The Relationship between Emotional Intelligence and Mental Health in Collegiate Champions

Seyed Mohammad Niazi¹, Nasser Bai², Soleiman Gharaei¹

¹Department of physical education, Jiroft Branch, Islamic Azad University, Jiroft, Iran
²Department of physical Education, Azadshahr Branch, Islamic Azad University, Azadshahr, Iran
³Department of Management, Aliabad Katoul Branch, Islamic Azad University, Ali Abad Katoul, Iran

Corresponding Author: Seyed Mohammad Niazi

ABSTRACT: The purpose of this research was to study the relationship between emotional intelligence and mental health factors in collegiate champions. The statistical population of the research included 192 students athletic in Islamic Azad University (Jiroft Branch) with the average 22.35± 2.49 years of age, 9±2 years of sport experience were selected as the samples of study. In this study two standard questionnaires were used, one relating to emotional intelligence and General Health Questionnaire (GHQ 12). The reliability and validity of these two instruments were reported to be significant in different studies. The findings indicated that there was significant and positive relationship between emotional intelligence, its subscales (Self awareness, Empathy, Self-control and Self-motivation) with mental health. But there wasn’t significant relationship between social skills and mental health. Also results of stepwise regression indicated that emotional intelligence subscales (Self-control, Empathy and Social skills), have significant role in prediction of mental health. Additionally Changes in mental health are predictable by self-control about 76%, self-control and empathy 85%, and self-regulation, empathy and social skills 87%.

Keyword: Student, Mental health, Emotional intelligence.

INTRODUCTION

Emotion and how to cope with it is a part of the human personality and affects on his mental health (Pervin, 1996). The ability to perception, understanding and use of emotional skills is in different people and this collection of consciousness' level constitutes emotional intelligence in individual which has significant contribution in his mental health and intellectual development and determines success in his life (Salovey et al., 2002). Emotional intelligence is a set of non-cognitive abilities and skills that increases person's ability to succeed in coping with environmental pressures and situations (Baron, 1999).

However, today, athletes' advance depends on to several factors in championship level. Identification of vulnerable people from childhood and adolescence and pushing them toward a particular sport, along with intensive training physical and psychological programs include these factors. For coaches it is recognized that athlete's psychological readiness is one of the success factors in implementing skills and his performance and his mental fitness as well as physical fitness is only possible by psychological skills training (Hosein Alian, 2005). In general emotional abilities to recognize appropriate responses play a major role in facing with daily events, expand of insight and positive attitude about the events and emotions. So athletes who have the ability to recognize, control and use of these emotional abilities have higher social support, a sense of satisfaction and mental health. Today many researchers believe that if a person is capable in emotional terms, it could be better faced with the challenges of life and this will result in better mental health (Ciarrochi et al., 2000). Review of literatures from Jain and Sinha showed a positive relationship between emotional intelligence and mental health and can even predict it (Jain & Sinha, 2005). Besharat et al., (2006) in a study revealed that emotional intelligence and sport have positive correlation in group and individual sports, but this variable can only predict sport success in group sports. also the role of physical activity in the development of mental health and enhance of mental capacity according to the reports of researchers is evident, so that Cooper Smith stated that athletes have emotional stability, self- confidence and high intellectual capacity and they have also clearly developed
personality factors (Jain & Sinha, 2005). Carson et al (2000) showed that emotional intelligence has a positive relationship with social functioning and has a negative correlation with depression and anxiety.

Ciarrochi et al (2001) believed that some forms of emotional secure people from depression and lead to better consistency. Along these, researches in the field of mental health and emotional intelligence components in different functional areas have also been shown that this structure positive correlation with mental health, identification of emotion's content, and social and emotional adaptation and has negative correlation with psychological distress and depression. Also the researchers believed the role of psychological issues is important in increase of athletes' abilities and coaches and athletes have realized that success in sports is not only the result of physical activity and enhancing physical performance but the psychological aspects must also be considered. It seems that recognizing the relationship between emotional intelligence and psychological characteristics of athletes, not only can help to the coaches to choose the players and the granting of responsibility and understanding behavior and how to deal with them, but also can help to the consideration of moral aspects of sport in all societies (Hosein Alian, 2005). Results of Austin et al (2005) showed that emotional intelligence has positive correlation with the amount of satisfaction from life, range of social relations network and its quality and has negative correlation with Psychological distress and depression (Slaski & Cartwright, 2002).

Research in the field of emotional intelligence with mental health components have shown that this structure has positive correlation with mental health (Jain & Sinha, 2005; Lane & Schwartz, 1987), social and emotional adaptation, emotional well-being (Mayer & Geher, 1996) and life satisfaction (Palmer et al., 2002) and negatively correlated with psychological distress (Slaski & Cartwright, 2002) and depression. Recently the importance of the role of psychological issues in enhancing athletic abilities have been recognized in the past few years and coaches and athletes have realized that success in sports is not the only result of the activity and physical performance and psychological aspects must also be considered. Among the factors involved in athletic achievement, attention to the mental health and emotional intelligence is essential for athletes. Therefore, by regarding to the importance of the functional aspects of emotion in Physical and mental health of people, especially athletes, study the structure and its role in the mental health seems to be important and useful; Also, this study is more relevant to the general population, in which both components are essential for athletes. The present study sought to find a relationship between emotional intelligence and mental health of the student athlete that should be investigated.

**METHODOLOGY**

In view of the goal, the research is applied (functional), and in view of methodology, this research has descriptive, correlation method which was performed by field approach.

**Participants**

The population of the study consisted of all Athlete Student of Islamic Azad University of Jiroft Branch in 2012. The sample size was considered equal to the population (N=192).

**Instruments**

For collecting data, two standard questionnaires were used, Emotional Intelligence Questionnaire provided by Siber Yashring (1990). This scale consists of 33 items on a 5-point Likert scale (1: Never, seldom, 2: Seldom, 3: Sometimes, 4: Often and 5: Always) and examines Emotional Intelligence at five dimensions (Social skills, Self-control, Empathy, Self-awareness, and Self-Motivation). The second questionnaire was General Health Questionnaire (GHQ 12) Developed by Goldberg and Williams (1988) was used. The validity of the above questionnaire has been proved (82%-92%).

**Data analysis**

SPSS software was used to analyze the data. As to the statistical measures, descriptive statistics including frequency, percentage, mean, standard deviation and tabulations were used to describe the data. Inferential statistics including Pearson correlation formula was used to test the hypotheses.

**RESULT**
Descriptive findings of the research showed that 192 Student-athletes with a mean age of 22.35±2.49 and the history of sports 9±2 were presented in this study. As shown in table (1) it is observed that there is a significant positive relationship between emotional intelligence and its components (Self-control, Empathy, Self-awareness and Self-motivation) with mental health and the highest correlation is with Self-control (0.76) and the lowest correlation is for Social skills (0.30). There is no significant relationship between the social skills and mental health. Based on the regression analysis’ results, the first variable in the equation was predicted and showed that self-control identifies 57% of the variations in mental health. In the second step, empathy variable in the equation was predicted and the rate of coefficient was increased to 73 percent and in the third step the variable of social skills entered to the equation, and identification Coefficient increased to 76% (Table 2). Standard coefficient of variables in all steps are significant in P<0.001 level. Self-motivation and Self-awareness variables had no a significant role in predicting mental health and therefore they were not entered into the equation. Therefore, it can be concluded that among these variables, self-control, empathy and social skills have the most important role in predicting mental health.

**Table1.** Correlation between emotional intelligence and subscale with mental health.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>Mental health</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social skills</td>
<td>192</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-control</td>
<td>192</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Empathy</td>
<td>192</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-awareness</td>
<td>192</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-motivation</td>
<td>192</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emotional intelligence</td>
<td>192</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Table2.** Regression result.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Step</th>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>R</th>
<th>R²</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
<th>Std. Error</th>
<th>β</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>First</td>
<td>Self-control</td>
<td>0.76</td>
<td>0.57</td>
<td>279.27</td>
<td>0.001</td>
<td>22.81</td>
<td>0.76</td>
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<tr>
<td>Second</td>
<td>Self-control</td>
<td>0.85</td>
<td>0.73</td>
<td>267.18</td>
<td>0.001</td>
<td>16.40</td>
<td>0.58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Empathy</td>
<td>0.85</td>
<td>0.73</td>
<td>267.18</td>
<td>0.001</td>
<td>16.40</td>
<td>0.42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Third</td>
<td>Self-control</td>
<td>0.87</td>
<td>0.76</td>
<td>208.89</td>
<td>0.001</td>
<td>17.36</td>
<td>0.59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Unanimity</td>
<td>0.87</td>
<td>0.76</td>
<td>208.89</td>
<td>0.001</td>
<td>17.36</td>
<td>0.47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Social skills</td>
<td>0.87</td>
<td>0.76</td>
<td>208.89</td>
<td>0.001</td>
<td>17.36</td>
<td>0.18</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION**

The results showed that emotional intelligence has a significant positive relationship with mental health, in other words, by increase in emotional intelligence of athlete students, the amount of their mental health will be increased. This finding is consistent with findings of Slaski & Cartwright (2002) and Jin & Sin (2005). The results of regression analysis to examine the components of emotional intelligence in explaining mental health showed that the factors of self-control, empathy and social skills have a significant effect in predicting mental health. Self-control as an important component alone can explain 76 percent of the variations in mental health. Efficient athletes in this component can avoid from negative emotions such as frustration, anxiety and irritability. These athletes during sporting events are less faced with difficulty or problematic situations or in case of occurring problem they can quickly return to the optimum conditions. Findings of This research are consistent with the results finding of Carson et al (2000). Empathy as a person's ability is one of the important variables in predicting the mental health of athletes to recognize emotions in others. In addition to the ability to interact effectively with other athletes in making relationship and effective interaction with others it has another result which includes easier and better access to the sources of social support which this has important role in protecting people against problems such as stress. Pearson correlation analysis showed that social skills haven't meaningful correlation with mental health. One of the main benefits of sport is the development of social skills. Individuals participating in the sport activities are familiar with others. Respect for other athletes, respect for coaches, respect for roles, help others, participate in decision making and so on can develop in sport.
that this can cause mental health of athletes. Therefore it is suggested coaches with the proper use of Emotional Intelligence help to develop athletes' mental health.

REFERENCES


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