

# Social representations about athletes' trust in the personality of the coach

UDC 159.9.072



Corresponding author: gena391@mail.ru

PhD, Associate Professor **N.A. Vakhnin**<sup>1</sup>

PhD **L.G. Tatyana**<sup>1</sup>

Senior Lecturer **D.A. Vasiliev**<sup>1</sup>

PhD, Associate Professor **E.T. Mayboroda**<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Saint-Petersburg Mining University of Empress Catherine II, St. Petersburg

<sup>2</sup>North-Western Institute of Management of the Russian Presidential Academy of National Economy and Public Administration, St. Petersburg

## Abstract

**Objective of the study** was to identify social perceptions about the trust of athletes in the personality of the coach.

**Methods and structure of the study.** As research methods, a semi-structured interview was used, including free statements of athletes in response to a proposal to list the personality traits of a coach whom they are ready to trust.

The scientific work was attended by 105 athletes who are students of universities in St. Petersburg (Lesgaft University, Pushkin Leningrad State University, BSTU "VOENMEH" named after D.F. Ustinov), participating in competitions in the qualification category I - Master of Sports. The study covered 52 gymnasts specializing in rhythmic gymnastics, acrobatics and sports aerobics (38 boys and 14 girls) and 53 combat athletes specializing in boxing, taekwondo, judo, kickboxing (38 boys and 15 girls).

**Results and conclusions.** The social ideas about the trust of athletes to the coach were studied. Comparison of ideas about the trust of athletes-gymnasts and athletes-martial artists to the personality of the coach is carried out. It was revealed that the moral and communicative qualities of a coach, professional competence are paramount for trust in a coach. In the group of athletes specializing in martial arts, it was noted that the strong-willed qualities of a coach are significant.

**Keywords:** *trust, social representations, coach, single combat athletes, gymnasts.*

**Introduction.** It is an indisputable fact that trust in the modern world is a key condition for interaction between people, and the measure and amount of trust characterizes its qualitative side. The author of the first monograph in our country on the psychology of trust T.P. Skripkina, explaining trust as an attitude of a person in communication, notes that the higher the level of trust in people's interactions, the stronger their connections and relationships [3].

In the concept of A.B. Kupreychenko considers trust as an emotionally positive attitude towards an interaction partner, including positive emotional assessments, understanding of needs and motives that can be realized as a result of interaction [2].

S. Covey considers the close relationship between the level of trust and promising relationships between people, career success, and personal achievements.

In the absence of trust, notes S. Covey, it is impossible to achieve success [1].

The theoretical and methodological analysis of research on the psychology of sports achievements allows us to speak about the important role of the relationship between an athlete and a coach, many aspects of which remain poorly understood today [4]. Mutual trust is a necessary condition for an effective training process, an indicator of the productivity of the dialogue and the efficiency of the "coach-athlete" relationship.

Today, the quality of relationships in the "coach-athlete" system is becoming an essential factor in the effectiveness of training athletes; the "power" of the coach over the athlete is being replaced by the position of their mutual understanding and cooperation. Obviously, the relationship with the coach, based on trust, is the leading factor on the path to sports success and achievement.



Setting on trust in interpersonal contacts largely depends on not always conscious, implicit ideas and expectations for a communication partner, which play an important role at all stages of the communication process [4, 5, 6]. The authors focused their attention on the study of ideas about the trust of athletes in the personality of the coach.

**Objective of the study** was to identify social perceptions about the trust of athletes in the personality of the coach.

**Methods and structure of the study.** The respondents were 52 gymnasts specializing in acrobatics, sports aerobics and rhythmic gymnastics (38 boys and 14 girls) and 53 martial artists specializing in boxing, judo, kickboxing, taekwondo (38 boys and 15 girls). In total, 105 athletes participated in the study, who are students of universities in St. Petersburg (Lesgaft University, Pushkin Leningrad State University, BSTU "VOENMEH" named after D.F. Ustinov, Saint-Petersburg Mining University) and compete in the qualification I category - master sports.

To study athletes' perceptions of trust in a coach, a semi-structured interview was conducted, which included open-ended questions. Respondents were asked in a free form, without limiting themselves in reasoning, to name the personality traits of a coach who, in their opinion, deserves trust.

Processing was carried out using the content analysis of free responses of respondents. In order to verify the answers and determine the semantic groups, two expert psychologists were involved.

**Results of the study and their discussion.** All free statements of athletes about trust in the coach were defined in semantic categories. The first category included answers that indicated the intellectual properties of the coach. The second semantic category of responses, called "communicative qualities", included statements that characterize the attitude of the coach to the athlete (goodwill, openness, sincerity, responsiveness, trust, understanding, etc.). The third semantic category - "moral qualities" - includes statements about such qualities of the coach's personality as kindness, honesty, fairness, decency, reliability, disinterestedness, etc. The fourth semantic category includes answers related to the coach's professional knowledge. The fifth semantic category included statements about the volitional qualities of a coach (decisiveness, courage, discipline, etc.).

The results of the study showed that in the general sample of respondents, the most important influence

on the trust in the coach is the peculiarities of communication between the coach and the athlete (noted by 64.3% of respondents) and the moral qualities of the coach (noted by 53.7% of respondents). To a lesser extent, professional knowledge and skills (noted by 21.7% of respondents), intellectual (17.5%) and volitional qualities (16.3%) influence the trusting attitude. (Figure 1).

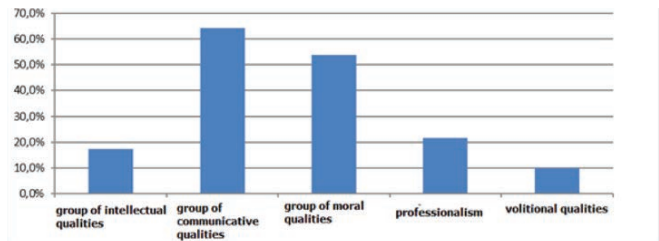


Figure 1. Distribution of athletes' ideas about the significant qualities of a coach's personality by semantic categories

Comparison of the results of interviewing athletes of the selected groups showed that the ideas of gymnasts and athletes specializing in martial arts have some similarities and differences.

Representatives of martial arts most often express kindness (48.1%), honesty (34.6%), justice (19.0%) of the moral qualities that are important for trusting a coach. The professionalism of the coach is important for trust (42.8%). Among the communicative qualities, responsiveness (28.5%), openness in communication (23.5%), sensitivity (19.0%), sincerity (16.2%) are most often mentioned. Of the strong-willed qualities, masculinity, firmness of character (19.0%), perseverance (9.5%), discipline, restraint (4.6%) are most often mentioned (Figure 2).

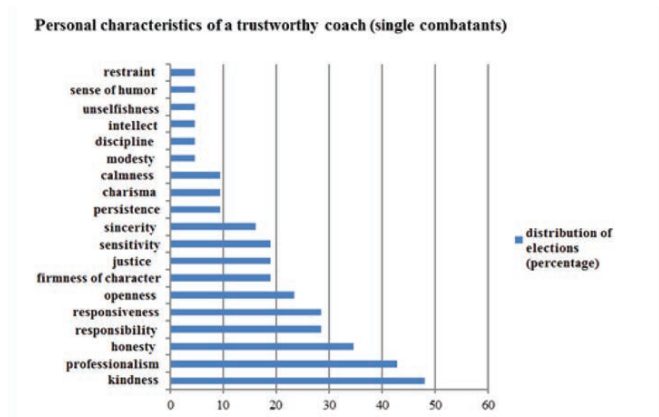


Figure 2. Representations of martial arts athletes about the significant personality traits of a trustworthy coach

In the minds of gymnasts, the most important for trusting a coach are his communicative qualities, such as goodwill, respect, courtesy (noted by 53.3% of respondents), openness in contacts (34.2%), sensitivity (19.5%), responsiveness (16.2%), ease of communication (12.0%), tolerance (4%), openness (2.7%), understanding and assistance (24.5% and 26.6%), sense of humor (4.6%) and others (Figure 3).

Also, in the ideas of gymnasts about trust in a coach, the professionalism of a coach (noted by 20.1% of respondents) and his moral qualities, such as kindness (noted by 26.6%), responsibility (12.0%), reliability (9, 5%).

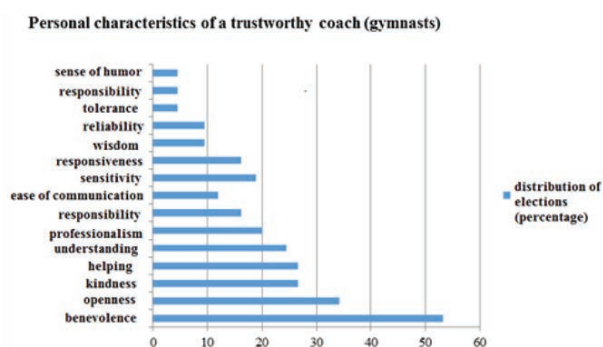


Figure 3. Representations of athletes-gymnasts about the significant qualities of the personality of a trustworthy coach

**Conclusions.** Based on the results of the study, it was determined that in the views of athletes specializing in martial arts, moral qualities are paramount for trust in a coach (kindness and honesty have the greatest "weight" in the views). The next in the hierarchy of significance of the characteristics of the personality of a trustworthy trainer are his professionalism, communicative and volitional qualities.

In the views of athletes specializing in gymnastics, in order to trust the coach, his communicative properties (goodwill, openness) come to the fore. The next most important are the assessment of the professional competence and moral qualities of the

trainer (the greatest "weight" of which is gaining kindness).

Despite some differences in the perceptions of athletes in the studied groups, it can be stated that trust in a coach depends on his communicative, moral qualities, and professionalism. In the group of athletes specializing in martial arts, the strong-willed qualities of the coach are significant. In the minds of athletes in both groups, the intellectual qualities of a coach are important, but not paramount for establishing trust.

## References

1. Covey S., Jr. Skorost' doveriya: To, chto menyayet vse [Speed of trust: The thing that changes everything]. [Transl.]. 3rd ed. Moscow: Alpina Publisher publ., 2012. 425 p.
2. Kupreichenko A.B. Psikhologiya doveriya i nedoveriya [The psychology of trust and distrust]. Moscow: nstitut psikhologii RAN publ., 2008. 564 p.
3. Skripkina T.P. Psikhologiya doveriya (teoretiko-empiricheskiy analiz) [Psychology of trust (theoretical and empirical analysis)]. Rostov-on-Don, 2000.
4. Tatyana L.G., Vakhnin N.A., Sazonova N.N., Sorokin S.I. Koping-strategii studentov-sportsmenov s raznym urovnem emotsionalnogo vygoraniya [Coping strategies of students-athletes with different levels of emotional burnout]. Teoriya i praktika fizicheskoy kultury. 2023. No. 3. pp. 30-33.
5. Yakovleva Yu.A., Sharok V.V., Vakhnin N.A. Dinamika predstavleniy studencheskoy molodezhi o rabote v Arktike [Dynamics of students' ideas about work in the Arctic]. Vyssheye obrazovaniye v Rossii. No. 4. V 30. 2021. pp. 112-119. DOI: 10.31992/0869-3617-2021-30-4-112-119
6. Tatiana LG., Vakhnina EG. 2020. Personal determinants of trust in Arctic ships' crews. 2020/8/1 IOP Conference Series: Earth and Environmental. 554(1). pp.120-127. 012007