

# A research on self-efficacy beliefs, perception of success, competitive state anxieties of 9-13-year-old children playing soccer

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## Abstract

The purpose of this research is to evaluation self-efficacy beliefs, perception of success and competitive state anxieties of the children that participated in youth academy selections of Anatolia University Soccer Team. In this research, totally 152 children (Age, mean: 11 ± .755) were classified in two groups as the qualified (N: 108, Age, mean: 11.02 ± .736) and the disqualified (N: 44, Age, mean: 10.95 ± .806). SES, POSQ-CH, CSAI-2C and SCAT-C were used as data collection tools in the research. The Correlations Analysis and MANOVA were employed to analyse the research data. In consequence of the conducted analysis, there is not a meaning difference ( $p>.05$ ) among the scores of competition trait anxiety, competitive state anxiety sub-dimension and perception of success in sports sub-dimension between the qualified and the disqualified groups. There is a considerable difference between the self-efficacy scores of both groups ( $p<.05$ ). Additionally, there is a significant negative correlation between competition trait anxiety and self-efficacy, between cognitive anxiety and self-efficacy, between cognitive anxiety and task orientation, between cognitive anxiety and task orientation and between physical anxiety and self-efficacy, physical anxiety and task orientation and between physical anxiety and ego orientation. Consequently, when selection criteria of 9-13 year-old children playing soccer are taken into consideration, only self-efficacy beliefs among the variables mentioned in this study between the qualified and the disqualified made a difference, whereas other variables did not make any differences. Once again, some relationships appear between anxiety and competence levels and perception of success.

**Keywords:** Perception of success, Self-efficacy, state anxiety, trait anxiety.

## INTRODUCTION

Individuals' approaching successful environments and staying away from successful environments are affected by skills, capacities, previous experiences and individual features. Briefly, physical activity is a behavioural structure that is affected by these parameters. Individuals use this information to explain why these results or events occur and to formulate appropriate expectations of individual capacities. These processes are the focus of two social, cognitive theories, which are often used in physical activity researches. These theories are the load theory of Weiner and self-efficacy theory of Bandura. The load theory deals with how individuals evaluate the results of their success. Self-efficacy theory focuses on the mediating role of individual perception affected by human functionality and different states of behaviors. Both theories show that individuals

possess the capacity to control thinking process, motivation and behaviors (4). Here, the important factor is the belief that sportspeople have in themselves. Bandura (2), Bandura & Cervonen (3) presented the cognitive evaluation theory called Self-efficacy theory in order to explicate these individual differences among sportspeople in sports environments. Self-efficacy belief is considered as one of the most significant factors for the success in sports environments.

The anxiety experienced by sportspeople before a competition and its effect on cognitive and physical functioning of a sportsperson and performance of a sportsperson are important facts known and evaluated by everybody. Naturally, this interactive process is accepted as a part of the competition and rivalry in the competition. Although it occurs with different frequency and intensity, this anxiety process, which is valid for

sportspeople from all levels, and the effects of this anxiety process on sportive performance have made anxiety one of the important concepts of sports psychology. Spielberger is the first person who divided anxiety into two as state anxiety and trait anxiety (1). Every person feels anxiety in a situation that s/he perceives dangerous. The fear and unease caused by dangerous conditions are accepted as temporary and normal anxiety that an individual feels. This is called "State Anxiety". State anxiety level increases when stress is intense, on the other hand, when stress disappears, the level decreases (12). Some people constantly experience uneasiness and are generally unhappy. This anxiety type, which is not directly associated with danger coming from the environment, arises spontaneously. An individual feels anxiety when s/he thinks that values are threatened or interprets the current conditions as stressful. This is called "Trait Anxiety" (12). Trait anxiety is stable, and it is described as a personal characteristic (1).

Trait competition anxiety is described as perceiving the pressure of competition environment and responding to these environments with fear and tension. Therefore, a sportsperson having a high level of competition anxiety perceives that the competition environment is ominous, whereas a sportsperson having low competition anxiety experiences the contrary (7). The conducted researches have revealed considerable results about how children and the youth identify success in physical activities (14). In these conducted studies, it has been stated that there are two different perspectives, which are task and ego orientation, related to the perception of success. While success is identified as doing something skilfully in task orientation, ego orientation identifies success as outperforming or winning. Goal orientation theory was theorized by (10). According to the theory, task oriented people deal with their own personal development and personal efforts, so they are not interested in others' performances. On the other hand, ego oriented individuals consider other performances and see others as their opponents for their performances. In goal theory, the main purpose of the moment is to show competence. Thus, the perception of skills becomes a significant variable (5). This study aims at examining and evaluating the processes, which are thought that they affect the sportive performance, in children's sports.

## MATERIAL & METHOD

### Participants

One hundred-two youth soccer players (Age, mean:  $11 \pm 0.76$ ) and qualified ( $n = 108$ ) and disqualified ( $n=44$ ) voluntarily participated in this study. The scale was applied all participant before the selection and after the selection.

### Instruments

*The Perception of Success Questionnaire-Children's Version-PSQ-CV*: The inventory was developed by Roberts, Treasuer & Balague (13). The scale carries out a 5-point likert type evaluation. The inventory consists of 12 items, and six of these 12 items are task oriented and six of them are ego oriented. The inventory includes two sub-dimensions. The inventory was adapted to Turkish by Kazak (9). Cronbach alpha scores for sub dimension of task orientation is .79 and for sub dimension of ego orientation .77 was founded. The scale of test-retest correlations coefficient was determined for ego orientation .88 and task orientation .61.

*Competitive State Anxiety Inventory-2C-CSAI-2C*: The Competitive State Anxiety Inventory-2 (CSAI-2C) that is the multidimensional measurement of sport-specific state anxiety developed by Martens et al., (15) was reorganized for children aged between 10 and 12 (15). The scale includes 15 question items. According to the multidimensional competitive anxiety model, there are 3 subscales, which are Cognitive Anxiety, Physical Anxiety and Self-Confidence. All items are answered in 4-point likert type. Cronbach alpha scores was found for cognitive anxiety is .80, somatic anxiety is.87 and self-confidence .85. Total internal consistency of the inventory was found to be .89. The inventory was adapted to Turkish by Koruç & Yılmaz (9).

*Self-Efficacy Scale-SES*: The scale was developed by Riggs et al. (20) and adapted to Turkish by Öcel (17). The scale consists of 10 items, which aim at determining individuals' beliefs in their capacities. Subjects respond to a five-point likert type evaluation in order to determine to what extent they agree with the statements given in the items. Internal consistency of the inventory was found to be .89.

*Sport Competition Anxiety-Children Form-SCAT-C*: "Sport Competition Anxiety-Children Form-SCAT-C" was prepared by Martens, Vealey & Burton (15), and it was developed for children aged between 10 and 14. The test includes 15 question items. All

items are answered by using the triple scale. In the test, 10 items contain individual differences related to competition trait anxiety and 5 items contain filler questions which are not taken into consideration. The 6<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> questions in the test are reverse items and they are evaluated inversely. Cronbach alpha scores is .76. The scale of test-retest correlations coefficient was determined for .89. Cronbach alpha scores is .76. The scale of test-retest correlations coefficient was determined for .89. The inventory was adapted to Turkish by Koruç & Yılmaz (13).

### Procedure

All instruments were administered to participants before the soccer selection. Researchers

provided verbal and visual information on how to respond to items in each questionnaire.

### Statistical Analysis

Descriptive statistics, Pearson moments correlation and MANOVA analysis were used to analyse the data.

### RESULTS

As it is seen in Table 2, there is a considerable difference between the qualified and the disqualified groups only in terms of Self-Efficacy scores ( $F=7.95$ ;  $P<0.05$ ). There is no significant difference between two groups in terms of Scat, Cognitive anxiety, Physical Anxiety, Self Confidence, Ego Orientation and Task Orientation scores ( $p>0.05$ ).

Table 1. Descriptive statistics table.

	Group	Mean	SD	N
Scat	The qualified	15.40	3.36	108
	The disqualified	14.59	2.33	44
Cognitive anxiety	The qualified	8.17	2.59	108
	The disqualified	7.66	2.55	44
Somatic anxiety	The qualified	8.36	3.00	108
	The disqualified	7.50	2.55	44
Self confidence	The qualified	16.88	3.71	108
	The disqualified	17.45	2.87	44
Self-efficacy	The qualified	34.74	6.87	108
	The disqualified	38.02	5.46	44
Ego orientation	The qualified	4.19	1.15	108
	The disqualified	4.27	1.07	44
Task orientation	The qualified	4.17	1.13	108
	The disqualified	4.38	.97	44

Table 2. MANOVA Table.

Source	Depend variable	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Group	Scat	20.37	1	20.37	2.11	.148
	Cognitive Anxiety	8.05		8.05	1.20	.274
	Somatic Anxiety	23.18		23.18	2.78	.097
	Self confidence	10.33		10.33	.848	.359
	Self-efficacy	336.17		336.17	7.95	.005
	Ego orientation	.176		.176	.137	.712
	Task orientation	1.34	151	1.34	1.12	.290

Table 3. Correlation table.

	Scat	Cognitive Anxiety	Somatic Anxiety	Self confidence	Self-efficacy	Ego orientation	Task orientation
Scat	1	.366**	.437**	-.179*	-.194*	-.070	-.145
Cognitive Anxiety	.366**	1	.466**	-.240**	-.287**	-.219**	-.262**
Somatic Anxiety	.437**	.466**	1	-.086	-.296**	-.241**	-.312**
Self confidence	-.179*	-.240**	-.086	1	.142	.138	.144
Self-efficacy	-.194*	-.287**	-.296**	.142	1	.094	.158
Ego orientation	-.070	-.219**	-.241**	.138	.094	1	.868**
Task orientation	-.145	-.262**	-.312**	.144	.158	.868**	1

\* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed). \*\* Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

## DISCUSSION

The main purpose of this study is to examine self-efficacy beliefs, perception of success and anxiety levels of 9-13 year-old children playing soccer in two different groups. In the light of conducted analysis and collected data, it is observed that there is no significant difference among anxiety levels and perception of success of children who participated in soccer team selections and gathered in two groups as the qualified and the disqualified. However, the difference between two groups in the context of self-efficacy beliefs is statistically meaningful. When students perceive satisfactory goal progress, they feel capable of improving their skills; goal attainment, coupled with high self-efficacy, leads students to set new challenging goals (24).

Bandura(3) thinks that self-efficacy beliefs of students in attaining their goals are affected by their abilities, previous experiences, attitudes towards learning environment, trainers and social environment. In our study, the fact that children with high self-efficacy belief qualified in selections can be shown as the reason of difference emerging between two groups because the power of competence belief of people becomes important in attaining expected goals in an environment where any kind of social variable such as selection environment exists. On the other hand, Bandura(3) reported that people having low self-efficacy might shirk hard tasks, and those having high self-efficacy beliefs would place greater demands on their capacities in order to attain expected goals than those having low self-efficacy beliefs when they encounter a difficult situation. It is possible to evaluate that this notion supports the difference in our study in terms of self-efficacy.

Children might regard selection process as a hard goal. Schunk (24) suggests that special goals would increase performance and these special goals would enhance self-efficacy beliefs. Nevertheless, these two groups did not differ in terms of goal and success perceptions in our study. The possibility that both groups might not regard the selection criterion as a very special goal in the same way can be shown as the reason of it. Nicholls (16) states that skill-concept development originates from the difficulty of the task, the necessary effort made for the skill. Soltani et al. (25) found significant difference between the level of somatic anxiety and training experience of elite and non-elite badminton players in Iran. In our study, there is not a

difference between two groups in terms of perception of success and anxiety levels.

The difficulty of the task perceived by children that participated in the selections might not have changed their skills and their efforts. There are studies indicating that task orientation is related to social status in a sport environment (21,22). The notion that winning or not winning these soccer team selections would not make a significant difference in terms of social status for children who participated in the study can be presented as a reason why there was not a difference between two groups. There was not a meaningful difference related to the competition anxiety in terms of two groups. Leary (14) stated that competition anxiety is a dimension of social anxiety, and it becomes special via sport environments. Leary also claimed that negative remarks made by spectators cause an increase in anxiety in sport environments. This result agrees with the result of our study because families of children participating in selections also attend the competition environment and pressure at a certain level caused by bystanders occurs naturally. It is expected that this pressure would make a difference in anxiety, and Leary (14) stated it in his study. This perspective is called self-presentation approach in sport environments. In fact, no difference emerged between two groups in terms of anxiety levels. It is an interesting result that any differences did not emerge in terms of anxiety levels, but differences emerged in terms of self-efficacy beliefs for both groups. Besides, when the conducted correlation analysis is considered, it is seen that self-efficacy belief has a meaningful negative correlation with competitive state anxiety and competition trait anxiety, and this is a result expected and supported by the literature (6,10). This is because the increase in competence and self-confidence reduces anxiety.

Vealey (28) defines self-confidence as "being sure of his/her skills which are necessary to be successful in sports or belief in his/her skills". Intuitively, it is understood that sportspeople having high self-confidence would be less anxious than those having low self-confidence would. Martin & Gill partly supported this hypothesis and stated that distance runners with high self-confidence have low cognitive state anxiety. Individuals with low self-confidence feel inadequate. Inadequacy feeling becomes special to an individual with the perception that something is wrong with himself/herself. Such personal

dissatisfaction results in feeling weak, tiredness or concentration difficulty and anxiety (1,7). Scanlan & Passer (23) discovered that state anxiety levels of children before competitions are related to trait anxiety, self-esteem and performance expectations. Rainey and Cunningham (19) report that failure and fear of being evaluated are serious threat sources for children with high competition trait anxiety. In our study, the presence of differences in self-efficacy for both groups and the absence of differences in anxiety for both groups, and the presence of correlational relationship between these two variables were parallel to the results supported and not supported by the literature.

Consequently, children are in a selection competition in sport environment as it is the same in many environments. In such competitive environments, raising children who have high competence beliefs, can manage anxiety and its processes (anxiety management) and set goals in perception of success properly may facilitate the expected achievement in sport. In this study, there is a difference between two groups, which are called the qualified and the disqualified, in terms of competence beliefs, but there are not any differences in the perception of anxiety and success. However, what is interesting is that the relations among the variables provide clues for this and future studies despite there are not differences.

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