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ANALYSIS OF THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN STYLES OF COPING WITH STRESS AND EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE IN VOLLEYBALL COACHES

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ABSTRACT

The aim of this study is to analyse the levels of emotional intelligence and coping with stress in volleyball coaches in terms of different variables. 78 volleyball coaches from second league volleyball teams Turkish volleyball federation in 2015-2016 season participated in the study. According to the results of the study, a significant association was found between emotional intelligence and coping with stress dimensions. The coping with stress dimension most frequently preferred by volleyball coaches was found to be "self-confident approach". Statistically significant difference was found in the dimension of coping with stress in terms of the variables of marital status, educational status and professional experience. No significant difference was found in the dimensions of coping with stress in terms of the variable of age. As a result of the analysis made in terms of the variables of emotional intelligence scale and demographic variables, significant difference was found in terms of the variables of professional experience and coach status; while no significant difference was found between the variables of age, educational status and marital status.

Keywords: Emotional intelligence; sport; coach; coping with stress.

INTRODUCTION:

Emotional intelligence is a type of intelligence that is used to express emotions of understanding and coping with emotions. From this view, emotional intelligence may be said to be effective in many things, from decision-making mechanisms to school success, from conflict resolution to coping with stress. Self-awareness refers to the person's ability to recognize and understand their own emotions and has a critical prescription for emotional intelligence. Beyond knowing emotions, it also involves being aware of how one's behaviour will affect other people's feelings. In order to increase self-awareness, one should follow his/her reactions and emotional changes to different situations and make them meaningful for themselves. One needs to understand how to control his/her emotions and to control emotions in order to have emotional intelligence, as well as to understand their emotions and how they affect others. We just have to find the right time, place and way of expressing our feelings. The appropriateness of expressing our behaviour and emotions is essentially what is sought in self-regulation.

Communicating well with other people is another requirement of emotional intelligence. We must articulate our everyday life in the same way that we convey these feelings in the correct way. The most important social skills include active listening, verbal communication skills, nonverbal communication skills, leadership and persuasion skills. In addition, empathy, the ability to understand how other people feel about situations, is critical for emotional intelligence. However, it is not enough to understand how the other person feels, even, the reactions we give to that person must also be appropriate to his emotional state.

Inner motivation also plays an important role in emotional intelligence. Those with high inner motivation set goals, strive for their goals, and always look for new ways to do better, so they enrich their inner world. All these features regarding Emotional Intelligence (EI) are of great importance for coping with stress

LITERATURE REVIEW:s

Emotional intelligence (EI) is a new concept based on the tradition of multiple intelligences. It is argued to have traced back to the work of Thorndike (1920) who introduced the concept of Social Intelligence in his Multi-Factor theory of intelligence. Gardener's (1983) model of Multiple Intelligences includes two components of EI, namely interpersonal intelligence and intrapersonal intelligence. There are three approaches to EI that guide understanding in the current EI research. First, Coleman 1998, postulated that EI includes traits, such as motivation, optimism, adaptability, and warmth, which can predict success in human relations, work and life in general (Jihan, Alumran, & Leena, 2008).

Second, (Mayer & Salovey, 1997) and Salovey (1997) have defined emotional intelligence by the specific competencies it encompasses, organizing skills in perceiving emotions, facilitating thought, understanding emotions, and managing emotions. The emotional intelligence indicates the knowledge about emotions and how this knowledge influences interpersonal relationship, and on the other hand, evaluation and emotional expression in a suitable and competence mood are as an indicator of the ability to recognition (Lyusin, 2006).

Third, Bar-On (1997a) proposed a personality or mixed model of EI, which most directly suggests EI to be important in coping with stress. He defined EI as "an array of emotional, personal, and social abilities and skills that enable an individual to cope effectively with environmental demands and pressures" (Jihan, Alumran, & Leena, 2008). (Kayalar & Güler Arı, 2016) argued in their research that creating an interactive environment, integrating strong emotional connections, and being aware of internal and external attention for the training process seemed to be a success in training environment.

(Mayer & Salovey, 1997) developed the ability conception of EI, which has four branches: perception/appraisal, emotional facilitation of thinking, understanding/analysing emotion, and regulation. EI is observed as a pyramidal structure composed of four basic skills: (1) the ability to perceive, appraise and express emotions accurately (emotional perception), (2) the ability to access and/or generate feelings when they facilitate thought (emotional integration), (3) the ability to understand emotions, emotional knowledge and emotional reasoning (emotional understanding), and (4) the ability to regulate one's own and others' emotions to promote emotional and intellectual growth (emotional regulation) (Mayer & Salovey, 1997).

Emotional intelligence might render individuals less vulnerable to emotional exhaustion in that emotionally intelligent coaches are more likely to understand that they engage in surface acting only with the view to enhance the performance of their athletes and teams. That understanding is likely to mitigate the negative effects of surface acting including emotional exhaustion (Lee & Chelladurai, 2016).

EI in the sport context is receiving growing attention from sport psychologists as it relates to athletes (Mayer & Fletcher, 2007); (Holt & Hogg, 2002). However, few studies have examined the role of emotional intelligence

in coaching in particular and sport organizations in general (Lee & Chelladurai, 2016; (Hwang, Feltz, & Lee, 2013).(Crombie, Lombard, & Noakes, 2009) propose that emotional intelligence could influence performance through managing emotions under stress, and emotional intelligence has been linked to reduced stress in sport. Despite many differences between the business setting and sport (i.e. nature of the goal and context), a number of similarities between the two contexts exist, especially regarding the roles of a coach in a team (e.g. motivating and communicating with followers, and showing leadership). For example, if coaches appropriately regulate their own negative emotion during competitions or practice, they would think that these behaviours (regulating and keeping a positive mood) positively affect the attitude of athletes. Competence to identify athletes' emotional states (e.g. burn-out, boredom, and anxiety level) would probably lead them to believe that they can effectively motivate, teach, and strategize with their athletes with confidence (Hwang, Feltz, & Lee, 2013). Emotional intelligence has a significant value in terms of being a key concept among the developing subjects of sports psychology by sports scientists, coaches, sports psychologists, managers and sports authors (Mayer & Fletcher, 2007); (Meyer & Zizzi, 2007); Thelwell, 2008; (Lane, et al., 2009).

EI has been linked to coping (Schutte, Malouff, Thorsteinsson, Bhullar, & Rooke, 2007); Noorbakhsh & Zarei, 2010; (Matthews, et al., 2006). Coping strategies refer to the specific efforts, both behavioral and psychological, that people employ to master, tolerate, reduce, or minimize stressful events. Two general coping strategies have been distinguished: problem solving strategies and emotion-focused coping strategies. These two coping dimensions differ in the way coping behavior is targeted: problem-focused coping is aimed at solving the problem and emotion-focused coping is directed towards regulating the emotion of the person under stress (Latack et al., 1992). In a competency based training system, self-regulation, empathy, emotional intelligence, and character turn out to be very significant features (Kayalar, 2016). Problem focused coping typically involves strategies to manage or alter the problem that is causing stress through behaviours such as information gathering, goal setting, time management skills, and problem-solving. Emotion-focused coping styles include the strategies of regulating emotional responses resulting from a stressor through actions like meditation, relaxation, and cognitive efforts to change the meaning the individual attaches to the situation. Avoidance coping involves physically or mentally disengaging from the stressful situation. Finally, the appraisal-reappraisal category involves efforts to appraise and reappraise stressful situations to assess whether or not the coping techniques are working effectively (Nicholls, Holt, Polman, & Bloomfield, 2006). Coping with stress in sport is another issue of significance. Researchers have examined coping widely, defining it as "constantly changing cognitive and behavioural efforts to manage specific internal and/or external demands that are appraised as taxing or exceeding the resources of a person" (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984).

Sport achievement and performance to a large extent is influenced by usual stressful factor, committing a mental or physical fault, bearing pain and inconvenience, seeing rival's cheating or success, getting penalty from referee, or rebuking by trainer (Mohammad & Besharat, 2010).The occupation of training, which is the most important element of sports environment, is among the most stressful occupations. Although elite coaches perform in somewhat different ways to their athletes, they still have to plan meticulously for training and competition, execute training plans with the flexibility to adapt in competitive situations, and cope with the stressors of the intense competition, the intrusion of the media, and the pressure to produce results (Olusoga, Maynard, Butt, & Hays, 2014). Hence, within sporting contexts, coaches think and behave in a strategic manner to cope with their stress experiences. These strategies can be classified as problem-focused, in which attempts are made to deal with the demands of the environment, or emotion- focused, in which attempts are made to deal with one's emotional responses to these stressors. Coaches should create a supportive team atmosphere and adopt and espouse a positive attitude in order to help athletes deal with the stress resulting from self-imposed performance expectations. When coaches model a positive attitude and confidence, athletes may adopt this perspective themselves and this can act as a coping resource (Jenelle et al., 2007).

(Aldwin, 1994) suggested that standard approaches to coping overemphasize the role of control over the environment and emotions, and for minor stressors, "deferring action, or simply letting events play themselves out, may be a better strategy". Although coaches were not a minor stressor, blocking may have been an appropriate coping strategy because confronting the situation risks a negative influence on playing status. Furthermore, it was not clear if participants thought they were coping effectively with stressors or if the coping strategies employed were altering the social context of the team (Saklofske, Austin, Galloway, & Davidson, 2007). If the coaches were unable to msanage their stress effectively, some felt that their focus and decision making was impeded.

Thus, when the role and effect of coaches on athletes are considered, this study is important in terms of determining the emotional intelligence and coping with stress levels of volleyball coaches and also reducing the negative effects of coach tension during the process of training-competition.

METHODS:

Sample and procedure:
Seventy-eight professional volleyball coaches from a second league national team participated in the study. The data collected from the sample, its demographical and descriptive information about the coach were as follows: Their ages ranged from 27 to 64 (41.6±10.2). About 52.6% are married, 47.4% are single. About 26 (33.3%) were coaches, 52 (66.7%) were assistant coach. 5.1% had graduated from high school according to alma mater distribution. (n = 4), 76.9 % were under graduates (n = 60), and 17.9 % had graduated from Master (n = 14). In terms of professional experience, 20.5% had 1-5 years of experience (n = 16); 15.4 % had 6-10 years of experience (n = 11) and 15.4 % had 11-15 years of experience (n = 12).

1.1 Instruments

The Emotional Intelligence Scale

This is a self-report scale based on the emotional intelligence model and including 33 items developed by (Salovey & Mayer, 1990) (Schutte, et al., 1998) defined the scale as one dimensional. The items are scored on a Likert scale ranging from 1 (does not describe me well) to 5 (describes me very well).

Ways of Coping Scale:
Volleyball coaches' styles of coping with stress have been measured. The "Ways of Coping Scale", developed by (Folkman & Lazarus, 1980) and revised and recreated by (Sahin & Durak, 1995) was employed in this study. The factor analysis of the scale, which had been reduced to 30 items, had presented a 5 (five) factor structure. While three of the sub scales (self-confident approach, optimistic approach, seeking of social support approach) were assessed as effective methods of coping, while the other two sub scales (helpless approach, submissive approach) were assessed as ineffective methods of coping.

Statistical Analysis:
Data collected was analysed by SPSS 22.0 program for Windows. While frequency analysis was used for determining the demographical information distribution of the participants, descriptive statistics were used to determine average and standard deviation related to the scores obtained from sub-dimensions of the inventory. Before making comparisons related to the sub-dimensions of the inventory, One Sample Kolmogorov-Smirnov test was used to find out whether data related to the sub-dimensions were appropriate for the normal distribution. For that reason, non-parametric analysis methods were used in order to make comparisons. Mann-Whitney's U test was used for nonparametric comparisons and Kruskal-Wallis H-test analysis of variance was used for comparison of two or more groups. Finally, to evaluate the relationship between EI and coping style the Spearman correlation test was used.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION:

Table 1: Means and standard deviations and ranges of the study measures

Measures	mean±ss
Self-Confident Approach	ss
Optimistic Approach	3.4±0.7
Seeking of Social Support	3.8±0.9
Helpless Approach	2.8±0.7
Submissive Approach	2.0±0.6
Emotional Intelligence	126.3±26.5

Note: N=78

According to table 1descriptive the means and standard deviations for the background variables, the coping styles and the emotional intelligence scales.

Table 2: Comparing the coping ways of participants according to marital status

Sub-dimensions	Marital status	N	Mean rank	Average Rank	U	p
Self-Confident Approach	Married	41	45.67	1872.50	505.50	**.01***
	Single	37	32.66	1208.50		

Sub-dimensions	Marital status	N	Mean rank	Average Rank	U	p
Optimistic Approach	Married	41	42.61	1747.00	631.00	.20
	Single	37	36.05	1334.00		
Seeking of Social Support	Married	41	39.21	1607.50	746.50	.90
	Single	37	39.82	1473.50		
Helpless Approach	Married	41	36.93	1514.00	653.00	.29
	Single	37	42.35	1567.00		
Submissive Approach	Married	41	41.61	1706.00	672.00	.38
	Singles	37	37.16	1375.00		

*p<.05

When the table 2 was analysed, it was possible to see that there was a statistically significant difference between the Self-Confident Approach scores according to the marital status of the participants (MW=505.00; p=0.01<.05) and there was no statistically significant difference in other sub-dimensions according to the marital status of the participants (p>.05). In Self-Confident Approach sub-dimension, single participants had lower level of average.

Table 3: Comparing coping ways of the participants according to age groups

Sub-dimensions	Age Groups	N	Mean rank	KW	p
Self-Confident Approach	30 years and under	28	37.48		
	31-40 years old	26	39.08		
	41-50 years old	20	42.83	0.670	.88
	50 years and above	4	39.75		
Optimistic Approach	30 years and under	28	42.82		
	31-40 years old	26	38.02	1.103	.77
	41-50 years old	20	38.00		
	50 years and above	4	33.38		
Seeking of Social Support	30 years and under	28	40.18		
	31-40 years old	26	40.96	0.550	.90
	41-50 years old	20	37.90		
	50 years and above	4	33.25		
Helpless Approach	30 years and under	28	33.32		
	31-40 years old	26	40.83	4.020	.25
	41-50 years old	20	44.20		
	50 years and above	4	50.63		
Submissive Approach	30 years and under	28	40.50		
	31-40 years old	26	42.38	1.586	.66
	41-50 years old	20	36.18		
	50 years and above	4	30.38		

p<.05

According to Table 3, no statistically significant difference was determined between the participants' coping with stress scores according to their age groups (p>.05).

Table 4:s Comparing coping ways of the participants in terms of the status of education

Sub-dimensions	Status of education	N	Mean rank	X^2	p
Self-Confident Approach	High school	4	16.63		
	Undergraduate	60	42.11	5.521	0.63
	Master	14	34.86		
Optimistic Approach	High school	4	26.00		
	Undergraduate	60	39.64	1.727	0.42
	Master	14	42.75		
Seeking of Social Support	High school	4	13.50		

Sub-dimensions	Status of education	N	Mean rank	X^2	p
	Undergraduate	60	42.25	6.825	**0.03***
	Master	14	35.14		
Helpless Approach	High school	4	53.88		
	Undergraduate	60	37.22	3.117	0.21
	Master	14	45.18		
Submissive Approach	High school	4	35.13		
	Undergraduate	60	38.82	0.693	0.70
	Master	14	43.68		

**p<.05*

When the Table 4 was analysed, it was possible to see that there was a statistically significant difference between the Seeking of Social Support scores in terms of the Status of education of the participants (X^2=6.825; p=.03 <.05). There was no statistically significant difference in other sub-dimensions according to the status of education the participants (p>.05).

Table 5: Comparing coping ways of the participants in terms of professional experience

Sub-dimensions	Professional experience	N	Mean rank	X^2	p
Self-Confident Approach	Less than 1 year	39	37.69		
	1-5 years	16	34.78	5.416	.14
	6-10 years	11	53.82		
	11-15 years	12	38.54		
Optimistic Approach	Less than 1 year	39	31.23		
	1-5 years	16	40.50	13.346	**.04***
	6-10 years	11	51.91		
	11-15 years	12	53.67		
Seeking of Social Support	Less than 1 year	39	42.60		
	1-5 years	19	34.09	5.613	.13
	6-10 years	11	28.45		
	11-15 years	12	46.75		
Helpless Approach	Less than 1 year	39	47.17		
	1-5 years	16	37.25	12.136	**.00***
	6-10 years	11	34.27		
	11-15 years	12	22.38		
Submissive Approach	Less than 1 year	39	37.14		
	1-5 years	16	44.66	2.333	.50
	6-10 years	11	34.91		
	11-15 years	12	44.50		

**p<.05*

When the Table 5 was analysed, it was possible to see that there was a statistically significant difference between the Optimistic Approach (X^2=13.346; p=0.04<.05) and Helpless Approach (X^2=12.136; p=0.00<.05) scores in terms of professional experience. There was no statistically significant difference in other sub-dimensions according to professional experience in terms of coaching the participants (p>.05).

Table 6: Analysis Results in terms of the variables of emotional intelligence levels of sample group

Variables		N	Mean + s	(U test) Z / (KW) X^2	P
Age	30 years under	*28*	128.1+28.2		
	31-40 years old	*26*	127.0+22.5	*1.038*	*.79*
	41-50 years old	*20*	125.9+25.6		
	50 and above	*4*	111.5+45.4		
Education	High school	*4*	92.0+40.7		
	Undergraduate	*60*	128.4+24.4	*4.247*	*.12*

Variables		N	Mean + s	(U test) Z / (KW) X^2	P
	Master	*14*	127.2+25.9		
Professional experience	Less than 1 year	*39*	132.3+22.6		
	1-5 years	*16*	124.0+20.2	*8.206*	**.04***
	6-10 years	*11*	109.1+34.5		
	11-15 years	*12*	126.0+32.6		
Marital status	Married	41	125.0+28.0	742.00	.86
	Single	37	127.8+25.0		
Coach status	Coach	26	116.4+32.4	465.50	**.02***
	Assistant coach	52	131.3+21.6		

*p<.05

When the Table 6 was analysed the difference between the levels of emotional intelligence in terms of professional experience and Coaching status (p< .05) was statistically significant; While no significant difference exists in terms of age and marital status (p>.05). Also there was no significant difference in terms of level of education (p>.05).

Table 7: Spearman correlation between EI and coping style

Variable	S-CA	OA	SSS	HA	SA
EI	-.04 .68s	-.10 .38	**.94**** .00	**.23*** .03	.10 .37

**p<.05 EI=emotional intelligence; S-CA= Self-Confident Approach; SSS= Seeking of Social Support; HA= Helpless Approach; SA= Submissive Approach*

When Table 7 was analysed, no statistically significant relationship were found between self-confident approach (r= -0.04; p=0.68>.05), optimistic approach (r=-0.10; p=0.38 >.05), and submissive approach (r=0.10; p=0.37 >.05) which are sub dimensions of emotional intelligence level and coping with stress. However, a statistically significant relationship was found between emotional intelligence and seeking of social support (r=0.94; p=.00<.05). As general emotional intelligence skill levels increase, seeking of social support also increase. A statistically positively significant relationship was found between emotional intelligence level and helpless approach (r=.23; p=.03<.05). As the general emotional intelligence skill increases, helpless approach also increases.

According to the results of the study, a positive association was found between seeking of social support and helpless approach. As coaches' emotional intelligence levels increase, their seeking of social support and helplessness approaches also increase. From another point of view, in terms of coaches whose sensuousness comes to the forefront during the time of stress, seeking of social support is a solution and a way to get away from stress. It can be thought that coaches think more emotionally and focused on their inner worlds and the occurrence of negative conditions for an indefinite time and continuation of these negative conditions can be thought to increase helpless approach in stressed times. When the literature is reviewed, there are studies which have found emotional intelligence and dimensions of coping with stress to be positively correlated (Noorbakhsh, Besharat, & Zarei, 2010); Saklofske et al., 2007; Salovey & Mayer, 1990; (Kim & Agrusa, 2011).When the coaches' ways of coping with stress were reviewed, they were found to prefer the self-confidence approach dimension most. It is a positive result that scores of self-confidence approach, optimistic approach and seeking of social support, which are effective approaches, to be higher than the scores of helplessness approach and submissive approach. Thus, it can be said that coaches can use problem-based coping style more.

It was also concluded in similar researches carried out in Turkey upon individuals working in different professional groups that individuals generally preferred self-confident approach for coping with stress (Eraslan, Yetiş, & Şahin, 2016); (Güler & Çınar, 2010).

In terms of demographic variables, differences were found in coaches' levels of coping with stress in terms of marital status, educational status and Professional experience; however, no significant difference was found between the dimensions of coping with stress in terms of age.

Generally, age was not an influential factor, saying that old-aged people can cope in the same way as young or middle aged people (Madenoğlu, 2013); (Feifel & Strack, 1989); Folkman & Lazarus, 1980; (Canpolat, 2006).

A review of the literature shows that people with higher social status favour more effective coping strategies (e.g., active-cognitive and problem-focused coping) and those with lower social status are inclined to use less effective coping strategies (Billings & Moos, 1981); (Cronkite & Moos, 1984).
In the current study it is found that the difference in levels of emotional intelligence according to age, education, and marital status is not statistically significant ; while, there is a significant difference according Professional skating and coach status. When the related literature was reviewed, it was concluded that emotional intelligence level did not change significantly in terms of the variable of age (Kim & Agrusa, 2011; (Augusto-Landa, Lopez-Zafra, Berrios-Martos, & Aguilar-Luzon, 2008); (Alumran & Punamäki, 2008); (Cote & Miners, 2006); (Eraslan, 2015). (Mayer, Caruso, & Salovey, 1999), (Sevindik, Uncu, & Dag, 2012), (Adilogullari, 2011) and (Ulucan, 2012) (Kumar & Muniandy, 2012) made studies which show that emotional intelligence increases with age. In a study by (Acar, 2001) about emotional intelligence, it was found that emotional intelligence level did not differ in terms of Professional experience or seniority. In foreign literature, studies were conducted to analyze emotional intelligence within a sportive environment and similar results were concluded (Thelwell, Lane, Weston, & Greenlees, 2008); (Wagstaff, Hanton, & & Fletcher, 2013); (Barlow & Banks, 2014); (Fletcher & Scott, 2010); (Lane, Thelwell, Lowther, & Devonport, 2009).

CONCLUSION:

The results showed that there was statistically significant relation between the strategies of coping with stress and Emotional Intelligence of coaches. As a result of these findings, when trainers know which strategies exist for coping and under which circumstances these strategies will be used, understanding their own feelings and the athletes' feelings will inform them to have an influence on their feelings and the coaches' feelings. Reaching and using knowledge, making plans, coming face to face with problems are very important in being successful and reaching targets. The awareness of which methods to use in fighting stress, which is the reason for success and every kind of disturbance, will increase and strategies will be developed to have a more successful career. Results of our study showed that there are trainers who use effective coping strategies more frequently.
Emotion based coping approach is preferred less. However, emotion based coping approach also has positive sides; it is very important to control feelings and thoughts and to develop healthy strategies consequently before competition, during competition and after competition. Coaches who have the talents and skills to be aware of their own skills, to be aware of their own personal feelings and limits, to take stress and anger under control and to be emphatic will always be successful and affect athletes' behaviours positively.
Coaches' being aware of the emotional status of athletes (exp. levels of exhaustion, stress and anxiety) and intervening accordingly can probably be more effective in their being motivated more effectively, in learning and in developing their trust to the athletes. Besides making them organize their behaviours to athletes, these skills will have a great use in coaches' managing their emotional behaviours both in their professional and also in their personal lives.

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