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The relationship between emotional intelligence and communication skills in international table tennis female coaches

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ABSTRACT

The aim of this study was to investigate the relationship between emotional intelligence and communicative skills in international female coaches of Iran table tennis. The statistical sample of this study included all female coaches and trainers who had coaching international degree in table tennis in Iran (n=70). The whole population was considered as the statistical sample. For data collection two questionnaires were used including Shrink's emotional intelligence (1986) and Braton's communicative skills (1990). Data were analyzed by descriptive and inferential statistics including Pearson correlation ($P \leq 0.05$). The result of study showed that there was a positive significant relationship between emotional intelligence and communicative skills of international female coaches. Furthermore, positive significant relationship was observed between communicative skills, sympathy and emotional intelligence subscales in female coaches. There was also positive relationship between emotional intelligence and listening communication subscale from communicative skills in female coaches. Moreover, there was a positive significant relationship between self-regulation subscale from emotional intelligence and listening communication subscale from communicative skills in female coaches. Concerning the findings, it is proposed to include emotional intelligence in the curriculum sources of coaching classes. Furthermore, this variable can be a good criterion for final selection of better coaches.

Keywords: Emotional Intelligence, Communicative Skills, International Coaches, Table Tennis

INTRODUCTION

Commercialization of sport, development of private clubs, increase of awareness in society and expectations of athletes and participants in sport programs, global revolutions, increase of sport costs, budget deficit and the strict regulations of government made the managers to match themselves with new conditions and improve their required skills and abilities for managerial functions to have better and effective performance. Thus, every year many financial and human sources are spent for increase of managers' power and abilities in form of short-term trainings, seminars and conferences. These attempts are based on this opinion that training managerial skills is the most proper strategy for improving performance, increasing the effectiveness and updating the information and awareness of managers [12]. Coaches have one of the most important responsibilities in sport organizations. In fact, coaching is a kind of management and leadership since successful managers help athletes to learn new skills, enjoy competing with others and increase their self-confidence. Successful managers not only teach sport skills to others, they also teach required skills for successful life in society to the youth [8]. Being successful coach is a great and difficult challenge; successful coaches are those who learn new skills. There are many skills which could be trained; one of them is emotional intelligence. The studies have shown that emotional intelligence and coaching are unique and applicable concepts in management psychology [13]. Recently, social psychologists argued that emotional

intelligence is a main factor which determines adaptive interpersonal relations. Emotional intelligence is an area which has increasingly attracted the attention of organizational behaviors, human resources and management [10, 12]. Recent studies have emphasized on the significance of emotional intelligence as the greatest predictive factors in important realms like educational performance, occupational performance, negotiation, leadership, trust, feeling expression, work and family conflict and stress [1, 7, 15, 16, 17 and 18]. The studies have shown that emotional intelligence has a significant role in social compatibility and stress [34] such that training of emotional intelligence is very effective on social compatibility and development of communicative skills [6]. Emotional intelligence which includes the ability of precise reasoning about thought and feeling promotions [26], tolerance and ability to resist against failure, preserving the moral principles, stress suppression, sympathy, intimacy and optimism [11] not only helps to control the emotional feelings, but also facilitates the proper utilization of feelings in different conditions and can predict the reduction of occupational erosion. In fact, by proper processing of the events that are tolerant of emotional burden and enhancement of self-restrain and proper management of emotions, emotional intelligence reduces erosion and increases emotional control [26]. Furthermore, the capability of emotional intelligence can develop personal performance by its stability to resolve conflicts, confront mental pressures and facilitate communication with others [31]. According to Shrink (1986), emotional intelligence includes sympathy, self-motivation, self-regulation, self-awareness and social skills or management of relations. The ability to consider issues from others' point of view is called sympathy, optimum use of emotions to achieve goals is called self-motivation, managing emotions is called self-regulation, awareness of emotions is called self-awareness, ability to manage the relation between self and others is called management of relations. Individuals who have high social skills or in other words, have good management of relations can easily direct the thought and behavior of others to the direction they want [30]. Researchers have shown in various studies that coaches with higher emotional intelligence have created higher effectiveness in their management and leadership. Patra and Swati (2011) in their study concluded that there is significant relation between teachers with more teaching experience and emotional intelligence [32]. Besides, Lunenburg (2011) showed that emotional intelligence and its elements (self-awareness-self-management, self-motivation, sympathy and management of relations) are better pre-requirement for effective and successful leadership than emotional intelligence [24]. The results of other study done by Laborde et al., (2011) indicated the significance of cultural grounds and emotional intelligence of tennis players on their control of stress at the time of competition. Moreover, it is argued that giving required instructions to players of this field is essential in order to increase their emotional intelligence for controlling the stress [23]. Furthermore, the results of Bahadori study (2012) showed that all elements of emotional intelligence have had positive effect on efficient behavior [2]. Dadvar et al., (2012) argued that there is positive significant relation between emotional intelligence and the creativity of students [4]. The important point is that individuals with higher emotional intelligence will gain access to social support networks through shaping proper communicative pattern. As the research findings show, one of the main features of making effective relation is to have communication skills. Researchers have shown that managers having effective communication skills benefit from high emotional intelligence. All documents and evidences showed that communication skills not only are effective in getting job, they also are important for its effective implementation [14]. There is direct relation between employees and benefit. The presence of organization depends on communications. Generally, managers spend most of their time on communications, thus, the identification of communication skills and its improvement are considered as the requirements of successful organizations [35]. Barton (1990) divided communication skills to three dimensions of verbal, auditory and feedback. Auditory skill or listening is the active search for meaning. Feedback process determines whether the message is clearly perceived and the required actions are taken or not. Essentially, feedback is necessary for the process of communication. Having high verbal skill, effective listening skill, sympathy with others and the ability to receive recommendations and critics are among the attributes of individuals with high communication skills. Benefiting and using these attributes makes managers to solve the problems and issues in the organization through collaboration and cooperation with others [35]. This researcher found that there is significant positive relation between emotional intelligence and feedback from communication skills, however, he observed no significant relation between emotional intelligence of managers with verbal skill and auditory skill.

Nikbakhsh (2013), Jorfi (2011), Orner (2010) also referred to significant relation between emotional intelligence and communicative skills in their findings [19, 29 and 31]. On the other hand, Zarei (2010) in his study found that there is positive significant relation between interpersonal communication skills and organizational commitment [38]. Mayer et al., (2009) reported that improvement of communication skills leads to better self-confidence and reduction of occupational stress [26]. Variables of emotional intelligence and communication skills are very important in tennis for two reasons; one is that communication skills are very important for sport coaches especially for tennis in which excitement and stress can affect the efficiency of players, and the second is that emotional intelligence is

considered as a kind of emotion management. On the other hand, effective communications can prevent the occupational erosion of coaches to a great extent; thus, concerning the significance of the mentioned issues and the contradictory findings obtained from the studies and since no study has been done on tennis coaches especially female ones, conducting such a study was necessary. The research question was that 'is there any relation between emotional intelligence and communication skills of female coaches of Iran tennis or not'. Thus, this study was carried out with the aim of investigating the relation between emotional intelligence and communication skills of international female coaches of tennis in Iran.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

This study is a descriptive-correlational one which has been done through field study by the use of questionnaire. The statistical sample of this study included 70 female coaches who had international coaching degree in tennis in Iran. The whole population was considered as the statistical sample of the study. Concerning the objectives of this study, data collection was done through Shrink's emotional intelligence scale (1986) and Barton's communication skills scale (1990). Shrink's emotional intelligence questionnaire (1986) included 33 items which have been validated based on Likert five-value scale. The subscales of emotional intelligence questionnaire included the variables of sympathy (6 questions), self-motivation (7 questions), self-regulation (7 items), self-awareness (8 questions) and social skills or management of relations (5 items). Barton's communication skills questionnaire (1990) included 18 items which were scored in Likert system in 1 - 5 rank scale (from very much - very little). This questionnaire included verbal, auditory and feedback dimensions. Although the reliability of the present scales have been confirmed by local and foreign researchers, for insuring the reliability of questionnaires, in a preliminary study they were distributed between 30 tennis coaches and collected after being filled. The reliability of Shrink's (1986) emotional intelligence questionnaire was 0.8 in this study and for subscales of sympathy, self-motivation, self-regulation, self-awareness and social skills it was 0.78, 0.57, 0.58, 0.6 and 0.62, respectively. The reliability of Barton's (1990) communication skills was obtained 0.74 in this study and for subscales of verbal, auditory and feedback communications it was obtained as 0.7, 0.65 and 0.57, respectively. For insurance, the comments of the physical education professors were used to determine the face validity of questionnaires. The error probability was considered $\alpha=0.05$ in this study.

RESULTS

According to the results presented in table (1), the age range of coaches is 37.9 ± 11.6 . The coaching experience in coaches is 14.4 ± 9.1 and playing experience in coaches is 16.9 ± 9.1 .

Table (1) the descriptive statistics related to age, coaching and playing history in international female players of Iran

Index	Mean	SD	Minimum	Maximum
Age	37.9	11.6	23	62
Coaching experience	14.4	9.1	1	35
Playing experience	16.9	9.1	1	48

Table (2) Pearson correlation coefficient between emotional intelligence, communication skills and their subscales in international female coaches of tennis in Iran

Variable	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
1. emotional intelligence	1									
2. sympathy	0.63	1								
3. self- motivation	0.65	0.29	1							
4. Self-regulation	0.81	0.34	0.38	1						
5. Self-awareness	0.5	0.32	0.28	0.2	1					
6. Social skills	0.53	0.29	0.23	0.25	0.05	1				
7. communication skills	0.22*	0.31*	0.1	0.18	0.02	0.1	1			
8. verbal communication	-0.04	0.15	0.03	-0.2	0.06	-0.04	0.58	1		
9. Auditory communication	0.29*	0.23	0.02	0.37	0.09	0.07	0.78	0.15	1	
10. feedback communication	0.04	0.24	0.03	-0.06	-0.01	0.06	0.6	0.25	0.08	1

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

The results of present study showed that there is positive meaningful relation between emotional intelligence and communication skills of international female coaches. There is also positive meaningful relation between communication skills and subscale of sympathy of emotional intelligence in female coaches. This conclusion is in line with the results of Malouff et al., (2014), Gignac (2014), Yoo (2014), Kalat (2014), Tun (2013), Jerphy (2011), Amraei et al., (2011), Reisi et al (2009), Besharat (2005), Yusefi (2006) who showed that individuals with higher emotional intelligence are more successful in human interactions, satisfaction in relations and communication skills. Based on Golman emotional intelligence, the likely reason for this conformity can be justified in this way that one of the elements of emotional intelligence from Golman approach is social skills i.e. communications. The above results are in line with Lanenberg (2011) who showed that emotional intelligence and its elements (self-awareness, self-management, self-motivation, sympathy and management of relations) are better predictors for effective and successful leadership rather than intelligence. Furthermore, the results are in line with Laborde (2014), Druskat et al., (2006), Cherniss (2010) study who showed that emotional intelligence has meaningful relation with managers' efficiency and with Komlosi (2014) study who referred to meaningful relation between membership in social organizations and educational level and emotional intelligence in men. The reason for this conformity can be that emotional intelligence plays an essential role in the success of a manager and intelligence tests just measure a limited subset of all required abilities for a successful life [13]. In addition, the intelligence does not give individuals any awareness about how should they act in the ups and downs of the life. Furthermore, intelligence and educational talent donot give any preparation and skill for fighting with life adversities through using desired opportunism. According to Baron, emotional intelligence is a multifactor area consisting of skills and social competencies that affects the individuals' abilities for recognition, perception and management of excitement and emotion, problem-solving and compatibility and makes them adapted to the needs, pressures and life challenges [3, 14]. The above conclusion is inconsistent with Comlosi (2014) study that showed there is no meaningful relation between emotional intelligence and membership in social organizations. Since the sample of Comlosi study includes women of Hungary, the reason for such inconsistency can be the fact that women in Hungary confront less constrains and limitations for presence in society than Iranian women. Thus Iranian women who have high emotional intelligence are more inclined toward effective presence in society and making wider communication; however, for women in Hungary, participation in social organizations has never been limited, thus their high emotional intelligence does not necessarily lead to their higher participation in social organizations. In present study, it was found that there is positive significant relationship between auditory communication subscale of communication skills and emotional intelligence in female coaches. Furthermore, there is positive significant relation between subscale of auditory communication from communicative skills and self-regulation subscale from emotional intelligence in female coaches. While these findings contradict with those of Reisi (2009) who showed that, there is no significant relationship between emotional intelligence of managers with auditory skill. In general, about ¾ of the manager's time is spent on making communication and they should spend most of this time to listening [2]. Auditory skill or listening which seeks for meaning perception needs mental attempt and mindfulness can be improved; active listening is aggregated with the speaker's sympathy. Since sympathy is a component of emotional intelligence, it is justifiable that listening skill and emotional intelligence can have significant relationship. Thus, it is recommended to use the managers and coaches who have higher emotional intelligence especially high self-regulation. The results of the present study showed that there is positive significant relationship between emotional intelligence and communication skills of international female coaches. Furthermore, there is positive significant relationship between communication skills and subscale of sympathy in female coaches. Since tennis is a sport field in which psychological factors are very effective on the efficiency of athletes, and those coaches who are more successful can exert the highest effectiveness on transfer of instructions and finally the improvement of athletes' performance in very limited time between two games of competition due to higher communication skills. Thus, it is recommended to take into consideration the necessary measures for emotional intelligence promotion in training courses of coaches. Since emotional intelligence is trainable one and at the end can increase the coach's communication skills.

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