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The relationship between leadership behavior and burnout among coaches and athletes

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ABSTRACT

Recently, burnout in sport has received increasing attention, to the point that some scholars have even suggested that burnout has become synonymous with sports (Lai & Wiggins, 2003). The present research examines the relationship between leadership behavior and burnout among coaches and athletes. The population consisted of 218 swimmers and 50 coaches who participated in intercollegiate competitions. The participants completed a demographics questionnaire, Maslach Burnout Inventory (MBI), the Athlete Burnout Questionnaire (ABQ) of Raedeke and Smith (2001), and the Leadership Scale for Sports (LSS) of Chelladurai (1980). One-sample t-test and histogram charts were used to examine the differences between variables. Pearson correlation coefficient was used at the 0.05 significance level for hypothesis testing. The findings showed that there is no significant relationship between autocratic leadership and burnout among coaches. The subscales of autocratic leadership, however, were negatively associated with depersonalization and positively associated with reduced personal accomplishment. A significant relationship was observed between leadership style of coaches and burnout among athletes. Athlete burnout was negatively associated with training and instruction, negatively associated with positive feedback, and positively associated with autocratic behavior. Autocratic behavior was positively associated with all the three components of burnout among athletes. No significant relationship was observed between coach burnout and athlete burnout, but weak correlations were observed between coach burnout and reduced personal accomplishment and emotional exhaustion of athletes.

Keywords: Leadership style, burnout, coaches, athletes

INTRODUCTION

Coaches' leadership style and burnout among coaches and athletes are important issues that have been the subject of many studies over the past two decades. Despite the growing literature on leadership and burnout in sport, there are many questions that have remained unanswered. Identifying the factors in burnout among coaches and athletes and developing strategies for effective decision making can improve the performance of coaches, athletes, and sport clubs in general.

Burnout is usually defined as a psychological syndrome of emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and reduced personal accomplishment [1]. Emotional exhaustion refers to the depletion of psychic energy or the draining of

emotional resources. Depersonalization refers to the development of negative, cynical attitudes towards the recipients of one's services. Lack of personal accomplishment is the tendency to evaluate one's own work with recipients negatively, an evaluation that is often accompanied by feelings of insufficiency [1]. Appels and Otten (1992) argue that exhaustion (a construct that to some extent overlaps with burnout) is highly associated with cardiac diseases[2].

The concept of burnout in sport has received so much attention that some scholars suggest that burnout has become synonymous with sports[2]. Internal and external sources of pressure, physical and mental exhaustion, mood changes, increased anxiety, and lack of caring are the feelings that coaches and athletes often associate with burnout [3].

Raedeke and Smith (2001) proposed a framework for burnout in sports context. Using exploratory factor analysis, they identified three dimensions for burnout: emotional/physical exhaustion (associated with intense training and competition), reduced sense of accomplishment (in terms of skills/abilities and the inability to achieve personal goals/live up to expectations), and devaluation (a loss of interest, a "don't care" attitude and resentment)[4].

Many studies have addressed the relationship between burnout and decision making styles [3, 5]. Research has shown that autocratic decision making increases burnout in athletes, while democratic behaviors decrease athlete burnout [6].

Sunar et al. (2009) examined the relationship between coach burnout and leadership behavior and burnout experienced by school soccer players. They found significant relationships between coach burnout and leadership behaviors. They suggested reduced personal accomplishment and emotional exhaustion as the most important factors that are affected by leadership behaviors[7].

Harris and Ostrow (2005) examined the relationships between decision-making styles of coaches and burnout among coaches and athletes. They reported a significant negative relationship between athlete burnout and democratic behaviors. They also found that democratic behaviors significantly affect exhaustion and depersonalization subscales[6].

Vealey et al. (1998) studied burnout among coaches and athletes. They found that coach burnout was significantly related to perceived coaching behavior, perceived coaching behavior was predictive of athlete burnout, and athlete anxiety and athlete burnout were significantly related. They showed that those athletes scoring high on the negative self-concept, emotional and physical exhaustion, devaluation, and psychological withdrawal subscales perceived coaching behaviors to be less empathetic, stressing winning more than development, and using more dispraise and an autocratic coaching style[5].

Price and Weiss (2000) examined the relationship among coach burnout, coaching behaviors, and athletes' psychological responses. They studied a sample of 193 female soccer players and 15 head coaches of high school teams and found that athletes experiencing low perceived sport competence and pleasure along with higher anxiety and burnout levels reported coaching behaviors that were characterized by less instruction or training, social support, and positive feedback and more autocratic in nature. They also found that athletes who reported lower levels of burnout perceived coaching behaviors to be more democratic than autocratic in nature[3].

Altahayneh (2003) studied the relationship between coach burnout, coaches' behaviors, and levels of burnout and satisfaction experienced by college athletes. He showed that there is a significant relationship between coaches' leadership behaviors and burnout. He also showed that personal accomplishment and emotional exhaustion are significant predictors of the coaches' leadership behaviors. Athletes who perceived their coaches as providing more training and instruction, social support, feedback, and exhibiting more democratic behavior and less autocratic behavior were more satisfied and less burned out[8].

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The population of the present research consisted of all the swimming coaches of Iran's universities who had been coaching for at least six months and their athletes. 50 coaches (31 female and 19 male) and 218 swimmers (136 female and 82 male) were selected as the sample. Descriptive statistics and Pearson correlation coefficient were used

for data analysis at the 0.05 significance level. All statistical operations were done in SPSS and LISREL. The indices proposed by the software are tested using structural equation modeling, and after verifying the significance of the model, the effects of the variables on each other are examined. It must be noted that the * sign in the following tables indicates significance at the $p \leq 0.05$ level and ** indicates significance at the $p \leq 0.01$ level. Using structural equation modeling, this study examines the relationship between leadership behavior from the perspective of coaches and athletes as input and burnout among coaches and athletes as outputs.

The present research uses the burnout scale developed by Maslach (1996), the Athlete Burnout Questionnaire (ABQ) of Raedeke and Smith (2001), and the Leadership Scale for Sports (LSS) of Chelladurai (1980). Maslach Burnout Inventory (MBI) consists of 22 items rated on a scale of 0 (never) to 6 (always). ABQ consists of 15 items rated on a 5-point Likert scale from 1 (never) to 5 (always). LSS consists of 43 items rated on a 5-point scale from 1 (never) to 5 (always).

RESULTS

Given the data from MBI, burnout levels in swimmers are shown in Table 1.

Table1) One sample t-test for study burnout levels in swimmers							
burnout levels	Test Value = 3						
	T	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
						Lower	Upper
Reduced Sense of Accomplishment	8.078	217	.000	.31560	3.3156	.2386	.3926
Sport Devaluation	15.379	217	.000	.70459	3.7046	.6143	.7949
emotional exhaustion	19.188	217	.000	.97982	3.9798	.8792	1.0805

Considering the above table, there is a significant difference between the theoretical and experimental means in all the components of burnout in athletes at the $\alpha = 0.05$ level. It can be argued that burnout in the swimmers is higher than the expected level, and the level of emotional exhaustion with a mean of 3.9798 is higher than the other components.

The level of burnout among coaches and the difference between theoretical and experimental means are provided in Table 2.

Table2) One sample t-test for study burnout levels in coaches							
burnout levels	Test Value = 4						
	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
						Lower	Upper
Reduced Sense of Accomplishment	-76.301	217	.000	-2.38838	1.6116	-2.4501	-2.3267
Sport Devaluation	-132.270	217	.000	-2.75596	1.2440	-2.7970	-2.7149
emotional exhaustion	-28.084	217	.000	-.89507	3.1049	-.9579	-.8323

Given the obtained t values, the above table shows that there is a significant difference between the theoretical and experimental means in all the components of burnout in coaches at the $\alpha = 0.05$ level. Burnout among coaches is lower than the expected level, and the level of reduced personal accomplishment with a mean of 3.1049 is higher than the other components.

Based on the data from LSS, the leadership behaviors of coaches from the perspective of athletes are reported in Table 3.

Table3) One sample t-test for study coaches behaviors (athlete perception)							
Dimensions of behavior	Test Value = 3						
	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
						Lower	Upper
training and instruction	-19.061	217	.000	-.86203	2.1380	-.9512	-.7729
positive feedback	-15.147	217	.000	-.85378	2.1462	-.9649	-.7427
Democratic decision-making behaviors	-9.469	217	.000	-.43935	2.5607	-.5308	-.3479
social support	-5.999	217	.000	-.23624	2.7638	-.3139	-.1586
Autocratic decision-making behaviors	11.914	217	.000	.51663	3.5166	.4312	.6021

The obtained t values indicate that there is a significant difference between the theoretical and experimental means in all the components of leadership behavior at the $\alpha = 0.05$ level. The level of autocratic behavior is higher than the other components of leadership behavior with a mean of 3.5166.

Based on the data from LSS, the leadership behaviors of coaches from the perspective of coaches themselves are reported in Table 4.

Table4) One sample t-test for study coaches behaviors (coach perception)							
	Test Value = 3						
	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
training and instruction	-44.722	217	.000	-1.12315	1.8769	-1.1726	-1.0736
positive feedback	-40.867	217	.000	-1.32339	1.6766	-1.3872	-1.2596
Democratic decision-making behaviors	-18.175	217	.000	-.49032	2.5097	-.5435	-.4371
social support	-14.791	217	.000	-.28498	2.7150	-.3230	-.2470
Autocratic decision-making behaviors	16.649	217	.000	.55562	3.5556	.4898	.6214

The obtained t values suggest a significant difference between the theoretical and experimental means in all the components of leadership behavior at the $\alpha = 0.05$ level. The level of autocratic behavior is higher than the other components with a mean of 3.5556.

Hypothesis 1

According to the first hypothesis, there is a significant relationship between leadership behavior of coaches and burnout among coaches.

Table4) Pearson Correlation for relationship between coaches' behaviors and their burnout

		burnout	emotional exhaustion	Sport Devaluation	Reduced Sense of Accomplishment
training and instruction	Pearson Correlation	.102	.154	-.002	-.003
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.519	.331	.989	.985
	N	42	42	42	42
positive feedback	Pearson Correlation	.221	.226	.078	.049
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.159	.151	.624	.759
	N	42	42	42	42
Democratic decision-making behaviors	Pearson Correlation	.032	.099	-.039	-.028
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.839	.532	.807	.861
	N	42	42	42	42
social support	Pearson Correlation	.256	.154	-.221	.369*
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.102	.331	.160	.016
	N	42	42	42	42
Autocratic decision-making behaviors	Pearson Correlation	.137	-.006	-.311*	.414**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.388	.971	.045	.006
	N	42	42	42	42

The above table shows that the null hypothesis is not rejected ($p > 0.05$), and there is no significant relationship between leadership behaviors and burnout among coaches at the $\alpha = 0.05$ level. The data suggests that autocratic behavior is negatively associated with depersonalization and positively associated with reduced personal accomplishment, and social support is positively associated with reduced personal accomplishment. Since significant relationships are observed only in the subscales of burnout, the causal relationship between the autocratic and supportive behaviors and the components of burnout can be evaluated using structural equation modeling (SEM).

Figure 2 – The output of SEM for the relationship between leadership behaviors and burnout among coaches using LISREL in standard mode

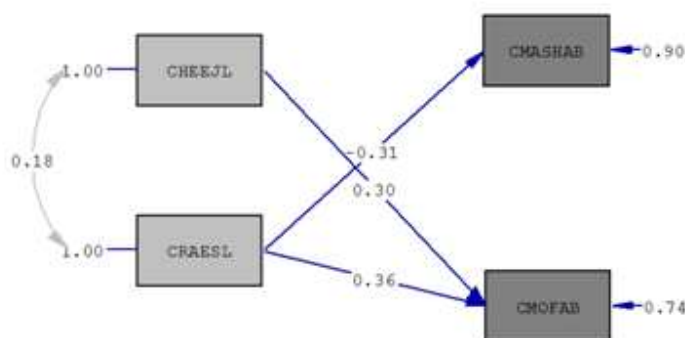


Figure 3 –The output of SEM for the relationship between leadership behaviors and burnout among coaches using LISREL in significance mode

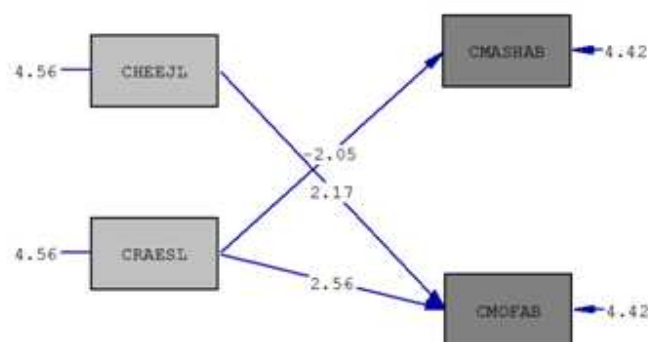


Table 6 – The results of testing the conceptual model of first hypothesis

	Autocratic decision-making behaviors				social support			
	Standard coefficient (R)	t-Value	result	R2	Standard coefficient (R)	t-Value	result	R2
Reduced Sense of Accomplishment	0.36	2.56	Accept		0.30	2.17	Accept	0.26
Sport Devaluation	-0.31	-2.05	Accept	0.097				
Adjusted Goodness of Fit Index (AGFI) = 0.95 Goodness of Fit Index (GFI) = 0.98 Chi-Square=1.27, df=3, P-value=0.73679, RMSEA=0.000								

Chi-squared test was applied to examine whether the proposed model is appropriate. The chi-squared statistic is equal to 1.27, which is less than the critical value of 6.25 with the degree of freedom of 3, thus supporting the model. Moreover, the p -value is 0.75, which is greater than 0.05 and acceptable. All the goodness-of-fit indices suggest that the model fits the data. What follows are the coefficients of all the factors in the model: The coefficient of the effect of autocratic behavior on reduced personal accomplishment is 0.36; the coefficient of the effect of social support on reduced personal accomplishment is 0.30; the coefficient of the effect of autocratic behavior on depersonalization is -0.31; all the coefficients are significant ($t > 1.96$).

Hypothesis 2

Based on the second hypothesis, there is a significant relationship between leadership behavior and burnout among athletes.

Table7) Pearson Correlation for relationship between coaches' behaviors and athletes' burnout

		Reduced Sense of Accomplishment	Sport Devaluation	emotional exhaustion	burnout
training and instruction	Pearson Correlation	-.171*	-.296**	-.210**	-.291**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.011	.000	.002	.000
	N	218	218	218	218
positive feedback	Pearson Correlation	-.149*	-.235**	-.220**	-.261**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.028	.000	.001	.000
	N	218	218	218	218
Democratic decision-making behaviors	Pearson Correlation	-.109	-.127	-.064	-.125
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.108	.062	.348	.065
	N	218	218	218	218
social support	Pearson Correlation	.027	-.132	-.061	-.076
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.694	.052	.371	.264
	N	218	218	218	218
Autocratic decision-making behaviors	Pearson Correlation	.183**	.320**	.332**	.364**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.007	.000	.000	.000
	N	218	218	218	218

The above table indicates that the hypothesis is rejected for autocratic behavior, training and instruction, and positive feedback ($p < 0.05$). The results show that burnout among athletes is negatively associated with training and instruction, negatively associated with positive feedback, and positively associated with autocratic behavior at the $\alpha = 0.05$ level. However, no significant relationship was observed in terms of democratic behavior and social support ($p > 0.05$). The autocratic behavior of coaches was positively associated with all the three components of

burnout. Moreover, positive feedback and training and instruction were negatively associated with the components of burnout among athletes. The causal relationship between leadership behaviors and burnout can be further evaluated using SEM.

Figure 4 – The output of SEM for the relationship between leadership behaviors and burnout among athletes using LISREL in standard mode

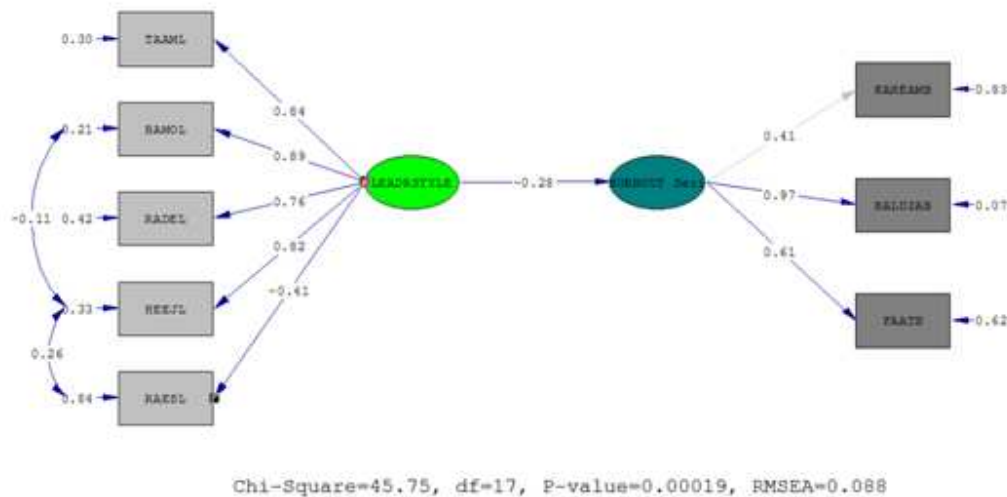
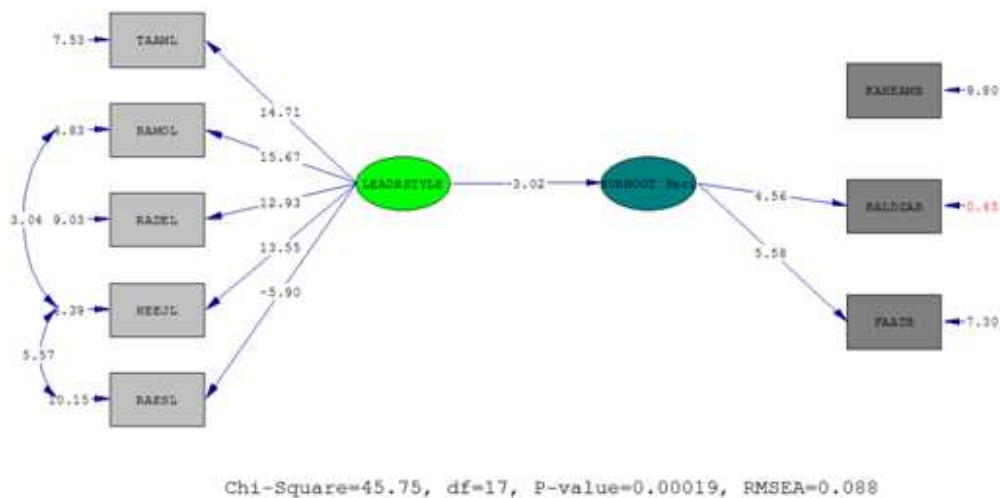


Figure 5 – The output of SEM for the relationship between leadership behaviors and burnout among athletes using LISREL in significance mode



After applying the changes suggested by the software, the chi-squared test rejects the model, for the p -value is very small. Based on the recommendations of Browne and Cudeck (1993), the RMSEA is 0.88 and the confidence interval is between 0.058 and 0.12. Since the lower limit is lower than the 0.05 value, the error of approximation is quite high. However, other fitness indices such as GFI and AGFI are appropriate ($GFI > 0.90$). Therefore, the model does not fit the data.

Table 8 – The results of testing the second hypothesis

Autocratic behaviors		social support		Democratic behaviors		positive feedback		training and instruction								
t-Value	Standard coefficient (R)	t-Value	Standard coefficient (R)	t-Value	Standard coefficient (R)	t-Value	Standard coefficient (R)	t-Value	Standard coefficient (R)							
-5.90	-0.41	13.55	0.82	12.93	0.76	15.67	0.89	14.71	0.84							
Coaches' Behavior																
Recommended changes				R2		t-VALUE		Standard coefficient					Swimmers burnout	0.41	Standard Coefficient (R)	Reduced Sense of Accomplishment
social support and positive feedback Autocratic behaviors and social support				0.078		-3.02		-0.28								
Degrees of Freedom = 17 Chi-Square = 45.75 (P = 0.00019) (RMSEA) = 0.088 Confidence Interval for RMSEA = (0.058 ; 0.12) Goodness of Fit Index (GFI) = 0.95 Adjusted Goodness of Fit Index (AGFI) = 0.89														0.97	Standard Coefficient (R)	Sport Devaluation
														4.56	t-Value	
										0.61	Standard Coefficient (R)	emotional exhaustion				
										5.58	t-Value					

Hypothesis 3

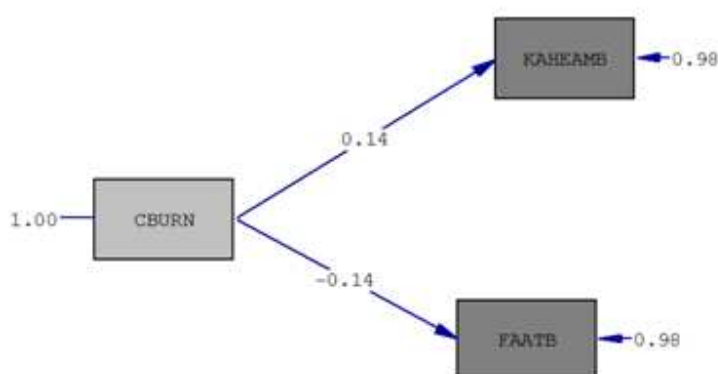
Based on the third hypothesis, there is a significant relationship between burnout among coaches and burnout among athletes.

Table 9 – Pearson correlation coefficient for the relationship between burnout among coaches and athletes ($n = 218$)

Coaches	Swimmer	emotional exhaustion	Sport Devaluation	Reduced Sense of Accomplishment	burnout
Reduced Sense of Accomplishment	Pearson Correlation	.086	.003	.118	.139*
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.205	.960	.083	.041
	N	218	218	218	218
Sport Devaluation	Pearson Correlation	-.127	-.089	.041	-.096
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.062	.192	.551	.157
	N	218	218	218	218
emotional exhaustion	Pearson Correlation	-.147*	-.065	-.024	-.143*
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.030	.337	.729	.035
	N	218	218	218	218
burnout	Pearson Correlation	-.093	-.068	.049	-.059
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.171	.316	.469	.388
	N	218	218	218	218

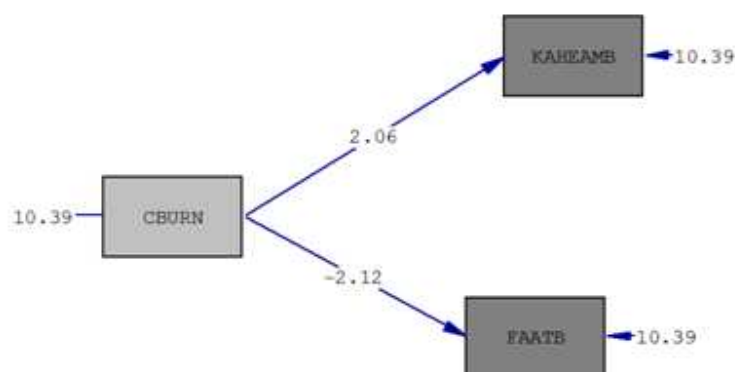
The above table shows that there is significant relationship between burnout among coaches and athletes ($p > 0.05$). Weak correlations were observed only between coach burnout and reduced personal accomplishment and emotional exhaustion in athletes at the $\alpha = 0.05$ level. Since correlations were only observed between the subscales, these relationships can further be examined using SEM.

Figure 6 – The output of SEM for the relationship between burnout among coaches and athletes using LISREL in standard mode



Chi-Square=13.81, df=1, P-value=0.00020, RMSEA=0.244

Figure 7 – The output of SEM for the relationship between burnout among coaches and athletes using LISREL in significance mode



Chi-Square=13.81, df=1, P-value=0.00020, RMSEA=0.244

Table 10 – The results of testing the third hypothesis

Statistics Variables	Coaches' burnout			
	Standard coefficient (R)	t-Value	result	R2
Reduced Sense of Accomplishment	0.14	2.06	accept	0.019
emotional exhaustion	-0.14	-2.12	accept	0.020
Degrees of Freedom = 1 Chi-Square = 13.81 (P = 0.00020) RMSEA = 0.24 90;Percent Confidence Interval for RMSEA = (0.14 ; 0.36) Goodness of Fit Index (GFI) = 0.96 Adjusted Goodness of Fit Index (AGFI) = 0.76				
Autocratic decision-making behaviors				
Statistics Variables	Standard coefficient (R)	t-Value	result	R2
Reduced Sense of Accomplishment	0.36	2.56	accept	
Sport Devaluation	-0.31	-2.05	accept	0.097

After applying the changes suggested by the software's output, the chi-squared test rejects the fitness of the model, for the p -value is very small. The RMSEA of the model is 0.24 and the confidence interval is between 0.36 and 0.14. Since the lower limit is less than the recommended 0.05 value, the model does not fit the data. However, other fitness indices such as GFI and AGFI were appropriate.

The Conceptual Framework of the Research

The causal relationship between leadership behavior of coaches as input and burnout among coaches and athletes as output was examined using SEM.

Figure 8 – The output of SEM for the relationship between the variables using LISREL in standard mode

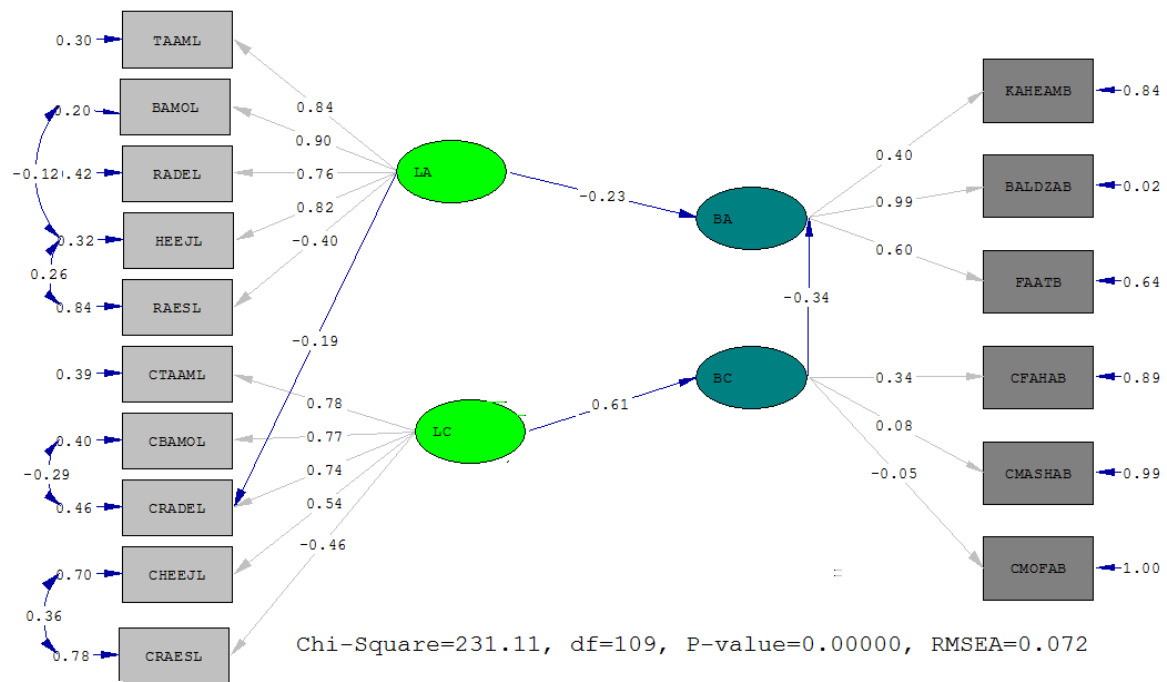


Figure 9 – The output of SEM for the relationship between the variables using LISREL in significance mode

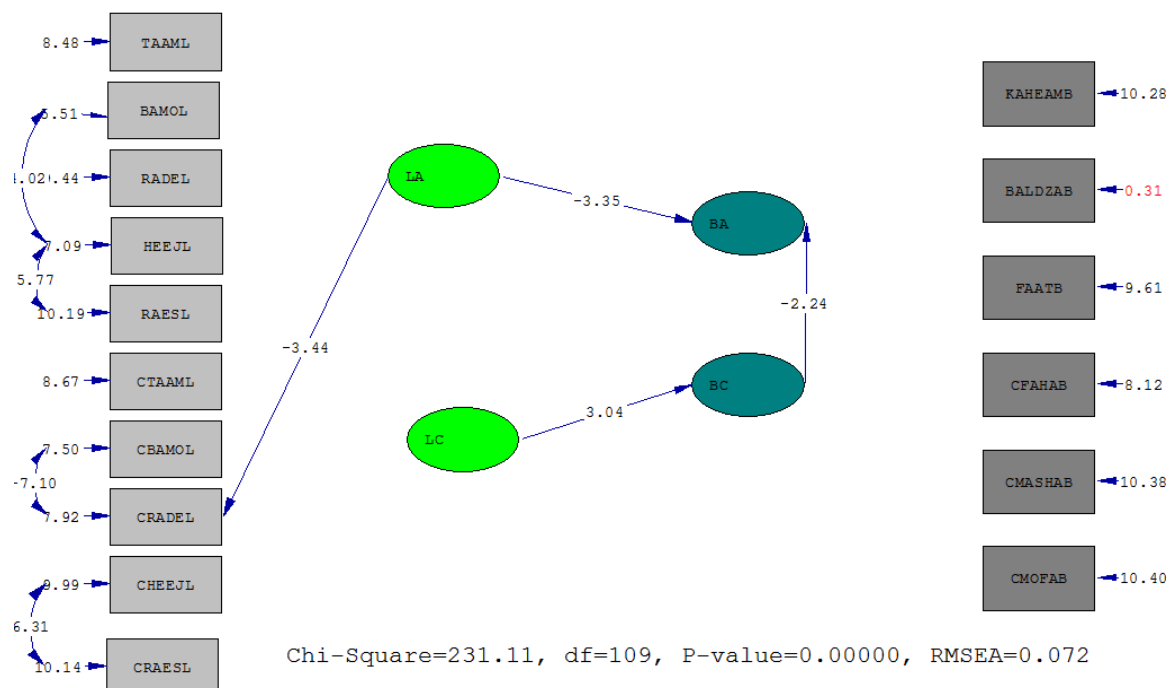


Table 11 – The conceptual model of the research

R ²	Swimmers burnout			Coaches burnout			Coaches behavior (coaches perception)			Coaches behavior (swimmers perception)			variables
	result	t-Value	Standard coefficient (R)	result	t-Value	Standard coefficient (R)	result	t-Value	Standard coefficient (R)	result	t-Value	Standard coefficient (R)	
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	Coaches behavior (swimmers perception)
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	Coaches behavior (coaches perception)
0.37	-	-	-	-	-	-	accept	3.04	0.61	-	-	-	Coaches burnout
0.18	-	-	-	accept	-2.24	-0.34	-	-	-	accept	-3.35	-0.23	Swimmers burnout
Recommended relationship model for subscales													
result		t-Value		Standard coefficient (R)		Relation type		Recommended relationship					
accept		6.23		0.36		relation between covariance		Autocratic behaviors (coaches perception) and Social support (coaches perception)					
accept		-7.10		-0.29		relation between covariance		Democratic behavior and positive feedback (coaches perception)					
accept		5.77		0.26		relation between covariance		Autocratic behaviors (swimmers perception) and Social support (coaches perception)					
accept		-4.02		-0.12		relation between covariance		Social support (swimmers perception) and positive feedback (swimmers perception)					
accept		-3.44		-0.19		correlation		Coaches behaviors (swimmers perception) and Democratic behavior (coaches perception)					
Degrees of Freedom = 109 Chi-Square = 231.11(P = 0.00000) RMSEA = 0.072 90;Percent Confidence Interval for RMSEA = (0.059 ; 0.085) Goodness of Fit Index (GFI) = 0.88 Adjusted Goodness of Fit Index (AGFI) = 0.85													

Since the chi-squared statistic is significant ($p < 0.05$), rejecting the null hypothesis and suggesting that the model does not represent the population. However, the chi-squared statistic is distorted due to the largeness of the sample and it is sensitive to the normal distribution assumption. Therefore, the model must be tested against other competing models. The value of RMSEA is relatively small (< 0.08), which is satisfactory. On the other hand, the χ^2/df ratio is equal to 2.12, which is not ideal. Of course this index is also sensitive to sample size. The next index is GFI which needs to be equal to or greater than 0.90, but its value in the present research is 0.85.

Nonetheless, the goodness-of-fit of the model must be evaluated against competing models. The direct and indirect effects of the variables are examined as follows:

- Leadership behavior from the perspective of athletes has a direct negative effect on burnout among athletes with a coefficient of -0.23.
- Leadership behavior from the perspective of athletes has an indirect negative effect on burnout among athletes with a coefficient of -0.21.
- Leadership behavior from the perspective of coaches has a direct positive effect on burnout among coaches with a coefficient of 0.61.
- Burnout among coaches has a direct negative effect on burnout among athletes with a coefficient of -0.34.
- Leadership behavior from the perspective of athletes has a direct negative effect on the democratic behavior of coaches with a coefficient of -0.19.
- All the coefficients are significant ($t > 1.96$).

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

In terms of the relationship between burnout and leadership behavior, the results of the present research are consistent with the findings of Harris and Ostrow (2005). However, these researchers found a significant negative relationship between burnout among athletes and the democratic behavior of coaches, which does not support the present findings[6].

The results of this research are consistent with Dale and Weinberg (1989), Kelley et al. (1999), Price and Weiss (2000), Udry et al. (1997), Vealey (1998), and Altahayneh (2003). The present research found no significant relationship between leadership behaviors and burnout among coaches, but the said studies have reported significant relationships between leadership behaviors and coach burnout. In the present study, however, autocratic behavior of coaches was negatively associated with depersonalization and positively associated with reduced personal accomplishment. Social support of coaches was also positively associated with reduced personal accomplishment. These two findings are consistent with previous studies. The present findings are also inconsistent with the results of Sunar et al. (2009) who found that leadership styles are significantly related to burnout in coaches[7-11].

The present research found a significant positive relationship between autocratic behavior of coaches and the three components of burnout in athletes. This is consistent with the findings of Sunar et al. (2009) who showed that more autocratic behavior develops burnout in athletes. However, the results are not in line with the findings of [7, 12].

As for the relationship between coach burnout and athlete burnout, significant relationships were observed only in a few subscales. This is inconsistent with the findings of Mohammadzadeh (2006) who argued that burnout in coaches is significantly associated with burnout in athletes[12].

Leadership behavior of coaches and burnout in athletes were significantly related in the present study, except for the subscales of democratic behavior and social support. This is consistent with the findings of Mohammadzadeh (2006) who reported significant relationships between leadership behaviors and burnout in athletes. However, this finding is inconsistent with the results of Vealey et al. (1998), Udry et al. (1997), Price and Weiss (2000), and Altahayneh (2003)[3, 5, 8, 9, 12].

No significant relationship was observed between democratic behavior of coaches and burnout among them. This is inconsistent with the findings of Price and Weiss (2000) who reported a negative relationship between coach burnout and democratic behavior. These researchers also reported a significant positive relationship between coach burnout and autocratic behavior. This is to some extent in line with the present findings, for we showed that autocratic behavior is negatively associated with depersonalization and positively associated with reduced personal accomplishment[3].

The present findings show that athlete burnout is negatively associated with training and instruction, negatively associated with positive feedback, and positively associated with autocratic behavior. These results are consistent with the findings of Price and Weiss (2000) who found that leadership behaviors are significantly related to burnout in athletes. However, the present research found no significant relationship between democratic behavior, social support, and athlete burnout[3]. Altahayneh (2003) found a significant relationship between leadership behaviors and athlete burnout. They showed that reduced personal accomplishment and emotional exhaustion are important predictors of leadership behaviors. Athletes who perceived their coaches as providing more training and instruction, social support, feedback, and exhibiting more democratic behavior and less autocratic behavior were more satisfied and less burned out[8].

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