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## The relationship between sports teacher – coach role conflict and self-efficacy with the mediating role of sports goal orientation

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## Zależność pomiędzy konfliktem między rolami nauczyciela wychowania fizycznego i trenera a poczuciem własnej skuteczności z pośredniczącą rolą orientacji na cele sportowe

### Streszczenie

Nauczanie i bycie trenerem to dwie różne role, a przedstawiciele tych dwóch grup zawodowych różnią się zakresem obowiązków. Celem niniejszego badania było zbadanie zależności pomiędzy rolą nauczyciela wychowania fizycznego i trenera a poczuciem własnej skuteczności z pośredniczącą rolą orientacji na cele sportowe. Badanie przeprowadzono za pomocą metody opisowo-korelacyjnej. Adekwatność modelu pomiaru została sprawdzona za pomocą konfirmacyjnej analizy czynnikowej. Dane do badania uzyskano od 36 nauczycieli wychowania fizycznego poproszonych o wypełnienie kwestionariusza. Dane analizowano statystycznymi metodami testu korelacji oraz regresji dwudzielnej przy użyciu oprogramowania SPSS-22 i AMOS. Konflikt między rolami nauczyciela wychowania fizycznego i trenera z pośredniczącą rolą zmiennej orientacji na cele sportowe pokazał jej pozytywny i znaczny wpływ na poczucie własnej skuteczności. Orientacja na cele sportowe ma także pozytywny i bezpośredni wpływ na poczucie własnej skuteczności. Wyniki obecnego badania pozwoliły całościowo spojrzeć na to zjawisko. W związku z tym, nauczyciele wychowania fizycznego, którzy mają rolę pośredniczącą (koncentracja na roli nauczyciela i koncentracja na roli trenera) pokazali wysoki poziom poczucia własnej skuteczności oraz zorientowania na cele sportowe. Wyniki badania dostarczyły cennych informacji dla poprawy jakości uczenia się i nauczania w odniesieniu do trenerów i nauczycieli wychowania fizycznego.

**Słowa kluczowe:** bycie trenerem, konflikt ról, orientacja ego, nauczyciele WF, orientacja na zadanie.

### Abstract

Teaching and coaching are two different occupational roles and the responsibilities of teachers and sports coaches can be distinguished from each other. The aim of this study was to investigate the relationship between the role of teacher-coach in sports and self-efficacy with the mediating role of sports goal orientation. This study used descriptive-correlational research. The appropriateness of the measurement model was tested by confirmatory factor analysis. Research data were obtained from 36 physical education teachers through a questionnaire. For data analysis, statistical methods of correlation test and bivariate regression using SPSS-22 and AMOS software were used. The conflict between the roles of sports teacher-coach with the presence of the mediating variable of sports goal orientation indicated a positive and significant effect on self-efficacy. Sports goal orientation also had a positive and direct effect on self-efficacy. The results of the present study displayed a comprehensive view. Accordingly, physical education teachers who have an intermediate role (teacher-centered and coach-centered) showed high self-efficacy and sports goal-orientation. The findings of this study offered valuable information to improve the quality of learning and teaching for sport coaches and physical education teachers.

**Keywords:** coaching, role conflict, ego orientation, Physical Education teachers, task orientation.

## **Introduction**

Teaching and coaching are two different job roles and the teachers who have coaching duties may work in more stressful school environments than those in other educational settings. However, each job role has its own duties and responsibilities. It is obvious that the responsibilities of physical education teachers and trainers can also be distinguished from each other [23]. Teaching is a highly responsible job and requires effort and commitment. On a typical day, physical education teachers organize many sports classes, perform a variety of activities in the school environment, and attend meetings. In addition, they often conduct extracurricular activities, such as coaching sports clubs in schools. These multifaceted responsibilities often lead to full-time job opportunities [2], [12], [24].

Many Physical Education (PE) teachers have accepted that coaching is an expected job commitment in the form of extracurricular activities. However, coaching is different from many extracurricular activities as it requires many jobs performance and daily planning throughout the year. School sports teams, whose coaches are generally accountable for their performance, are expected to participate in regional sports competitions and advance to state championships. School physical education curriculums include coaching courses that teach students coaching skills. Furthermore, there are centers called extracurricular sports centers where students' sporting talents are identified. A number of interested students are trained in their favorite sports by enrolling in extracurricular sports centers under the supervision of experienced and expert coaches. Accordingly, physical education teachers in schools allow talented students who are at a high level in terms of athletic skills to coach weaker students [23]. However, these different roles and role conflicts may create tension among physical education teachers, who are also coaches. Therefore, the conflict between the role of a teacher and a sports coach can lead to inefficient teaching in PE classes due to mismanagement of valuable resources [7], [13], [22].

Figone (1994) briefly stated that in order to better understand the differences between teacher and coach roles, the origins of these roles should be examined [14]. The history of physical education showed that there are many underlying factors that increase the conflict between the roles of a teacher and a coach in sport. Self-efficacy is one of the factors included in this study because it is generally regarded as a positive and facilitating factor in sport [20], [27]. Self-efficacy has also attracted considerable attention in the education sector and is often associated with teachers and their efforts to become successful in the classroom [6]. The concept of self-efficacy, introduced by Bandura (1978), refers to an individual's assessment of their ability to achieve a certain goal through their actions. People with higher levels of self-efficacy are more likely

to be motivated to do a task, and to put more effort and perseverance into doing it [3], whereas people with low self-efficacy tend to perceive a competitive position more as a threat [40]. As Bandura considers self-efficacy to be an important factor for successful performance [39], he believes that self-efficacy beliefs are based on a person's perception of their individual performance. Thus, in fact it can be said that effective performance requires both having the skills and believing in the ability to perform those skills [25]. Accordingly, our definition of self-efficacy of physical education teachers in this article refers to their capabilities or abilities to achieve the desired results pertaining to student interaction and learning.

In general, the role conflict in physical education teachers is a natural thing, the result of a competitive environment, and occurs when their needs, wants, goals, ideas or values are different [26]. How a person typically evaluates success is called their goal orientation [32]. Sports goal orientation is also one of the most important factors causing the role conflict in physical education teachers. Therefore, the goal-oriented sports styles that teachers choose to implement to teach physical education are influenced by their needs, wants, goals, ideas and attitudes. It is noteworthy that the literature dealing with these goal orientations displays different views, but there is a general consensus among researchers that we can distinguish two goals, namely task orientation and self-control. The first goal, known as task orientation, focuses on how to learn a skill and become a master in that activity, the second goal, called ego orientation, refers to the comparison one makes of one's abilities with others' [29]. Studies have shown that ego-oriented people are more likely to engage in sports activities with motivations such as competing, gaining status, and proving their abilities over others while task-oriented individuals emphasize skills development and skillful performance [8].

Assar (2021) in a study showed that athletes with higher levels of task orientation tend to have a higher level of self-efficacy [1]. Similarly, Sari (2015) found a positive relationship between task orientation and self-efficacy in a study focusing on academic badminton players, and no significant relationship was found between ego orientation and self-efficacy [34].

However, to date, there has been no study that examines the relationship between the conflict among the role of a teacher and that of a coach, self-efficacy and the mediating role of sports goal orientation. The present study focuses on an important area that may lead to the development of self-efficacy and sports orientation among physical education teachers (teacher-centered, coach-centered and intermediate). Therefore, the main purpose of this study was to investigate the relationship between the role of a teacher and a coach in sports and self-efficacy with the mediating role of sports goal orientation.

## **Materials and methods**

This research is regarded as descriptive-correlational research in terms of its applied purpose and method.

### **Participants**

60 male physical education teachers from different schools who were employed in the educational department of Karaj city were used for this study using the convenience sampling method. All the participants who volunteered for the study indicated that they specialized in at least one sport. The mean age of participants was 35.84 years ( $SD = 3.79$ ). After receiving and signing the informed consent form to determine the role of physical education teachers (teacher-centered, coach-centered and intermediate), the subjects were asked to complete a questionnaire that was developed by the researchers and focused on the role of a teacher and a coach in sports. Each participant was informed that the purpose of the study was to discover what their views and beliefs about teaching were like. Then, based on the scores obtained from the results of the teacher-coach role conflict questionnaire, 36 people, divided three groups (teacher-centered = 12 people, coach-centered = 12 people and intermediate = 12 people) were selected as a statistical sample. Then, all three groups were asked to complete the self-efficacy questionnaires on teachers and homework and self-orientation in sports.

### **Measurement tools**

Research data were collected through the questionnaire. The three tools used in this study were the questionnaire of task and ego orientation in sports, the questionnaire of teachers' self-efficacy and the questionnaire of the teacher-coach role conflict. Relevant demographic information was also collected including age, gender, level of education, coaching degree and coaching background. Given that the questionnaire of this research was extracted from the proposed theories, its theoretical framework and analytical model has construct validity. The validity of the research tool was reviewed and confirmed by 11 professors of sports management. Also, Cronbach's alpha coefficient was used to evaluate the internal reliability of the questionnaire questions, which was calculated for the questionnaire of task and ego orientation in sports ( $\alpha = 0.78$ ), the questionnaire of teachers' self-efficacy ( $\alpha = 0.81$ ), and the questionnaire of the teacher-coach role conflict ( $\alpha = 0.84$ ).

### **Task and Ego Orientation in Sports Questionnaire**

The Task and Ego Orientation in Sports Questionnaire (TEOSQ) [38] includes 16 items. The participants are asked to rate their agreement when they feel

most successful in a particular sports discipline in different situations. 8 of which reflect task orientation (for example, "When I learn a new skill with hard work"), while the other eight reflect selfishness (for example, "I feel successful in sports when others cannot do as well as I can"). The items were scored on the five-point Likert scale between strongly disagree (1) and strongly agree (5).

### **Teachers Self-Efficacy Questionnaire**

The teachers' self-efficacy scale [36] was used to measure this concept. This scale has 24 items based on the five-point Likert scale, which varies from very low (1) to very high (5). The sum of the scores of the items indicates the overall self-efficacy score. In addition to the overall score, this scale offers three sub-scores related to the following subscales: 1. Self-efficacy in classroom management (8 items), 2. Efficacy in student engagement (7 items) and 3. Efficacy in instructional strategies (9 items).

### **Teacher-coach role conflict Questionnaire**

To assess this concept, the researcher-made sports teacher-coach conflict role questionnaire was used. This scale has 28 items based on the five-point Likert scale, which varies from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (5). This scale offers three sub-scores related to the subscales: 1. Teacher centered approach (10 items), 2. Intermediate approach (9 items) and 3. Coach-centered approach (9 items).

## **Data Analysis**

Before starting to analyze the data, the quality of the data was examined. To determine the normal distribution, skewness and elongation values were examined. Descriptive statistics (mean, standard deviation, etc.) and inferential statistics (t-test, correlation coefficient test, and bivariate regression analysis) were used for data analysis. The details of the participants were reported in descriptive statistics. The measurement model was tested with the help of the confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) using the structural equation model and the fit of the model was evaluated as appropriate according to the fit statistics. The regression equation was used to test hypotheses. The regression equation is employed to determine the effect of independent variables on the dependent variable. The value of the coefficient of determination expresses how much of the change of the dependent variable is explained by the help of independent variables. Standardized beta coefficients are also effective in determining the relative contribution of each variable to the dependent variable. It is worth mentioning that

all calculations and drawings of graphs and tables were done through SPSS-22 and AMOS software.

## Findings

### Demographic variables

The sample includes 36 male physical education teachers from different schools with an age range between 22 and 57 years ( $SD = 3.79$ ;  $M = 35.84$ ) (Table 1).

Table 1 displays the socio-demographic data of the sample.

**Table 1.** Socio-demographic data of the sample.

		N	%
Gender	Male	36	100
Age	From 22 to 30 years	8	22.22
	From 31 to 39 years	14	38.89
	From 40 to 48 years	10	27.78
	From 49 to 57 years	4	11.11
Educational stage	Primary school	16	44.44
	Middle school	9	25
	High school	11	30.56
Type of school	Public	22	61.11
	Private	14	38.89
Teaching experience	Below 5 years	8	22.22
	6 to 10 years	11	30.56
	11 to 15 years	7	19.44
	16 to 20 years	6	16.67
	Over 21 years	4	11.11

### Analysis of the correlation between the sport teacher-coach role conflict, teachers' self-efficacy and sports goal orientation

The analysis of the variables showed that there is a significant relationship between the sport teacher-coach role conflict, teachers' self-efficacy and sports goal orientation ( $P = 0.000$ ) (see Table 2). The beta coefficient of each independent variable that was higher means that it has a greater relative share in the dependent variable changes. The results of Table 2 show that the sport teacher-coach role conflict has a greater relative share in the dependent variable changes ( $Beta = 0.807$ ,  $p = 0.000$ ).



**Table 2.** Hierarchical regression analysis results

Model Statistics	Sig	t	Beta	Std. Error	B	Model	
R <sup>2</sup> = 0.651; Ad. R2 = 0.650; p = 0.000	0.000	4.500		0.394	1.772	Constant	1
	0.000	26.272	0.807	0.032	0.839	Tcrc (a)	
R <sup>2</sup> = 0.684; Ad. R2 = 0.683; p = 0.000	0.000	4.025		0.312	1.257	Constant	2
	0.000	9.586	0.365	0.040	0.379	Tcrc (a)	
	0.000	14.053	0.573	0.050	0.759	Sgr (b)	
R <sup>2</sup> = 0.730; Ad. R2 = 0.729; p = 0.000	0.000	3.658		0.624	2.282	Constant	3
	0.000	4.356	0.271	0.065	0.282	Tcrc (a)	
	0.000	5.088	0.430	0.112	0.570	Sgr (b)	
	0.000	1.895	0.228	0.009	0.017	Interaction	

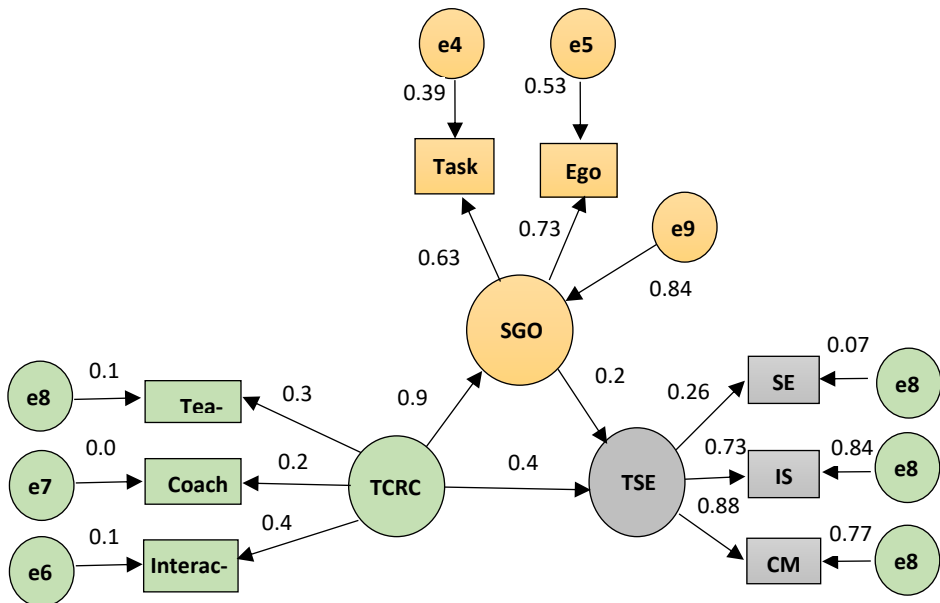
(a) Teacher-coach role conflict

(b) Sports goal orientation

According to the table above, it can be seen that the level of significance of all the independent variables is less than 0.05 ( $p=0.000$ ,  $p<0.05$ ). Thus, they enter the regression model. Therefore, the null hypothesis is rejected and it can be said with 95% confidence that the fitted model is a suitable model and the regression relationship is linear.

### Modeling structural equations using AMOS graphics

The following model tests the structural validity of the independent variables of the conflict between the role of a teacher and a sports coach and sports goal orientation with the dependent variable of teachers' self-efficacy and the goodness of fit test. The model combines the goodness of fit test of the proposed theoretical structure with the observed data and the structural validity of the measurement device in question. All adaptive indicators of the model also show values higher than 0.90, which means the ability of the model to distance itself from an independence model and to approach a saturated model based on the criteria defined for them. Since the criteria of TLI = 0.911, AGFI = 0.904 and IFI = 0.915 are close to one, it indicates a high fit of the model and the criterion of RMSEA = 0.078, which is less than 0.08, which means a good fit. Figure 1 displays Amos algorithm results.



Key: SGO: Sports goal orientation, TCRC: Teacher-coach role conflict, TSE: Teachers’ self-efficacy, SE: Student Engagement, IS: Instructional Strategies, CM: Classroom Management

Figure 1. Amos Algorithm Results

Table 3 displays the results obtained from the output of Amos software.

Table 3. Results obtained from the output of Amos software

CMIN/DF	TLI	NFI	IFI	RMSEA	AGFI	Chi-square	P	DF
4.123	0.911	0.906	0.915	0.078	0.904	101.788	0.000	17

## Discussion

The aim of this study was to investigate the relationship between the role of a sports teacher and a coach and self-efficacy with the mediating role of sports goal orientation. The findings showed that there is a positive and significant relationship between the components of the conflict between the role of sports teacher and a coach and self-efficacy with the mediating role of sports goal orientation. Self-efficacy is an important factor in the constructive system of human competence by which human cognitive, social, emotional and behavioral skills are effectively organized to achieve various goals [25]. Researchers have used complex data analysis methods and diverse populations in the educational environment to expand the body of knowledge about the teacher self-efficacy variable. In various studies, they have examined the positive relationships be-

tween teachers' self-efficacy and job satisfaction [37], goal orientation [5], [30], understanding of teaching methods [35], teachers' collective effectiveness [4], [41], school characteristics [19], students [18], and also the negative relationship between teacher self-efficacy and burnout [28].

Goostree (2021), in a study entitled "Comparative Analysis of Self-Efficacy among Different Groups of Teachers in Northern Middle Tennessee," concluded that no significant difference in overall self-efficacy was observed between different groups of teachers [17]. Due to the sports teacher and a coach role conflict, each teacher according to the environmental conditions and educational level, the type or types of methods and techniques that they think have the most impact on students, selects them, and employs in teaching and class management [15]. The role of physical education teachers in applying methods and techniques of teaching and training of motor and sports skills makes the goals of education in general and the goals of physical education in particular to be achieved more easily and effectively in a shorter period of time [31]. In addition to the specialized knowledge of physical education teachers, having additional information and knowledge, in particular, in some sciences, such as sports psychology, sports physiology, sports biomechanics, motor development, motor learning, and even sociology, is a valuable tool and an advantage for both teachers and coaches. The factors such as space, time, activities, educational materials, social communication [23], social origin, culture, gender, type and style of sports [11], and student behavior are related to the wide range of activities undertaken by the teacher in the physical education area [23]. Accordingly, Cynarski (2020) in a research entitled "Sensei (in martial arts = teacher) or Coach? His group relations in the context of tradition" pointed out that in martial arts, regardless of cultural and social differences, a sensei must also be a coach in order to have a relatively large educational impact on his players or students. Therefore, in the case of combat sports that have entered the path of competitive sports, the stark contrast between the roles of a coach and a sensei fades. This applies, for example, to the sports of jujutsu and karate (in different forms and organizations), as well as to the sports of wushu, judo and taekwondo, that is, the coach here is both a coach and a teacher. But in traditional sports such as various forms of folk wrestling and martial arts in the traditional understanding that makes them parts of the national cultural heritage of different countries and nations, teaching them requires knowledge of the entire cultural systems from which they originated. For this reason, a martial arts teacher should have a much broader competency than a coach specializing in sports teaching and training methods. This requires awareness of the moral code, school tradition, and the tutor - guide role of the person acting as sensei. Generally, the difference between the role of a sports coach/teacher and the role of a master in a martial art is culturally determined. A master should be a teacher and a coach.

This is due to the influence of the hierarchical culture and warrior ethics preserved in martial arts [10]. In another study, Cynarski et al. (2018) investigated the perception of success among people who practice martial arts and combat sports. The purpose of this research was to explain the "perception of success" in adult age groups in combat sports (contact and non-contact) among participants from the United States of America, the Czech Republic, and Poland. The noteworthy point of this study is its multidimensionality (culture, type of combat sports in terms of martial art or fighting style, goal and understanding of success). The research findings showed that there is a weak relationship between the perception of success and the type of fighting style of combat sports, and there is also a moderate relationship between the perception of success and social origin. Furthermore, a weak relationship was observed between perceived success, gender, and representativeness of the American or European cultural sphere. Undoubtedly, this issue requires more and wider research in educational environments, different types of martial arts, combat sports and related styles [11]. What is more, in another study by Cynarski et al. (2018) entitled "Young people practicing martial arts and their perception of success", the main goal of the research was to describe the perception of success in the age groups of 15 to 17 years, where 11.11% of girls and 88.89% of boys were involved in martial arts training. The participants (63 people) consisted of young people practicing martial arts from Poland and the United States. The research findings showed 1) a weak relationship between the perception of success and the type of fighting style cultivated, 2) a moderate relationship between the American participants versus the Polish participants, and the perception of success, and 3) a weak relationship between gender and perceived success in martial arts and combat sports. In the conclusion of this study, it is stated that the form or style of a cultivated martial art or combat sport that is performed does not have a significant impact on the perception of success expressed by children and teenagers involved in it [9].

Nonetheless, a physical education teacher in a sports class should be fully aware of all management and teaching methods and how to use each method in different educational courses (elementary, middle and high school) when using the teacher-centered or coach-centered role. In that way they can create individual and group learning opportunities as well as they can motivate students to participate actively in the exercises.

In a study, Assar (2021) investigated the mediating role of self-compassion in the relationship between goal orientation and self-efficacy in sports. The findings showed that there is a positive but weak relationship between task orientation and self-efficacy but there is no significant relationship between ego orientation and self-efficacy. The results showed that athletes with higher levels of task orientation also tended to have higher levels of self-efficacy [1]. In another

study, Ruzhikova et al. (2020) investigated “Changes in perceptions of value orientation in university students after a winter expedition: A report on experiential education from the Czech Republic”. The most important finding of their research was the increasing importance of the value of the “peaceful world”. Unfortunately, this finding cannot be compared with our research results, as our research studies usually lack this value. However, within the framework of the main research question and the purpose of the current research, this is convincing evidence that the perception of value orientation in physical education teachers can be influenced by other methods than sports goal orientation, such as philosophy training or ethics [33]. In another study, Kenioua (2017) examined the relationship between self-efficacy and goal orientation of football players in different positions in the game. The results of his findings showed that there is a positive and significant correlation between self-efficacy and task orientation and between self-efficacy and self-confidence of football players [21]. Gersh-goren et al. (2011) also studied the effect of goal orientation on sporting success. The results showed that the emphasis on both skill and competitive goals provides more success and progress for the athlete than focusing on one goal [16]. Therefore, in line with the results of the research [1], [16], [21], it can be stated that if physical education teachers are looking for short-term and immediate changes in creating ego orientation and establishing championship motivation for students, they should play a coach-centered role in the sports class. On the other hand, if long-term and lasting changes are to be considered, they must play an intermediate role (teacher-centered and coach-centered) in teaching students’ sports skills.

Overall, the results of this section of the research findings indicate that the goal of sports orientation is strongly influenced by the roles of physical education teachers, which are mainly manifested in coach-centered and intermediate teachers roles. Generally, the best role of physical education teachers to achieve the goal of students’ sports orientation is the intermediate style.

## Conclusion

The results of the present study provide a comprehensive view by examining the relationship between the role of a teacher and a coach in sport and self-efficacy with the mediating role of sports goal orientation. The findings of the present study show that the conflict between the roles of sports teacher and a coach has a positive and significant relationship with self-efficacy and sports goal orientation. Accordingly, physical education teachers who exercise the intermediate role (teacher-centered and coach-centered) have high self-efficacy and sports goal-orientation. It is important that the application of each teaching

method and the combination of these methods depend on the situation and purpose of education in schools. The factors influencing the role of physical education teachers in teaching motor and sports skills in sports classes depend on factors such as age, level of student experience, learning stage, teaching content, educational objectives and tools and facilities available in schools, activity level, available resources, number of students, available time, characteristics and attitudes of teachers.

The findings of this study provide valuable information to improve the quality of learning and education for sports coaches, physical education teachers and sports psychologists. Considering the fact that there are different courses (primary, middle and lower secondary). The purposes of teaching motor and sports skills are different from each other. Therefore, physical education teachers (teacher-centered and coach-centered) should make sure that each student has an opportunity to actively participate in sports activities and programs. Practical participation of students in sports activities or any other sport constitutes the basis of their learning. This means that students will not learn anything until they are educated and do something practically. Since students are not at the same level in terms of performing sports skills, intense competition between students reduces the enjoyment of training. Therefore, it is better to perform exercises and fitness exercises in groups and in the form of games. Accordingly, it can be noted that physical education teachers should know that each student could act to the best of their ability; and the important thing is that students realize that success can only be achieved through diligence and effort.

In conclusion, we have three different suggestions for the future research studies:

1. The present study could be conducted on female physical education teachers and the results of the two studies could be compared.
2. The conflict between the role of the sports teacher and a trainer and other psychological variables such as personality traits should be also investigated.
3. Considering the fact that the present study was conducted on secondary physical education teachers, it is suggested that further research should be conducted on physical education teachers at elementary and high school levels.

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#### **DECLARATION OF CONFLICTING INTERESTS**

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