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Being a Migrant Athlete in Turkey: What Motivates Them and What Their Problems

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Abstract

With globalization and the commercialization of sport, there has been an increase in the mobility of migrant athletes worldwide. In parallel to this, there is also an increase in the number of migrant athletes in Turkey. In this respect, this research aims to investigate the motivations and problems experienced by the increasing number of migrant athletes in Turkey. The study group of the research, which was planned in a phenomenological design, consisted of a total of twenty (20) migrant athletes: nine (9) from the football branch, six (6) from the basketball branch, and five (5) from the volleyball branch. Personal information forms and semi-structured interview forms were used as data collection tools. In the research, face-to-face and one-to-one interviews were conducted with migrant athletes. The data were analyzed using the content analysis method. According to the research findings, three typologies affecting the motivation of migrant athletes to be in Turkey emerged. These typologies are ambitionist, mercenary, and settler. It was determined that living in a new society and culture in the context of intra-sport problems and integration in intra-sport problems. As a result, the motivations of immigrant athletes to be in Turkey are mostly ambitionist and mercenary, and they face more problems in their lives outside of sports.

Keywords: *Migrant Athlete, Motivation, Problems.*

INTRODUCTION

Emerging of a sector the related products and services must be commercialized, professionalized, or professionally prepared, as well as to produce economic value. While becoming a sector by producing economic value, the sport has historically experienced slow and sometimes rapid change (Wilson & Piekarz, 2016, p.34) and transformation (Maguire, 1988). Sports has become a sector that has increased the speed of transformation, which owes to some extent to globalization and its popularization with the positive effects of globalization. In this process, the sport has gained popularity and become a commercial and professional characteristic with significant effects (Beech & Chadwick, 2013, p.6; Uzun et al., 2021; Baskın, 2023). It has paid and continues to pay its debt.

The popularization and commercialization of sports have made spectators willing to pay to watch and investors willing to support for commercial (such as sponsorship) and altruistic reasons (Mason, 1999; Sage, 2004, p.31; Beech & Chadwick, 2013, p.69; Sarol, 2018, p.477 Küçük, & Ceylan, 2022). Therefore, sport's governing bodies (e.g., NBA, FIFA), sports organizations (e.g., Olympics, World Championships), leagues (e.g., Premier League, Bundesliga), and sports clubs within the sector have had to manage the significantly increased financial revenues and maintain and improve their popularity (Beech & Chadwick, 2013, p.6; Çimen, 2023, p.259).

As one of the ways to achieve this task, leagues and many sports clubs, especially in affluent countries, have chosen to use migrant athletes to increase the quality and popularity of the country, the league, and the club or to access lower cost labor, with the advantages of globalization (Thibault, 2009), we can call it "migrantization ."For example, Saudi Arabia has used famous migrant footballers such as Cristiano Ronaldo (Fauzul & Imamuddin, 2023; Averre & Bahtia, 2023), while in the 2017-2018 season, 77.3% of significant football teams Manchester City, 73.9% of Lazio and 70.4% of Sevilla were composed of migrant players (Armstrong, 2018). Wealthy nations even include migrant athletes in their national teams, especially in mega sporting events (such

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as the Olympics and FIFA World Cup) to boost their international image. Since 1992, about 18% of Canadian Olympic athletes have been migrant athletes (Schinke & McGannon, 2014), while Kenyan athletes have migrated to the affluent Persian Gulf countries of Qatar and Bahrain (Thibault, 2009).

As a result, more athletes and even coaches are freely crossing national borders, and the number of migrant athletes is increasing. This can be considered a vivid signal of commercialization in sports, which has become conspicuous and ubiquitous with globalization (Lee, 2010; Sarıakçalı et al., 2020). Migrantization, which aims to be popular and commercially sustainable, creates environments for sports organizations to hire elite athletes as full-time jobs (Çimen, 2023, p. 259). Thus, the distinction between amateur and professional athletes' status is blurred to some extent in professional sports such as football and team sports such as basketball, volleyball, and handball.

Therefore, globalization and athlete labor migration in professional and amateur sports have attracted academic attention. Athlete labor migration has been studied in the fields of sports sociology (Lee, 2010; Aybek, 2023), sports management (Thibault, 2009; Küçük & Durmuşoğlu, 2022), and sports psychology (Schinke & McGannon, 2014) and in many sports branches. For example, soccer (Botelho and Agergaard, 2011; Darby et al, 2007; Magee & Sugden, 2002; Maguire & Pearton, 2000; Maguire & Stead, 1996; Stead & Maguire, 2000), rugby (Kanemasu & Molnar, 2012, Storey, 2023), handball (Agergaard, 2008), basketball (Banet-Weiser, 1999; Eastman & Billings, 2001), African student athletes (Lee & Opio, 2011). Some of these studies try to explain the sources of motivation that lead athletes to become immigrants through typologies developed (Magee & Sugden, 2002; Maguire, 1996). In addition, the problems created by going to a country with different characteristics such as culture, language, and belief system as a migrant athlete have also been the focus of academic studies (Hay, 1998; Schinke et al., 2011; Schinke et al., 2013). The host country's specific cultural characteristics and conditions (e.g., more prosperous, democratic, quality league, and sports environment) may differentiate the problems and motivation sources experienced by migrant athletes.

Therefore, within the framework of the structure specific to the host country, it is essential to understand the problems experienced by migrant athletes and the motivational sources that lead them to migrate in order for local sports administrators to manage their leagues or clubs effectively. This study was conducted in Turkey, which is on the migration route of migrant athletes in many sports branches, has two objectives. The first one is to reveal the motivation sources of migrant athletes working in football, basketball, and volleyball branches within the framework of Magee and Sugden's (2002) typologies and to identify their problems. The second one is to draw attention to the issues that will make it easier for sports club managers to manage migrant athlete transfer processes and to cope with the problems of migrant athletes.

LITERATURE

Reasons For Recruiting Migrant Athletes

Migrantization in the sports sector, migrant athletes are often used as outsourced recruitment (Çimen et al., 2019). As in many other sectors, this approach has two strategic focuses: cost and performance (Lee, 2016). For sports organizations, the cost-reduction-oriented approach is to access skilled and lower cost labor in developing countries, while the performance-oriented approach is to improve market share by improving the quality of the team or league, even if costs are high (Sherwin & Sanderson, 2001; Thibault, 2009). This is because, without sporting success and quality of play, gaining global viewership, finding sponsors and advertisers, selling tickets and merchandise, and increasing market share is difficult.

Source of Motivations for Migrant Athletes

Improving sporting success and the quality of the game depends to a large extent on the talent of athletes. However, in sports, competition for the recruitment of talented athletes has become increasingly fierce internationally, and access to talented resources has become crucial (Lee, 2010). Following similar pathways, athlete migration is often called 'talent/migratory pipelines' through which individuals can be recruited and channeled (Maguire & Pearton, 2000; Molnar & Maguire, 2008). Keeping talent pipelines open is closely related to understanding the sources of motivation for athletes to migrate from donor to host countries.

Research on athletes' migration patterns to the host country has been approached from different perspectives, ranging from geographical studies to historical and sociological studies (Agergaard, 2008; Çamiçi, 2021). In the existing literature, there are approaches where athletes are seen as a labor force exploited by international capitalism or as part of a global system that they cannot influence (Agergaard, 2008; Maguire, 1988; Thibault, 2009). This study uses an actor-oriented approach to examine migrant athletes and their motivations for choosing sports clubs in Turkey as a host country.

Starting with Maguire's work in 1994 and continuing after that (Bale & Maguire, 1994), a series of published articles on athlete labor migration helped to establish the issue as an academic topic. In 1996, Maguire developed a typology of five categories of migrant athletes. These categories are pioneers, settlers, mercenaries, returnees, and nomadic cosmopolitans. This typology was criticized by Magee and Sugden (2002) in their study based on interviews with 22 migrant players in the English football league as having inconsistencies and inaccuracies due to the lack of primary data to support the classifications and six categories were presented: the mercenary, the settler, the ambitionist, the nomadic cosmopolitan, the exile and the expelled.

The mercenary: The athlete motivated above all by money. He or she does not hesitate to move frequently for economic gain. Focusing on short-term gains, this type of athlete is defined as a "hired gun" by Maguire (1996). These athletes have little or no loyalty to their host country, club, or homeland.

The settler: An athlete who moves to the host country and stays for four or five seasons or more. This type may even be motivated to stay in the host country to gain some benefits after completing their professional career. The settler tendency usually occurs in young families who can see the benefits of bilingualism for their children.

The ambitionist: Migrant athletes who have the desire and the opportunity to develop their career by moving to a higher quality league. It can take three forms: those who dreamed of playing for a particular country or a certain club during their childhood or youth, those who prefer a higher level of sport that offers more career development opportunities, and those who are willing to play for a club with a chance to win trophies or medals.

The nomadic cosmopolitan: An athlete who is motivated to experience different cultures and nations. Big world cities especially attract this type of nomadic athlete.

The exile: Athletes who leave their country to play abroad for sport-related, personal, or political reasons (voluntary or due to internal threats to their career, freedom, or life). An example of an exiled athlete is George Weah, who was forced to play in Europe due to the political turmoil and civil war in Liberia, coupled with the fact that there were no leagues in Liberia or elsewhere in Africa that could sustain and reward his extraordinary talent (Magee & Sugden, 2002).

The expelled: A player who is actually forced to emigrate. This type of player leaves his local league because a combination of behavioral problems and high media exposure makes it almost impossible for him to play professionally in his local league (Agergaard, 2008; Borges et al., 2015; Magee & Sugden, 2002). Frenchman Eric Cantona is a case in point. Cantona had to leave France to continue his professional football career due to problems with the French football authorities.

This typology suggests that the motivations and experiences of migrant athletes vary considerably and are shaped by a complex set of interconnected processes. Politics, history, economics, geography, and culture can be influential in determining the resources that facilitate athletes' migration and influence the migration process. Therefore, it should be remembered that it would not be correct to attribute the movements of migrant athletes to a single factor (Elliot & Maguire, 2008).

Problems of Migrant Athletes

Although globalization and the migration of athletes have led to positive effects in sports management, they also create essential problems that need to be understood (Thibaot, 2010). The primary source of these problems is that when migrant athletes settle in a new country, either permanently or temporarily, they move away from their society and old social relations. Therefore, whether sports labor migration occurs between

nation-states within the same continent or across continents, many problems may inevitably arise (Elliot & Maguire, 2008; Maguire & Pearton, 2000).

The problems that have a significant impact on the non-sport life and sport environment of migrant sport workers are grouped under three categories in the literature: (a) those encountered in a new society, (b) those encountered in a new culture outside of sport, and (c) those encountered in sport contexts (Schinke et al., 2011). These problems affect the lives of migrant athletes in host countries regardless of whether they are amateur or professional, and all three categories often manifest in similar ways in the social and professional lives of migrant athletes (Çimen et al., 2019). These include homesickness and social isolation in a new society (Lee & Opio, 2011), loneliness (Maguire & Stead, 1996; Molnar & Maguire, 2008; Evans & Stead, 2014), and loss of social ties. Some migrant athletes find a way to overcome such problems before choosing a host country. For example, South American athlete migrants prefer Spain and Portugal due to cultural similarities (Maguire & Pearton, 2000).

Living in a new culture creates many problems for migrant athletes: clothing, food, language (Battochio et al., 2013; Schinke et al., 2011; Evans & Stead, 2014; Kellerman et al., 2005, p.209), lifestyle (Maguire & Pearton, 2000), xenophobia (Molnar & Maguire, 2008), religion (Portes & DeWind, 2010), etc. Some migrant athletes who do not want to face these problems prefer countries with the same belief system or where the same language is spoken. For example, French Canadian ice hockey players prefer French-speaking countries (Elliot & Maguire, 2008). In sports where professional or amateurism is blurred, and clubs have a multinational player group, integration into a new team is one of the problems that migrant players naturally face (Kellerman et al., 2005, p. 211).

In the context of sports, such integration is addressed under the heading of adaptation and may consist of adjusting to the new team, coaching staff, and coaching style (Schinke et al., 2011; Çeviker et al., 2018) and teammates (Çimen et al. For example, migrant players may face disrespectful behavior from local players whom they perceive as threatening their jobs and positions (Molnar & Maguire, 2008). In addition to this problem, organizational communication and legal issues can also be encountered (Lee, 2010). The 1995 Bosman decision significantly reduced legal issues in football by making players and coaches often the superior party in legal matters (Steinberg et al., 2013). For example, many migrant players and coaches who initiated legal proceedings in Turkey have won lawsuits against their clubs (Zeren, 2014).

Migrant Labor Athletes in Turkey

Intercontinental sports labor occurs mainly between Europe and Africa, although in all directions (Maguire & Pearton, 2000). Geo-cultural reasons such as being a European country located between the Asian and European continents and its proximity to the African continent and former "Iron Curtain" countries make Turkey an attractive destination or pipeline for migrant sports labors (Çimen et al., 2019; Doğan et al., 2004; Habertürk, 2010).

In addition, Turkey is in the top 50 in the FIFA world rankings (FIFA, 2023) and is a country "in love with football" (Yılgı, 2018; Genç, 2017), positioning itself as a "volleyball country" in volleyball, especially for women, with its successes at the national teams and clubs' level (Afacan & Afacan, 2021); and having successful teams in European cups in basketball (Karakoç, 2023); have made Turkey an attractive country for migrant athletes. The number and percentage distribution of local and migrant athletes in the last three seasons in football, basketball and volleyball first division leagues of Turkey can be seen in Table 1.

Table 1: Number and Percentage of Migrant Players (last three seasons)

Seasons	Football				Basketball				Volleyball			
	DP	MP	%	TY%	DP	MP	%	TY %	DP	MP	%	TY %
2023-24	602	296	49,2		240	94	39,2		218	54	24,8	
2022-23	785	353	44,9	45,0	271	89	32,8	35,1	220	50	22,7	23,1
2021-22	821	336	40,9		289	96	33,2		253	55	21,7	

Domestic Player (DP), Migrant Player (MP), Three-Year Percentage (TY%)

METHOD

This study aims to explore the motivations of the migrant athletes choosing Turkey as a host country and what are the problems of being a migrant athlete, and to open a window for sports managers on these two issues related to migrant athletes and to make suggestions.

Research Design

Phenomenological design (Yıldırım & Şimsek, 2006), which focuses on phenomena that we are aware of but do not have a clear understanding of (Creswell et al., 2007), tries to reveal the in-depth meanings of the individual's experiences (Norlyk & Harder, 2010). This research was conducted in a phenomenological design, which is one of the qualitative research designs, since it will try to understand and make sense of the factors that motivate them to migrate in Turkey and the problems they face in the sports environment and social life of the athletes who work as immigrants in three different sports branches, based on their experiences.

Study Group

The study participants were determined by criterion and convenience sampling methods from purposive sampling. In this context, the researchers first determined some criteria for migrant athletes, as follows:

Being a migrant athlete working in the first division in football, basketball, and volleyball branches,

Being a migrant athlete in at least one different country before coming to Turkey,

Being a migrant athlete in Turkey for at least one season.

Totally 20 migrant athletes (8 female and 12 male), 9 soccer players, 6 basketball players, and 5 volleyball players, met study criterions, and constituted the study group. See the detailed information of participants on Table 2.

Table 2: Demographics of participants

Branches	Code	Age	Gender	Status	EL	NP	PE	PME	CET	ET	ACC
FOOTBALL	FK1	34	Man	Male	High school	Brezil	19	4	4	5	2
	FK2	18	Man	Single	High school	Nigeria	2	2	2	2	1
	FK3	28	Man	Male	High school	France	10	5	3	4	1
	FK4	29	Man	Male	Middle school	France	15	5	2	2	2
	FK5	21	Woman	Single	High school	Congo	2	3	2	2	1
	FK6	34	Woman	Male	High school	Nigeria	17	4	4	8	2
	FK7	32	Man	Male	High school	Portugal	16	5	2	2	2
	FK8	38	Man	Male	Middle school	France	22	2	5	9	4
	FK9	34	Woman	Male	Middle school	France	19	5	2	2	1
BASKETBALL	BK1	33	Man	Male	Bachelor	USA	17	5	2	2	1
	BK2	32	Man	Male	Bachelor	USA	15	4	2	4	1
	BK3	33	Man	Male	Bachelor	Serbia	16	3	1	4	3
	BK4	32	Man	Male	Highschool.	Italy	14	4	2	2	1
	BK5	32	Man	Male	Bachelor	USA	15	5	6	9	2
	BK6	30	Woman	Male	Bachelor	USA	9	4	2	2	1
VOLLEYBALL	VK1	23	Woman	Single	Bachelor	Sweden	7	2	2	2	1
	VK2	34	Woman	Male	High school	Sweden	18	4	4	8	3
	VK3	24	Man	Single	High school	China	10	3	2	2	1
	VK4	25	Woman	Single	Middle school	Cuba	13	5	2	4	3
	VK5	29	Woman	Single	High school	Serbia	13	5	3	3	1

Football Player Participant (FK), Basketball Player Participant (BK), Volleyball Player Participant (VK), Education Level (EL), Nationality of Participants (NP), Player Experience in Year (PE), Previous Migrant Experience in Number (PME), Club Experience in Turkey in Number (CET), Experience in Turkey in year (ET), Experience in Currently Club in Season (ACC)

Data Collection Tool and Collection of Data

Within the scope of the study, a personal information form was developed by the researchers to determine the demographic characteristics of migrant athletes. The personal information form includes age, gender, education level, duration of stay in Turkey, and similar information about migrant athletes. On the other hand, a semi-structured interview form was prepared by the research design. While preparing the interview form, the international and national literature on migrant athletes was examined and structured based on three expert opinions. The experts consisted of a coach working in top leagues, an academician researching migrant athletes, and a researcher who was experienced in qualitative research.

Six questions were prepared in line with the support from the literature and expert opinions, and two sample questions are given below.

What is the most important motivator for you to become a migrant athlete in Turkey?

What kind of problems have you experienced in your social life (outside of sports) in Turkey?

The research data were collected through face-to-face interviews with the participants. The interviews were conducted by the researcher, fluent in English and lasted an average of 30 minutes. For the participants who did not speak English, the interviews were conducted with the professional translators of the sports clubs. All interviews recorded with digital tools were computerized as soon as possible to avoid data loss.

Data Analysis

In the analysis of the data of this study, qualitative content analysis (Merriam, 2015) was used to examine the insight (Altheide, 1987), which includes events, settings, styles, images, and meanings as keywords, and to create data and categories obtained through a process (Merriam, 2015). In the analysis, codes were first extracted from the data obtained from in-depth interviews, and categories were created and reported.

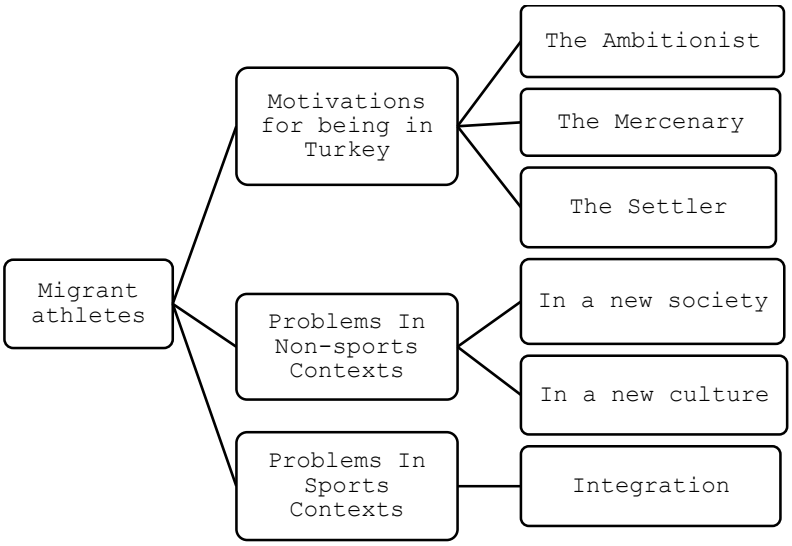
Validity and Reliability (Credibility, Transferability, Consistency and Verifiability)

Creswell (2009) expresses validity and reliability in qualitative research using credibility, transferability, consistency, and confirmability criteria. In order to increase the credibility of the research, detailed information about the study group was presented, the research process was described in detail, and field expert opinions were taken during the preparation of the semi-structured interview form. For transferability, detailed information about the data collection processes is presented in detail in the method section.

For consistency, the data obtained from the research were coded separately by two researchers, and a consensus was reached between the coding. In the scope of verifiability, all processes from the beginning of the research were transferred to the computer environment and archived.

FINDINGS

This study was conducted to examine the motivations of migrant athletes to be in Turkey and the problems they face in their non-sport and intra-sport environments. In this context, it is seen that the motivating factors for migrant athletes to be in Turkey are the ambitionist, the mercenary, the settler, and the problems they experience outside of sports are the problems of living in a new society and a new culture, problems in sports and integration problems.



Şekil 1. Motivators and problems of being a migrant athlete in Turkey

Motivations of Migrant Athletes to be in Turkey

When the opinions of migrant athletes regarding their motivation to be in Turkey are analyzed, three categories emerge. In this context, it was determined that the most critical factors affecting their motivation to be in Turkey are the desire to develop their sports careers, gain economic gain and remain as settlers, respectively.

The Ambitionist: Almost all migrant athletes emphasized that the most important motivator for them to come to Turkey is that it is a country where their desire to develop their careers can be met due to the higher quality of the Turkish leagues. One migrant athlete said, "My reason for coming to Turkey is for career purposes. The Turkish League is of higher quality than the Swedish League" (V1). In this regard, two other athletes said, "I was playing in the lower league in my own country. I came to Turkey for the super league. Because I thought I could make a career here" (FK8), "My reason for coming to Turkey was to move up in level. I was playing in lower leagues in Germany and Spain. I came to Turkey to play in the Super League" (FK1). It is seen that the thought that playing in the super league will have a positive effect on his career is dominant. An athlete who reiterated this situation said, "I turned my route to Europe. There are already a few countries in Europe that dominate basketball. One of them is Turkey. I came to Turkey to be successful in the league and in Europe". In addition to the high quality of the Turkish leagues, the presence of quality athletes and athletes from their own countries were also identified as a source of motivation. "Also, there are many careers and famous African footballers in this league. Seeing them always encourages us", FK2 expressed this situation.

On the other hand, it is understood that achieving success by winning trophies and medals, which is an essential element, especially in the careers of migrant athletes, is a motivating situation. An athlete who stated that this situation is essential for him/her: "... I received an offer from a successful team with a high chance of winning a trophy. This makes the whole season go well for a player" (BK1) shows that the awards received are essential motivators for an athlete in terms of career development. These evaluations show that the desire for career development emerges as the primary source of motivation for migrant athletes working in Turkey's football, basketball, and volleyball branches.

The Mercenary: One of the critical motivations for migrant athletes to be in Turkey is the desire to earn money and become economically more vital. In the formation of this situation, the athletes emphasized that it offers the opportunity to earn more money than their home countries. The migrant athlete expressed his/her views on this issue as follows.

"I came to Turkey to earn money. I had played football in Cyprus before, so I knew the country. Even though it is a better league compared to Cyprus, my main goal is money because my family is in France. I could have played there and earned less" (FK4). Athletes expressed their motivation for being in Turkey very briefly: "My

motivation for being here is money because I come across an ocean" (BK6). "I came here to earn more money" (FK6). "I came here to earn money" (FK7).

Within the framework of the findings obtained, it is understood from the participant's opinions that the motivating factor for migrant athletes in football and basketball branches is the desire to earn more money while earning money in the volleyball branch does not affect their motivation to be in Turkey.

The settler: Another finding from migrant athletes is that six athletes stayed in Turkey for four seasons or more. This shows that migrant athletes desire to stay in Turkey long. For example, the statement of an athlete as follows: "When I first came here, I came for the money. Then I liked this league. Now I am getting old, I want to be in Turkey for the last 3-4 years of my career" (BK5) reflects the desire to stay in the country. Again, another athlete said, "To be honest, it is a perfect country to be an athlete; there are outstanding teams. Every year, a different team can come to the fore. This increases the quality of the league. That is why I played for different teams in Turkey" (VK5), emphasizing the happiness of being in Turkey. Some other athletes echoed this, saying, "Everything is better than I expected. I feel at home here" (FK4), "I love Turkey very much" (BK5), and "Turkey is wonderful; I can live here after I quit football" (FK9), emphasizing the importance of being in Turkey as a settler.

Problems In Non-Sport Contests

It has been determined that migrant athletes mainly do not experience problems in non-sport environments, and those who do see this situation as an element of living in a new society and a new culture.

In a New Society: When the in-depth insights of migrant athletes experiencing problems are analyzed, it is seen that they generally express the view that being in a new society brings some difficulties with it. This is especially the case for athletes who had to leave their families in their home countries to play for a club in Turkey. An athlete summarizes this situation: "Being away from the family is the biggest factor that makes life outside of sports difficult. Because there is a huge distance" (BK5). Another critical factor is the overcharging of athletes from time to time when it is understood that they are foreigners. For example, an athlete said, "I have had two problems so far, and I think both were because I was a foreigner. I rented a car from a company and had an accident; they tried to charge me the whole cost. However, in such cases, they have car insurance. Secondly, when I was leaving my house, the landlord demanded a huge amount of money from me, saying that I had damaged the house. Since we are football players, they think they can get us money very easily" (FK4). Another athlete said, "I only have problems with taxi drivers when I go somewhere because they always tell me different fares. I call the interpreter and tell them they are wrong and that there is always a different price" (VK3).

In a new culture It is seen migrant athletes express the opinion that there is a language problem, which is an element of being in a new culture, albeit to a lesser extent. It is emphasized that language problems are more common, especially in non-sport environments. An athlete said, "I can't do much outside the club because I do not have friends. I have a language problem. When I have time off, I go to Istanbul because there are people from my own country there, and I spend time with them (FK5). Another athlete expressed his feelings, "I have a language problem, but I have started to learn it. This problem will disappear as soon as possible" (FK2), and it is seen that he is making an effort to solve the problem.

Although numerically small in number, it was emphasized by the participants that living in a different culture sometimes creates behavioral disturbances. For example, an athlete said, "I cannot say for everyone, but I can be disturbed by the behavior of some people. Sometimes, they do not respect our private lives. They can come and talk directly without asking questions or taking photos or videos without permission. This can prevent us from being comfortable socially" (VK4).

Vehicle traffic was another issue that was difficult to get used to or understand in a new culture and posed a problem. The problem in this regard was expressed by (FK3) as "Traffic problem, everyone is in a hurry in a way I do not understand. We do not know the roads very well, but they do not show patience".

Problems In Sports Contests

Migrant athletes stated that there are generally few problems in the intra-sport environment. In Turkey, they reported that the problems in sports are mostly related to the pressure caused by being success-oriented and communicating with the coach.

Integration: It is seen that some situations that are different from the countries where they were previously athletes create adaptation difficulties for migrant athletes from time to time. For example, athletes believe that a successful and result-oriented approach is too dominant in sports. One of the athletes said, "The focus on success and the level of struggle I mentioned before sometimes pushes us players too much. We feel pressure on us. We are professionals, but too much pressure on the athlete causes him/her not to do what he/she can do" (BK3). A result-oriented approach creates pressure on them. Another athlete echoed this sentiment: "The biggest problem in Turkey starts when things are not going well. Everything is result-oriented. If you do not perform well on the field, they directly cut off interest in you. This makes you feel worthless" (FK7), emphasizing that this situation creates pressure for them. Another athlete expressed his feelings: "The only problem I have is pressure, and I do it to myself because I do not want to disappoint the people who trust me. This pressure sometimes harms me, and I cannot do what I want (FK2). It is stated that the pressure is mostly caused by the people who trust them.

On the other hand, it was determined that one of the problems experienced was related to the coaches. This is primarily due to the communication between coaches and athletes. In this regard, an athlete said, "Sometimes I do not understand the coaches. While their communication is excellent, they can suddenly become different. In Turkey, even communication depends on your result (FK3), drawing attention to coach communication and a result-oriented pressure factor. Another athlete also emphasized coach communication. "The coaches are a bit different here. For example, in Europe, coaches talk to you individually more. When they do not include you in the team, they explain it" (FK6).

DISCUSSION

This research was carried out to examine the factors that motivate migrant athletes in Turkey and the problems they experience within and outside of sports. The findings obtained in this direction are interpreted below.

When the opinions of migrant athletes regarding their motivations for being in Turkey are analyzed, three categories emerge. In this direction, it is understood that the primary motivational factor that most influence the motivation of migrant athletes to be in Turkey is the desire to develop their careers and that they prefer to be in Turkey for the high level of sport that offers more career development opportunities. This finding is similar to studies conducted in different countries and different sports branches (Agergaard, 2008; Magee & Sugden, (2002). Ambitionist migrant athletes are in the group of athletes who prefer a high level of sport that offers career development opportunities and who aim to play for a club that can win trophies or medals. In this context, it can be said that the most critical motivational source for migrant athletes to be in Turkey is to play in a higher-quality league and to have the highest possible sporting level.

In our study, it is understood that obtaining economic gain is a vital motivation source for migrant athletes. In the literature, it is stated in many studies that the desire to earn economic gain or earn more money is an essential factor as a motivation source for migrant athletes to be in a guest country (Stead & Maguire, 2000; Magee & Sugden, 2000; Çimen et al., 2019; Palumbo et al., 2021; Bon et al., 2022). In the study conducted by İnal (2021) in Turkey on this issue, migrant soccer players stated economic gain as the most critical factor. It can be said that money is unquestionably an essential reason for migration for athletes working in the sports sector, as is the case for many sector employees, and this importance is even more important for athletes from countries with weaker economic conditions (Love & Kim, 2011; Simiyu Njororai, 2012) and is an essential source of motivation.

This situation, which is also in line with the phenomenon of mercenary migrant athletes, which Magee and Sugden (2002) include in their typology, is closely related to the motivation to go to places where they will be

fully compensated for their labor. The fact that a significant portion of the study participants are migrant athletes from countries such as Nigeria, Congo, Serbia, Cuba, and Brazil, which are weaker or similar to Turkey in terms of economic status, confirms Magee and Sugden's typology. On the other hand, athletes who migrated from developed countries such as France, the USA, and Sweden are motivated by the aim of earning more than their country. The main reason for this is that the taxation rates of the income earned by athletes in Turkey are meager compared to those in developed countries, and the assurance given to the athletes is that the sports clubs will pay the taxes. For a similar result, we can refer to the pioneering research conducted by Çimen et al. In this framework, it can be said that earning economic income is the second important factor affecting the motivation of migrant athletes to be in Turkey. Again, the desire to stay in Turkey is another factor in line with Magee and Sugden's (2002) typology of migrant athletes, but less motivating for the participants to become migrant athletes. In the study, it was seen that there are athletes who are defined as settlers in the typology who stay in the host country for four to five seasons and who want to stay after completing their careers to gain some benefits in the host country. While almost half of the participant migrant athletes were in Turkey for four or more seasons, one of these athletes expressed a desire to stay after his/her career. Although only one of the athletes expressed the desire to stay, the definition of a settler can be considered as a source of motivation for migrant athletes and is compatible with the typology, as the other athletes' thoughts about the country are in line with the other characteristics in the typology.

Within the scope of non-sport problems of migrant athletes, it is stated that being in a new society brings along some difficulties. It is understood that the most important of these difficulties is being far away from their families. Distance from family causes homesickness, social isolation, and loneliness in athletes. Dobray (1987) also states that separating foreign athletes from their societies causes feelings of isolation and loneliness. Similarly, Morela et al. (2019) emphasize that migrant athletes are exposed to homesickness and isolation. Likewise, Schinke et al. (2011) state that when athletes lose physical access to their families, their social ties weaken. In this direction, athletes living in a different society away from their families may experience loneliness and social isolation.

One of the problems of migrant athletes outside of sports is the difficulties of being in a new culture. It is understood that one of these problems is language in non-sport environments. In this regard, Schinke et al. (2011) state that language is the most critical element in communication processes. Likewise, Baines (2013) emphasizes the importance of language adaptation for athletes. Weedon (2012) emphasizes the need to adopt cultural characteristics as a central aspect of acculturation in many countries. He states that it is essential for athletes with underdeveloped language skills to adapt both in and out of sports. In our study, it is seen that language problems are more common in non-sport environments. In the intra-sport environment, there were fewer problems. It is understood that this is due to the effective and efficient use of interpreters in the intra-sport environment.

When the intra-sport problems of migrant athletes are analyzed, it is understood that in Turkey, club management, coaches, media, spectators, etc., exhibit a more result-oriented approach. In particular, it is seen that the result-oriented understanding of the game is an element of pressure on athletes. Demir (2019) emphasizes that, especially in football, with the effect of industrialization, the game is played for the rent to be obtained through the result. Katırcı et al. (2018) emphasize that a result-oriented understanding is also influenced by the programs carried out by the media. Another problem within sports is the communication problem with coaches. In this regard, Schinke et al. (2011) evaluated coaching style in the context of integration. In this study, it can be said that for migrant athletes, the coaching style of an athlete causes them to perceive the coaching style as an integration problem for themselves.

In conclusion, it can be said that the most important motivating factors for migrant athletes in Turkey are ambitionist, mercenary, settler, out-of-sport problems are living in a new society and culture, and in-sport problems are integration.

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