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Examination of the Anxiety of Catching the Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19) in Elite Athletes and Sedentaries

Gönül Tekkurşun Demir.
Gazi University, Sport Sciences Faculty, Ankara, Turkey.
gonultekkursun@hotmail.com

Celal Bulğay.
Gazi University, Sport Sciences Faculty, Ankara, Turkey.
celalbulgay@hotmail.com

Veli Ozan Çakir.
Alanya Alaaddin Keykubat University, Sport Sciences Faculty, Antalya, Turkey.
ozan.cakir@alanya.edu.tr

Işık Bayraktar.
Alanya Alaaddin Keykubat University, Sport Sciences Faculty, Antalya, Turkey.
isik.bayraktar@alanya.edu.tr

Ebru Çetin.
Gazi University, Sport Sciences Faculty, Ankara, Turkey.
cetinebruu@gmail.com

RESUMEN.
El presente estudio tiene como objetivo examinar la ansiedad por contagiarse de COVID-19 desde el punto de vista de deportistas de élite y sedentarios en función de diferentes variables. Se aplicó la subdimensión de ansiedad individual de la escala de ansiedad del atleta para contraer el nuevo coronavirus (COVID-19). Según los resultados del estudio, los atletas tenían niveles más bajos de ansiedad por contraer COVID-19 en comparación con los sedentarios. Se concluyó que las mujeres participantes tenían niveles más altos de ansiedad en comparación con los hombres. También se determinó que las atletas de élite femeninas también tenían niveles más altos de ansiedad en comparación con los atletas de élite masculinos. Cuando se examinó la ansiedad por contraer COVID-19 por grupo de edad, se observó que los atletas de élite menores de 19 años tenían niveles significativamente más bajos de ansiedad individual en comparación con otros grupos de edad. Además, se encontró que los atletas de élite masculinos tenían niveles más bajos de ansiedad en comparación con los sedentarios masculinos.

PALABRAS CLAVES.
Deporte, Atletas, Sedentarios, COVID-19, Nuevo coronavirus, Ansiedad.

ABSTRACT.

The present study aims to examine the anxiety to catch COVID-19 from the viewpoint of elite athletes and sedentaries based on different variables. The Individual Anxiety sub-dimension of the Athlete's Anxiety to Catch the Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19) Scale was applied. According to the study results, athletes had lower levels of anxiety to catch COVID-19 compared to sedentaries. It was concluded that female participants had higher levels of anxiety compared to male participants. It was also determined that female elite athletes also had higher levels of anxiety compared to male elite athletes. When the anxiety to catch COVID-19 was examined by age group, it was observed that elite athletes under the age of 19 had significantly lower levels of individual anxiety compared to other age groups. Additionally, it was found that male elite athletes had lower levels of anxiety compared to male sedentaries.

KEY WORDS.

Sport, Athletes, Sedentaries, COVID-19, Novel Coronavirus, Anxiety.

1. Introduction.

The COVID-19 outbreak is the first pandemic caused by coronaviruses, spreading rapidly to hundreds of countries across six continents. The disease, which is known as coronavirus 2 (SARS-CoV-2), causes a severe and highly infectious acute respiratory syndrome through human (and animal) interaction. The high transmission rate of the virus is the most important factor in the disease's rapid spread around the world and the declaration of COVID-19 as a pandemic. COVID-19 spreads when healthy individuals inhale the respiratory droplets produced by infected individuals or asymptomatic carriers coughing, sneezing or talking (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2020). The disease can also be transmitted between humans when the droplets produced by infected individuals fall to surfaces and healthy individuals touch their face, eyes, nose or mouth after contacting the droplets. According to the latest statistics, only 20% of infected individuals require hospitalization (Wu & McGoogan, 2020). On the other hand, there is significant uncertainty regarding how long the pandemic, which can also result in death, will last and continue to spread (Scheiner, 2020). Since no specific medication or vaccine could be developed yet to stop or eliminate the COVID-19 virus, various measures were adopted to minimize the spread of the virus. These measures include social distancing, travel restrictions, self-quarantine (Ebrahim Ahmed, Gozzer, Schlagenhauf & Memish, 2020), frequent hand washing for at least 20 seconds, keeping hands away from the face, eyes and mouth (World Health Organization, 2020), working from home, closing schools and universities (Surveillances, 2020), and suspending religious activities and sports organizations (BBC, 2020). Like other communities, the world of sport has also been affected by the outbreak. Although it was initially announced that sports competitions would be played without spectators for a time, all competitions were delayed shortly afterwards as part of the measures against the outbreak. Due to the spread of COVID-19, large-scale organizations such as Tokyo 2020 Olympic Games, World Athletics Indoor Championships, Formula One races, tennis tournaments, boxing matches, National Basketball Association (NBA) games, marathons (Amsterdam, Paris, Barcelona, London,

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Tokyo and Boston), football matches (Copa América, UEFA European Championship, Premier League, UEFA Champions League, UEFA Europa League, AFC Asian Cup, start of the professional football leagues in China, Japan and South Korea), and the 2nd Trisome Games were delayed or cancelled (BBC, 2020). It is inevitable that these decisions and practices, which were adopted for the benefit of our daily life and future, will cause an increase in anxiety for both athletes and sedentaries.

Anxiety is defined as an unpleasant emotion characterized by feelings of agitation, concern and physiological stimulation caused by various reasons (Han, 2009). Anxiety is a set of personal emotions including uneasiness, worry, delusion and fear (Elliott & Smith, 2010). According to Zeidner (1998) anxiety involves situations such as worrying, thinking about irrelevant issues, nervousness, showing physical reactions, procrastination and avoidance, and it can also be examined in a cognitive, behavioral and affective framework. Anxiety is characterized by feelings of excitement, fear and nervousness due to the stimulation of the autonomic nervous system (Spielberger, 2013) in situations where the source of danger is unclear (Cai, Tang, Wu & Li, 2017). According to Beck, Emery & Greenberg (2005) anxiety refers to the reaction shown when certain particular situations are perceived as threats. Therefore, the acknowledgment of danger represents fear while the physiological reaction that occurs as a result of experiencing fear represents anxiety. Spielberger (2013) classified anxiety into two as state and trait anxiety. State anxiety is defined as an emotional state including feelings of fear and stress against a stimulant. Trait anxiety, on the other hand, is the tendency of individuals to perceive the environments in which they are evaluated by others as threatening and show different levels of anxiety. Mathews & MacLeod (2005) stated that anxiety refers to the tendency to frequently focus on, experience and point out negative emotions such as fear, concern and worry, and that it became a part of the neuroticism personality trait.

In a previous study, it was revealed that the current events related to the COVID-19 pandemic may increase the anxiety levels of athletes (Demir, Cicioğlu & İlhan, 2020; Amal, Bipin & Demir, 2020) and sedentaries. However, scenarios related to catching COVID-19 and the future outcomes of this contraction are uncertain. There are two groups who experience this uncertainty and isolate themselves at home. These are sedentaries and elite athletes. Their levels of anxiety to catch COVID-19 is a subject of interest.

It can be considered that sedentaries and elite athletes carry similar concerns such as the anxiety to stay healthy, fear of death, fear of being unable to meet individual needs after catching COVID-19, and uncertainty towards what to expect after catching COVID-19. However, when the situation is approached more thoroughly in terms of elite athletes, it can be said that these individuals possess the fear of loss of performance, inability to gain previous strength, and detachment from sports in addition to general anxiety and fears. Additionally, situations such as a significant lack of training, the changes in nutrition and psychological-sociological conditions and the ability to adapt to these changes as a result of extended time spent at home may also affect their levels of anxiety. At this point, the fact that no studies were found in the literature on determining whether there is a difference between sedentaries and elite athletes in terms of the anxiety to catch COVID-19 increases the significance of the present study. In the present study, it was aimed to examine the anxiety levels of elite athletes

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and sedentaries to catch COVID-19 based on different variables by considering all of the aforementioned situations.

2. Method.

Study Model.
The present study was modelled as a cross-sectional study. In this type of survey study, participants' opinions regarding a topic or event, or their features such as interests, skills, abilities and attitudes are determined while data measurement is performed at once and sample sizes are larger compared to other types of studies (Karasar, 2017).

Participants.
In the power analysis performed using the "G. Power-3.1.9.2" program, when the effect size was taken as 0.25 and the significance level was taken as 0.05, it was estimated that 99% power would be established with a total of 844 participants (Cohen, 2013). Accordingly, a total of n=844 participants involving n=444 certified elite athletes (M=22.26 age, Sd=4.07 M=5.06 playing experience, Sd=3.22) playing for different clubs in Turkey in the branches of track and field (athletics), badminton, basketball, volleyball and handball in the year 2020 and performing regular training at least 5 days a week, and n=400 sedentaries (M=23.91 age, Sd=7.06) were included in the study.

Data Collection Tools.
Application Phase.
Data collection was carried out online through Google Forms. Two types of data were collected from the participants. For this, the Personal Information Form and the Athlete's Anxiety to Catch the Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19) Scale (Demir, Cicioğlu & İlhan, 2020) were used. In addition to the Personal Information Form, it was explained to the participants in written form that they were informed in detail regarding the purpose of the study, that the study was scientific, that they were expected to be objective while giving answers, and that providing accurate information was very important in terms of study results.

Personal Information Form: This form consists of the participants' (elite athletes and sedentaries), gender, age, weight, height and demographic information.

Athlete's Anxiety to Catch the Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19) Scale (Individual Anxiety Sub-Dimension): The scale developed by Demir, Cicioğlu & İlhan (2020) was used in the present study. The scale includes two sub-dimensions involving Individual Anxiety and Socialization Anxiety. The Socialization Anxiety sub-dimension includes items related to the sports life of athletes while the Individual Anxiety sub-dimension includes items related to their life in general. Due to the fact that athletes and sedentaries were included in the sample group of the present study, the Individual Anxiety sub-dimension of the scale was used. In this context, the Individual Anxiety (IA) sub-dimension, which is suitable for application to athletes and sedentaries (Demir, Cicioğlu & İlhan, 2020), consists of 11 items. The 2nd item of the

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sub-dimension was reverse-coded. The scale was structured as a 5-point likert scale. The minimum score from the Individual Anxiety sub-dimension is 11 while the maximum score is 55. High scores indicate high levels of individual anxiety to catch COVID-19. The Cronbach's Alpha coefficient was calculated as .89 for the Individual Anxiety sub-dimension. As a result of the CFA analysis, the fit indices of the scale developed by Demir, Cicioğlu & İlhan (2020) were calculated as χ2/sd=1.87, RMSEA=.08, PGFI=.62, PNFI=.80, GFI=.92, AGFI=.90, IFI=.97, NFI=.95 and CFI=.97. As a result of the CFA performed for the sedentary participants in the present study, the fit indices were calculated as x^2= 92.41, sd= 44, RMSEA= .093, NFI= .91, CFI= .95, IFI= .93, PNFI= .95 and GFI= .92. As a result of the CFA performed for the elite athletes, the fit indices were calculated as x^2= 140.36, sd= 64, RMSEA= .094, NFI= .93, CFI= .91, IFI= .95, PNFI= .90 and GFI= .91.

Data Analysis.
The analysis of the data obtained from the scale was performed using SPSS 25.0. The data of 15 participants with invalid answers were excluded and the analyses were performed on the data of the remaining 844 participants. When the skewness and kurtosis values were examined for normality, it was determined that the data were normally distributed (Kline, 2011). The independent t-test was performed in the comparisons between two independent groups, and ANOVA was used for more than two groups. In order to determine the source of the significant difference determined as a result of the ANOVA test, the Turkey post hoc test was used as the sample sizes were close to each other, and the Pearson Correlation Test was used for the relationship between the groups. p<.05 was considered as statistically significant.

3. Results.
Tablo 1. T-Test Results for the Independent Groups

Variable	Group	N	$\bar{x}$	sd	t	p
IA Level	Athlete	444	37.14	8.60	-7.279	**.000***
	Sedentary	400	41.08	6.90		

p<.05

In Table 1, the participants' levels of anxiety to catch COVID-19 were examined with the Independent Groups t-test. It was determined that there was a significant difference between the individual anxiety levels of athletes and sedentaries ($t_{(842)}$= -7.279, p<.05). According to this, the individual anxiety score average of the sedentaries ($\bar{x}$=41.08) was significantly higher compared to that of the elite athletes ($\bar{x}$=37.08).

Table 2. T-Test Results for the Independent Groups

	N	$\bar{x}$	sd	t	p
Female	516	40.08	7.81	4.917	**.00***
Male	328	37.31	8.22		

p<.05

In Table 2, the participants' individual anxiety levels were examined based on the gender variable with the Independent Groups t-test. According to this, there was a significant difference in the levels of anxiety to catch COVID-19 based on the gender variable ($t_{(842)}$=4.917, p<.05). The individual anxiety score average of the female participants ($\bar{x}$=40.08) was significantly higher compared to that of the male participants ($\bar{x}$=37.31).

Table 3. T-Test Results for the Independent Groups

	Group		N	$\bar{x}$	sd	t	p
IA Level	Athlete	Female	244	38.80	8.58	4.589	**.00***
		Male	200	35.12	8.33		
	Sedentary	Female	272	41.23	6.96	.655	.74
		Male	128	40.75	6.96		

p<.05

In Table 3, the participants' levels of anxiety to catch COVID-19 were examined based on the gender variable with the Independent Groups t-test, and it was determined that the male elite athletes had a significantly lower individual anxiety score average ($\bar{x}$=35.12) compared to the female elite athletes ($\bar{x}$=38.80) ($t_{(442)}$=4.589, p<.05).

Table 4. *ANOVA Test Results Regarding the Comparison between Groups*

		Age (year)	Group	N	$\bar{x}$	F(5,838)	p	Difference
IA Level	Athlete	U 19	a	196	34.63	31.358	**.00***	a*<b<c
		20-29	b	160	37.05			
		30<	c	88	42.90			b*<d<f<c
	Sedentary	U 19	d	132	41.60			
		20-29	e	112	38.32			a*<d
		30 <	f	156	42.61			

p<.05

Table 4 shows the results of the one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) performed for the comparison between the participants' age groups and individual anxiety levels. A significant difference was found as a result of the analysis ($F_{(5,838)}$=31.358, p<.05). According to this, it was determined that the elite athletes aged 19 or younger had a significantly lower individual anxiety score average ($\bar{x}$=34.63) compared to that of the athletes aged 20-29 ($\bar{x}$=37.05) and 30 or older ($\bar{x}$=42.90). It was also determined that the elite athletes aged 20-29 had a significantly lower individual anxiety score average ($\bar{x}$=37.05) compared to the sedentaries aged 19 or younger ($\bar{x}$=41.60), the sedentaries aged 30 or older ($\bar{x}$=42.61) and the elite athletes aged 30 or older ($\bar{x}$=42.90). It was determined that the individual anxiety score average of the elite athletes aged 19 or younger ($\bar{x}$=34.63) was significantly lower compared to that of the sedentaries aged 19 or younger ($\bar{x}$=42.61).

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Table 5. *Pearson Correlation Test Results for the Relationship between the Participants' Levels of Anxiety to catch COVID-19 Based on the Age Variable*

Group			N	$\bar{x}$	sd	IA Level
Athlete	Age	r	444	37.14	8.63	.344
		p				**.000****
Sedentary	Age	r	400	41.08	6.93	.073
		p				.710

p<.05

Table 5 shows the results of the Pearson Correlation Test performed for the relationship between the participants' age and levels of individual anxiety to catch COVID-19. As a result of the analysis, it was determined that there was a positive, moderate and significant difference between the elite athletes' age and individual anxiety scores (r=.344; p<.05).

Table 6. *T-Test Results for the Independent Groups Regarding the Comparison between the Participants' Levels of Anxiety to catch COVID-19 Based on the Gender Variable*

		Group	N	$\bar{x}$	ss	t	p
IA Level	Female	Athlete	244	39.80	8.58	-2.775	.06
		Sedentary	272	41.23	6.96		
	Male	Athlete	200	35.12	8.33	-6.409	**.00***
		Sedentary	128	40.75	6.96		

p<.05

Table 6 shows the results of the Independent Groups t-test performed for the comparison of the participants' levels of anxiety to catch COVID-19 among the same gender. According to this, it was determined that the male elite athletes had a significantly lower individual anxiety score average ($\bar{x}$=35.12) compared to the male sedentaries ($\bar{x}$=40.75) ($t_{(326)}$=-6.409, p<.05).

4. Discussion.

In the present study, the individual anxiety levels of elite athletes playing in various clubs in Turkey and sedentaries towards catching COVID-19 were examined based on the variables of gender, age, and the status of being an elite athlete or sedentary. According to the findings obtained in the present study, it was determined that the elite athletes had lower levels of individual anxiety to catch COVID-19 compared to the sedentaries. This finding is mostly attributed to the fact that athletes are able to consult dietitians, sports physicians, mentors of psychological performance consultants in this process. When the related literature is examined, it is clear that the COVID-19 outbreak has been a challenging period for all individuals. However, it is stated that athletes require special support in order to minimize the problems they may experience in terms of athletic performance (physical, physiological and psychological) (Hull, Loosemore & Schwellnus, 2020). Despite the potential problems that may be experienced by athletes in relation to the COVID-19 outbreak, it can also be said that there have been certain positive effects of isolation. For example, in a previous study, it was revealed that athletes can take advantage of this process as a window of opportunity to gather strength and rejuvenate themselves until their normal training schedule starts again (Silva,

Brito, Akenhead & Nassis, 2016). Tingaz (2020), as a result of the qualitative research examining the psychological effects of Covid-19 on elite athletes, concluded that anxiety is the most common emotion experienced in athletes. He stated that this anxiety seems to be a result of ambiguity regarding future competitions and their sports performance then. However, it is among the findings that the personal awareness of athletes has increased with the pandemic. Physical and mental training are preferred mostly to manage the pandemic situation by athletes. In addition, most of the athletes expect their performance to decrease after the pandemic. Additionally, it is recommended that athletes take measures such as regular sleep, a well-balanced diet and ample fluid consumption to reduce their risk factor and maintain their immune system during the COVID-19 process (Somerville, Braakhuis & Hopkins, 2016). It is thought that training imagination skills of elite athletes may increase both their physical performance and quality of life during the isolation process. This is another factor in the finding that the elite athletes had lower anxiety levels compared to the sedentaries. Therefore, it can be said that there are certain differences in the subjects that may cause anxiety and concern for athletes and sedentaries.

When the findings of the present study were examined based on the gender variable, it was observed that the female participants had significantly higher scores of individual anxiety to catch COVID-19 compared to the male participants. The increased anxiety levels of women during the COVID-19 process is attributed to the fact that they are unable to stay calm and tend to experience anxiety-provoking mental states such as fear and avoidance. In a present study examining anxiety levels, it was reported that the female participants had higher levels of anxiety compared to the male participants although no significant difference was found (Boz, 2019). In the study titled "State-Trait Anxiety Levels of School of Physical Education and Sports Students" (Özgül, 2003), it was determined that the female participants had significantly higher levels of anxiety compared to the male participants. The researcher reported that this situation resulted from the female students' tendency to experience intense emotional states such as distrust towards others, forlornness, uneasiness, hyperemotionality and oversensitivity under stress due to being away from their family. However, no clinical studies were found on the examination of athletes' anxiety to catch COVID-19 based on the gender variable. On the other hand, there are certain studies in the literature stating that males have higher rates of infection and mortality related to COVID-19 compared to females (Li et al., 2020; Livingston & Bucher, 2020; Surveillances, 2020). It can be said that the X chromosome, which is congenital in females and a significant factor for adaptive immunity, and sex hormones may play a part as well (Jaillon, Berthenet & Garlanda, 2019). In the present study, it was found that despite the fact that females have lower rates of infection and mortality compared to males, they had higher levels of anxiety.

As stated above, the general findings of the present study indicate that the male participants had a lower individual anxiety score average compared to the female participants. It was also determined that the male elite athletes had a significantly lower individual anxiety score average compared to the female elite athletes. This may be attributed to the fact that male athletes consider themselves to be stronger and more confident than female athletes due to their condition and muscular appearance. Additionally, the increased anxiety levels of women during the COVID-19 process can be attributed to the fact that they are unable to stay calm

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and tend to experience anxiety-provoking mental states such as fear and avoidance. When the difference in athletes' anxiety levels based on the gender variable was examined, it was found that female basketball players had higher anxiety scores compared to male basketball players (Özerkan, 2003). Similar findings are observed in different branches as well. In a previous study conducted with the futsal players participating in the Intercollegiate Futsal Tournament and Futsal League, it was determined that the male participants had lower anxiety levels compared to the female participants (Karaademir, Türkçapar & Eroğlu 2019). In another study, when the anxiety levels of Swimming majors at the Faculty of Sports Sciences before and after an 8-week training program were examined, it was observed that the male participants had a higher rate of significant results. The researcher reported that this was due to the fact that the number of male participants was twice that of female participants (Tellioğlu & Karadenizli, 2018).

When the participants' levels of anxiety to catch COVID-19 were examined based on the age variable, it was determined that the elite athletes aged 19 or younger had lower individual anxiety levels compared to other groups. This finding is attributed to the idea that the elite athletes aged 19 or younger are unable to sufficiently perceive the potential long-term damages of catching COVID-19, that the effects of the virus are less severe in young individuals, that these individuals think COVID-19 primarily targets individuals aged 65 and older (Wu & McGoogan, 2020), that they do not have a chronic disease, and that they went into self-quarantine with strict measures as a result of curfews or the high levels of confidence they possess. Although COVID-19 was found to infect children and young individuals as well, it was observed that the number of severe cases was very low. It was determined that particularly young individuals recovered from their symptoms within a week (Ludvigsson, 2020). However, it was also stated that heart or lung complications could arise in young individuals if they started training early without getting the necessary rest (Wu & McGoogan, 2020). In order to prevent such complications, it was suggested that athletes or young individuals rest for at least 7 days after they recover from their symptoms (Hull, Loosemore & Schwellnus 2020). In Turkey, the limited number of cases in this age group were attributed to factors such as the curfew administered for individuals aged 20 or younger and the closing of schools (Uğraş, Mediha-Kına, Özkan & İlhan, 2020).

In the present study, it was determined that there was a positive, moderate and significant relationship between the elite athletes' levels of individual anxiety to catch COVID-19 and progressing age. Based on this, it can be said that the levels of anxiety to catch COVID-19 increase as athletes' age increases. In this; the fact that mostly the individuals in upper age groups were affected by COVID-19 around the world, the decrease in athletic performance after catching the disease and potential financial problems such as competition or sponsor revenue can be listed as major factors. In the sedentaries, however, no significant relationship was found. Anxiety is an important subject for athletes and it affects performance. In terms of sports psychology, it is stated that increased levels of anxiety diminish athletic performance (Ekmekçi, 2016). Considering the increased spread rate of COVID-19, stay-at-home measures are adopted to prevent the further spread of the virus. However, it is thought that remaining inactive for extended periods during this process increases anxiety in both sedentaries and high-level athletes (Chen et al., 2020). Although measures such as informing

sedentaries about the practices carried out within this process or maintaining their physical fitness levels are mostly enough, high-level athletes require more sensitive exercise prescriptions to maintain their performance levels (Kraemer, Bonnabau, Granados, French & Gorostıaga, 2007). Failure to meet the needs of high-level athletes may indicate that they may become physically and mentally inadequate in terms of performance and therefore regress as an athlete in the future (Ekmekçi, 2016). In the related literature, no study was found examining the relationship between individual anxiety to catch COVID-19 and the age variable. However, in a study conducted with elderly individuals infected with COVID-19, it was found that although significant recovery was observed in the respiratory system following a 6-week rehabilitation period, there was little improvement in the depressed emotional state of the participants (Liu, Zhang, Yang, Zhang, Li & Chen, 2020). To summarize the situation in terms of athletes, it can be foreseen that their anxiety levels may be brought under control with motivation and imagination practices when required (Cüceloğlu, 2005).

In the final finding of the present study, the participants' levels of anxiety to catch COVID-19 were examined among the same gender. Based on this, it was determined that the male elite athletes had significantly lower levels of anxiety to catch COVID-19 compared to the male sedentaries. The years of training underwent by athletes and the intensity of their commitment may affect their psychological endurance (Çetin, Bulğay, Demir, Cicioğlu, Bayraktar & Orhan, 2020). Elite athletes are individuals who are undeterred, committed to realizing their current goals regardless of any challenges, aware of their skills, able to use their energy and strength suitably, and control their thoughts and feelings thanks to their mental skills. Elite athletes are individuals who regard professionalism as a virtue, who are able to feel pleasure while fulfilling the requirements of their profession, turn challenges into play and entertainment, and remain in control in any situation (Biçer, 1998). In addition to these, the fact that athletes have easier and more frequent access to support from sports psychologists, mentors or psychological performance consultants compared to sedentaries is thought to be among the reasons why their individual anxiety scores are lower.

5. Conclusion.

In conclusion, the most apparent difference in terms of individual anxiety levels was observed between elite athletes and sedentaries. It was found that the athletes had lower levels of anxiety to catch COVID-19 compared to the sedentaries. This may be attributed to the fact that athletes have greater access to dietitians, sports physicians, sports psychologists, mentors or psychological performance consultants. In the present study, significant differences were determined based on the gender variable as well. It was found that the female participants had higher levels of anxiety compared to the male participants. When the anxiety to catch COVID-19 was examined based on age groups, it was determined that the elite athletes aged 19 or younger had significantly lower levels of individual anxiety compared to the other groups. In summary, it can be said that unlike sedentaries, athletes approach the challenges they face with patience and determination in order to increase their performance and reach their goals, which makes it easier for them to maintain their mental tranquility. This type of approach can have a positive impact on the psychological endurance of athletes and,

therefore, enable them to remain more controlled in terms of the anxiety factor during the COVID-19 pandemic.

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