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INVESTIGATION ON SELF-EFFICACY ON JOB SATISFACTION OF SOCCER REFEREES

RAZISKAVA SAMOUČINKOVITOSTI NOGOMETNIH SODNIKOV NA ZADOVOLJSTVO Z DELOM

ABSTRACT

Referees assume a similar role with the players for the purpose of successfully finalizing a sports competition/match. Majority of the current studies have focused on the players/athletes' role whilst the number of studies investigating the performance of the referees who manage the match/competition is relatively few. This study aimed to reveal whether professional self-efficacy, which is considered to be a significant predictor on the job satisfaction of referees, has an effect therein. The participants of the research comprise of 204 soccer referees assigned in different classifications. The referee self-efficacy scale (REFS) and a job satisfaction scale for the referees were used as instruments of collecting research data. The analysis of whether the research data were distributed normally or not is followed by the data analysis process. After determining that the data exhibited a normal distribution, parametric tests were performed. A path analysis was performed using the independent sample t-test for two independent variables, one-way variance (Anova) for more than two independent variables, the pearson correlation analysis was used to determine the relationship between the variables and the AMOS program is used in order to evaluate the hypotheses developed within the scope of the research. In line with the findings obtained, a positive significant relationship was identified between the self-efficacy and the job satisfaction of the referees ($p < 0.01$). In addition, significant differences were identified as a result of binary and multiple comparisons performed within the context of the research variables ($p < 0.05$). Accordingly, the self-efficacy of the referees was found to have a significant effect on their job satisfaction ($p < 0.01$).

Keywords: soccer referee, job satisfaction, professional self-efficacy, self-efficacy

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IZVLEČEK

Sodniki imajo z igralci isti namen, to je uspešno zaključili športno tekmovanje. Večina trenutnih študij se je osredotočila na vlogo igralcev/športnikov, medtem ko je število študij, ki raziskujejo uspešnost sodnikov, ki vodijo tekmovanje, relativno malo. Namen te študije je bil odkriti, ali na to vpliva poklicna samoučinkovitost, ki velja za pomemben napovedovalec zadovoljstva sodnikov pri delu. Udeleženci v raziskavi so bili 204 nogometni sodniki, razvrščeni v različne klasifikacije. Kot instrumenta za zbiranje raziskovalnih podatkov sta bili uporabljeni lestvica samoučinkovitosti sodnikov (REFS) in lestvica zadovoljstva pri delu za sodnike. Analiziranju, ali so bili raziskovalni podatki razporejeni normalno ali ne, sledi postopek analize podatkov. Po ugotovitvi, da imajo podatki normalno porazdelitev, so bili izvedeni parametrični testi. Izvedena je bila analiza z uporabo neodvisnega vzorčnega t-testa za dve neodvisni spremenljivki in enosmerna analiza variance (ANOVA) za več kot dve neodvisni spremenljivki. Za določitev razmerja med spremenljivkama je bila uporabljena pearsonova korelacijska analiza in program AMOS z namenom vrednotenja hipotez, postavljenih v okviru raziskave. Ugotovljena je bila pozitivna značilna povezava med samoučinkovitostjo in zadovoljstvom pri delu sodnikov ($p < 0,01$). Poleg tega so bile ugotovljene pomembne razlike kot posledica binarnih in večkratnih primerjav, opravljenih v okviru raziskovalnih spremenljivk ($p < 0,05$). Odkrili smo, da samoučinkovitost sodnikov pomembno vpliva na njihovo zadovoljstvo pri delu ($p < 0,01$).

Ključne besede: nogometni sodnik, zadovoljstvo z delom, poklicna samoučinkovitost, samoučinkovitost

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INTRODUCTION

Soccer is considered to be the most popular sport in the world (Giulianotti, 2012). The reasons why soccer is so popular is the evolutionary change it has undergone throughout the history as well as the fact that it is the most important game played by many nations. Soccer, which has a rich historical background, is also considered a global power (Armstrong, 1999). In fact, it is considered as the final stage of globalization. There is no other global phenomenon than soccer in the century we are living in (Boniface, 2007). Soccer is described as a global game almost everywhere in the world. Soccer has been an important spare time activity that everyone plays and even talks about (Chadwick and Hamil, 2009). There are different reasons for this global interest in soccer; some sports sociologists associate this interest with the fact that soccer is both easy and playable everywhere (Talimciler, 2010). Soccer corresponds to another specific area of responsibility, which, in addition to the audience and players, has many different meanings. One of these areas of responsibility pertains to the referees. The referee is considered to be the person responsible for managing sports competitions. In addition, referees have a significant importance in terms of maintaining a fair level of competition in sports (Louvet et al., 2009). Particular attention of the broadcasting platforms to soccer matches and accordingly the fact that soccer matches are more easily accessible today caused an increase concerning the responsibility of referees and subsequent pressure on referees day by day. In this regard; a soccer match may be managed indisputably and fairly in the event that the referees have a brilliant mastery in the issues concerning their profession, that is in case they use their professional self-efficacy correctly.

Self-efficacy is referred to as the ability to discipline one's belief in one's skills as well as the behaviors required to execute these skills (Bandura, 1997). The concept of self-efficacy is an inherently cognitive concept; it is based on four basic elements. These are personal achievements, lived experiences, the ability of verbal persuasion and emotional arousal (Hepler and Chase, 2008). A strong self-efficacy is considered as a significant factor in overcoming one's failures and mistakes (Martin et al., 2006). Self-efficacy has an impact on various aspects of the society, from education to politics and from politics to sports. A high level of self-efficacy not only points out to the fact that a person performs well in a general sense, but also helps people set realistic goals and to be less afraid of failure (Feltz et al., 2008). The concept of self-efficacy, when evaluated within the context of sports, affects people's ability to achieve certain levels of performance and successfully carry out planned actions (Bandura, 1974). One of the professions in the field of sports, where the concept of self-efficacy is significantly important,

is refereeing. For referees, self-efficacy is expressed as the capacity to fulfill the issues within their field of duty (Guillén and Feltz, 2011). Being a referee in a high-class sports competition, particularly in soccer, requires a combination of both mental and physical skills specific to soccer. These mental and physical privileges may be associated with a competence, which allows referees to make the right judgments on the soccer field (Mathers and Brodie, 2011). The physical and mental skills, that soccer referees should have, are of inevitable significance to maintain a fair competition and to ensure that psychological pressure both on and off the field does not adversely affect the management of the match. Furthermore, it is the self-efficacy that includes different elements that ensures to overcome the feeling of negativity that may arise during the match. These elements were defined as knowledge about the rules of the game, judgment ability, psychological and strategic skills, communication skills during the match and physical competence (Guillén and Feltz, 2011).

Various studies examining the self-efficacy and job satisfaction of referees have been found in the literature review (Guillén and Feltz, 2011; Myers et al., 2012; Karaçam and Adıgüzel, 2019; Johansen, Ommundsen and Haugen, 2018; Diotaiuti et al, 2020; Spencer, 2015; Cunningham and Sullivan, 2020; Dereceli Ünlü Erbaş, 2019; Şirin and Döşyılmaz, Tieman, 2017). Related studies evaluated the self-efficacy of the referees and the performance of the referees. In addition; the job satisfaction of referees, in general, has been associated with stress. Data collection tools used in the studies conducted by Tojjari, Esmaili and Bavandpour (2013) are aimed at overall self-efficacy and job satisfaction. However data collection tools used in the current study are aimed specifically at sports referees. In this context, current study focuses on both the correlation between different aspects of soccer referees' self-efficacy and the interaction between the self-efficacy and job satisfaction of the referees. Current study, in these aspects, is notable as it differs in content from other studies in the literature. Current study aims to review whether professional self-efficacy of the soccer referees, assigned in different classifications, has an effect on their professional job satisfaction.

METHODS

Methodological Model of the Research

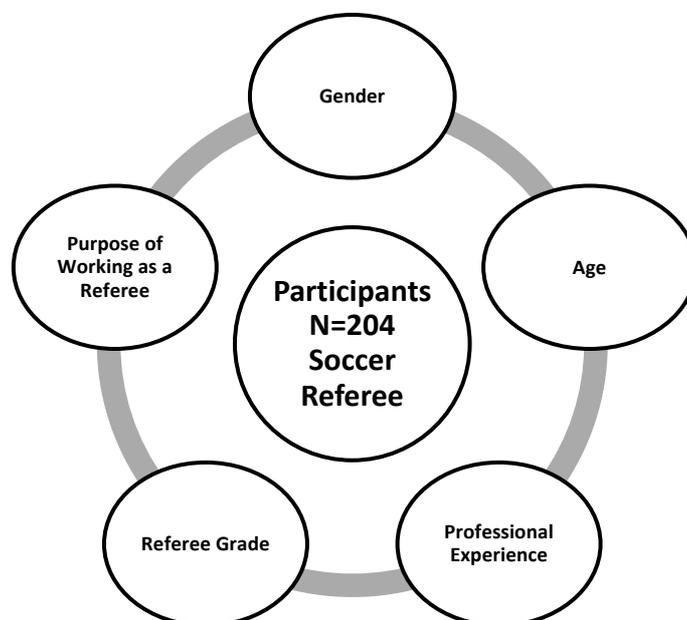
This study, reviewing the effect of professional self-efficacy of the soccer referees on their professional job satisfaction, is a descriptive research based on correlation analysis technique.

This type of research is defined as screening models aimed at determining the degree and direction of the correlation between two or more variables (Karasar, 2012).

Participants

The participants of this research study, reviewing the effect of professional self-efficacy of the soccer referees on their professional job satisfaction, comprise of 204 soccer referees. 35 (17.2%) of the soccer referees were women and 169 (82.8%) were men; 65 (31.9%) were between 18-24 years old, 68 (33.3%) were between 25-31 years old, 48 (23.5%) were between 32-37 years old and 23 (11.3%) were 38 years of age and above. 60% had professional experience (29.4%) between 0-3 years, 53% (26%) between 4-7 years, 38% (18.6%) between 8-11 years, 53% (26%) had professional experience of 12 years and over. 12 (5.9%) were assistant referees, 97 (47.5%) were state/provincial referees, 42 (20.6%) were regional referees, 45 (22.1%) were national classification referees and 8 (3.9%) were international classification referees. 9 (4.4%) were secondary school graduates, 159 (77.9%) had a bachelor's degree and 36 (17.6%) had a post-graduate level education background. 31% (15.2%) preferred refereeing as a profession and 173% (84.8%) were engaged in refereeing as a leisure activity outside of their main profession.

Figure 1. Participants and Research Variables.



Data Analysis

Spss 21 software was used in the statistical analysis of the research data. For the purpose of the data analysis; first, it was analyzed whether or not the variables exhibited a normal distribution.

Data, whose skewness and kurtosis values are between +2 and -2, as referred to in the literature, were evaluated as normal (George and Mallery, 2010). As it was concluded that the research data exhibited a normal distribution, parametric analysis techniques were used. Independent sample t-test was used for the comparison of two independent variables and one-way variance (Anova) was used for the evaluation of more than two independent variables. Pearson correlation analysis was used to evaluate the correlation between the research variables whereas the effect of soccer referees' self-efficacy on their job satisfaction was evaluated using Amos 21 software. In addition, descriptive statistical values for the data are provided.

Data Collection Tools

Job Satisfaction Scale for the Referees

It is a 7-item single-factor scale developed by Karaçam and Puler (2018) aimed at examining the job satisfaction of soccer referees. There are no reverse scored/negative items in the scale. The increase in the score obtained from the scale indicates that the job satisfaction levels of the referees have increased.

Referee Self-Efficacy Scale (REFS)

Referee Self-Efficacy Scale (REFS), developed by Myers, Feltz, Guillen and Dithurbide (2012) and further adapted to Turkish by Karaçam and Puler (2017) is a likert-type scale consisting of a total of 18 questions and 5 sub-dimensions. The scale measures the self-efficacy of referees in the profession. There are 5 sub-dimensions that include various skills associated with the refereeing profession: physical self-efficacy, self-efficacy considering the expertise on game rules, judgment self-efficacy, pressure and communication self-efficacy.

RESULTS

Table 1. Validity and Reliability Results of the Data Collection Tools Used in the Research.

Data Collection Tools	X ² /Df	RMSEA	GFI	CFI	IFI	NNFI	Cronbach Alpha
Referee Self-Efficacy Scale (REFS)	2.777	.080	.952	.933	.934	.901	.757
Job Satisfaction Scale for the Referees	2.448	.080	.900	.919	.920	.877	.912

The values displayed in Table 1 regarding the validity and reliability of the data collection tools of the research indicate that the data collection tools are valid and reliable.

Table 2. Comparison of Referee Self-Efficacy and Referee Job Satisfaction with respect to Gender

Scale and sub-dimensions	Gender	n	x	ss	t	p
Physical Self-Efficacy	Female	35	4.3029	.61620	-3.396	.001*
	Male	169	4.6260	.48871		
Self-Efficacy on Game Rules	Female	35	4.6667	.38772	-.776	.439
	Male	169	4.7258	.41522		
Judgment Self-Efficacy	Female	35	4.3714	.58729	-3.408	.001*
	Male	169	4.6667	.43795		
Pressure Self-Efficacy	Female	35	4.6095	.49498	.084	.933
	Male	169	4.5996	.66227		
Communication Self-Efficacy	Female	35	4.6786	.47578	-.313	.755
	Male	169	4.7027	.40086		
Job Satisfaction	Female	35	4.7388	.32959	.012	.990
	Male	169	4.7380	.37528		

Table 2 exhibits significant differences concerning physical self-efficacy and judgment self-efficacy derived in the comparison of professional self-efficacy and job satisfaction sub-dimensions with respect to the genders of the referees ($p < 0.05$). It is possible to conclude that male referees have a higher score.

Table 3. Comparison of Referee Self-Efficacy and Referee Job Satisfaction with respect to Educational Background

Scale and sub-dimensions	Educational Background	n	x	f	p	Sig.Dif.
Physical Self-Efficacy	1. Secondary School	9	4.2444	3.792	.024*	1-3
	2. Bachelor's Degree	159	4.5509			
	3. Post-Graduate Degree	36	4.7389			
	Total	204	4.5706			
Self-Efficacy on Game Rules	1. Secondary School	9	4.5556	2.342	.099	
	2. Bachelor's Degree	159	4.6981			
	3. Post-Graduate Degree	36	4.8333			
	Total	204	4.7157			
Judgment Self-Efficacy	1. Secondary School	9	4.4444	2.404	.093	
	2. Bachelor's Degree	159	4.5933			
	3. Post-Graduate Degree	36	4.7593			
	Total	204	4.6160			
Pressure Self-Efficacy	1. Secondary School	9	4.5556	3.752	.025*	2-3
	2. Bachelor's Degree	159	4.5451			
	3. Post-Graduate Degree	36	4.8611			
	Total	204	4.6013			
Communication Self-Efficacy	1. Secondary School	9	4.6111	2.453	.089	
	2. Bachelor's Degree	159	4.6730			
	3. Post-Graduate Degree	36	4.8333			
	Total	204	4.6985			
Job Satisfaction	1. Secondary School	9	4.8254	.306	.737	
	2. Bachelor's Degree	159	4.7305			
	3. Post-Graduate Degree	36	4.7500			
	Total	204	4.7381			

For the purpose of a comparison with respect to the educational background of the referees participating in the research; Table 3 exhibits that there are significant differences between referees graduated from a secondary school and having a bachelor's or a post graduate degree in terms of physical self-efficacy sub-dimension. In addition there is a significant difference between referees holding a bachelor's or a post graduate degree in terms of judgment self-efficacy ($p < 0,05$).

Table 4. Comparison of Referee Self-Efficacy and Referee Job Satisfaction with respect to Age

Scale and sub-dimensions	Referee Age	n	x	f	p	Sig. Dif.
Physical Self-Efficacy	1. 18-24 years of age	65	4.4646			
	2. 25-31 years of age	68	4.5853			
	3. 32-37 years of age	48	4.6583			
	4. 38 years of age and above	23	4.6435	1.503	.215	
	Total	204	4.5706			
Self-Efficacy on Game Rules	1. 18-24 years of age	65	4.5385			
	2. 25-31 years of age	68	4.7402			
	3. 32-37 years of age	48	4.8264			
	4. 38 years of age and above	23	4.9130	7.768	.000*	1-4, 1-3
	Total	204	4.7157			
Judgment Self-Efficacy	1. 18-24 years of age	65	4.3436			
	2. 25-31 years of age	68	4.7108			
	3. 32-37 years of age	48	4.7917			
	4. 38 years of age and above	23	4.7391	12.350	.000*	1-4, 1-3
	Total	204	4.6160			
Pressure Self-Efficacy	1. 18-24 years of age	65	4.4513			
	2. 25-31 years of age	68	4.6324			
	3. 32-37 years of age	48	4.6667			
	4. 38 years of age and above	23	4.7971	2.196	.090	
	Total	204	4.6013			
Communication Self-Efficacy	1. 18-24 years of age	65	4.6231			
	2. 25-31 years of age	68	4.7169			
	3. 32-37 years of age	48	4.7500			
	4. 38 years of age and above	23	4.7500	1.135	.336	
	Total	204	4.6985			
Job Satisfaction	1. 18-24 years of age	65	4.7341			
	2. 25-31 years of age	68	4.6660			
	3. 32-37 years of age	48	4.8304			
	4. 38 years of age and above	23	4.7702	1.975	.119	
	Total	204	4.7381			

For the purpose of a comparison with respect to the ages of the referees participating in the research; Table 4 exhibits that there are significant differences between referees of ages

between 18-24, 32-27 and 38 and above in terms of self-efficacy on game rules and judgment self-efficacy ($p < 0.05$).

Table 5. Assessment of the Relationship Between the Soccer Referees' Self-Efficacy and Job Satisfaction

Scale and sub-dimensions	(1) Physical Self- Efficacy	(2) Self- Efficacy on Game Rules	(3) Judgment Self- Efficacy	(4) Pressur e Self- Efficacy	(5) Communicatio n Self-Efficacy	(6) Job Satisfaction
1. Physical Self-Efficacy	1					
2. Self-Efficacy on Game Rules	.528	1				
3. Judgment Self-Efficacy	.507	.609	1			
4. Pressure Self-Efficacy	.306	.436	.468	1		
4. Communication Self-Efficacy	.393	.564	.607	.498	1	
6. Job satisfaction	.205	.215	.238	.287	.351	1

* $p < 0.01$

For the purpose of a comparison with respect to the professional self-efficacy and job satisfaction of the referees participating in the research; Table 5 exhibits moderate positive correlations ($p < 0.01$).

Table 6. The Result of the Analysis on the Effect of Referees' Self-Efficacy on their Job Satisfaction

Measurement Model	$\beta 1$	$\beta 2$	S.E	CR	P
Model: Job Satisfaction<--- Self Efficacy	.329	.336	.065	5.090	0,00*

Table 6 exhibits that there is a significant positive effect of referees' self-efficacy on their job satisfaction ($\beta 2 = .336$ $p < 0.01$).

DISCUSSION

The aim of this research is to review the effect of soccer referees' self-efficacy on their job satisfaction. This research, unlike other studies in the literature, is outstanding in terms of revealing the extent to which the professional self-efficacy of referees has an impact on their job satisfaction. The comparison based on the gender variable indicated that self-efficacy on the game rules, judgment self-efficacy and communication self-efficacy scores of male soccer

referees were found to be higher than female referees, while on the other hand the pressure self-efficacy score was found to be higher in female referees. The relevant literature review revealed studies pointing out similar results with the current study (Diotaiuti et al., 2020; Graded, Ünlü and Erbaş 2019; Karaçam and Pular, 2017; Ud, Naseer and Butt, 2020; Koçak, 2019; Adıgüzel, 2018). Soccer, is rather imposed as a male-dominated social phenomenon. It is a well-known fact that male referees more often take part in soccer games and that there are more male referees than female referees. In this context, the higher scores of male referees in terms of self-efficacy on game rules, judgment self-efficacy and communication self-efficacy may be interpreted within the context of the cause-and-effect relationship caused by a male-dominated structure in soccer. On the other hand higher scores of female referees in terms of pressure self-efficacy compared to that of male referees may be interpreted within the context of the fact that women who are supposed to have been brought up in a patriarchal society are more resistant to the feeling of oppression as a result of unfair pressures that they are subjected to for various reasons, such as gender inequality and social roles. Liberal feminism aims to achieve equality of opportunity in all social spheres, from education to health, from health to politics (Amman, 2000). Female referees, when granted equal opportunities, are believed to achieve very important results in the field of sports. As a matter of fact, it is possible to find various examples of this issue in developed countries. In addition, there are various scientific studies which also confirm this prediction. For example; Karaçam and Pular (2017) reported in their studies on the subject that the communication self-efficacy scores of female referees were higher. However, results obtained by Ayrbaş, Savaş and Belli, 2020; Kizilkaya Namli and Kizilkoca, 2021 were contrary to existing findings.

The comparison of soccer referees' self-efficacy based on the age variable indicated that self-efficacy increases as the age of the referees increase. The findings by Dereceli, Ünlü and Erbaş 2019; Tabassum, Khadim and Hussein; Koçak, 2019; Adıgüzel, 2018; Myers et al., 2012 supports the current study. The researches by Ağırbaş, Savaş and Belli, 2020; Dumangöz and Sanlav, 2020; Kizilkaya Namli and Kizilkoca, 2021; Ugw and Onyishi, 2013 indicated a negative relationship between self-efficacy and age. Although different findings have been reached in the academic literature; professional experience, in general, is believed to increase as the age increases in the field of sports, as in all other arenas of the community. Similarly, the increase in the professional experience of soccer referees as they get older may be explained by the fact that they have become more competent in their profession over the years. The comparison of soccer referees' self-efficacy based on their educational background indicated

that self-efficacy increases directly as the educational background of the referees increase. However; Dumangöz and Sanlav, 2020; Ugw and Onyishi, 2013 pointed out in their study to a negative relationship between education and self-efficacy. Boschman et al., 2021; Derceli, Ünlü and Erbaş 2019; Koçak, 2019; London, 2006 reported in their study that there are positive relationships between educational background and self-efficacy. Therefore, these findings support the current study. The reason for this is the expectation that the level of awareness and consciousness in the profession will increase with the increase in the level of education. Finally; considering the research hypotheses, the hypothesis stipulating that the professional self-efficacy of soccer referees had a positive effect on job satisfaction has been accepted. ($\beta_2 = .336$ $p < 0.01$). The studies by Abdulgani, Mulyana and Badaru, 2021; Karaçam and Adıguzel, 2019; Mokoena and Dhurup, 2019; Yıldırım, 2015 revealed similar findings. These findings may be explained by the conclusion that when the referees consider themselves professionally sufficient this causes a psychologically positive situation which further results in job satisfaction.

CONCLUSION

The main purpose of this research is to determine the effect of professional self-efficacy of soccer referees on their job satisfaction. Research findings indicated a moderate, positive and significant relationship between the professional self-efficacy of soccer referees and their job satisfaction. It has been concluded that the professional self-efficacy of soccer referees has a significant positive effect on their job satisfaction. The comparison conducted with respect to gender variable noted the results in favor of female referees in terms of pressure self-efficacy and job satisfaction, whereas significant results were obtained in favor of male referees in terms of physical self-efficacy, self-efficacy on game rules, judgment self-efficacy and communication self-efficacy. The results indicated that the referees' professional self-efficacy increased in parallel with their educational background whereas the results obtained with respect to job satisfaction were in favor of referees who had received secondary school education. The comparison conducted with respect to age variable revealed significant results indicating that judgment self-efficacy and self-efficacy on game rules increased in parallel with seniority of age. This research was limited to 204 soccer referees participating in the study, who were assigned in different classifications as well as the data collection tools used in the study. For the purpose of future studies; we suggest researchers to support their work with qualitative

studies that may allow the manifestation of different results regarding the interaction that lies behind the self-efficacy and job satisfaction of soccer referees. In addition the research assessing the interaction that lies behind the self-efficacy and job satisfaction of the referees may be extended to other team sports and individual sports with different levels of competition.

Declaration of Conflicting Interests

The author(s) declared no potential conflicts of interest with respect to the research, authorship, and/or publication of this article.

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