

Some Personality Traits and Their Relationship to Refereeing Performance Among Football Referees in the Southern Region

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Abstract

This research attempts to scientifically study an individual's behavior, experience, and mental processes related to their human skills across various fields, levels, and practices. It aims to describe, explain, and predict these processes to benefit from the knowledge and information gained through application. Certain personal traits are among these forms of knowledge, serving as a fundamental driving force for achieving success and excellence in various aspects of life. This is particularly true in professions that demand high concentration, quick decision-making, and the ability to withstand immense pressure, such as sports refereeing. While the technical and cognitive aspects of the rules of the game are important, the psychological and personal aspects play a crucial role in a referee's performance and their ability to manage a match effectively and fairly. This research aims to explore the personal traits of football referees and how these factors influence their performance. The research objective is to identify the relationship between certain personal traits and refereeing performance. To this end, the researcher developed a scale for assessing certain personal traits and evaluative scores for referees to determine the strength of the relationship between the two variables under study.

Introduction

Personal traits are a fundamental driver of excellence in all aspects of life, and their impact is clearly evident in matches that demand sharp focus, quick decision-making, and the ability to withstand immense pressure, as is the case in the world of sports refereeing. Football referees are not merely enforcers of the rules; they are leaders who manage vital events on the field, and their decisions directly affect the course and outcome of the match. Despite the great importance of knowledge of the laws of the game and the technical aspects, the psychological and personal aspects play a pivotal role in determining the success of a referee and their ability to manage matches effectively and impartially. This research aims to delve into the relationship between the personal traits of football referees and how these aspects are reflected in their actual performance on the field. In this context, we will address the concept of some personal traits and their crucial importance in a challenging environment such as football matches. We will also highlight the most prominent personal traits that are indispensable for an outstanding referee and that enable them to adapt to changing situations. Through analyzing these factors, this research seeks to provide a comprehensive view of the psychological factors that contribute to building an exceptional football referee capable of performing their duties with high efficiency and competence.

Research Problem:

Despite the pivotal role of football referees in ensuring the fairness and integrity of matches, they face significant challenges related to increasing psychological pressure, the need for rapid decision-making under close scrutiny, and the ability to manage negative reactions from players and the public. These challenges can directly impact a referee's performance and limit their ability to accurately apply the rules and maintain match discipline, potentially affecting match results and the overall credibility of the game. The problem lies in the fact that psychological and personal aspects, particularly certain personality traits, often receive insufficient attention in referee training and development programs, despite their crucial importance. Does the absence or weakness of these psychological aspects lead to a decline in referee performance? How can certain personality traits, such as self-confidence, composure, and mental flexibility, enhance a referee's ability to cope with these pressures and make correct decisions in critical situations? The research problem lies in the extent to which specific personality traits influence the performance of football referees and their ability to manage matches effectively and impartially under increasing pressure. Does neglecting these aspects in training programs lead to a decline in the quality of refereeing?

Research Objectives:

1. To develop and standardize a scale for assessing certain personality traits among football referees in the southern region.
2. To identify the performance level of football referees in the southern region.
3. To identify certain personality traits among football referees in the southern region.
4. To establish standard levels and scores for a scale assessing certain personality traits among football referees in the southern region.

Research Scope:

Human Scope: A sample of football referees in the southern region.

Spatial Scope: The referees' committees in the governorates of Dhi Qar, Basra, and Maysan.

Temporal Scope: The 2024-2025 season.

Definition of Terms:

Some Personality Traits: A personality trait represents enduring characteristics and a predisposition to act in a particular way in different situations. A trait, therefore, replaces the concept of personal temperament.

Football Referee: A qualified and accredited individual by the football federation who is primarily responsible for applying the Laws of the Game during a match. **Referee Evaluation Form:** This involves assessing and evaluating the technical, refereeing, and physical performance of referees using a form prepared in advance by the Referees Association.

Chapter Two: Theoretical Studies and Previous Research: The researchers addressed topics related to the research subject, including certain personality traits as a social phenomenon that underscores individual activity as a form of psychological skill. Previous research studies were also discussed. Refereeing is a complex and multifaceted profession. It requires more than just academic knowledge and psychological skills. In the modern world of football, there is a growing recognition of the importance of individuals possessing diverse and comprehensive competencies and abilities related to their field of specialization and work. Among these abilities, cognitive, emotional, and social skills stand out significantly. Sports psychology is a branch of psychology that studies the psychological factors affecting athletic performance and how to improve these factors to enhance athletic performance. Sports psychology plays a vital role in physical education, helping to develop individuals' personal skills, which in turn helps achieve better results. "The nominal existence and its significance in terms of the trait's meaning, its generality, its dynamism (which expresses every behavior the individual exhibits), the possibility of determining the trait empirically or statistically, the trait's independence from other traits, the trait's agreement or disagreement with social norms and conventions, the incompatibility between the trait and customs indicating the trait's absence, and finally, the definition of the trait through the personality that embodies it or through its distribution in society or among the general population

"Cattell summarizes the basic traits of personality as those that quantitatively express the basic structure of personality and represent its building blocks. Furthermore, they are the most economical means of description and are considered independent factors because they are not interconnected. They express the basic components of personality" (). Traits constitute a fundamental aspect of personality in Cattell's theory. According to him, traits are permanent, inherited entities that develop over time and shape behavior. Cattell established a hierarchical design

for traits, where general traits are limited in number, while specific traits are greater in number" An athlete may have high psychological energy as a result of high anxiety, while another athlete may have high psychological energy as a result of some positive emotions. There is a hypothesis that indicates a linear relationship between increased psychological energy and improved performance)

Chapter Three: Research Methodology and Field Procedures:

Research Methodology: The descriptive method, employing both survey and analytical approaches, was chosen due to its suitability to the nature of the research problem and its solution.

The descriptive method relies on "studying reality or the phenomenon as it exists in reality, focusing on describing it accurately through qualitative expression, which describes the phenomenon and clarifies its characteristics, or quantitative expression, which provides a numerical description that clarifies the extent and magnitude of the phenomenon".

Research Population and Sample: The research population is defined as "all elements of the phenomenon that the researcher is studying, or all individuals, persons, or things that constitute the subject of the research problem." The research population was defined as the football referees of the southern region for the 2024-2025 season, totaling 225 referees distributed across the governorates of Basra, Dhi Qar, and Maysan. Consequently, the researcher randomly selected a sample of 200 referees, representing 88.8% of the total population. This sample was divided as shown in Table 1, as follows:

1. The construction sample, consisting of 100 referees (44.4% of the research population), which includes the methodological procedures and steps required to conduct the statistical analysis for constructing a scale measuring certain personality traits.
2. The pilot study sample, consisting of 10 referees (2.25% of the research population), which involves piloting the scale.
3. The application sample, consisting of 90 referees (40% of the total population). The study population was selected based on the results of the final version of the personality traits scale.

Table (1) shows the distribution of the sample.

Percentage	Exploratory experiment	Percentage	Application sample	Percentage	Construction sample	Origin population	Governorate	No
		%40,69	35	%46,5	40	86	Basra	1
%14,28	10	%42,85	30	%42,8	30	70	Dhi Qar	2
		%36,23	25	%43,4	30	69	Maysan	3
%4,44	10	%40	90	%44,4	100	225	Total	

Field Research Procedures:

Identifying the Scale Areas:To identify the areas of a scale measuring certain personality traits of football referees in the southern region, the researcher reviewed various sources, studies, and previous research that addressed the research topic, as well as conducting personal interviews with specialists in sports psychology. The researcher adopted the theoretical framework and identified (9) areas for the scale of certain personality traits. After analyzing the experts' responses, the researcher adopted the following areas, based on the chi-square test for area acceptance:

1. Leadership
2. Professional Intelligence
3. Resilience
4. Self-Confidence.

Determining the Style and Foundations for Formulating the Items

After reviewing relevant sources and studies and conducting personal interviews with a group of experts and specialists, the researcher adopted specific principles for formulating the scale items.

(52) items were formulated, distributed across four areas as follows:

1. Leadership (13) items.
2. Professional Intelligence (13) items.
3. Flexibility (13) items)
4. Self-Confidence (13 items)

Presentation of the Initial Scale Form.The initial scale form was presented to a panel of (15) expert judges with expertise in educational psychology, sports psychology, and management and organizational psychology. This was done to ensure the validity of the scale items and their suitability for the intended field, and to determine their appropriateness. After the experts provided their responses and comments on the scale items, the responses were analyzed using the chi-square test (χ^2) on a single sample. Upon completion of the expert responses analysis, it was found that the difference between those who agreed and those who disagreed, using the chi-square test, was statistically significant in favor of retaining the item and not deleting any of it.

Selecting a Rating Scale.After reviewing a range of scales, the researcher selected a three-part scale for measuring certain personality traits because it reduces the degree of guesswork. The researcher then asked experts for their opinion on the proposed three-part scale (always, sometimes, never) for the positive thinking scale. The experts' responses supported this proposed scale, as it achieved 100% agreement, making the proposed rating scale suitable for the scale. Weights were assigned according to the direction of the item.

Table (2) shows the rating scale scores.

A measure of certain personality traits			
Never	Sometimes	Always	Paragraph direction
1	2	3	Positive
3	2	1	Negative

The main experiment for analyzing the scale items on a construct sample:The application was conducted from Tuesday, January 14, 2025, to Thursday, March 27, 2025. One hundred (100) judges were selected, and the forms were distributed to them. After completion, the researcher reviewed each form to ensure that the instructions were followed and that all items were answered.

Statistical analysis of the scale items:The objective of statistically analyzing the items is "to improve the quality of the test by identifying weaknesses in the items and then either revising them or discarding them if they are not valid

Discriminatory Power of the Scale Items:Discriminatory power refers to the ability of items to differentiate between high-level and low-level judges in relation to the domain they measure. Statistical analysis is a necessary step in constructing personality scales and other assessment tools because logical analysis of the items can sometimes reveal their validity or accuracy, while statistical analysis of the scores

reveals the accuracy of the items in measuring what they were designed to measure. To calculate discriminatory power, the researcher followed these steps:

1. The respondent was given the alternative score they selected for each item on the scale, and then the scores for each item were totaled for each individual in the sample to represent their total score.
2. The scores obtained by the sample members were arranged in descending order from highest to lowest.
3. Two sets of scores were taken, one representing the 27% of individuals who scored highest and the other representing the 27% of individuals who scored lowest.

The highest and lowest 27% are considered acceptable for comparison between the two sets. "This ratio gives us two groups with the maximum possible size and differentiation when the test scores are distributed in the form of a normal distribution curve

Thus, the researcher had two groups, upper and lower, each consisting of (27) forms. To calculate the discrimination index for each of the (52) items in the scale, the researcher used a t-test with the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS). The statistically significant t-value was considered an indicator of item discrimination. Internal Consistency Coefficient:

The discriminatory power of items does not determine their homogeneity in measuring the phenomenon they are intended to measure. Items may have similar discriminatory power but measure different dimensions. This method assumes that the total score is the standard for the scale's validity. An item is removed when its correlation with the total score is low, based on the assumption that the item does not measure the phenomenon the scale is intended to measure. Using the internal consistency method distinguishes the scale with important features, which are: 1- Conducting internal consistency is one aspect of the scale's construction. 2- Conducting internal consistency is an extraction of the items' reliability.

The internal consistency method means the degree of correlation between items and the degree of correlation of each item with the test as a whole. The presence of non-zero correlations between items The scale items confirm the consistency of these items and that they all measure the same thing intended to be measured.

This indicator was extracted using the significance of Pearson's correlation coefficient between the score of each item and the total scale score, and the second method between the score of each domain and the total scale score for all members of the sample, which numbered (100) judges, using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS)

Table (3) shows the arithmetic mean and standard deviation of the upper and lower groups, the calculated t-value, and its significance in calculating the discriminatory power of the scale for some personality traits.

Paragraph strength	Sig	Calculated t value	Lower group		Upper Group		No
			standard deviation	arithmetic mean	standard deviation	arithmetic mean	
Leadership field							
Special	0.045	2.229	0.575	2.422	0.516	2.771	1
Special	0.000	3.892	0.542	2.290	0.320	2.887	2
Special	0.027	2.280	0.508	2.412	0.449	2.742	3
Special	0.036	2.233	0.736	2.180	0.506	2.550	4
Special	0.041	2.334	0.580	2.413	0.508	2.768	5
Special	0.000	3,493	0.808	2.037	0.396	2.815	6
Special	0.005	2.939	0.801	2.222	0.447	2.743	7
Special	0.003	3.083	0.705	2.422	0.267	2.996	8
Special	0.017	2.473	0.801	2.333	0.480	2.765	9
Special	0.023	2.337	0.679	2.322	0.465	2.704	10
Special	0.000	2.166	0.700	2.418	0.447	2.714	11
Special	0.022	2.853	0.629	2.370	0.550	2.657	12
Special	0.022	2.367	0.694	2.440	0.423	2.758	13
Field of professional intelligence							
Special	0.000	3.051	0.238	1.805	1.524	2.297	14
Special	0.03	2.989	0.125	1.948	1.803	2.977	15
Special	0.03	2.111	0.959	1.927	1.225	2.793	16
Special	0.02	3.476	0.231	1.808	1.172	2.936	17
Special	0.03	2.543	1.224	1.718	1.506	2.688	18
Special	0.02	3.232	0.357	1.830	1.301	2.696	19
Special	0.003	2.872	0.130	1.837	1.326	2.728	20
Special	0.03	3.321	0.026	1.131	1.124	2.679	21
Special	0.03	3.521	0.087	1.102	1.311	2.888	22
Special	0.01	3.052	0.873	1.024	1.347	2.776	23
Special	0.02	2.372	1.884	1.032	1.912	2.693	24
Special	0.02	3.070	0.541	1.638	1.917	2.894	25
Special	0.03	2.959	0.765	1.141	1.821	2.932	26
The field of self-confidence							
Special	0.000	2.837	0.050	1.022	1.322	2.830	27
Special	0.000	3.146	0.431	1.412	1.064	2.935	28
Special	0.000	2.825	0.012	1.070	1.433	2.867	29
Special	0.02	2.055	0.453	1.217	1.125	2.955	30
Special	0.004	2.341	0.876	1.274	1.721	2.568	31
Special	0.021	3.237	0.123	1.132	1.031	2.972	32
Special	0.000	2.414	0.105	1.041	1.050	2.186	33
Special	0.000	3.121	0.161	1.240	1.373	2.970	34
Special	0.024	2.870	0.072	2.351	1.423	2.856	35

Special	0.000	4.741	0.548	1.657	0.475	2.678	36
Special	0.000	6.23	0.192	2.030	0.497	2.892	37
Special	0.000	5.052	0.732	1.154	0.507	2.535	38
Special	0.000	8.573	0.438	1.320	0.475	2.621	39
Flexibility field							
Special	0.000	11.468	0.498	1.764	0.808	2.035	40
Special	0.03	2.919	0.705	1.121	1.840	2.961	41
Special	0.01	3.013	0.873	1.023	1.352	2.956	42
Special	0.02	3.121	0.161	1.240	1.373	2.970	43
Special	0.02	3.164	0.431	1.412	1.064	2.935	44
Special	0.000	11.468	0.498	1.764	0.808	2.035	45
Special	0.024	2.870	0.072	2.351	1.423	2.856	46
Special	0.000	4.741	0.548	1.657	0.475	2.678	47
Special	0.000	6.23	0.192	2.030	0.497	2.892	48
Special	0.000	5.052	0.732	1.154	0.507	2.535	49
Special	0.000	8.573	0.438	1.320	0.475	2.621	50
Special	0.000	11.33	0.549	1.895	0.999	2.214	51
Special	0.000	7.333	0.508	2.134	0.497	2.792	52

From the table above, we find that the mean scores for the upper and lower groups ranged from 2.996 to 2.035, while the mean scores for the lower group ranged from 2.440 to 1.022. The t-value ranged from 11.468 to 2.111. Comparing the significance level (sig) shows that all items were discriminatory, meaning there were no significant differences in the discriminatory performance of these items between the upper and lower groups. Scientific Foundations of the Scale: **Content Validity.** Content validity aims to determine whether the test or scale accurately represents the aspects of the trait, characteristic, or ability it is designed to measure. This validity is achieved when a group of specialists evaluates the suitability of the items for measuring what they are intended to measure. Content validity is a type of validity that reveals the contents of the scale's form through the items presented to experts and specialists. This type of validity was achieved by presenting the scale to experts and specialists during the initial review of the scale's initial version. The Two Extreme Groups Approach: The discriminatory power of the items was extracted, allowing researchers to identify those items capable of distinguishing between individuals scoring high and those scoring low. The items' discriminatory power serves as evidence of construct validity. The Relationship Between Each Item's Score and the Total Scale Score (Internal Consistency): (The researcher used the internal consistency coefficient to analyze the scale items, i.e., to calculate the validity of the scale items using the internal criterion by finding the correlation between each item's score and the total score for the dimension. It belongs to it, as does the total score of the scale. This type of validity is achieved through the use of Pearson's simple correlation law, which demonstrates the internal consistency of the scale for some personality traits.

1-Split-Half Method of the Scale: To find the scale's reliability coefficient, the researcher adopted the split-half method. Data obtained from a sample of (100) judges was used for the (52) items of the scale for some personality traits. The total score for each individual in the sample was used for each item on the scale. The scale for some personality traits had (26) odd-numbered items and (26) even-numbered items, which are equal. Pearson's correlation coefficient was calculated between the scores of the two parts of the scale, representing the odd-numbered and even-numbered items, and then the correlation coefficient value was extracted.

Table (4) shows the correlation coefficient value of each item with the total number of items on the scale for some personality traits.

The field of flexibility		The field of self-confidence		The field of professional intelligence		Leadership field		No
The meaning	The relationship of the paragraph to the scale	The meaning	The relationship of the paragraph to the scale	The meaning	The relationship of the paragraph to the scale	The meaning	The relationship of the paragraph to the scale	
Dal	0,368	Dal	0,441	Dal	0,455	Dal	0.433	1
Dal	0,435	Dal	0,416	Dal	0,484	Dal	0.228	2
Dal	0,356	Dal	0,422	Dal	0,338	Dal	0.434	3
Dal	0,446	Dal	0,338	Dal	0,334	Dal	0.455	4
Dal	0,484	Dal	0,467	Dal	0.458	Dal	0.467	5
Dal	0,435	Dal	0,388	Dal	0,484	Dal	0.588	6
Dal	0,356	Dal	0,482	Dal	0,338	Dal	0.484	7
Dal	0,368	Dal	0,386	Dal	0,455	Dal	0.558	8
Dal	0,429	Dal	0,425	Dal	0.325	Dal	0,377	9
Dal	0,344	Dal	0,422	Dal	0.433	Dal	0.543	10
Dal	0,441	Dal	0,338	Dal	0,439	Dal	0.455	11
Dal	0,409	Dal	0,467	Dal	0,344	Dal	0.467	12
Dal	0,344	Dal	0,388	Dal	0,520	Dal	0.588	13

The significance of (0.05) for the sample means that all items on the scale are valid in measuring what they are designed to measure and are consistent with each other in measuring the intended trait.

Table (5) shows the value of the domain correlation coefficient with the total score for the items on the scale for some personality traits.

The field of flexibility		The field of self-confidence		The field of professional intelligence		Leadership field		
The meaning	The relationship of the paragraph to the scale	The meaning	The relationship of the paragraph to the scale	The meaning	The relationship of the paragraph to the scale	The meaning	The relationship of the paragraph to the scale	No
Dal	0,988	Dal	0,984	Dal	0,976	Dal	0.987	1

The results show high correlation coefficients, with all correlation coefficients being statistically significant compared to the 0.05 level for the sample. This indicates that all items on the scale are valid in measuring what they are intended to measure and are consistent with each other in measuring the intended trait.

Main Experiment: After completing all the requirements and procedures for designing and constructing a scale for certain personality traits, consisting of five axes and (52) items, the researcher administered the scale in its final form to a sample of (90) referees from the Southern Region for the 2024/2025 season, from December 22, 2024, to January 12, 2025.

Statistical Methods:

The statistical data were processed using the SPSS statistical software.

1. Arithmetic mean.
2. Percentage.
3. Standard deviation.
4. Independent samples t-test.
5. Simple correlation coefficient.
6. Cronbach's alpha coefficient.
7. Chi-square score.
7. .8One-sample t-test.
8. .9Cronbach's alpha coefficient and skewness coefficient.

Chapter Four includes: Presentation, analysis, and discussion of results.

Table (6) shows the identification of some personality traits among football referees in the southern region.

level	Skewing	Standard error	Practical mean	Standard deviation	Mean	Sample	No
High	1,44	0,768	130	4,345	150,53	90	1

To achieve this objective, a scale measuring certain personality traits was administered to (90) football referees in the southern region. After analyzing and statistically processing their responses, the arithmetic mean was (150.53) and the standard deviation was (4.345), which is higher than the hypothetical mean (130) and at a high level. The standard error was (0.768), a low value indicating the internal consistency of the sample results. The skewness coefficient was (1.44), indicating the normality of the sample distribution on the normal distribution curve (± 3).

"A sample is considered normally distributed when the skewness coefficient is within (± 3), indicating homogeneity."

The researcher believes that the referees' possession of certain personality traits qualifies them to officiate matches with high accuracy and confidence, enhances their emotional stability, strengthens their character, prevents them from making mistakes, and enables them to control the course of the game and overcome obstacles they face. The direct influence of personality traits on referees leads them to interact effectively with the players of both teams and the audience. The coaching staff of both teams acted wisely and prudently, making the right decision at the right time. This result can be explained according to information processing theory, as the theory focuses on the cognitive processes that mediate between stimulus and response. Individuals appear more active as information processors, connecting new knowledge with prior knowledge to make it meaningful. This is what Ali Youssef (2015) confirmed: "Personal traits play a prominent and important role in the sports field in general and in sports activities in particular, along with the accompanying influences and the obstacles and variables that referees face, which affect the thinking process. Motor behavior is a result of thought, thought generates mood, and mood generates behavior. Most of the events we experience are natural, but the difference lies in how we think about and interpret them."

This is what Barian Tracy (2006) agreed upon: "The mind possesses only one thought at any given time. If we introduce a positive thought into our minds, the negative thought that opposes it will emerge because the mind does not accept a vacuum. If we do not fill it with positive thoughts, it will be filled with negative ones."

Chapter Five includes conclusions and recommendations.

Conclusions

In light of the research results and statistical analysis of the data... Based on the data obtained through the Moral Thinking Scale, the researcher reached the following conclusions:

1. The scale developed by the researcher (Reporting on Certain Personality Traits), which meets its scientific criteria, is capable of revealing its intended purpose and is suitable for the target group (the research sample) under study.
2. Football referees in the southern region are distinguished by their practical experience and genuine knowledge in all the areas for which the scale was developed.

Recommendations

1. Adopting the "Reporting on Certain Personality Traits" scale is capable of revealing the referee's personality, as it was developed according to sound scientific principles. It can serve as a guide for referees during matches, based on a precise understanding of referees' personality traits.
2. Researchers and graduate students should familiarize themselves with sources and studies in psychology, given the concepts they contain that are relevant to football referees and their practical application.

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