



RESEARCH ARTICLE

Examining the Relationship Between Football Players' Attitudes Towards Superstition and Achievement Motivation

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to examine the relationship between athletes' attitudes toward superstitions and their achievement motivation. It is known that athletes may exhibit various attitudes toward superstition to increase their success or maintain their performance. In this context, a relational screening model was used to determine the effects of superstition on athletes' psychological well-being and motivation levels. The study sample consists of 260 football players selected based on predefined criteria. Data were collected through a personal information form, the Sport-Specific Achievement Motivation Scale, and the Attitude Scale toward Superstitious Behavior in Sports, and analyzed using SPSS software. The findings reveal a positive and significant relationship between football players' attitudes toward superstition and their achievement motivation. When differences based on age groups were examined, it was found that players aged 28-32 were more prone to superstition, while players aged 18-22 had relatively lower achievement motivation. In position-based analyses, it was observed that defenders had lower levels of achievement motivation and need for power expression compared to players in other positions. Additionally, it was determined that as athletes' sports experience increased, differences in achievement motivation emerged, and as their education level increased, their need for power expression and achievement motivation were higher. In conclusion, it was observed that football players' attitudes toward superstition had a significant impact on their achievement motivation. These findings provide guidance for further research in the fields of sports psychology and performance management and suggest the development of strategies to enhance athletes' psychological resilience.

INTRODUCTION

Football is a sport that involves both individual and team performance, incorporating physical, psychological, and social dynamics (Horn, 2008; Sariaçalı et al., 2020; Sariaçalı et al., 2022; Küçük & Ceylan, 2022). As in every sport, the behaviors displayed in this sport affect athletic success (Cengizoglu et al., 2024). The behaviors displayed by football players both on and off the field are closely related to psychological factors as well as technical and physical methods (Moran, 2013; Arslan Kabasakal, 2024). The behaviors exhibited by football players, both on and off the field, are closely related not only to technical and physical methods but also to psychological factors (Moran, 2013). One of these factors is superstitions. Athletes may develop various superstitions in an attempt to increase their success or maintain their performance (Schippers & Van Lange, 2006). The impact of superstitions on athletes should be considered in both the context of psychological well-being and motivational dynamics.

Superstitious behaviors emerge in certain situations where a false cause-and-effect relationship leads to a repetitive sequence of actions (Foster & Kokko, 2009). Superstitions are one of the psychological mechanisms that individuals can use to enhance their sense of control and cope with

uncertainty (Vyse, 2014). These beliefs can make athletes feel more secure, reduce anxiety levels, and positively influence their performance (Foster et al., 2006). According to the American Psychological Association (2020) and experts from the Comparative Cognition Laboratory (2022), when an individual suddenly achieves success due to a miracle, they are likely to develop superstitious behaviors. They may then interpret this as good luck and continue to repeat the same actions in future activities, with the opposite also being true. However, in some cases, when superstitions become excessive, they can negatively affect athletes' intrinsic motivation, making their success dependent on luck or external factors (Sartori et al., 2024; Damisch et al., 2010). Therefore, this situation necessitates a more detailed examination of the relationship between individual achievement motivation and superstitions.

Motivation is defined as any force that influences, initiates, guides, and sustains behavior, while success is defined as a task behavior that allows the evaluation of performance in relation to certain internally or externally imposed standards or a certain level of excellence against which an individual competes or is involved (Yan, 2020; Reeve, 2009). The concept of achievement motivation is widely discussed in sports psychology and refers to an individual's desire to achieve goals and the perseverance demonstrated during the process (Zuber et al., 2022; Roberts, 2012). McClelland's (1961) theory of achievement motivation defines an individual's achievement motivation as a force that drives them, with superior skills, in a competitive environment. According to this theory, individuals are motivated to engage in activities that are important and challenging for them, demonstrate excellent performance within their systems, and achieve good results. Additionally, they aim to catch up with and surpass others (Li et al., 2023). In sports, achievement motivation is influenced by both intrinsic and extrinsic factors (Deci & Ryan, 2013). The foundation of achievement motivation is success, which encompasses the fulfillment of all life goals. The need to demonstrate competence is represented by the achievement goal, which can affect an individual performing a task (Petričević et al., 2022). In this context, identifying the effect of superstitions on football players' achievement motivation could provide significant insights within the field of sports psychology.

The purpose of this study is to examine the relationship between football players' attitudes toward superstitions and their achievement motivation, and to explore the potential effects of this relationship on athletes' performance. In this regard, this study aims to contribute to a deeper understanding of the impact of psychological factors in sports, through its theoretical framework, relevant literature review, research methodology, and discussion of findings.

Materials and Methods

Research Model

In this study, a relational screening model was used to examine the relationship between variables. This model is a research approach aimed at determining the level and direction of common variation between two or more variables (Karasar, 2021).

Research Group

In determining the research group for this study, the convenience sampling method was used. The research group consists of 260 football players aged between 18 and 33, playing in different positions.

Data Collection Tools

In this study, a personal information form, the Sports-Specific Achievement Motivation Scale, and the Attitude Scale Towards Superstitious Behavior in Sports were used.

Personal Information Form

The "Personal Information Form," created by the researchers, was designed to collect demographic information such as age, position, years in sport, education level, mother's education level, and father's education level from the participants.

Attitude Scale Towards Superstitious Behavior in Sports

The "Attitude Scale Towards Superstitious Behavior in Sports," developed by Çar et al. (2023), was used in this study. The scale, which consists of 10 items and supports a one-factor structure, was

found to have an internal consistency coefficient of 0.87 in reliability analysis. The items in the scale are scored on a 5-point Likert scale, where (1) means "Never" and (5) means "Always."

Sports-Specific Achievement Motivation Scale

The "Sports-Specific Achievement Motivation Scale" (SSAMS), developed by Willis (1982) and adapted into Turkish by Tiryaki and Gödelek (1997), was used in this study. The scale consists of 40 items and includes three subdimensions: (a) the drive for power display, $r=0.81$, (b) the drive to approach success, $r=0.82$, and (c) the drive to avoid failure, $r=0.80$. The items in the scale are also rated on a 5-point Likert scale, where (1) means "Never" and (5) means "Always" (Tiryaki & Gödelek, 1997).

Reliability and Normality

For both scales used, skewness and kurtosis values met the criteria for normal distribution. The reliability coefficients were found to be at an acceptable level. These findings indicate that the scales used are reliable and the data are suitable for valid analyses.

Findings

Table 1. Means, Standard Deviations, Skewness-Kurtosis Values, and Reliability Coefficients for the Scales

Scale and Subdimensions	n	Mean	SD	Skewness	Kurtosis	α
Attitude Towards Superstitions	260	2.61	0.77	0.092	0.007	0.814
Achievement Motivation (Total)	260	3.27	0.54	-0.287	1.071	0.883
Power Drive	260	3.20	0.56	-0.292	0.324	0.636
Approach to Success Drive	260	3.56	0.63	-0.597	0.517	0.802
Avoidance of Failure Drive	260	2.83	0.79	0.477	-0.032	0.819

According to Table 1, the means, standard deviations, skewness-kurtosis values, and reliability coefficients for the data obtained from football players were calculated and presented. The results indicate that the players' attitudes towards superstitions were 2.61 ± 0.77 , and their sports-specific achievement motivation levels were 3.27 ± 0.54 . Among the subdimensions of the sports-specific achievement motivation scale, the highest mean was observed in the players' approach to success drive (3.56 ± 0.63), and the lowest mean was found in the avoidance of failure drive (2.83 ± 0.79). The skewness and kurtosis values for the scales were found to fall within the reference range of -1.5 to +1.5, indicating normal distribution (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2013). Additionally, when examining the Cronbach's Alpha coefficients for the scales, it was determined that the reliability coefficients for the scales and subdimensions were above 0.60, suggesting that the obtained data are reliable (Alpar, 2016).

Table 2. Frequency and Percentage Distributions of Football Players' Demographic Information

		f	%
Age	18-22 age	162	62.3
	23-27 age	38	14.6
	28-32 age	21	8.1
	33 age and above	39	15.0
Position	Defender	80	30.8
	Forward	53	20.4
	Goalkeeper	40	15.4
	Mid Fielder	87	33.5
Years in Sport	5-9 year	129	49.6
	10-14 year	67	25.8
	15-19 year	33	12.7

	20 year and above	31	11.9
Education Level	Secondary Sch	6	2.3
	High Sch	188	72.3
	Bachelor's degree or higher	66	25.4
Mother' Edu Level	Primary Sch	97	37.3
	Secondary Sch	72	27.7
	High Sch	74	28.5
	Bachelor's degree or higher	17	6.5
Father' Edu Level	Primary Sch	86	33.1
	Secondary Sch	61	23.5
	High Sch	87	33.5
	Bachelor's degree or higher	26	10,0
	Toplam	260	100.0

According to the demographic data, 62.3% of the participating football players are in the 18-22 age range. 33.5% of the players play as midfielders, and 49.6% have 5-9 years of experience in the sport. Regarding education level, 72.3% of the players have completed high school, and when examining the education levels of their parents, it was found that 37.3% of the mothers are primary school graduates, while 33.5% of the fathers have completed high school.

Table 3. Comparison of Football Players' Attitudes Toward Superstition and Success Motivation Levels by Age Variable

Scale and Subdimensions	Age	n	Mean	SD	F	p	Post Hoc
Attitude Towards Superstitions	18-22 age ^a	162	2.67	0.75	5.31	0.00*	c>a,b,d
	23-27 age ^b	38	2.44	0.79			
	28-32 age ^c	21	3.05	0.83			
	33 age and above ^d	39	2.31	0.71			
Achievement Motivation (Total)	18-22 age ^a	162	3.20	0.54	3.55	0.01*	a<b,c
	23-27 age ^b	38	3.40	0.57			
	28-32 age ^c	21	3.55	0.57			
	33 age and above ^d	39	3.30	0.39			
Power Display Drive	18-22 age ^a	162	3.10	0.56	4.66	0.00*	a<b,c,d
	23-27 age ^b	38	3.34	0.58			
	28-32 age ^c	21	3.42	0.57			
	33 age and above ^d	39	3.36	0.44			
Approach to Success Drive	18-22 age ^a	162	3.48	0.67	2.73	0.04*	a<b,c
	23-27 age ^b	38	3.73	0.66			
	28-32 age ^c	21	3.78	0.53			
	33 age and above ^d	39	3.62	0.45			
Avoidance for Failure Drive	18-22 age ^a	162	2.80	0.80	2.98	0.03*	c>a,d
	23-27 age ^b	38	2.90	0.83			
	28-32 age ^c	21	3.26	0.87			
	33 age and above ^d	39	2.65	0.57			

*p≤0.05

The attitudes of football players toward superstition and their success motivation levels were compared by age using one-way ANOVA. The results are presented in Table 3. The analysis revealed that the levels of superstition attitude [$F(3, 256) = 5.31, p \leq 0.05$], total success motivation [$F(3, 256) = 3.55, p \leq 0.05$], power display motivation [$F(3, 256) = 4.66, p \leq 0.05$], achievement approach motivation [$F(3, 256) = 2.73, p \leq 0.05$], and failure avoidance motivation [$F(3, 256) = 2.98, p \leq 0.05$]

showed significant differences. LSD post hoc test results indicated that football players aged 28-32 had higher superstition attitudes. It was also found that the total success motivation, power display motivation, and achievement approach motivation were lower in the 18-22 age group, while the failure avoidance motivation was higher in the 28-32 age group.

Table 5. Comparison of Football Players' Attitudes Toward Superstition and Success Motivation Levels by Years of Sport Experience

Scale and Subdimensions	Years of Sport Exp	n	Mean	SD	F	p	Post Hoc
Attitude Towards Superstitions	5-9 years ^a	129	2.56	0.76	1.28	0.28	-
	10-14 years ^b	67	2.61	0.68			
	15-19 years ^c	33	2.85	0.89			
	20 years and above ^d	31	2.61	0.88			
Achievement Motivation (Total)	5-9 years ^a	129	3.17	0.56	4.61	0.00*	a<b,d
	10-14 years ^b	67	3.30	0.48			
	15-19 years ^c	33	3.50	0.55			
	20 years and above ^d	31	3.41	0.47			
Power Display Drive	5-9 years ^a	129	3.05	0.55	7.93	0.00*	a<b,c,d
	10-14 years ^b	67	3.27	0.54			
	15-19 years ^c	33	3.45	0.50			
	20 years and above ^d	31	3.43	0.51			
Approach to Success Drive	5-9 years ^a	129	3.44	0.68	4.01	0.00*	a<b,c
	10-14 years ^b	67	3.64	0.59			
	15-19 years ^c	33	3.81	0.58			
	20 years and above ^d	31	3.68	0.49			
Avoidance for Failure Drive	5-9 years ^a	129	2.80	0.78	1.09	0.35	-
	10-14 years ^b	67	2.75	0.74			
	15-19 years ^c	33	3.03	0.90			
	20 years and above ^d	31	2.91	0.77			

*p≤0.05

The attitudes of football players toward superstition and their success motivation levels were compared by years of sport experience using one-way ANOVA. The results are presented in Table 5. There were no significant differences in superstition attitudes [$F(3, 256) = 1.28, p > 0.05$] and the subdimension of success motivation, namely failure avoidance motivation [$F(3, 256) = 1.09, p > 0.05$], according to years of sport experience. However, total success motivation [$F(3, 256) = 4.61, p \leq 0.05$], power display motivation [$F(3, 256) = 7.93, p \leq 0.05$], and achievement approach motivation [$F(3, 256) = 4.01, p \leq 0.05$] showed significant differences by years of sport experience. According to the LSD post hoc test results, football players with 5-9 years of sport experience had lower levels of total success motivation, power display motivation, and achievement approach motivation.

Table 6. Comparison of Football Players' Attitudes Toward Superstition and Success Motivation Levels by Education Level

Scale and Subdimensions	Education Level	n	Mean	SD	F	p	Post Hoc
Attitude Towards Superstitions	Secondary Sch ^a	6	2.30	0.31	2.80	0.06	-
	High Sch ^b	188	2.68	0.77			

	Bachelor's degree or higher ^c	66	2.45	0.80			
Achievement Motivation (Total)	Secondary Sch ^a	6	3.32	0.57	2.56	0.07	-
	High Sch ^b	188	3.23	0.54			
	Bachelor's degree or higher ^c	66	3.40	0.51			
Power Display Drive	Secondary Sch ^a	6	3.18	0.79	3.09	0.04*	c>b
	High Sch ^b	188	3.15	0.56			
	Bachelor's degree or higher ^c	66	3.35	0.53			
Approach to Success Drive	Secondary Sch ^a	6	3.65	0.82	3.38	0.03*	c>b
	High Sch ^b	188	3.50	0.65			
	Bachelor's degree or higher ^c	66	3.74	0.55			
Avoidance for Failure Drive	Secondary Sch ^a	6	2.84	0.37	0.15	0.85	-
	High Sch ^b	188	2.81	0.78			
	Bachelor's degree or higher ^c	66	2.88	0.83			

*p≤0.05

The attitudes of football players toward superstition and their success motivation levels were compared by education level using one-way ANOVA. The results are presented in Table 6. Football players' attitudes toward superstition [$F(2, 257) = 2.80, p > 0.05$], total success motivation [$F(2, 257) = 2.56, p > 0.05$], and failure avoidance motivation levels [$F(2, 257) = 0.15, p > 0.05$] did not show significant differences by education level. However, the subdimensions of success motivation, namely power display motivation [$F(2, 257) = 3.09, p \leq 0.05$] and achievement approach motivation [$F(2, 257) = 3.38, p \leq 0.05$], showed significant differences by education level. According to the LSD post hoc test results, football players with a bachelor's degree or higher had higher levels of power display motivation and achievement approach motivation compared to football players with a high school education.

Table 7. Comparison of Football Players' Attitudes Toward Superstition and Success Motivation Levels by Mother's Education Level

Scale and Subdimensions	Education Level-Mother	n	Mean	SD	F	p	Post Hoc
Attitude Towards Superstitions	Primary Sch ^a	97	2.58	0.74	1.00	0.39	-
	Secondary Sch ^b	72	2.74	0.82			
	High Sch ^c	74	2.53	0.73			
	Bachelor's degree or above ^d	17	2.63	0.92			
Achievement Motivation (Total)	Primary Sch ^a	97	3.18	0.50	2.42	0.06	-
	Secondary Sch ^b	72	3.28	0.62			
	High Sch ^c	74	3.34	0.47			

	Bachelor's degree or above ^d	17	3.51	0.60			
Power Display Drive	Primary Sch ^a	97	3.11	0.57	2.10	0.10	-
	Secondary Sch ^b	72	3.23	0.60			
	High Sch ^c	74	3.24	0.49			
	Bachelor's degree or above ^d	17	3.44	0.58			
Approach to Success Drive	Primary Sch ^a	97	3.46	0.58	2.57	0.06	-
	Secondary Sch ^b	72	3.56	0.73			
	High Sch ^c	74	3.65	0.56			
	Bachelor's degree or above ^d	17	3.86	0.70			
Avoidance for Failure Drive	Primary Sch ^a	97	2.74	0.70	0.88	0.44	-
	Secondary Sch ^b	72	2.84	0.88			
	High Sch ^c	74	2.90	0.78			
	Bachelor's degree or above ^d	17	3.00	0.91			

*p<0,05

The attitudes of football players toward superstition and their success motivation levels were compared by the education level of the mother using one-way ANOVA. The results are presented in Table 7. Football players' attitudes toward superstition [$F(3, 256) = 1.00, p > 0.05$], total success motivation [$F(3, 256) = 2.42, p > 0.05$], power display motivation [$F(3, 256) = 2.10, p > 0.05$], achievement approach motivation [$F(3, 256) = 2.57, p > 0.05$], and failure avoidance motivation [$F(3, 256) = 0.88, p > 0.05$] did not show significant differences by mother's education level.

Table 8. Comparison of Football Players' Attitudes Toward Superstition and Success Motivation Levels by Father's Education Level

Scale and Subdimensions	Education Level-Father	n	Mean	SD	F	p	Post Hoc
Attitude Towards Superstitions	Primary Sch ^a	86	2.54	0.70	3.21	0.02*	c>a,b,d
	Secondary Sch ^b	61	2.54	0.67			
	High Sch ^c	87	2.81	0.86			
	Bachelor's degree or above ^d	26	2.37	0.83			
Achievement Motivation (Total)	Primary Sch ^a	86	3.24	0.57	1.19	0.31	-
	Secondary Sch ^b	61	3.19	0.54			
	High Sch ^c	87	3.34	0.52			
	Bachelor's degree or above ^d	26	3.35	0.50			
Power Display Drive	Primary Sch ^a	86	3.16	0.55	1.33	0.26	-
	Secondary Sch ^b	61	3.11	0.58			
	High Sch ^c	87	3.27	0.55			

	Bachelor's degree or above ^d	26	3.31	0.58			
Approach to Success Drive	Primary Sch ^a	86	3.49	0.64	1.09	0.35	-
	Secondary Sch ^b	61	3.51	0.67			
	High Sch ^c	87	3.64	0.61			
	Bachelor's degree or above ^d	26	3.66	0.59			
Avoidance for Failure Drive	Primary Sch ^a	86	2.83	0.81	0.78	0.50	-
	Secondary Sch ^b	61	2.70	0.79			
	High Sch ^c	87	2.90	0.78			
	Bachelor's degree or above ^d	26	2.86	0.74			

*p≤0,05

The attitudes of football players toward superstition and their success motivation levels were compared by the father's education level using one-way ANOVA. The results are presented in Table 8. While success motivation (total) [F(3, 256) = 1.19, p > 0.05], power display motivation [F(3, 256) = 1.33, p > 0.05], achievement approach motivation [F(3, 256) = 1.09, p > 0.05], and failure avoidance motivation [F(3, 256) = 0.78, p > 0.05] did not show significant differences based on father's education level, there was a significant difference in attitudes toward superstition [F(3, 256) = 3.21, p ≤ 0.05]. According to the post hoc LSD test results, football players whose fathers had completed high school exhibited higher superstition-related attitudes than those with fathers having lower education levels.

Table 9. Relationship Between Football Players' Attitudes Toward Superstition and Success Motivation

		1	2	3	4	5
1. Attitude Towards Superstitions	r					
	p					
	n					
2. Achievement Motivation (Total)	r	0.347*				
	p	0.00				
	n	260				
3. Power Display Drive	r	0.228*	0.786*			
	p	0.00	0.00			
	n	260	260			
4. Approach to Success Drive	r	0.264*	0.905*	0.659*		
	p	0.00	0.00	0.00		
	n	260	260	260		
5. Avoidance for Failure Drive	r	0.366*	0.758*	0.364*	0.500*	
	p	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	
	n	260	260	260	260	

*p≤0,01

The relationship between football players' attitudes toward superstition and their success motivation was examined using Pearson correlation analysis. The results presented in Table 9 indicate that there is a positive and significant relationship between attitudes toward superstition and total success motivation (r = 0.347, p ≤ 0.01), power display motivation (r = 0.228, p ≤ 0.01), achievement approach motivation (r = 0.264, p ≤ 0.01), and failure avoidance motivation (r = 0.366, p ≤ 0.01). This suggests that as football players' attitudes toward superstition increase, their success motivation, power display motivation, achievement approach motivation, and failure avoidance motivation also increase.

DISCUSSION

In this study, the relationship between football players' attitudes toward superstition and success motivation was examined in detail, and the findings were evaluated by comparing them with the literature.

The study explored football players' attitudes toward superstition and sport-specific success motivation. It was found that the highest average in sport-specific success motivation sub-dimensions was in achievement approach motivation, while the lowest average was in failure avoidance motivation. In a study conducted with professional football players in Ghana, it was revealed that superstitions play a significant role in enhancing players' performance, and these beliefs might differ according to players' positions (Ofori et al., 2012). Similarly, a study conducted with university-level athletes concluded that superstitions were related to stress management and coping strategies. This suggests that athletes may turn to superstitions to cope with uncertainty (Ofori et al., 2018). Additionally, another study showed that superstitions influence performance-related tendencies, and these beliefs can vary depending on the athlete's age and experience (Barkoukis et al., 2011). In this context, previous studies provide various findings on football players' superstitions and success motivations. Furthermore, studies examining the relationship between mental resilience, goal orientation, and irrational performance beliefs suggest that superstitions may be connected to motivational processes. In this regard, our study overlaps with previous findings in the literature and contributes to the field by supporting the relationship between superstitions and success motivation in football players (Erol et al., 2022; Sarı et al., 2021; Akgül, 2019; Orhan & Ünlü, 2022).

It was observed that most of the football players in the study were in the younger age group. A large proportion of participants played in midfield, and a significant portion had between five and nine years of sports experience. In terms of educational level, it was found that most football players were high school graduates. When evaluating the education levels of their parents, it was determined that most mothers were elementary school graduates, while most fathers were high school graduates. In Turkey, there are limited academic studies on the age, position, and educational level of football players. However, it is generally known that the age and position of football players are related to certain psychological and physical traits. For example, it has been found that football players' emotional intelligence levels vary according to their age groups and positions (Soylu, 2021). Additionally, there are individual examples of football players' academic achievements and high educational levels. For instance, English goalkeeper James Belshaw's two university degrees and academic success are remarkable. However, the intensive time and energy required for a professional football career can limit players' academic careers (The Guardian, 2024; The Times, 2024). Additionally, a study examining the effects of gender, age, and years of sports participation on the relationship between academic and sports success motivation revealed a moderate correlation between academic and sports success motivation, with significant differences found in sub-dimensions based on gender, age, and years of sports participation (Filiz & Demirhan, 2018). As a result, while studies on football players' age, position, and educational level are limited, these factors appear to have an impact on players' psychological and physical characteristics, and some players can achieve high academic success.

The study compared football players' attitudes toward superstition and success motivations across different age groups. The analyses showed significant differences in superstitions, success motivation, power display motivation, achievement approach motivation, and failure avoidance motivation based on age groups. Specifically, football players aged 28-32 had higher attitudes toward superstition, while their success motivation and motivation levels were lower compared to players in the 18-22 age group. These findings highlight the motivational and psychological differences between age groups. In a study by Çar and Kurtoğlu (2022), which examined the superstitions and behaviors of professional and amateur football players, it was concluded that age groups and experience levels could influence players' superstitions and motivations. All these studies indicate that age and experience levels affect superstitions and success motivation in football players (Ekinci et al., 2024; Ofori et al., 2012; Böke, 2018; Eri, 2018). Our study contributes to the literature by demonstrating that age and experience, particularly motivational drives and superstitions, are linked

to psychological factors. These findings underscore the importance of considering age-related differences when trying to better understand athletes' performance and motivate them.

A comparison of football players' attitudes toward superstition and success motivations by position revealed that there were no significant differences in superstitions and failure avoidance motivation levels based on position. However, there were significant differences in success motivation, power display motivation, and achievement approach motivation levels. The results of the LSD test indicated that defenders had lower levels of these motivational factors. A study on motivational differences by position found significant differences in success motivation levels between attacking, midfield, and defensive players, with defenders having lower motivation levels (Dr. C., 2018). Another study showed that football players' psychological traits vary by position, and attacking players score higher on motivation, confidence, and activation compared to players in other positions (Goswami & Sarkar, 2016). Sarmiento et al. (2008) found no significant differences in motivation by position, suggesting that motivational differences were not evident among professional, semi-professional, and amateur players. These findings, when compared with various studies in the literature, indicate that football players' motivations may vary by position, although these differences may be influenced by specific conditions and contexts.

Analysis results showed that football players' attitudes toward superstition and failure avoidance motivation did not vary significantly based on the number of years in sports. However, there were significant differences in success motivation, power display motivation, and achievement approach motivation levels. The results of the LSD test showed that football players with 5-9 years of sports experience had lower levels of these motivational factors. In a study by Özdemir et al. (2009), significant relationships were found in the cognitive and motivational sub-dimensions of imagery as the number of years of sports participation increased. It was noted that athletes with 11-15 years of experience had higher levels of imagery and motivation. Similarly, a study examining the motivation and anxiety levels of football players by position found that athletes with 11-15 years of experience scored higher on motivational imagery and general arousal sub-dimensions (Bedir et al., 2023). Additionally, a study investigating the effects of success motivation and sports experience on professional and amateur football players found that professional players had higher levels of success motivation, and sports experience was positively related to success motivation (Aslan & Kuru, 2002). These studies show that sports experience has a decisive effect on motivational factors. When compared with the findings of this study, differences in certain motivational factors can be observed as the years of experience increase. This suggests that football players may develop or change their motivational strategies and attitudes as they gain experience.

A comparison of football players' attitudes toward superstition and success motivations by education level revealed that there were no significant differences in superstition, success motivation, and failure avoidance motivation based on education level. However, significant differences were found in the sub-dimensions of success motivation, namely power display motivation and achievement approach motivation, based on education level. The results of the LSD test showed that football players with higher education (bachelor's degree or above) had higher levels of these motivations compared to players with a high school education. A review of the literature reveals examples both supporting and contradicting these findings (Arslan, 2004; Shermer, 2002; Kavi & Karagün, 2020; Arvas, 2017). These studies suggest that players' experience and education levels influence motivational factors and psychological skill levels. When compared with the results of this study, it can be concluded that education level and years of experience play significant roles in shaping football players' motivational profiles.

A comparison was made between football players' attitudes toward superstitions and their success motivation based on their father's education level. The results indicate that the father's education level did not create a significant difference in success motivation, power-assertion drive, approach-avoidance achievement drive, or failure avoidance drive. However, the players' attitudes toward superstitions showed a significant difference based on the father's education level. According to the results of the LSD test, players whose fathers were high school graduates exhibited higher attitudes toward superstitions compared to other groups.

In the study titled "The Relationship Between Perceived Parental Attitudes and Success Motivation in Football Youth Athletes", the relationship between success motivation and perceived parental

attitudes among youth football players was examined. This research highlighted the impact of parental attitudes on athletes' motivation, concluding that parental attitudes influence the child's sports motivation (Eri, 2018). In the existing literature, studies directly exploring the relationship between football players' superstitions, success motivation, and the educational level of their parents are limited. However, research that addresses the effects of parental attitudes and the athletes' own educational levels suggests that parental education level might also have a potential influence on athletes' superstitions and motivations. Therefore, conducting more specific research in this area will contribute to a better understanding of the topic.

The results show a positive and significant relationship between football players' attitudes toward superstitions and success motivation, power-assertion drive, approach-avoidance achievement drive, and failure avoidance drive. Based on these findings, it can be concluded that as football players' attitudes toward superstitions increase, their success motivation and other motivational factors also rise. This relationship suggests that football players may use superstitions as a form of psychological support or strategy, indicating that these beliefs function on a motivational level.

In conclusion, this study aims to contribute to the field of sports psychology by revealing the relationship between superstitions and success motivation among football players. Future research should emphasize the importance of conducting similar analyses in various sports and different cultural contexts to enhance understanding in this field.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This study aimed to understand the impact of the interaction between football players' attitudes toward superstitions and success motivation on their performance. The findings reveal a positive and significant relationship between players' attitudes toward superstitions and their success motivation. This suggests that superstition can function as a psychological support mechanism for athletes and may influence motivational dynamics.

Based on these findings, the following recommendations can be made:

Individual and group therapy sessions should be organized by sports psychologists to enhance athletes' success motivation and psychological resilience.

Educational programs focusing on psychological resilience and motivation should be conducted to help athletes better understand superstition-based psychological processes.

Motivational approaches should be personalized, taking into account the different age groups of players, to improve their success motivation and resilience.

Strategies tailored to players' specific positions on the field should be developed to increase their motivational levels, alongside the implementation of individual goal-setting techniques.

The potential impact of athletes' parents' education levels on their attitudes should be considered, and awareness-raising activities for parents should be organized.

To enhance team motivation, activities aimed at strengthening team spirit, solidarity, and group awareness should be organized.

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