



The effect of positive and negative mood on motivation to succeed of elite athletes

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Abstract

Summary, the aim of the present study was to determine the effect of positive and negative mood on motivation of elite athletes in terms of the level of education, sports experience, and age. The motivational levels of the athletes were measured using the Success Motivation Scale in Sports developed by Willis (1982) and adapted to Turkish by Tiryaki and Gödelek (1997). Positive and negative mood was measured using the Positive and Negative Affect Scale developed by Watson *et al.* (1988). The study included 440 voluntary participants (260 male and 180 female) randomly selected from 10 different sports. The average age and sport experience of the participants were 21.8 yrs. (SD=3.9) and 9.6 yrs. (SD=4.8), respectively. Results showed a positive correlation between athletes' sports experience and intrinsic motivation ($r=.148$, $p<.01$) and positive mood ($r=.216$, $p<.01$). Furthermore, there was a significant difference between athletes' positive mood level and negative mood level. No significant difference was found in athletes' motivation level as a function of education. On the other hand, there was a significant difference in athletes' motivation and positive mood level in terms of sport participated in ($p<.05$). However, there was no significant difference in athletes' negative mood level in terms of sex ($p>.05$). Finally, there was a positive relation between extrinsic motivation and each of intrinsic motivation ($r=.496$), success motivation ($r=.877$) and positive mood ($r=.366$), while there was a negative relation with negative mood ($r= -.174$).

Anahtar Kelimeler: Positive mood; negative mood; motivation; elite athletes

Introduction

Success in sports can be a consequence of the motivational level of an individual. The factors that motivate people are their beliefs, desires, needs, and fears (Eren, 2004, p.494). Motivation is very personal. A situation that motivates some people may fail to motivate others.

Motivation is related to the process of acquiring skills, time, and energy and using each of them in the most effective manner (Martin & Mushett. 1996). Motivation is what allows people to exert the highest level of effort for organizational or sports (Robbins, 1993).

Motivation is defined by the intrinsic and extrinsic factors which lead the organism to act in a certain way, and to direct and target this action to accomplish some particular outcome (Aydm, 2001; Steers,*et al.*, 2004). Intrinsic motivation is the experience of the person trying to display his or her skills (Brief & Aldag, 1976). Intrinsic motivation is directly related to the person's perception of the task and is influenced by several factors, such as the appeal, difficulty, the amount of independence required, and the employees, level of participation, kind of responsibility, need for creativity (especially in sports), the opportunities to practice one's own skills and receiving satisfactory feedback related to the performance of the person (Mottaz, 1985). According to double factor theory, only the intrinsic factors will provide a high level of motivation (Brislin*et al.*, 2005; Mahaney & Lederer, 2006).

Mood is proposed to be a more effective predictor of performance in short-duration sports (Beedie, *et al.*, 2000). Positive and negative mood were investigated by multi-dimensional analyses (Russel, 1980; Watson & Clark, 1992; Davidson, 1993). Affective events in the lives of the people influence their social reactions (Ashforth & Humphrey, 1995; Briner, 1999; Fisher & Ashkanasy, 2000). Research has found that different negative moods have different effects on performance (Lane & Terry, 2000; Hanin, 2000). Lane and Terry's (2000) conceptual model of this study supported the moderating effect of depressed mood on concentration tasks in which effort was identified as the major determinant of success. The few investigations that have simultaneously dealt with sports performance and elite athletes' motivation have outlined a positive relation between each of positive mood and negative mood and motivation to succeed (Briner, 1999; Lane & Terry, 2000; Watson, 2000).

In a study performed by Norlander & Archer, it was found that the higher the optimism, the better performance and competitors who had the highest scores on optimism performed

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well during the competitions. Their study indicated that optimism presents an important factor for predicting achievement in sports.

Athletes who possess positive moods (happy, relaxed, healthy, etc.) will have higher motivation and therefore more success compared to the athletes with negative moods (disturbed, nervous, tense, etc.). The number of studies dealing with this effect is limited. It is not a topic which was widely investigated by sport scientists (Ozdevecioğlu, 2004).

The aim of the present study was to determine the association of positive and negative mood with the motivation for success of elite athletes in terms of their level of sports experience, and age.

Methods

Participants

A total of 600 athletes were invited to participate in this study. They were randomly selected from ten sports (taekwondo(107 male-63 female), soccer(52 male-25 female), wrestling(22 male-10 female), tennis(5 male-0 female), basketball(5 male-5 female), volleyball(10 male-20 female), handball(5 male-5 female), track and field(54 male-27 female), step-dance(0 male-10 female), and folk dance,(0 male-15 female). Of these 440 athletes agreed to participate (260 male and 180 female) and complete the study. Questionnaires were given to elite athletes who had competition experience of at least five years and had participated at any national and international championships.

The age distribution of the participators was 15 to 20 years, 39,3%, 21 to 25 years, 44,1%, and 26 to 31 years, 16,6%. The average age and sport experience of the participants were 21,9 yrs. (SD=3,7) and 9.6 yrs. (SD=4.7), respectively.

Measures

The survey form used as a data collection tool in the study consisted of three parts. The first part contained six questions about demographic information. The second part included the application of the questionnaire of positive and negative mood levels of the athletes developed by Watson *et.al* (1988) and adapted into Turkish by Gençöz (2000). It has 20 items in two subscales measuring positive mood (10 items) and negative mood (10 items). The reliability (Cronbach's alpha values) of the positive mood subscale was .79 and of the negative mood subscale was .81. The third part was a sports-related motivation to succeed test developed by Willis (1982) and adapted into Turkish by Tiryaki and Gödelek (1997). This

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scale has two subscales: Power Motive (12 items) and success by dividing motive to approach success (17 items) and motive to avoid failure (11 items). 5 point Likert-type scale anchored at (1 to 5 rating scale) 1=never, 2= barely, 3=sometimes, 4=pretty much, 5=always. The reliability (Cronbach's alpha values) of the sports related success motivation test was 0.74.

Statistical Analyses

The demographic data were analyzed in terms of frequency and percentage distribution. The correlation between the dependent variables was estimated by "Spearman's rho" correlation analysis; the difference between the dependent and the independent variables was computed by Mann-Whitney U test for the two groups and Kruskal-Wallis test for more than two groups. Multiple Linear Regression analyses were performed to see the effects of positive and negative mood on the motivation to succeed. The significance level was set at 0.05.

Results

Table 1. Demographic data of the participants

	N	%
Sex		
• Male	260	59.1
• Female	180	40.9
Marital status		
• Married	31	7.0
• Single	409	93.0
Sports experience(yrs)		
• 1-5	115	26.1
• 6-10	157	35.7
• 11-15	129	29.3
• 16-21	39	8.9
Age (yrs)		
• 15-20	173	39.3
• 21-25	194	44.1
• 26-31	73	16.6
Education		
• Primary &Secondary	75	17.0
• College &Post grad.	365	83.0
Type of sports		
• Team sports	145	33.0
• Individual sports	295	67.0
Total	440	100

The sports experience of the athletes was 1 to 5 yrs., 26,1%; 6 to 10 yrs.,35,7%; 11 to 15 yrs., 29,3%; and 16 to 21 years,8,9%.Of the participants, 40,9% were female and 59,1%

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were male, and 7% were married and 93% were single. Regarding the sports type, 33% were involved in team sports and 67% individual sports.

Table 2 Specified total and sports of participants were listed according to sex

Sports	Sex		total
	Male	Famale	
• Taekwondo	107	63	170
• Soccer	52	25	77
• Wrestling	22	10	22
• Tennis	5	0	5
• Basketball	5	5	10
• Volleyball	10	20	30
• Handball	5	5	10
• Track&Field	54	27	81
• Step&Aerobic	0	10	10
• Folk dancing	0	15	15
Total	260	180	440

In Table 2, it showed that specified total and sports of participants were listed according to sex.

The analyses showed a statistically significant difference in motivation and positive mood for the participants in terms of the type of sport they are involved in, i.e., team sports or individual sports ($p < .05$). This is due to the fact that the positive mood and motivation level of the athletes involved in individual sports were higher than those involved in team sports. There was no statistically significant difference in the negative mood level of the participants in terms of the type of sports ($p > .05$).

The results also showed a statistically significant difference in motivational and positive mood levels of the participants in terms of sex ($p < .05$). The motivation and positive mood levels of male athletes were higher than the female athletes. There was a statistically significant difference regarding the negative mood levels of the athletes in terms of sex, as well ($p < .05$).

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Table 3. The analysis of the statistical difference between the positive and negative mood levels of the athletes participated in the study in terms of their gender and they type of sport participated.

			<i>N</i>	Mean Rank	<i>Z</i>	<i>P</i>
MOTIVATION TO SUCCEED	SEX	Male	260	238,14		
		Female	180	195,02	-3,505	.000*
		Total	440			
	TYPE OF SPORT	Team	145	194,09		
		Personal	295	233,48	-3,061	.002*
		Total	440			
POSITIVE MOOD	SEX	Male	260	238,86		
		Female	180	193,98	-3,647	.000*
		Total	440			
	TYPE OF SPORT	Team	145	172,84		
		Personal	295	243,92	-5,522	.000*
		Total	440			
NEGATIVE MOOD	SEX	Male	260	208,68		
		Female	180	237,57	-2,345	.019*
		Total	440			
	TYPE OF SPORT	Team	145	227,33		
		Personal	295	217,14	-.790	.429
		Total	440			

$P < .05$

There was a statistically significant difference in the motivation to succeed of the participants according to their age group and length of sports experience ($p < .05$). This difference was largely due to the fact that the motivational levels of the group with 15 to 20 years of sports experience and the group with ages 26 to 31 years had higher motivational compared to the rest of the participants. The motivational of the athletes who had sport experience of 16 to 21 years was associated with greater motivation compared to the other participants.

Table 4. The analysis of the difference in the success motivation of the participants in terms of their age and sport experience.

		N	Mean Rank	Z	P	
SUCCESS MOTIVATION	AGE GROUPS IN YEARS	15-20	173	237,44	18,917	.001*
		21-25	194	194,01		
		26-31	73	250,77		
		TOTAL	440			
	SPORT EXPERIENCE IN YEARS	1-5	115	231,69	36,369	.000*
		6-10	157	182,53		
		11-15	129	234,19		
		16-21	39	295,06		
		TOTAL	440			

* $p < .05$ **Table 5.** Relations between positive mood levels of the participants and their ages and sport experience

		N	Mean	Z	P	
POSITIVE MOOD	AGE GROUPS	15-20	173	216,51	41,629	.000*
		21-25	194	198,03		
		26-31	73	289,68		
		TOTAL	440			
	SPORT EXPERIENCE	1-5	115	210,75	39.946	.000*
		6-10	157	184,12		
		11-15	129	243,16		
		16-21	39	320,72		
		TOTAL	440			

 $p < .05$

According to the data obtained, there was a significant relation between the positive mood and age ($p < .05$). This is due to the fact that the positive mood of the 26 to 31 years group was higher than the others.

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There was also a significant difference in the positive mood of the participants in terms of their sports experience ($p<.05$). This stems from the fact that the positive mood of the experienced athletes (16 to 21 years) was higher than the others.

Table 6. The relations between positive mood levels of the participants and their ages and sport experience

			N	Mean	Z	P
NEGATIVE MOOD	AGE	15-20	173	249,51	29.156	.000*
		21-25	194	214,11		
		26-31	73	168,72		
		TOTAL	440			
	SPORT EXPERIENCE	1-5	115	238,33	18,335	.001*
		6-10	157	238,29		
		11-15	129	184,41		
		16-21	39	215,69		
		TOTAL	440			

$p<.05$

According to the data obtained, there was a significant relation between negative mood and age group ($p<.05$). This is due to the fact that negative mood of the 26 to 31 years group was lower than the others.

There was also a significant difference in the negative mood of the participants in terms of their sports experience ($p<.05$). This stems from the fact that the negative mood of the experienced athletes (16 to 21 years) and those with sports experience of 11 to 15 years were lower than the others.

As seen in Table 7, there was a positive relation between age and sports experience ($r=.429$, $p<.001$) and a negative relation between age and negative mood ($r=-.218$, $p<.001$). As the age of the athlete advanced, length of sports experience increased and negative mood decreased.

There was a positive relation between sports experience and intrinsic motivation ($r=.148$, $p<.05$), sports experience and motivation ($r=.109$, $p<.05$), sports experience and positive mood ($r=.216$, $p<.001$), and a negative relation between sports experience and negative mood ($r=-.146$, $p<.05$). It can therefore be concluded that as sports experience

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increased, extrinsic and intrinsic motivations and positive mood showed an increase and their negative mood decreased.

Table 7. The relations between age, sport experience, intrinsic motivation, extrinsic motivation, positive mood, and negative mood

		Age	Sport exp.	Ext. Motivation	In. Motivation	Motivation to succeed	Positive Mood	Negative Mood
Age	<i>r</i>	1,000						
	<i>p</i>	.						
Sport exp.	<i>r</i>	,429**	1					
	<i>p</i>	,000						
Ext. Motivation	<i>r</i>	-,099*	,056	1				
	<i>p</i>	,037	,242					
In. Motivation	<i>r</i>	,053	,148(**)	,496**	1			
	<i>p</i>	,269	,002	,000				
Motivation to succeed	<i>r</i>	-,037	,109*	,877**	,836**	1		
	<i>p</i>	,437	,022	,000	,000			
Positive Mood	<i>r</i>	,123**	,216**	,366**	,369**	,417**	1	
	<i>p</i>	,010	,000	,000	,000	,000		
Negative Mood	<i>r</i>	-,218**	-,146**	-,174**	-,133**	-,188**	-,012	1
	<i>p</i>	,000	,002	,000	,005	,000	,806	

*: $p < .05$, **: $p < .01$

There was a significant positive relation between extrinsic motivation and intrinsic motivation ($r=.496$, $p<.001$) and motivation ($r=.877$, $p<.001$) and positive mood ($r=.366$, $p<.001$), and a significant negative relation between all parameters except positive mood and negative mood ($r=-.174$, $p<.001$). The increase in the motivation coming from extrinsic factors was associated with increases intrinsic motivation and positive mood and decreases negative mood.

While there was a positive relation between intrinsic motivation and motivation to succeed ($r=.836$, $p<.001$) and positive mood ($r=.369$, $p<.001$), these parameters were

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negatively related to negative mood ($r=-.133$, $p<.001$). Therefore, as intrinsic motivation increased, motivation to succeed and positive mood increased and negative mood decreased.

Motivation to succeed was positively related to positive mood ($r=.417$, $p<.001$) and negatively related to negative mood ($r=-.188$, $p<.001$). Therefore, motivation increased with positive mood and decreased with negative mood.

Table 8. Multiple linear regression analysis according to “success motivation” data

Variable	b_i	$S(b_i)$	β	VIF	t	P
Positive mood	,268	,033	,352	1,000	7,803	,000*
Negative mood	-,126	,026	-,208	1,000	-4,746	,000*
(Constant)	3,264	,140	-	-	23,251	,000
n=440	s=.46699	R=.406	$R^2=.164$	(F=43,010	, p=.000)	

* $P<.05$

In Table 8, while the correlation for positive mood and motivation to succeed was positive, the correlation for negative mood and motivation to succeed was negative. The affecting values to motivation to succeed of the positive mood is BETA=.352, and the negative mood is BETA=-.208. Independent variables explained the dependent variables at rate of 16.4%. The addition to the model of both variables was significant at the $p<.05$ level.

In Table 9, while the correlation for positive mood and intrinsic motivation was positive, the correlation for negative mood and intrinsic motivation was negative. The affecting values to intrinsic motivation of the positive mood is BETA=.292, and the negative mood is BETA=-.176. Independent variables explained the dependent variables at rate of 11.4%. The addition to the model of both variables was significant at the $p<.05$ level.

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Table 9. Multiple linear regression analysis according to “intrinsic motivation” data

Variable	b_i	$S(b_i)$	β	VIF	t	P
Positive mood	,228	,035	,292	1,000	6,488	,000*
Negative mood	-,109	,028	-,176	1,000	-3,908	,000*
(Constant)	3,435	,148	-	-	23,154	,000
n=440	s=.49347	R=.338	$R^2=.114$	(F=28,239 ,	p=.000)	

* $P<.05$

Table 10. Multiple linear regression analysis according to “extrinsic motivation” data

Variable	b_i	$S(b_i)$	β	VIF	t	P
Positive mood	,321	,042	,336	1,000	7,616	,000*
Negative mood	-,147	,034	-,194	1,000	-4,396	,000*
(Constant)	3,037	,178	-	-	17,075	,000
n=440	s=.59157	R=.385	$R^2=.148$	(F=38,069 ,	p=.000)	

* $P<.05$

In Table 10, while the correlation for positive mood and extrinsic motivation was positive, the correlation for negative mood and extrinsic motivation was negative. The affecting values to extrinsic motivation of the positive mood is BETA=.336, and the negative mood is BETA=-.194. Independent variables explained the dependent variables at rate of 14.8%. The addition to the model of both variables was significant at the $p<.05$ level.

Discussion

One of the keys to success in sports is motivation. Motivation which makes the most efficient use of skills, time, and energy of the athletes also can be a protective factor from the adverse conditions of competition and help athletes endure the psychological stress of training sessions and competitions (Watson, *et al.*, 1988). It also influences in the sudden response and positive and negative mood levels of the athletes. The research in the literature shows that motivation leads to positive outcomes, such as dynamism, determination, sentimental sufficiency, and enthusiasm (Watson & Tellegen, 1985). These are important driving forces leading to success in sport.

The present results showed a positive significant relation between motivation and positive mood at a significance level of 0.01.

There was a similar but negative relation between motivation and negative mood of the participants. According to these results, the higher the positive mood of the athlete is the higher than their motivation level. Therefore, it may be helpful for coaches to focus on the positive mood levels of their athletes. Negative moods are proposed to derive from discrepancies between personal standards and perceived current status (Carver & Scheier, 1990; Martin & Tesser, 1996). People in a negative mood feel further from the standard and may analyse the situation carefully, attending to specific details in order to reduce this discrepancy (Cervone, Kopp, Schaumann, & Scott, 1994). When people perform objectively difficult tasks, perceived goal attainability influences the functional impact of negative mood on effort. Those in a negative mood either mobilize little effort because they perceive task demands to be too high, or increase effort because negative mood acts as a warning signal that attainment of achievable goals is threatened (Cervone *et al.*, 1994; Gendolla & Krusken, 2002). Therefore, the relationship between mood and the standard of performance set as a goal is a promising line of enquiry.

There was a negative relation between age and negative mood. This indicates that the negative mood decreased as the age of the athletes increased. Research has demonstrated that different negative moods have different effects on performance (Hanin, 2000; Lane & Terry, 2000; Schwarz & Bless, 1991; Schwarz, 2001). Anxiety has been shown to be associated with good performance in some studies and poor performance in others, whereas depression is consistently associated with poor performance. Lane and Terry (2000) developed a conceptual model to explain these effects. A key part of Lane and Terry's model is the assumption that different dimensions of mood interact to influence performance. They hypothesized that anger

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and tension can be either facilitative or debilitating of performance, depending on interactions with depressed mood (interpreted in this context as a transitory set of feelings rather than a clinical condition). Lane and Terry proposed that individuals in a depressed mood tend to direct feelings of anger internally, leading to suppression, self-blame and, ultimately, performance decrements (Spielberger, 1991). Similarly, such individuals tend to transfer tension into feelings of threat and worry, also leading to performance decrements. Conversely, in the absence of depressed mood, it is easier for the arousal component of anger and tension to serve a functional role by signaling the need for positive action (Bless, 2001; Schwarz, 2001). Recent research has found support for the proposed moderating effect of depressed mood on concentration tasks in which effort was identified as the major determinant of success (Lane, Terry, Beedie, & Stevens, 2004).

There was also a positive relation between sports experience and intrinsic motivation, sports experience and motivation to succeed, sports experience and positive mood and a negative relation between sports experience and negative mood. Thus, as sports experience increases, intrinsic and extrinsic motivation and positive mood of the athletes showed an increase and their negative mood showed a decrease.

There was a positive relation between extrinsic motivation and intrinsic motivation, motivation to succeed and positive mood and a negative relation between extrinsic motivation and negative mood. Thus, increase in the motivation associated with external factors seems related to an increase in intrinsic motivation and positive mood and a decrease in negative mood.

There was also a positive relation between intrinsic motivation and motivation to succeed and positive mood and there was a negative relation between intrinsic motivation and negative mood. Therefore, intrinsic motivation had a positive association with positive mood and a negative association with negative mood.

Motivation was positively related to positive mood and negatively related to negative mood. Therefore, it seems that motivation increased the positive mood and decreased with negative mood of athletes.

The results also showed that there was a significant difference between the motivation and positive mood levels of the athletes regarding team sports and individual sports. Motivational and positive mood of the athletes involved in individual sports were higher compared to those involved in team sports.

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According to the results obtained in the present study, the motivational and positive mood levels of the athletes differ significantly in terms of sex. Motivational and positive mood of the male athletes were higher than those of the female athletes.

In a study by Raglin, *et al.* (1990) Mood state (POMS) and self-motivation were assessed (SMI) in 84 women vying for a position on a collegiate freshman rowing team. Mood state was assessed three additional times during the season with 22 rowers who adhered to training throughout the entire season. It was found that female rowers who adhered to a season of competitive training had higher self-motivation and superior ergometer performance at the outset than did the eventual dropouts. In this study, the motivational, positive mood and negative mood of the athletes showed significant differences in terms of the sport experience of the athletes. The difference was largely due to the fact that the experienced athletes (those with 21 years or more of experience) had higher motivation, higher positive mood, and lower negative mood compared to others.

According to the results obtained in this study, it is clear that positive mood is a related to increased motivation and negative mood is related to decreased motivation in sports. The present results also indicated that the positive mood levels of the athletes were higher than their negative mood levels.

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