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## **THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN COPING STRATEGIES WITH JOB BURNOUT ON SPORT COACHES**

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### **ABSTRACT**

The main purpose of this study was to investigate the relationship between coping strategies with job burnout on sport coaches. The population of this study is consisted of all Tehran municipality women coaches that were 1500. The 152 coaches were selected through random sampling. In this study, Coping Strategies Scale (Billings and Moos, 1981) and Maslach Burnout Inventory (MBI; Maslach and Jackson, 1986) was used. The results indicate there is not significant relationship between emotional focused copings with job burnout. Also, there is negative significant relationship between negative problem focused coping with job burnout. Moreover, only problem focused coping strategies is significant predictor of job burnout and explain 0.38% job burnout decrease.

**Keywords:** *Coping Strategies, Job Burnout, Sport Coaches*

### **INTRODUCTION**

A large number of factors play a crucial role in whether an athlete experiences positive or negative affective outcomes from sport. These include, but are not limited to, coping with stress (Crocker and Graham, 1995), level of self determined motivation (Vlachopoulos *et al.*, 2000), passion (Vallerand *et al.*, 2006), motivational climate (Papaioannou and Kouli, 1999), autonomy supportive coaching (Gagne *et al.*, 2003), autonomy supportive environments (Edmunds *et al.*, 2006), basic need satisfaction (Donough and Crocker, 2007), goal attainment (Smith *et al.*, 2007) and learned helplessness (Boyd and Yin, 1996). Coping can be described in terms of strategies, tactics, responses, cognitions, or behavior. Actual coping is a phenomenon that can be noticed either by introspection or by observation, and it includes internal events as well as overt actions. According to Lazarus and Folkman (1984) have defined copings a dynamic process of cognitive and behavioral attempts to deal with internal or external demands which are experienced as taxing or exceeding the individual's resources. With new fact, Lazarus (1991), defined cognitive and behavioral efforts to manage specific external or internal demands that are appraised as taxing or exceeding the resources of a person. So coping can be employed as one of the strategies to overcome such problem in the athletes. Crocker *et al.*, (1998) and Lazarus (1999) said that coping represents an individual's cognitive, affective, and behavioral efforts to manage specific external and/or internal demands. Athletes must develop a range of cognitive and behavioral coping skills to manage the competitive stressors they face (Scanlan *et al.*, 1991).

Different coping strategies have to be employed by athletes as they face different critical situation. Kristiansen *et al.*, (2007), said that different sports have different sources of stress, and consequently participants require special strategies to cope successfully in their particular field. Coaches and athletes understand that not only will stressful events occur in the future, but athletes require constant improvement in their skills to compete at optimum level. In a sense, these are the circumstances for proactive coping to flourish. Teams and individuals practice hours on end to overcome events that will cross their path in the near or distant future. It is their goal to be successful, which in turn makes their preparation process goal-oriented, not risk-oriented. The events, tasks, and situations that need to be dealt with in the future are positive tests of their abilities, skills, and mastery of their sport. To deal with the sensitizations requires the same behavioral manifestations of skill development (e.g. practice), resource accumulation (e.g. team and social support, physical fitness, strategy, and mental preparation), and long term planning. Furthermore, a positive outlook on the challenges that await an athlete is more conducive

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to a successful outcome than an approach focused on the threatening aspects of future competitions. Thus, one can see the potential benefits of athletes utilizing proactive coping in a sports setting. Burnout is an ongoing process that emerges gradually over time. It is characterized by three components: emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and reduced personal accomplishment (Maslach, 1982). Emotional exhaustion in teachers refers to the depletion of energy resources. Depersonalization refers to a detached attitude that teachers adopt toward the job itself or the people associated with it.

Reduced personal accomplishment refers to a decrease in teachers' feelings of achievement and competence at work. Although emotional exhaustion is the acknowledged hallmark of burnout, we focus on each component separately in order to capture critical aspects of the burnout syndrome (Schaufeli and Taris, 2005). Despite the fact that burnout components are expected to evolve, few studies have used a longitudinal design to investigate them. Moreover, existing longitudinal studies have failed to reproduce the effects observed in cross-sectional studies (Schaufeli, 2003).

In addition, based on correlations over time, many researchers have concluded that burnout components are stable for most people regardless of intra-individual changes (i.e., within person stability and change) over time. Although this approach provides important information on between-person groups, it obscures individual differences in stability and change. For example, perceptions of burnout may be stable for some individuals, whereas they might fluctuate for others. Thus, patterns of change across individuals, which capture the notion of inter-individual differences in intra-individual change, are difficult to assess with stability coefficients.

We believe that a more complete understanding of burnout and its correlates requires a greater appreciation of intra-individual changes. To our knowledge, these concerns were investigated in only one study (Burisch, 2002), based on a three-year panel of data spanning seven time points. Results showed no association between intra-individual changes in burnout and dispositional or workplace factors. In light of these unexpected findings, Burisch has called for "novel approaches to make the study of intra-individual change a more promising endeavor" (p.16).

Bagceci *et al.*, (2012) investigate job burnout and coping styles and indicate that there is positive significant correlation between emotional exhaustion with emotional oriented coping strategies as well it is significant predictor of emotional exhaustion on teachers. Serec *et al.*, (2012) indicate that only emotional exhaustion have positive relationship with emotional oriented coping strategies. Jaracz *et al.*, (2005) found that there is significant correlation between burnout with coping styles. There was negative significant correlation between burnout with task oriented coping styles and positive correlation between emotional oriented coping styles.

## **MATERIALS AND METHODS**

### **Participant**

The population of this study is consisted of all Tehran municipality women coaches that were 1500. The 152 coaches were selected through random sampling.

### **Measure**

**Coping strategies** was assessed with Coping Strategies Scale (Billings and Moos, 1981). This scale has 19 items and assesses problem focused and emotional focused coping. Participant were required to indicate, on a 4-point Likert scale (never (0), rarely (1), sometimes (2), always (3), whether the statement was true of them.

**Burnout** was assessed with the Persian version of the Maslach Burnout Inventory (MBI; Maslach and Jackson, 1986). Emotional exhaustion was composed of nine items (e.g., "I feel emotionally drained from my work). Depersonalization was assessed with five items (e.g., "I've become more callous toward people since I took this job,"). Personal accomplishment was measured by eight items (e.g., "I have accomplished many worthwhile things at this job,"). Responses to all items were scored on a seven-point scale ranging from 0 (never) to 6 (daily). The psychometric properties (internal consistencies and factorial and construct validity) of the Persian version of the MBI are similar to those of the original version (Maslach *et al.*, 2001).

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**Method**

The method of the study is descriptive correlation. The data was collected using questionnaires and through field study procedure. Descriptive statistics were used for describing and categorizing raw data and for measuring Mean, frequency, SD and table drawing. Enter model regression and Pearson coefficient of correlation was used for statically analysis. For analyzing data the SPSS software was applied and 93% of confidence level was considered.

**RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

Table 1 indicates the demographic information about the sample of this study.

**Table 1: Demographic information of coaches**

Characteristics		Frequency	Percentage
<b>Age</b>	19-27	44	29.3
	28-36	66	44.0
	37-45	19	12.7
	46-54	21	14.0
	Total	150	100
<b>Marital status</b>	Single	77	51.3
	Marriage	73	48.7
	Total	150	100
<b>Academic degree</b>	Diploma	27	18.0
	Associate degree	21	14.0
	BA/BSc	75	50.0
	MA	26	17.3
	Phd	1	0.7
	Total	150	100

As table 2 indicates there is not significant relationship between emotional focused coping with job burnout. Also, there is negative significant relationship between negative problem focused coping with job burnout. It means that with increase of problem focused coping score of job burnout is decrease.

**Table 2: Pearson Correlation coefficient between coping strategies subscales and job burnout**

Variables	Mean	SD	1	2	3	4
Emotional focused coping	10.38	3.10	1			
Problem focused coping	22.78	4.85	0.12**	1		
Job burnout	107.05	21.74	0.50**	-0.26**	1	
Life satisfaction	18.26	6.94	0.30**	-0.13*	0.42**	1

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**Table 3: Regression coefficients associated with prediction of job burnout according to coping strategies and its subscales**

	R	R <sup>2</sup>	F (df)	Coping strategies	B	Beta	t	Sig
Job burnout	0.27	0.08	5.79(2,147)		117.13		10.72	0.00
				Emotional focused coping	0.35	0.08	0.97	0.33
				Problem focused coping	-1.74	-0.25	-3.08	0.00

As table 3 indicates only problem focused coping strategies is significant predictor of job burnout and with increase of problem focused coping strategies 0.38% job burnout decrease.

**Conclusion**

The main purpose of this study was to investigate the relationship between coping strategies with job burnout on sport coaches. The results of this indicate that there is negative significant relationship between negative problems focused coping with job burnout. It means that with increase of problem focused coping score of job burnout is decrease. This finding indicate that since coaches participate in sport psychology courses in coaching course therefore they likely are familiar with necessary techniques for using problem focused coping strategies. Hence, when they experience stressful situation in sport especially during the game they used problem focused strategies such as positive feedback and seeking social support and then control stress. Then, problem focused coping strategies more likely control coaches stress and avoid of their job burnout. This finding is in line with the results of Jaracz *et al.*, (2005) that found there is significant correlation between burnout with coping styles. Moreover, there was negative significant correlation between burnout with task oriented coping styles and positive correlation between emotional oriented coping styles. But this finding is inconsistent with Serec *et al.*, (2012) that indicate only emotional exhaustion have positive relationship with emotional oriented coping strategies. The possible reasons for this inconsistency could differences in questionnaires that used in both researches. Also, differences between sport context and other job environment could be possible reason for inconsistency.

Other results of this study indicate that there is not significant relationship between emotional focused coping with job burnout. It means that using emotional focused coping strategies such as avoidance prevent individuals from direct and effective involvement with problems and decrease him/his ability to solving problems. This finding is inconsistent with Jaracz *et al.*, (2005) and Serec *et al.*, (2012) results. The possible reason for this inconsistency could difference in both studies samples. Moreover, this study indicate that only problem focused coping strategies is significant predictor of job burnout and with increase of problem focused coping strategies 0.38% job burnout decrease. This finding is in line with the results of Bageci *et al.*, (2012).

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