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Assessment of Demographic and Personality Characteristics of Elite Dancers in Turkey

by

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In this study, a descriptive method was used in order to assess the demographic and personality characteristics of athletes in dancing sports.

Data collected with ACL scale were evaluated with a computer programme and subscale scores were obtained. Five subscale categories which have the highest mean scores among all, were decided as typical characteristics of the athletes. The distributions of subscale scores according to demographic variables were analyzed by Mann-Whitney U test, and Pearson correlation test. In all analysis, results were tested two-sided and level of significance was accepted as 0.05.

Preponderance over others, decisiveness, high self-esteem, masculine behavior were found significantly higher in younger athletes compared to old ones. On the other hand, acceptance of psychological consultation was found to be significantly higher among old athletes.

Keywords: dancers, personality, demographic characteristics

Introduction

Kluchohn and Murray noted that each person is like all other people, that each person is like some other people, and that each person is like no other person. What may be understood from this observation is that each person possesses universal components of structure and function; that each person has commonalities with particular subgroups, but not others; and that there are idiographic and individual differences in each person (Murray 1953). This work is concerned primarily with the personality differences among dancers. Therefore, it is necessary to define the concept of "personality" and place it within the given context. The word personality de-

rives from the Latin word "persona" that means "mask." The study of personality can be understood as the study of "masks" that people wear. However, there is no consensus among scholars as to what exactly the concept should include. This may be due to the fact that people in general and behavioral sciences define personality from different perspectives Luthans 1992 (Luthans 1992). In 1953, Guilford defined personality as the "interactive aggregate of personal characteristics that influence the individual's response to the environment."(Guilford 1953). This interpretation of the word is also in line with Gordon W. Allport's definition of personality as "the dynamic organization within the individual of those psychophysical systems that determine his unique adjustments to his environment."(Giritli 2008, All-

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port 1953). In this study, personality will be used to describe an individual's collection of behaviors or characteristics.

Model for Survey:

In this survey, the qualitative survey model has been used in order to define the demographic and personality characteristics of the sportsmen and sportswomen who are involved in the dance sports.

Universe and Sampling:

The universe of this survey is comprised of all the sportsmen and sportswomen who have a license and do the dance sport in Turkey. The sampling of the survey is comprised of the 43 sportsmen and sportswomen who have joined the Turkey Dance Championship.

Data and its Collecting:

In this survey two different measuring tools have been used for the purpose of data collecting. The first one of these is the questionnaire, which aims to indicate the demographic characteristics of the ones who are involved in the dance sport. The questionnaire has been developed by the researchers and is comprised of 20 questions.

The second data collecting tool is the Assessment Scales List Personality Test which was developed in the USA by Gouht and Heilbrun in 1967 (Gouht 1967). There are in total 300 adjectives and 24 subscales in the test. These subscales and their meanings have been given below:

In accordance with the circumstances in Turkey, the study of the test's language equivalence, dependability, validness and norms has been made by Canan Savran in 1993 (Savran 1003).

Accumulation of the Data:

The sportsmen and sportswomen who were planned to be included in the sampling group were given information about the survey. All the sportsmen and sportswomen who were informed about the survey accepted joining the survey. They were given and asked to fill in a questionnaire and a scale after the competition. They were asked to mark their own personality traits while filling in the ACL scale.

The Analysis of the Data and their Interpretation:

The data gathered for the survey has been transferred to computer by the researchers.

The frequencies and the percentages have been derived out of the data that was gathered through the questionnaire, and they have been used in graphics. The interpretation of these graphics has been given in the inferences section.

The data that has been collected through the ACL scale has been evaluated by using a specially prepared computer program and the subscale points have been reached. All the subscale points averages and standard deviations have been calculated for all the people who are involved in the dance sports. Five subscales with the highest average value from among the subscales have been accepted as the typical characteristics of all the sportsmen and sportswomen who do the dance sports. The Mann-Whitney "U" test was used according to the gender and education level variables of the sportsmen and sportswomen in order to find out the difference of ACL subscale point averages. Furthermore, in order to define the relationship between the ACL subscales and the age variables, the Pearson product-moment correlation coefficient has been found out.

Throughout the survey, in all the analysis, the results have been tested in both ways and the level of logicalness has been accepted as at least .05. The statistical analysis of the survey has been made by using a SPSS 16.0 statistical program.

Achievement: To strive to be outstanding in pursuits of socially recognized significance

Dominance: To seek and maintain a role as leader in groups, or to be influential and controlling in individual relationships

Endurance: To persist in any task undertaken. Having the capacity to accomplish the undertaken task.

Order: To place special emphasis on neatness, organization, and planning in one's activities

Intraception: To engage in attempts to understand one's own behavior or the behavior of others

Nurturance: To engage in behaviors that provide material or emotional benefits to others

Affiliation: To seek and maintain numerous personal friendships

Heterosexuality: To seek the company of and derive emotional satisfaction from interactions with opposite-sex peers

Exhibition: To behave in such a way as to elicit the immediate attention of others

Autonomy: To act independently of others or of social values and expectations

Aggression: To engage in behaviors that attack or hurt others

Change: To seek novelty of experience and avoid routine

Succorance (Dependence): To solicit sympathy, affection, or emotional support from others

Abasement: To express feelings of inferiority through self-criticism, guilt, or social impotence

Deference: To seek and maintain subordinate roles in relationships with others

Counseling Readiness: Readiness to accept counseling or professional advice in regard to personal problems, psychological difficulties and the like

Self-Control: The extent to which self-control is imposed, and valued

Self-Confidence: Self-confidence, poise, and self-assurance

Personal Adjustment: Good adjustment in the sense of the ability to cope with situational and interpersonal demands, and a feeling of efficacy

Ideal Self: Strong sense of personal worth; or, harmony between what one is and what one wants to be

Creative Personality: The desire to do and think differently from the norm, and a talent for originality

Military Leader: Steadiness, self-discipline, and good judgment of the kind required in positions of military (or related) leadership

Masculine: Role-qualities such as ambition, assertiveness, and initiative associated with everyday notions of masculinity

Feminine: Role-qualities such as helpfulness, sympathy, and affection associated with everyday notions of femininity

Results

Inferences

In this part of the survey, the results which have been reached through statistical analysis have been converted into graphics and interpreted.

The frequency and the percentage distribution regarding the holiday habits of the sampling group has been given in 25.6% go on a holiday for at least once both in the summer and in the winter 41.9% go on a vacation every summer while only 2.3% never go on a vacation. These results support the deduction made in regarding the economical level Table 1.

Table 2, which shows the frequency and percentage distribution according to the variable of the job of the mother for the sampling, indicates that the mothers of 37,2% are housewives. This is followed by 27,9% whose mothers are civil servants. Those outside this majority are distributed to the other job categories almost evenly Table 2.

Table 1

The Frequency and the Percentage Distribution According to the Variable of Holiday Habits

Your Holiday Habits	F	%
Never	1	2,3
Every summer	18	41,9
Sometimes	7	16,3
Both in the winter and in the summer	11	25,6
Other	6	14,0
Total	43	100,0

Table 2

The Frequency and the Percentage Distribution According to the Variable of the Jobs of the Mothers in the Sampling Group

Job of the Mother	F	%
Housewife	16	37,2
Civil servant	12	27,9
Worker	2	4,7
Self-employed	4	9,3
Industrialist	2	4,7
Other	7	16,3
Total	43	100,0

Table 3

The Frequency and Percentage Distribution According to the Variable of the Type of School that the Sampling Group Attended

The Type of the School You Attended	F	%
Private	12	27,9
Government	28	65,1
Foundation	1	2,3
Foreign	2	4,7
Total	43	100,0

Table 4

The Frequency and Percentage Distribution of the Variable of the Place Where the Participants Started Dancing

Where did you start dancing	F	%
At school	22	51,2
In the club	3	7,0
Private Course	15	34,9
Other	3	7,0
Total	43	100,0

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The frequency and the percentage distribution according to the variable of the type of school that the sampling group studied at have been given in Table 3. 65,1% of the sportsmen and sportswomen who do the dance sport have been studying at or have graduated from state schools. This is followed by 27.9% who studied at private schools Table 3.

51,2% of the sampling group said that they started the dance sport at school. 34.9 % indicated that they started dancing in a private course while

Table 5

The Adjective List (ACL), Subscale Points Averages and the Standard Deviation Values

ACL subscales	N	Subscale Averages	Standard Deviation
Achievement	43	40,20	6,73
Dominance	43	45,69	8,43
Endurance	43	38,11	6,54
Order	43	40,72	6,39
Interception	43	35,23	7,91
Nurturance	43	30,27	9,61
Affiliation	43	35,95	7,21
Heterosexuality	43	42,83	8,32
Exhibition	43	53,74	5,61
Autonomy	43	54,44	9,06
Aggression	43	57,23	7,45
Change	43	46,32	6,66
Succorance	43	54,72	9,92
Abasement	43	52,53	6,31
Deference	43	40,04	7,51
Counseling readiness	43	56,04	6,48
Self-control	43	44,93	8,45
Self-confidence	43	42,18	6,59
Personal adjustment	43	33,53	9,63
Ideal self	43	50,41	8,48
Creative personality	43	47,76	8,39
Military leadership	43	31,44	9,59
Masculine characteristics	43	46,00	8,67
Feminine characteristics	43	38,41	10,75

Table 6

The Relationships between ACL Subscales and Age (Spearman Placement Difference Correlation Coefficient Number)

ACL subscales	Age	Sd	P
Achievement	-,315	40	P<,05
Dominance	-,431	40	P<,01
Endurance	-,332	40	P<,05
Order	-,243	40	P>,05
Interception	,057	40	P>,05
Nurturance	-,249	40	P>,05
Affiliation	-,138	40	P>,05
Heterosexuality	-,018	40	P>,05
Exhibition	-,110	40	P>,05
Autonomy	,164	40	P>,05
Aggression	-,231	40	P>,05
Change	-,094	40	P>,05
Succorance	,018	40	P>,05
Abasement	-,104	40	P>,05
Deference	-,263	40	P>,05
Counseling readiness	,339	40	P<,05
Self-control	,137	40	P>,05
Self confidence	-,437	40	P<,01
Personal adjustment	-,152	40	P>,05
Ideal self	-,078	40	P>,05
Creative personality	-,069	40	P>,05
Military leader	-,332	40	P>,05
Masculine	-,403	40	P<,01
Feminine	-,269	40	P>,05

only 7% expressed that they started the dance sport in a club, Table 4.

In Table 5 The Adjective List (ACL), Subscale Points Averages and the Standard Deviation Values has been given Table 5.

Table 6 reveals the results of the non-parametric Mann-Whitney "U" test made for the ACL subscale points according to the gender variable. Among the ACL subscales, the only statistically meaningful difference has been found in the subscales of change, ideal self and feminine characteristics. In terms of change and feminine characteristics, a difference in favor of the males has been found. On the other hand, in terms of the ideal self, a difference in favor of the females has been found Table 7.

The Spearman correlation coefficient of the relationships in between the ACL subscale points and the age variable has been given. Meaningful relationships have been found in between dominance in a negative way at the level of ,01, in between endurance in a negative way at ,05 level, in between counseling readiness in a positive way at the level of ,05, in between self confidence in a negative way at ,01 level and in between masculine characteristics in a negative way at the level of ,01. No statistically meaningful relationships have been found for subscales other than those mentioned above Table 6.

Discussion

Argument:

The dominant personality characteristics of the sampling group are aggression, counseling readiness, autonomy, succorance, exhibition and ideal self. Other studied shows that aspects of personality are associated with participation in physical activity (Schneider 2009, Bakker 1991). Our studies show that when all these dominant characteristics come together, the personality characteristics of the dancers can be summarized as follows:

They are critical and doubtful. They avoid from close relationships and they are cautious against others. They approach other people with doubt, while they approach their own aims in a protective way.

They are not influenced easily. Their personal pace is fast. Their behavior and moves are hurried. They are inclined to ruin, hamper or remove. They are distant in their relationships. They are generally insecure against other people. Their behaviors are decisive and effective. They are inclined to express

Table 7

The Results of the Mann-Whitney "U" Test that is Made for the ACL Subscale Points According to the Gender Variable

ACL subscales	Gender	N	Mean Rank	Sum of Ranks	Z	P
Achievement	Female	15	22,57	338,50	-,638	P>,05
	Male	26	20,10	522,50		
Dominance	Female	15	19,90	298,50	-,447	P>,05
	Male	26	21,63	562,50		
Endurance	Female	15	22,37	335,50	-,556	P>,05
	Male	26	20,21	525,50		
Order	Female	15	23,23	348,50	-,910	P>,05
	Male	26	19,71	512,50		
Interception	Female	15	23,20	348,00	-,895	P>,05
	Male	26	19,73	513,00		
Nurturance	Female	15	17,87	268,00	-1,275	P>,05
	Male	26	22,81	593,00		
Affiliation	Female	15	19,77	296,50	-,502	P>,05
	Male	26	21,71	564,50		
Heterosexuality	Female	15	20,10	301,50	-,366	P>,05
	Male	26	21,52	559,50		
Exhibition	Female	15	21,60	324,00	-,245	P>,05
	Male	26	20,65	537,00		
Autonomy	Female	15	22,37	335,50	-,556	P>,05
	Male	26	20,21	525,50		
Aggression	Female	15	18,67	280,00	-,950	P>,05
	Male	26	22,35	581,00		
Change	Female	15	16,10	241,50	-1,998	P<,05
	Male	26	23,83	619,50		
Succorance	Female	15	18,27	274,00	-1,114	P>,05
	Male	26	22,58	587,00		
Abasement	Female	15	19,50	292,50	-,611	P>,05
	Male	26	21,87	568,50		
Deference	Female	15	19,77	296,50	-,502	P>,05
	Male	26	21,71	564,50		
Counseling readiness	Female	15	23,73	356,00	-1,113	P>,05
	Male	26	19,42	505,00		
Self-control	Female	15	24,13	362,00	-1,274	P>,05
	Male	26	19,19	499,00		
Self-confidence	Female	15	20,23	303,50	-,312	P>,05
	Male	26	21,44	557,50		
Personal adjustment	Female	15	22,97	344,50	-,800	P>,05
	Male	26	19,87	516,50		
Ideal self	Female	15	26,20	393,00	-2,115	P<,05
	Male	26	18,00	468,00		
Creative personality	Female	15	19,33	290,00	-,678	P>,05
	Male	26	21,96	571,00		
Military leader	Female	15	17,80	267,00	-1,302	P>,05
	Male	26	22,85	594,00		
Masculine	Female	15	22,23	333,50	-,502	P>,05
	Male	26	20,29	527,50		
Feminine	Female	15	14,10	211,50	-2,815	P<,01
	Male	26	24,98	649,50		

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their various needs in a straightforward and uncontrolled way. They can't suppress their emotional discharges and satisfaction. These kind of people are interesting and influential. They are rebellious and obstinate. Since the person gives far more importance to his or her personal needs, he or she can be criticized by the people around. They are inclined to express their feelings and thoughts without bringing any limitation. The person gives importance to his or her independence and autonomy. This is an independent person who likes to make his or her own decisions and carry the responsibilities that come along with these decisions. This person is self-confident, assertive and has a strong will. Such people are known as selfish and stubborn people by others.

These people are talkative. They have a strong sense of humor. They have a fast personal pace. Their behaviors and moves are quick. They act reck-

lessly and in a determined way. These kinds of people are interesting and influential. They are inclined to express their various needs in a straightforward and uncontrolled way. They push the boundaries and try to overcome them. This person gives importance to economical and spiritual power in his or her life. He or she looks for the characteristics of being strong in him/herself and others. He or she is inclined to express emotions and thoughts without bringing any limitations. Such people express their feelings with exaggerated moves and express themselves in a dramatic way. They are impatient. They are hard to be directed by other people. Since they place too much emphasis on their own personal needs, they can be criticized by the people around them.

These people see others as rivals, who need to be beaten. They are striver and aggressive people. Most of the time, they have strong drives that are hard to be controlled and which are expressed in ways that are not appropriate in terms of social rules.

They are talented in social techniques like imaginative games, imitation and humor. Their personal pace is fast. They can express themselves with facial mimics and body language. They act in a self-assured and confident way. They are inclined to express their various needs in a straightforward and uncontrolled way. They give importance to being together with other people. They are sociable. They are interesting and influential. They like sensual experiences like touching and smelling. They push the boundaries and try to overcome them. They try to gain as much as possible and get away with this. They are fond of their own needs and comfort. Since the person gives far more importance to his or her personal needs, he or she can be criticized by the people around them. In the lives of these people, feelings are more important than the realities.

Alter's researched that dance students are significantly different on the following scales: higher scores

for favorable adjectives, labiality, achievements and dominance (Alter 1984).

These are people who draw so much attention as to be disturbing. They are quite talkative and they make too much of an effort to draw attention. They like to dominate or lead impatient people who are inclined to surrender silently against oppositions and postponements. An exceptionally high incidence of depression 38% was reported by dancers (Marchant 1992).

Savran and friends were found their research that the typical personality characteristics of sport were aggression, dominance, achievement, masculinity and exhibition according to subjects perceptions (Savran et al.2004).

Table 6 reveals the results of the non-parametric Mann-Whitney "U" test made for the ACL subscale points according to the gender variable. Among the ACL subscales, the only statistically meaningful difference has been found in the subscales of change, ideal self and feminine characteristics. In terms of change and feminine characteristics, a difference in favor of the males has been found. On the other hand, in terms of the ideal self, a difference in favor of the females has been found.

As the ages of the sportsmen and sportswomen are younger, their dominance over others, their endurance, self confidence and masculine characteristics increase. This results related Hoffman and Jeffrey's study (Hoffman 1984). However, as the ages of the sportsmen and sportswomen are older, their readiness for counseling increases.

The results confirmed the typical personality profile of dancers reported in an earlier study, dancers being introverted, relatively high on emotionality, strongly achivement motivated and exhibiting less favorable self attitudes.

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