

## **The Relationship between Leadership Styles and Self-efficacy of Aquatics in Tehran, Iran**

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### **Abstract**

Today, the role of coaches as leaders is very important. Continuous efforts are conducted in all areas to find people who have the ability to lead teams and enormous funds are spent in this way. According to researchers, the coaching in sports requires leadership. This was applied correlation field study. The population consisted of all male and female coaches of different aqua sports (rowing, swimming, lifeguards, diving, water polo) in Tehran (N=830, Women= 610 (73%), men= 220 (27%)). Using Morgan table, the sample size was estimated to be 265 participants; the sample was selected using stratified random sampling method. The library and field study was conducted for collecting the data. First, the library resources (books, articles in Persian and Latin, internet websites, etc.) were used for literature review. Based on the literature study, then, the questionnaires were prepared for evaluating the performance of coaches. The face and content validity of questionnaire was reviewed and approved by 12 professors and PhD candidates in sport management. The, they were distributed among the participants. The reliability of leadership style, self-efficacy, and burnout questionnaires was determined to be 0.78, 0.83, and 0.73, respectively. The collected data were summarized using descriptive statistics (mean, standard deviation, percentage, etc.) in the form of charts and tables. Also, the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test was used to evaluate the normality of data distribution and Pearson correlation coefficient was used to test hypotheses.

## **1. Introduction**

Today, the sport is considered in various ways in the world. Many people deal with it in different ways as professional athletes, amateur athletes, fans who are interested in sports and sports programs, and those who meet their affairs through sports. Given the significant role of sports in economic, social, cultural, and even political development of countries, the progress of sports has become one of the strategic priorities of planners (Dehghan, 2010).

The dynamic and efficient management and leadership is an important feature of successful sports teams which distinguishes them from unsuccessful teams (Leith, 2001). The coaching is some kind of leadership which brings people with different experiences, talents, and interests together and encourages them to take responsibility, continue progress, and behave perfectly with their partners and coworkers. The coaching is not just memorizing techniques and thinking about best programs; however, it is paying real attention to athletes, believing them, and involving them. Today, the coaching is considered to be one of the most difficult jobs. The coach should have necessary skills and knowledge to train skilled athletes. In professional coaching, the working condition is very hard. The coaches' performance is monitored strictly by spectators, players, sports managers, journalists, mass media, and critics (Goudarzi & Ahmadi, 2002). Among the factors affecting the success of a sports team, the leadership style has particular importance. If other factors which affect the success of team will be desirable but the leadership style does not satisfy the athletes, it cannot be expected that the team will achieve its goals (Zardoshtian, 2009). The coaches will be effective managers if they have necessary skills for leading the athletes. The leadership is one of the most important and necessary skills for coaches. Some important tasks of leaders include motivating, effective communication with athletes, and creation of cohesion and harmony (Sadegh, 2008).

The coaches' concerns about work, family, and social problems affect their performance. This makes them stressful and anxious; finally, this causes burnout. The sports coaches face many stressful situations in communicating with managers, providing required facilities to support individual programs, and meeting different needs of athletes; all these also lead to burnout (Ramezanejad, 2001).

The self-efficacy theory in fact refers to judgment of people about their competences and capacities. It is the result of certain beliefs which rely on previous experiences, beliefs, verbal encouragement, and mental conditions. In this regard, Gondi (1998) states that an efficient coach should have features such as listening, leading, being a teacher, guiding, counseling, and being role model. Win Berg (1981) suggests that the self-efficacy impacts directly or indirectly on performance through mental and emotional ways. The more one's self-efficacy, the better his/ her athletic performance. If all physical and environmental conditions will be the same for all individuals, the mental conditions and characteristics of coaches will determines the result of athletes' performance. The self-efficacy is a personality factor which impacts on method of dealing with environmental stress.

The people who are goal-oriented and responsible in their life and have good nutrition and adequate rest endure better the hardships, benefit from mature defense mechanisms such as dedication, flexibility, and social support, and are less vulnerable. In contrast, the people with mental and physical diseases, low self-esteem, and limited social relations are vulnerable to stress and get sick (Milanifar, 1996).

However, the people with more self-efficacy hope for success and are less anxious and depressed. In addition, it seems that the people who are competent and effective in solving the problems in stressful conditions are less prone to depression (Mose & Shefer, 1993).

When a group of people try to reach a goal, someone takes the responsibility of group as manager and leader. This person should have the necessary skills and qualities of a leader to be able to guide members towards the goal. In sports situations, the coach leads the team.

The effective leadership of coach has an important impact on athletic performance. The leadership style reflects the mindset, worldview, and personality of leaders. The attitude of leader toward his/her role is the factor which affects leadership style. Most of leaders have a style which matches their features or is easier for them. Limited number of leaders may adapt their style with different situations and people. Undoubtedly, having leadership skills is a salient feature of an effective coach. If the leadership style adopted by coach will be consistent with different functions, it will certainly lead to athletes' success. In many cases, the coaches start their work with high motivation, but for various reasons they get demotivated and face with

helplessness feeling and lack of self-satisfaction; these are often due to low self-efficacy in workplace. If the self-efficacy will be at a higher level, the motivation and enthusiasm will increase.

The research has shown that the higher the level of self-efficacy, the higher the job performance, range of opportunities, and interest in job and vice versa (Bores et al., 2003).

Bandura (1996) considers the self-worth sense as a cognitive process in people which creates a subjective judgment about their ability comply with environmental demands.

Frand (2001) considers the self-efficacy as a key to success in sports. If individuals have no confidence in their abilities, they cannot actualize their internal potentials. It is even possible that the people with less ability but with high self-confidence and self-esteem act more than their potentials; this is due to the powerful effect of self-confidence.

According to Frank Stand (2004), the effective and efficient coaches are those who pay more attention to work habits, personality and teamwork, skill level, ability to de-stress, professional thinking education, proper personal habits, and following the works of other coaches and athletes to train outstanding athletes.

The stress and burnout are common and serious problems which arises among people who serve the people. The teaching and training are among the stressful jobs (Zareian, 2007).

Obviously, the responsibility of individuals to achieve specific objectives have problems and ups and downs which cause fatigue and stress. In addition, researchers have found that the burnout is associated with physical and mental exhaustion, mood changes, increased anxiety, weak performance, and lack of interest to participate in sports programs (Godger et al., 2007).

Due to limited research in this area in Iran, it seems that the leadership styles and self-efficacy should be studied further.

This study aims to answer these questions: regardless of technical and tactical factors, whether there is a relationship between leadership style and self-efficacy of coaches? .

Today, the role of coaches as leaders is very important. Continuous efforts are conducted in all areas to find people who have the ability to lead teams and enormous funds are spent in this way.

According to researchers, the coaching in sports requires leadership. In the process of influence on players and teams to achieve the goals, the coach interacts with players in leader role. Some introduce coach as leader (Chelladurai, 1984).

Stein Dabir states that the coaching is deep thinking on leadership styles and believing them. The leadership is a mental attitude, philosophy, or approach. The successful leaders touch the lives of members of their groups. They are familiar with the people who lead them. The coaching is one of the leadership styles and may be combined with other leadership styles to increase its applications and popularity and achieve success.

The adoption of improper leadership style by coaches may lead to reduced performance and burnout (Alavi & Kazemzadeh, 2008).

The self-efficacy is a central factor in psychological adaptation to sports conditions. The research on coaching self-efficacy conceptual model has increased over the previous years (Kavussana et al., 2008). Due to interest in understanding the relationship between coaches and athletes' behaviors and beliefs and results of teams, Feltz and Deborah L (1999) developed a conceptual model for coach self-efficacy and coach self-efficacy scale. Other than conceptual model of coach self-efficacy, there are many guidelines which are designed to measure the behavior of coaches; Coaching Behavior Assessment System (Smith et al., 1977), Leadership styles in Sport (Chelladurai & Saleh, 1978 and 1980), and decision-making style questionnaire (Chelladurai & Arnott, 1985) are the most prominent ones. In order to teach and develop the athletes, the coaches are expected to develop and provide good guidelines for developing certain motor skills. In psychology field, the coaches are expected to have effective motivational skills, lead the competitions and exercises in such a way that increase emotional /social growth, and promote the sportsmanship in athletes. In the field of skills, tactics, and strategies, the coaches are expected to apply appropriate competitive strategies. The coaching self-efficacy scale has actualized these three areas of competence among the coaches. The coaching self-efficacy scale (CES) (Feltz et al., 1999) measures the coaches' belief in their abilities to affect learning and performance of athletes. The coaching self-efficacy structure implies effectiveness of coaching. According to coaching self-efficacy models, the quality of coaches' beliefs depends on their performance, self-perception, and behavior. Feltz and colleagues suggested that the high self-efficacy of coaches

leads to pleasing outcomes such as commitment to coaching and using effective motivational techniques among coaches and high satisfaction, performance, self-confidence, and motivation among athletes.

Feltz et al. (1999) showed that the coaching self-efficacy has a direct and positive relationship with winning, satisfaction of athlete, and coach behavior (i.e. praise and encouragement). The research also showed that there is relationship between coaching self-efficacy and leadership styles (Kent, A., & Sullivan, PJ, 2003), commitment to coaching (Kent, A., & Sullivan, PJ, 2003), and team effectiveness (Vargas-Tonsing et al., 2003).

Goldo and colleagues (2002) showed that the coaches who evaluate their feelings will be able to control their emotions in certain circumstances with high sensitivity; and this characteristic enables them to have mastery on their coaching role.

In everyday life and professions, all of us experience stresses and pressures.

Given the important role of coaches in mental and physical training of athletes and considering their need to space and facilities to play their roles, it seems that the situation is not proper in many sports facilities, including aqua sports facilities in Iran. Therefore, most coaches have concerns and cannot conduct properly their job. These conditions cause the sports coaches have stress in providing favorable conditions for athletes.

On the one hand, they should meet the psychological, physical, emotional, and social needs of athletes and on the other hand, they are under pressure to provide proper sports facilities.

The literature review indicates that despite the important role of coaches in training of athletes, there is no research on relationship between self-efficacy leadership styles and burnout of aqua sports coaches. However, this study aims to investigate the relationship between leadership styles, self-efficacy, and job burnout. It is hoped that the results of this study help to recognize the relationship between leadership styles and self-efficacy of coaches.

## **2. Research Methodology**

This was applied correlation field study. The population consisted of all male and female coaches of different aqua sports (rowing, swimming, lifeguards, diving, water polo) in Tehran

(N=830, Women= 610 (73%), men= 220 (27%)). Using Morgan table, the sample size was estimated to be 265 participants; the sample was selected using stratified random sampling method. The library and field study was conducted for collecting the data. First, the library resources (books, articles in Persian and Latin, internet websites, etc.) were used for literature review. Based on the literature study, then, the questionnaires were prepared for evaluating the performance of coaches. The face and content validity of questionnaire was reviewed and approved by 12 professors and PhD candidates in sport management. Then, they were distributed among the participants. The reliability of leadership style, self-efficacy, and burnout questionnaires was determined to be 0.78, 0.83, and 0.73, respectively. The collected data were summarized using descriptive statistics (mean, standard deviation, percentage, etc.) in the form of charts and tables. Also, the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test was used to evaluate the normality of data distribution and Pearson correlation coefficient was used to test hypotheses.

### **3. Findings**

#### *3.1 Descriptive findings:*

1. The findings showed that the age of participants was 20 to 60 years old. The majority of coaches were in age group 30 to 39 years old (35%). The least number of coaches were in age group 50 years and above (13%).
2. In terms of gender, 72% of aqua sports coaches were women and 28 % were men.
3. In terms of work experience, the majority of coaches (44%) had between 1 and 5 years of coaching history. About 32% had between 6 and 10 years of coaching history. In fact, majority of them (76%) had less than ten years of coaching history.
4. In terms of education, most of the participants (46%) had a bachelor's degree. Also, about 25% had associate degree.
5. The scores of leadership styles (scale from 1 to 5) showed that the mean of educational, democratic, authoritarian, supportive, and positive feedback leadership styles was 2.66, 3.35, 2.83, 3.28, and 3.19, respectively. On the other hand, the mean of all empowerment (except trust) components was higher than 4; this is a high level.
6. The mean of aqua sports coaches self-efficacy (scale of 1 to 5) was 4.14; this is a high level. Also, the mean of self-efficacy components was higher than 4.

7. The mean of aqua sports coaches burnout (scale from 1 to 7) was equal to 3.10; this is a moderate level. The emotional burnout and depersonalization had a low mean; the lack of success had high mean.

### 3.2 Inferential findings:

The first hypothesis: There is no significant relationship between educational leadership style and self-efficacy of aqua sports coaches in Tehran.

Pearson correlation coefficient was used to test this hypothesis. The results are provided in Table 1.

Table 1: Correlation between educational behavior and self-efficacy of aqua sports coaches in Tehran

(P) Sig. level	Pearson's correlation coefficient	Number	Statistical index Variable
0/001*	-0/293	210	Educational behavior
			Self-efficacy

\* $p < 0.05$

According to Table 1, the Pearson's correlation coefficient is equal to  $r=0.293$  and  $p=0.001$ . With 99% confidence level, therefore, it can be said that the null hypothesis is rejected; there is a significant and inverse relationship between educational behavior and self-efficacy of coaches. This means that the self- efficacy of coaches will be improved if their tendency to use educational leadership style is reduced.

The Second hypothesis: There is no significant relationship between democratic leadership style and self-efficacy of aqua sports coaches in Tehran.

Pearson correlation coefficient was used to test this hypothesis. The results are provided in Table 2.

Table 2: Correlation between democratic leadership style and self-efficacy of aqua sports coaches in Tehran



(P) Sig. level	Pearson's correlation coefficient	Number	Statistical index Variable
0/175	0/121	210	Democratic leadership
			Self-efficacy

\*p< 0.05

According to Table 2, the Pearson's correlation coefficient is equal to  $r=0.12$  and  $p=0.175$ . Therefore, it can be said that the null hypothesis is accepted; there is no significant relationship between democratic leadership style and self-efficacy of coaches.

The Third hypothesis: There is no significant relationship between authoritarian leadership style and self-efficacy of aqua sports coaches in Tehran.

Pearson correlation coefficient was used to test this hypothesis. The results are provided in Table 3.

Table 3: Correlation between authoritarian leadership style and self-efficacy of aqua sports coaches in Tehran

(P) Sig. level	Pearson's correlation coefficient	Number	Statistical index Variable
0/129	-0/135	210	Authoritarian leadership
			Self-efficacy

\*p< 0.05

According to Table 3, the Pearson's correlation coefficient is equal to  $r=0.135$  and  $p=0.129$ . Therefore, it can be said that the null hypothesis is accepted; there is no significant relationship between authoritarian leadership style and self-efficacy of coaches.

The fourth hypothesis: There is no significant relationship between supportive leadership style and self-efficacy of aqua sports coaches in Tehran.

Pearson correlation coefficient was used to test this hypothesis. The results are provided in Table 4.

Table 4: Correlation between supportive leadership style and self-efficacy of aqua sports coaches in Tehran

(P) Sig. level	Pearson's correlation coefficient	Number	Statistical index
			Variable
0/002*	0/368	210	Supportive leadership
			Self-efficacy

\*p< 0.05

According to Table 4, the Pearson's correlation coefficient is equal to  $r=0.368$  and  $p=0.002$ . With 99% confidence level, therefore, it can be said that the null hypothesis is rejected; there is a significant relationship between supportive leadership style and self-efficacy of coaches. This means that the self- efficacy of coaches will be improved if their tendency to use supportive leadership style is increased.

The fifth hypothesis: There is no significant relationship between positive feedback leadership style and self-efficacy of aqua sports coaches in Tehran.

Pearson correlation coefficient was used to test this hypothesis. The results are provided in Table 5.

Table 5: Correlation between positive feedback leadership style and self-efficacy of aqua sports coaches in Tehran

(P) Sig. level	Pearson's correlation coefficient	Number	Statistical index
			Variable
0/002*	0/374	210	Positive feedback leadership
			Self-efficacy

\*p< 0.05

According to Table 5, the Pearson's correlation coefficient is equal to  $r=0.37$  and  $p=0.002$ . With 99% confidence level, therefore, it can be said that the null hypothesis is rejected; there is a significant relationship between positive feedback leadership style and self-efficacy of coaches.

This means that the self- efficacy of coaches will be improved if their tendency to use positive feedback leadership style is increased.

The sixth hypothesis: There is no significant relationship between educational leadership style and job burnout of aqua sports coaches in Tehran.

Pearson correlation coefficient was used to test this hypothesis. The results are provided in Table 6.

Table 6: Correlation between educational leadership style and job burnout of aqua sports coaches in Tehran

(P) Sig. level	Pearson's correlation coefficient	Number	Statistical index
			Variable
0/71	-0/08	210	Educational leadership style
			Job burnout

\*p< 0.05

According to Table 6, the Pearson's correlation coefficient is equal to  $r=0.08$  and  $p=0.71$ . Therefore, it can be said that the null hypothesis is accepted; there is no significant relationship between educational leadership style and job burnout of coaches.

The seventh hypothesis: There is no significant relationship between democratic leadership style and job burnout of aqua sports coaches in Tehran.

Pearson correlation coefficient was used to test this hypothesis. The results are provided in Table 7.

Table 7: Correlation between democratic leadership style and job burnout of aqua sports coaches in Tehran

(P) Sig. level	Pearson's correlation coefficient	Number	Statistical index
			Variable

0/29	-0/09	210	Democratic leadership
			Job burnout

\*p< 0.05

According to Table 7, the Pearson's correlation coefficient is equal to  $r=0.09$  and  $p=0.29$ . Therefore, it can be said that the null hypothesis is accepted; there is no significant relationship between democratic leadership style and job burnout of coaches.

The eighth hypothesis: There is no significant relationship between authoritarian leadership style and job burnout of aqua sports coaches in Tehran.

Pearson correlation coefficient was used to test this hypothesis. The results are provided in Table 8.

Table 8: Correlation between authoritarian leadership style and job burnout of aqua sports coaches in Tehran

(P) Sig. level	Pearson's correlation coefficient	Number	Statistical index
			Variable
0/009*	-0/249	210	authoritarian leadership style
			Job burnout

\*p< 0.05

According to Table 8, the Pearson's correlation coefficient is equal to  $r=0.25$  and  $p=0.009$ . With 99% confidence level, therefore, it can be said that the null hypothesis is rejected; there is a significant and inverse relationship between authoritarian leadership style and self-efficacy of coaches. This means that the job burnout of coaches will be reduced if they use authoritarian leadership style.

The ninth hypothesis: There is no significant relationship between supportive leadership style and job burnout of aqua sports coaches in Tehran.

Pearson correlation coefficient was used to test this hypothesis. The results are provided in Table 9.

Table 9: Correlation between supportive leadership style and job burnout of aqua sports coaches in Tehran

(P) Sig. level	Pearson's correlation coefficient	Number	Statistical index Variable
0/289	0/167	210	Supportive leadership
			Job burnout

\*p < 0.05

According to Table 9, the Pearson's correlation coefficient is equal to  $r=0.16$  and  $p=0.289$ . Therefore, it can be said that the null hypothesis is accepted; there is no significant relationship between supportive leadership style and job burnout of coaches.

The tenth hypothesis: There is no significant relationship between positive feedback leadership style and job burnout of aqua sports coaches in Tehran.

Pearson correlation coefficient was used to test this hypothesis. The results are provided in Table 10.

Table 10: Correlation between positive feedback leadership style and job burnout of aqua sports coaches in Tehran

(P) Sig. level	Pearson's correlation coefficient	Number	Statistical index Variable
0/481	0/13	210	Positive feedback leadership
			Job burnout

\*p < 0.05

According to Table 10, the Pearson's correlation coefficient is equal to  $r=0.13$  and  $p=0.481$ . Therefore, it can be said that the null hypothesis is accepted; there is no significant relationship between positive feedback leadership style and job burnout of coaches.

The eleventh hypothesis: There is no significant relationship between job burnout and self-efficacy of aqua sports coaches in Tehran.

Pearson correlation coefficient was used to test this hypothesis. The results are provided in Table 11.

Table 11: Correlation between job burnout and self-efficacy of aqua sports coaches in Tehran

(P) Sig. level	Pearson's correlation coefficient	Number	Statistical index Variable
0/094	-0/232	210	Job burnout
			Self-efficacy

\* $p < 0.05$

According to Table 11, the Pearson's correlation coefficient is equal to  $r=0.23$  and  $p=0.09$ . Therefore, it can be said that the null hypothesis is accepted; there is no significant relationship between job burnout and self-efficacy of coaches.

#### 4. Discussion and Conclusion

This study aimed to determine the relationship between leadership styles, self-efficacy, and burnout of aqua sports coaches in Tehran. The research hypotheses will be discussed separately in the following.

First hypothesis:

The findings showed that there is a significant and inverse relationship between educational behavior and self-efficacy of aqua sports coaches in Tehran. This means that the coaches' emphasis on strengths and weaknesses of athletes to improve their skills will reduce the self-efficacy of coaches. According to definition of self-efficacy which refers to perception of coaches about their abilities to influence learning and performance of athletes, it seems logical

that in training, the coaches will have a better understanding about their abilities. However, this may merely be limit to self-efficacy in teaching techniques (Ehsani et al., 2011) and there will not be such influence on psychological dimension and game strategy. The findings of this study showed high mean for educational self-efficacy. This is inconsistent with findings of Rahimpur (2010) who studied Dragon Boat coaches; this may be due to differences in the level of studied players and coaches. In their study, Fathi et al (1384) showed that if coaches move from educational and authoritarian leadership styles to behavior-oriented and relationship-oriented styles, they are more likely to succeed. According to Sullivan and Kenneth (2003), the low self-efficacy of coaches after using educational leadership style may lead to failure and poor result of team. According to Amurus and Horn (2000), on the other hand, the top athletes who have higher levels of intrinsic motivation are more interested in education and training style; if these styles will be used by their coaches, they will show better performance. Therefore, the findings of this study may be explained by low level of athletes who have lower level of intrinsic motivation and do not prefer educational and authoritarian styles.

Second hypothesis:

The findings showed that there is no significant relationship between autocratic leadership style and self-efficacy of coaches. In fact, although the findings indicated a positive correlation between these two variables, it was not statistically significant. This finding is consistent with findings of Rahimpur (2010); though high correlation was found in research of Rahimpur. This difference may also be due to different level of players. According to studies, the top players have less tendency to human and relationship-oriented leadership styles; they prefer authoritarian style. Due to less experience, on the other hand, the low level players do not accept independent decision making and personal strength of coach. Thus, since Rahimpur studied the players and coaches in national teams, this may be a reason for difference between two researches. Weinberg and Gould (2003), Beam, Servatka, and Wilson (2004), and Lam (2007) concluded that the use of autocratic leadership style, especially among female athletes, may lead to poor performance of players and subsequently, weak perception of coach about his/her performance. In contrast, however, Noil (2007) and Lyons and Schneider (2009) found a significant and positive correlation between autocratic leadership style and performance of players. Therefore, this

findings may not be explained by failure to obtain proper results. Perhaps, the inputs may be the important factor which impacts on this result. Due to declined popularity among players and even loss of community and team officials' support, in fact, the coaches who use autocratic style may not have favorable perception of their own abilities. Bagheri et al (2005) showed that the task-oriented leadership styles which are not based on human relations lead to players' burnout; this finding may confirm the above argument.

Third hypothesis:

The findings showed that there is no significant relationship between democratic leadership style and self-efficacy of coaches. In terms of significance, this finding is inconsistent with findings of Weinberg and Gould (2003), Beam, Servatka, and Wilson (2004), Lam (2007), and Rahimpur (2010). However, in terms of positive relationship, this finding may be consistent with these researches. It may be argued that since coaches in democratic style allow athletes to involve in determining the goals of team, training methods, and tactics and strategies of game, they may have undesirable feelings about their abilities. In evaluating the self-efficacy of coaches, they are expected to take appropriate guidelines for development of players' skills, use affective motivational skills, lead the competition and training such that increase the emotional and social development of players, and use appropriate tactical strategies in competitions. It seems that in this study, considering the moderate level of players and their relatively limited experience, their involvement in decision making and goal setting may not lead to optimal performance of teams. Thus, according to findings of Cameron et al. (2002), the team performance is one of the most important factors affecting the self-efficacy of coaches; this may be the reason of reduced self-efficacy of coaches while they use democratic leadership style.

Fourth hypothesis:

The findings showed that there is a significant and positive relationship between supportive leadership style and self-efficacy of coaches. This is inconsistent with findings of Amurus and Horn (2000). The researchers believe that the athletes who have higher level of intrinsic motivation have a greater tendency toward educational and autocratic leadership styles. If their coaches use these styles, they will show better performance. On the other hand, according to Neville (2007), if the level of players will be low, the coaches will be more willing to use



supportive and feedback styles in order to create a positive atmosphere in team and proper group relations, and use properly the technical skills, competitive strategies, and motivational variables. Accordingly, it can be argued that the supportive leadership style may improve the self-efficacy of coaches. Altahanyh (2003) believes that the athletes who are supported socially by their coaches have more satisfaction and high motivation for optimal performance. Asiye and Rusli (2009) also confirmed this and states that the satisfaction of athletes depends on coaches leadership styles in specific conditions. The high satisfaction and motivation of athletes may lead to individual and team successes and subsequently, high self-efficacy of coaches.

Fifth hypothesis:

The findings showed that there is a significant and positive relationship between positive feedback leadership style and self-efficacy of coaches. This means that using positive feedback leadership style is associated with positive attitude of coaches toward their capabilities. This is consistent with findings of Kent and Sullivan (2003), Altahanyh (2003), Wilson (2004), and Lam (2007); it is inconsistent with findings of Rahimpur (2010). In positive feedback leadership style, the coach encourages the good performance of athletes. According to McDonald (2010) and Afsanepour et al. (2012), the creation of motivational climate in team and recognizing and rewarding good performances may lead to close relationship between coach and player and will increase the athletes' tendency to success, competitiveness, and goal orientation. This makes the coach to see the efforts of athletes and their success and have good feeling in using motivational stimuli, appropriate strategies, and teaching required techniques. In fact, this may be due to favorable motivational climate in the team (Norouzi et al., 2012) and subsequently, the increase satisfaction of players (Altahanyh, 2003, Asiye & Rosell, 2009).

Sixth hypothesis:

The findings showed that there is a non-significant negative relationship between educational behavior and burnout of coaches. This means that by increasing use of educational behavior, the burnout of coaches reduced very little. In contrast, Kelly and Gale (1993) and Anunimas (2005) argue that the educational behavior of sports coaches put them under stress and burnout. This difference may be explained by different population; these two studies investigated the professional players whose coaches experience a lot of stress. In fact, it can be argued that due to

high workload and time limitations in professional sports, the coach faces with stress and finally, burnout. In this study, however, it can be said that due to low level of athletes, the use of educational style may be somewhat pleasant to coach. This feeling may be due to success and getting feedback. However, this finding may not be generalized, because the observed relationship is very insignificant. Altahanyh (2003) and Yasin (2013) argued that the selection of appropriate leadership style according to situation and circumstances that coaches face with may reduce the burnout. Accordingly, it can be said that the educational style is one of the neutral styles for aqua sports coaches who were studied in this research.

#### Seventh hypothesis:

The findings showed that there is no significant relationship between democratic leadership style and burnout of coaches. Zupitas and Constanti (2010) showed that there is strong and positive relationship between using transformational leadership style and personal success; it also reduces emotional exhaustion and depersonalization of coach. According to Yalsin (2013) and Harris and Russell (2013), the leader behavior may play an important role in increasing the satisfaction of athletes and helps to create more favorable exercise environment and having relationship with players. In fact, the democratic behavior like educational behavior may lead to a pleasant feeling of coach. However, the process of this pleasant feeling creation is likely to be different. In other words, in democratic style, the proper relationship and work environment reduce the burnout. In terms of existence of relationship, this finding is consistent with Zupitas and Constanti (2010), Yalsyn (2013), and Harris and Russell (2013); in terms of statistical significance, it is inconsistent with them. It may be said that among the aqua sports coaches in this study whose burnout is in average to low levels, other factors are involved in causing burnout. The lack of effective mechanisms to deal with stress may be one of these factors.

#### Eighth hypothesis:

The results showed that there is a significant and inverse relationship between autocratic leadership style and burnout of coaches. This means that autocratic leadership style is associated with reduced burnout. This is inconsistent with findings of Bagheri et al. (2005), Lyons and Schneider (2009), Zupiatas and Constanti (2010), and Risambasi et al (2012). In fact, these researchers believe that the authoritarian and task-oriented leadership styles are associated with

increased burnout; inflexible behaviors of coaches, emphasis on winning as goal, limited communication channel, and emphasis on reaching goals in team cause stress and psychological pressure and burnout over time. Although this argument seems logical, it should be remembered that they studied the professional athletes and coaches and in this study, the low and medium-level athletes were studied. Analyzing the views of Altahanyh (2003), Yalsin (2013), and Harris and Russell (2013), in fact, it can be concluded that there is no continuously effective and fully qualified style; according to different situations, different styles may be effective. In present study, the autocratic leadership style is associated with reduced burnout. This finding may be due to reduced excess personal interactions, elimination of role conflict, substantially increased control over teams and athletes, and reduction of stressors. The last two factors may prevent emotional exhaustion, create a pleasant internal feeling, increase the success feeling of coach, and reduce burnout. On the other hand, it seems that the risks of aqua sports for low-level athletes put coaches under stress and automatically pushes them toward autocratic style. In general, based on this finding, it can be said that among the leadership styles, the autocratic style is the best style for aqua sports coaches. The authoritarian leadership is able to prevent burnout.

Ninth hypothesis:

The findings clearly indicated that there is no significant relationship between supportive leadership and burnout. This finding is inconsistent with findings of Dale and Weinberg (1989) and Risambsy et al (2012). Risambsy et al (2012) argued that the transformational leadership style has a direct and negative impact on burnout and increases the satisfaction of individuals. In other words, the transformational leadership which creates emotional relations between leader and subordinate (i.e., covers supportive leadership features) should logically reduce the burnout of athletes; this is inconsistent with recent findings. On the other hand, Noil (2007) stated that the supportive style may create a positive atmosphere in team and proper group relations. However, it seems that the positive atmosphere in team and proper group relations cannot significantly reduce the burnout of coaches. Based on previous research, although supportive leadership style creates appropriate climate for team, it cannot reduce job stressors and prevent from burnout of coaches. In fact, this style of leadership plays a neutral role in dealing with burnout. This finding

may be due to nature of job responsibilities (Yalsin, 2013), different attitudes, and different expectations (Bvharkvz, 2002) of different groups.

Tenth hypothesis:

The findings of this study showed that there is no significant relationship between positive feedback leadership style and burnout of coach. The previous research have paid little attention to relationship between this leadership style and burnout of coaches. They only state that the positive feedback behavior of coach may avoid burnout of athletes (Zarei Matin, 2007). In other words, although the positive feedback behavior may be associated with increased optimal performance and encourage players to perform better and achieve desirable outcomes and results (Neville, 2007), it cannot be associated with burnout of coaches. It seems that the encouragement and rewarding players may not be associated with positive attachment, reduced stress of coaches, and reduced emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and lack of success. It can be argued that the positive feedback behavior focuses more on players and may create pleasant feelings, human relations, and encourage success among them to prevent their burnout. However, this may not be true about the coaches.

Eleventh hypothesis:

The findings showed that there was no significant relationship between burnout and self-efficacy of coaches. In terms of negative relationship between two variable, this finding is consistent with findings of Rastegar (2008), Dukan (2009), Ozer and colleagues (2002), Chang Qing (2004), Shufli and Salanva (2007), and Browser and Tomic (2011). In terms of significance of relationship, this finding is inconsistent with these research. Christine (2004) believed that the self-efficacy reduces work-related stress and prevents from burnout. On the other hand, if reduced burnout is considered to be enhanced pleasance and satisfaction feeling about coaching, it can be argued that this feeling may be associated with perception of coach of his/her self-efficacy. This means that the satisfied coaches may better conduct the technical skills, competitive strategies, and motivational variables among athletes. Most research that reported significant relationship between these two variables studied the high level coaches who experienced high levels of stress (Hendrix et al., 2000). Obviously, therefore, the coaches with less stress levels and workload may more efficiently use control mechanisms and have more

opportunities for playing their coaching role; therefore, they experience more self-efficacy. However, this is not true about low and medium level coaches; the insignificant relationship between their burnout and self-efficacy may be largely influenced by this factor.

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