INFLUENCE OF EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE ON COACHING EFFICACY EXPECTATIONS AMONG FOOTBALL COACHES

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ABSTRACT

Coaches’ confidence in their coaching abilities has a great influence on athletes and the results from their activity. In an attempt to explain coaching efficacy some authors relate it to emotional intelligence. The aim of the present research is to study the interdependence between emotional intelligence and coaching efficacy among football coaches.

Methodology: The research was done among 50 football coaches aged between 23 and 45 years with different level of qualification.

In order to fulfill the aim, we used: 1) Background information; 2) Coaching Efficacy Scale (CES; Feltz et al., 1999); 3) Emotional Intelligence Scale (EIS; Schutte et al., 1998).

Results: the results reveal that the leading subscales for the researched football coaches are “Technique efficacy” and “Motivation efficacy”. We established significant correlations among the subscales of emotional intelligence and coaching efficacy. The results show a significant influence of emotional intelligence on coaching efficacy expectations. High Emotional Intelligence leads to increase in Technique efficacy.

Conclusions: Our results regarding coaching efficacy reveal a certain specificity in comparison with the data published by foreign authors but confirm the findings in literature about the role of emotional intelligence as a predictor of coaching efficacy.

Key words: Coaching Efficacy, Emotional Intelligence, Personal efficacy, football coaches

INTRODUCTION

Coaches’ confidence in their coaching abilities has a great influence on athletes and the results from their activity. Personal efficacy expectations are regarded as one of the strongest and most influential psychological constructs leading to achievement of sports goals (D. Feltz, 1988, 1994). The efficient coaching activities require constant, persistent and professional competent management of the different parts of the education-training process. In order to be efficient leaders on the field, coaches should identify the areas where they have to develop their competences. As Gould points out (1987), coaches perform a number of roles to be efficient (they educate, motivate, define strategies, organize, build characters, etc.).

Feltz et al. (1994) presents a coaching efficacy model which “provides a basic framework for studying the relations between coaching efficacy expectations, coaching behavior, motivation and athletes’ performance” (Iancheva, 2012). Thus, the authors developed a sports oriented conceptual framework which was logically formulated in Bandura’s works (1997, 1986, 1997).

The authors define coaching efficacy as “the degree to which coaches believe they have the capacity to influence the training and performance of their competitors” (D. Fltz, M. Chase, S. Moritz & P. Sullivan, 1999). The concept of coaching efficacy includes four dimensions: game strategy, motivation, tech-
In accordance with Bandura’s theory of Self-efficacy, the authors offer a model where coaching efficacy expectations are influenced by their past achievements and experience (coaching experience, preparation, previous wins/loses), perceived abilities of their players, perceived social support. Here the authors include four dimensions – game strategy, motivation, technique, and character building (Feltz et al., 1999).

Bandura pointed out that Self-efficacy had 4 main sources (Fig. 1) – previous experience, modeling, oral persuasion, and emotional conditions (Bandura, 1977, 1994). The concept of coaching efficacy includes four dimensions: game strategy, motivation, technique, and character building. In accordance with Bandura’s theory of Self-efficacy, the authors offer a model where coaching efficacy expectations are influenced by their past achievements and experience (coaching experience, preparation, previous wins/loses), perceived abilities of their players, perceived social support. Here the authors include four dimensions – game strategy, motivation, technique, and character building (Feltz et al., 1999).

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Feltz et al. (1994) clarified that coaching efficacy expectations were influenced by several sources which could increase or reduce coaches’ confidence (Feltz et al., 1994).

The first factor is the degree of coaching experience and coaches’ preparation for education-training and competitive activity. It is supposed that coaches with longer coaching experience in a particular sport have higher expectations for their work efficiency.

The second factor is based on the achieved results by the team and by the coach in particular. The proportion wins-loses has major significance for the positive team climate and coaches’ confidence in the future success.

Social support is the third source of coaching efficacy. In the professional environment it is based on the support on behalf of the fans and organizational structures in the club. When coaches work with children and adoles-
Feltz et al. (2008) developed Coaching Efficacy Scale – CES which is a continuation of their conceptual model. Consequently, the authors reduced it to 24 items measuring the four dimensions underlying in the base of the conceptual model (Coaching Confidence Questionnaire).

Conceptually, coaching efficacy is considered to be a cognitive mediator between sources and outcomes. The outcomes shown to be associated with coaching efficacy were coaching behavior, player/team satisfaction, player/team performance and player/team efficacy (Feltz et al., 1999).

Feltz et al. (1999) found out that coaches with higher coaching efficacy encouraged their players more, needed less time for demonstration and explanation of the exercises unlike those ones with lower coaching efficacy (Feltz et al., 1999). Research of Myers et al. (2005) supported these claims (Myers et al., 2005).

Sullivan and Kent (2003) demonstrated that coaches who were rated with high efficacy engaged in more teaching and instructional behaviors than coaches with low efficacy as well as provided more positive feedback to their athletes (Sullivan & Kent, 2003).

More specifically, research has recently identified efficacy sources to be influenced by gender (e.g., Short, Smiley, & Ross-Stewart, 2005), where males were reported to be more efficient than females. Malete and Feltz (2000) reported coaches who had participated in a specific coach education program to have significantly greater efficacy judgments compared to those who did not participated (Malete & Feltz, 2000). Lee, Malete, and Feltz (2002) suggested that certified coaches would experience greater coaching efficacy than those without certification (Lee, Malete & Feltz, 2002).

These coaching behaviors have already been established as beneficial to athletes as they promote mastery of skills through training, skills practice and recognizing, and rewarding good performances (Chelladurai and Saleh, 1980).

The sources of coaching efficacy, introduced in the conceptual model, influence both coaches’ confidence and coaching efficacy, and have impact on the development of athletes’ potential and reaching sports success.

Côté and Gilbert (2009) suggest that coach-

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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sources of Coaching efficacy</th>
<th>Coaching efficacy dimensions</th>
<th>Outcomes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Extent of coaching experience/preparation</td>
<td>• Game strategy</td>
<td>• Coaching behaviour</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Prior success (won-lost record)</td>
<td>• Motivation</td>
<td>• Player/team satisfaction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Perceived skill of athletes</td>
<td>• Technique</td>
<td>• Player/team performance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• School/community</td>
<td>• Character building</td>
<td>• Player/team efficacy</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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Côté and Gilbert (2009) suggest that coach-
ing effectiveness is an interaction of a coach’s knowledge, athletes’ outcomes and coaching contexts (Côté and Gilbert 2009).

Horn (2002) formulated a working model of coaching effectiveness (Figure 2). In the center of the model he placed coaching behavior (box 5) and expectations, beliefs and coaches’ goals (box 4).

The Horn model is based on three assumptions. The first is that antecedent factors (i.e., sociocultural context, organizational climate, and coaches’ personal characteristics) influence coaches’ behaviors indirectly through coaches’ expectancies, beliefs, and goals. Felt et al. (2008) indicate coaching self-efficacy is including in box 3.

Second, coaches’ behaviors directly influence athletes’ evaluations of their coaches’ behaviors and team performance. The effectiveness of coaches’ behaviors is influenced by situational factors and athletes’ individual differences.

In an attempt to explain coaching efficacy some authors relate it to emotional intelligence. Thelwell and colleagues (2008) studied the relation between emotional intelligence and coaching efficacy expectations. The authors used Emotional Intelligence Scale and the Coaching Efficacy Scale. The results from research among 99 coaches reported a significant relation between two of the variables – the motivation efficacy was related to regulation of emotions and social skills, a character-building efficacy was associated with optimism (Thelwell et al., 2008).

Hwang and coll. (2013) did research with 323 head coaches of high school’s basketball team and used Horn’s working model of coaching effectiveness. The aim of the research was to reveal the relation between emotional intelligence (EI), coaching efficacy (CE), and leadership style (LS) of the coaches by testing the mediation of CE in the relation between EI and LS. The authors reported that Emotional intelligence of the coaches was shown to directly predict leadership style and coaching efficacy (Hwang et al., 2013).

The significance and role of Emotional

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**Figure 2. A working model of coaching effectiveness (Horn, 2002, 2008).**
intelligence has been subject of research of many authors over the years. Emotional intelligence is related to major aspects of life such as building productive personal relationships and achieving professional success. It affects cognitive processes and is a factor for achieving greater personal success (Romanelii, Cain & Smith, 2006). People with higher emotional intelligence create more positive interpersonal relationships and are perceived by the others as pro-sociable, less hostile and conflict-seeking (Brackett, Rivers & Salovey, 2011). Their better social competencies and relationships facilitate the development of their intellectual and cognitive abilities (Ford & Smith, 2007). People with higher emotional intelligence find it easier to arrange their thoughts according to their importance, to regulate their behavior and to create a suitable life style to achieve the goals they have set (Brackett, Rivers & Salovey, 2011).

Salovey and Mayer (1990) created the first conceptual model for emotional intelligence as a predictor for the successful functioning of humans in society.

The authors conceptualized emotional intelligence as „the ability to monitor one’s own and others’ feelings and emotions, to discriminate among them and to use this information to guide one’s thinking and actions” (Salovey & Mayer, 1990).

In sports context, during a training or competition, athletes can experience positive and negative emotions (Hanin, 1997; Jones, 2003). In reviewing emotions and their impact on sports performance, Botterill and Brown (2002) contended that athletes should critically reflect on their own emotional experiences (Botterill & Brown 2002). Hanin (2000) suggested participants needed to develop skills in order to recognise and manage their emotions. It could be argued that the evidence presented above closely aligns with the construct of emotional intelligence (Hanin, 2000). Totterdell and Leach (2001) found that emotional regulation could lead to optimal performance states (Totterdell & Leach, 2001).

The study of the place and influence of emotional intelligence in sports context attracts a lot of psychologists. Their research is aimed mostly at competitors (Lane & Lowther, 2005; Meyer & Fletcher, 2007; Zizzi, Deaner, & Hirshhorn, 2003). Its influence on coaches’ work and efficacy has been less researched.

Athletic coaches are also leaders of their teams just as business leaders. Therefore, just as EI has been shown to be an effective variable in the business setting (Humphrey, 2002; Rosete & Ciarrochi, 2005), it is reasonable to consider EI as a key variable in effective coaching.

Gould et al. (2002) surveyed Olympic-level coaches for coaching effectiveness and identified that, in Olympic competition, being in control of one’s own emotional state and masking certain emotions from athletes were just some aspects of a coach’s effective performance (Gould et al. 2002). Hanson and Gould (1988) reported that being aware of their athletes’ anxiety levels was a matter of great concern for coaches (Hanson & Gould, 1988).

Over the years there have been several conceptual models for emotional intelligence. Bar-On (2006) pointed out that this fact led to contradictions in the search for the right approach towards determining and measuring Emotional intelligence (Bar-On, 2006).

Mayer and Salovey (1997) developed the ability conception of EI, which has four branches (Fig. 5): perception/appraisal, emotional facilitation of thinking, understanding/analyzing emotion, and regulation (Mayer & Salovey, 1997).

Mayer, Salovey, and Caruso (2002) em-
phasized EI as a cognitive-emotional ability within an ability framework that ought to be measured by a maximum performance test (MSCEIT), which consisted of performance tasks requiring responses that were evaluated against predetermined scoring criteria (i.e. expert or consensus scoring) (Mayer, Salovey, & Caruso, 2002).

The other conception of EI uses the trait framework, which argues that this construct is not related to intelligence (i.e. cognitive ability) as traditionally defined, but rather that it is based on personality and behavioral dispositions. Trait approaches to emotional intelligence emanate from emotional behavioral dispositions and encompass self-perceptions in accord to experiences (Petrides & Furnham, 2001).

Within trait emotional intelligence, participants reflect on emotional experiences across different situations and report their subjective perceptions. That is, the trait EI measures individuals’ perceptions of their typical emotional ability such as regulating, identifying/appraising, and utilizing emotions in a specific situation (Petrides & Furnham, 2001, 2003).

Furnham and Petrides (2003) suggest that participants high in trait emotional intelligence believe that they are in touch with their own emotions and through regulating these emotions, well being is promoted (Petrides & Furnham, 2003).

Examples of self-report measures of trait emotional intelligence include the Emotional Intelligence Scale (EIS: Schutte et al., 1998); Trait Emotional Intelligence Questionnaire (TEIQue: Petrides & Furnham, 2003) and Trait Emotional Intelligence Questionnaire Short-Form (TEIQue-SF: Petrides & Furnham, 2006).

Our research is based on trait emotional intelligence and the developed by Schutte et al. (1998) Emotional Intelligence Scale, which was created on the base of 6-factor model of Lane et al. (2007).

The 6-factor model is factorised into appraisal of others emotions, appraisal of own, regulation, social skills, utilisation of emotions and optimism.

**The aim** of the present research is to study the interdependence between emotional intelligence and coaching efficacy among football coaches.

**METHODOLOGY**

**Participants**

The research was done among 50 football coaches aged between 23 and 45 years with different level of qualification - license UEFA „A” (1-coach), UEFA „B” (28 coaches), UEFA “B”- GK (17 coaches), national license „С” (4 coaches). The mean age of the researched individuals is 33.8 (SD=5.82). For the purposes of the research the coaches were divided into groups as follows: depending on their sports experience as football players: 0-5 years (10 coaches); 6-10 years (18 coaches); 11-16 years (17 coaches); over 17 years (5 coaches); coaching experience: 0-2 years (11 coaches); 3-6 years (20 coaches); 7-10 years (16 coaches); over 10 years (3 coaches); age group they are working at the moment - with 10-14-year-old football players (16 coaches), 15-18-year-old (18 coaches), male (13 coaches), and 3 coaches are not working at the moment.

**Measures**

In order to fulfill the aim of the research we used:

*Background information.* To obtain appropriate demographic data, a background information questionnaire was developed to ascertain details such as age, gender, the sport...
coached in, the number of years that they have
been coaching, and the current level of their
coaching.

**Coaching Efficacy Scale** (CES; Feltz et al., 1999). The CES, although totaling 24
items (where items are rated on a 10-point scale anchored by $0 = $\text{not at all confident}$ to $9 = $\text{extremely confident}$), is made up from four
factors, where the four subscale scores, as well as total scale scores, can be employed. Each
question is preceded with the statement ‘How
confident are you in your ability to,’ which is
followed by a subscale specific item. The CES
is made up of six factors: Motivation efficacy
has seven items (e.g., maintain your confi-
dence), Game strategy has seven items (e.g.,
make critical decisions during competition),
Character building efficacy contains four
items (e.g., promote good sportsmanship),
and Teaching technique efficacy has six items
(e.g., demonstrate the skills of your sport).

**Emotional Intelligence Scale** (EIS; Schutte et al., 1998). The EIS, although to-
taling 33 items (where items are rated on a
5-point scale anchored by $1 = $\text{strongly dis-agree}$ to $5 = $\text{strongly agree}$), is made up of
six factors (Lane, Thelwell, Gill, & Weston,
2007) - appraisal of own emotions, appraisal
of others’ emotions, optimism, regulation,
social skills and utilization of emotions. The
scale shows very good psycho-metric charac-
teristics in Bulgarian conditions.

The subscale „Appraisal of other’s emo-
tions“ assesses the ability to appraise the emo-
tional states experienced by others which is
clearly an important concept for team athletes,
coaches.

„Appraisal of one’s own emotions“ is cen-
tral subcomponent of emotional intelligence
(Salovey & Mayer, 1990).

The subscale „Regulation of own emo-
tions“ assesses strategies that may be used to
alter emotional states including reflection and
re-evaluation of emotions in important situa-
tions, perceptions of emotional stability, and
utilization of strategies such as imagery and
seeking support from others.

Social skills are characterized by the abil-
ity to change the emotions of other people by
general strategies such as being complimen-
tary of and helping others, showing empathy
towards others, and organizing social events.

The subscale „Utilization of emotion“ is
concerned with awareness of the influence of
emotions on a range of different performance
outcomes.

„Optimism is characterized by positive be-
liefs regarding the future toward general out-
comes.

**Statistical methods**

When processing the initial data from the
research we used statistical package SPSS 21
and made variation, correlation, comparative
and regression analyses.

**RESULTS AND ANALYSIS**

The analysis of the obtained results (Table
2) shows that, as a whole, the values along the
different subscales of the coaching efficacy
are close. The higher results were reported for
the subscales „Technique efficacy“ ($M=7,986$)
and „Motivation efficacy” ($7,864$), i.e. the re-
searched coaches feel the most confident in
their abilities to provide the necessary instruc-
tions, to build technical skills and to motivate
their players, to influence their condition and
to stimulate their activity and to maintain their
confidence (Figure 3). This fact is interesting
and could be explained from the view of the
circumstance that in most cases after failures,
in interviews and public appearances, coaches
often explain the poor results with lack or in-
sufficient motivation.
The above-mentioned subscales are followed by the subscale „Character building efficacy“ (M=7.630) – coaches’ belief in their ability to influence the positive attitude and to build certain personal qualities. The lowest values were reported for efficacy expectations regarding Game strategy (M=7.262). This subscale reflects coaches’ skills to make critical decisions during competition, to lead their team towards successful results.

**Table 2. Results from the comparative analysis of the results depending on the players’ age**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
</tr>
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<tr>
<td>19+ ages</td>
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<tr>
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<td>.8877</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Game strategy efficacy</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td><strong>Character building efficacy</strong></td>
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<td>19+ ages</td>
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<td>.5132</td>
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<tr>
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<td>50</td>
<td>3.722</td>
<td>.6979</td>
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</table>
The data from our research reveal statistically significant differences depending on age group the coaches are working with (Table 3) as regards game strategy. The higher values were reported for the coaches working with the age group 15-18-year-old. The lowest values were reported for the coaches working with the age group 10-14-year-old.

The results do not reveal significant statistical differences in the factors qualification (acquired license), coaching experience and competitive experience – a fact which differs from the findings in literature.

The obtained results from the research of emotional intelligence show that football coaches value the highest their social skills (M=3,932), followed by utilization of emotion (M=3,920). The lowest values received the subscale „Appraisal of other’s emotions”. The researched coaches find it more difficult to get oriented and assess others’ emotions which could impede their sports-competitive activities.

The comparative analysis made depending on the age group the coaches are working with reveals significant differences as regards the subscale „Appraisal of one’s own emotions”, which is viewed by some authors (Salovey & Mayer, 1990) as central subcomponent of emotional intelligence (Table 2). The values of this index are similar to the ones of game strategy. The highest values were reported for the coaches without a team at the moment, followed by the ones working with football players aged between 15 and 18 years.

There are no statistical significant differences depending on the acquired license, the coaching and competitive experience.

The obtained results from the correlation analysis made reveal certain dependences between the researched parameters of Coaching efficacy and Emotional Intelligence (Figure 4).
There are significant correlations between Motivation efficacy and Appraisal of own emotions, Regulation of emotions; between Game strategy efficacy and Appraisal of other emotions, Appraisal of own emotions, Regulation of emotions, Utilization of emotions, between Technique efficacy and Appraisal of other emotions, Appraisal of own emotions, Regulation of emotions, Social Skills. The subscales Character building efficacy and Optimism remain isolated.

One of the tasks of our research was to study the influence of emotional intelligence on coaching efficacy. In order to assess this influence, we used step regression analysis. The results show (Table 3) that the high Emotional Intelligence [Appraise other emotions ($β=.488^{***}$), Appraise own emotions ($β=.505^{***}$), Social skills ($β=.416^{***}$), Utilization of emotions ($β=.447^{***}$) and Optimism ($β=.334^{**}$)] stimulates Technique efficacy and leads to its increase. The Regulation of emotions stimulates Game strategy efficacy ($β=.482^{***}$).
Table 3. Results from the Regression analysis

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Predictor</th>
<th>Coefficient</th>
<th>t</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
<th>ΔR^2</th>
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<tr>
<td>Appraise other emotions predict: Technique efficacy</td>
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<td>3.872</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>.238</td>
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<td>Appraise own emotions predict: Technique efficacy</td>
<td>.505</td>
<td>4.049</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>.255</td>
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<td>Regulation of emotions predict: Game strategy efficacy</td>
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<td>3.814</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>.233</td>
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<td>3.173</td>
<td>.003</td>
<td>.175</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Utilization of emotions predict: Technique efficacy</td>
<td>.447</td>
<td>3.458</td>
<td>.001</td>
<td>.199</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Optimism predict: Technique efficacy</td>
<td>.334</td>
<td>2.459</td>
<td>.018</td>
<td>.112</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**DISCUSSION**

The researched coaches have the greatest efficacy expectations as regards management of motivation and building technical skills in their competitors. This is an interesting finding and can be supported by the fact that in most cases coaches explain in their press releases the poor results and failure with lack of motivation or insufficient one.

The lowest coaching efficacy expectations can be observed regarding game strategy. It is interesting that in sport such as football where the game strategy and decision taking in constantly changing situations is of vital importance for the final results, coaches feel the lowest confidence particularly in this index. The reason for that could be linked to the coaches being conscious of the importance of this index and their inability on this base to cope with the requirements related to the management of game strategy. The data from our research reveal significant reserves for optimization of coaches’ preparation and hence, for better results.

As a whole, the results obtained from the research of Bulgarian coaches’ confidence reveal certain specificity in comparison with the data provided by foreign authors.

The data do not show statistically significant differences in the factors: qualification (acquired license), coaching experience and competitive experience – a fact which differs from the data found in literature.

Our results confirm the data in the literature about the role of emotional intelligence as predictor of coaching efficacy (Hwang, Feltz & Lee 2013). In this sense, we can assume that coaches who regulate their emotions and are aware of their players’ emotions would be more successful in their activities both during preparation and during competitions. Emotional competence, the ability to identify their and their athletes’ emotional states can affect positively their motivation and confidence.
We should certainly point out some limitations of our research. The research was done only among football coaches which means that the results cannot be generally applied to all coaches.

Future research with a greater number of coaches from different kinds of sports could cast more light on this issue which is very important for the theory and practice.

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