

Investigation of hockey referees' levels of sport commitment to attending referee training: An example of examining in terms of education level and gender variable

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to examine the behaviors of hockey referees in Turkey to continue and quit the refereeing profession and to examine their sports commitment levels. A total of 70 referees (37 women, 33 men) participated in the research, including trainee, county, national and international referees. In the research, the "Sport Commitment Scale" developed by Scanlan et al. (1993) and reorganized by Vanyperen was used. The scale is a 5-point Likert scale consisting of 20 items and consists of a total of 6 sub-dimensions as enjoyment, participation alternatives, personal investment, social barriers, participation opportunities and intention to quit refereeing. The obtained data were analyzed using SPSS 25.0 Program. As a result of the analysis, it was determined that the data showed a normal distribution. Considering the gender variable, a significant result was obtained in the sub-dimension of female referees' personal investment and participation alternatives ($p < 0.05$). According to the education level variable, a significant result was revealed in the sub-dimension of social barriers and quitting the refereeing ($p < 0.05$). As a result, it was concluded that they liked the refereeing profession, they considered it as an opportunity to participate, and especially female referees regarded the refereeing profession as a personal investment tool, and it was also found that both male and female referees were exposed to social barriers. In this sense, it is seen that the conscious awareness levels of the masters and doctoral referees are high and their stress and pressure management is better.

Keywords: Hockey, quitting the refereeing, referee, referee training, sport commitment.

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INTRODUCTION

Sports activities intersect with other areas of human activities within the social field. Sport is used as a 'global language' to promote international awareness and intercultural understanding (Tiessen, 2011). Sport is the transformation of physical, moral, social and character personality into competition at the expense of one's life within certain systematic and fair rules in order to establish a mutual relationship with the nature and social structure of the struggle and power of success in the

human spirit. Sport is a discipline and a culture. Also, sport has a scientific side. Moreover, sport is the greatest tool in the formation of world peace and brotherhood. According to Tiryaki (2000), sport is a set of events that have an important place in people's lives and health. It is of great importance for the management of the game that the referees can increase their motivation emotionally and spiritually and maximize their performance in terms of physical and decision-making in this job they do

outside of their profession (Kargün et al., 2012). Referees are exposed to spectator, player and club pressure before, during and after the competition, especially in popular sports branches. For this reason, the work of the referees is quite challenging and wearisome. In addition, efforts to adapt to the negative conditions and environment that individuals are exposed to throughout life can also cause emotional stress (Sivrikaya, 2019). Despite all these negative factors, referees have to show strong character and a successful performance (Karaçam and Pular, 2018).

Refereeing requires experience, training, knowledge, competence, the ability for refereeing, condition and concentration. The referee is a person who takes care of every moment of his/her life, has a good relationship with people with his/her reliable honest personality, understands the norms and values of society, and can interpret his/her individual and social behaviors as a whole, and should set an example with his/her actions on the field and his/her life outside the field. Refereeing is on the way to becoming a community of specially selected people (Orta, 2005). Coaches and families are social groups that have been widely analyzed and discussed. In contrast, the referee is often overlooked (Andersson, 2019). This is because referees can have various roles in different sports. Plessner and MacMahon (2008) considered individual sports in different ways and classified refereeing into three types: referees who interact, referees who react, and referees who evaluate. Job satisfaction, in the most general sense, is expressed as all positive or negative feelings about the work environment. In other words, it is the satisfaction or dissatisfaction of the employees with their work. Job satisfaction occurs when the characteristics of the job match the demands of the employees. Employees spend most of the day at work. Being happy and peaceful at work also positively affects their job satisfaction from work and daily life and increases work efficiency (Daşdemir, 2009). Emotional commitment means that the individual works with excitement and pleasure, cognitive commitment means that the worker concentrates his/her attention and mind on his/her work, and physical commitment means that the worker uses all his/her energy for his/her work. Work commitment is the simultaneous giving of one's cognitive energy, physical energy and heart to role performance. (Rich et al., 2010). The Hockey Federation, which became autonomous as of April 11, 2006, has 221 clubs in 40 active provinces. Accordingly, there are 715 active athletes, 534 of whom are men and 181 are women. Clubs participate in competitions in women's and men's leagues, in which 8 teams each participate in the senior category, and Turkey Championships are held directly in other age groups (Güner, 2007).

Hockey is one of the 28 Olympic branches. When we examine the literature on hockey, which is newly

developing and newly recognized in our country, it is seen that there are not enough studies. As referees play an important role in hockey competitions, as in all competitions, it is important to understand the reasons why people who work as referees start the refereeing profession, the reasons for continuing to referee, and the reasons for quitting the refereeing. From this point of view, this study was conducted to examine the reasons why hockey referees continue and quit refereeing and to examine hockey referees' sports commitment levels. We think that this study on hockey referees will contribute to the literature.

METHOD

This research aims to examine the continuing and quitting of the refereeing profession of the hockey referees working under the Turkish Hockey Federation in terms of various variables. In light of the data obtained from individuals representing the universe, the descriptive survey model, which is a research method that provides the opportunity to make generalizations about the universe, was used in the research (Sönmez and Alacapınar, 2019).

The research has sought answers to the following questions:

1. Is there a difference in the behavior of referees to quit refereeing in terms of gender variable?
2. Is there a difference in the behavior of referees to quit refereeing in terms of the variable of the level of education?

Universe and sample

The universe of the research consists of a total of 120 hockey referees, 95 males and 25 females, working throughout Turkey. The sample of the study consists of a total of 70 hockey referees, 33 males and 37 females, selected by convenience sampling method, who participated in the 2020-2021 Open Field Season Hockey Referee Development Seminar held in Antalya-Alanya.

Data collection tool

Personal information form

A personal information form developed by the researchers was used to collect information about the independent variables. In this form, there are questions about the characteristics of referees such as gender, marital status, age, educational status, classification and years of refereeing.

Sport commitment scale

In the study, the “Sport Commitment Scale” was used to collect the data. The scale was developed by Scanlan et al. (1993) and reorganized by Vanyperen (1998). By conducting the validity and reliability tests of the scale Ağbuba et al. (2017) used the scale in the study entitled “Examination of Stay/Leave Behavior of Track and Field Referees in Denizli”. The scale is a 5-point Likert-type scale with 20 items and consists of 6 sub-scales. Vanyperen (1998) explained these sub-dimensions, respectively, as follows: (1) enjoyment; positive sensory response such as having fun and enjoying, (2) participation alternatives; other interesting options versus continuing to referee, (3) personal investment; personal resources put forward in the absence of the task, (4) social barriers; social expectations or norms created and felt to stay active, (5) opportunities for participation; valuable opportunities created through continued participation and (6) intention to quit refereeing.

Data analysis

The data obtained in the study were analyzed using the SPSS 25.0 program. Frequency analysis was used to determine the demographic information of the participants and the percentage distribution of the participants' information about refereeing. Descriptive statistics were used to determine the averages of the answers given by the participants to the scale items and the averages of the scale sub-dimensions. Cronbach's Alpha coefficients were determined by performing the reliability analysis of the scale scores. Cronbach's alpha values of sub-dimensions were found to be between 0.70 and 0.80. Whether or not the data of the variables were normally distributed was tested with the Kolmogrov-Smirnov test and Shapiro Wilk tests, and it was seen that the data showed normal distribution in these test results. T-test was carried out to compare the paired groups, and One Way ANOVA test was employed to compare the multiple groups, and the significance level was considered as $p < 0.05$.

When Table 1 is addressed, it is seen that the skewness and kurtosis values are between .180 and -

1088. Skewness and kurtosis values between -2 and +2 indicate that the data are in accordance with a normal distribution (George and Mallery, 2010).

FINDINGS

When looking at the age group in Table 2, it is seen that the 18-22 age group (34.3%) is the highest, and when gender and marital status are addressed, it is observed that the rate of women (52.9%) and singles (75.7%) are high. When we look at the education level, it is seen that the undergraduate level (74.3%) has the highest rate. When the category of refereeing is analyzed, it is noticeable that a large part (60%) consists of trainee referees. Finally, when the refereeing experience is taken into consideration, it is seen that the referees with 1-3 years of experience are the most (81.4%).

In Table 3, the hockey referees stated that they liked their profession ($\bar{X} = 4.63$, $SD = .411$), they had no reason to quit refereeing ($\bar{X} = 4.39$, $SD = .834$), and the valuable opportunities created through continuous participation were high ($\bar{X} = 4.40$, $SD = .489$). In addition, it is seen that the social expectations ($\bar{X} = 2.26$, $SD = 1.00$) created and felt to stay in the refereeing profession and other interesting options ($\bar{X} = 2.44$, $SD = .937$) to continue the refereeing profession are below 3. Moreover, it is seen that they have an average opinion about the personal resources ($\bar{X} = 3.87$, $SD = .628$) that are put forward when the job is not performed.

When Table 4 is examined, a significant result was found in the sub-dimensions of sport commitment scale of hockey referees in our research in terms of participation alternatives and personal investment sub-dimensions based on the gender variable ($p < .05$). This difference is due to the high average score of female referees in participation alternatives and the personal investment sub-dimension.

When Table 5 is examined, a significant result was obtained in the sub-dimensions of social barriers and quitting the refereeing based on the variable of the level of education of sport commitment scale of hockey referees ($p < .05$). This result is due to the referees who had postgraduate education.

Table 1. Evaluation of the normal distribution of referees' sport commitment scale scores.

Sub-dimension	Skewness	Kurtosis
Enjoyment	-1088	834
Participation alternatives	231	-774
Personal investment	-331	-374
Social barriers	.180	-991
Participation opportunities	-488	.676
Reasons for quitting refereeing	-1069	-337

Table 2. Frequency and percentage distributions of demographic information of referees.

Variable	Sub-variable	f	%
Age group	18-22	24	34.3
	23-27	17	24.3
	28-32	14	20.0
	33 and over	15	21.4
Gender	Female	37	52.9
	Male	33	47.1
Marital status	Married	17	24.3
	Single	53	75.7
Level of education	High-school	16	22.9
	Undergraduate	52	74.3
	Postgraduate	2	2.9
Refereeing classification	Trainee	42	60.0
	County	21	30.0
	National	5	7.1
	International	2	2.9
Refereeing experience	1-3 years	57	81.4
	4-6 years	10	14.3
	7-9 years	2	2.9
	10 years and over	1	1.4

Table 3. The mean scores of the sub-dimensions of the sport commitment scale.

Sub-dimensions	N	\bar{X}	SD
1. Enjoyment	70	4.63	.411
2. Participation alternatives	70	2.26	1.00
3. Personal Investment	70	4.09	.649
4. Social Barriers	70	2.44	.937
5. Participation Opportunities	70	4.40	.489
6. Reasons for Quitting Refereeing	70	4.39	.834

Table 4. Independent t-test analysis of sub-dimensions of sport commitment scale in terms of gender variable.

Sub-dimension	Groups	N	\bar{x}	SD	Sh_g	t Test	
						t	p
1. Enjoyment	Male	33	4.58	.417	0.072	-1.005	.319
	Female	37	4.68	.406	0.66		
2. Participation alternatives	Male	33	1.54	.744	.129	-7.580	.000
	Female	37	2.90	.748	.123		
3. Personal investment	Male	33	3.89	.609	.106	-2.473	.016
	Female	37	4.27	.642	.105		

Table 4. Continues.

4. Social barriers	Male	33	2.35	.893	.155	-.751	.455
	Female	37	2.52	.979	.161		
5. Participation opportunities	Male	33	4.31	.501	.087	-1.327	.189
	Female	37	4.47	.474	.077		
6. Reasons for quitting refereeing	Male	33	4.45	.807	.140	.604	.548
	Female	37	4.33	.864	.142		

Table 5. One-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) results of sport commitment scale in terms of level of education variable.

Sub-dimensions	Groups	N	\bar{x}	SD	F	p
Enjoyment	High-school	16	4.70	.344	.272	.762
	Undergraduate	52	4.61	.0439		
	Postgraduate	2	4.72	.530		
Participation alternatives	High-school	16	2.50	1.081	.573	.566
	Undergraduate	52	2.19	.997		
	Postgraduate	2	2.16	.707		
Personal investment	High-school	16	4.16	.699	.285	.753
	Undergraduate	52	4.06	.646		
	Postgraduate	2	4.33	.471		
Social barriers	High-school	16	2.52	.910	3.219	.046
	Undergraduate	52	2.35	.916		
	Postgraduate	2	4.00	.000		
Participation opportunities	High-school	16	4.40	.569	.045	.956
	Undergraduate	52	4.39	.467		
	Postgraduate	2	4.40	.707		
Reasons for quitting refereeing	High-school	16	4.56	.663	6.344	.003
	Undergraduate	52	4.41	.812		
	Postgraduate	2	2.50	.235		

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

The role of referees in national and international competitions, which continues to increase today, is increasing day by day. Therefore, knowing the mood of the athletes, trainers and referees, who are the stakeholders of a sports branch, and determining how much they love their job, is an issue that needs to be informed and paid attention to whether the referees continue their refereeing profession or not. When the literature was examined, there were not many studies on the continuation or abandonment of the refereeing profession. It is seen that the number of studies conducted in our country on this issue, which is being

researched more and more in the world and trying to find a solution, is quite limited. Thus, we think that the results of this study will contribute to the literature.

As a result of this study, it was concluded that the referees perform the refereeing profession with passion, they like the refereeing profession to continue refereeing, and especially female referees care about the profession more than men as an investment alternative. It was concluded that this study is parallel to the study of Scanlan et al. (1993). Also, it was found out that referees like the refereeing profession, and therefore, they consider it as a personal investment and participation opportunity based on the result of the study of Ağbuba et al. entitled "Examination of Stay/Leave Behavior of Track

and Field Referees in Denizli” (Ağbuğa, Ağbuğa, Şenkibar and Gül, 2017). In another study, although the profession of refereeing, which is carried out voluntarily, is not very limited in terms of economic opportunities, it may result in the intention of quitting refereeing as a result of negative feelings such as dislike and not enjoying after the negativities encountered during the refereeing profession. A more promising way of effectively influencing referees' intention to quit is to increase positive emotional responses to the refereeing (Carpenter et al., 1993). In a study on the behavior of volleyball referees to quit or continue refereeing, enjoyment and participation alternatives were seen as the only direct predictors of intention to quit refereeing. That is, the intention to quit in this example was particularly inspired by the lack of enjoyment and participation alternatives (Vanperen, 1998). In our study, it was concluded that the referees felt social pressure and were negatively affected while performing their jobs. In a study on football referees, it was revealed that they were adversely affected by the influence of the environment, and verbal or physical attacks (Orviz-Martínez et al., 2021). It is known that referees do not receive as much attention as athletes, and when the psychological and physical demands of their jobs are not met, they will be exposed to medical and psychological problems (Erickson et al., 2012). It can be claimed that the hockey referees' enjoyment of refereeing is effective in their continuation of refereeing. It may be put forth that competition earnings from hockey refereeing and social activity opportunities during the refereeing affect participation in hockey refereeing and lead them to see it as a personal investment. As a result, it was concluded that enjoying the refereeing profession is important to continue refereeing in terms of participation opportunities and personal investment.

Our study is important in terms of motivating people to do the refereeing profession and setting an example for sports federations in making the profession more appealing. In this sense, a result of the studies to be done in other refereeing profession classifications will reveal what is effective in continuing or quitting the refereeing profession. It is crucial to investigate the factors that negatively affect the refereeing profession and to take steps to eliminate these negative factors in terms of increasing the number of qualified referees needed and increasing the performance of the referees. It can be suggested that vocational guidance should be given at the school education age. Referees' mathematics, human psychology, anatomy, physiology, sports injuries, ethics, morals, decision-making styles, etc. studies can be carried out in the opening and training of refereeing academies where courses are taught. Studies to be carried out in branches such as basketball, football and volleyball, where people are more interested, will contribute to the literature.

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