

Relationship between Emotional Intelligence's Components and Goal-Oriented Attitude in Athletes

Ziba Ghazili¹, Behnam Makvandi PhD^{*2} and Farah Naderi PhD³

¹ M.A. student in General Psychology, College of Psychology, Khouzestan Science and Research Branch, Islamic Azad university, Khozestan, Ahvaz, Iran

² Assistant professor at College of Psychology, Khouzestan Science and Research Branch, Islamic Azad university, Khozestan, Ahvaz, Iran

³ Associate Professor, Department of Psychology, Ahvaz Branch, Islamic Azad university, Ahvaz, Iran.

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Abstract

Physical education as an innate need and a social educational phenomenon has a great impact on physical and mental development of individuals as its mission which leads to social characterization and health (Khiabanchian, 1997). Participants in a sport event are different in terms of their talent, practice, motivation, mental and character traits. Nevertheless, the athletic performance has an undeniable impact on the obtained result (Abolqasemi, Kiamarsi, Arianpouran and Dortaj, 2006). Goal-orientation or goal-progress is one of the most routine subjects in the field of sport research and is significance in theorists' and researchers' opinion. Goal-orientation refers to a set of coherent patterns on personal beliefs due to which an individual tends to different circumstances, activates in the intended field and subsequently obtains a result (Ames, 1992)

Key words: Emotional intelligence, goal-oriented attitude, mental development, motivation.

Introduction

Generally speaking, Dweck (1988) introduced two types of goal orientation. In goal orientation, an external motivation emphasizes more on prove of competence or capability while in an internal motivation to form goal orientation, education and success in the task in which the person aims at learning new skills for handling them it and to widen their capabilities, is highlighted.

Elliot (1996), defines goal orientation as a method based on which an individual judges their competences. Archer (1994) on the other hand, believes that an individual is drastically affected by goal orientation in the way of their inference and reaction to the surrounding world. One of the common misunderstandings made by individuals is the distinction between goal orientation and assuming them as specific goals chosen by individuals. Researchers believe that the theory of achieving goals, is one of the most powerful motivation theories in sport psychology and has progressed significantly during the past two decades in such a way that it turned out to be one of the fundamental theories for better interpretation of success motivation in sports and

a key to understand the real intention of individuals for demonstrating their achievements (Nocolas, 1989). The increasing emphasis in the present century on physical activities in order for the betterment of quality of social life is obvious and as a result, the interdisciplinary fields of study and research have gained importance (Maleki & Qavami 2013).

Every individual concerns about their success in different aspects and layers of personal and professional life in case they meet all requirements of a healthy body and soul. Emotional intelligence as one of the important psychological components refers to the our ability of understanding and controlling our feelings and emotions.

There has been an increasing interest to the relationship between emotional intelligence and other human reactions leading to health, in recent decades. Not only has the emotional intelligence included the theoretical psychological framework, but also by its practical application and development many hidden problems can be solved.

The research has showed that emotional intelligence has an effective role on daily routine (Carmel 2008, Wong 2002).

In addition, emotional intelligence leads to developed healthy interactions as well as quality of life and profession of physical educators (Douglas, 2007). Perlini & Halverson (2005) in a research named *investigating emotional intelligence among athletes of Canadian League*, concluded that (EI) had a positive effect on scores of Hockey players.

Interactions during sport activities results in players having been involved in different feelings and emotions such as happiness, anger, discouragement, disappointment and stress. The main question, however remains if it will be possible to forecast the goal orientation in a context such as sport environments where there is much possibility of expression of these emotions and its management as well as its being competitiveness.

Andrio (2011) in his study on investigation of the role of perceived performance of golf athletes on the emotional intelligence, found out that there was a positive significant relation between emotional intelligence performance and dominance orientation. It was further found out that there was a negative relation between depression and anger on one hand and dominance orientation goal.

Duriz (2011) studied the relation between psychological needs and goal orientation and showed that between psychological needs such as independence competence and internal goals (dominance orientation) there is a positive relation while between the mentioned factor and external goals (functionalist orientation) there is a negative relation.

Singh et al. (2011), investigated and compared the role of emotional intelligence in athletic performance of those athletes with opened and closed skills and it was concluded that there was a significant difference between both groups of opened and closed skill athletes in terms of using the emotional intelligence. As an instance, athletes with opened skills (footballers) used more emotional intelligence skills compared to athletes with closed skills (gymnasts) and subsequently in the former group the sport performance is more optimized than in the latter group. Lean et al. (2009) also studied the similar subject of relation between emotional intelligence and sport performance and showed that emotional intelligence is related to emotions before

experiencing a successful or unsuccessful event in such a way that the emotions related to a successful performance in athletes were power, happiness and peace while the emotions related to a weak performance were weakness, confusion, depression and exhaustion.

Gadrio & Blandrin (2009) evaluated the relation of comparative strategies of goal orientation and competitive anxiety and stated that there is a significant relation between the two factors i.e. comparative strategies of goal orientation and competitive anxiety and each factor an affect athletes' performance (also cited in Keshavarz, 2010).

Nien & Duda (2008), used a pattern of perceived competence as an independent variable, goal orientation as moderate variable and self motivation as dependent variable. The result of that study showed that the perceived competence significantly and positively forecasts the orientation of goals.

Bembenutty (2007), in an investigation on goal orientation and self regulation among teachers and university students, showed that setting of goals is the key factor in improving the educational motivation of students and teachers. Furthermore, teachers with goal orientation were shown to have a positive attitude for teaching and class management and mostly welcome challenges at work.

Salkofske et al. (2007) who worked on the relation between optimism and emotional intelligence showed that optimism and positive attitudes have a direct positive relation with emotional intelligence. The latter also is the link between interpersonal relations and sport behavior. Rinbot & Duda (2004) studied the relation between perception of motivation and perceived competence, and mental and physical well-being in football and cricket players. They concluded that those players who perceived their atmosphere by goal orientation, enjoyed a higher self esteem while those egoists who had lower self perception, had a lower self esteem. Generally speaking, it has been proven that optimism is in direct relation with positivism psychology. This study furthermore stated that optimists are more stable in their tendencies as well as more prepared in response to sudden stressful situations so that they can be distinguished from the pessimists. Optimists

further have more tendency towards problem oriented strategies while pessimists tend toward denial and obvious rejection of sudden situations. Dongfang (2003, also cited in Yusefi & Fani, 2007) investigated the effect of goal orientation on 620 young athletes' self confidence. The result showed that the young athletes were significantly different from each other in terms of effective variables such as demonstration of capabilities, physiological and mental preparation, and conversancy at skill on self confidence.

The research carried out by Zizzi et al. (2003) on the relation of emotional intelligence and athletic performance of baseball players, showed that emotional intelligence has drastic effects on opened skills such as track and field and football in such a way that can significantly affect the leaders performance, the team unity and confrontation with increasing pressure.

Lopes (2003) on the other hand, evaluated the relation between emotional intelligence and the quality and vastness of an individual's circle of social interactions. He stated that the emotional intelligence is in a positive and direct relation with optimism, positive attitude, positive interaction with others, empathy, social behaviors, self actualization and increased social skills.

Elliot & Macgrigor (2001) and Lee Sheldon & Turban (2003) in their research named *the effect of goal orientation patterns and mental concentration on performance and enjoyment*, showed that those individuals who have more independency and the opportunity to choose according to their own internal needs, most probably would select the dominant goal orientation so that they would be satisfied with their sense of competence. Nevertheless, in control motivation orientations, individuals might choose egoist orientations so that they can represent to others their competences and to avoid errors.

Duda et al. (1999), in their study *setting psychological grounds for athletes with goal orientation*, showed that there is a positive relation between athletes' task based goal orientation and their self confidence.

On the other hand, the way of encouragements, the coach feedbacks as well as the motivation environment of the practice, is significantly

effective on success-based goal orientation of either task-based nature or self-based nature.

Rabbany & Yusefi (2012), by evaluating the role of intermediation of goal orientation and its reaction with self efficiency and task value by different cognitive strategies, stated that self efficiency in either direct way as well as intermediation way affects the cognitive strategy variable in such a way that the value of the task can predetermine the types of cognitive strategies applied.

In another study carried out by Aqdasi, Jeyrani & Rahmani (2012), they tried to investigate the relation between perceived motivation environment and elite and non-elite athletes' self esteem and they found out that the task based motivation environment has a positive relation with increasing the self confidence. Despite the obtained results, there isn't enough information on what basis the task based environment might possibly have such consequences.

The result obtained from another study (Maleki et al., 2011) on the relation between self esteem and progress motivation in successful and unsuccessful athletes states that in both groups of successful and unsuccessful athletes there is a significant positive relation between self esteem and progress motivation.

Hashemian & Latifian (2010) also studied the relation of perfectionism and goal orientation among the students and could show that there was a positive relation between self oriented perfectionism and goal orientation.

Yusefi and Qaani (2007) studied the relation between goal orientation, perceived motivation environment and sources of self confidence. They concluded that the dominancy on skills as the most important factor in shaping self confidence in athletes and the reverse, demonstration of physical competency was the least important factor in athletes' self confidence. In addition, between task based orientation and sources of acquiring self confidence within the field of sport, there were more factors with significant positive relation. The mentioned study was carried out on the volleyball players of Iranian super league 2004-5. According to the results of the study, individuals with task based goal orientation, consider some factors as the increasing factors of self confidence. Factors such as concentration on task, improvement of

newly learnt skill, focus on goal and physical and mental preparation. Social factors also have an impact on self confidence. Factors such as social support, friends' feedback, admiration and encouragement by the coach and others and having faith in oneself. Despite all these, egoistic individuals minimize the effect of above mentioned factors.

Consequently, the present study aims at investigating the relation between emotional intelligence and goal orientation and tries to find an answer to this question if there is a simple or multiple relation between components of emotional intelligence.

METHOD

The present study is of descriptive- correlation type of research in which the components of emotional intelligence are the predictor variables and the goal orientation is the criterion variable. The statistical society of the study includes football gyms in the city of Ahvaz with 600 individuals in different age range, 250 of which were randomly sampled according to Morgan table. Research questionnaires were given to them and they were asked to answer sincerely. After collecting the questionnaires, data was gathered and analyzed by Pearson correlation and multiple regression method.

MATERIALS FOR RESEARCH

A) Questionnaire of goal orientation (TEOSQ)

(TEOSQ) questionnaire is used for tracking and analyzing the success of an athlete in an athletic situation based on task based high skill or egoist "better than others" function. The questionnaire consisted of 13 questions in two categories of task based and egoist based, seven of which evaluates the task based or duty based situation and the rest (6 questions) evaluates the egoist based function and at last a total score is obtained which shows the goal orientation value. This questionnaire had been previously applied in research by Shamshiri (1994) on athlete students of Tehran as well as by Bahrami & Yusefi (2004) on wrestling athletes of Lorestan Province, Iran and was therefore

recognized as valid. The scoring was carried out via 5 degree Likert Scale including from 1 to 5 as follows respectively: 1. extremely disagree, 2. Disagree, 3. No idea, 4. Agree, and 5. Extremely agree.

The reliability of the current study, was calculated via Cronbach's Alpha and was equal to 0.85 which is considered as desirable reliability of the questionnaire.

B) Emotional intelligence questionnaire of Petrides and Furnham

Emotional intelligence questionnaire of traits by Petrides and Furnham is a self-evaluator scale. The original form of the questionnaire contains items and 15 subscales which are as follows: adjustment, assertiveness, expression of excitement, controlling the excitement and emotions, regulation of the excitement and emotions, perceiving the excitement and emotions, empathy, happiness, excitement, optimism, social skills, self motivation, self esteem, social competence and controlling stress. The questionnaire used in the current study contains 30 items each of which is answered on a 7 degree scale from (1) extremely agree to (7) extremely disagree. The scoring of items 28, 26, 25, 22, 18, 16, 14, 13, 12, 10, 8, 7, 5, 4, and 2 is reverse. By adding up all the scores from all the questions, the total score of the questionnaire is obtained. In norm selection of the short form in the example of Iranian university students carried out by Marenani (2003), 4 factors of optimism, Perception of self and others' emotions, controlling emotions and feelings as well as social skills, were extracted. The internal correlation coefficient of mentioned study was calculated via Cronbach's Alpha as 0.81. Saklovsy et al. (2003, also cited in Azghandi, 2005) reported Cronbach's Alpha of 0.89 for their study. Ahmadi & Azghandi also normalized the questionnaire in Iran in 2005-2006 and set the validity of the method via internal correlation coefficient and test re-test which showed values of 0.76 and 0.714,

respectively. In the present study however, for setting the reliability of the questionnaire of emotional intelligence, Cronbach’s Alpha method was applied

which shown 0.80 for the whole questionnaire and is considered as a desirable reliability coefficient.

RESULTS

Table 1. average and standard deviation of scores in research variables

Number	Standard deviation	Average	Statistical indices
			Variable
250	22/35	137/20	Emotional intelligence
	7/87	34/65	Emotional intelligence related to optimism
	9/02	46/75	Emotional intelligence related to perception of self and others’ emotions
	7/25	29/67	Emotional intelligence related to controlling the emotions
	5/55	26/14	Emotional intelligence related to social skills
	3/13	20/35	Attitude to Life
	8/51	45/74	Goal Orientation

Table 2. simple correlation coefficients between emotional intelligence and goal orientation in male athletes

Number of sample (n)	Leve of p) significance (Correlation coefficient (r)	Statistical indices	Crite rion varia ble
			Predicator variable	
250	002/0	0/19	Emotional intelligence	Goal orientation
	0/0001	0/26	Emotional intelligence related to optimism	
	0/011	0/16	Emotional intelligence related to perception of emotions	
	0/402	0/05	Emotional intelligence related to controlling the emotions	
	0/246	0/07	Emotional intelligence related to social skills	

As shown in table 2, there is a significant positive relation between emotional intelligence and goal orientation in male athletes (<0/002)p = 0/19 و r). in other words, by increase of emotional intelligence in male athletes, the goal orientation also increases.

Also there is a significant positive relation between emotional intelligence and other variables of optimism and perception of self and others' emotions. Therefore theories 1- 4 and 2-4 are confirmed. In other words, by increase of emotional intelligence related to optimism and perception of self and others' emotions, the goal orientation also increases. Nevertheless, no significant relation was found between emotional intelligence and control of emotions and social skills.

Table 3. multiple correlation coefficients of predictor variables (emotional intelligence components) and goal orientation of male athletes by simultaneous and stage based entry

p=	T	β	p=	F	R ²	R	Predictor variable	Method
0/0001	3/62	0/31	0/001	5/03	0/07	0/27	Optimism	Entry
0/962	-0/047	-0/01					Emotion Perception	
0/355	-0/927	-0/06					Emotion control	
0/733	-0/321	-0/02					Social skills	
0/0001	4/34	0/26	0/0001	18/90	0/07	0/26	Optimism	Stage based

As shown in table 3, there is significant regression of goal orientation in male athletes based on emotional intelligence components (optimism, self and others' emotion perception, control of emotion and social skills) $p=5/03$ و $F($.therefore the 5th theory is also confirmed. Variable of emotional intelligence related to optimism with beta coefficient of 0.31 is significantly and positively related with athletes' goal orientation. Also the value of R2 shows that 07% of variance of goal orientation is defined by mentioned variables. The result of stage based regression analysis also showed that only the variable of emotional intelligence related to optimism was the predictor of goal orientation of male athletes.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The aim of the present study is the evaluation of relation between emotional intelligence and goal orientation in male athletes in city of Ahwaz. The result showed that there is a positive significant relation between emotional intelligence and goal orientation in male athletes. The result of emotional intelligence components and goal orientation showed that there is positive relation

between optimism and goal orientation. The same relation also exists in the case of controlling self and others' emotion and goal orientation. There is no significant relation between control of emotions and goal orientation. The same relation also exists in the case of social skills and goal orientation. The result of the current study is in harmony with previous seminar research such as Maleki, Mohamadzadeh & Ghavami's (2012), Aqdami, Jeyrani & Rahmani's (2012), Duris' (2011) and Sinball et al. Emotional intelligence is the factor for controlling emotions specially negative emotions via recognition and management of emotions. Latest studies on emotional intelligence and negative emotions such as anxiety and anger show the reverse relation between them and supporting the achievements in this field. Relation between emotions and achieving the goals has always been the attention of researchers. Emotion is considered as a yardstick based on which other emotions are scaled both regarding potential goals and also moving towards them. In other words, emotions are very important either in setting the goals or evaluating and following them, redirecting cognitive processes towards them and reacting to their consequences. As a matter of fact, the motivation for achieving goals

depends to a large extent on positive or negative emotions. Therefore the motivation structure of individuals and the way they apply it as well as the emotional intelligence and other major cognitive structures is in direct relation with an individual's success or failure. Optimism and positivism has a positive relation with emotional intelligence. emotional intelligence also is the intervening factor of interpersonal relation and athletic behavior. Consequently it can be concluded that a desirable level of optimism and positive attitude can lead individuals to better mental well being.

Generally it can be stated that emotional intelligence is a set of connected skills for exact perception, evaluation and expression of emotions on one hand, and access to them in order for facilitation of thinking, perception of emotions and regulating them to achieve top notch rational and emotional development. Furthermore, emotional intelligence refers to ability to manage humans to achieve highest level of interpersonal human relations. Literature on the other hand shows the positive relation between emotional intelligence and successful athletic activities. The athletes can most probably be trained for learning social skills and emotional intelligence to confront tensions and mental pressures and to better learn the positive evolution of surrounding situations and betterment of their athletic performances. Meanwhile, they can decrease the level of stress and to focus on the goal, pave the way through success.

Taking into account the results of the present study, it is recommended to develop research on establishing educational workshops of psychological skills such as setting goal orientation in educational, professional and athletic domains. Relation of other factors such as time management, character types and individuals' level of education with goal orientation for athletes also should be taken into account.

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