in the current study, are below .70.

The relationship between suppression strategy and empathy and attention, positive feedback and target-oriented training is positive and low. The relationship between cognitive reappraisal and empathy and attention, positive feedback, democratic training climate and target-oriented training is positive and low. In addition, the relationship between cognitive reappraisal and hindering support or solidarity is negative and low.

Table 6. Regression analysis

Independent Variables	B	SE	Beta	t	p	VIF	Adjusted R ²
Empathy and Attention	,482	,152	,376	3,173	,002	1,873	,204
Hindering Support or Solidarity	-,146	,138	-,105	-1,056	,293	1,314	
Positive Feedback	,115	,124	,104	,923	,358	1,688	
Social Support	-,006	,134	-,005	-,045	,965	1,551	
Democratic Training Climate	-,021	,124	-,019	-,166	,868	1,676	
Target-oriented Training	,054	,126	,049	,428	,669	1,715	

Dependent variables=Cognitive Reappraisal, R=,500 R²=,250 (Anova: F=5,541 p=.000) Durbin-Watson: 1,839

When Table 6, was examined, it was determined that empathy and attention sub-dimension, which is one of the sub-dimensions of the trainers' pedagogical competence scale, explained cognitive reappraisal ($B=.482$) in a positive way.

Table 7. Regression analysis

Independent Variables	B	SE	Beta	t	p	VIF	Adjusted R ²
Empathy and Attention	,309	,155	,232	1,994	,051	1,873	,232
Hindering Support or Solidarity	,304	,141	,210	2,156	,033	1,314	
Positive Feedback	,049	,127	,043	,390	,698	1,688	
Social Support	-,121	,136	-,094	-,886	,378	1,551	
Democratic Training Climate	,030	,126	,027	,241	,810	1,676	
Target-oriented Training	,382	,129	,331	2,967	,004	1,715	

Dependent variables=Suppression $R=.525$ $R^2=.276$ (Anova: $F=6,342$ $p=.000$), Durbin-Watson: 1,503

When Table 7, was examined, it was determined that hindering support or solidarity and target-oriented training sub-dimensions, which is two of the sub-dimensions of the trainers' pedagogical competence scale, explained suppression in a positive way.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

In the study, empathy and attention sub-dimensions, which are sub-dimensions of the trainer's pedagogical competency scale, were determined to positively predict the cognitive reappraisal strategy. It was an expected result that an athlete who thought that his trainer was approaching with empathy would turn to the cognitive reappraisal strategy associated with positive emotions. Although there are many definitions of empathy in the literature, it is generally seen to be defined as a dimension of communication and a strong communication skill. In the current study, it can be explained as the state of being understood by the trainers of the athletes' own feelings and thoughts. There are studies that found a positive and significant correlation between empathy and emotion regulation (Lockwood et al., 2014; Olalde-Mathieu et al., 2021). In a study conducted by Lorimer and Jowett (2009), a positive and significant correlation was found between the level of empathy perceived by athletes from their coaches and their satisfaction with training. It has also been determined that the quality relationship between the trainer and the athlete has a mediating role in the correlation between personality and empathy (Jowett et al., 2012). Based on these studies, it is seen that the level of empathy and attention perceived by the athlete from their own trainer is also correlated with other variables and is important. While Thompson et al., (2019) have emphasized that how we understand and react to the emotions of others, that is, empathy can be affected by the regulatory processes (i.e. emotion regulation) used to form the emotions of ourselves and others, there are also studies stating that a lack of empathy in the person can cause emotion regulation disorders (Schipper & Peretmann, 2013) as well. Assuming that the trainer-athlete relationship and the teacher-student relationship are similar, there are also studies in the literature evaluating the effects of teachers' pedagogical competency on students (Afalla & Fabelico, 2020; Hakim, 2015; Marina et al., 2019). When the results of these studies are examined, it was determined that teacher's pedagogical competency is effective on student's learning performance, learning discipline, and motivation. When examined, the results of these studies in the literature and the current study support each other, and empathy and attention, which are one of the trainer's pedagogical competency criteria, are observed to be of great importance for athletes.

The sub-dimension of hindering support or solidarity, which is one of the sub-dimensions of the trainer's pedagogical competency scale, was determined to positively and significantly predict the suppression strategy. Trainers are one of the most important factors for athletes (Horn, 2008; Özyıldırım & Sarı, 2018; Sarı & Bayazıt, 2017). According to Jowett & Shanmugam (2016), the trainer has the task of supporting the athlete as well as energizing, motivating, protecting, encouraging, satisfying, adapting, and relieving. Therefore, it can be expected that athletes who feel that they do not receive support and solidarity from their trainers will tend to the suppression strategy, which is generally associated with negative emotions. As a result of a study conducted by Sarı et al. (2020), it has been determined that the trainer-induced supportive motivational climate is important for the athlete. When the results of two different studies conducted by Amorose and Anderson-Butcher, 2015, and Mageau and Vallerand 2003 were examined, the trainer's autonomy-supportive behaviors were determined to have positive effects on motivation, which is an important determinant of performance and persistence in athletes. The results of these studies and the results of the current study show parallelism and emphasize the importance of the support and solidarity that the athlete perceives from his trainer.

In addition, the target-oriented training sub-dimension was determined to positively predict the suppression strategy. It is thought that the athletes who feel that their trainer coaches target-oriented training strategies use the suppression strategy in a positive way. Athletes who feel that they have trained appropriately and sufficiently may aim to suppress their pre-competition anxiety and not appear anxious, thus preventing their opponents from increasing their confidence. The situation that underlies the anxiety suppression strategy here may be the thought that athletes have performed target-oriented training. In the event that the determined targets are not achieved in time, athletes as well as trainers may face pressure and may have financial worries (Haungen et al., 2023). In order not to encounter such negative situations, the athletes should control their emotions before and during the competition. If the athletes think that they are ready for the competition during the training period, they can restrain their emotions, which are expected to be revealed and defined as negative, due to the suppressing strategy.

According to the research findings, relationships were determined between the pedagogical competence criteria perceived by the athletes and their emotion regulation strategies. Friesen et al., (2017) determined that the athletes who interact with their coaches as they wish are in the most appropriate performance areas in terms of their emotional states. This result expresses the basis and importance of the current research.

In conclusion, the empathy and communication with attention characteristics of the trainer cause the athlete to tend to the cognitive reappraisal strategy, which is one of the emotion regulation strategies. In addition, athletes who think that they do not receive support and solidarity from their trainer and that their trainers coach target-oriented, were determined to tend to the suppression strategy.

Recommendations

The findings of this study are of great importance for researchers working in the field of sports psychology, particularly on the relationship between the trainer and young athlete or the effects of the trainer on the athlete. However, the sample group of the study consists of only judoists. So much so that the relationship between the trainer and the young athlete is of great importance in other branches as well. Consequently, the current study should be repeated in other sports fields to determine to what extent the results obtained are generalizable.

In addition, there is a need to understand what kind of antecedents or results a factor affecting the performance of the athlete, such as emotion regulation, is correlated with. By making the discoveries of these antecedents and results, literature contribution can be provided to optimize the psychological performance of the athlete. Again, although significant predictive results were obtained in the current study, it is thought that the reason for the low rate is due to the sample size and structure. For this reason, it is recommended that future studies be conducted with larger and mixed sample structures.

Conflict of Interest: As the authors of the article, we declare that there is no personal or financial conflict of interest within the scope of the study.

Researchers' Statement of Contribution Rate: Research Desing-ÖA, HÜ; Data Collection-ÖA, FK; Analyzes- ÖA, FK; Preparation of the article, ÖA, FK, HÜ.

Research Ethic Informations

Ethics Committee: Kilis 7 Aralık University Ethics Committee

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