

## **Investigating the Effect of Coaches Communication Skills on Socialization and Satisfaction of Students Participating in Football Leisure Classes**

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### **Abstract**

The purpose of this study was investigate the effect of coaches' communication skills on socialization and satisfaction of students participating in football leisure classes. The research method was descriptive-correlational based on structural equation modelling. The Social Skills Questionnaire (Inderbitzen & Garbin, 1992), Communication Skill Questionnaire (Burton, 1990) and Satisfaction Questionnaire (Riemer & Chelladurai, 1998) were used to gathering data. The participants included all the students in the secondary school and football schools of district 7th of Mashhad (N=300). Sampling was done randomly based on 5 to 10 times the number of research items (n=159). Data analysis was performed using SPSS version 22 and LISREL 8.80. Findings showed that there was a positive and significant correlation between communication skills of coaches with the social skills of students ( $p<0.05$ ), and the components of communication skills have the ability to predict 31% of changes of social skills. Also, there was a positive and significant correlation between communication skills of coaches and student's satisfaction ( $p<0.05$ ), and the components of communication skills were able to predict 27% of changes of satisfaction. Finally, the structural equation model showed a good correlation between communication skills of coaches, socialization skills and satisfaction of students participating in football leisure classes.

**Keywords:** Communication skills, Socialization, Satisfaction, Sports leisure time.

## Introduction

Undoubtedly, human life can be considered a product of a social relationship. From the moment we open our eyes to the world, we form our first social experience and face the verbal and non-verbal reactions of the people around us, moment by moment adds to the richness of this experience. Basically, human life is tied to life in society, and the necessity of social life is inextricably linked with people's lives. In fact, from the very first days of life, human beings have thought about establishing interaction with their own kind and have constantly been striving to expand this relationship (Rahnama et al., 2012). Hence, communication can be considered one of the essential elements of social and professional life and it can be mentioned as the most vital element needed by humans for interaction in the current century (Azimkhani et al., 2022; Bronk, 2013). Communication skills (also called social or interpersonal skills), are the ability of a person to communicate with other people efficiently and in order to fulfil their desires, needs, rights and obligations in an acceptable manner without violating the rights of others (Keshtkaran et al., 2012). In this regard, coaching in sports is one of the skills that is based on solid communication skills with people, and it is one of the professions that extensively requires professional and purposeful communication with athletes and team members (Mohammadi turkmani et al., 2022). Clearly the behavior of a coach, in addition to acceptance by the players; plays a significant role in the players' success. According to Holstein(2010), it can have a direct impact on the intensity, performance and satisfaction of a team. In this regard coaches can present in class to improve student by giving just-in-time feedback (Bolton, 1999) Also, it provides the required conditions for their socialization and social growth (A'arafi & Ibrahim, 2018). Satisfying people is a process that requires skill, and it is important to investigate the factors which affect the increase or decrease of this satisfaction can help sports coaches to fill the gaps that cause the dissatisfaction of athletes and help to use factors that can lead to an increase in the level of satisfaction (Saez & Stantcheva, 2016). Therefore, one of the aspects that sports coaches should pay attention to as a manager and team leaders is the satisfaction of athletes. Athlete satisfaction is defined as a positive emotional state that is achieved by evaluating the structures, processes and consequences related to sports experiences (Aoyagi et al., 2008). This evaluation is based on the difference between what the athlete's expectations and the perception of what he received. Maslow believes that satisfaction of needs not only keeps a person in the team, but also provides satisfaction (Ghorbani et al, 2019).

It is difficult to find a specific definition for socialization, and each expert has come up with a specific definition. In general, socialization is related to a balanced set of learned social skills and adaptive behaviors that enable a person to have favorable mutual relations with other people, show positive reactions and avoid behaviors that have negative consequences in society (Rajaeian & Bagherpour, 2015). In this regard, the personal development and socialization of students is a process that could happen with the help of sports exercises and with the constant work and attention of coaches during training and competitions. Therefore, the communication skills of the coaches have an impact on the personality of the players and the behavior of the teacher and coach as a role model can affect the students (Purnomo et al., 2021). The role of a teacher and coach as a role model is particularly important due to direct and continuous communication with learners. Hence, a teacher can become an incomparable role model for students by using characteristics such as openness, playing sports with them, respecting them, not blaming and punishing them, and finally by giving positive motivations (Yousefi et al., 2015). It seems that the communication skills of coaches play a significant role in the development of players' personality and can improve their social skills and satisfaction. Also, the communication skills of coaches have a reciprocal effect on the

performance of athletes, and the coach's awareness of these effects will lead to favorable results in coaching (Thelwell et al., 2017). However, it can be acknowledged that coaches with different levels of efficiency need to have good communication skills to help them to do their best. In fact, it is necessary for the coaches to be efficient and to benefit from certain skills, including communication skills, and it seems that neglecting the acquisition and application of the required skills in the personal affairs, human relations and communication with others, as well as affairs being related to the team is inevitable. In other words, without proper communication, it will not be possible to obtain information that will help coaches to make good decisions, and naturally, it is impossible to create the desired motivation and full awareness of the needs. Hence, paying attention to the dimensions of the communication skills of coaches can provide a basis for more participation of players in collective activities.

In this regard, the current research aims to explain the effect of communication skills and their role as a fundamental factor in the socialization skills and satisfaction of students in sports leisure activities. Measuring such characteristics can help teachers and coaches in planning to remove obstacles and gaps and also to strengthen students' abilities.

## **Material and Method**

### **Research Model**

The research method was descriptive-correlational based on structural equation modeling.

### **Sampling**

The participants included all the students in the football schools of district 7th of Mashhad (N=300). The samples were selected randomly and based on the method of 5 to 10 times the number of the research items (n=159).

### **Data Collection Tools**

The measurement instruments included three questionnaires of teachers' communication skills, social skills and satisfaction. The instrument for measuring the communication skills of coaches was the Communication Skills Questionnaire (Burton, 1990) which consists of 15 items and three subscales (feedback skills - listening skills - verbal skills) based on a five-point Likert scale (completely disagree =1 to completely agree =5). The reliability of the questionnaire using cronbach's alpha test was 0.80. The second instrument was the Social Skill Questionnaire (Inderbitzen and Garbin, 1992), which consists of 8 items and two subscales (desirable social behaviors and undesirable social behaviors) and based on a five-point likert scale (completely disagree =1 to completely agree =5). The reliability of the questionnaire using cronbach's alpha test was 0.81. And the third instrument was Satisfaction Questionnaire (Riemer&Chelladurai, 1998), which measures this concept by 3 items and a five-point likert scale (completely disagree =1 to completely agree =5). Also, the reliability of the questionnaire using cronbach's alpha test was 0.87.

### **Ethical Approval**

All relevant permits were obtained from Imam Reza International University (2018.06.11/427998). All ethical standards were met.

### **Collection of Data**

In this research, after coordinating with the managers of football schools and their coaches in 2016, the above questionnaires were given to the selected students.

### Analysis of Data

In order to analyze the data, Kolmogorov-Smirnov test, Pearson test, regression test and structural equation modeling was used. Also, SPSS version 24 and LISREL 8.80 software were used to analyze the data.

### Findings

In this section, first the demographic characteristics of participants are presented (Table 1).

**Table 1.** Demographic characteristics of participants

Variable		Frequency	Frequency percentage
<b>Age (Year)</b>	10 to 12	19	9.11
	13 to 15	88	5.53
	16 to 18	55	6.34
<b>Father's job</b>	Freelancer	103	8.64
	Employee	56	2.35
<b>Mother's job</b>	Housewife	127	9.79
	Employee	32	1.20
<b>Degree of education</b>	Seventh	4	5.2
	Eighth	18	3.11
	Ninth	53	3.33
	Tenth	46	9.28
	Eleventh	38	9.23
<b>The amount of engaging in sports activities during the week (Hour)</b>	Under 5	7	4.4
	6 to 10	52	7.32
	11 to 15	43	0.27
	16 to 20	36	6.22
	More than 20	21	34
<b>Sports experience (Year)</b>	Under 1	16	1.10
	2 to 3	34	4.21
	4 to 7	66	5.41

The results of Table 1 showed that the age group of 13-15 years had the highest number of 88 people and the age group of 10-12 years had the lowest number of 19 people. On the other hand, the sample under review in terms of educational level; The 9th grade had the highest number with 53 people and the 7th grade had the lowest number with 4 people. The results also showed that according to the amount of sports activity during the week (hours); The highest frequency was related to those who were active for 6-10 hours a week, and the lowest frequency was related to those who were physically active for less than 5 hours.

**Table 2.** Kolmogorov-Smirnov test of communication skills, social skills and satisfaction

	Communication skills	Social skills	Satisfaction
<b>Z</b>	0.39	0.47	0.61
<b>Sig.</b>	0.81	0.12	0.27

According to the results of Table 2, the normality of the data distribution was evaluated by the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test, and the results showed that the distribution of the variables is normal.

Also, Pearson correlation test was used to determine the relationship between the components of communication skills and social skills.

**Table 3.** Correlation between the components of communication skills and social skills

	Correlation coefficient	Sig.
Feedback skills and social skills	0.22	0.005
Verbal skills and social skills	0.25	0.003
Listening skills and social skills	0.34	0.001

As can be seen in Table 3, there is a positive and significant relationship between all the components of communication skills and the social skills of students ( $p < 0.05$ ).

**Table 4.** Regression test of communication skills components with social skill variable

Components	B	SE	ETA	T	Sig.
Feedback skills	0.222	0.092	0.214	2.404	0.01
Verbal skills	0.119	0.261	0.044	0.048	0.01
Listening skills	0.076	0.083	0.502	1.406	<u>0.61</u>
<b>Significance level = 0.04</b>		Fisher = 2.773	Correlation = 0.56	Prediction coefficient = 0.31	

According to the results of Table 4, in order to predict the social skills through the components of communication skills, a regression test was used. Based on the results of table 4, 0.31 of the changes of social skills are predicted through the components of communication skills. According to the significance level, only the components of feedback skill and verbal skill had predicted the social skill.

**Table 5.** Correlation between the components of communication skills and satisfaction

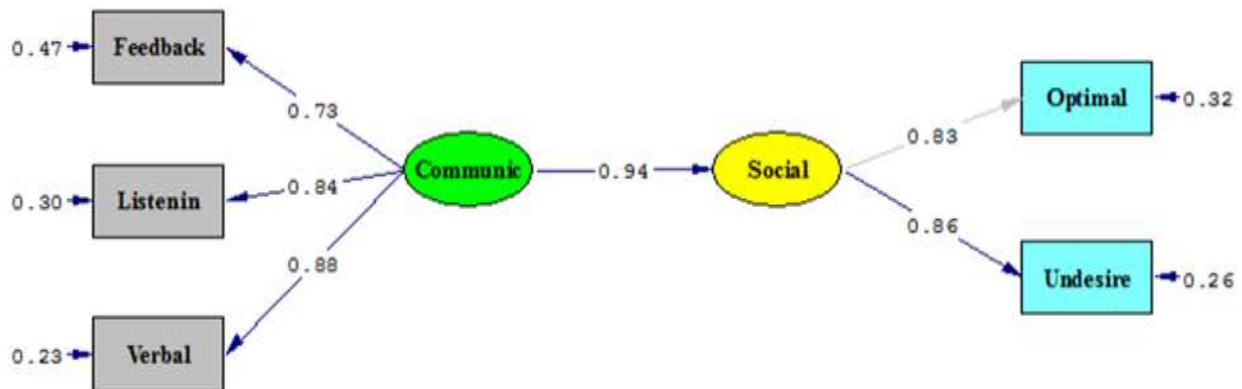
	Correlation coefficient	Sig.
Feedback skills and satisfaction	0.15	0.04
Verbal skill and satisfaction	0.28	0.001
Listening skills and satisfaction	0.10	<u>0.17</u>

According to the results of Table 5, the relationship between the components of communication skills and students' satisfaction is presented. As can be seen in table 5, among the components of communication skills, feedback skill and verbal skill have a positive and significant relationship with students' satisfaction ( $P < 0.05$ ). Also, there is no significant relationship between listening skill and satisfaction.

**Table 6.** Regression test of communication skills components with satisfaction

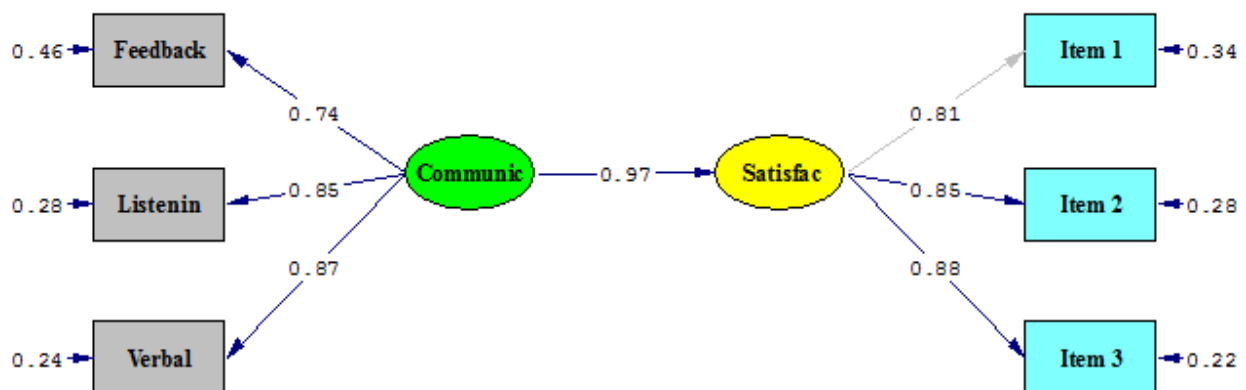
Components	B	SE	BETA	z	T	Sig.
Feedback skills	0.068	0.135	0.044	0.507		<u>0.61</u>
Verbal skills	-0.013	0.359	-0.010	0.064		<u>0.90</u>
Listening skills	0.112	0.121	-0.118	2.961		0.004
<b>Sig. = 0.005</b>		F = 4.482	Correlation = 0.51	Prediction coefficient = 0.27		

According to the results of Table 6, in order to predict satisfaction through the components of communication skills, a regression test was used. Based on the results of table 6, 0.27 of the changes of the satisfaction are predicted through the components of communication skills. According to the significance level, only the listening skill have predicted the satisfaction. Finally, using structural equation modeling, the relationship between communication skills and social skills, and communication skills and satisfaction was investigated (Figures 1 and 2).



**Figure 1.** The Relationship between communication skills and social skills

In figure 1, the relationship between the communication skills of the coaches and the social skills of the students is investigated and all the factor loadings have acceptable values. Also, the results showed that the communication skills of coaches can have a positive and significant effect on students' social skills with a path coefficient of 0.94 (Sig=0.001, T=23.77).



**Figure 2.** The Relationship between communication skills and satisfaction

In figure 2, the relationship between the communication skills of the coaches and the satisfaction of the students is investigated and all factor loadings have acceptable values. Also, the results showed that the communication skills of the coaches can have a positive and

significant effect on students' satisfaction with a path coefficient of 0.97 (Sig=0.001, T=24.44).

## Discussion and Conclusion

Societies that are thinking of improving the current situation and preparing a better future for themselves, pay attention to leisure time, especially in students, and consider these people as future talents. Therefore, in order to achieve progress, it is necessary to pay attention to this generation and plan for the optimal use of their leisure time, and neglecting this issue will have many negative consequences. In this regard, one of the factors that can create rich leisure time for students is the communication skills of teachers (Sukys et al., 2019). Thus, considering the importance of coaches' communication skills in determining and channeling students' thoughts and behavior, the present research has investigated the relationship between coaches' communication skills on socialization and the satisfaction of students participating in Mashhad's football school.

One of the most positive things and a major supporting factor in success is creating a solid team and producing exemplary achievements, one of which is the communication factor. Interpersonal communication is considered a complex social process in both psychology and pedagogy. Also, a coach must have good communication skills to reduce aggressive actions that can be done at any time by the players/athletes. However, the coach's communication skills will be more effective in individual sports, and a lower level of athlete education provides the development of better communication between athletes and coaches. Currently, knowledge of the physical and cognitive aspects is essential in sports. So, it is not uncommon for sports to be associated with social issues or more complex ones. In addition to knowledge, techniques, strategies, or sports skills, coaches should also know how to teach these skills to players with communication skills (Purnomo et al., 2021)

According to the results, the students were satisfied with the experiences gained in the leisure classes, they feel happy to be in the sports environment and enjoy participating in sports activities. To and Lung(2020) believe that some social skills have a greater impact on students' satisfaction with physical activity. They believe that, despite the common belief that social behavior leads to satisfaction, it is the characteristics of age groups that require specific social activity to form satisfaction, and some simple social skills such as listening, which is also one of the variables of this research, increases the satisfaction of students, but the same issue causes less satisfaction in older age groups, and older age groups are more satisfied with planning and correct implementation of the game (To and Lung, 2020). According to the results, a positive and significant correlation was observed between the communication skills of the coaches and the socialization of the students. Sport psychologists have taken a great interest in the development of life skills through sport. Additionally, they have worked upon the factors influencing the link between sport and the development of life skills among youth. Some researchers have worked upon the development of an important life skill of self-esteem (Khan et al, 2021).

Sport is defined as physical activities performed for different purposes in the literature. In addition, it is the whole of spiritual, physical and mental activities that aim to satisfy the subconscious feelings of the human being, such as superiority and power, which are performed within the framework of certain rules, socializing, integrating and based on competition. Today, sports are becoming more and more important in terms of its place and importance in society, although it increases impact on human life. Individuals who do sports

develop in terms of physical and mental abilities. In terms of its social aspect, it is known that it strengthens the social ties between individuals and socializes the individual. In addition, sport is the most effective form of activity that enables people to prepare for life psychologically, and in this respect, it contributes to people's psycho-social and individual balance (Altun et al, 2021).

The research results of Yousefi et al., (2015), Linet al., (2020) and To and Lung (2020) also support this finding. Thus, proper planning for communication skills of coaches can help in facilitating the socialization of students. In this regard, Mohammadi et al (2018) believe that honesty is one of the factors that promote communication programs and the presence of a specific strategy in coaches' communication skills can be very effective and beneficial in facilitating communication. Also, the findings of the research showed that there is a positive and significant correlation between the communication skills of coaches and the satisfaction of students participating in sports activities. The results of Karimi et al., (2019) and Wallace (2010) support this research finding. In this regard, Fallah et al, (2010) believe that creating a sense of satisfaction from participating in sports activities is one of the main duties of coaches, and considering the results of Konter(2010), coaches can increase this satisfaction by using their authoritative power correctly. Karimi et al., (2019) believe that there is a positive relationship between the behavior perceived by athletes and satisfaction; they consider appropriate feedback as a suitable communication bridge that strengthens the relationship between coach and athlete. Nicholls et al., (2016) stated the relationship between the coach and the athlete may be the basis for the positive sports performance of the players, and on the other hand, the improve of this relationship can bring important reflections for achieving the sports results of the players. Therefore, the existence of appropriate verbal skills can be a good complement to communication skills, especially providing appropriate feedback, and the coach should pay special attention to these two skills, because these skills are related and complement each other.

It can also be concluded that considering the confirmed role of sports in increasing students' mental and physical abilities, as well as helping to reduce abnormal behaviors and facilitating the process of socialization among students, engaging in sports in leisure time is one of the best options for families. On the other hand, considering the need to communicate in the sports environment, coaches' attention to communication skills and teaching these skills at the beginning will improve the coach's leadership skills. These skills should be taught to coaches and teachers in a targeted way in coaching courses or in teacher training courses and coaches should be familiar with the functions of these skills. Considering the meaningfulness of the research model, coaches should be fully familiar with the performance indicators and know the specific skills and techniques of the sports field so that they can provide them with appropriate feedback regarding the students' performance. Also, when giving feedback, try to make the feedback a reflection of the reality of the student's performance and not involve emotions or other disturbing factors in the feedback, it is a kind of corrective feedback (Rafati et al, 2021). One of the feedback factors that educators can use to increase students' socialization is engaging one or more students in the teaching process. The coach or teacher can ask students who have higher skill levels to teach and improve the skills of weaker students. This improves the teacher's feedback and increases the communication between students, which ultimately helps the students' socialization. In addition, teachers should be well acquainted with verbal skills; verbal skills can strengthen the sense of confidence and motivation in students (Sahebdel and Asadi, 2016). A teacher can reinforce a behavior in a student with a positive sentence and can also prevent an abnormal behavior with a punitive sentence. Of course, it is worth mentioning that the coach must understand the level of



knowledge of the students well, and in communicating verbally, he/she should speak with them according to the level of understanding of the audience, avoid specialized words and convey the essence of the matter in the shortest sentences. Listening is also one of the skills that teachers should pay special attention to. It may be difficult or even impossible to pay attention to everything the students say, but the teacher can overcome this problem by establishing rules. For example, ask the students to tell their opinions to the instructor before or after the practice session. Therefore, taking into account that the population of this research is in the age group between 10 and 18 years, it can be concluded that any positive behavior and action from the teachers in the first stage in the formation of the personality and socialization process of the students can be very important. And secondly, it can make students satisfied with the sports environment, and in this way, by considering sports in one's leisure time options, it can help to improve the quality of life and promote the health culture in the society.

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**Ethical Approval:**

**Ethics Committee:** Imam Reza International University

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