



## Effect of Abusive and Verbal Behaviors of Coaches on Sport Training of Players

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**Abstract:** Team sports have become a vital informal learning setting in which athletes are taught, motivated and mentored by their coaches. This descriptive study examined the effects of abusive and verbal behavior of coaches on sports training of player. A well-designed questionnaire adopted for the collection of data. To find out the psychological impact anxiety, aggression verbal and abusive behavior of coaches on sports performance of players. To find out social support on sports performance of players. What an economic effect on sports performance of players abusive and verbal behavior of coaches. To find out a significant level of psychological effect, economic as well as anxiety and aggression effect on abusive and verbal behavior of coaches. To find out aggression effect on sports performance results revealed that athletes who are verbally aggressive exposed were significantly less motivated and perceived the coach as less credible than athletes who were exposed to a coach having good affirming style. Verbally aggressive coach less competent, trustworthy and caring than a coach who used affirming style. Coach behavior identified psychological, anxiety to affect the performance of players in sports. Moreover, it is recommended that greater attention be paid to examining the holistic effect of athlete's experience of abusive and verbally behavior in sport, including emotional abuse and social and educational and spiritual well-being of the athletes. Finally, the experience coaching behavior and the such coaches is required.

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**Key words:** Coaches, sport, athletes

### Introduction:

Athletic environment can change their behaviors toward sports. Parents, teammates, sport fans, media and sport coaches etc. have an effective impact on athletes' behaviors. According to Ehsani et al., (2012) one of the most important factors that could affect athletes is performance sport coach. Athletes interact with their coach during training session and competition. Moreover, a sport coach could be a role model for the athlete and is also one of the people who can affect athletes outside of the sport context too. Their behaviors and feedbacks to an athlete could also determine how the athlete will behave in his/her daily life. For example, it is stated that undesirable coaching behaviors could result in negative outcomes related to sport satisfaction and burnout (Gould, Udry, Tuffey, &Loehr, 2006).

A parent, an athletic director or a spectator might think that grabbing a player by their face mask is embarrassing, unnecessary and physically abusive. However, Coach Holtz's reason for this action was simply to make sure his player was paying attention. Certainly, all coaches want to build mental toughness in their players. Mental toughness is the ability to

face adversity, failure and negative events without loss of effort, attitude and enthusiasm (American Football Coaches Association Weekly, 2014). It is an essential component of winning and success. The question is, when do tough coaching, demanding behavior and high standards cross the line to abuse? "Abuse," according to Cambridge English Dictionary is bad or cruel treatment of a person or animal, or the use of something in an unsuitable or wrong way (Cambridge University Press, 2017).

Researches in leadership field started and continued with behavioral approach. During the recent decades, leadership styles of coaches in sport environments have frequently applied leadership patterns and instruments to measure leadership styles in organizations. For example, some researchers such as tried to explain leadership models in sport context (Ehsani et al., 2012). It is a common knowledge that acts of aggression on the part of an athlete will constitute a distraction and result in a poor performance. These acts are likely to be distracting to the team also as a whole. Research has shown, for example, that the poorer a team is in the performance, more likelihood it will engage in

aggression. As the game gets bloodier (more intense), hostility levels after the game are significantly higher. Coaches are a key source of influence on the moral performance of their athletes. Whether or not coaches “develop character or characters” (Weiss et al., 2008) for the purpose of measuring leadership in leadership research in sport. This scale measures five dimensions of sport coaches’ leadership behaviors which are training and instruction, social support, positive feedback, autocratic style and democratic style (Ehsani et al., 2012). Most of the researchers tried to determine the important factors which could be related to these coaching behaviors. Some of the factors which were examined regarding their relationship with sport coaches.

However, the answer to the question what makes the athlete-coach interaction well-balanced does not seem so obvious. Although much research has already been carried out into this area, many issues still remain unexplained. It may be caused mainly by the fact that researchers explore only “measureable” forms of coaching behaviors (observable, replicable, etc.), and seldom provide insight into the experiences of the athlete connected with being coached (Becker, 2009). Therefore, this study was designed to describe athletes’ perceptions of coaches.

Abuse is not reflective of specific way of coaching, Autocratic, Democratic and lassie-faire (Brian Max sports coach 2017). Abuse comes in different shape. Abuse can be verbal, mental, emotional or physical. In 2014, Mike Rice was fired as head men’s basketball coach at Rutgers University after footage of him mistreating his players was released. His behavior exist of throwing basketballs at players along with push them, execrate at them, and using homophobic language. The news of this treatment was made public and jump started a national discussion (A Hard Look “January 2015)

Abuse can have long term effects on athletes that many follow them in to adulthood (Kerr & Stirling, 2015). Sports psychology a profession that uses psychological knowledge and skills to address optimal performance and well-being of athletes developmental and social aspects of sports of sports participational, and systemic Issues with sports settings and organizations (American Psychological Association, 2017). Athletes ‘environments can alter their behaviors, parents, teammates, sport fan, media, sport coaches etc., have an effective impact on athletes’ behaviors. According to Ehsani et al., (2012).

To find out the effect of abusive and verbal behaviors of coaches on sports training of players, abusive and verbal aggression on athlete in sports and to search out the social , sports, family ,friends and

teachers and psychological impact of the abusive behavior of coaches in sports and its performance (Prunty, 2013). According to the above, it conclude that undoubtedly, verbal aggressiveness is negatively related to state motivation or act as a demotivating force in the educational domain. Unfortunately there does not exist any relatively study in the sports setting. A negative teacher trait such as verbal aggressiveness (Myers & Knox, 1999; Roach, 1995) that undermine learning, are similar to abusive coaching behaviors. In addition, coaching training can lead to social problems within the class- room. While, in sport setting, Gardner and Bostrom (1995) state that coaching trainings facilitates the acceptance of unsporting behaviors (cheating, verbal, abusive and aggressiveness) in a team. Their statement is based on the high correlation they found between the abusive and verbal coaching leadership training and the shared rules (cheating and aggressiveness) accepted as valid by the team. Consequently, we can assume that coaches training leadership style it is likely to act as a demotivating force not only in the educational domain but and in the sport setting also. Studies suggested that coaches have an important influence in all aspects of athletes’ preparations for competition and in determining athletes’ success and development (Durand- Bush & Salmela, 2002). Also, coaches are perceived to have a key point role in all aspects of athletes’ career’s, as well as in training and competition. Reviewing the literature, however, it seems that there is a lack of research exploring athletes’ internal motivation with relation to verbal aggressiveness of coaches as perceived by athletes and coaches’ leadership style abusive and verbal behaviors of coaches (Beauchamp et al., 2012). This research attempted to examine abusive and verbal behaviors of coaches and its effect on sports training of players. More specifically, the main purpose of this study was to investigate the relation between of athletes and coaches’ verbal aggressiveness and also, the relationship between abusive and verbal behavior of coaches and their effects on training of players. This research study was specifically designed for achieving following objectives.

- i. To examine the psychological impact (stress, anxiety, aggression) of abusive behaviors of coaches on training performance of players.
- ii. To find significance verbal behavior of coaches on anxiety and training of sports performance
- iii. To find impact of aggression on sports performance.
- iv. To examine the social support (family, teachers, friends) on sports performance

- v. To find out the economic impact on sports of abusive and verbal behavior on sports performance.

### Research methodology

#### Population of the study

For this research, district Faisalabad institutions selected for data collection. 50

respondents were selected from Snooker club, educational institutions name Government College University Faisalabad (GCUF) and University of Agriculture Faisalabad (UAF) were selected as population of the study.

NO	Institutions	Population	Coaches Male	Female	Sample
1	Clubs	50	8	6	14
2	GCUF	50	11	8	19
3	UAF	50	9	8	17
	Total	150	28	22	50

Population = 150

Sample = 50

From clubs total 50 respondents in which 8 male coach and 6 female coach to select sample size. Government college university Faisalabad its sport department 50 total population and 11 male and 8 female total 19 sample size selected. University of agriculture Faisalabad its sports department 50 population 9 male and 8 female total 17 respondents select as sample size then total 150 population and 50 sample size select for research.

#### Sample size of the Study

The sample of 14 former elite athletes (selected from a slightly larger original cohort of 19 and 17 athletes based on specific inclusion criteria outlined in the sampling section below), was comprised of six males and eight females, between the ages of 17 and 28, who had been retired from their sport between 1 and 5 years. Each athlete competed at national or international level in their respective sports. Two of the athletes had been national champions in their sport, and seven of the athletes had competed at the Olympic Games and World Championships. A variety of sports and sport types were represented. Further information on the participants is found in Table 1. Elite athletes were targeted for participation for two reasons. Firstly, the frequency of effects of abusive and verbal behaviors of coaches in sports training of plyers, abusive coaching behaviors appears to increase as athletes move up the sporting ranks. Interviews with 12 former elite child athletes (Gervis & Dunn, 2004) indicated that athletes perceived their coach's behavior as more negative after the athlete was identified as an elite performer compared to pre-elite

levels. Accordingly, compared to other levels of athletes, elite athletes may be most likely to have experienced a pattern of verbal and abusive behaviors in the coach-athlete relationship and its effects on sports training of players. Secondly, previous research has suggested that at high-performance levels, a coach's realm of influence over the athlete often extends beyond the athlete's training into other areas of the athlete's life including diet, sleep patterns, and even interpersonal relationships, thus increasing the significance and critical nature of the coach-athlete relationship at this level. Importantly, it is the pattern of direct behaviors within a critical relationship that constitutes abusive and verbal behaviors of coaches (Stirling & Kerr, 2008). The same behaviors experienced by an individual in isolation, indirectly, or outside of a critical relationship would not constitute abusive and verbal behaviors of coaches, and may instead constitute other forms of harmful maltreatment such as harassment, bullying, or neglect (Stirling, 2009). It was also required that athletes be at least 16 years of age and be retired from their sport. These criteria were established in order to avoid gleaning information on children that may be presently at risk for abuse, effects on sports training of players and knowledge of which would legally require reporting to local authorities. None of the participants were involved in any way with an investigation or court case related to abuse in sport, but if through the course of participation an athlete had revealed on ongoing investigation, his/her data would not have been included in the write-up of the study.

#### Data collection

The collection of data from various respondents through adopted questionnaire from coaches and related to this field like sport and its training factor of all sports department from selected institutions of Faisalabad.

After the completion of collected data, all the gathering information was reviewed for confirmation of collected data and it was sure that all data was in true form. All questionnaires stood number in a serial. Data were transferred from feedback form to the computer for analysis. Statistical techniques were applied to get results of the study.

### **Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of this study was to explore the perceived effects of selected athletes' experiences of verbal and abusive behaviors on sports training of players in the coach-athlete relationship. Given that previous research has reported a range of psychological, behavioral, and performance effects of abusive and verbal behaviors in the general population (Bingelli et al., 2001), this study focused on elite athletes' abusive and verbal behaviors and its effects on sports training of players, experiences of abuse by their coaches within the coach-athlete relationship and the potential effects of such abuse on the athletes' psychological well-being, and on their training and performance in sports. This research question has the potential to inform the discussion regarding reports that athletes and coaches alike may rationalize abusive coaching practices as a necessary means for achieving athletic success (Boocock, 2002; Gervis & Dunn, 2004; Stirling & Kerr, 2009).

### **Method**

Methods was established using the methodology of deal with theory. This research theory is a quantitative tradition of inquiry that is commonly used for new and emerging areas of research (Charmaz, 2006). This research approach assumes that knowledge is effects of abusive and verbal behaviors of coaches on sports training of players in individual experiences and interpretations. Unlike other forms of inquiry, this theory does not test a hypothesis but rather allows theory to emerge from the experiences of the participants. Furthermore, as reflected in the methods of this investigation, suggests that there should be a continuous interplay between data collection and analysis allowing for the reasonable identification of relationships among concepts (Strauss & Corbin, 1998). This methodology was chosen for this study because little research exists on the effects of athletes' behaviors of abusive and verbal on sports training of players and its effects on sports training.

### **Recruitment**

Following approval of the study from the university's human ethics review board, contestants were enrolled by word of mouth. A snowball sampling technique was used, with initial names and contacts information of potential participants being acquired through the retirement lists of local sports organizations and references provided by applicants who had been involved in earlier investigations of abusive and verbal in sport. Following participation, each participant was asked if he/she could suggest others who they used to train with or who they remember having difficulties with the coaching practices in their particular sport. The athletes were initially contacted by e-mail and were informed of the purpose of the study, namely to explore athletes' experiences of effects of verbal and abusive behaviors in sports, abuse in the coach-athlete relationship, and were given specific details for their involvement. They were also sent a formal letter of information. Attempts were made to recruit both male and female athletes from a variety of sports. There were no earlier relationships between the scholar and the applicants.

### **Instrument and Instrumentation**

In instrument we find the questionnaires which used to find the study results and tools which should be used to collect gathering information from the respondents for analysis the data set. In instrument a quantitative study of the respondent get after this fill out all the questionnaire and gathering information from selected institutions and sports club which is necessary for data collection and my study to find out results of abusive and verbal behavior of coaches and its effect on sports performance of players. Quantitative data collection of the study to find out results.

### **Questionnaires / Research tools**

Misia Gervis from Brunel University for the current year 2009 for the current research adopted questionnaires were used after the author permission. Questionnaires were sectioned into three category first frequency, second abusive and verbal response and last one is performance impact.

1. My coach criticized my personality
2. My coach told me I was stupid
3. My coach said I was useless
4. My coach put down in front of others
5. My coach told me they were embarrassed by me
6. My coach made me feel small
7. My coach made nasty personal comments about me
8. My coach talked to me with no respect

9. My coach verbally attacked me by shouting at me
10. My coach walked away from me in training
11. My coach rejected me because I couldn't do a skill/move
12. My coach made me feel I was worthless
13. My coach said they could ruin my career
14. My coach said mistakes were always my fault
15. My coach said bad training session were my fault
16. My coach blamed my team-mates failure on my performance
17. My coach blamed me for other people's mistakes
18. My coach treated me differently to others
19. My coach made me train on my own
20. My coach walked away from me after a bad performance
21. My coach ignored me if I was injured
22. My coach didn't acknowledge me in training

### Data Analysis

The main concept of the data collection and the theory of this study was to find out the quantitative and t- test used to find results in the findings theory is the constant comparative method in which data collection and analysis occur simultaneously to establish, compare, and refine relationships among concepts (Strauss & Corbin, 1998). In-depth, open-ended questionnaires were conducted individually with each of the athletes. While the questionnaires were led by the athlete primarily, they typically began with the interviewer asking the following questions: How did you get into competitive sport of your coach behavior? And, what was your relationship like with your coach throughout the course of your career? Specific probes used to illicit conversation included: Have you ever been abusive and verbal at/ called names/humiliated/ ignored by a coach? What effect did this experience of your coach abusive and verbal have on you? In your opinion what effect did your coach's behaviors have on your training? And, in your opinion what effect did your coach's behaviors have on your performance? Given the sensitivity of the subject matter, a strict protocol was put in place to reduce the psychological and physiological risks to participants. Before participation commenced the verbal and abusive risks to participation were discussed and contestants were asked to read and sign a letter of informed consent. Each participant was assured that if he/she felt uncomfortable at any time during the interview he/she could take a break, reschedule or end his/her participation. The

interview was approached in a sensitive manner and the questions were communicated in a style that was best suited for the participant's emotional state. None of the participants asked to end their interviews, however throughout the course of the investigation some athletes showed signs of emotional upset such as tears and lowered voices. When this occurred, the line of questioning switched to more positive questions about the athlete's sport experience and then returned to the topic of emotional abuse when the participant calmed down or redirected the conversation back that way. The duration of the interviews ranged from 1-2 hours in length, and with the participants' consent, all interviews were written-recorded. At the end of the interview, each participant was provided with a list of local counseling services and was informed that opportunities were available for professional counseling should they be desired. Recorded interview sessions were transcribed verbatim immediately following the interview and reviewed in full a minimum of three times to allow the researcher to become familiar with the data. Statements were coded from the interviews by hand, and meaning units were grouped into higher order themes using open, axial, and selective coding techniques. Concepts along with their properties and dimensions were then compared with the categorizations derived from previously analyzed interviews allowing for the confirmation and refinement of emerging concepts (Strauss & Corbin, 1998). In order to establish trustworthiness in the analysis process, debriefing of the coding and categorization occurred with a group of two to three peers on a regular basis. During each interview session the interviewer also made notes on the general points that were being made by the participant. These notes, while not coded, were used to focus the analytic thoughts of the researcher before the formal data analyses occurred. At the completion of each interview session, specific feedback was invited from the participant on the interpretation of his/her interview and on the developing themes. The themes were presented via a running theoretical discussion in which the conceptual categories and their properties were discussed (Glaser, 1978). Firstly, informants were asked to confirm the interpretation of what was discussed in the interview. Following this for abusive, any verbal effect, feelings, or sports training of players about the emerging themes were requested. This form of member checking has been recommended for research as a way to ensure credibility and consistency in the data collection and interpretation. As well, consistent with what is recommended in the abusive and verbal effects on sports training of players' literature, this member checking was done

during the early stages of data collection before the process of abstraction (Goulding, 2002).

## RESULTS & DISCUSSION

In this research, the study of raw data was collected from the males and females abusive and verbal behaviors at different level of coaches and its effect on sports performance of players. These participants of questionnaires belonged to Government sports institutions like sports and physical education departments, universities of Punjab name as University of Agriculture Faisalabad, Govt. College University Faisalabad and clubs. The current study analyzes the effects of abusive and verbal behaviors of coaches on sports training of players.

### Socio economic characteristic of participants

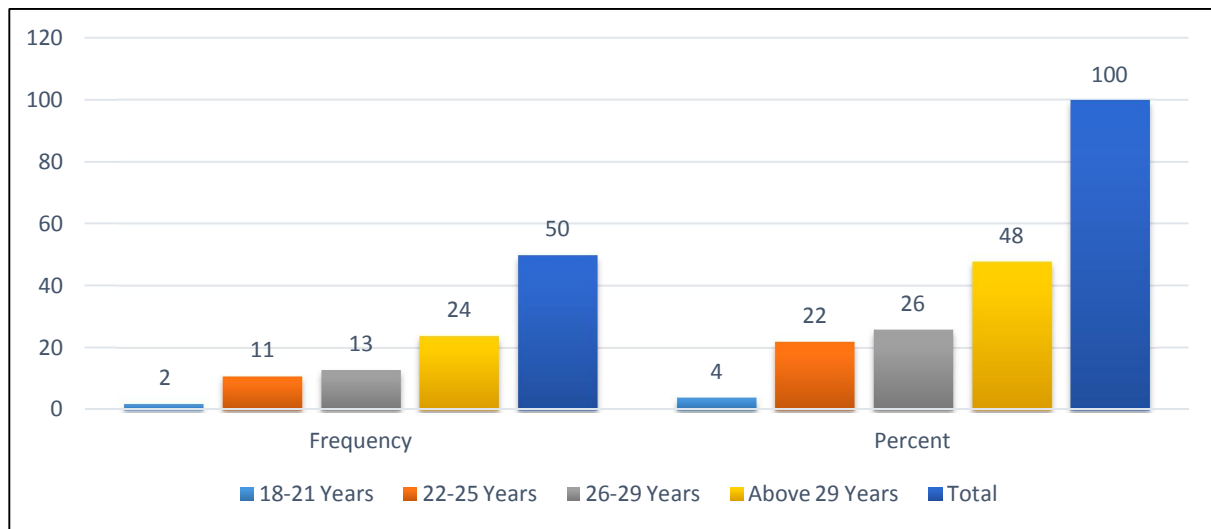
Socio economic characteristics are those characteristics through which the respondent are categorized into different characteristics like age,

education, gender, experience and marital status. In social sciences these socio-economic factors have abundant importance. Socio economic factors has great effect directly or indirectly on the study.

### Age of the respondent

Age is a deliberated and very significant demographic factor and it shows the attitude and reflects in behavior of the respondents. As higher in age have a good and a knowledgeable experience to understand the characteristics. As in socio economic factor play a key role to gain experience.

Figure 1 showing the ages of coaches's its percentage frequency of participants of study 4 % lies in the age between 18 to 21 years, 22 % of the respondents were in 22 to 25 years ages and their frequency is 11. 26 % of the respondent are in between the ages 26 to 29 years and remaining were is 48 % were in high frequency level is 24 and their ages are above then 29 years.

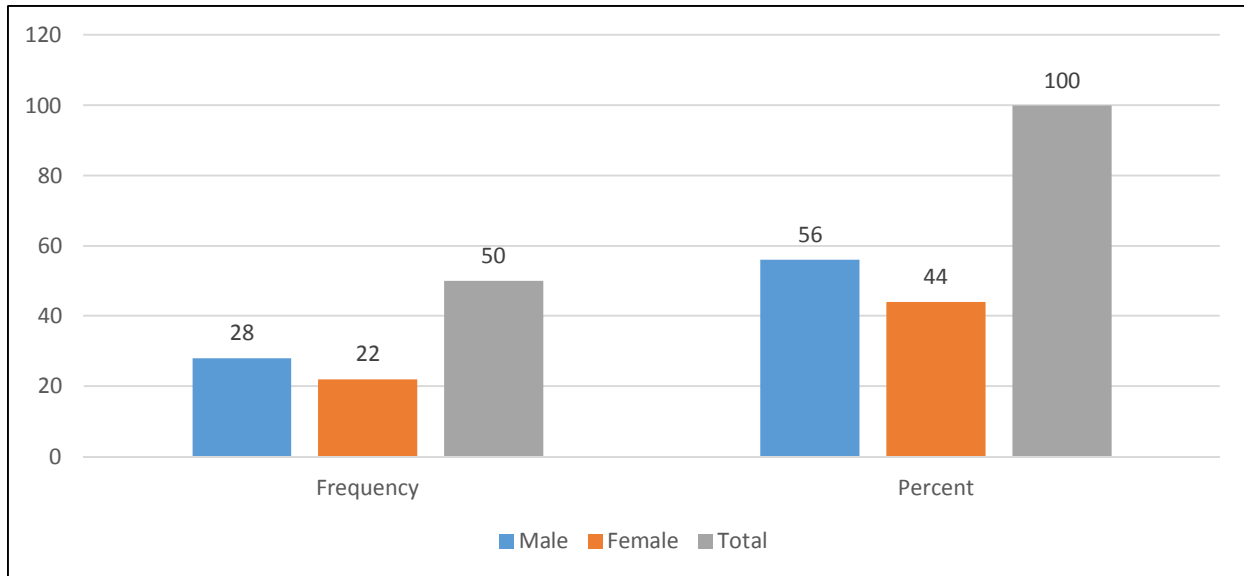


**Figure 1: Distribution of respondent according to ages**

### Respondent of Genders

Gender of the participants showing the value of the males and female are lies in sports category and its frequency level shows what are the percentage of respondents involved to fulfill requirements of the questionnaires. In this table male

and female belong to physical and sports science department of the university were selected as sample size. Figure 2 shows that 56 % of the respondents were male and remaining 44% were female and their frequency level is 28 & and 22 respectively.

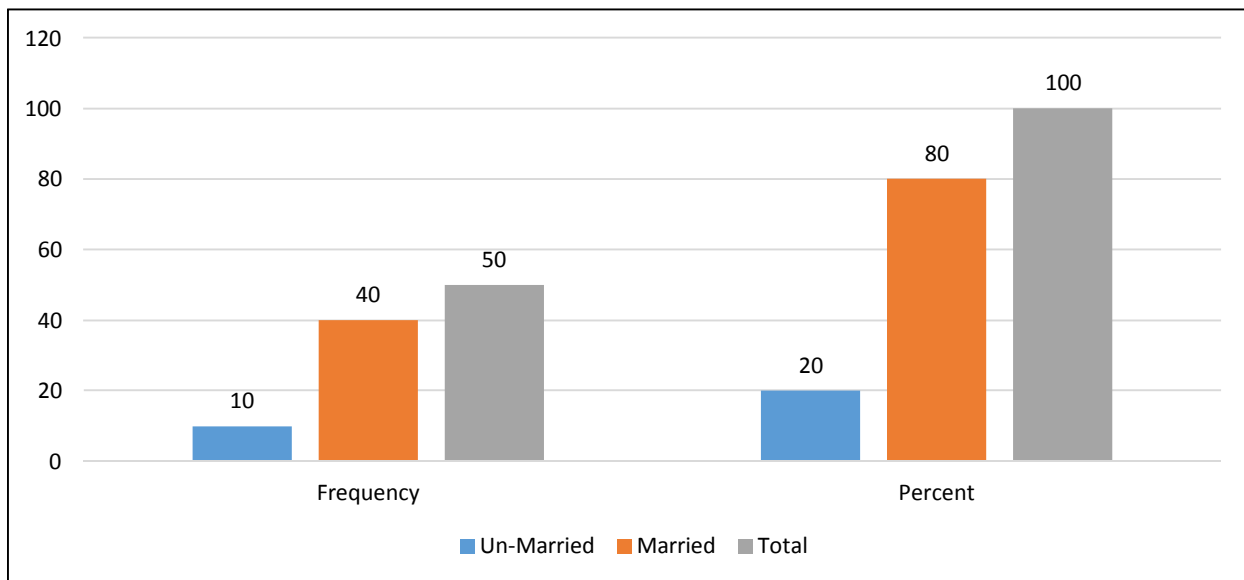


**Figure 2: Coaches gender**

**Coaches Marital Status**

Coaches’ marital status shows that how many participants and married or un-married in this table married coaches have a great extent in this knowledge and having high frequency level. The

Figure 3 displays the marital status of the participants of coaches 20 % of respondents un-married and 80 % respondents are married the un-married coaches.

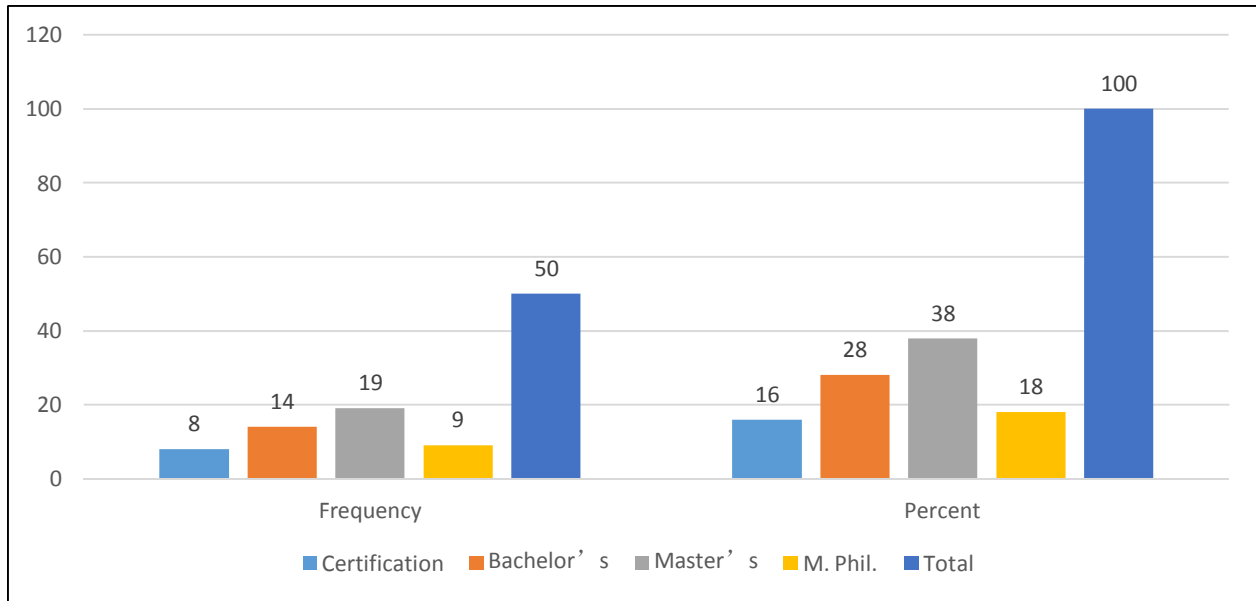


**Figure 3: Marital Status of the respondents**

**Coaches Education**

Education of the participants is a very important variable and it is important to understand the techniques and what the researcher should find out to evaluate the basic assumptions of the study. The figure 4 showing the education level of the respondents which are needed to fulfill the

questionnaire of the data analysis. In the above table it is showing that the education level of the respondents were 16% of the participants only certification holder and 28% were in 14 frequency level and having the Bachelor’s degree holder, 38% are Master’s degree holder and having the higher frequency level as much as compared to other and remaining 18% were M. Phill.

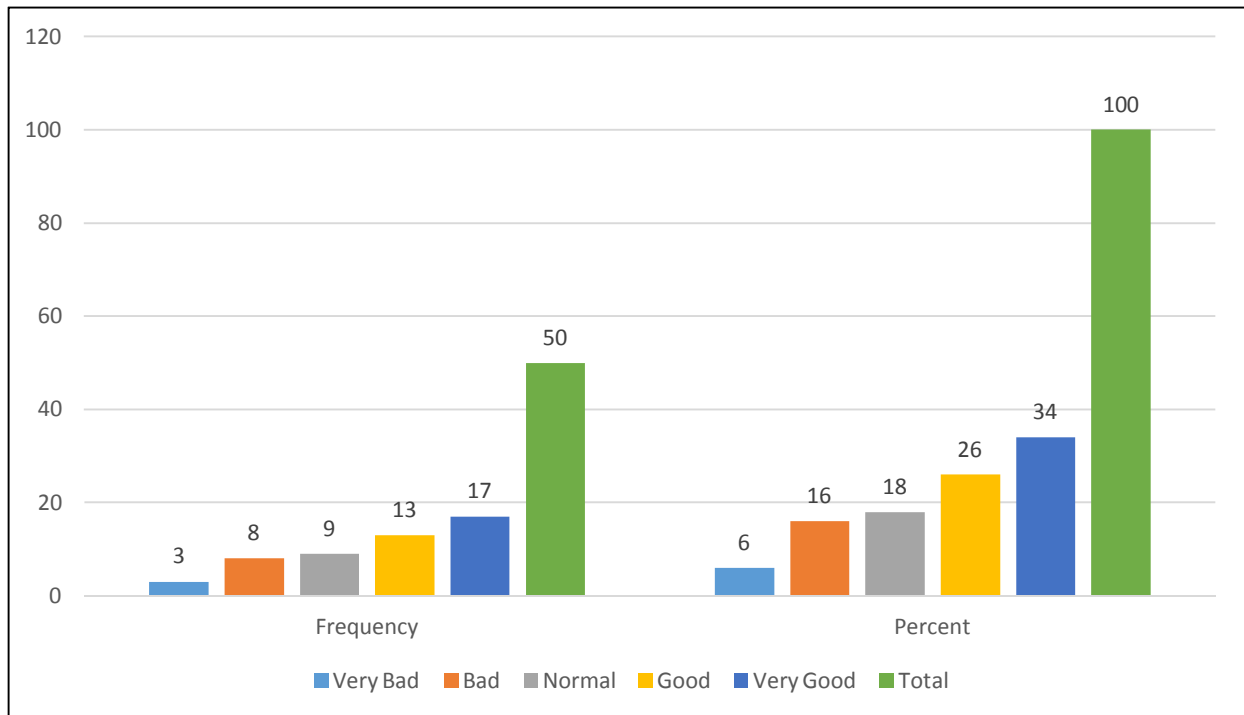


**Figure 4: Distribution of coaches according to Education**

**Previous Experience of Coaches**

Previous experience of the respondent showing the behavior of coaches in sports experience of coaches are basic to fulfill the research study and having high experience showing the interest to evaluate the research. Figure 5 display the previous experience of the coaches in which 6% of the

participants are showing very bad in behavior, 16% shows only rough in or bad behavior of experience level, 18% of the respondents showing the Normal in experience level and having the 9 frequency level in this table, 26% were showing good in behavior and remaining 34% showing the very good in previous experience of coaches and its behavior.



**Figure 5: Distribution of coaches according to previous experience in Behavior**

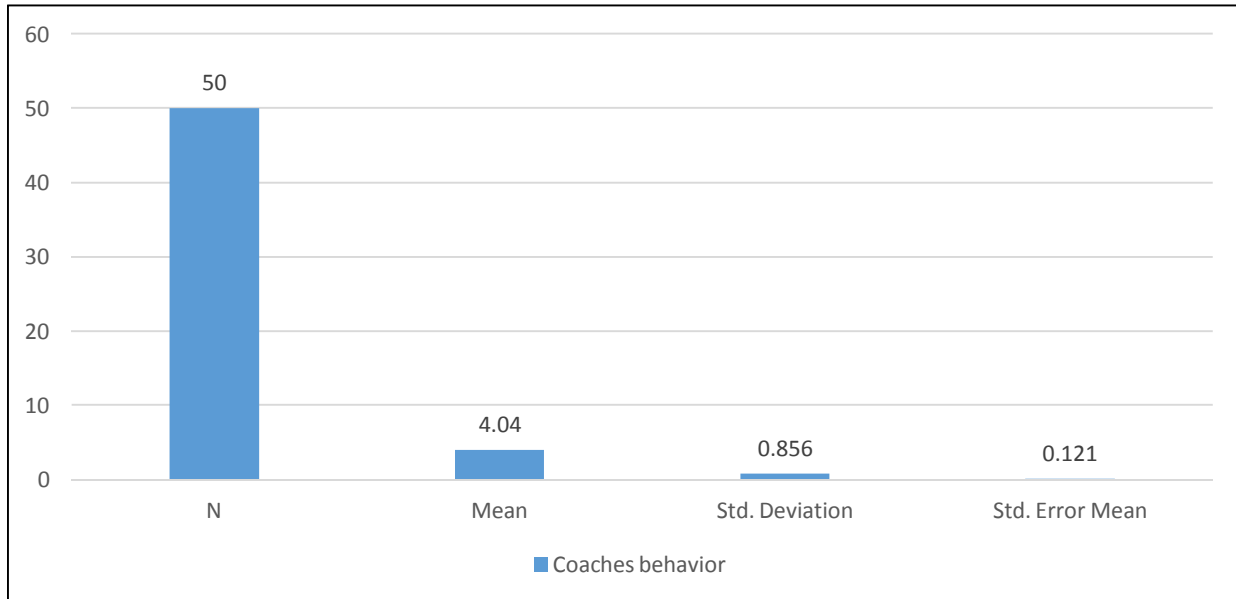


**One Sample t-test**

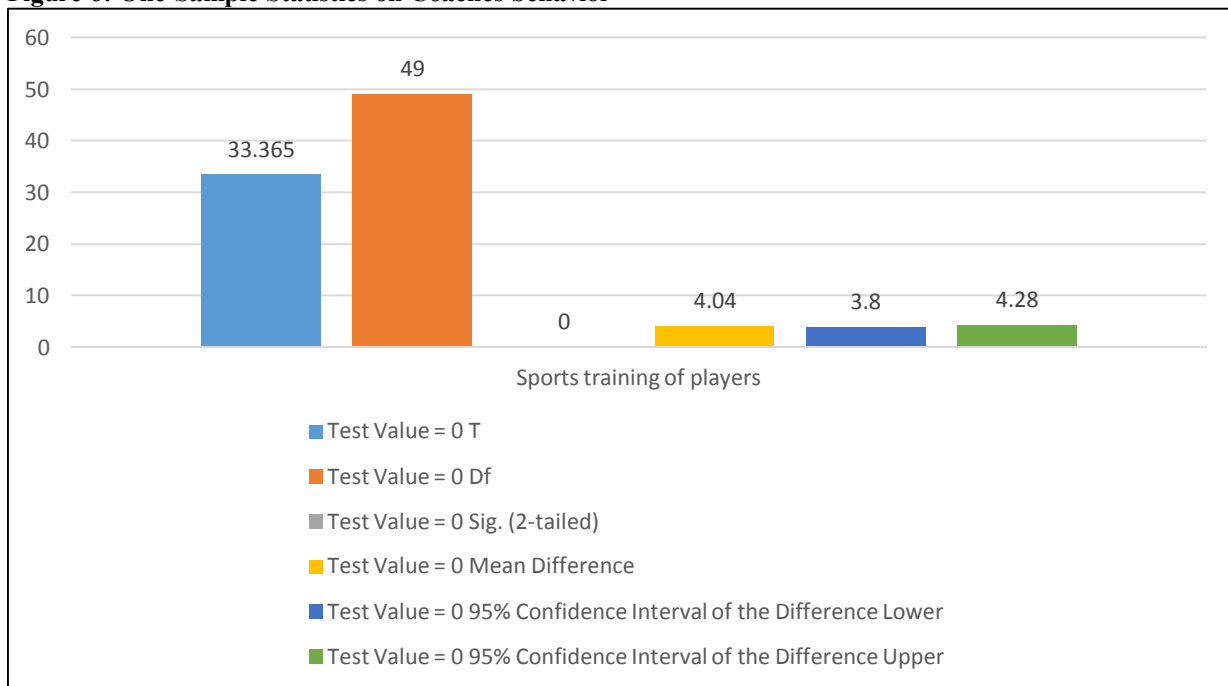
One sample t-test is implemented in this study to estimate that sample in this study represents the normal population. One sample t-test shows the basic of the sports participants in this study. 95 % confidence interval for data evaluation to maintain the t test requirements.

**One Sample Statistics**

The table below highlights the number of respondents, mean value of respondents who participated in the study and standard deviation value, which shows that how much responses of the respondents deviate from the mean.

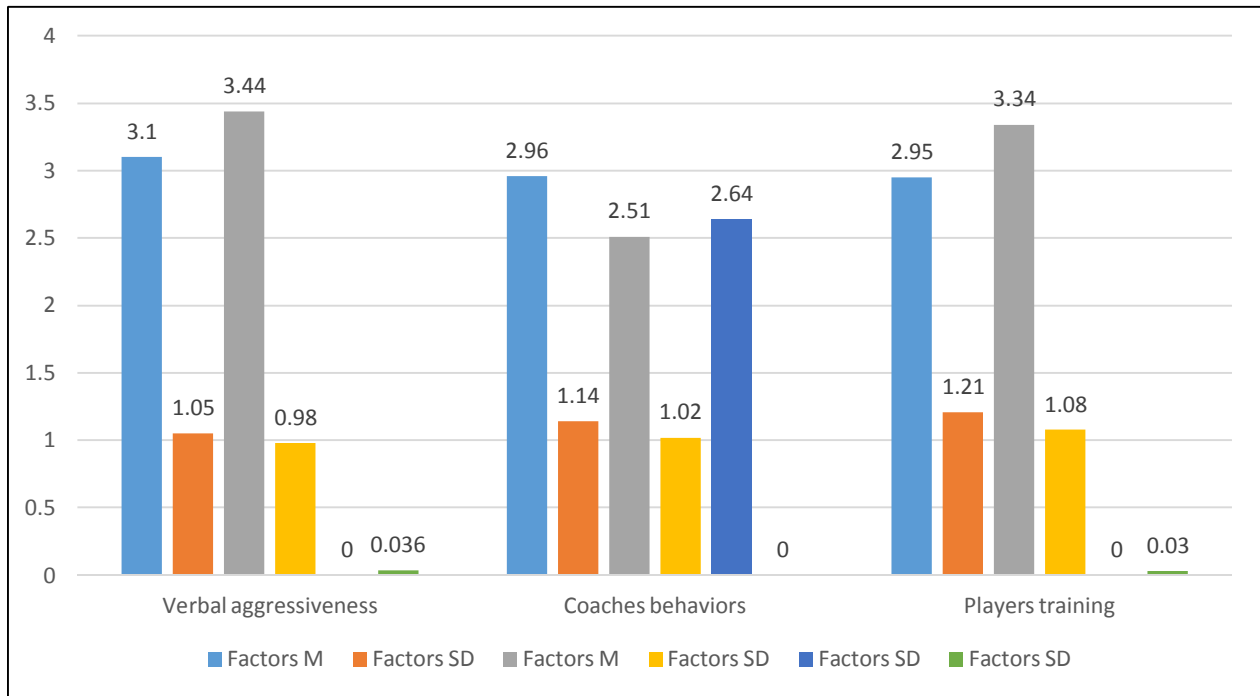


**Figure 6: One-Sample Statistics on Coaches behavior**



**Figure 7: One sample t test**

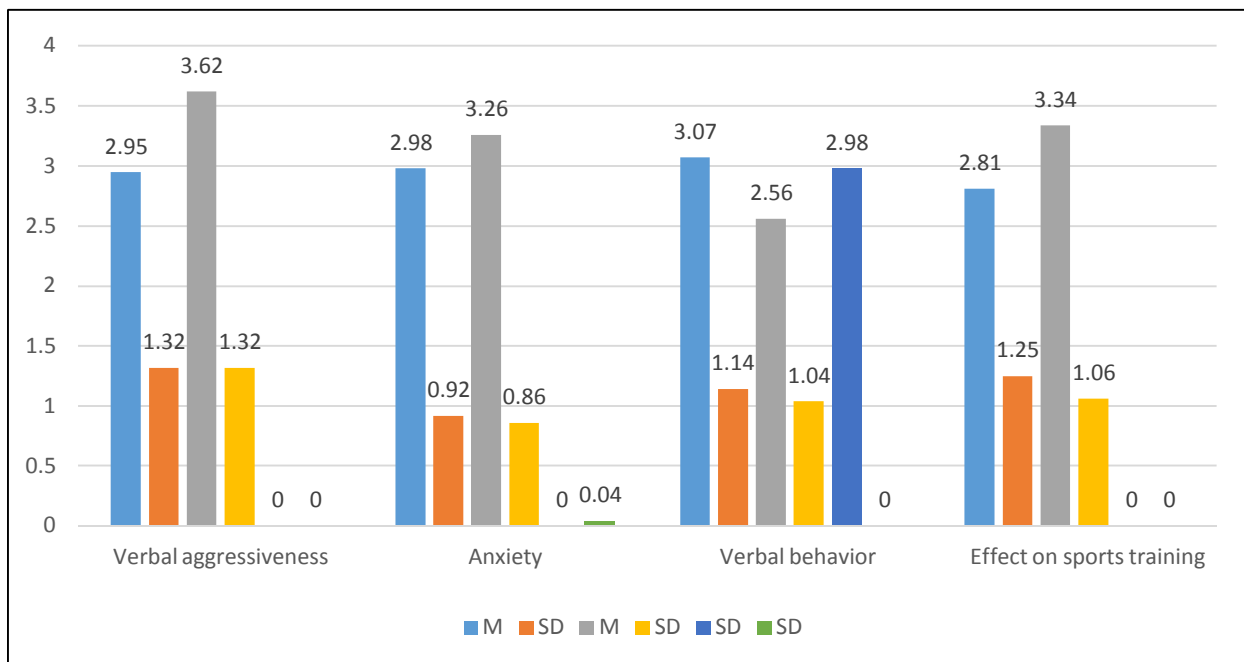
This figure showed the t value and degree of freedom for mean difference. In this table 95% of the confidence interval of the difference for lower and upper level of the coach behavior to find out the proper requirements of the study.



**Figure 8: Descriptive statistics and t-test results according to individual or team sports**

This figure showing the factors of the study verbal aggression and coach’s behavior and players training to find out the mean and standard deviation value of

the individual and team sports for player and coaches effect on training of players.



**Figure 9: Descriptive statistics and t-test results according to contact or non-contact sport**

## Discussion

Overall, the results indicate that several negative psychological effects may result from athletes' experiences of emotional abuse in the coach-athlete relationship. However, no definitive claims may be made about the effects of emotional abuse on athlete training or performance. It is possible that coaches use emotionally abusive practices because of a belief that these behaviors will make athletes more mentally tough, resilient to the pressures of training and competition, and therefore better able to perform. Alternatively, one could argue that optimal performances and long term well-being are more readily achieved when the athlete is well-adjusted, self-reliant, and free from the experiences of emotional abuse. It is suggested that other coaching approaches may achieve similar performance results while fostering overall personal growth (Kidman, 2005). Several researchers have also suggested that techniques that encourage and support the athlete are more appropriate for athlete development (Holt, 2008). Further research of the training and performance effects of emotionally abusive and more holistic coaching approaches is required in order in to support these claims empirically.

Regardless of the potential impact of athlete emotional abuse on training and performance outcomes, in light of the current findings on the perceived negative psychological effects, the ethics of condoning or justifying emotionally abusive coaching practices is questioned, and the need for athlete protection measures in sport is supported. Although this form of coaching may or may not be effective in producing athletic success, along with this coaching approach can come a severe cost to the psychological well-being of the athlete making it an unethical method for coaching athletes. The general child abuse literature indicates that the long-term squealed of emotional abuse are significant and harmful (Miller-Perrin & Perrin, 2007). Athletes in this study also spoke about the lingering psychological consequences of their emotionally abusive experiences in sport. Further research however on the long-term costs of athletes' emotionally abusive experiences in sport is warranted.

## Limitations

The most significant limitation of this study may be the sample selected for participations. Although retired elite athletes and other coaches of sports training of players were selected for a number of reasons already described, less successful athletes, or athletes who dropped out along the way would have provided alternative stories to those who were

able to continue and achieve in their sports. This study is limited by the thoughtful nature of the participant interviews. Without seeming to invalidate the participants' experiences, it is possible that over time, participants' recollections of their experiences in sport may have been skewed in positive or negative directions. Due to the nature of the review and the recruitment strategies employed, participant bias, common with retrospective methods such as interviews, could be a further limitation of this investigation. It is important to acknowledge the possibility that it may be those athletes who are still experiencing the long-term implications of the emotional abuse who were most willing to be interviewed. Conversely, those athletes who may still be experiencing severe implications of emotional abuse may not be willing to talk about their experience and thus may not have volunteered to participate.

## Future Directions/Recommendations

As this study was morally exploratory in nature, for the needs of future research is required regarding the relationship between specific abusive coaching behaviors and identified psychological, training and performance effects. Given the reliance on self-reported retrospective accounts, further examination of the effects of emotional abuse would benefit from prospective research and psychometric assessment. Moreover, it is recommended that greater attention be paid to examining the holistic effects of athletes' experiences of emotional abuses in sport, including the impact of emotional abuse and coaches behaviors on the social, educational, psychological, physical, and spiritual well-being of the athlete (Miller & Kerr, 2002). Coaches' perspectives on this issue are also warranted. Finally, future research on successful high-performance coaches' and athletes' experiences of non-abusive coaching techniques and the effects of such coaching approaches is required.

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