

## Examining Attributions of Success and Failure According to Golf Coaches' Perceptions in the Istanbul Region: A Qualitative Study

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### Abstract

This study aims to analyze coaches' attributions of success and failure in athletes within the framework of the Causal Attribution Theory. The Causal Attribution Theory is a framework that examines how individuals explain events and the effects of these explanations on motivation, performance, and behavior. The research adopts a qualitative approach and is conducted in a phenomenological design. Data were collected through semi-structured interviews. The study population consists of 272 coaches working in nine golf clubs in Istanbul, and a sample of 8 coaches was selected using simple random sampling. The interview form includes four open-ended questions and was refined based on expert opinions. Data were conceptualized through content analysis, and themes and codes were identified. Findings indicate that coaches tend to attribute success to internal factors (such as athlete talent, effective planning, and experience) and failure to external factors (such as opponent performance, luck, and field conditions). The impact of these attributions on athletes' motivation and performance is discussed, and the role of Causal Attribution Theory in sports psychology and coaching practices is highlighted. The study aims to enhance coaches' awareness in performance evaluation and psychological support processes and contribute to the literature.

**Keywords:** Athlete Management, Coach, Causal Attribution Theory, Athlete, Success and Failure, Golf Sport

### Introduction

Success and failure among athletes are fundamental topics in sports psychology. The role of coaches is critically important in this context. How coaches explain success and failure when evaluating and guiding athletes is a significant factor. It should be remembered that the Attribution Theory is a theory aimed at explaining how individuals attribute causes to events in cases of success and failure. According to Attribution Theory, individuals typically attribute success to internal factors (e.g., ability, effort) while attributing failure to external factors (e.g., luck, difficulty, referee decisions, weather conditions). These attributions can significantly influence individuals' motivation, performance, and attitudes toward future goals (Heider, 1958; Weiner, 1985).

In the sports context, examining the attributions made by coaches regarding athletes' success and failure can aid in understanding both the processes of performance evaluation and predicting the psychological and performance-based responses of athletes. The attributions

coaches prefer to make may be influenced by factors such as the coach's experience, education, and individual characteristics, and this can lead to positive or negative behavioral changes in athletes (Horn, 2008; Dweck, 2017).

In this context, it is important to discuss how Attribution Theory can provide a framework for understanding relationships between athletes and coaches and what practices can be developed for coach education, performance management, and psychological support applications.

Attribution Theory is frequently used in sports psychology literature to understand the attributions made by athletes and coaches in situations of success and failure. Athletes often attribute their success to internal factors (e.g., work discipline, training program), while they may emphasize external factors (e.g., opponent performance, referee decisions) when they fail.

Coaches play a crucial role in the processes of success and failure for athletes. The sports psychology literature examines how coaches perceive athletes' performance and how these perceptions affect athletes' motivation and success. This study aims to explore how coaches' attributions in success and failure situations are shaped within the framework of Attribution Theory.

In the sports psychology literature, applying Attribution Theory helps us understand the responses of athletes to success and failure situations and the effects of these responses on their performance. For example:

- **Success Situations:** Athletes typically attribute success to internal factors. When an athlete performs well, they might attribute this to their own abilities or work discipline.
- **Failure Situations:** Coaches tend to attribute failure to external factors. For example, a coach might attribute an athlete's poor performance to bad luck, inexperience, or opponent performance.

According to Attribution Theory, attributions have significant effects on individuals' motivation and future performance. Internal attributions can enhance motivation, while external attributions can often reduce motivation or lead individuals to attribute responsibility to external factors.

- **Positive Attributions:** Internal attributions in success situations can increase athletes' self-confidence and provide motivation for future success.
- **Negative Attributions:** External attributions in failure situations can decrease athletes' motivation and have negative effects on their future performance.

Coaching is a profession that involves using knowledge, skills, and experience to help athletes develop their abilities, improve their performance, and achieve success in specific sports. Coaches assist athletes in technical, tactical, physical, and psychological development. In the coaching process, coaches:

- **Technical and Tactical Training:** Facilitate athletes' learning of game rules, strategies, and techniques.
- **Physical Training:** Enhance athletes' physical attributes such as endurance, strength, speed, and flexibility.
- **Psychological Support:** Improve athletes' motivation, help them manage stress, and boost their self-confidence.

- **Performance Analysis:** Evaluate athletes' performance and monitor their development.

In sports, the attribution process occurs in sequential stages based on the behavioral components of the athlete. The fundamental stages involved in the attribution process are as follows:

- **Observation of Athlete Behavior:** Not all behaviors exhibited by athletes in training and competitions are meaningful from a coach's perspective. The behaviors observed in the attribution process should generally be considered as behaviors produced for the achievement of a goal. For an athlete's behavior to be purposive, the athlete must possess the will to choose among behaviors, performance, and technical competence.
- **Structuring the Goal:** The attribution process for a coach does not end with observing and evaluating the athlete's behavior. At this stage, the coach's time working with the athlete, knowledge of the athlete, and particularly the coach's ability to combine their own skills with experience to make attributions are important for the athlete's performance.
- **Making Attributions According to the Athlete's Characteristics:** Each athlete has different capacities for perceiving mental training. Especially in training or competitions, teaching new techniques and providing pre-competition support should be tailored to the athlete's personality and performance capacity. Making attributions and attributions for behavior without a defined goal is highly detrimental to athlete performance.

## Attribution Theory

Attribution theories play a significant role in organizational behavior because they relate to the "why" questions of behavior. Attribution theories concern personal, social perception, interpersonal behavior, and relationships (Özgener & Ulu, 2018). These theories propose the following assumptions:

- People try to make sense of their world.
- People attribute their actions to either internal or external causes.
- People make causal attributions in relatively rational ways.

Attribution Theory, developed by Fritz Heider and later expanded by Harold Kelley and Bernard Weiner, is a psychological theory examining how people explain the causes of events and behaviors. It aims to understand how people perceive the reasons for outcomes such as success or failure and how these perceptions affect their future behavior.

Heider (1958) introduced Attribution Theory, which was later developed by Kelley and Weiner. The theory posits that individuals seek to determine the causes of events and that these determinations affect their emotional and behavioral responses. Kelley's theory explains the cognitive processes individuals use when evaluating their own and others' performances. These schemas can directly affect employees' job satisfaction and motivation (Heider, 1958).

Heider (1958) proposed that individuals differentiate between internal and external causes when trying to understand their surroundings. Internal causes relate to a person's own abilities, efforts, and personal characteristics, while external causes relate to external factors such as luck or environmental conditions (Weiner, 1985).

Attribution Theory examines how individuals establish cause-and-effect relationships about their own and others' behaviors. The fundamental assumption of the theory is that people have a natural tendency to understand and explain the causes of events. This theory is used particularly in sports psychology to examine how athletes' explanations for their performances and results affect their motivation, emotions, and future performance.

Weiner's Attribution Theory aims to understand how people explain others' behaviors and how these explanations affect social relationships. The theory is often used in social psychology and interpersonal communication contexts. Weiner's Attribution Theory focuses on attributing behavior to internal and external factors.

Weiner's Attribution Theory consists of three main components:

- **Locus of Control:**
  - **Internal (Internal) Attributions:** Causes attributed to one's own abilities, efforts, or character traits. For example, "I succeeded because I worked hard."
  - **External (External) Attributions:** Causes attributed to environmental factors, luck, or other people's behaviors. For example, "I failed because the weather was bad."
- **Variability:**
  - **Controllable Attributions:** Factors that can be controlled by the individual, such as the amount of work.
  - **Uncontrollable Attributions:** Factors that cannot be controlled by the individual, such as innate abilities or weather conditions.
- **Controllability:**
  - **Stable Attributions:** Factors that do not change over time. For example, intelligence is considered a stable trait.
  - **Variable (Temporary) Attributions:** Factors that can change over time. For example, fatigue is a temporary condition.

Weiner's theory is particularly applicable in educational settings. Students attribute their success and failure in different ways. For example, one student might attribute their success to their own effort, while another might attribute their failure to the teacher's unfairness. These attributions affect the student's motivation, future performance, and emotional responses (Weiner, 1992).

## The Role of Attribution Theory in Social Relationships

Weiner's Attribution Theory makes significant implications not only in the context of individual success and motivation but also in social relationships and interpersonal interactions. How people attribute others' behaviors can significantly affect the nature and quality of relationships (Biddle, 1993).

**Empathy and Understanding:** When people attribute others' behaviors to internal factors (e.g., character traits), it often results in less empathy and understanding. For example, a person who attributes a friend's lateness to laziness or disorganization might show less understanding compared to someone who attributes it to external factors (Hu, Zhang, Shi, Fan, 2023).

**Blame and Praise:** Attributions also influence the dynamics of blame and praise. For example, a team might attribute their success to a leader's skills while attributing their failures to external factors. This can lead to praising the leader and blaming external factors.

**Relationship Satisfaction:** In workplace relationships, attributing positive behaviors to internal causes (e.g., love, loyalty) and negative behaviors to external causes (e.g., stress, workload) can enhance relationship satisfaction. Such attributions can help partners or colleagues show more understanding and support to each other (Grosser, Labianca, Venkataramani, 2023).

## Weiner's Attribution Theory and Emotional Reactions

Weiner's Attribution Theory also shapes people's emotional responses. The attribution of a cause to an event determines the emotional reaction to it.

1. **Success and Happiness:** When success is attributed to internal and controllable causes (e.g., effort), it generally increases feelings of happiness and pride. However, if success is attributed to external and uncontrollable causes (e.g., luck), the level of happiness may be lower (Fredrickson, Branigan, 2021).
2. **Failure and Disappointment:** When failure is attributed to internal and controllable factors (e.g., lack of effort), it often leads to feelings of disappointment and frustration. Conversely, if failure is attributed to external and uncontrollable factors (e.g., bad luck), individuals might feel less personal disappointment and more acceptance of the outcome.
3. **Concentration and Attention:** Sports performance is directly related to the ability to concentrate correctly at the right time. The instructions provided by coaches can determine how athletes direct their attention and concentration. A communication style supported by effective feedback can help athletes maintain focus during matches or competitions (Jones et al., 2002).
4. **Team Communication and Collaboration:** In team sports, how coaches manage team communication and collaboration directly affects the relationships and cohesion among team members. Positive and supportive coaching attribution can enhance team members' motivation to work together and improve their performance (Carron et al., 2005).
5. **Performance Development and Continuous Improvement:** Coaches' attitudes and feedback styles enable athletes to continuously develop themselves. Communication supported by proper guidance and positive attributions can help athletes consistently improve their performance and maximize their potential (Garita, 2023).

## Research Method

This study, which investigates the strengths and weaknesses of golf coaches and their attributions of success and failure within the framework of Attribution Theory, employs a phenomenological design from qualitative research methods. When the focus of the research is on describing an individual's perceptions, narrative research is the most suitable qualitative design. Conversely, when the aim is to explore the experiences of one or more individuals related to a phenomenon, phenomenology is the most appropriate design. In phenomenological research, it is crucial to determine general orientations, benefit from individuals' experiences, and express and explain the meanings attributed to these experiences (Çapar & Ceylan, 2022,

p. 297). This study employs a phenomenological design to articulate individuals' behaviors and attitudes, uncover the underlying reasons for their actions, and identify their unique perceptions.

## Population and Sample

The study focused on golf coaches operating in various golf clubs in Istanbul. The reason for selecting golf coaches is due to the unique nature of golf as a sport, often described as the "silent game of green," and the high socio-economic and educational level of its athletes. Golf is an individual sport reflecting human character, where athletes discipline themselves in various ways. The quality and efficiency of the mental training provided by golf coaches before and after tournaments are crucial.

Golf coaches, as described in the golf literature, perform various roles, including accompanying the golfer on the course, carrying their bag, advising on the appropriate club for various shots, cleaning equipment when it gets muddy, searching for balls that travel long distances, and familiarizing the player with the course. They are often referred to as "caddies" and are constantly present with their players.

Due to the unique nature of golf coaches compared to coaches in other sports and the scarcity of research in the literature specifically related to attribution theories, a simple random sampling method was used to select 10 golf coaches from a total of 272 golf coaches working in Istanbul. Information about the golf coaches in the sample group is provided in Table 1.

Table 1. Demographic Information of Educational Managers Participating in the Study

|                     | n                          |   |
|---------------------|----------------------------|---|
| Gender              | Female                     | 3 |
|                     | Male                       | 5 |
| Education Level     | Undergraduate              | 2 |
|                     | Postgraduate               | 6 |
| Years of Experience | 0-5 years                  | 1 |
|                     | 6-10 years                 | 1 |
|                     | 11-15 years                | 3 |
|                     | 16 years and high          | 3 |
| Profession          | Physical Education Teacher | 1 |
|                     | Head Coach                 | 5 |
|                     | Researcher/Author          | 1 |
|                     | English Teacher            | 1 |

## Research Aim and Data Collection Tool

The primary aim of this study is to systematically analyze the attributions made by coaches in success and failure situations and to determine the potential effects of these attributions on athlete performance.

The data for this study were collected using a semi-structured interview form developed by the researchers. The semi-structured interview form contained four open-ended questions. The data

were obtained through face-to-face interviews. The questions in the interview form were formulated as follows:

- As a golf coach, in which areas do you perceive yourself as most successful and strong during training sessions and tournaments?
- As a golf coach, in which areas do you perceive yourself as most unsuccessful and weak during training sessions and tournaments?
- As a golf coach, what reasons do you attribute to your successes in tournaments?
- As a golf coach, what reasons do you attribute to your failures with athletes in tournaments?

## Data Analysis

The collected data were examined and analyzed using content analysis methodology. In the content analysis, codes and themes were identified to reveal the purpose of the study.

## Findings and Discussion

Various findings were reached based on the data obtained from the study. The data are analyzed below.

Table 2: Areas Where Golf Coaches Perceive Themselves as Most Successful and Strong During Training Sessions and Tournaments

| THEME                                                                                                | CODED EXPRESSIONS                                                                 | n |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---|
| Areas Where Golf Coaches Perceive Themselves as Most Strong During Training Sessions and Tournaments | Collaboration and Effective Communication with Athletes (GA1, GA3, GA5, GA7, GA8) | 5 |
|                                                                                                      | Transformational Leadership (GA2, GA5)                                            | 2 |
|                                                                                                      | Use of Technology in Training (GA3, GA4, GA6, GA8)                                | 4 |
|                                                                                                      | Emphasis on Motivation Techniques (GA1, GA2, GA3, GA5, GA7)                       | 6 |
|                                                                                                      | Understanding the Athlete Well (GA1, GA4, GA6, GA7, GA8)                          | 5 |
|                                                                                                      | Ability to Perform Performance Analysis (GA1, GA2, GA3, GA5, GA7, GA8)            | 6 |
|                                                                                                      | Ability to Adjust Tournament Schedule (GA6, GA8)                                  | 2 |
|                                                                                                      | Ability to Arrange Pre-Tournament Training Camps (GA1, GA2, GA3, GA4, GA6)        | 5 |
|                                                                                                      | Openness to Change, Development, and Innovation (GA3, GA7)                        | 2 |
|                                                                                                      | Ability to Plan Training Sessions (GA1, GA2, GA3, GA4, GA6, GA8)                  | 6 |
|                                                                                                      | Valuing Athletes (GA1, GA2, GA3, GA5, GA7)                                        | 5 |

Table 2 presents the coded perceptions of golf coaches regarding their strengths during training and tournaments. According to the coded expressions, the areas where golf coaches perceive themselves as most strong include: collaboration and effective communication with athletes, transformational leadership, the use of technology in training, emphasis on motivational efforts, understanding the athlete well, performance analysis capabilities, ability to adjust the tournament schedule, ability to arrange pre-tournament training camps, openness to change, development, and innovation, ability to plan training sessions, and valuing athletes. These areas represent the strengths where golf coaches view themselves as most successful in their work with athletes during training and tournaments. This table illustrates the areas where golf coaches feel most competent. Coaches particularly feel strong in areas such as collaboration and effective communication with athletes, transformational leadership, using technology in training, and emphasizing motivational efforts. This finding suggests that golf coaches adopt modern and effective leadership approaches and actively utilize technology. Additionally, technical skills such as understanding the athlete well and performing performance analysis are also among the coaches' strengths. This indicates that golf coaches develop strategic approaches to understand athletes and enhance their performance.

GA1 highlighted that collaboration and effective communication with athletes, focusing on motivational efforts in training and competitions, planning and organizing training sessions, and valuing athletes are perceived as their strongest areas.

GA3 stated, "I prioritize motivational efforts and do everything possible for the success of my athletes. I value my athletes regardless of their age group. I have made every effort to adjust the pre-tournament camp environment and ensure athletes' comfort before competitions. I research and apply new training methods to address the deficiencies of previous sessions. I see myself as particularly strong in performance analysis, openness to change, development, and innovation."

GA4 mentioned, "I believe I am strong in adapting and effectively using technology in training, understanding my athletes, performing performance analysis, and planning training sessions."

GA5 noted, "Throughout my time working with athletes, I emphasize collaboration and effective communication and value my athletes as much as possible. Additionally, I consider performance analysis of my athletes to be one of my strongest skills."

GA6 explained, "Among the mentioned characteristics, I focus on using technology in training by researching and improving myself. Planning training sessions, adjusting tournament schedules, and arranging optimal camp environments for athletes are my strongest areas as a golf coach."

GA7 said, "During my tenure as a coach, I have always strived for collaboration and effective communication with my athletes. I have placed great importance on motivating my athletes. I see myself as quite strong in motivating athletes. Since I started coaching, I have always been open to change, development, and innovation and have made every effort to renew myself."

GA8 stated, "I consider my strongest area to be collaboration and effective communication with athletes. Throughout my coaching career, I have always focused on

planning training sessions well, analyzing athletes' performance in golf, and providing feedback, which I regard as my strengths."

Table 3: Areas Where Golf Coaches Perceive Themselves as Most Weak During Training and Tournaments

| THEME                                                                                     | CODED EXPRESSIONS                                                          | n |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------|---|
| Areas Where Golf Coaches Perceive Themselves as Most Weak During Training and Tournaments | Inexperience (GA3, GA4, GA8)                                               | 3 |
|                                                                                           | Lack of Emphasis on Training (GA4)                                         | 1 |
|                                                                                           | Inability to Adapt to Innovations in Training Methods (GA1, GA3, GA7, GA8) | 4 |
|                                                                                           | Being Closed Off to Communication with Athletes (GA5, GA2)                 | 2 |
|                                                                                           | Lack of Motivation (GA2, GA8)                                              | 2 |
|                                                                                           | Resistance to Self-Criticism (GA3)                                         | 1 |
|                                                                                           | Being Overly Disciplined in Training (GA4, GA5)                            | 2 |
|                                                                                           | Experiencing Conflicts with Athletes (GA8)                                 | 1 |
|                                                                                           | Ineffective Communication with Parents (GA1, GA7)                          | 2 |

Table 3 presents the areas where golf coaches perceive themselves as most weak during training and tournaments. According to the coded expressions, the areas where coaches perceive themselves as weakest include inexperience, lack of emphasis on training, inability to adapt to innovations in training methods, being closed off to communication with athletes, lack of motivation, resistance to self-criticism, being overly disciplined in training, experiencing conflicts with athletes, and ineffective communication with athlete families. This table highlights the areas where golf coaches feel weakest. Inexperience and lack of emphasis on training are among the areas where coaches feel most weak. Additionally, factors such as inability to adapt to innovations in training methods and being closed off to communication with athletes also stand out as areas perceived as weak. This situation indicates that golf coaches may be adhering to some traditional methods and experiencing difficulties in adapting to new innovations. Improving in these areas could contribute to increasing their success in golf coaching.

GA8: "One of the areas where I see myself as unsuccessful and weak is conflicts with athletes. Particularly, the reluctance and disruption of training by young athletes sometimes lead to conflicts between us. I am not fond of compromising on training schedules. This could be seen as a somewhat traditional coaching management approach, but such traditional or authoritarian coaching structures are not suitable for golf coaching. I see this very clearly."

GA1: "As coaches, we sometimes have negative feelings towards parents who point out our deficiencies or incorrect behaviors. When such situations arise, unfortunately, we tend to

respond in a subjective and negative manner. I know that this is a very wrong behavior and I try to avoid such behaviors as much as possible."

GA7: "Currently, I work with young athletes. Due to the nature of golf, teaching proper techniques can sometimes be boring for athletes. However, parents are very impatient and expect their children to participate in tournaments and compete immediately. Support from parents is crucial, especially for young athletes. However, I have not been able to bring parents to the desired level. I am not convinced that we can achieve the success we want without involving them in this process."

GA4: "As a golf coach, the area where I am most unsuccessful is my inexperience in coaching. Working hard and improving myself in golf is crucial for my future coaching career. I know that experienced golf coaches are sought after abroad. In fact, due to the intensity of my school lessons, I cannot dedicate much time to training. This situation also causes a lack of motivation."

GA2: "I sometimes struggle to communicate with athletes due to difficulties in finding suitable training grounds and the athletes not arriving on time for training. Sometimes, every week brings a new issue. I genuinely find myself unsuccessful in crisis and conflict management. I also engage in self-criticism, but I attribute this problem to my inexperience. I need to overcome this over time; otherwise, coaching in golf will become a challenging situation for me."

GA5: "The area where I am most frustrated and weak is addressing negative attitudes and motivational deficiencies due to my inexperience as a golf coach. I attribute this to a lack of knowledge and experience in the field. Particularly, the inability to adapt to innovations in training methods... The limited amount of scientific studies on golf, due to the sport's relatively low popularity, makes it difficult to find sufficient resources."

GA3: "Being a golf coach is quite challenging. The high socio-economic and educational levels of athletes make working with them difficult. These characteristics sometimes make me resistant to self-criticism. Although this is not a good behavior, I occasionally experience this situation. Managing athletes with extensive experience in a sport with specific characteristics like golf is particularly challenging."

Table 4: Areas to Which Golf Coaches Attribute Their Successes in Tournaments

| THEME                                      | CODED EXPRESSIONS                                                  | n |
|--------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------|---|
| Reasons Coaches Attribute to Their Success | Self-confidence (GA1, GA2, GA3)                                    | 3 |
|                                            | Strong planning and organization (GA4, GA6, GA8)                   | 3 |
|                                            | Openness to communication (GA1, GA3, GA5, GA7, GA8)                | 5 |
|                                            | Ability to motivate athletes and oneself (GA1, GA2, GA3, GA5, GA7) | 5 |
|                                            | Continuous self-renewal (GA4, GA6)                                 | 2 |
|                                            | Effective training delivery (GA5, GA7)                             | 2 |
|                                            | Emphasis on mental training (GA3, GA6)                             | 2 |
|                                            | Good game reading (GA3, GA4, GA6)                                  | 3 |
|                                            | Effective tactical knowledge (GA3, GA4, GA6, GA8)                  | 4 |
|                                            |                                                                    |   |

The reasons coaches attribute to their tournament successes are coded in Table 4. According to the coded expressions, self-confidence, strong planning and organization, openness to communication, the ability to motivate athletes and oneself, continuous self-renewal, effective training delivery, emphasis on mental training, good game reading, and effective tactical knowledge are among the reasons coaches attribute to their tournament successes. This table examines the reasons golf coaches attribute to their tournament successes. Factors such as self-confidence, strong planning and organization, and openness to communication are identified as areas that contribute to the coaches' successes. Additionally, technical and psychological elements like effective training delivery and emphasis on mental training are also attributed to success. This finding reveals that golf coaches perceive themselves as strong in both technical skills and psychological preparation and believe they are successful in these areas.

GA1: "The main reason for my successes is my self-confidence. When a tournament begins, I motivate myself by evaluating how I can perform my job best, and I start the tournament by reflecting this state."

GA4: "I always rely on better planning and organization management in my athlete's successes during tournaments. Planning is very important for my successes. I always try to ensure that my athlete does not experience any problems by making a proper plan in advance. My athlete's belief in this has been effective in my successes."

GA8: "Being open in communication is a major factor in my success because it strengthens my relationships with athletes. Proper timing and communication are very important to me."

GA5: "As a coach, I believe that my successes are due to having good training with my athletes and using effective mental training techniques. I place great importance on mental training

before the tournament. Especially, it is very important for my athlete to get used to and use this training."

GA4: "My success is greatly attributed to being well-equipped, competent, and constantly renewing myself. The variety of experiences gained from working with different athletes and my self-confidence are other factors that influence my successes."

GA3: "I believe that the biggest reason for my success as a coach is my ability to read the game well and my effective tactical knowledge. Being a coach in golf is very difficult. Effective athletes are those who choose their coaches. Golf coaching is not an ordinary job. If you do not have the necessary qualifications, you cannot succeed in golf. In this respect, my success is greatly influenced by my adequacy and experience."

**Table 5: Areas Golf Coaches Attribute to Their Failures in Tournaments**

| THEME                                       | CODED EXPRESSIONS                                                                                             | n |
|---------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---|
| Reasons Coaches Attribute to Their Failures | Inability to Keep Up with Technological Developments in Golf Lack of Knowledge and Experience (GA3, GA4, GA8) | 8 |
|                                             | Insufficient Effort and Time Spent on Training (GA4)                                                          | 1 |
|                                             |                                                                                                               | 5 |
|                                             | Inadequate Interest in Golf (GA1, GA2, GA3, GA5, GA7)                                                         | 2 |
|                                             | Lack of Planning in Training Sessions (GA4, GA5)                                                              | 6 |
|                                             | Insufficient Infrastructure, Equipment, and Facilities (GA1, GA2, GA3, GA5, GA7, GA8)                         | 3 |
|                                             | Psychological Resilience Issues (GA5, GA2, GA8)                                                               |   |

The reasons that golf coaches attribute to their failures in tournaments are shown in Table 5. According to the coded expressions, the following factors are cited: inability to keep up with technological advancements in golf, lack of knowledge and experience, insufficient effort and time spent on training, inadequate interest in golf, lack of planning in training sessions, insufficient infrastructure, equipment, and facilities, and psychological resilience issues. Table 5 summarizes the perceptions of golf coaches regarding the reasons for their failures in tournaments and groups these reasons under various themes. Key factors identified include "inability to keep up with technological advancements," "lack of knowledge and experience," "insufficient effort and time spent on training," and "insufficient infrastructure, equipment, and facilities." This table highlights the necessity of adapting to rapidly evolving technology in golf. Inability to keep up with technological advancements is one of the most frequently cited reasons for coaches' failures. This indicates the critical role that technological support and analysis play in achieving success in individual sports like golf. Coaches face significant challenges when

they cannot effectively use or keep up with developments in technology, which can negatively impact athletes' performance. Lack of knowledge and experience is particularly critical for young or inexperienced coaches. These deficiencies can lead to inadequacies in determining and applying appropriate strategies, making it difficult to achieve success in tournaments. Additionally, factors such as insufficient effort and time spent on training are also significant reasons attributed to coaches' failures. This can lead to issues with motivating athletes or planning training sessions effectively. Inadequate interest in golf is another critical factor that affects both coaches' and athletes' motivation and can hinder the overall development of the sport. Moreover, insufficient infrastructure, equipment, and facilities negatively impact athletes' preparation processes. Such deficiencies can prevent coaches from creating optimal training conditions, leading to performance losses. Lastly, psychological resilience issues are also cited as reasons for failure. Psychological resilience is a key factor in success in individual sports. Coaches' inability to adequately support athletes' mental preparation or deficiencies in this area can result in unsuccessful outcomes.

This analysis details the various dimensions through which golf coaches explain their failures and underscores the impact these factors have on athletes' performance. For coaches, keeping up with technological advancements, increasing their experience, and addressing infrastructure deficiencies are critical steps toward achieving success.

GA5: "One of the main reasons for my failures as a golf coach in tournaments is the fact that golf athletes are truly unique. In reality, it is a sport that is closed off to the media. It is often perceived as a sport for the wealthy. However, that is not entirely true; young people interested in the sport can still participate in golf. I believe it needs to be supported through scientific research by both social media and academics."

GA7: "Internally, both golf athletes and coaches are in a very isolated situation. We generally need to show people how golf training is conducted and what is done. With limited interest, it naturally becomes somewhat challenging to find athletes. However, even if we had a large number of athletes, we would face issues with infrastructure and facilities. In reality, the most significant factor in my failures is the lack of facilities for training."

GA4: "As a golf coach, I attribute my failures to not being able to allocate time for training sessions at the desired level. Another factor is my lack of knowledge and experience, which I consider to be the biggest obstacle to success."

GA3: "As with any sport, the coach is a significant factor in an athlete's success and failure. However, golf is a very special sport, and the coach's knowledge and experience are crucial. I attribute my failures to a lack of experience. I believe I need to address this issue over time."

GA2: "Other coaching colleagues might have focused on this, but I think one reason for our failures is that interest in golf is limited to a specific segment of the population. Another reason for failure is the frequent facility problems experienced, especially during the winter months. The lack of access to the field leads to deficiencies in training and incomplete training, which causes significant issues in the development of young athletes."

## Conclusion

This research aimed to explore how golf coaches operating in the Istanbul region evaluate the success and failure of their athletes and how these evaluations are shaped within the framework of Attribution Theory. In this context, the findings of the study contribute significantly to both the sports psychology literature and practical coaching applications. The study observed that coaches' attributions regarding their athletes' performance were largely based on various factors. Specifically, in cases of success, coaches attributed outcomes to internal factors such as athletes' personal effort, talent, and motivation. It was determined that such internal attributions bolster athletes' self-confidence, create a positive impact on the coach-athlete relationship, and enhance athletes' motivation for future performance. Internal attributions help athletes feel in control of their own successes, thereby laying the groundwork for more sustainable and positive performance.

On the other hand, in cases of failure, coaches were found to reference external factors (e.g., weather conditions, opponent strength, bad luck) more frequently when evaluating athletes' performance. These external attributions may reduce athletes' sense of responsibility for their failures, potentially negatively affecting their future performance. While external attributions might help relieve pressure on athletes, they can also adversely affect the processes of taking responsibility and learning from mistakes. This situation might weaken athletes' personal development and their desire to advance themselves.

Another significant finding of the research focuses on whether coaches adequately consider athletes' individual differences when making attributions. Athletes' psychological traits, levels of self-confidence, and mental resilience greatly shape the effects of attributions on them. In this context, developing customized attribution strategies that take into account each athlete's psychological makeup can help coaches create support mechanisms better suited to the athletes' individual needs. Specifically, developing more supportive and empowering attribution strategies for athletes with low self-confidence or difficulties in coping with failure can enhance their mental resilience and improve their performance. The findings also indicate that coaches should help athletes view failures as learning opportunities rather than attributing them to external factors. This approach can better prepare athletes for similar situations in the future and improve their performance. Establishing a feedback culture that encourages athletes to learn from mistakes and use these lessons positively is a crucial element in supporting their development.

The theoretical contributions of the research are noteworthy. Although Attribution Theory has long been used in sports psychology, the findings of this study underscore the importance of the theory, especially in coach-athlete relationships. It was observed that coaches' attribution strategies affect not only athletes' current performance but also their long-term development and mental resilience. These findings support the more effective use of Attribution Theory in sports psychology education and coaching practices. Practically, the study suggests that coaches should adopt a more conscious and strategic approach when evaluating athletes' performance. Focusing on internal factors when evaluating success and providing balanced and constructive

feedback during failure can positively impact athletes' motivation and development. Furthermore, coaching education programs are recommended to focus on Attribution Theory and attribution strategies to enhance coaches' awareness and enable more effective communication with athletes.

This research also lays an important groundwork for future studies. Future research should test these findings in different sports and with larger sample groups to increase the generalizability of coaching practices. Additionally, studies examining the impact of cultural differences on attribution strategies for coaches and athletes could provide valuable contributions to the sports psychology literature. In this context, more comprehensive and diverse research considering the cultural contexts of coaches and athletes is necessary. Overall, this study highlights how the attributions coaches use when evaluating athletes' performance deeply affect athletes' motivation, self-confidence, and performance, and underscores the long-term implications of these effects. Developing more strategic and conscious attribution strategies will play a significant role in athletes' journey toward achieving success.

**Importance of Demographic Data:** The fact that most of the participating coaches are male and have graduate education highlights that high education levels and a predominance of males are characteristic of the profession of golf coaching. Additionally, the significant number of coaches with 11 years or more of experience indicates the presence of experienced coaches in golf. This suggests that golf is a disciplined and experience-requiring field, and experienced coaches are more likely to have a higher potential for success.

**Analysis of Strengths:** Golf coaches particularly feel strong in areas such as collaboration, communication, and transformational leadership. This finding suggests that modern coaching approaches are also adopted in golf. Coaches' strengths in using technology effectively, conducting motivational work, and performance analysis highlight that success in golf depends not only on technical knowledge and skills but also on leadership and communication abilities.

**Analysis of Weaknesses and Reasons for Failure:** Factors such as inexperience, inability to adapt to technological innovations, and insufficient time allocated to training are among the areas where coaches feel weak. Additionally, reasons attributed to their failures include inability to keep up with technological advancements, lack of knowledge and experience, and infrastructure deficiencies. These findings indicate that golf coaches may still rely on some traditional methods and face challenges in adapting to innovations. Improving in these areas will contribute to enhancing their success in golf.

**Impact of Psychological and Social Factors:** The research results show that coaches value psychological resilience and athlete motivation. However, elements such as psychological instability are among the reasons for failure. This indicates that coaches need to focus more on athletes' mental preparation, as this area is crucial for success. Supporting athletes' psychological preparation will enhance overall performance.

Importance of Infrastructure and Equipment: Infrastructure deficiencies and facility shortcomings are significant reasons for coaches' failures. This finding underscores the critical role of physical conditions in achieving success in golf. Providing better equipment and facilities will improve the quality of training processes and positively affect athletes' performance.

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