

## **The Relationship between Sport Self-efficacy Inter-mediator and Perfectionism and Competitive Anxiety among Top Football League Athletes of Hamedan Province**

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### **Abstract**

Present study was carried out to reveal the relationship between sport self-efficacy inter-mediator and perfectionism among athletes of top football league of Hamedan province. This study was applied, descriptive and correlative type and it was quantitative in terms of data collection method. The statistical community of present study consisted of all footballers in top football league of Hamedan province in 2016. Given the point that there are 10 teams in top league of Hamedan province, thus, the statistical society of this study included 220 athletes. The statistical sample consisting of 140 athletes were chosen in random using Morgan and Kerjsi table. Results indicate that there is a significant relationship between sport self-efficacy inter-mediator and perfectionism and competitive anxiety of football athletes of Hamedan province. On the other hand, a significant relationship is observed among all three variables of sport self-efficacy, competitive anxiety, and perfectionism. Also, the components of perfectionism had the ability to predict sport self-efficacy and competitive anxiety and also components of sport self-efficacy were capable of predicting competitive anxiety.

**Keywords:** sport self-efficacy, perfectionism, competitive anxiety

## Introduction

Success or lack of success in sport fields depend on many factors including the aims of the athlete, personal characteristics, his relationship with other athletes, understanding of the coach from athlete and many other mental and social factors such as competitive anxiety are all factors that can affect the quality and performance of the athlete and its results (Mahdian, 2011).

Three main aspects have been distinguished in the experience of competitive anxiety: cognitive anxiety, physical anxiety, and self-confidence (Martens et al., 1990). Cognitive anxiety is the mental component of anxiety and is determined with negative expectations and cognitive concern about self, probable situations and outcomes (for example, probability of failure). Physical anxiety is the physical component anxiety and shows the perception of the individual from physiological responses and negative provoking and self-confidence is defined as the belief of the individual about mastering and the ability of doing assignments successfully (Burton, 1998; Martens et. al, 1990; Woodman and Hardy, 2001). Indeed, competitive anxiety is created in sporting competitive situations. Studies have revealed that there is a significant relationship between competitive anxiety and perfectionism of the athletes (Koivula, Hassmen and Fallby, 2002; Hall, Kerr, and Matthews, 1998).

Perfectionism is a personality trait consisting of the multi-dimensional construct (Hewitt and Flett, 1991) that is characterized with an attempt for perfection and setting high criteria for performance along with a tendency toward fully critical evaluations of the personal behavior and oversensitivity toward mistakes (Flett and Hewitt, 2002). The set of study evidence distinguishes two aspects of perfectionism (Siddhartha and Slaney, 2001). The first aspect has been described as the positive, safe or compromised perfectionism and includes some aspects of perfectionism that are related to perfectionist efforts like having excellent personal criteria, setting exact criteria for personal performance, and an attempt for being perfect. This dimension of perfectionism is correlated with good compatibility index such as efficient coping, developed defensive styles, safe attachment, positive emotion, patience, intra-personal relations, high educational performance and sports success (Stumpf and Parker, 2002). The second dimension has been described as negative, unsafe or unabated and includes aspects of perfectionism that are associated with critical evaluations of personal performance, and concern about mistakes and this dimension of perfectionism is correlated with anxiety, stress and negative emotion (Anshel and Mansouri, 2005; Flett and Hewitt, 2005). In addition to this variable, another variable studied in this research is the study of the role of sport self-efficacy mediator on competitive anxiety. Self-efficacy is defined as the belief of the individual about the ability to do special behaviors for achieving favourite results (Bandura, 1997). According to Bandura's self- efficacy theory that refers to the effect of thoughts on behavior and emotion of individuals, the perception of individuals of their abilities has an effect on their motivation level, thinking pattern and behavioral and emotional reactions in stressful situations (Bandura, 1997). According to cognitive- social theory, individuals with high self-efficacy level are less vulnerable to extreme emotional excitements compared to individuals with lower self-efficacy and are more prepared for resisting against emotional excitement (Bandura, 2000). One of the valid indexes of self-efficacy that is related with the health and physical activities is the sport self-efficacy that is considered an important variable in sport behavior (Wallace and Buckworth, 2002).

In general, the findings of present study are important, necessary and applied: first of all, this study will fill a part of the knowledge gap in regard with the competitive anxiety and second of all, it focuses on the study of the relationship between sports self-efficacy with

perfectionism and competitive anxiety. Thus, the findings of this research will be able to achieve appropriate information in this field and assist in promoting the literature. It is expected that the results of this study be used by sports trainers, athletes, psychotherapists and counselors to reduce and treat competitive anxiety.

Also, this investigation can pave the way for these types of study by presenting theoretical and practical data in this field that has less been studied, and in the end, the authorities and planners of football board in the cities and international football federation in Iran are expected to use the findings to improve the quality and quantity of football sports field.

To that end, the results of studies by Besharat (2004), Isfahani and Soflu (2011), Besharat and Hosseini (2012), Ramezanzadeh et al. (2013), Ghasemi nezhad et al. (2015), Flett and Hewitt(2005), Anshel and Mansouri (2005), Ivan Heen (2008), Nakano (2009), Alden et al. (2009), Stobber et al. (2011), Bronuskas and Malinowski (2014) and Madigan et al. (2016), showed that negative perfectionism could lead to an increase in the anxiety level in individuals since perfectionist individuals always seek to do their tasks or jobs accurately and perfectly and this could always result in some sort of anxiety for them .

In general, sports is naturally followed by a competition that causes anxiety for athletes. In this state, the athlete faces problems and difficulties and is no longer capable of using all of his skills and abilities. It is here that sports self-efficacy and as a result, their performance reduces and this is one of the main concerns of the authorities and coaches in sports society that has resulted in increasing the studies about the behavior of athletes and their reactions in competitive conditions and prevents from injuries and damage to athletes either temporarily or permanently. Despite the destructive effect of competitive anxiety on the athletes and their performance in sports situations, few investigations have focused on this important point and factors affecting it in footballers.

Hence, the researcher in this study attempts to study the relationship between sporting self-efficacy mediator with perfectionism and competitive anxiety among top league footballers of Hamedan province and seeks to answer the question that whether there is any relationship between sporting self-efficacy with perfectionism and competitive anxiety in the athletes of top football league in Hamedan province or not.

## **Theoretical Foundations**

### **Competitive anxiety**

Anxiety is one of the unwelcome emotional states whose little amount is effective in achieving success and it is destructive if it is too much. Anxiety in psychology is defined as feeling anxious, sad mental pressure or panic. In Amid dictionary, anxiety has been defined as turmoil, trembling or chill, impatience and restlessness.

The word anxiety literally means walking or movement and it's equal in English is anxiety that has Greek root meaning "to press tight" that has been accompanied with "Trostragie" (Mansour and Dadsetan, 1990). Physical education and sports could be considered one of the ways of prevention and treatment of mental illnesses and the sports psychologists, psychiatrists and psychologist's psychiatrists could considerably help the society if the treatment method is confirmed and revealed (Kheibari, 2003). The necessity to understand the rate of anxiety for the coach and the athlete makes it possible to assess his performance and skill performance during competitions. That is, to understand the rate of anxiety in athletes in each field, the difference in the amount of anxiety and whether the effect of success and

failure on the amount of anxiety in athletes is clear, in case of need, controlling and adjusting anxiety seems necessary in order to optimize the mental energy for the athletes.

The effect of anxiety on mental states and the sports skills of athletes is the basic field in studying the performance of athletes. An athlete may have all the physical facilities and factors required for success in sports and be trained technically and tactically along with required physical fitness and situation, but cannot overcome the competitive pressures in sports. Concentration, having the required self-confidence, setting targets, quick decision-making and appropriate predictions against the movements of the opponent is considered a requirement for achieving success in many of the sports fields. In other words, the power to control anxiety and creating mental relaxation may provide extraordinary power and ability for the athletes and make him ready physically to encounter the opponent, (Hooshmand, 2007). Furthermore, most of the research findings show that athletes with more sports ability or skills have less stress (Farrokhi and Hakak, 2010). Given the international sports competitions, it is revealed that the role of mental factors in sports completions is very important and considerable (Roberts, 2001). In this way, societies which along with increasing physical sports capabilities, focus on the mental abilities of the athletes, have achieved considerable success both in international competition scenes and in increasing their safe sports society.

In recent decades, the logical relationship between competition and anxiety level of athletes in different sport fields has been revealed by extended studies. An appropriate background will be provided for required short and long-term planning for mental calming of the athletes by studying the level of anxiety and comparing it with the level of anxiety in other athletes that could be effective considerably in reducing anxiety.

### **Sports self-efficacy**

Self-efficacy is indeed the individual's strong belief in his or her abilities that lead to mobilize motivation and cognitive sources and the series of actions that are required for successful conducting of a specific job. Prior to selecting a job and making an attempt to do it, the individual assesses the job and obtains information about his capabilities and evaluates his capabilities in regard to the job and sums it up. Personal efficacy determines whether the individual has the capability for that special behavior or not and how long he will continue his attempt in that field (Shaezadeh, 2005). Self-efficacy beliefs that have been considered as the core of cognitive-social theory are effective on humanistic performance. This belief to Pajars (2000) means the judgment of individuals about their capabilities for organizing and conducting actions that require different performance (Shamaeezadeh, 2005).

Sport self-efficacy determines beliefs about the athletes' abilities for organizing and traveling the action routes for achieving advancement. He considers self-efficacy as the athletes' beliefs about their abilities for a selective generation (production) of performance level, that is, an attempt for its effect and holding the events that influence them. Sports self-efficacy beliefs determine how athletes feel, think and motivate themselves and behave (Mazloomi et al., 2010).

Sport self-efficacy has an effect on thinking patterns of the athletes and could be effective in raising or reducing the sporting performance especially if the athlete has a high level of self-efficacy, more probably he chooses the challenging aims and his successful performance level and motivation will rise. High level of self-efficacy helps the individuals to continue their attempt in order to achieve their goals (Shamaeezadeh, 2005).

The degree of confidence of athletes' sporting self-efficacy determines whether they will cope with difficult situations or they will experiment with the difficult situations or not. Sporting self-efficacy not only reduces the expected inhibition and fear but also increases the amount of individuals' attempts through expecting probable success or achievements: the higher the perception level of sporting self-efficacy, the better behavior and actions the athlete shows and tries to do tasks better (Mazloomi Mahmudabadi et al., 2000).

## Perfectionism

Perfectionism has been known for more than a century. However, for many years, it has been raised as a construct by physicians rather than studied experimentally. Early clinical descriptions of perfectionism contain important descriptive characteristics that well contain the properties of this phenomenon. The motivation for perfection and its effect on human behavior has historically been discussed extensively and comprehensively by psychologists and especially theorists of psychoanalysis. The most important characteristics of perfectionism are having an ambitious, ambiguous and unachievable goal and extreme effort for achieving it. Frost, Marten, Lahart, and Rosenblate (2001) have defined perfectionism as a set of very high standards for performance that is along with the extreme critical values themselves (Frost, Heimberg, Holt and Mattia, 1993). Majority of early definitions mostly consider perfectionism as an inefficient characteristic. Early philosophers and therapists considered perfectionism as an important aspect of human behavior. Janez (1898) and Eijan (2005) were the first individuals who wrote about perfectionism. He considered perfectionists as individuals with fix and solid ideas. As a result, rigidity was one of the parents of characteristics about perfectionism.

Among other early writers who had realized the importance of perfectionism, we could refer to Epictetus (1899) and Dunois (1907), Ijan, (2005). Alden and Safrang (1978) referred to the importance of perfectionism in the Neurosis. He considered attempt for perfectionism as the basic part of human response to feeling humiliation and insolvency. Although Alden (1978) believed in the healthy and adaptive aspect, Perfectionists are individuals who attempt to achieve their ideal image that leads to low self-confidence. Other psychoanalysts have also commented on the treatment of perfectionism. For example, Baronfman and Bergler (1995) considered it as the basic aspect of Anankastic depression (A type of personality disorder in the domain of perfectionism that is unadaptive (rigid) (Ijan, 2005).

Psychologists have studied the relationship between perfectionism and many other mental disorders such as an anxiety (Flett, Hewitt and Dyck, 1989), eating disorders (Cooper, Cooper and Fair burn, 1985), depression (Hewitt and Flett, 1990), personality disorders (Broday, 1988). Also, individual differences related to perfectionism in psychological texts have mostly been associated with aims, ideals, and self-norms or self-reinforcing behaviors.

## Method

Selection of research type depends on the aims, nature of the study and implementation facilities. Therefore, given the aim that this investigation attempts to determine the relationship between sporting self-efficacy mediator with perfectionism and perfectionism and competitive anxiety between football league athletes, it could be said that this study is applied and correlative-descriptive type, and since this investigation seeks to determine the relationship between variables and describe the variables in detail, also considering the point that the variables are periodical and the data cannot be collected for several years and given the aim of the research which is experimenting with the structural relations based on the study

theories and findings, it could be said that the data-collection method in this study is correlative and descriptive and its data-collection method is quantitative. The statistical community consists of a complete set of possible sizes or recorded information about a qualitative characteristic about the complete collected units that we want to make implications about. The statistical community of this study consists of all the athletes of football league of Hamedan province in (2016). Given that there are ten teams in Hamedan province, thus statistical community of the study consists of 220 subjects.

Sampling is a process during which some of the units are selected in a way that are the representatives of a larger community. A sample is a set of signs that are chosen from a section, a group or a larger society in such a way that this set is representative of qualities and characteristics of the section, group or a larger society. In this investigation, the statistical sample was selected in random (140 subjects) using Morgan and Kerjisi table.

In present study, a questionnaire consisting of three variables of sporting self-efficacy, perfectionism and competitive anxiety. To enrich the literature review of the study and raise its validity, magazines, Internet sites and valid domestic and foreign sources were used.

#### **a) Competitive Anxiety Questionnaire**

The questionnaire of Besharat et al. (1911) is a tool for assessing competitive anxiety. This questionnaire contains 15 items that consist of three aspects of cognitive anxiety, physical anxiety and lack of confidence in 5-degree Likert scale assessing from score 1 (complete disagreement) to score 5 (complete agreement) while the method of scoring items 1,4,6 and 11 are inverse. The reliability coefficients of competitive anxiety questionnaire were computed in Besharat et al. study using Alpha Cronbach for each of the sub-scales of cognitive anxiety, physical anxiety and self-confidence 90%, 83% and 89%, respectively.

#### **b) Sporting Self-Efficacy Questionnaire**

Questionnaire of Mazlumi Mahmoodabad et al. (2010) was used in this study to evaluate the sporting self-efficacy. This questionnaire contains 10 items each consisting of 5 choices that have been scored in this study from 1 (complete disagreement) to 5 (complete agreement). Mazlumi Mahmoodabad et al. (2010) used Alpha Cronbach to determine the reliability of this scale and coefficient of 95% was obtained that is indicative of acceptable reliability of the above-mentioned scale.

#### **c) Perfectionism Questionnaire**

Thirty-item questionnaire of Hill et al (2004) was used to measure perfectionism variable. This questionnaire was designed according to Likert 5-choice scale (from complete disagreement=1 to complete agreement = 5). This questionnaire consists of six subscale of interpersonal sensitivity, attempt for being excellent, order and organization, pressure perception, having goal and required high standards each being defined with some questions. The validity of this questionnaire in the study by Hill et al. (2004) was obtained 78 % using affirmative factor analysis method and its reliability was obtained 81% using splitting method.

### **Findings**

At first, it is necessary to assess the normality of the study variables using Kolmogorov-Smirnov (KS) test prior to studying the research hypotheses. Hence: table 1 studies the normality of the research variables;

**Table 1.** Normality of variable

Variables	Statistics Z	Significance level
perfectionism	1.073	0.225
Sporting self-efficacy	0.773	0.437
Competitive anxiety	1.374	0.125
Ability to overcome sporting barriers	0.914	0.288
Sporting motivation	0.696	0.515
Interpersonal sensitivity	1.115	0.209
Attempt for excellence	0.978	0.354
Order and organization	1.048	0.232
Perception of pressure	1.12	0.194
Having goal	1.046	0.239
Having high standards	0.927	0.379
Cognitive anxiety	1.174	0.179
Physical (bodily) anxiety	1.289	0.145
Lack of confidence in self	1.522	0.099

Given above table, it could be concluded that the significance level of all variables is higher than 0.05. Thus, the data related to above variables are normal, so the normality of above variables justifies the use of parametric tests for implying the research hypotheses. There is significant relationship between sporting self-efficacy mediator and perfectionism and competitive anxiety of football athletes in Hamedan province. To study the research hypotheses, the analysis of structural equations of AMOS soft-ware, table 2 showed the estimation of relationship among variables.

**Table 2.** Estimating relations in the study hypothesis

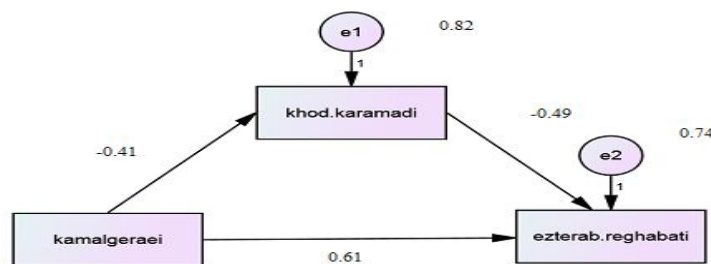
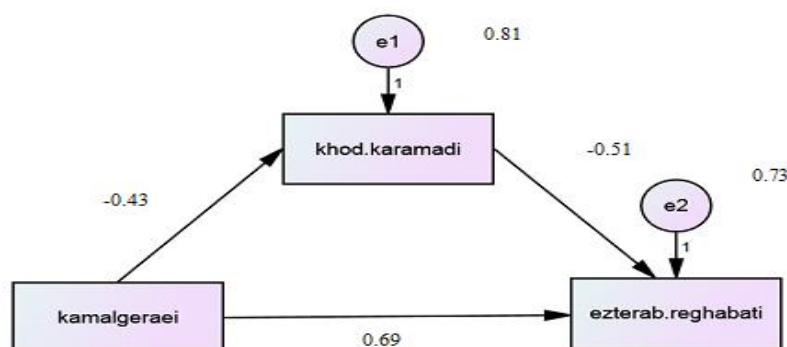
Relations	Estimation	Criterion deviation	Critical ratio	Factorial load	Significance level
Perfectionism ----> sporting self-efficacy	-0.41	0.038	16.946	-0.43	0.001
Perfectionism ----> competitive anxiety	0.61	0.054	22.243	0.69	0.001
Sporting self-efficacy---> competitive anxiety	-0.49	0.055	18.381	-0.51	0.001

According to the table (9-4), it could be concluded that the critical ratios (CR) in the variable relations are not in the range of -2.58 and 2.58 and this indicates that the sporting self-efficacy mediator with perfectionism and competitive anxiety of Athletes is significant. Also, significant levels are lower than 0.01 that indicates this point that sporting self-efficacy mediator with perfectionism and competitive anxiety of athletes is significant with 99% confidence level. Estimation index represents the rate of factorial loads in nonstandard state and factorial loads are Beta coefficients in standard state that indicate the degree of effect of the relationships, in a way that perfectionism is effective on sporting self-efficacy as much as 41%. Also, perfectionism affects competitive anxiety as much as 61% and on the other hand, sporting self-efficacy influences competitive anxiety as much as 49%, therefore, it could be said that the study hypothesis is verified and the null hypothesis is rejected. Now, table 3 shows the model fitness using fitness model indexes that has the highest similarity of results with the society.

**Table 3.** Indexes of Fitness model in study hypothesis

Index	Amount	Acceptable amount	Result
$\chi^2/df$	0	Smaller than 3	accepted
RM SEA	0.009	Smaller than 0.08	accepted
NFI <sup>1</sup>	0.95	Greater than 0.5	accepted
NNFI <sup>2</sup>	0.96	Greater than 0.8	accepted
PNFI <sup>3</sup>	0.94	Greater than 0.8	accepted
CFI <sup>4</sup>	0.97	Greater than 0.9	accepted
IFI <sup>5</sup>	0.97	Greater than 0.9	accepted
RFI <sup>6</sup>	0.94	Greater than 0.9	accepted

Above table shows that fitness index of the model, that is, RM SEA, is smaller than 0.08 and thus, this model has appropriate fitness. Also, floor index that is  $\chi^2/df$ , is also smaller than 3 and shows that the number of samples under study is appropriate. Now, this modeling is demonstrated in two standard and nonstandard states:


**Figure 1.** Hypothesis modeling in nonstandard state

**Figure 2.** Hypothesis modeling in standard state



According to the results of the hypothesis, it could be concluded that perfectionism reduces the sporting self-efficacy of athletes up to 43% and also sporting self-efficacy could reduce competitive anxiety as much as 51%. Therefore, the direct effect of perfectionism and competitive anxiety is equal to 69%. While the direct effect of perfectionism and competitive anxiety is the multiplication sum of factorial loads two routes of perfectionism to sporting self-efficacy and competitive anxiety is 21%. In fact, sporting self-efficacy could reduce the effect of perfectionism as much as 21%. That results in an increase in competitive anxiety and as a mediator variable could reduce such a relationship and as a result, the individual is less affected by competitive anxiety.

## Conclusion

Given the study hypothesis that investigates the role of sporting self-efficacy mediator in the relationship between perfectionism and competitive anxiety of football athletes in Hamedan, it could be said that sporting self-efficacy in the relationship between perfectionism and competitive anxiety of athletes functions as the mediator and can reduce the effect of perfectionism that results in an increase in competitive anxiety and as a result mediator variable will be able to decline such a relationship and the individual will be less affected by competitive anxiety. In this regard, the results of studies by Besharat (2004), Esfahani and Soflu (2011), Besharat and Hosseini (2012), Ramezanzadeh et al. (2013), Ghaseminezhad et al. (2015), Flett et al. (2005), Anshel and Mansouri (2005), Ivan Hin (2008), Nacanook (2009), Alden et al. (2009), Stobber et al. (2011), Brunswick and Malinowski (2014), and Madigan et al. (2016) were consistent with those of present investigation, since in their studies, they came to the conclusion that negative perfectionism can lead to an increase in anxiety level among individuals, because perfectionists always seek to do their jobs (tasks) accurately and without any defect and this point could lead to some type of anxiety in them. On the other hand, since perfectionists attempt to do their jobs perfectly, thus, they will not start any other jobs unless they feel their jobs have been done perfectly and as a result, their efficiency will be reduced and cannot immediately start their tasks. Also, results of a study by Trumpeter et al. (2006) are in agreement with those of present investigation since they showed that perfectionism can lead to an increase in self-efficacy. This inconsistency could be attributed to the fact that in this investigation, perfectionism has been studied from a positive aspect and hence, positive perfectionists who do not exercise extreme things for achieving perfection can also even raise their efficiency. Thus, from the comparison between the result of study hypothesis and results of previous studies, it could be concluded that sporting self-efficacy among athletes could play the role of mediator between perfectionism and competitive anxiety. Therefore, self-abilities and the ability to solve problems and difficulties could result in some type of confidence for athletes in regard with sporting activities and this self-confidence leads the athletes to advance their sporting activities and even their negative perfectionism about different issues does not prevent them from doing accurate or perfect tasks. Since perfectionist individuals do not start doing any jobs or tasks unless they feel that the jobs are done as they have planned and this leads to a reduction in their efficiency. Whereas self-efficacy in athletes makes them believe in their ability and do their jobs (tasks) appropriately even in unplanned conditions because they are sure of their abilities and qualification. On the other hand, self-efficient individuals do not feel anxiety and concern about sporting issues since they believe in their ability and qualities and in some sense, lack of confidence among individuals results in anxiety. An athlete who is confident of himself and conducts sporting activities accurately relying on his/ her capabilities no longer becomes concerned or anxious and he/she will be free from any kinds of anxiety in the competition

scene. Because he/she has enough confidence in his/ her capabilities and efficiency and thus conducts his/ her tasks or jobs accurately.

Hence, sporting self-efficacy among athletes leads to reduction in anxiety rooted in the accurate conducting of the tasks that usually is associated with the individuals' perfectionism and idealism and encourages the individuals to do their sporting activities accurately and feel no fear and concern about the competition. While, without considering the sporting self-efficacy of perfectionist individuals, they feel anxiety and concern when they face a problem since the problem distracts their plans and they cannot do their tasks accurately and in other words, when athletes face a problem including injury in sporting scenes or sporting decline during the sporting course, they are affected by anxiety since they have not planned for such a problem. While, if they have high self-efficacy in the field of sports, they will believe that they will advance their sporting activities in the best way by overcoming difficulties again through relying on the abilities and self-efficacy in the course of sporting activities and thus will not be affected by competitive anxiety. Athletes who always believe that they must do their sporting activities in the best way and consider their errors something unnatural, they less feel that they are successful in their sporting activities, since they always assess themselves according to the most the difficult and highest criteria and can inculcate the feeling of some type of inability in the individual and the person believes that he cannot achieve the given standards and thus feels inefficacy and cannot rely on his ability. Since sensitivity to predetermined standard and ideals in sporting issues in a way that the individuals do not feel enough satisfaction even though they achieve sporting success and feel that they must attempt and work more and harder, this can transfer lack of motivation to him and leads him never to be satisfied with his present status. This lack of satisfaction will create a background for destructive inefficacy beliefs in the person and causes them to feel inefficacy. The more the athlete feels that he can overcome sporting problems and difficulties, he feels less concern and anxiety due to not doing tasks or not doing them accurately. Since when the individual feels that he cannot advance the affairs, he is affected by anxiety and concern. Therefore, when the athlete feels that he can rely on his potential and abilities based on acquired knowledge and experience, he will not feel concern and anxiety in the competition scenes and will be involved in sporting activities feeling confidence and relaxation. While, if the person feels he cannot remove the barriers in the course of sporting success and also does not have enough motivation for success and achieving high sporting levels and feels inefficacy and this feeling itself means that acceptance of inability leads to feeling competitive anxiety. The higher the expectations of the athletes of themselves, and belief that they must do sporting activities with the highest quality, this level of expectation can cause anxiety in the individual. Because the perfectionist individual is worried about the point that he may not be able to overcome the criteria determined in advance and he always thinks about the outcomes and this fear of future turns into a background for competitive anxiety in the individual. Therefore, expectations and considering high standards for self and also determining standards by others lead to nervousness and confusion in the individual when he cannot achieve the extensions and this will result in anxiety. Since the peripheral conditions have not turned up the way he had expected and thus he rapidly feels anxiety and cannot concentrate efficiently on sporting issues and activities.

Removing emotional and sporting barriers as the components of sporting self-efficacy among athletes will reduce the amount of competitive anxiety by raising their ability in removing barriers. On the other hand, the ability to remove the sporting barriers could predict the competitive anxiety. Since, if the athlete feels that he can manage and remove the problems in the course of his sporting activities accurately, he will never feel anxiety and concern and

knows that he will be able to remove the barriers relying on his abilities. In other words, the capability of the athlete towards solving sporting problems makes him overcome the difficulties easily and presents differences and solutions to the problems until the suitable and right solution is found and the problem is solved. Solving sporting problems could take anxiety away from the athlete and the individual will be able to cope with sporting difficulties and problems and as a result, there will be no signs of anxiety in him. The attempt of the athlete for excellence and ignoring self-weak points and also feeling pressure toward peripheral environments and also determining high standards for self-results in his separation from peripheral realities and considers the conditions without deficiencies and unpredictable factors and on the other hand, imagines a high level for himself and this could impose a lot of pressure on him since he has high expectations of himself and not achieve these expectations could lead to an increase in the anxiety level of athletes in the competitive scenes. Indeed, the more the athlete attempts for excellency and thinks that he must always conduct sporting activities at a high level, the smallest problem in this regard could seriously increase his anxiety, perception of pressure from peripheral environment including the coach, competitors and teammates make him not feel comfort in sporting activities and not do the activities and competitions comfortably and this reduction in relaxation level results in an increase in anxiety and concern. On the other hand, determining high standards and over expectations from self-make the individual to be worried in that he is at a lower level than that he himself has determined and the feeling of being away from unreasonable standards leads to an increase in competitive anxiety. Continuous attempt of athletes toward conducting sporting activities at high level leads to individual's distinction because determining ideal level for athlete always makes him feel that he is lower that level and thus feels dissatisfaction and these results in reduction in his efficiency and self-efficacy in sporting scenes. Also, determining very hard and inaccessible goals creates this feeling in the athlete that he never can achieve his goals and he will feel inefficacy in achieving his goals. Thus, he imagines the goals far away and these results in decline in sporting self-efficacy. On the other hand, when an athlete determines a very high level for himself in terms of increasing fitness, if this defined standard is unachievable and in disagreement with his individual abilities, he will feel a type of confusion and disappointment and feels that he is not able to reach this level and as a result he will not imagine himself efficient.

### **Suggestions**

Given the hypothesis of the study, it is recommended to all the authorities and managers of football league in Hamadan province to raise the sporting efficiency level of top league in regard with the strategies associated with the ability of problem-solving by holding compulsory educational classes and workshops so that athletes can reduce pressures caused by sporting activities in order to have appropriate performance in the field of sporting activities and this point in addition to improving the individual capability level of the players, could have useful effects for the club from different aspects. Also, it is recommended that they provide the appropriate background for the athletes' sporting self-efficacy through determining standards based on the athletes' capability by means of physical and mental fitness tests and also by reducing their expectations level from themselves considering their deficiencies and individual conditions. It is recommended that the authorities pave the way for reducing competitive anxiety of the athletes through giving freedom of action to athletes toward raising their sporting creativity level and also through creating sporting motivation among the athletes by giving their rights and salaries on due time and presenting strategies for their encouragement through offering valuable prizes and reward. Also, improving planning in sporting activities including sporting exercise and competitions in terms of mental and

physical recovery and toward right decision-making about determining their own ideal level for success in sporting activities could result in a reduction in competitive anxiety of the athletes. Also, it is suggested that the background is prepared for solving a sporting and non-sporting problems and also fulfilling promises about material and non-material Promises in terms of promoting level in order to reduce competitive anxiety of the athletes. It is recommended that the background for reducing competitive anxiety be focused on not determining high standards for athletes, controlling the mental and physical capability of the athletes for reducing the level of disappointment especially at the time of sporting matches and also perceiving the conditions of the athletes and not ignoring their physical and spiritual conditions.

It is suggested that the authorities provide the background for sporting self-efficacy by allocating time for picnic and entertainment after sporting exercises and matches according to the framework of club norms and also involving the athletes in achieving the goals through applying their ideas in the process of decision-making.

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### **Conflict of Interest**

The authors have not declared any conflicts of interest.

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