

**SU SPORLARIYLA UĞRAŞAN BİREYLERİN BAZI PSİKOLOJİK ÖZELLİKLERİNİN  
İNCELENMESİ**  
*INVESTIGATION OF SOME PSYCHOLOGICAL CHARACTERISTICS OF ATHLETES DEALING WITH  
WATER SPORTS*

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**ABSTRACT**

Background: It is known that many factors can cause pressure for the athlete in sports performed on water rather than any outdoor sports. In this context, it is important to train athletes' cognitive abilities and skills with a strong mindset and to increase their awareness of their psychological characteristics.

Aim: The aim of the study is to examine the psychological characteristics of athletes engaged in water sports regarding locus of control, motivation and achievement orientation and to determine possible relationships between them. Appropriate sampling, one of the non-probabilistic sampling methods, was used in determining the participants, and the study was carried out with a correlational survey model. A total of 147 licensed athletes (34 females and 113 males), including 48 windsurfers, 36 individual sails, 37 sets of sails, 26 kitesurf, participated in the study.

Material and methods: The participants were administered the “Revised Locus of Control Scale”, “Sports Motivation Scale II” and “2x2 Achievement Orientation Scale”. Descriptive statistics, independent samples t-test, one-way ANOVA and Pearson correlation analysis were used in the analysis of the data.

Results: According to the analysis results, it was determined that there are statistically significant differences between national and non-national athletes in all sub-dimensions of the achievement orientation scale and that all athletes have a positive orientation towards learning. The average scores of the performance-approach sub-dimension of athletes aged 20 and under and the amotivated sub-dimension of individuals with sports age 9 and over were found to be significantly higher. In addition, a moderately significant positive correlation was found between performance-avoidance achievement orientation and the integrated regulation motivation dimension, and between intrinsic regulation and learning-approach orientation.

Conclusion: As a result, it is thought that individuals dealing with water sports can develop different strategies according to their psychological characteristics on the way to success and the findings will contribute to the field of sports psychology.

**Keywords:** Water Sports, Locus of Control, Motivation, Achievement Orientation, Psychological Skills

**ÖZET**

Herhangi bir doğa sporundan ziyade su üzerinde yapılan sporlarda, sporcu için birçok faktörün baskıya sebep olabileceği bilinmektedir. Bu bağlamda, güçlü bir zihin yapısı ile bireylerin sahip oldukları bilişsel yetenek ve becerilerinin eğitilmesi ve psikolojik özelliklerine ilişkin farkındalıklarının artırılması önemlidir. Çalışmanın amacı, su sporları yapan sporcuların, kontrol odağı, güdülenme ve başarı yönelimine ilişkin psikolojik özelliklerinin incelenmesi ve aralarındaki olası ilişkilerin belirlenmesidir. Katılımcıların belirlenmesinde, olasılıklı olmayan örnekleme yöntemlerinden uygun örnekleme kullanılmış ve çalışma ilişki tarama desen modeli ile gerçekleştirilmiştir. Araştırmaya 48 rüzgar sörfü, 36 bireysel yelken, 37 takım yelken, 26 kitesurf olmak üzere toplam 147 ( $\bar{X}$  yaş=23.09±7.23) lisanslı sporcu (34 kadın 113 erkek) katılmıştır. Katılımcılara “Rotter İç-Dış Kontrol Odağı Ölçeği”, “Sporda Güdülenme Ölçeği II” ve “2x2 Başarı Yönelimleri Ölçeği (Revize Formu)” uygulanmıştır. Verilerin analizinde, betimsel istatistik, bağımsız örneklem t-testi, tek yönlü ANOVA ve pearson korelasyon analizleri kullanılmıştır. Analiz sonuçlarına göre,

başarı yönelimi ölçeğinin tüm alt boyutlarında milli ve milli olmayan sporcular arasında istatistiksel olarak anlamlı farklılıklar olduğu ve tüm sporcuların öğrenmeye doğru olumlu bir yöneliminin olduğu tespit edilmiştir. 20 yaş ve altı sporcuların performans-yaklaşma alt boyutu puan ortalamaları ile 9 ve üzeri spor yaşına sahip bireylerin güdülenme alt boyutu puan ortalamaları anlamlı düzeyde daha yüksek bulunmuştur. Ayrıca performans-kaçınma başarı yönelimi ile bütünleşmiş düzenleme güdülenme boyutu arasında ve içe atımla düzenleme ile öğrenme-yaklaşma yönelimi arasında orta düzeyde anlamlı pozitif ilişki olduğu saptanmıştır. Sonuç olarak, su sporlarıyla uğraşan bireylerin başarıya giden yolda psikolojik özelliklerine göre farklı stratejiler geliştirebileceği ve elde edilen bulguların spor psikolojisi alan yazınına katkı sağlaması düşünülmektedir.

**Anahtar kelimeler:** Su sporları, Kontrol odağı, Güdülenme, Başarı Yönelimi, Psikolojik Beceriler

## **INTRODUCTION**

Water sports such as sailing and surfing are sports that involve complex skills and require a long learning process. Successful performance of these complex skills requires the persistence of physical strength and the mental endurance to support it (Mitic, Nedeljkovic, Bojanic, Franceško, Milovanovic, Bianco & Drid, 2021; Gürer-Kılınç, 2019). At this point, first of all, the characteristics of the sport should be examined comprehensively and the athletes should use the information they receive from different disciplines (Schinke, Stambulova, Si, & Moore, 2018). There are studies emphasizing that mental processes are an important factor in outdoor sports and have a direct effect on reaching the goal (Mutz- Müller, 2016; Burke-Orlick, 2003). The concept of goal orientation in our study means that on the way to success, individuals develop and master their duties under their responsibility or avoid appearing unsuccessful and making mistakes (Niemivirta, Pulkka, Tapola & Tuominen, 2019). In addition, determining which way the person is moving towards the goal is supported by the features that motivate him. Motivation dimensions that guide behavior and ensure the continuity of behavior are known as a power that affects performance (Seijts, Latham, Tasa & Latham, 2004). It can be explained in two basic dimensions as a person's desire to be successful, being interested and curious, or gaining strength from external influences such as reward, punishment, pressure, and request. In addition, Pelletier et al. (2013) mention 6 different types of motivation dimensions in sports. These are internal regulation, integrated regulation, identification regulation, introjection regulation, external regulation, and unmotivation. Different mechanisms are involved in maintaining motivation. The mechanism by which the individual controls himself is included in the literature as the internal-external locus of control (Mehri, Parvazi shandi & Ajilchi, 2017; Ashagi-Beheshtifar, 2015).

When all these concepts are evaluated, the belief and confidence that individuals have in changing the result in water sports whose competitions last for days can gain even more meaning when it is known how they are moving towards the goal and what kind of driving force they provide (Cook-Artino, 2016; Henriksen, Stambulova & Roessler, 2010). For example, when a sailing race lasting 5-6 days is considered, after the first 2-3 days, the athletes are divided into gold-silver-bronze groups according to the number of participants and they continue to strive to be the best in their group ([www.laserinternational.org](http://www.laserinternational.org)). In addition, the concept of achievement goal orientation in our research is often included in studies on educational research and students (Uçar,2020; Kösterelioğlu, Çelen, Akın Kösterelioğlu & Ahıska, 2019; Madjar, Weinstock & Kaplan, 2017). Studying this subject with individuals engaged in individual sports and struggling with nature can contribute to the literature. In this context, being aware of goal orientations as well as mental processes on the way to the goal and behaving individually can contribute positively to the psychological resilience of the athlete.

In the light of all this information, it was found valuable by researchers to determine which type of motivation is used by individuals engaged in water sports, and to reveal possible interactions with other mechanisms that control themselves and direct them to the goal. In the research, it is aimed to examine the concepts and possible relationships that cause individuals performing in water sports to remain in a realistic and challenging psychology against challenging conditions.

## **METHODS**

### **Participants**

Participants of the study are athletes engaged in windsurfing (N: 48), kitesurfing (N: 26), sailing (individual N: 36) and sailing (team N: 37). 34 of the participants are women and 113 of them are men. The average age

of the participants is  $23.09 \pm 7.23$  and the average age of sports is  $10.21 \pm 5.10$ . 79 of the participants participating in the study are national athletes, 68 of them are active licensed athletes. Participants take into account the average age for comparisons; They are divided into 2 groups: 20 years and under and 21 years and over. Likewise, sports age was examined in 2 groups as 8 years and below and 9 years and above. The reason why we examine the sports year in this way is; the age to start sports such as sailing and surfing is accepted as at least 7 years old, and an athlete who started this sport at the age of 7 has to change the boat class when he is 15. In this case, an athlete who starts to be interested in sailing should raise the boat class in an average of 8 years. In addition, some classes can be passed to a certain level of physical characteristics in both surfing and sailing athletes. These characteristics can also be reached by athletes around 16 years of age, usually after adolescence. The periods considered as 8 years and below / 9 years and above in our study are considered to be the years of athletes reaching the average Olympic classes.

#### **Data Collection:**

1. Demographics information form: This form contains information such as age, gender, sport year, sport type and the level of the athlete.
2. The Locus of Control Scale (LCS): Rotter (1966) created LCS, which Dağ translated into Turkish (1991). This scale consists of 29 items, each of which has two mandatory elective answer options. Six items were used as fillers to obscure the scale's intent, and the externality options of the other 23 items were each given one point. As a result, the scale scores range from 0 to 23, with a higher score indicating a greater external locus of influence. LCS has a test-retest reliability coefficient is .83. The scale's reliability coefficient, calculated using the KR-20 method, was found to be .83. The Cronbach's alpha internal consistency coefficient was found to be .68, and the Cronbach's alpha external consistency coefficient was found to be .71. Those with a score of 0 to 10 were considered internally supervised, and those with a score of 11 or more were considered externally supervised.
3. 2x2 Achievement Goal Questionnaire (AGQ): Elliot and Murayama (2008) created AGQ, which Arslan and Akın adapted into Turkish (2015). The learning-approach orientation sub-dimension had an internal consistency reliability coefficient is .72, and the performance-approach orientation sub-dimension had an internal consistency reliability coefficient is .68. The performance-learning orientation sub-dimension had an internal consistency reliability coefficient is .62 and The performance-avoidance orientation sub-dimension had an internal consistency reliability coefficient is .69.
4. Sport Motivation Scale-II (SMS-II): Yildiz, Altintas, Elmas, and Asci (2019) revised the 18-item Turkish edition of Pelletier et al. (2013) Sports Motivation Scale-II, which now has 16 items and six sub-dimensions. Intrinsic motivation 0.55, integrated regulation 0.68, identified regulation 0.75, introjected regulation 0.44, external regulation 0.73, and amotivation 0.75 were determined as the scale's internal consistency values.

#### **Statistical Analysis**

Descriptive statistics, independent sample t-tests, and correlation analysis were used to analyze the data obtained in our study. First of all, the data in the obtained data set was examined and it was checked whether there were any erroneous data and no erroneous data was found. Then, before proceeding with the analysis, it was checked whether there was any missing or empty data that would affect the analysis results. After it was determined that there was no empty or missing data in the data set, the minimum and maximum values in the data set were examined and whether the assumption of multivariate normality was provided was examined with the help of Mahalanobis distance values and no extreme values were found in the data set. Before analyzing the data, descriptive statistics such as arithmetic mean, mode, median, skewness and kurtosis coefficients were made to determine whether the data set provided normal distribution. The fact that the arithmetic mean, mode and media obtained in the analyzes are equal or close indicates that the data provide a normal distribution. The obtained values are presented in Table 1.

#### **RESULTS**

Locus of control scores of the athletes participating in the study were found to be  $10.52 \pm 4.23$ . It was observed that the highest score obtained from achievement orientation was the learning approach ( $\bar{X}: 4.46 \pm 0.86$ ), followed by the dimensions of performance avoidance ( $\bar{X}: 4.03 \pm 1.16$ ), performance approach ( $\bar{X}: 3.82 \pm 1.29$ ), and learning avoidance ( $\bar{X}: 3.74 \pm 0.94$ ), respectively. In motivation, it was observed that the highest scores of the athletes were followed by identified regulation ( $\bar{X}: 6.12 \pm 1.14$ ), followed by

integrated regulation ( $\bar{X}$ :6.11±1.00), introjected regulation ( $\bar{X}$ : 6.09 ± 1.05), and intrinsic motivation sub-dimensions ( $\bar{X}$ : 6.01 ± 1.19). The lowest score in motivation was seen in the external regulation ( $\bar{X}$ : 1.65 ± 0.85), and amotivation ( $\bar{X}$ : 1.82 ± 1.02) sub-dimensions.

Descriptive statistics of the study are shown in Table 1.

Table 1: Frequencies and descriptive statistics

|                               | <i>N</i> | <i>Min</i> | <i>Max</i> | <i>Mod</i> | <i>Median</i> | $\bar{X}$ | <i>ss</i> | <i>Skewness</i> | <i>Kurtosis</i> |
|-------------------------------|----------|------------|------------|------------|---------------|-----------|-----------|-----------------|-----------------|
| <i>Locus of control</i>       | 147      | 1          | 22         | 8          | 11            | 10.52     | 4.23      | -,088           | -,383           |
| <i>Learning approach</i>      | 147      | 2.33       | 7          | 5          | 4.46          | 4.46      | .86       | -,023           | .976            |
| <i>Learning avoidance</i>     | 147      | 1          | 5          | 5          | 3,66          | 3.74      | .94       | -,064           | 1.029           |
| <i>Performance approach</i>   | 147      | 1          | 6.67       | 5          | 4             | 3.82      | 1.29      | -,786           | .707            |
| <i>Performance avoidance</i>  | 147      | 1          | 6.67       | 4          | 4             | 4.03      | 1.16      | -,757           | -,432           |
| <i>Intrinsic motivation</i>   | 147      | 2.5        | 7          | 7          | 6.5           | 6.01      | 1.19      | -1.232          | .640            |
| <i>Integrated regulation</i>  | 147      | 3          | 7          | 7          | 6.33          | 6.11      | 1.00      | -1.471          | 1.846           |
| <i>Identified regulation</i>  | 147      | 2.33       | 7          | 7          | 6.33          | 6.12      | 1.14      | -1.698          | 2.248           |
| <i>Introjected regulation</i> | 147      | 2          | 7          | 7          | 6.5           | 6.09      | 1.05      | -1.843          | 4.460           |
| <i>External regulation</i>    | 147      | 1          | 4.33       | 1          | 1.33          | 1.65      | .85       | 1.387           | 1.143           |
| <i>Amotivation</i>            | 147      | 1          | 4.67       | 1          | 1.33          | 1.82      | 1.02      | 1.376           | 1.036           |

When the scores of athletes were compared on the scales, it was found that there was a significant difference between national and not-national athletes in all sub-dimensions of achievement orientation ( $p < 0.05$ ). While the learning-approach ( $t = 3.23$ ;  $p < 0.05$ ), performance-approach ( $t = 5.05$ ;  $p < 0.01$ ), and performance-avoidance ( $t = 3.80$ ;  $p < 0.01$ ), scores of national athletes were higher, the learning avoidance ( $t = -5.53$ ;  $p < 0.01$ ), scores of not-national athletes were found to be higher (Table 2).

Table 2:T-test results according to athletes' level

| <i>Sub-dimensions</i>        | <i>athletes' level</i> | <i>n</i> | $\bar{X}$ | <i>ss</i> | <i>t</i> | <i>p</i> |
|------------------------------|------------------------|----------|-----------|-----------|----------|----------|
| <i>Learning approach</i>     | National               | 79       | 4,67      | ,855      | 3,236    | ,002     |
|                              | Not-national           | 68       | 4,22      | ,821      |          |          |
| <i>Learning avoidance</i>    | National               | 79       | 3,37      | ,889      | -5,534   | ,000     |
|                              | Not-national           | 68       | 4,16      | ,823      |          |          |
| <i>Performance approach</i>  | National               | 79       | 4,44      | ,936      | 5,059    | ,000     |
|                              | Not-national           | 68       | 3,54      | 1,21      |          |          |
| <i>Performance avoidance</i> | National               | 79       | 4,18      | 1,14      | 3,802    | ,000     |
|                              | Not-national           | 68       | 3,40      | 1,34      |          |          |

Analysis according to age were made as 20 and under and 21 and over. As a result of the t test, a significant difference was found in the learning avoidance, performance approach sub-dimensions and locus of control level ( $p < 0.05$ ). While the performance approach ( $M_{20\text{andunder}}:4.26 \pm 0.96$ ) and locus of control ( $M_{20\text{andunder}}:11.63 \pm 3.72$ ) scores of athletes aged 20 and under were higher, learning avoidance ( $M_{21\text{andover}}:11.63 \pm 3.72$ ) scores of athletes aged 21 and over were found to be higher (Table 3).

Tablo 3: T-test results according to age

| <i>Sub-dimensions</i>       | <i>Age</i>   | <i>n</i> | $\bar{X}$ | <i>ss</i> | <i>t</i> | <i>p</i> |
|-----------------------------|--------------|----------|-----------|-----------|----------|----------|
| <i>Learning avoidance</i>   | 20 and under | 74       | 3,50      | ,853      | -3,194   | ,002     |
|                             | 21 and over  | 73       | 3,98      | ,972      |          |          |
| <i>Performance approach</i> | 20 and under | 74       | 4,26      | ,968      | 2,502    | ,014     |
|                             | 21 and over  | 73       | 3,79      | 1,29      |          |          |
| <i>Locus of control</i>     | 20 and under | 74       | 11,63     | 3,72      | 3,309    | ,001     |
|                             | 21 and over  | 73       | 9,39      | 4,44      |          |          |

Analysis according to sports year were made as 8 years and under and 9 years and above. According to the t-test results, a significant difference was found in the learning avoidance ( $t = 2.11$ ;  $p < 0.05$ ), intrinsic motivation ( $t = 2.12$ ;  $p < 0.05$ ), identified regulation ( $t = 2.29$ ;  $p < 0.05$ ), and amotivation sub-dimensions ( $t = -2.44$ ;  $p < 0.05$ ). Learning avoidance, intrinsic motivation and identified regulation score of athletes sport year

8 and under were found to be higher than athletes as 9 and over and amotivation scores of athletes sport year 9 and over were found to be higher than 8 and under (Table 4).

Table 4: T-test results according to sport year

| Sub-dimensions        | Sport year  | n  | $\bar{X}$ | ss   | t      | p    |
|-----------------------|-------------|----|-----------|------|--------|------|
| Learning avoidance    | 8 and under | 63 | 3,93      | ,916 | 2,112  | ,036 |
|                       | 9 and over  | 84 | 3,60      | ,943 |        |      |
| Intrinsic motivation  | 8 and under | 63 | 6,24      | ,966 | 2,128  | ,035 |
|                       | 9 and over  | 84 | 5,84      | 1,31 |        |      |
| Identified regulation | 8 and under | 63 | 6,35      | ,855 | 2,291  | ,023 |
|                       | 9 and over  | 84 | 5,95      | 1,29 |        |      |
| Amotivaton            | 8 and under | 63 | 1,60      | ,848 | -2,448 | ,016 |
|                       | 9 and over  | 84 | 2,00      | 1,11 |        |      |

According to the results of the t test analysis in independent samples, it was found that there was a significant difference between individual and team athletes in performance avoidance ( $t = 2.55$ ;  $p < 0.05$ ) sub-dimension scores of the achievement orientation scale. The performance avoidance scores of the athletes who sailed individually were found to be higher than the sailing athletes as a team (Table 5).

Table 5: T-test results according to sport type

| Sub-dimensions        | Sport type | n  | $\bar{X}$ | ss   | t    | p    |
|-----------------------|------------|----|-----------|------|------|------|
| Performance avoidance | Individual | 36 | 4.39      | 1.05 | 2,55 | ,013 |
|                       | Team       | 37 | 3,73      | 1.14 |      |      |

Pearson correlation analysis results of the study are as follows (Table 6):

There is a weak negative relationship between locus of control and learning avoidance. There is a very weak positive relationship between intrinsic motivation and learning approach, and weak positive relationship between intrinsic motivation and learning avoidance, and intrinsic motivation and performance approach. There is an also weak negative relationship between intrinsic motivation and locus of control. Integrated regulation shows a weak and positive relationship with the learning approach and performance approach. In addition, it shows positive moderate relationship with the performance avoidance. Identified regulation shows a weak and positive relationship with the all sub-dimensions of achievement goal orientation. Introjected regulation shows a moderate positive relationship with the learning approach and a weak positive relationship with the other sub-dimensions of achievement goal orientation. And there is a weak positive relationship between external regulation and locus of control.

Table 6: Results of correlational analysis

|                          | 1      | 2       | 3      | 4      | 5      | 6      | 7       | 8       | 9     | 10     | 11 |
|--------------------------|--------|---------|--------|--------|--------|--------|---------|---------|-------|--------|----|
| 1.Learning approach      | --     |         |        |        |        |        |         |         |       |        |    |
| 2.Learning avoidance     | ,243** | --      |        |        |        |        |         |         |       |        |    |
| 3.Performance approach   | ,383** | -,118   | --     |        |        |        |         |         |       |        |    |
| 4.Performance avoidance  | ,370** | -,129   | ,749** | --     |        |        |         |         |       |        |    |
| 5.Locus of control       | -,008  | -,229** | ,053   | ,154   | --     |        |         |         |       |        |    |
| 6.Intrinsic motivation   | ,173*  | ,211*   | ,255** | ,101   | -,198* | --     |         |         |       |        |    |
| 7.Integrated             | ,268** | ,107    | ,343** | ,404** | -,046  | ,385** | --      |         |       |        |    |
| 8.Identified regulation  | ,258** | ,371**  | ,302** | ,398** | -,043  | ,554** | ,612**  | --      |       |        |    |
| 9.Introjected regulation | ,420** | ,212**  | ,283** | ,386** | ,040   | ,348** | ,697**  | ,523**  | --    |        |    |
| 10.External regulation   | -,058  | ,036    | -,027  | ,063   | ,229** | -      | -,173*  | -,288** | -,073 | --     |    |
| 11.Amotivation           | ,142   | -,072   | ,010   | ,052   | ,124   | -,177* | -,389** | -,349** | -,114 | ,351** | -- |

\* $p < 0.05$

\*\* $p < 0.01$

## **DISCUSSION**

In this study, success orientation, internal-external locus of control and motivation dimensions of individuals engaged in water sports were examined and the relationships between these concepts were revealed. In other words, it has been contributed to the understanding of the psychological factors that can positively support the performance of the athletes, who struggle with the changing natural conditions at any time, by gaining self-awareness about these concepts.

The remarkable findings of the study are the differences in success orientation according to the status of being a national athlete or not, and the negative relationship between learning-avoidance orientation, success orientation and locus of control. Locus of control scores of the athletes participating in the study were found to be below 11. This situation shows that the athletes have internal locus of control. Studies in the literature show that athletes participating in competitive sports activities had a greater internal locus of control (Baba et al., 2017; Fejgin, 1994; Parsons- Betz, 2001). When the achievement goal orientations of the athletes participating in the study were examined, the learning approach dimension received the highest score. When the average score values of the participants' achievement orientation sub-dimensions are examined, the learning-approach dimension has the highest score. Individuals with this dimension tend to learn all the information about their field in progress towards their goals and have a deep curiosity about the subjects (Roberts, 2001). At this point, it can be said that they only compete with themselves in competitive environments. Considering the fact that the participants have been struggling with nature for many years and the possibility of unexpected changes in natural conditions at any time, we can say that they do not have the chance to miss even the smallest detail about their branches. This situation may have caused them to adopt the learning-approach goal orientation.

In motivation, it was observed that the highest scores of the athletes were followed by identified regulation, followed by integrated regulation, introjected regulation and intrinsic motivation sub-dimensions. The lowest score in motivation scale was seen in the external regulation and amotivation sub-dimensions. Although the athletes engaged in water sports have equal skill levels and equal opportunities, they can achieve different results in each race. There may be many reasons for this difference, but the effects of motivation situations are great. In an environment of competition and struggle that lasts for days, it is unlikely that external forces will direct the participants to behavior. It can be said that they experience unmotivated situations as little. Considering that the learning-approach mean score was found to be the highest in our study, it is an expected result that extrinsic motivation and non-motivation were the lowest. In addition, the high level of identified regulation may explain the athletes' voluntary action, believing that their contribution to the development of behavior is important. These findings obtained in the study also support the evaluations made regarding age. In the analysis made according to age, performance approach and locus of control scores of athletes aged 20 and under were found to be higher. Learning avoidance scores of athletes aged 21 and over were found to be higher. In other words, it can be thought that older and more experienced athletes act with the anxiety of not being able to learn all aspects of a given information, and the athletes who are thought to be younger and inexperienced adopt the behavior of moving away from environments where they will fail in order not to look weak. In addition, the result that younger athletes are more outward-oriented than older athletes indicates that they believe they have no role in the development and emergence of the events they experience. In this context, it can be said that their perception of directing their lives is lower. There are studies in the literature that support and do not support our study. While a similar result was found in the study of Baba et al. (2018), no significant difference was found in the study of Çalan et al (2018).

When the scores obtained from the scales according to the levels of the athletes were compared, it was found that there was a significant difference between national and non-national athletes in all sub-dimensions of achievement orientation. While the scores of national athletes were higher in learning-approach, performance-approach and performance-avoidance dimensions, non-national athletes had higher scores in the learning-avoidance dimension. When trying to determine what kind of meaning the participants attach to learning according to their status of being a national athlete or not, it draws attention that the average score of national athletes is significantly higher in the sub-dimensions of performance-approach and performance-avoidance. In this case, it can be thought that national athletes who adopt performance orientation tend to show their talents more and tend to compete with others with the effect of their achievements. These

individuals try to hide their inadequacies and do not like to encounter failure. In addition, it was determined that national athletes in the learning-approach sub-dimension and non-national athletes in the learning-avoidance sub-dimension had significantly higher mean scores. At this point, it can be said that non-national athletes are still worried about whether they will achieve the success they want, considering that they learn something wrong, forget what they have learned, and avoid making mistakes.

In the analyzes made according to the sports age, It was found that the learning-avoidance, internal regulation, identified regulation scores of the athletes with a sport year of 8 years and below were higher and amotivation scores of athletes with a sport year of 9 years or more were higher. At this point, it is thought that the more years the participants have been dealing with water sports, the less motivated they are in their branch. The inner motivation of less experienced athletes also supports this situation. In water sports, people have to follow many factors such as wave, current, wind direction, speed, change, boat angle, route, location, competitors (Callewaert, Boone, Celie, Clercq, & Bourgois, 2015). It seems quite difficult for athletes who have moved away from their goals in time to continue with high motivation for many years in an activity that requires such hard struggles. For this reason, it is expected that individuals with a lower age in sports will consider the activity as important and provide motivation in some way. Kolayış et al (2015) found a significant negative relationship between amotivation and sports age in their studies, indicating that experienced athletes can be motivated more easily. In the study of Akman and Can (2019), a relationship was found between the sport year and only external motivation. These findings do not match our results.

As a result of the evaluations made according to the sport type, the performance avoidance scores of the individual sailing athletes were found to be significantly higher than the team athletes. In this context, it explains that the athletes who continue their struggle individually act more to hide their inadequacies than the athletes who continue their struggle with their teammates. This situation may have been caused by the lack of a partner with whom s/he can share the negativities and the result that s/he will be judged only by his/her own mistakes at the end of the day.

A weak negative relationship was found between locus of control and learning avoidance. Considering who and what the participants' experiences put the responsibility on the reasons for their occurrence, it can be said that the athletes, who are affected by external forces such as fate and luck, tend to succeed in order not to fall behind others and to avoid negative evaluations.

A moderate positive correlation was found between integrated regulation and performance avoidance. In the integrated regulation, which is considered as a type of external motivation, it can be thought that athletes avoid appearing incompetent to others, believing that their actions reflect who they are, by associating the values gained in participating in activities with their lives.

## **CONCLUSION**

In this study, psychological factors such as locus of control, motivation, and achievement orientation of individuals dealing with water sports were examined. As a result, it can be said that some of the methods used by athletes in providing motivation interact with the ways they move towards their goals and the mechanisms they control themselves. In this context, it is recommended to focus on the psychological factors that athletes need to develop and to get support from sports psychologists if necessary. The fact that the trainers and sports psychologists include studies to increase psychological competence and performance can help athletes have positive thoughts about themselves and use psychological factors correctly.

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