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## Examination of the relationship between team (group) harmony and role perception among players: A research on veteran national players

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### Abstract

The purpose of the present study is examining the relationship between team (group) harmony and positive role perception. In addition, the present research aims at examining whether there are significant differences in players' attitudes toward team (group) harmony and role perception in terms of age groups, gender, length of sporting, and country distributions. 29 female, 46 male; a total of 76 elite veteran players selected via random sampling method among elite veteran players who participated in international veteran friendly matches participated in the research. Questionnaire form that consists of three parts was used as the data collection tool of the present study. First part of the questionnaire form includes 4 questions about the players' personal information; Group Environment Questionnaire developed by Carron et al. (1985) is the second part of the questionnaire; and Role Perception Scale developed by Beauchamp et al. (2002) is the third part of the questionnaire. According to research findings; there are significant differences in players' team (group) harmony and role perception levels in terms of age groups, gender, length of sporting and country distributions ( $p < 0.005$ ). Research findings revealed a positive significant correlation between team (group) harmony and positive role perception at 0.01 significance level.

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## 1. Introduction

Role; refers to the various behaviors expected by humans from an individual or a group. There are many behavioral patterns expected from individuals to perform in their personal and professional lives; and the extent of a certain role is defined by a number of norms in advance (Beauchamp, and Bray, 2001). Individuals are responsible for meeting the expectations required by the roles assigned to them in their personal and professional lives. They may be a husband, a father at home, an officer, a chief or a member of a union at work. A role reflects the individuals' positions in a social system; and the rights, liabilities and responsibilities that come along with that position.

Basic roles are the ones that occur according to the ages and genders of the individuals. Expectations of the societies from the individuals according to their ages and genders form the basic roles. Motherhood and fatherhood are in this basic roles classification.

Independent roles are the individual roles that are independent from the basic roles and are not compulsory to be performed. For example; there are no limitations related to age and gender for conducting doctorate studies at the faculty of business. However, when an individual joins on a plane related to the role of doctoral student, this individual starts to perform the role behavior by meeting the conditions of the related position within this plane; at which point the role loses the feature of independence.

Even though the sports related roles that individuals assume are not included in the basic roles classification, sports related roles assumed by the individuals who considers sports as a life style, can be counted as the roles that have be performed by the individuals. Especially, each role assumed by the individuals (players) forming the team in sportive competitions of team sports in organizations based on competition is one of the factors that can directly affect the achievement (Loughead and Carron, 2004). At this point, that the players have positive perceptions related to their personal roles and the roles they assume within team should evidently be considered as the most important key to sportive achievement(Beauchamp, at all, 2002; Eys, at all, 2003).). Moreover, the harmony of the players who form the team in team sports is also one of the most important determiners of sportive achievement (Carron, 1982; Craig and Kelly, 1999). In high-level sports organizations, one of the basic conditions of being successful as a team is obviously the harmony being at the best level (Mullen and Copper, 1994; Patterson at all, 2005) Every factor that affects the harmony of the team in sportive competitions is considered as one of the basic reasons of failure (Carron, 1982; Carron at all, 2002). Many previous researches showed that there is a positive correlation between positive role perception and team harmony. Thus, the purpose of the present research is determining the correlations between elite veteran players' positive role perceptions and team harmony. The researchers conducted on player on the subject matter in the Turkish literature is very limited; which makes the importance of the present research more distinct.

## 2. Method

### 2.1 Work group

The present research was conducted on elite veteran national volleyball players between the ages of 35 and 55. Veteran national volleyball players who played in national teams of the countries formed the work group of the study. The present research was conducted on players who participated in International Black Sea Countries Veteran Games, Greece Veterans Friendly Competition and Friendly Competitions organized in Bulgaria. 27 female, 49 male; a total of 76 veterans from 4 countries who participated in veterans friendly competitions voluntarily participated in the research.

### 2.2. Data collection tools

#### 2.2.1.Role perception scale

Role Perception Scale developed by Beauchamp et al. (2002) was used in the present research. Original form of the role perception scale consists of 40 items, 20 of which measure the negative role perception, and 20 of which measure positive role perception. In the present research, only the items measuring the positive role perceptions of

the players were used. The scale is arranged on a 9 level grading system; 1= totally disagree to 9=totally agree. In the present research, the original English form of the scale was used and, explanations in Turkish were added for Turkish players.

### 2.2.2. Group environment scale

Group Environment Questionnaire developed by Carron et al. (1985) in order to determine the team harmony level in sports was used in the present research.

The scale consists of 18 items on a 9 level grading system. The scale consists of items prepared to measure the team dependance of the players. In the present research, the original English form of the scale was used and, explanations in Turkish were added for Turkish players.

### 2.2.3. Personal information form

In accordance with the purpose of the present research; a personal information form of 4 questions on age, gender, length of sporting and country was used.

## 2.3. Statistical analysis

Descriptive statistical analyses related to the personal information of the participants were obtained and Pearson Correlation Analysis was used to define the correlation between players' role perceptions and sportive achievement motivation. In addition, T test on groups of two, and ANOVA tests on groups of more than two were used to test whether there are significant differences in players' role perceptions and sportive achievement motivation levels in terms of demographic variables. Tukey HSD analysis was used to determine the source of differences in groups of more than two.

## 3. Findings

32.9% of the participants were in 35-39 age group, 31% of them were in 40-44 age group, 27.6% of them were in 45-49 age group and 7.9% of the players who participated in the present research were in 50-55 age group. In addition 64.5% of the participants were male, and 35.5% of them were female. The average for the players length of sporting was calculated as 22.4% of these players were Turkish, 31.6% of them were Bulgarian, 15.8% of them were Greek and 30.3% of the participants were Romanian.

According to research findings, there is positive correlation at 0.01 significance level between the players' positive role perception and team harmony ( $r=656$ ). According to this finding, the players' having positive perceptions about the roles they assume in their teams contributes to the positive development of team harmony.

According to research findings, there is a significant difference in the players' positive role perceptions across genders ( $p<0.005$ ). According to Tukey HSD analysis, this difference is caused by the fact that female players have a higher-level of positive role perception than the male players. No significant difference was detected in the players' team harmony in terms of gender ( $p>0.005$ ).

A significant difference was found in players' team harmony and positive role perception in terms of length of sporting ( $p<0.005$ ). According to Tukey HSD analysis, this difference is caused by the fact that players who sported for 30-34 years have a higher-level positive role perception than the other players. No significant difference was detected in team harmony levels in terms of length of sporting ( $p>0.005$ ).

No significant difference was found in team harmony levels of players in terms of age groups ( $p>0.005$ ). However, there is a significant difference in players' positive role perception levels in terms of age groups ( $p<0.005$ ). According to Tukey HSD analysis, this difference is caused by the fact that players in the 50-55 age group have a higher-level of positive role perception than the other groups.

Significant differences were detected in participants' positive role perceptions and team harmony levels in terms of countries ( $p<0.005$ ). According to Tukey HSD analysis, this difference is caused by the fact that Romanian players have more negative role perceptions than the other players and Turkish players have a higher-level positive

team harmony than the other players.

#### 4. Discussion and conclusion

The present research that aims at defining the relationship between team harmony and positive role perception among elite veteran players found that there is a positive correlation between players' positive role perception and team harmony. This finding shows that, the players' having positive perceptions about the roles they assume in their teams contributes to the positive development of team harmony. Therefore, in order to provide team harmony which affects the sportive achievement considerably, positive perceptions of the players related to their roles they assume in their teams should be seriously taken into consideration (Can et al., 2010; Soyer et al. 2010). In addition, it can be observed from the research findings that, female players have a higher-level positive role perception than the male players. Undoubtedly, the reason for this finding is that, women assume more roles in life and they have a higher willpower in performing these roles they assume with positive perceptions.

One of the most interesting findings of the present research is that, Romanian players have lower-level positive role perception than the players from other countries. The reason for this finding is that, Romanian players have worse social living conditions than the players of other countries. Another interesting finding of this research is that, Turkish players have a higher-level team harmony than the players from other countries. This finding can be perceived as the reflection of the fact that Turkish people are prone to team work because of their general characteristics.

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