

The relationship between coaching behaviors and athletes' burnout in Golestan province futsal super league players

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study is to examine the relationship between coaching behaviors and athletes' burnout in Golestan province (Iran) super league Futsal players. The research method in this study was Descriptive and correlation method. Statistical population of survey is all players who play in Golestan province Futsal super league (N=110) that they all participate in the study. There were two questionnaires used for data collection including Martin and Barnes (1999) Coaching Behavior questionnaire And Raedeke & Smith (2001) questionnaire to measure athletes' burnout. Descriptive and inferential statistics methods for data analysis were used. With 99% confidence, the results showed that: 1. There is a negative and significant correlation between Positive reaction Behavior and futsal players' burnout ($r=-0.646$, $P\leq 0.001$). 2. There is a positive and significant correlation between negative reaction Behavior and futsal players' burnout ($r=0.566$, $P\leq 0.001$). 3. There is a negative and significant correlation between natural behavior and futsal players' burnout ($r=-0.388$, $P\leq 0.001$). It is recommended that coaches employ adequate leadership styles to decrease athletes' burnout and other factors affecting athletes' burnout in training and competition are examined.

Keywords: Coaching Behaviors, Athletes' Burnout, Futsal Players.

INTRODUCTION

In the world of sport, we constantly see a premium placed on winning. Winning coaches are most typically allowed to keep their coaching positions while coaches with losing records are often asked to leave. This emphasis on performance outcomes can lead people to believe that quality coaches are those who exhibit effective behaviors and win while poor coaches are those who exhibit less effective behaviors and lose [1].

A considerable amount of research has been conducted within the past two decades to examine the effects of coaches' behavior on the performance and psychosocial responses of their athletes. Research in this area began with attempts by investigators to identify the personality traits, characteristics, and/or behaviors exhibited by successful coaches. More recently, however, a variety of factors (e.g. situational characteristics, organizational climate, and a coach's personal characteristics and values) have been recognized as factors that may affect the types of coaching behaviors that will be most successful in any particular context. It has also been hypothesized that a coach's behavior can ultimately have both a direct and an indirect effect on an athlete's behavior [2].

To help athletes and sport team's success, coaches need to be familiarized with different leader methods. Success coaches are who that has known the leader methods and how to use them. Naturally these coaches are more effective

than coaches that don't know the leader methods or know but can't use them, and also the athletes would have better action under their supervision [3]. The effective coaches effect considerably on athletes action, behavior and motivational and exciting aspects. *Sullivan and Kent* (2003) refer to coaching effectiveness as the ability of a coach to influence athletic performance [4]. Athletes, coaches, team managers and fans relate team or athletic performance to their variable motivational characteristics. Different factors may influence motivation in the athletes. Leadership behavior and style is one of the main factors to which the researchers refer as the source of motivation [5, 6]. Considering the role of coaching in generating motivation in the athletes, it would be fruitful to know the effective behaviors that help coaches reinforce motivation in the athletes using different approaches. It is essential to have a competitive mindset to achieve success in sports competitions [7]. As a leader, a coach influences athletes' attitudes that generate behavioral motivations. Thus, it is essential to identify behaviors that significantly influence competitive motivation and achievements in the athletes [4].

On other hand, although there is research to support the positive physical, social, and psychological benefits of participation in competitive sport programs (e.g., *Kane & LaVoi*, 2007), there are also some concerns about more negative effects [1]. Specifically, over the last couple of decades, sport psychology researchers have been examining levels of burnout in elite athletes [8, 9]. Burnout has been defined by *Raedeke & Smith*, (2001) as a syndrome that is characterized by a constellation or group of symptoms. These symptoms include: perceived emotional and physical exhaustion, feelings of sport devaluation, and perceived reduced accomplishment [1]. Current research [8, 9] confirms that there are some athletes who do experience high levels of burnout during their years of collegiate sport participation.

One of the primary factors that have been identified as a cause of increased burnout levels in athletes is the physical and physiological demands that participation in elite sports place on them [10]. Thus, there has been some research studies conducted to identify the effects of overtraining on the development of burnout levels in elite athletes.

In addition to the possible effects of overtraining, other personal and socioenvironmental factors have also been suggested as a cause, or at least a correlate, of high levels of burnout in selected athletes [9]. In particular, the leadership styles and behaviors used by coaches in practice and competitive contexts have been identified as possible factors leading to high levels of burnout in college athletes [1].

In this regard, the results of *Vealey et al.* research (1998) showed that athletes scoring higher on burnout dimensions such as negative self-concept, emotional/physical exhaustion, psychological withdrawal, and feelings of devaluation perceived their coaches as demonstrating an autocratic coaching style, placing an emphasis on winning over all else, emphasizing dispraise, and being less empathetic. [11]. Other study examined the relationship between coaching behavior and athletes' level of burnout was conducted by *Price & Weiss* (2000) with a sample of high school soccer coaches (N=15) and their female athletes (N=193). the results showed that athletes who perceived that their coaches provide higher frequencies of training and instruction, social support, positive feedback and who used a democratic rather than an autocratic style reported lower levels of burnout and less anxiety than did athletes whose coaches exhibited the opposite leadership style and behaviors [12]. The result of *Mann* (2009) research showed that certain perceived coaching behaviors did, in fact, explain, at least in part, the increase in burnout levels that a small number of athletes reported throughout the season. In general, then, the results of the research reviewed in this section provide some support for the idea that coaches' behavior may be related to their athletes' levels of burnout [13].

Considering the coaches' role and importance in sport teams' success and guidance, it is important to research about coaches' leadership styles [14]. Evaluation of coaching behaviors can also help obtain precise information and employ the coaches who may effectively motivate the athletes and can decrease athletes' burnout. Besides, developing coach-training programs, drawing on research findings and access to objective results may help the coaches in this regard, which further justifies the present study. The study aims to provide applicable results so that the findings is hoped to inform the coaches to employ coaching styles and improve the motivational characteristics in athletes.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The purpose of current study is applied and its method is correlated descriptive which is conducted as a field study.

Statistical Population and Sampling: Statistical population of the study is all players of Golestan province (Iran) super league Futsal players (N=110) in 2013. The sample size was considered equal to the population.

Instrument (s): For collecting data, two standard questionnaires were used, Coaching Behavior Questionnaire developed by *Martin and Barnes* (1999) with 48 questions that have closed answer and athletes' burnout

Questionnaire developed by *Raedeke & Smith* (2001) with 15 questions that have closed answer. The content validity of the questionnaires was approved by ten professors of sports management. To calculate the reliability of the questionnaires, a pilot study was conducted. The results showed a reliability coefficient of $\alpha=0.82$ for Coaching Behavior Questionnaire and $\alpha=0.88$ for athletes' burnout Questionnaire, which indicated the consistency of measurement. A demographic data sheet was used to collect the data on personal information including age, level of education and play experience. Due to Players familiar with the coaches' behavior, questionnaires were distributed two months after the start of the league.

Data Analyses: SPSS (Ver 16) software was used to analyze the data. As to the statistical measures, descriptive statistics including frequency, percentage, mean, standard deviation and tabulations were used to describe the data. Inferential statistics including Pearson correlation formula was used to test the hypotheses.

RESULTS

After distributing the survey questionnaires, finally 103 questionnaires were returned. The results showed that over half of the participants (64%) had less than 25 years of age. 48.8 percent of the subjects had diploma or lower degrees and 38.6 percent had over eleven years of play experience.

Table1. Description of coaches' coaching behavior based on players' opinions

Variable	Statistic	Mean	Std. Deviation	Maximum	Minimum
Positive Reaction Behavior		4.26	0.464	5.00	1.00
Negative Reaction Behavior		3.56	0.642	4.80	2.00
Natural Behavior		3.86	0.563	4.60	1.00
Total Coaches' Behavior		3.56	0.458	5.00	2.00

As shown in Table 1, the mean positive reactive behavior was 4.26, the mean negative reactive behavior was 3.56 and the mean natural behavior was 3.86. As the maximum coaching behaviors score was found to be 3.56 out of the total 5, the players were found to evaluate the coaching behaviors as above average.

Table2. Description athletes' burnout based on players' opinions

Variable	Statistic	Mean	Std. Deviation	Maximum	Minimum
Athletes' Burnout		2.96	0.487	5.00	1.00

As shown in Table 2, the mean score of athletes' burnout was 2.96 out of 5.

Table3. Relationship between coaching behavior and its subscales with athletes' burnout

Variables	Athletes' Burnout			
	N	r	P	r ²
Positive Reaction Behavior	103	-0.646	0.001	0.42
Negative Reaction Behavior	103	0.566	0.001	0.32
Natural Behavior	103	-0.388	0.001	0.14

Since the data show a normal distribution, Pearson correlation formula was run to examine the relationship between coaching behaviors and athletes' burnout. Regarding the results in table 3, there is a negative and significant relationship between positive reaction behavior and athletes' burnout ($r=-0.646$, $P\leq 0.001$). Also, the results of correlation coefficient shows that there is a positive and significant relationship between the negative reaction behavior and athletes' burnout ($r=0.566$, $P\leq 0.001$). In addition, there is a negative and significant relationship between Natural Behavior and Competitive Anxiety ($r=-0.388$, $P\leq 0.001$).

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

The style or behavior that coaches shows in their leadership or coaching is the most important property that effects on athletes' competitive anxiety and how their understanding of coaches' leadership styles. The research result showed that there is meaningful and negative relation between coaches' positive reaction behaviors and Athletes' Burnout. This is consistent with the findings of *Vealey et al.* (1998) *Man* (2009). Because the motivating aspects are the successful basis of competitive and reaction activities and every athlete's success and effort rate in success path depends on his motivation and finally his anxiety rate, coach as a stimulant, in leader role must use safe, efficient and certain ways and styles to decrease the athletes' burnout rate and must predict using of specific styles to decrease athletes' competitive anxiety. Coach's positive reaction behaviors make necessary backgrounds and

chances to decrease athletes' burnout, anxiety and stress and arouse the creativity and innovation on players, and by confirming these actions by coach and increasing athletes' ability. This motivation is made on him to transfer confirmed reactions to other his teammate and feels a kind of influence and leadership over others. On the other hand, whatever the athletes' burnout rate is high, athlete would lose his own creator thought and his creatorship during the match because of failing fear and encountering with its possible results and his action and efficiency would be decreased. Considering the descriptions noted, and considering that burnout in athletes in sport teams is inevitable, coaches of present sport teams in sport league in Golestan province must be awarded of athletes' burnout results and must do skills to decrease this important issue among players.

The research finding showed that there is meaningful and positive relation between coaches' negative reaction behaviors and athletes' burnout. This is consistent with the findings of *Vealey et al.* (1998) *Man* (2009). Coaches constantly try to help own athletes to get success by using coaching different styles. In this path, some coaches cause the increase of athletes' burnout because they don't have technical ability and ignore motivating problems. In this regard, *Gustafsson et al.* (2007) states that some coaches cause the increasing of their own athletes' burnout by showing the negative actions and behaviors like punishment and using unsuitable words. So it is suggested that coaches don't use negative reaction behaviors in showing feedback to their athletes. Of course, the situations and circumstances on team and players is an issue that coach shouldn't forget it in presented behavioral procedures.

The research finding showed that there is meaningful and negative relation between coaches' natural behaviors and athletes' burnout. Coach's natural behaviors should be for helping the athletes. Whatever coaches use positive action behaviors and natural behaviors in showing feedback to athletes, athletes' burnout is decreased and subsequently success's motivation and athletes' ability motivation is increased and finally improve their performance.

This research has been done on premier league Futsal teams of Golestan province and a same research is suggested to do in other sport leagues (individual and team sport). Other effective factors also are suggested to study on athletes' burnout.

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