

The Relationship between Emotional Intelligence and Transformational Leadership of Female Coaches in Golestan Province

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Abstract

the current study aims to investigate the relationship between emotional intelligence (EI) and transformational leadership (TL) of female coaches in Golestan province (Iran). A descriptive-correlational research method is applied. Statistical population includes all female coaches in the province, from which a total of 313 subjects are randomly selected. The Emotional Intelligence Questionnaire (Syber Yashring, 1986), Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (Bass and Avolio, 2000), and Demographic Questionnaire are used to collect data. The first two provide the reliability coefficients of 0.84 and 0.81, respectively. The Kolmogorov-Smirnov (K-S) test results a skewed (non-normal) distribution of the variables ($p < 0.05$). Descriptive (frequency, mean, and standard deviation), and inferential (spearman's rank correlation coefficient) statistics are calculated in the analysis of data. The results indicate that the mean scores on the EI and TL measures of the subjects are 119.43 and 2.72, respectively. It means that there is a significant positive relationship between these two components ($r=0.173$, $p < 0.002$). In other words, the female coaches with higher rate

of EI have a more tendency to TL. Moreover, there are significant relationships between the EI subscales of self-awareness, self-motivating, and social skills with all subscales of TL (inspirational motivation, idealized influence, intellectual stimulation, and individual consideration). On the other hand, the subscale of sympathy has significant relationships with just two TL sub scales (i.e. inspirational motivation and individual consideration), while having no relationships with idealized influence and intellectual stimulation. Furthermore, there is no significant relationship between the subscale of self-regulation and none of the TL subscales.

Keywords: Emotional Intelligence, Transformational Leadership, Female Coaches

Introduction

Today, science has realized the power and influence of emotion in the intellectual life of human beings, seeking to find and explain its position in human actions and behaviors. As one of the main characteristics, emotional intelligence (EI) can help managers understand changes in this field (Modassir & Singh., 2008). The scientific discussion on emotional intelligence was first introduced by Peter Salovey and John Mayer, two American psychologists, in 1970. They defined

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emotional intelligence as "the subset of social intelligence that involves the ability to monitor one's own and others' feelings and emotions" (Hebert., 2011). Daniel Goleman (1995) believes that emotional intelligence is a wide range of skills by which one can control consciously his/her mind by self-awareness, improve it through self-regulation, understand its influence via sympathy, and enhance one's own and other's spirit by managing relationships (Hebert., 2011; Goleman., 1995). Emotional intelligence can help individuals think creatively, and use their emotions and feelings to solve problems (Cherniss., 2000). Modern trends in organizational culture management, teamwork, and cooperative management now find great importance, hence organizations tend to get managers who can achieve good social capabilities and communication skills; be good listener and speaker; actively understand and transfer the feelings of one's own and those of others; and create a happy environment where people can flourish. When the same conditions met, research shows that managers will be certainly successful who apply techniques of positive emotional influence, and establish effective relationship with their human resource (Hebert., 2011). One of the new and widely considered styles of leadership is Transformational Leadership (TL). The concept of "Transformational Leadership" was developed by Burns (1978) and expanded by Bass and Avolio (1990). As defined, transformational leaders are able to inspire their followers, and encourage and guide them in order to meet organizational objectives (Bass & Avolio., 1990). However, Bass and Avolio (1990) stated that transformational leadership would be appeared when leaders enhance staff interests, inform them about the group's responsibilities, and keep them motivated to accomplish general goals, rather than individual ones (Stone et al., 2004). The current style has many well-known advantages, such as: job

satisfaction, increased productivity, reduced stress, higher morale in subordinates, and profound effect on organization (Barling et al., 2000). Leadership is intrinsically an emotional process whereby leaders can realize emotional states of their subordinates, evoke their emotions, and then attempt to manage their followers' emotional states properly. Emotional intelligence is a key factor for people who are socially effective. In leadership field, emotional intelligence is described as a main determinant of effective leadership (Kerr et al., 2006). In recent years, transformational leadership has been linked to emotional intelligence. Evaluating the relationship between emotional intelligence and transformational leadership depends heavily on the theory and the applied assessment tools. Using mixed models of competency and emotional intelligence, previous research has provided inconsistent results (Modassir & Singh., 2008; Hebert., 2011; Weinberger., 2004; Sayeed & Shanker., 2009; Gardner and Stough., 2002). This may highlight the need for further research. Modassir and Singh (2008) observed that emotional intelligence of the leaders may not be the only parameter determining the perception of transformational leadership. Moreover, no significant findings were obtained for the relationship between EI and TL among managers and supervisors (Modassir and Singh., 2008). Through a study on school principals, Hebert (2011) revealed that there was a significant positive relationship between emotional intelligence and transformational leadership, and reported that principals may develop their skills for effective leadership as a result of knowing their own strengths and weaknesses regarding the emotional intelligence field, along with improving the transformational leadership behaviors (Hebert., 2011). Weinberger (2004) conducted a research on manufacturing managers and achieved

no relationship between emotional intelligence and transformational leadership. As he claimed, theories and measurements in emotional intelligence were at the very beginning point, and more experimental research was required (Weinberger., 2004). Sayeed and Shanker (2009) announced a significant relationship between EI and leadership styles of managers. Their findings showed that there were significant relationships between the subscales of EI and those of TL (Sayeed & Shanker., 2009). Furthermore, Gardner and Stough (2002) reported that the EI subscale of sympathy had a relationship with the TL subscale of inspirational motivation. There were also significant relationships between the subscale of self-regulation with the subscales of idealized influence, individual consideration, and inspirational motivation (Gardner and Stough., 2002). Due to paradoxical findings, also since emotional intelligence helps coaches effectively deal with others' emotions, recognize athletes' needs, and motivate them effectively; evaluating the relationship between emotional intelligence and transformational leadership is of great importance for sport coaches. On the other hand, while little research has been conducted on leadership and management styles of coaches in sports teams, measuring their EI, and most importantly, examining the relationship between emotional intelligence and transformational leadership in coaches, the present study investigates the relationship of emotional intelligence with transformational leadership. In other words, this research tries to answer the question of whether or not there is relationship between emotional intelligence and transformational leadership in the sample being studied.

Methodology

A descriptive- correlational research method was applied. Statistical population

included all female coaches in Golestan province (Iran) (n=1677), from which a total of 313 subjects were selected according to the Morgan's table, by using a random sampling process. A Syber Yashring's (1986) questionnaire for emotional intelligence was used to assess coaching EI. Covering 33 items, the questionnaire is widely applied to measure five subscales (self-awareness, self-regulation, self-motivating, sympathy, and social skills) of EI. In order to measure TL, Bass and Avolio's (2000) multifactor leadership questionnaire was applied. This questionnaire contains 45 items for three main styles of leadership: transformational, transactional, and passive/avoidance leadership. In the analysis, just questions related to transformational leadership were provided, and the rest was ignored. A 12-item questionnaire exploring demographic characteristics was developed to evaluate personal data of coaches. In order to overcome the potential shortages, 30 copies of the questionnaire were distributed among the research sample. Using Cronbach's alpha method, the reliability coefficient values were 0.84 and 0.81 for the EI and TL questionnaires, respectively. The Kolmogorov Smirnov test (to measure normality and homogeneity), and Spearman's rank correlation coefficient test (due to the lack of normal distribution of data) were used. For all calculations, the level of significance was $p < 0.05$.

Result

Table 1 shows the mean scores for emotional intelligence and its subscales of self-awareness, self-regulation, self-motivating, sympathy, and social skills in the participations. The mean score for EI is 119.43, and the subscale of self-awareness has the highest score in the measurement.

Table 1. Scores for Emotional Intelligence and its Subscales

Variable	No.	Ave.	SD	Max.	Min.
Emotional Intelligence	313	119.43	11.88	141	76
Self-awareness	313	31.23	3.79	40	17
Self-regulation	313	22.59	3.17	30	13
Self-motivating	313	23.88	2.95	30	16
Sympathy	313	21.81	3.11	30	14
Social skills	313	19.93	3.01	25	7

Table 2 shows the mean scores for transformational leadership and its subscales of inspirational motivation, idealized influence, intellectual stimulation, and individual consideration

in the participations. The mean score for transformational leadership is 2.72, and two subscales of inspirational motivation and individual consideration have the highest scores in the measurement.

Table 2. Descriptive Indices of Emotional Intelligence and its Subscales

Variable	No.	Ave.	SD	Max.	Min.
Transformational Leadership	313	2.72	.31	3.42	2
Inspirational Motivation	313	3.05	.47	4	1.50
Idealized Influence	313	2.99	.47	4	1.38
Intellectual stimulation	313	2.92	.50	4	1.50
Idealized Influence	313	3.05	.45	4	1.75

The Spearman test indicates a significant positive relationship between emotional

intelligence and transformational leadership ($r=0.173$, $p<0.05$).

Table 3. Correlation between Emotional Intelligence and Transformational Leadership

Variable	No.	Correlation Coefficient	Significance Level
Emotional Intelligence & Transformational Leadership	313	0.173	0.002

Moreover, there is a significant positive relationship between three EI subscales (self-awareness, self-motivating, and social skills) and all subscales of TL (inspirational motivation, idealized influence, intellectual stimulation, and individual consideration) ($p<0.05$). However, no significant relationship could be observed between the EI subscale of self-regulation and any subscale of TL ($p>$

0.05). Also, the EI subscale of sympathy presents significant positive relationships with two TL subscales of inspirational motivation and individual consideration ($p<0.05$), while it has no significant relationship with the subscales of intellectual stimulation and idealized influence ($p>0.05$).

Table 4. Correlation Matrix between EI Subscales and TL Subscales

Subscales	Self-awareness		Self-regulation		Self-motivating		Sympathy		Social skills	
	Corr. Coe.	Sig. level	Corr. Coe.	Sig. level	Corr. Coe.	Sig. level	Corr. Coe.	Sig. Level	Corr. Coe.	Sig. level
Inspirational motivation	.234*	.000	.042	.454	.297*	.000	.232*	.000	.347*	.000
Idealized influence	.190*	.001	.031	.579	.177*	.002	.083	.145	.246*	.000
Intellectual stimulation	.273*	.000	.027	.637	.181*	.001	.104	.067	.321*	.000
Individual consideration	.375*	.000	.037	.512	.239*	.000	.227	.000	.331*	.000

* p<0.05

Discussion and Conclusion

The research findings indicate that there is a significant relationship between emotional intelligence and transformational leadership behavior in female coaches. The result is consistent with most studies conducted in this field, such as Gardner and Stough (2002), Sayeed and Shanker (2009), and Hebert (2011) (Gardner and Stough., 2002; Sayeed and Shanker., 2009; Hebert., 2011), although it is inconsistent with the findings of Weinberger (2004), and Modassir and Singh (2008) (Weinberger., 2004; Modassir and Singh., 2008). Teamwork, and cooperative management have great importance, and hence organizations tend to get managers who can achieve good social capabilities and communication skills; be good listener and speaker; actively understand and transfer the feelings of one's own and those of others; and create a happy environment where people can flourish. When the same conditions met, research shows that managers will be certainly successful who apply techniques of positive emotional influence, and establish effective relationship with their human resource

(Hebert., 2011). Through a study on school principals, Hebert (2011) observed the same result. He reported that principals may develop their skills for effective leadership as a result of knowing their own strengths and weaknesses regarding the emotional intelligence field, along with improving the transformational leadership behaviors, and that such positive correlation can be just accomplished in TL, while it may not be observed in other styles (Hebert., 2011). Examining individual elements for EI and TL, however, Weinberger (2004) found no relationship between these two components (Weinberger., 2004). Since many paradoxical studies have been applied in educational setting and non-educational environments like corporations, plants, and industrial workshops, it seems that differences of leadership role a coach plays in one's relationship with athletes must be regarded. Anshel (2000) believed that as a leader, coaches has a provocative role to develop safe and effective methods for athlete developments. A most important characteristic affecting athletes' motivation and their perception of coaches is the leadership style coaches demonstrate in

their behavior (Anshel., 2000). Dionne and Yammario (2004) reported that transformational leaders are able to keep athletes motivated through behaviors with respect and individual consideration. This is consistent with present findings about higher EI levels in coaches with TL behavior, since such coaches have better knowledge from self and others, and thereby exert great impact on athletes (Dionne & Yammario., 2004). However, the results obtained from the subscales of emotional intelligence and transformational leadership indicate a consistency between the research with Sayeed and Shanker (2009), and Gardner and Stough (2002) (Sayeed & Shanker., 2009; Gardner and Stough., 2002). The research shows that the subscale of self-awareness is associated with all subscales of TL. This may be justified with Goleman's (1995) description who defined self-awareness as the basis of other EI elements. As Goleman noted, people with a higher self-awareness level can gain better understanding about one's own strengths and weaknesses, easily prioritize their needs, perform activities accurately, be honest with others, and exactly know any emotional influence on one's own and others (Goleman., 1995). The EI subscale of self-motivating has relationship with all TL subscales. In their research, Sullivan and Kent (2003) defined emotional intelligence as an important predictor for leadership style of sport coaches (Sullivan & Kent., 2003). As Hsu et al (2002) stated, motivation is the foundation for success in recreational and competitive activities, and athletes' effort to gain success depends on individual motivation (Hsu et al., 2002). Amorose and Hom (2001) revealed that coaching behaviors directly affect the levels of motivation, self-awareness, perception of success, and developmental behaviors in athletes, and that athletic motivation is the product of coach (leader)'s behavior (Amorose & Hom., 2001). In general, the findings show that social skill has significant relationship

with all subscales of TL, and that there are significant relationships between the subscale of sympathy and – at least- two subscales of inspirational motivation and individual consideration. The above finding can be justified with high emotional capacity of leaders. Such leaders can provide higher managerial performance and better assessments of their subordinate and direct supervisors. Research also indicates that female managers have more emotional capacity (Cherniss., 2000; Helgesen., 1990; Rosener., 1990). Kerr et al. (2006) explain emotional intelligence as a major factor for people who are socially effective. Therefore, it may be concluded that social skills and sympathy, which are considered as the EI elements and more prominent in women due to their emotional nature, can affect leadership behavior, and thereby may be affected by the subscales of leadership style (Kerr et al., 2006). Emphasizing on the necessity of perception of individual emotions which is referred as sympathy, Gardner and Stough (2002) concluded that leaders with higher EI are able to recognize increased expectation levels of staff, which in turn is a sign of inspirational motivation in TL (Gardner & Stough., 2002). The EI element of self-regulation shows no significant relationship with the TL elements. The result is not consistent with Gardner and Stough's (2002) findings (Gardner & Stough., 2002). This may be justified due to discrepancy of leadership roles among coaches and managers. Audiences' judgment, club's force to achieve results desired, and competitive stress may impose negative impact on coaches to control their emotions. While managers in companies, agencies, and industries deal with their special stress and emotional problems within different environment form athletic settings. So, the different nature between research samples can be regarded as the main determinate for such discrepancy.

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