The mediating role of coaching efficacy in the relation between emotional intelligence and leadership style among female coaches

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Abstract

Sport coaches are critical human resources in sport organizations. Thus factors such as leadership style and mental and performance properties of the coaches play important role in athletes’ success. The objective of the present study was to determine the relation between emotional intelligence and leadership style with mediating role of efficacy among female coaches participating in female college Olympiad. The required data were collected by questionnaires of emotional intelligence (Shout, 1998), coaching efficacy (Myers et al, 2011) and leadership style (Chelladurai and Saleh, 1980) submitted to 90 female coaches participating in sport Olympiad. Although reliability and validity of these questionnaires had been already confirmed in many studies; their facial and content validity was approved by many university professors and their reliability was calculated by Cronbach’s alpha as 0.84, 0.77 and 0.91. Data were analyzed using multiple and double regression methods based on four-step model proposed by Baron and Kenny (1986). Results indicated that perceived ability of coaches regarding emotional intelligence including evaluation and exact monitoring of excitement changes during training and match time and the ability for optimal control and regulation of these excitements have positive influence on coaching confidence and their efficacy beliefs; and this relation results in taking a leadership style and behavior proportional to match and athlete’s condition and hence, enhances effectiveness of total coaching process. Moreover, this interaction can also promote athlete’s attitude and relation with his/her coach and thus their learning and performance.

Keywords: leadership style, emotional intelligence, coaching efficacy, coaches, sport Olympiad
Introduction

Among the three factors affecting teams’ success including athlete, coach and spectator, coach is regarded as a leader of team and a powerful organizer and the basis for every success and achievement. Previous experiences have shown that coaching is fully different from other fields requiring a wide range of skills (Moradi, 2001, Khajevand 2002). It has been reported that among various skills of the coaches required for leadership and management, emotional intelligence, coaching efficacy and leadership style are important performance and mental aspects whose identification not only results in coach’s achievement and his/her promotion to an elite coach, but also leads to better relation between coach and the athlete and better directing during training and match. Thus this factor can help in athlete or team achievement and even in success of sport organizations (Huang 2013, Thelwell et al 2008, Sullivan et al 2003, Shabani Bahar et al 2009, Bakhsheshi et al 2012). Many studies have been conducted on the relation between emotional intelligence, leadership style and coaching efficacy. For instance, in the study carried out by Thelwell et al (2008), 99 female and male coaches in various sport fields completed excitement questionnaire proposed by Shout (1998) and coaching efficacy questionnaire (Felts et al, 1998). Results indicated that there was significant correlation between six sub-criteria of emotional intelligence and four sub-criteria of coaching efficacy and total coaching score. Thelwell et al (2008) explained that by increase in emotional intelligence and coaches’ understanding about their excitement changes during match and training and their ability to justify and regulate these excitements had considerable influence on athletes’ learning and performance via promoted coaching efficacy. Sullivan and kent (2003) investigated the relation between coaching efficacy and leadership style among 224 coaches (165 male and 58 female) in colleges. Results indicated that there is positive influence between the two variables and coaching efficacy explained 42% of the changes of leadership styles. Moreover, no significant difference was observed between male and female coaches. Despite lack of investigation on the relation between emotional intelligence and coaching efficacy, it seems that emotional intelligence components (perception, evaluation and emotion regulation) is related to coaching efficacy (Gould et al, 2002). Gould et al (2002) investigated olympic0level coaches regarding coaching efficacy and showed that in Olympic games, control of emotional status and emotional coverage of some athletes are only some aspects of coaching efficacy. The relation between emotional intelligence and coaching efficacy can be justified via the relation between coaching efficacy and leadership style. It means that using Horn model (2008) regarding coaching efficacy, coaches’ attitude about their emotional ability can be regarded as a personal trait that predicts their expectations which can ultimately anticipate their behavior. Moreover, leadership style affects coaches’ performance, beliefs and athletes’ perception. Huang et al 92013) studied the mediating role of coaching efficacy in relation between emotional intelligence and leadership style among 323 American basketball coaches. The results showed that leadership style can be predicted by emotional intelligence and coaching efficacy and the latter plays intermediating role in the relation between emotional intelligence and coaches’ leadership style. The weakness of their study was that since their sample was limited to basketball coaches, thus external validity and generalization
of the results to other coaches are limited. The authors thus suggested that coaches of other sport fields (team and individual sports) and other skill and experience levels should be investigated and this is the objective of the present study. Studies show that perceived ability of coaches about their emotional intelligence such as exact evaluation and monitoring on emotional changes during training and match and the ability to control and regulate these emotions have probably positive effect on coaching trust and efficacy beliefs and this relation results in taking a leadership style and behavior proportional to match and athlete’s condition and hence, enhances effectiveness of total coaching process. Moreover, this interaction can promote athlete’s attitude and relation with the coach and thus enhance their performance and learning. The objective of the present study – based on coaching effective coaching model proposed by Horn (2008) and weakness and limitations of the study conducted by Huang et al (2013)—was to investigate the relation between emotional intelligence, coaching efficacy and leadership style among female coaches of team and individual sports and also to study the mediating role of coaching in the relation between emotional intelligence and leadership style using structural equation modeling. In the other words, the present study was carried out to find answers for these questions: is there any relation between emotional intelligence, coaching efficacy and leadership style among female coaches? Can coaching efficacy play a mediating role in the relation between emotional intelligence and effective leadership style? Conceptual model of the study and the relations between the variables are presented in figure.

![Figure 1: Conceptual Model of the Research](image)

**Methodology**

Regarding the goal, it is an applied research and regarding data collection method, this is a descriptive and causal-comparative study. Statistical population includes sport coaches participating in female sport Olympiad in 2014 which covers eight fields including saloon football (16 teams), volleyball (15 teams), basketball (16 teams), badminton (20 teams), ping
pong (20 teams), track and field (31 teams), swimming (31 teams), taekwondo (34 teams),
totally including 183 teams.

Tabachnic and Fidel (2007) proposed a formula for determining minimum sample size
required for multiple regression researches, as follows:

\[ N > 50 + 8m \]

Where, \( N \) denotes for minimum sample size and \( m \) stands for the number of independent
variables. Thus in the present study including two independent variables as emotional
intelligence and coaching efficacy (mediator variable), the least sample size is 66 people. For
this, research goals were first described for supervisors and coaches of male and female
athletes participating in Olympiad. Then 105 coaches of female athletes announced their
tendency to participate in the research. After distribution and collection of the questionnaires,
15 defected questionnaires were excluded. Totally, 90 people formed the sample.

To collect data required for hypothesis test, three questionnaires were used as measurement
tool as follows:

1- Sport leadership questionnaire: Chelladurai and Sale (1980) developed multi-aspect sport
leadership model to investigate if leadership theories are applicable in sport situations. Thus
we used sport leadership scale in the present study to investigate sport leadership and its
relation with other variables. This scale is composed of 40 questions out of which, 13
questions are related to educational behavior, 9 items relate to democratic behavior, 5
questions on commanding behavior, 8 questions on social support and five questions on
positive feedback. Answers were scored based on Likert five-point scale including never (1),
rarely (2), sometimes (3), often (4) and always (5). Validity and reliability of the persian
version of this questionnaire has been already evalaued and confirmed (Ramezaninehad et al,
2010). For example, Yousefi et al reported reliability of this questionnaire as 0.91 via internal
homogeneity and Cronbach’s alpha coefficient. The Cronbach’s alpha of this questionnaire
was calculated in the present study as 0.76 which resides in acceptable range.

2- Coaching efficacy scale-2: this scale was developed by Myers et al (2008, 2010) following
the study of Feltz et al (1999). This questionnaire includes 18 questions. Scoring was
conducted by four choices including low self-confidence (1), medium self-confidence (2), high
self-confidence (3), and full self-confidence (4). The questions start with the phrase: how
confident are you about your ability in…. in a research carried out on 270 coaches in various
levels (college, first degree league, master league and national teams) in eleven team and
individual sports, the results of confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) showed that fitness indices
including CFI scoring 0.94 and TLI with value of 0.93 and RMSEA valuing 0.06 are included
in acceptable range and hence, persian version including 18 questions and five coaching
efficacy factors has suitable construct (factor) validity. Moreover, reliability of the Persian
version was evaluated and confirmed among Persian coaches via internal homogeneity and retesting, so that total Cronbach’s alpha of the questionnaire was 0.71 and intra-group correlation coefficient resulting from retesting with two-week interval was 0.76 which is acceptable. In the present study, Cronbach’s alpha of the questionnaire in a preliminary study among female coaches was calculated as 0.77 suggesting acceptability of internal homogeneity and reliability of the questionnaire.

3- Emotional intelligence questionnaire: emotional intelligence questionnaire proposed by Shout et al (1998) was used in this study to determine emotional intelligence; the questionnaire is based on theoretical model developed by Myer and Salvey (1999). This scale is composed of 33 questions in three five degree sub-criteria scored from 1 to 5 which include 13 questions on emotion evaluation, 10 questions on emotion regulation, and 10 questions on emotion efficiency (application). In this scale which is a self-reporting test, the subject expresses his/her comment with a sentence (fully disagree, to some extent disagree, no comment, agree to some extent, fully agree). Moreover, the items 28, 5 and 33 have inverse scoring. The lowest and the highest score one can achieve is 33 and 165, respectively. Validity, reliability and normality of the Persian version of this questionnaire was evaluated and confirmed by Khosrohavid et al (2002). Validity was evaluated by exploratory factor analysis and keeping three factors with 33 questions and the reliability was calculated by Cronbach’s alpha. The factors had acceptable value in the range of 0.66 to 0.84. Moreover, Cronbach’s alpha of the questionnaire was calculated in the present study as 0.72 suggesting acceptability of the internal homogeneity and reliability of the questionnaire. Descriptive statistical methods for determining central and dispersion indices and inferential statistics including Pearson correlation between emotional intelligence, coaching efficacy and leadership style were used. In the next step, double and multiple regression analysis was used to evaluate the model and to estimate mediating effect of efficacy; and Souble test was used to compare the coefficients (Jose, 2013). Data analysis was conducted by SPSS 20 software.
Results

Demographic properties of the participants are presented in table 1.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sport Type</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Age (year)</th>
<th>Coaching experience</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Saloon football</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>10.91 ± 2.54</td>
<td>38.32 ± 6.65</td>
<td>11.47 ± 4.17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Football</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>39.43 ± 4.50</td>
<td>36.87 ± 6.61</td>
<td>10.57 ± 4.12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Basketball</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>39.20 ± 7.20</td>
<td>39.43 ± 6.28</td>
<td>11.13 ± 5.08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Badminton</td>
<td>11.1</td>
<td>38.44 ± 7.29</td>
<td>39.87 ± 6.61</td>
<td>12.64 ± 4.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Volleyball II</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>46.38 ± 7.32</td>
<td>39.20 ± 7.20</td>
<td>12.22 ± 5.28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Taekwondo</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>35.22 ± 7.32</td>
<td>36.87 ± 6.61</td>
<td>11.00 ± 3.94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Swimming</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>12.2 ± 3.60</td>
<td>38.32 ± 6.65</td>
<td>11.47 ± 4.17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Track and field</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>15.5 ± 5.5</td>
<td>36.87 ± 6.61</td>
<td>11.13 ± 5.08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ping pong</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>16.6 ± 6</td>
<td>39.43 ± 6.28</td>
<td>12.64 ± 4.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Badminton</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>11.1 ± 1</td>
<td>39.20 ± 7.20</td>
<td>12.22 ± 5.28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Basket    all</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>38.44 ± 7.29</td>
<td>13.88 ± 3.98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Volleyball II</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>46.38 ± 7.32</td>
<td>13.88 ± 3.98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Saloon football</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>35.22 ± 7.32</td>
<td>9.89 ± 2.66</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1. Participants’ frequency based on sport type

As can be seen from table 1, 90 female coaches participated in this study among which, track and field coaches had the highest frequency and those of volleyball had the lowest frequency. Average highest age was observed for volleyball coaches as 46.38±7.32 and average highest experience was also observed in the same group as 13.88±3.98. The method proposed by Baron and Kenny (1986) was used to investigate the mediating role of coaching efficacy in the relation between emotional intelligence and leadership style. In this method, three regression equations should be formed to test the mediating role of a variable: in the first regression, the relation between dependent and independent variable; in the second regression, the relation between independent and mediator variable; and in the third regression, the relation between independent variable and mediator variable with dependent variable is investigated. According to Baron and Kenny (1986), four requirements should be satisfied if a variable is to be regarded as mediator between dependent and independent variables: 1- standard regression coefficient (beta) between independent variable (emotional intelligence) and dependent
variable (leadership style) is significant; 2- standard regression coefficient (beta) between independent variable (emotional intelligence) and mediator variable (coaching efficacy) is significant; 3- after controlling effect of independent variable on dependent variable, mediator variable has significant effect on dependent variable; 4- in the third equation, standard regression coefficient of the relation between dependent and independent variables either loses its significance or in the case of retaining its significance, its value compared to corresponding value in the first equation is reduced. If standard regression coefficient of the relation between independent and mediator variables fully loses its significance, it can be expressed that the investigated variable has full mediating role in the relation between dependent and independent variables; but if the coefficient remains significant but its value is reduced, it can be said that the investigated variable has mediating role in the relation between dependent and independent variables (Jose 2013). Sobel test should be performed to test significance of mediating role which is called indirect effect. The null hypothesis in this test claims that coefficient of indirect effect is equal to zero (alternative hypothesis claims that indirect effect of independent variable on dependent variable is significantly different from zero) (Baron and Kenny 1986, Jose 2013).

To evaluate if the relation between emotional intelligence (independent or predictor variable) and leadership style (dependent variable) agrees with the first requirement or the first regression of four-step Baron and Kenny Model (1986), one variable regression (single or double) was used. The results are presented in tables 2 and 3.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>A.R²</th>
<th>R²</th>
<th>R</th>
<th>The first model</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0.268</td>
<td>0.276</td>
<td>0.52</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Results presented in table 2 show that by inclusion of emotional intelligence in the first step, square correlation coefficient or adjusted coefficient of determination (A.R²) predicts and determines 26.8% of the changes in dependent variable that is leadership style among female coaches participating in female sport Olympiad. Significance levels and regression weight of each independent variable in each step based on t-test is presented in table 5.
Table 3. Statistics of variables included in the model of the relation between emotional intelligence and leadership style

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>t</th>
<th>Standard β coefficient</th>
<th>Non-standard β coefficient</th>
<th>Index</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>SE</td>
<td>B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
<td>0.38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.80</td>
<td>0.526**</td>
<td>0.11</td>
<td>0.66</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Significant (P<0.01)

Results of standard beta in table 3 show that standard beta coefficient (β) between independent variable (emotional intelligence) and independent variable (leadership style) is significant. In the other words, the first condition of Baron and Kenny four-step model is significant; meaning that emotional intelligence is significantly related to leadership style and explains 27% of its change in the female coaches.

The second step of four-step equation that is the relation between emotional intelligence (independent variable) and coaching efficacy (mediator variable) is presented in tables 4 and 5.

Table 4. Summary of regression model for prediction of leadership style by emotional intelligence

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>A.R²</th>
<th>R²</th>
<th>R</th>
<th>The first model</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0.205</td>
<td>0.214</td>
<td>0.46</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Results presented in table 4 show that by inclusion of emotional intelligence in the second model, square correlation coefficient or adjusted coefficient of determination (A.R²), predicts and determines 20.5% of the changes in mediator variable that is coaching efficacy among female coaches participating in female sport Olympiad.
Table 5. Statistics of variables included in the model of relation between emotional intelligence and coaching efficacy

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>t</th>
<th>Standard beta coefficient (β)</th>
<th>Non-standard β coefficient</th>
<th>Index model</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>SE</td>
<td>B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>0.36</td>
<td>1.44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.89</td>
<td>0.463*</td>
<td>0.10</td>
<td>0.53</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Significant (P<0.01)

Results of standard beta in table 5 show that standard beta coefficient (β) between independent variable (emotional intelligence) and mediator variable (coaching efficacy) is significant. In the other words, the second condition of Baron and Kenny four-step model is significant; meaning that emotional intelligence is significantly related to coaching efficacy and explains 21% of its change in the female coaches. Tables 6 and 7 indicate the third step of Baron and Kenny four-step model.

Table 6. Summary of regression model for prediction of leadership style by emotional intelligence and coaching efficacy

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>A.R²</th>
<th>R²</th>
<th>R</th>
<th>First model</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0.298</td>
<td>0.314</td>
<td>0.56</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Results presented in table 6 indicate that weight combination of emotional intelligence and coaching efficacy in the third step, square correlation coefficient or adjusted coefficient of determination (A.R²), predicts 29.8% of the changes of independent variable that is leadership style of female coaches participating in female sport Olympiad.
Table 7. Statistics of variables included in the model of relation between coaching efficacy and leadership style with emotional intelligence control

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Alignment value</th>
<th>Variance inflation factor</th>
<th>Tolerance parameter</th>
<th>Standard beta coefficient (β)</th>
<th>Non-standard β coefficient</th>
<th>Index</th>
<th>SE</th>
<th>B</th>
<th>The third model</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>t</td>
<td>Non-standard β coefficient</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Alignment value</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Non-standard β coefficient</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Constant</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Emotional intelligence</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Coaching efficacy</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Results of standard beta in table 7 show that standard beta coefficient (β) between coaching efficacy and leadership style after controlling emotional intelligence is significant. In the other words, the third condition of Baron and Kenny four-step model is significant; meaning that after controlling effect of independent variable (emotional intelligence) on dependent variable (leadership style), mediator variable (coaching efficacy) has significant effect on dependent variable (leadership style).

Results of Sobel test (Z=2/1 P=0/03) showed that non-standard regression coefficient of emotional intelligence path to leadership style was reduced from 0.66 to 0.53 after inclusion of coaching efficacy; suggesting mediating role of coaching efficacy in the relation between emotional intelligence and leadership style in female coaches participating in female college Olympiad. It should be mentioned that reporting the non-standard values and measurement error in the figure is due to application of these values in Sobel test (Jose, 2013).
In summary, the results obtained in the present study confirms mediating role of coaching efficacy in the relation between emotional intelligence and leadership style among female coaches participating in college Olympiad, because:

1- According to the first step of Baron-Kenny equation, emotional intelligence is significantly related to leadership style ($\beta = 0.52; P<0.01$)

2- According to the second step of Baron-Kenny equation, emotional intelligence is significantly related to coaching efficacy ($\beta = 0.46; P<0.01$)

3- According to the third step of Baron-Kenny equation, after controlling emotional intelligence effect, coaching efficacy is significantly related to leadership style ($\beta = 0.42; P<0.01$)

4- According to the fourth step of Baron-Kenny equation, after controlling coaching efficacy effect, although standard regression coefficient ($\beta$) relating to the relation between emotional intelligence and leadership style retained its significance level, its value was reduced from 0.52 to 0.42. These findings indicate the mediating role of coaching efficacy in the relation between emotional intelligence and leadership style (Jose, 2013).

Discussion and Conclusion

The present study was conducted to evaluate the relation between emotional intelligence and leadership style mediated by coaching efficacy among female coaches participating in female college Olympiad. Thus, Persian version of the questionnaires of emotional intelligence proposed by Shout (1998), coaching efficacy-2 (2008) and leadership style proposed by Chelladurai and Sale (1980) were submitted to 105 people of female coaches; after removing
15 questionnaires due to reasons such as systematic answer or non-responding to many questions, 90 female coaches were used as sample. Double and multiple regression methods based on Baron-Kenny four-step equation (1986) were used for data analysis.

Results of the first hypothesis claiming relation and determination ability of emotional intelligence to predict leadership style are in agreement with the results reported by Huang et al (2013) and Shabani Bahar et al (2009). To explain the results, it can be expressed that female coaches’ evaluation about their emotions can directly affect their perception on leadership behavior and style and indirectly affect their efficacy beliefs. More exactly, coaches that have more powerful emotion and control on emotion regulation to create a positive atmosphere on themselves and the athletes, represent effective leadership styles and behaviors such as more positive behaviors including encouraging the athlete to continue his/her attempts despite his/her mistakes, more optimal training and educational behaviors such as more effective planning for training sessions and regular and effective evaluation of athlete’s performance, selection of more efficient coaching style with various skill levels of athletes and match (Huang et al, 2008).

Results of the second hypothesis claiming the relation between emotional intelligence and coaching efficacy are in accordance with those reported by Thelwell et al (2008), huang et al (2013), and Bashiri et al (2012). In the study carried out by Thelwell et al (2008), 99 male and female coaches of various sport courses completed Shout’s emotional intelligence questionnaire (1998) and coaching efficacy (Feltz et al, 1998). Results indicated that there is significant correlation between six sub-criteria of emotional intelligence and four sub-criteria of coaching efficacy and total coaching efficacy. The authors maintained that by increase in emotional intelligence and coaches’ understanding about their excitement changes during match and training and their ability to justify and regulate these excitements had considerable influence on athletes’ learning and performance via promoted coaching efficacy. For example, if the coach accurately controls his/her negative emotions, this will have positive effect on athletes’ attitude. Moreover, coach’s ability to diagnose athlete’s emotional status accurately and timely, enhances his/her self-confidence in that he/she had suitable effect on encouraging the athletes and educating suitable strategies. Investigating factors affecting Olympic-level coaches’ effectiveness, Gould et al (2002) maintained that in Olympic games, coaches’ awareness about their emotions and their ability to control them and also concealing some negative emotions from the athletes, is a major aspect of coaching at Olympic level. Moreover, the results denoting prediction of coaching efficacy via ability to accurately evaluate, manage and regulate the emotions among the coaches is well suited with Bendura self-efficacy theory (1997). Bandura (1997) expressed that a way for changing efficacy beliefs among the people is to reduce negative emotions such as anger, fear and anxiety. In this regard, Petrides et al (2006) maintained that emotional intelligence can be defined as emotional self-efficacy because emotions- as a main source- can be accompanied with altered performance of people.
Results of the third and fourth hypotheses claiming the relation and prediction of leadership style via coaching efficacy (after controlling emotional intelligence) and mediating role of coaching efficacy in the relation between emotional intelligence and leadership style are in agreement with those reported by Sullivan and Kent (2003) and Huang et al (2013). Sullivan and Kent (2013) conducted an investigation on the relation between coaching efficacy and leadership style among college coaches. 224 coaches (165 male and 58 female) completed coaching efficacy questionnaire (Feltz, 1999) and leadership style (Chelladurai and Saleh, 1980). Their results showed that there is positive correlation between the two variables and coaching efficacy explained 42% of the changes in leadership styles. Moreover, no significant difference was observed between males and females.

The main and innovative part of the present study is taken from the study conducted by Huang et al (2013). These authors investigated mediating role of coaching efficacy in the relation between emotional intelligence and leadership style among 323 US basketball coaches. The results indicated that leadership style can be predicted by emotional intelligence and coaching efficacy which is in agreement with the results of the first and third hypotheses. Moreover, emotional intelligence predicted coaching efficacy (in agreement with the results of the second hypothesis) and coaching efficacy played partial mediating role in the relation between emotional intelligence and leadership style (in accordance with the results of the fourth hypothesis).

The advantage of the present study over that conducted by Huang et al (2013) is due to their study’s limitations and weakness. The authors maintained that since their sample was limited to only basketball coaches, generalization and external validity to coaches of other sports is highly limited. Thus the authors suggested that future studies should be conducted in different sport courses (individual and team) and different levels of skill and experience; the present study was carried out based on these recommendations.

Considering the results of the third and fourth hypotheses, although reduction of path coefficient between emotional intelligence and leadership style is not complete, a large part of the dependent variable (leadership style) is due to effect of mediator variable (coaching efficacy). In the other words, results of Souble test showed that 0.1 reduction in path coefficient between emotional intelligence and leadership style after inclusion of coaching efficacy was significant, suggesting relative mediating role of this variable (Jose, 2013).

Results of the present study and particularly those of the fourth hypothesis are in alignment with –at least a part of- coaching effectiveness model proposed by Horn (2008). According to Horn (2008), coaches’ expectations, beliefs and goals play a mediating role in the relation between personal properties of coaches and their behavior. Our results indicated that coaches’ self-efficacy plays mediating role in the relation between emotional intelligence (as a personal property) and leadership style (coach’s behavior). It was observed that coaches’ perception about their emotional ability can be a predictive personal trait which anticipates
their efficacy beliefs and indeed, their coaching styles and behavior and leadership during training and educating the athletes (Horn, 2008). In the other words, personal properties of coaches and their attitudes toward their own abilities and coaching and leadership behaviors are related to each other; and this interaction plays important role in athletes’ performance, vision learning and behavior.

As a conclusion it can be said that perceived ability of coaches on their emotional intelligence such as exact evaluation and monitoring on emotional changes during training and match, and their ability for optimal control and regulation of these emotions have positive influence on coaching confidence and efficacy beliefs; and this relation leads to taking a behavior and leadership style in proportion to match and athlete’s condition which ultimately results in enhanced effectiveness of total coaching process. Moreover, this interaction can promote athlete’s vision and relation with coach and hence promotes his/her performance and learning.

Furthermore, regarding the fact that these results are limited to female coaches, it is recommended that the present study be conducted among male coaches and in other coaching skill levels (master league and national team) or be simultaneously carried out with similar sample size between male and female coaches at various skill levels and the results should be compared.
References

1. Madwani A, Tondnevis F, Ahamdmozaffari A. 2011. Effect of coaching behavior on coaching efficacy and team dynamism. Journal of research in sport management and mobility behavior 1(2)


