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An investigation of the relationship between coaching license and communication skills among wrestling coaches in mashhad

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ABSTRACT

The main purpose of the present research was to investigate the relationship between coaching license and communication skills among wrestling coaches in Mashhad city. The statistical population of the research consisted of all 1, 2, and 3-licensed coaches of whom 70 people were selected randomly as the sample of the research. The instrument for measuring the data was Barton JL (1990)'s communication skills questionnaire which consisted of 18 questions categorized into 4 indices. Besides, through the questionnaire, some individual characteristics of the examinees (coaches) such as impact of age, experience, etc. were investigated. Additionally, descriptive statistics was applied to describe demographic features, as well as Spearman test and ANOVA to investigate the relationship and difference among the variables of the research. The results of Spearman correlation test indicated that no significant and positive relationship was found between coaching license, coaching experience, age, and level of wrestling coaching and communication skills ($P > 0.05$); there was a significant relationship only between coaching license and communication skills ($P < 0.05$). The comparison of the average of predictive indices in the research revealed that there is no difference among them ($P > 0.05$). Therefore, at the end, it can be stated that increase in the level of the coaches' education in Mashhad city may contribute to boost the ability to develop effective communication between coaches and players.

Keywords: *Communication skills, Coaching, License.*

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INTRODUCTION

Communication skills are considered to be prominent resources for individuals to succeed. Being able to communicate is crucial for all creatures and apparently humans are not exceptions. However, the process of communication in humans is more sophisticated than others. There are various ways for communications among humans. Along with the development of communication skills, self-confidence also increases, thus, reinforcing communication skills could be considered as long-term strategies to attain success. Communication could be defined as a quest to achieve all potential facilities and equipment for motivating and convincing others (Moshabaki, 2001). In Helrigel and Slokum's opinion, communication skill is the ability to send and receive information, thoughts, emotions, and concepts. Communication skill revolves around managers' ability to proficiently transmit ideas and information to others and subsequently to receive useful ideas and information in turn (Griffinn, 1992).

One of the keys to successful coaching is building communication with the players of the team, so that they are motivated to do hard works. Coaching is nothing but the combination and mixture of sophisticated skills altogether. One of these skills is the ability to build effective communication with the players and other members of the club. This art (skill) discriminates between great coaches from other coaches. The success of a coach, to a great extent, depends on the ability to communicate effectively

in different contexts. Coaches have to be able to communicate properly with the players, assistants, and the managers of the club. Training, encouragement, following discipline, evaluation, and applying skills are the most common and practical terms associated with coaching each of which requires sending message. It is acknowledged that coaches are given attention with regard to the way they send the message. Communication of all the members in a club strongly depends on the proper communication with the coach; the coach is in the center and everyone should directly focus at the center. When Alex Ferguson, the coach of Manchester United, is asked about his communication with the team players, he replies: "I share all the time grief and joy of the players and know about their personal feelings" (Ghezelseflou, 2002).

The starting point of coaching begins with basic level which is called 3 coaching license. 2 license is considered to be the second level of coaching at which some technics, as well as tactics, are presented for them. And finally, 1 level or course is the highest coaching license in our nation and; taking into account that the classes and the capacity is limited, just few coaches succeed to finish the course.

The most difficult and important skill for building strong communication with athletes is practical communication. Practical communication is a term which is considered as the underlying reason for victory. On the other hand, non-practical communication is known as an explanation for defeat. In a research, Fahim (2005) concluded that communication skills in managers (whether educational or executive managers in the faculties of physical education) should be taught and its rate is not a function of age increase and years of experience in the organization, though these skills have to be developed (Fahim, 2005). Having conducted a research under the name of "investigating communication skills among U.S.A basketball coaches" (Mikel, 2006) came to the conclusion that educated coaches possessed higher communication skill (Pederson et al., 2007). Smith (2005) studied the way coaches communicate with their students in English soccer schools, and concluded that verbal skills of these coaches are higher than other communication skills (Birrerrand Morgan, 2010). Cample (1996), conducted a research in which the relationship between the communication signifying supervisor's equity at work and commitment and job satisfaction of the employees in health institutes was investigated; these results were obtained: when a manager encounters employees with equity and intimacy and passion, this makes the employees have more commitment and job satisfaction as well (Dickson, 1996). In a research, Raferti (1995) revealed that teachers in an open organizational atmosphere significantly demonstrated more developed concept and attitude toward higher communication with their manager compared with those who were working in a closed organizational atmosphere (Deveugele, 2005). Majid et al. (2010) in their research came to the conclusion that there is a positive and meaningful relationship between communication skills of managers and job motivations of employees. Gue and Sanchez (2009) believe that an eligible sport manager communicates with both positive and negative environmental factors, so that the organization finds new ways to do research and discuss on positive and negative resources as well. In their research related to sport sciences, Laios and Theodorakis (2001) pointed to the fact building communication is one of the most important responsibilities of a manager. Lack of communication caused problem in coordination, cooperation, correlation, and cooperation among the members of a group. A head coach acts like a sender that should find the best way to send the messages to the receivers, which are supposed to be the players and assistants. Building good and effective communication among head coaches and athletes, before and after a competition, is considered to be an important factor which could, either positively or negatively, have impact on individual and team performance.

In a research, (Shahin andFulya, 2008) stated that those who have positive conception of themselves and consider themselves as celebrities and were aristocrats, as well as those who have comprehended democratic methods, possess high levels of communication skills. Throughout a research under the name of "individual skills of leaders and their consequent effects at various levels", (Amir Khan andWisal, 2012) concluded that leaders and managers at middle levels of management have higher ability for effective communication compared with those who are at higher or lower levels. Nazari et al. (2012) in their research affirmed that there is a significant relationship between inter-individual communication with inferiors and superiors and organizational effectiveness of sport managers in which characteristics play a critical role as a proper index.

Building proper and practical communication is a delicate task but it plays a critical role for good coaches. Proper communication leads to courage, enthusiasm, cooperation, and team work among athletes. The art of communication is crucial and learnable. The coach and the team that manage to communicate properly inside, as well as outside, the field of competition are competent enough to do the task altogether. The world of sportsmanship is facing particular challenges more than ever. As a coach, you have to encounter a lot of pressure, as well as the needs that you expect to be satisfied. Nowadays, athletes are searching for teams, schedules, and schools in which the coaches are able to have a respectful conversation with them (Linch, 1942). The significance of the above-mentioned factor is that empathy, emotional responses, and good human communications on one hand, and tension and lack of compromise on the other hand has been regularly observed among athletes in wrestling teams; if these factors are identified and analyzed properly, they will definitely lead to success for the team. If wrestling coaches, besides having enough knowledge and experience, are equipped with communication skills, they will definitely be able to build proper communication with the player implementing a proper leadership strategy and, consequently, will provide the team with the background to succeed through creating the spirit of cooperation and raising their energy for practice as well (FahimDovin, 2005). The significance of the issue is that the duty of a coach toward his/her students is like the duties of a good father. It is clear that training, even on person, could be pretty difficult let alone training and coaching a team consisting of 20-30 players at

various age levels with different educational and cultural background that is consequently a delicate task to deal with. For a better management, as well as building desirable communication with each of the team players, it is crucial that managers have sufficient information about the players and, even, try to response to their logical needs and be informed of the process of effective communication, and the basic needs of the players as well.

The main question which is the target of the present research is that:

Do the soccer coaches have sufficient communication skills including verbal skill, feedback, and effective listening? And, has every coach, who has attended training courses related to the certificate that he or she has, developed requisite communication skills or not?

Materials and Methods

This is a descriptive study conducted through field research applying a questionnaire. This research seeks to investigate communication skills of 1,2, and3-licensed wrestling coaches in Mashhad city applying communication skill questionnaire formulated by Barton JL in 1990, as well as investigating the relationship of individual characteristics of the examinees (coaches)including the impact of age, experience, and etc. on communication skills. The statistical population of the research consisted of all (AFC) A,B, and C-licensed coaches in Mashhad city who are still coaching at the time being.

- The number of 1-licensed coaches 5 people
- The number of 2-licensed coaches 50 people
- The number of 3-licensed coaches 150 people, which sum up to 205 people.

Of the whole statistical population, 70 people were selected as the sample and participated in this research. In the present research, the statistical population was categorized into 3 groups. The first group was the Asian 1-licensed coaches all of whom were selected as the statistical sample taking into consideration the limited number of them. The second group consisted of 2-licensed coaches of whom 25 people were randomly selected form different cities of the province. The third group was 3-licensed coaches of whom 40 people were selected randomly.

Table 1. The under-investigated statistical sample according to license

First group (1 license)	First group (2 license)	First group (3 license)
5 people	25 people	40 people

Research variables

- A) Independent variables: coaching level- coaching license- educational degree- coaching experience- age
- B) Dependent variables: communication skill- verbal skill- feedback skill-effective listening skill.

Measurement tools:

In this research, communication skill questionnaire was applied as a main tool for identifying the examinees. The communication skills questionnaire (Barton, 1990) consisted of 18 questions including 5 indices each of which was specified, in order, from 1 to 5 (1=strongly disagree, 5= strongly agree).

Total score of the questions 1, 13, 11, 9, 5, 16measuresfeedback skill

Total score of the questions 2, 6, 8, 10, 14, 18 measures effective listening skill

Total score of the questions 3, 4, 7, 12, 15, 18 measures verbal skill,

And the total score of the questionnaire measures communication skills in which, for identifying high or low effective listening feedback and verbal from 0 to 30, this skill is measured.

Results

Descriptive-inferential statistics was applied throughout the research. Descriptive statistics was applied in order to categorize the data, to calculate the mean, to draw table illustrations and tables; and inferential statistics (ANOVA & Spearman correlation coefficient) was applied for the hypotheses tests and comparing the means at various stages of the research and the statistical software SPSS version 18 was used to analyze the data. Research findings The results of descriptive statistics associated with demographic feature revealed that 43 coaches (61.4 %) had M.A degree or higher, 14 (20 %) of them had diploma, and 13 (18.6 %) coaches has associate degree. 44 people (62.9 %) were placed in the age group of 30-39, 14 people (20 %) in 40-49, 9 (12.5 %) coaches were in the age group of 20-29, and 3 coaches (4.3 %) in 50-59. At the level of coaching of the whole sample of the research, 32 people were (45.7 %) in the provincial level, 27 (38.6 %) in the city level, and 11 people (15.7 %) were in the national level. Regarding coaching experience, 32 people (45.7 %) had 5-10 year of coaching experience that constituted the majority of the percentage. Besides, with regard to the coaching level in Mashhad city, 17 people (24.3 %) are coaching in teenage group, 16 (22.9 %) in league first division who were the majority. With regard to coaching license, 40 coaches (57.1 %) had 3 license, 25 coaches (35.7 %) 2 license and 5 coaches (7.1 %) had 1 license.

The results of Spearman’s correlation coefficient in table 2 revealed that there is only a significant relationship between the index of the coaches’ educational degree and their communication skills ($p < 0.013$). No significant relationship was found in other indices namely coaching license, coaching experience, age, and level of coaching ($p > 0.05$).

Table 2. correlation coefficient among predictive indices of the research and communication skills of

Predictor variable	soccer coaches in Golestan province		Spearman’s correlation coefficient	Level of significance
	Criterion validity	Numbers		
Coaching license	Communication skills	70	0.969	0.336
	Effective listening skill		0.978	0.332
	Verbal skill		0.386	0.170
Coaching experience	Feedback skill	70	0.212	0.832
	Effective listening skill		0.142	0.887
	Verbal skill		0.803	0.370
	Communication skill		0.432	0.637
Age of the coaches	Feedback skill	70	0.595	0.277
	Effective listening skill		0.229	0.093
	Verbal skill		0.114	0.909
	Communication skill		0.527	0.189
Educational degree of the coaches	Feedback skill	70	0.350	0.181
	Effective listening skill		0.203	0.840
	Verbal skill		0.583	0.410
	Communication skill		0.658	0.102
Coaching level	Feedback skill	70	0.559	0.013
	Effective listening skill		0.689	0.263
	Verbal skill		0.140	0.258
	Communication skill		0.518	0.606
			0.235	0.121

Besides, for comparing the means among the indices of the research, as well as identifying differences among them, ANOVA was applied which is separately illustrated below.

Table 3. the comparison of intra/inter-group of educational degree with communication skills

Educational degree	Sum of squares	Degree of freedom	Mean squares	F	Level of significance
Inter-groups	0.607	2	0.304	1.316	0.275
Intra-groups	15.454	67	0.231		
Total	16.061	69	-		

According to table 3, ANOVA test (test F) was applied for the significance of mean, difference related to the educational degree of the coaches; the observed level of significance in the test is equal to $P\text{-value} = 0.275$ which is more than 0.05. Thus, the observed difference between the mean of various educational degree of the coaches is not statistically significant.

Table 4. The comparison of intra/inter-group of coaching level with communication skills

Coaching level	Sum of squares	Degree of freedom	Mean squares	F	Level of significance
Inter-groups	0.432	2	0.216	0.925	0.401
Intra-groups	15.629	67	0.233		
Total	69	-			

According to table 4, ANOVA test (test F) was applied for the significance of mean difference related to the coaching level; the observed level of significance in the test is equal to $P\text{-value} = 0.401$ which is more than 0.05. Thus, the observed difference between the mean of various coaching levels is not statistically significant.

Table 5. the comparison of intra/inter-group of coaching in various age groups with communication skills

Coaching in various age groups	Sum of squares	Degree of Freedom	Mean squares	F	Level of Significance
Inter-groups	1.440	5	0.288	1.260	0.292
Intra-groups	14.621	64	0.228		
total	16.061	69	-		

According to table 5, ANOVA test (test F) was applied for the significance of mean difference related to the coaching in various age groups; the observed level of significance in the test is equal to P-value=0.292 which is more than 0.05. Thus, the observed difference between the mean of coaching in various age groups is not statistically significant.

Table 6. the comparison of intra/inter-group of coaching license with communication skills

Coaching license	Sum of squares	Degree of freedom	Mean squares	F	Level of significance
Inter-groups	0.284	2	0.142	0.604	0.550
Intra-groups	15.776	67	0.235		
Total	69	-			

According to table 6, ANOVA test (test F) was applied for the significance of mean difference related to the coaching license; the observed level of significance in the test is equal to P-value=0.550 which is more than 0.05. Thus, the observed difference between the mean of coaching license is not statistically significant.

CONCLUSIONS

In this section, the research hypotheses are discussed and analyzed and the consistency of the research results are compared with other relevant researches. Regarding the hypothesis of the relationship between communication skills of the coaches and age and their experience, (Fahim, 2005). Conducted a research among educational and executive managers of faculties of physical education and came to the conclusion that their age and years of experience does not significantly improve the coaches' communication skills that is consistent with the results of the present research (Fahim, 2005).

Associated with the hypothesis that there is no significant relationship between effective listening and coaching license, Rezaei (2001) conducted a research under the title of “ Identifying the role of communication skills and their impact on the development of organizational communications of managers in ministries and government organizations ” and affirmed that the correlation rate between the communication skill of effective listening on organizational communication has an inverse relationship that is consistent with the results of this research (Rezaei, 2001). Moreover, the results of the present research are consistent with those of Poursoleyman (2000). Under the name of “investigating the coaches perspectives about the condition of effective communications of male coaches in junior high school in Tehran associated with listening skill (effective listening)”; the results revealed that verbal skills and feedback was in a different stage and not consistent with our present research results, but they were consistent associated with feedback skill (Poursoleyman, 2000).

Regarding the hypothesis that there is a significant relationship between communication skills and educational degree, throughout a research (Kamble, 2011). Concluded that managers should develop their interpersonal relationships, as well as their management skills, in order to effectively implement their plans and policies. Therefore, with regard to this conclusion, it can be stated that if managers take measures to rectify and upgrade their knowledge in the field of psychological skills along with developing and improving their technical issues, as well as knowing how to build effective communication with players, they will definitely contribute to their own and team success. This issue could be particularly considerable and undeniable for 1-licensed coaches with high technical sport skills; since a great part of a human's life is spent in companionship of others. Thus, the issue of interaction of coaches with players is considered to be the main communication skill. Besides, through comparing this research with other relevant cross-board researches, these conclusions are obtained. The present research results are also consistent with Mikel (2006)'s research which aimed to investigate communication skills of basketball coaches who were highly educated and possessed high communication skills as well. Smith (2005) conducted a research on communication skills among coaches in soccer school of England and affirmed that verbal skills of the coaches were better than other skills; this is also consistent with our research results. Additionally, all of the above-mentioned research results including (Smith, 2005; Masajid et al., 2010; Layosand Theodorakis, 2001). Alluded to the significance of effective role of communication in management and coaching.

Therefore, taking into account the above-mentioned issues, it can be stated that communication skills must be learned and its rate does not increase along with age increase and years of coaching in sport teams, though verbal skills, feedback, and effective listening should be enhanced among coaches. Accordingly, applying any educational strategy alongside developing and improving communication skills of sports coaches generally contributes to better management, particularly coaching and constructive educations. At the end, with regard to the present research results, as well as taking into account the coaches'

weakness in the field of communication skills (verbal skill, effective listening, and feedback), it is suggested that coaches begin their task of coaching from the beginning and in parallel with teaching coaching principles to them, basics and technics of building communication with other (communication skills) be taught to them as well; and it should be considered that the purpose is not just to give coach pass cards to coaches. Another result of this research was lack of communication skills with head coach that coach training should begin at an age in which individuals are able to socialize and communicate.

Taking into consideration the significance of communication skills associated with individual and organizational success, it is suggested that communication skills be considered as an efficient criterion in parallel with other criteria.

Conflict of interest

The authors declare no conflict of interest.

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