

NATIONAL SPORTS ACADEMY

“VASSIL LEVSKI”

Faculty: “Psychology, pedagogy and sociology”



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**THE PERSONALITY OF THE TRAINER AS A FACTOR FOR
SUCCESS IN SPORT**

ABSTRACT

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ABSTRACT

of a dissertation for the award of the educational and scientific degree
"Doctor" in the professional field 7.6. "Sports",
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Academic supervisor:

Prof. Tatiana Iancheva, Ph.D

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The dissertation was discussed and proposed for official defense by the extended scientific collegium of the “Psychology, pedagogy and sociology” Faculty at the National Sports Academy “Vassil Levski” on 28.09.2022.

The dissertation is 196 pages in length, illustrated with 33 tables and 44 figures. The bibliography includes 226 literary and documentary sources (of which 60 in Cyrillic and 166 in Latin).

The public defense of the dissertation will take place on 18.01.2023 at 14:00h in Hall A-3 of the National Sports Academy “Vassil Levski”

The materials for the defense of the dissertation are published on the website of the National Sports Academy “Vassil Levski” at the following web address www.nsa.bg and are available in the library of the NSA.

Introduction

The spectacle of modern-day sports puts competitors and their achievements in the spotlight, leaving those who “run the show” and are, therefore, “to blame” for the successes of said competitors in the shadows.

Extremely high demands are made of athletes in every single aspect of their athletic and competitive realisation. The demands for flawlessness and perfection placed on them are often at the limit of human capabilities.

However, what should a coach be like and what requirements should such a person meet? This problem is studied significantly less in sports literature.

In sports psychology, knowledge about athletes predominates, but when it comes to coaches, theoretical and empirical research is episodic. Psychological knowledge is no less important for the coach than for the athlete. The psychology of the coach and the athlete are not only interconnected, but also dependent on each other, as the personality of the coach is embedded in every result achieved in sport.

Coaching is among the professions with the highest complexity and accountability. Every coach significantly influences the formation of the personality of the athletes he works with and, accordingly, their outcomes in sports. The degree of personal development of the coach has an impact on the athletes’ journeys in sports.

The environment of modern sports is becoming ever more complicated with regard to reaching considerable achievements by way of the qualities, abilities and characteristics requisite of the elite coach.

It is our belief that success is to be pursued through imparting the coach’s entire reserves in terms of personality, intellect and psyche that he or she is in possession of.

This dissertation aims to reveal the prerequisites for a coach’s effective realisation through investigating certain personal characteristics of coaches and their influence on outcomes in sports.

CHAPTER ONE

THESIS STATEMENT

The thesis statement of this research is presented in the following several paragraphs, which examine the main aspects of the issues examined.

In the first paragraph – **I.1. Specificity of coaching** – the characteristics of coaching and the various concepts about it, the functions, qualities and skills of the coach, as well as coaching philosophy, are examined. Attention is paid to pedagogical communication and athlete-coach interaction.

Special emphasis is placed on coaching education – **I.1.2. Coaching education**. Illusions and problems in coaches' education are presented. Results of scientific research are indicated in relation to coaches' knowledge of the mental skills needed in coaching.

In paragraph **I.1.3. Difficulties in coaching**, crises and social problems of coaching as a profession are presented.

The next paragraph – **I.1.4. Successful Coaches** – examines the personalities, practices and development profiles of consistently winning coaches. Within this paragraph, descriptions can be found of what they are like as individuals, how they operate, and how they have developed into the coaches they are.

In the second part of the first chapter – **I.2. Personality, environment, behavior in sports** – theories about personality, the specifics of the competitive sports activity and what role personality plays in it are presented.

In the next paragraph – **I.3. Personal prerequisites for effectively realised coaching** – the most important personal prerequisites are outlined, those forming the basis, in the opinion of these researchers, of successful results in sports and coaching done effectively:

I.3.1. Coaching as a profession and the psychological capital of personality.

Psychological capital is viewed within positive psychology as a perspective that goes beyond that of human capital and places emphasis on improving work performance only by way of ensuring the strengths, capacities and potential of professionals are developed and effectively managed (Luthans, Youssef, Avolio, 2007).

I.3.2. Self-efficacy and coaching efficacy.

Self-efficacy affects every area of human activity, determining beliefs about one's abilities to influence situations and the choices one makes. Performance expectations are crucial to achieving success.

On the flip side of personal efficacy is self-sabotage. Self-sabotage manifests in personality through actions that create stumbling blocks and obstacles placing one at a disadvantage in an anticipated situation (Arkin & Shepperd, 1989, 1990).

The concept of self-efficacy is one of the most influential in modern psychology. It is believed to influence the pursuit of achievement in sport (Feltz, 1988). "Self-efficacy holds great explanatory and prognostic possibilities in sports" (Iancheva, 2004 p. 107).

Some coaches succeed in improving the performance of their trainees by pursuing high goals themselves, while others fail to meet the expectations imposed on them. One of the reasons for this is the coach's perception of his or her own efficacy. Coach engagement is positively related to personal coping resources (Brief & Weiss, 2002).

I.3.3. Locus of control.

Locus of control is a personality trait which reflects the interpretation of the connection between a person's behavior and the way outcomes achieved are perceived. (Rotter, 1966).

According to researchers in this field, people can be divided into two types – those with an **external** and those with an **internal** locus of control.

People with an **internal** locus of control believe that they are in control of the events in their lives and that the rewards and punishments they receive are the result of their own work. They make more attempts to manage their lives independently.

People with an **external** locus of control believe that chance, luck, or other people determine their fate. In most cases, they are willing to leave things to "fate". It has been established that these individuals are more susceptible to social pressure and are influenced to a greater extent by the opinion of the majority, seeking approval and social support from without (Iancheva, 2004).

It has been found that people with an **internal** locus of control usually have higher self-esteem, more social skills, are more confident, achieve more success, and show greater resilience in stressful situations (Rotter, 1975; Shultz, D. & Shultz, S., 2006).

The further one's locus of control increases towards the external, the lower the expectations for one's own efficacy become (Iancheva, Dimitrova, 2001).

I.3.4. Emotional intelligence.

Emotions have significant cognitive implications for athletic performance. There are times when the emotional state supports athletic performance, while at other times it impairs performance (Huber, 2013).

Emotions have a significant impact on the pursuit of excellence. To make the training and competitive process more effective, coaches are required not only to understand and manage their emotions, but also to impart this knowledge and skills to their athletes in order for the latter to use them effectively to their advantage (Chelladurai, 2007). An important prerequisite for success is the coach's correct understanding of the athletes and his or her ability to explain the reasons for their behaviour (Beswick, 2001).

"In the field of sports, emotional intelligence is studied not only independently, but also as a variable that influences and can predict other variable personality characteristics that have an effect on athletic performance" (Prodanov, 2020).

* * *

In conclusion, based on the literature reviewed and the observations of these researchers in practice, it was found that the personality of the coach in general is a problem that is poorly studied. There is but episodic data to be found within the literature from studies on the influence of what have been identified as significant personal characteristics of the coach on achievements in sports.

Sports outcomes are to some extent a subjective reflection of the achievement in sports, since the criteria for measurability in individual sports and disciplines are different. In competitive sports, the ranking, as a result registered during the respective sports competition, is taken to be the most relatively objective indicator.

The analysis of the literary sources on the topic of the dissertation's thesis in addition to the long-term observations in practice of these researchers provided the foundation to consider certain personal characteristics as significant for the realization of the coach and the results achieved in sports, namely – self-efficacy, locus of control, expectations of coaching efficacy, emotional intelligence and psychological capital. These researchers assume that the aforementioned results, in turn, depend on the education, qualification, age, experience, type of sport and club of a coach.

CHAPTER TWO

METHODOLOGY OF THE STUDY

II.1. Hypotheses of the study

Based on the literature reviewed and the observations of these researchers from the practice of competitive sports, the following main **working hypothesis** was reached:

The hypothesis that the coach's personality in general, self-efficacy, expectations of coaching efficacy, psychological capital, locus of control and emotional intelligence in particular significantly influence performance in sports is presented.

The hypotheses of these researchers are partially related to the following deductions:

The deduction that age, coaching experience, level of education, type of sport, belonging to a particular sports club and the qualifications of coaches influence the personal characteristics studied is made by these researchers.

These researchers hypothesize that interrelationships exist among self-efficacy, locus of control, coaching efficacy expectations, psychological capital, and emotional intelligence.

These researchers hypothesize that emotional intelligence influences coaching efficacy and psychological capital, which in turn influence coaches' results in sports.

These researchers hypothesize that coaches' education influences outcomes in sports.

II.2. Purpose and tasks of the study

The purpose of this study is to investigate the personal characteristics deduced on the basis of the theoretical analysis – self-efficacy, coaching efficacy, locus of control, emotional intelligence and psychological capital in coaches of different types of sports in Bulgaria and their influence on the outcomes in sports.

Achieving the purpose thus set implies solving the following tasks:

1. To examine the particularities of the deduced personality characteristics on the basis of the theoretical analysis.
2. To establish possible differences, depending on the age, gender, experience, type of sport, club, level of education and qualification of the coaches studied.
3. To establish the interrelationships between the indicators studied.
4. To reveal the influence of the characteristics studied on outcomes in sports.

II.3. Research object

The object of the present study is a selection of 157 Bulgarian coaches from various sports – rhythmic gymnastics, athletics, rowing, wrestling, and basketball. The coaches studied are aged from 18 to 70 years old and differ in gender, coaching experience, type of sport, club, degree of education, qualification and respective sports outcomes achieved in coaching.

Table 1. Research subjects by indicator

Indicator		N	Indicator		N
Age	18-24 years	18	Level of Education	High school	29
	25-34 years	59		Bachelor's degree	60
	35-44 years	35		Master's degree	63
	45-54 years	20		PhD	5
	over 55 years	25	Type of sport	Rhythmic gymnastics	40
Sex	men	79		Running	16
	women	78		Rowing	33
Years coaching experience	0-2 years	20		Wrestling	16
	3-6 years	38		Basketball	52
	7-10 years	23	Qualifications	Club team coach	128
	11-15 years	27		National team coach	29
	over 15 years	49	Results reached as a coach	State championships	80
Sports club	Different cities across the country	47		International competitions	29
				European and world championships; Olympic games	48

II.4. Subject of the study

The subject of the present study is a selection of psychological characteristics affecting the efficacy of coaching and success in sports:

- Self-efficacy
- Coaching efficacy
- Locus of control
- Emotional intelligence
- Psychological capital.

II.5. Methodology of the study

To realize the purpose and tasks of the present study, the following methods were used:

1. Theoretical – logical analysis of literary sources.

2. A psychological-diagnostic experiment that includes:

- **Methodology for the study of self-efficacy in sports** (T. Iancheva, Tsv. Misheva-Aleksova, 2006). The methodology includes 21 statements. A 5-point Likert scale is used for evaluation - from 1 - "Not at all true" to 5 - "Always true". The methodology includes 2 subscales:
 - *Self-efficacy* – relates to a person's confidence in his or her own ability to act so that his or her actions lead to the desired result.
 - *Self-sabotage* – is related to a person's actions that construct stumbling blocks and obstacles that put him or her at a disadvantage in an expected situation.
- **Coaching Efficacy Expectations Research Questionnaire.** Coaching efficacy scale (CES), developed by Feltz and colleagues (1999), adapted for Bulgarian conditions by Iancheva (2012). The questionnaire contains 24 statements. A 9-point Likert scale is used for assessment - from 1 - "I am not confident at all" to 9 - "I am completely confident". The questionnaire contains 4 subscales:
 - *Game strategy* – reflects coaches' confidence in their own abilities to lead their team or athlete to a successful performance in competition.
 - *Motivation* – reflects coaches' confidence in their own abilities to influence the psychological processes and states of their athletes.
 - *Technique* – reflects coaches' confidence in their own abilities to build technical skills and habits in their athletes.
 - *Character building* – reflects the coaches' confidence in their own abilities to influence positive attitude of their athletes towards competitive sports activity.
- **Questionnaire to measure the locus of control**, developed by A. Velichkov and colleagues (1986). The questionnaire contains 20 pairs of statements. The total score is obtained as the sum of each corresponding answer, which carries 1 point. The maximum score is 15. The higher the score, the more external the locus of control is. Thus, the research objects are divided into two types - with a predominantly external or with a predominantly internal locus of control.

- **Questionnaire for measuring emotional intelligence** – The Schutte Self Report Emotional Intelligence Test (SSEIT) – developed by Nicola Schutte and colleagues (1998), adapted for use in the context of Bulgarian culture by Iancheva and Prodanov (2022). The questionnaire contains 33 items. The evaluation uses a 5-point Likert-type scale - from 1 - "Strongly against" to 5 - "I completely agree". The result of the components of emotional intelligence as a result is interpreted in 6 subscales:
 - *Assessing the emotions of others* – reflects the ability to understand and assess the emotional states and experiences of others.
 - *Assessing one's own emotions* – reveals the ability to recognize one's own emotional states.
 - *Regulation of emotions* – denotes the ability to use strategies to change one's emotional state: perceptions of emotional stability and reappraisal of emotions in key situations and use of regulation and self-regulation strategies.
 - *Social skills* – assesses the ability to change other people's emotions through general strategies, such as empathy, helping, etc.
 - *Using emotions* – characterizes the awareness of how emotions can influence performance and its outcome.
 - *Optimism* – reflects positive beliefs about future outcomes.
- **Questionnaire to measure psychological capital**, developed by Luthans, Youssef, Avolio (2007). A modified version was used – Snezhana Ilieva (2019). The questionnaire shows very good psychometric properties in athletic environments. It contains 24 statements, and a 5-point Likert-type scale is used for evaluation - from 1 - "Completely disagree" to 5 - "Completely agree". The components of psychological capital are divided into 4 subscales:
 - *Self-efficacy* – characterized by having the confidence to take the actions necessary to succeed in challenging tasks and situations.
 - *Hope* – reflects persistence in achieving goals and/or possibly redirecting the ways and means of achieving success.
 - *Resilience* – ability to show flexibility and stand up for positions, despite problems and adversity.
 - *Optimism* – having a positive attribution about success now and in the future.

3. Mathematical and statistical methods.

The SPSS software package was used for statistical processing of the experimental results. The following statistical methods were used:

- Variational analysis
- Comparative analysis
- Correlational analysis
- Regression analysis

II.5. Organisation of the study

There were three main stages to conducting the experimental research, writing the scientific work, and implementing the relevant activities, as follows:

1. Preliminary stage (September 2019 г. – September 2020 г.):

- Determining the nature and scope of the topic of the dissertation thesis.
- Researching literary sources on the problem.
- Derivation of a preliminary working hypothesis, based on the literary sources studied.
- Creating an action plan and determining the purpose, tasks, and stages of the research and dissertation thesis.

2. Main phase (September 2020 – September 2021):

- Selecting the necessary methods for carrying out the research.
- Organising the experiment.
- Conducting the research.
- Writing the first and second chapter of the dissertation paper.

3. Final phase (September 2021 – September 2022):

- Primary processing of survey results.
- Statistical data processing and interpretation of the results obtained.
- Creation of tables and figures for visualisation of the results.
- Writing the third chapter of the dissertation paper.

CHAPTER THREE

ANALYSIS OF THE RESULTS

III.1. Analysis of the results of the self-efficacy study

Table 2 presents the results of the variance analysis of data obtained about all 157 coaches in Bulgaria who were objects of this research. The results show that the mean value of self-efficacy is ($M=46.31$). These values are higher than the results reported in the literature (Iancheva, 2004; Kancheva, 2011; Domuschieva-Rogleva et al. 2013). It can be assumed that the coaches studied are more active because they are confident that they have the necessary abilities to act successfully and achieve the expected result. It is assumed that high expectations of personal efficacy increase their motivation and they would successfully cope with the challenges and difficulties of competitive sports by setting high goals and putting in the efforts necessary for achieving them.

Table 2. Results of the variance analysis of the self-efficacy of the coaches studied.

	N	X min	X max	M	M oth	SD	V%
Self-efficacy	157	2,80	5,50	46,31	4,18	0,50	12,00
Self-sabotage	157	1,00	4,00	20,00	2,00	0,58	29,00

In the case of self-sabotage (Table 2), the average values ($M=20.00$) are lower compared to those reported in the literature (Iancheva, 2004; Kancheva, 2011; Domuschieva-Rogleva et al. 2013). The coaches studied were not inclined to sabotage themselves and put themselves in unfavorable situations to justify possible failure. On the contrary, they are confident in their own efficacy. According to both indicators, the sample is relatively homogeneous ($V_{Az-ef.}=12\%$ $V_{seb.}=29\%$).

Table 3 presents the results of the comparative analysis of the studied characteristics depending on the coach's club. Statistically significant differences were found between coaches' club affiliation in terms of self-efficacy ($p=0.003$) and self-obstruction ($p=0.004$). It can be assumed that the specificity of the environment in individual types of sports, the psychological climate, the style of work and the management approach in different sports

clubs influence the formation of different expectations for personal efficacy among the coaches studied. No data on this indicator was to be found in the literature studied.

Table 3. Results of the comparative analysis depending on the coach's club

	Self-efficacy	Self-sabotage
Chi-Square	76,471	75,574
Df	46	46
Asymp. Sig	0,003	0,004

III.2. Analysis of the locus of control study results

The data revealed that 29% of the coaches had an external locus of control, and 71% of all surveyed had a predominant internal locus of control. The majority of the surveyed coaches possess a strong sense of personal control over their situations and their lives in general. These coaches are presumed to be characterized by higher self-esteem, more social skills, and greater confidence. They put more effort into their work and are more resilient in stressful situations, which makes them more adaptable to the specific conditions of the sports environment (Joe, 1971; Rotter, 1975; Phares, 1976; Lazarus, 1994; Cooper, 1998 ; Munton et al., 1999; Iancheva, 2004; Shultz, D. & Shultz, S., 2006;), compared to coaches with an external locus of control.

III. 3. Analysis of the Coaching Efficacy Expectations Survey results

The results of these researchers show that the youngest coaches - from 18 to 24 years old (M=7.49) have the lowest values of expectations for coaching efficacy (Fig. 1). Such results were also established by Prodanov (2020). In the next age group (24-34 years old), the values increase, with the 35-44 years old coaches having the highest values (M=7.98). This is followed by a relative decline (45-54) and a subsequent increase in the values for the oldest coaches - over 55 years of age (M=7.83).

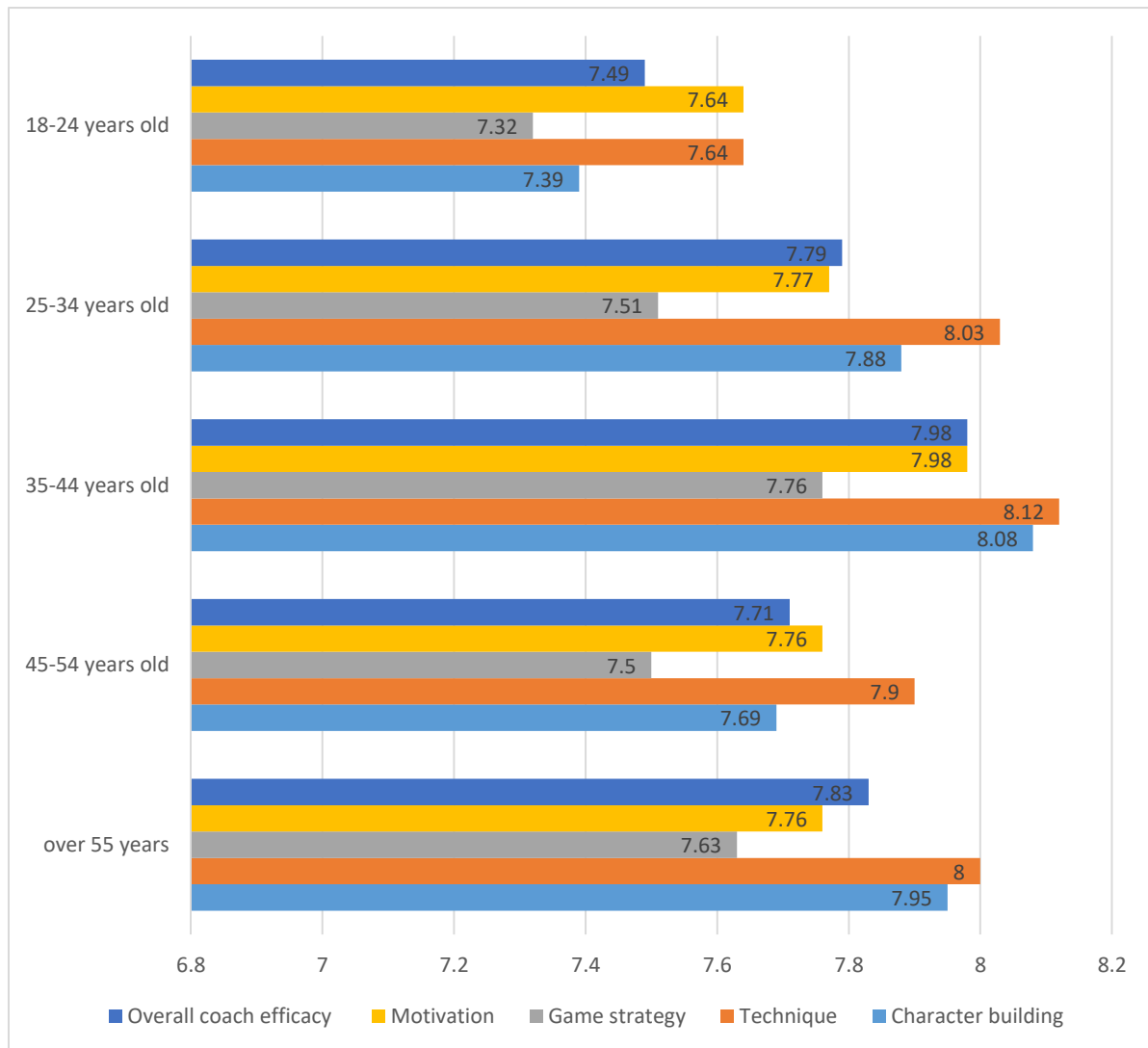


Fig. 1. Average values of expectations for coaching efficacy by age

It stands to reason that younger coaches feel less confident compared to their older colleagues. This lower level of confidence can be assumed to result from several factors, mainly that as life and coaching experience increases, so does the confidence of coaches in their own abilities to influence their athletes in the best possible way. The increase in the values of the oldest coaches is likely due to the fact that the active coaches of this age have considerable experience and achievements in coaching, have withstood all the tests of time, have accumulated considerable knowledge in sports and coaching, which gives them the necessary confidence to know what they are doing and how to do it in the most efficient way possible.

Table 4 presents the data from the comparative analysis regarding coaching qualifications. The results obtained by these researchers reveal statistically significant

differences in three of the components of coaching efficacy – game strategy ($p=0.020$), technique ($p=0.011$) and character building ($p=0.048$).

Table 4. Results of the comparative analysis depending on qualification

	Motivation	Game strategy	Technique	Character building
Chi-Square	2,175	5,386	6,546	3,919
df	1	1	1	1
Asymp. Sig	0,140	0,020	0,011	0,048

More elite coaches are more confident in their ability to demonstrate and train their athletes technically, to positively influence their attitude towards sports-competitive activity by training them not only in technical skills but also in psychological skills, thereby influencing on the motivational states of their athletes. Highly skilled coaches are more confident in their ability to lead their team to a successful performance than lower-skilled coaches. Apparently, the qualifications of the coaches studied have an impact on their perceptions and expectations of how capable they are of influencing the performance of their athletes. The results obtained by these researchers confirm the data presented in the literature (Malte & Feltz, 2000; Prodanov, 2020; Lee et al., 2002).

Figure 2 presents the values of the individual components of coaching efficacy expectations. On the four subscales, the highest scores belong to the coaches who achieved the best results at the highest level, followed by the coaches who achieved their best results at the middle level, and the lowest scores on all four subscales belong to the coaches who achieved the lowest good results at the lowest club level.

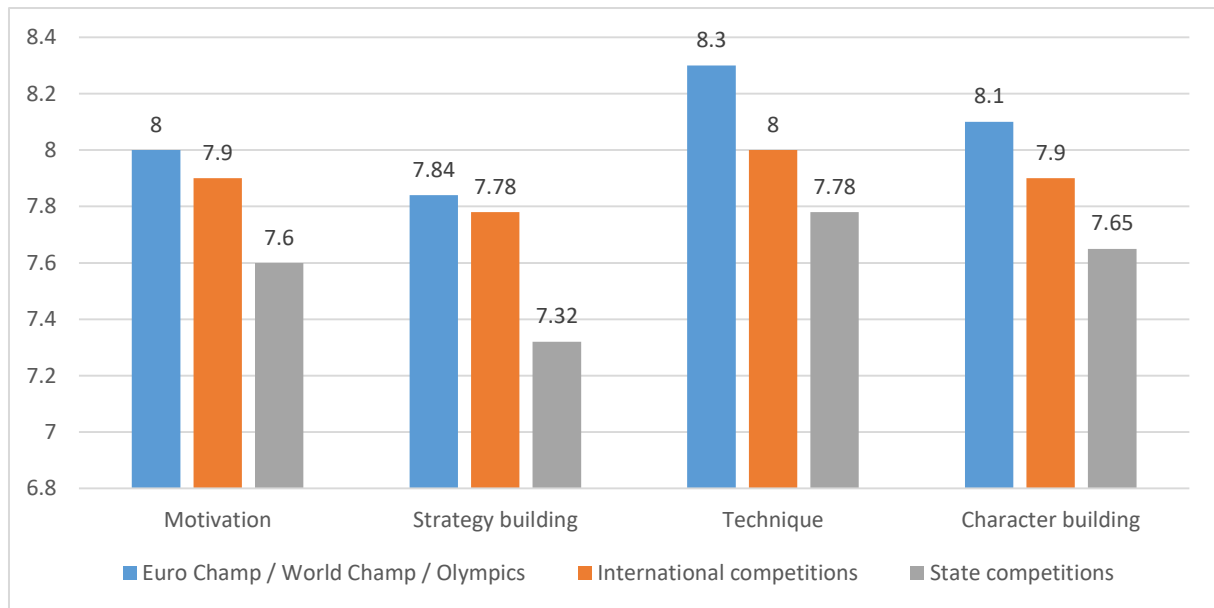


Fig. 2. Average values for the individual components of expectations for coaching efficacy, depending on the achieved sport outcome

The coaches who manage to build trust in their athletes, train them in technical and psychological skills, build a positive attitude in them towards competitive sports and manage to influence them during competition to the greatest extent, lead their athletes to achievements at the highest level. Our results confirm what has been reported in the literature that the coach's confidence in his own abilities and skills has an impact on the athletes' performance. Coach performance expectations are considered one of the most influential psychological constructs mediating goal achievement in sport (Iancheva, 2012).

III.4. Analysis of the psychological capital research results

The results of the comparative analysis demonstrating differences in the levels of education amongst the coaches revealed statistically significant differences on the self-efficacy subscale ($p=0.041$) (Table 5).

Coaches with the highest educational level are characterized by the highest values of self-efficacy ($M=26.00$) According to the theory of psychological capital, individuals invest in their education and training in order to receive increasing long-term benefits in the process of their career development (Sharf, 2013). Highly educated coaches set higher goals, strive for more difficult tasks, and invest more time and effort to achieve their goals.

Table 5. Results of the comparative analysis based on education

	Self-efficacy	Optimism	Hope	Resilience
Chi-Square	6,389	,570	,623	2,131
df	2	2	2	2
Asymp. Sig.	,041	,752	,732	,345

Significant differences were found on the subscales of optimism ($p=0.011$) and hope (0.027) in comparisons based on the given club coaches belonged to (Table 6). Development opportunities, as well as the security that the respective club provides them, are prerequisites for coaches to be satisfied with their activities, to be attached to the organization and to be optimistic about success now and in the future. It is likely that the style of leadership, the imposed style of working, and the psychological environment in given sports clubs influence the construction of the components of psychological capital among the coaches studied.

Table 6. Results of the comparative analysis based on the sports club

	Self-efficacy	Optimism	Hope	Resilience
Chi-Square	48,258	70,950	66,271	60,727
df	46	46	46	46
Asymp. Sig.	,382	,011	,027	,072

Regarding the sports outcome achieved, statistically significant differences on the subscales of self-efficacy ($p=0.022$) and mental resilience ($p=0.047$) were found (see Table 7) as components of psychological capital. The coaches who were found to have higher levels of self-efficacy and mental resilience, i.e. coaches with higher confidence, seeking success in challenging tasks and situations, able to show flexibility and stand up for positions despite problems and adversity, are the ones whose sports outcomes are better.

Table 7. Benchmark results depending on the comparative analysis result

	Self-efficacy	Optimism	Hope	Resilience
Chi-Square	7,668	2,488	5,002	6,116
df	2	2	2	2
Asymp. Sig.	,022	,288	,082	,047

The results obtained reveal that, in general, coaches with the highest levels of psychological capital ($M=25.65$) achieved the most significant results. The coaches with the lowest values of psychological capital ($M=24.38$) are the ones who achieved results at the lowest level.

Presumably, working towards the achievement of challenging goals, confidence in one's own competence, being able to adapt to the environment and possessing flexibility in fulfilling the set goals, taking responsibility for managing one's own career, are all personal prerequisites for achieving excellent outcomes in sports. This corresponds to what was stated by Jones (1994) about the set of an individual's personal qualities, personality traits, and other person-related factors can explain and predict the choice of a profession and success in its development (Jones, 1994).

III.5. An analysis of the results from the study on emotional intelligence

На таблица 8 са представени резултатите от сравнителния анализ на изследваните треньори в зависимост от вида спорт. Установихме статистически значими различия по две от подskalите на емоционалната интелигентност – оценка на емоциите на другите ($p=0,024$) и оценка на собствените емоции ($p=0,034$).

Table 8 presents the results of the comparative analysis of the coaches studied based on the type of sport. Statistically significant differences were found in two of the subscales of emotional intelligence - Assessing others' emotions ($p=0.024$) and Assessing one's own emotions ($p=0.034$).

Table 8. Results of the comparative analysis based on the type of sport

	Assessing others' emotions	Assessing one's own emotions	Emotional regulation	Social skills	Utilising emotions	Optimism
Chi-Square	11,198	10,439	5,957	2,614	2,583	6,618
df	4	4	4	4	4	4
Asymp. Sig.	0,024	0,034	0,202	0,624	0,630	0,157

The results show that rhythmic gymnastics coaches ($M=3.70$) have the highest values on the subscale evaluation on the emotions of others (Fig. 3).

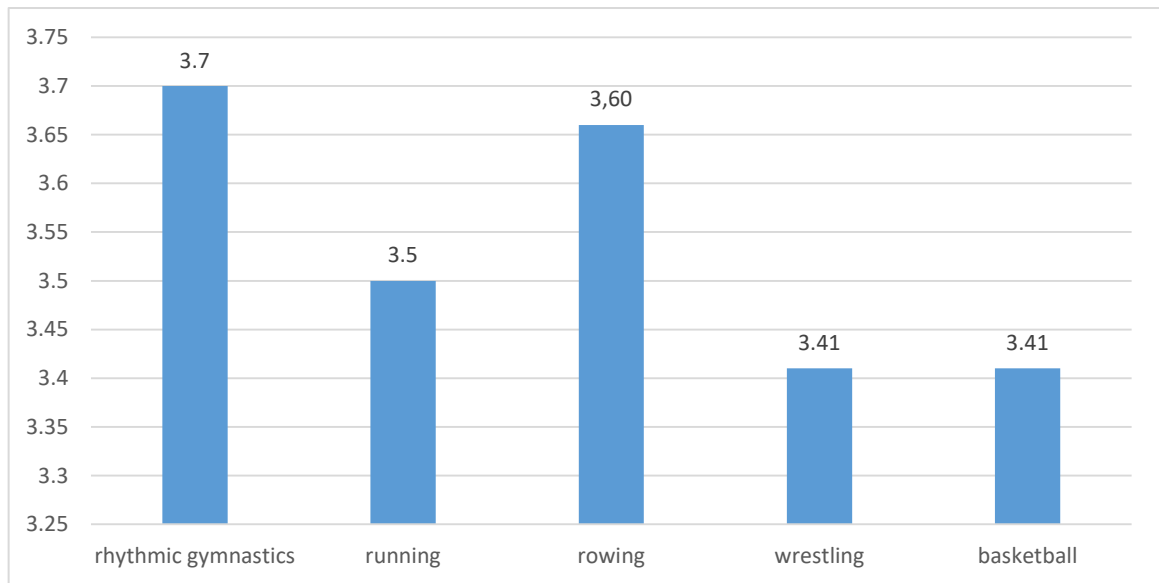


Fig. 3. Average values of the subscale evaluation of emotions of others in coaches from different sports

A highly charged emotional environment is quite characteristic of sports, with emotions being an integral part of the performance process. Rhythmic gymnastics is typical of expressive sports, in which the artistry and sensibility through which the competitors affect the audience are highly valued. This emotional undercurrent is likely to be the factor that would explain the results obtained. Rhythmic gymnastics coaches have the ability to understand the emotions experienced by others and to explain the reasons for their behavior to the greatest extent. According to some authors (Beswick, 2001; Popov, 2018), this ability is an important prerequisite for success in sports.

Additionally, rhythmic gymnastics is a women's sport, and previously noted, female coaches are better able to understand and appreciate the emotional states of their athletes.

In terms of evaluating their own emotions, running coaches have the highest values ($M=4.20$) (Fig. 4).

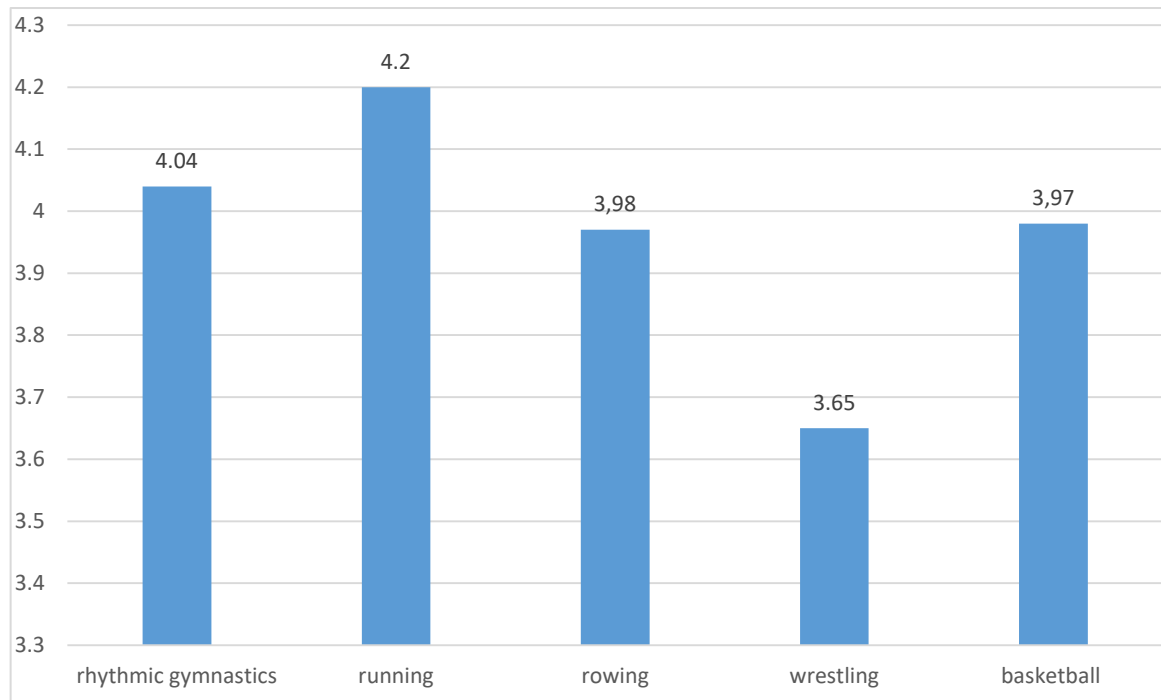


Fig. 4. Average values of the subscale assessment of one's own emotions in coaches from different sports

We assume that highly expressed individuality in athletics is a prerequisite for the formation of the ability for self-awareness and recognition of the individual's own emotions and states as they arise. These characteristics have significant cognitive consequences for achievements in sports. It is likely that the specificity of each sport has an impact on the emotionality of the personality and the construction of the components of emotional intelligence in the coaches studied.

III.6. Results of the correlation and regression analysis of the data

One of the goals of the undertaken research was to reveal the interrelationships between the personality characteristics which were studied - self-efficacy, locus of control, coaching efficacy, psychological capital and emotional intelligence – and their influence on performance in sports.

The complete results of the correlation analysis are presented in Appendix 1.

Table 9 shows the results of the correlation analysis, revealing significant correlations between self-efficacy, self-inhibition, and locus of control.

Table 9. Results of the correlational analysis of self-efficacy, self-sabotage and locus of control

	Self-efficacy	Self-sabotage	Locus of control
Self-efficacy	1		
Self-sabotage	-,581**	1	
Locus of control	-,320**	,324**	1

**p<0.01 level (2-tailed)

*p<0.05 level (1-tailed)

A highly pronounced negative correlation was found between self-efficacy and the level of self-sabotage ($r=-0.581$; $p=0.01$). As self-sabotage values increase, expectations for personal efficacy decrease significantly.

A strong correlation was also observed between "self-sabotage" and "locus of control" ($r=.324$; $p=0.01$). As the values of the locus of control in the external direction increase, so do the values of self-sabotage. As we previously established, the youngest coaches from 18 to 24 years old are characterised by the highest values of self-sabotage ($M=21.55$) and the highest values of locus of control (in the direction of the external) ($M=6.50$). Those coaches who feel they have little influence over what is happening tend to block their opportunities for development by putting themselves in a disadvantageous position.

The results indicate (Table 9) that there is a negative correlation between self-efficacy and locus of control ($r=-.320$; $p=0.01$). When the values of the locus of control in the external direction increase, expectations for personal efficacy decrease. Perceptions of the coaches studied regarding why they succeeded or failed in the performance of their activity determine how much effort they will put into their coaching. The more they believe that external circumstances control what happens to them, the more their confidence in their own abilities to achieve the desired result falls.

To further explore the relationship between self-efficacy, self-sabotage, and locus of control, stepwise regression analysis was used. As dependent variables, self-sabotage, then locus of control were put first (Table 10).

The results show that self-sabotage negatively affects self-efficacy. Coaches who are confident in their own actions and abilities do not block their opportunities for development ($\beta=-.532$; $\text{Sig}=.0,000$) because they consider that they have personal control over the events that happen to them and the results achieved are a natural consequence of their work ($\beta =-$

.153; Sig=.0026). On the other hand, self-sabotage stimulated external locus of control ($\beta=.158$; Sig=.0050). That is, self-efficacy, self-sabotage, and locus of control are personality characteristics that are interdependent.

These results coincide with those obtained by Iancheva (2004) in which it is shown that the level of self-sabotage is a factor that has a significant negative influence on generalised expectations of personal efficacy.

Table 10. Results of regression analysis of self-sabotage and locus of control

Indicator	Self-sabotage		
	β	t	Sig.
Self-efficacy	-.532	-7.810	0.000
Locus of control	.153	2.252	0.026
Indicator	Locus of control		
	β	t	Sig.
Self-efficacy	-.158	-1.973	0.050

The results of these researchers are consistent with those reported in the literature on the relationship between internal locus of control and high levels of personal efficacy (Rotter, 1975; Weiner, 1992; Smith et al., 1998; Iancheva, Dimitrova, 2001; Iancheva, 2004; Owad, 2005; Saadat et al., 2011).

As previously indicated, self-efficacy affects every single sphere of human action. The results of the correlation analysis revealed significant dependencies between "self-efficacy" and "coaching efficacy", "psychological capital" and "emotional intelligence".

A significant positive correlation was observed between self-efficacy and expectations of coaching efficacy (Fig. 5) – motivation ($r=292$; $p=0.01$), game strategy ($r=370$; $p=0.01$), technique ($r=332$; $p=0.01$), character building ($r=239$; $p=0.01$). The more confident coaches are, both in general and in their abilities, the more confident they will be in coaching effectively, as well. Their confidence will manifest in their abilities to train and prepare their athletes, as well as to influence their psychological states, to build up within them the necessary qualities and skills so as to lead those athletes to a successful performance in a competition.

A significant negative correlation was found between the level of self-sabotage and expectations of coaching efficacy (Fig. 5). Accordingly, the more likely the coaches studied are to hinder themselves by putting themselves in a disadvantageous position, the less effective they are in their work.

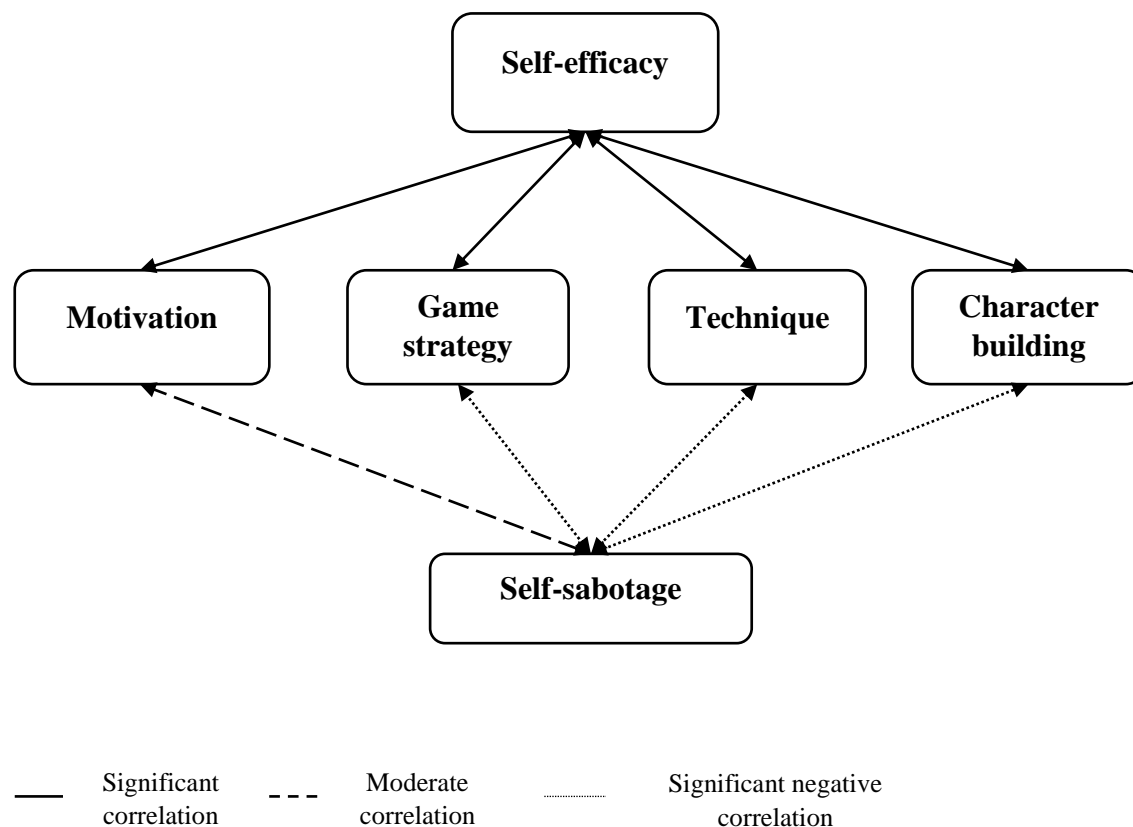


Fig. 5. Results of the correlation analysis between self-efficacy and coaching efficacy expectations

Figure 6 presents the results of the correlation analysis between self-efficacy and psychological capital and self-efficacy and emotional intelligence.

The analysis revealed significant positive correlations between self-efficacy and all components of psychological capital - self-efficacy ($r=.403$; $p=0.01$), optimism ($r=.363$; $p=0.01$), hope ($r=.511$; $p=0.01$) mental resilience ($r=.415$; $p=0.01$), as well as significant negative correlations between the level of self-sabotage and all subscales of psychological capital (Fig. 6).

As confidence in the efficacy of one's own actions increases, so does the capacity for resilience and flexibility in the face of problems and challenges, and the expectations for success now and in the future among the coaches studied.

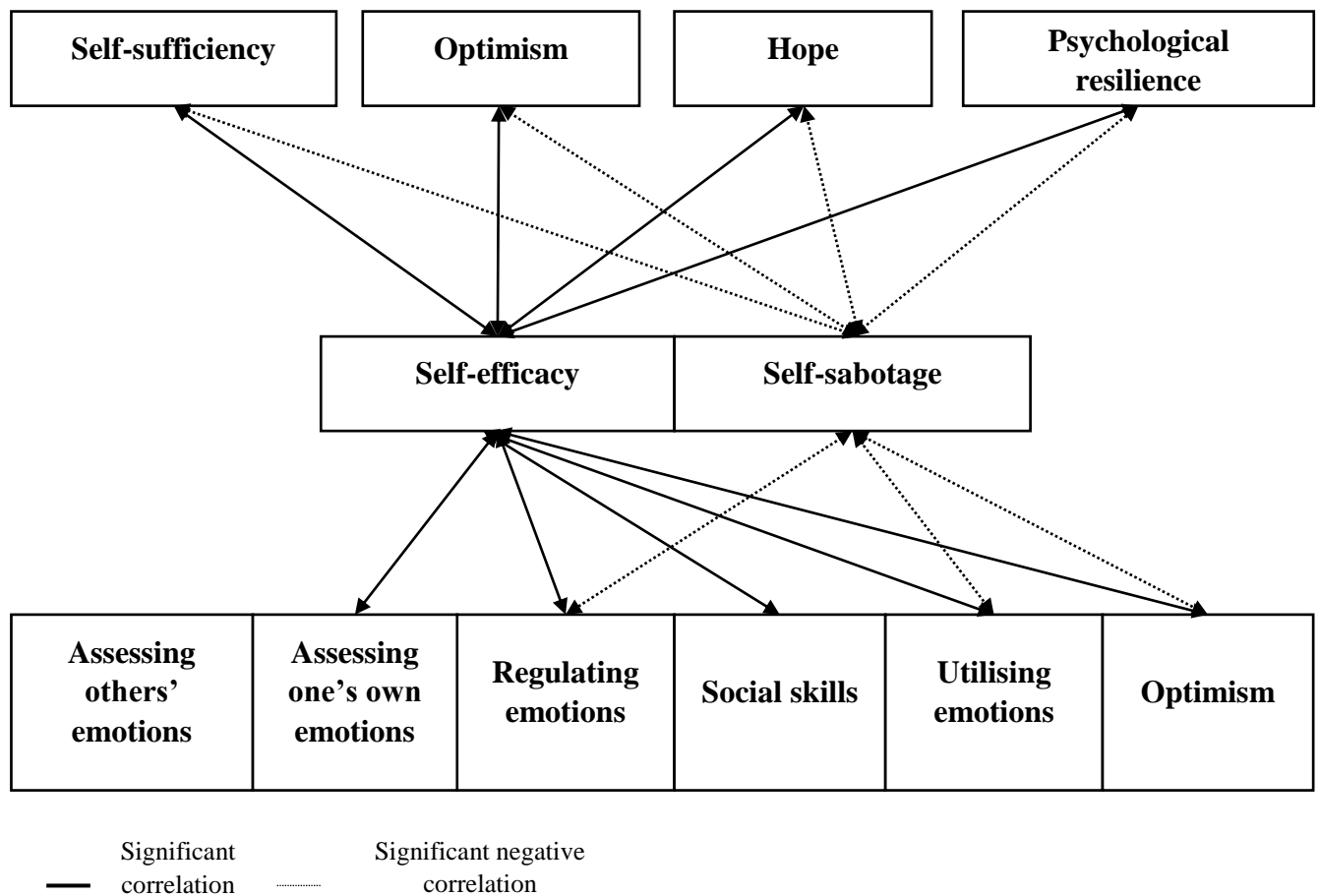


Fig. 6. Results of the correlation analysis between self-efficacy and psychological capital and self-efficacy and emotional intelligence

Regarding emotional intelligence (Fig. 6), found significant correlations were found between self-efficacy and all subscales of emotional intelligence, except Assessing and assessment of others' emotions. High personal efficacy correlates with the abilities of the studied coaches to recognize their own emotions ($r=.337$; $p=0.001$), to use strategies to change their emotional state ($r=.348$; $p=0.001$), to change the emotions of other people ($r=.285$; $p=0.001$), to be aware of how emotions can affect performance and its outcome ($r=.237$; $p=0.001$) and to have positive beliefs about achieving success ($r=.491$; $p=0.001$).

Self-sabotage also had significant negative correlations with the ability to be aware of how emotions affect coaching ($r=-.161$; $p=0.001$), reducing opportunities to change emotions ($r=-.234$; $p=0.001$), and overall expectations of success ($r=-.257$; $p=0.001$).

Regarding locus of control, we found significant negative correlations with psychological capital and with emotional intelligence (Fig. 7).

Significant negative correlations exist between locus of control and all components of psychological capital.

Coaches with an external locus of control who believe that not they, but external circumstances control occurrences, have lower optimistic attitudes about current and future success ($r=-.263$; $p=0.001$), along with lower confidence ($r=-.254$; $p=0.001$). In addition, they exhibit lower levels of persistence in achieving the set goals ($r=-.272$; $p=0.001$), as well as lessened ability to show flexibility and defend positions in difficult situations ($r=-.334$; $p=0.001$).

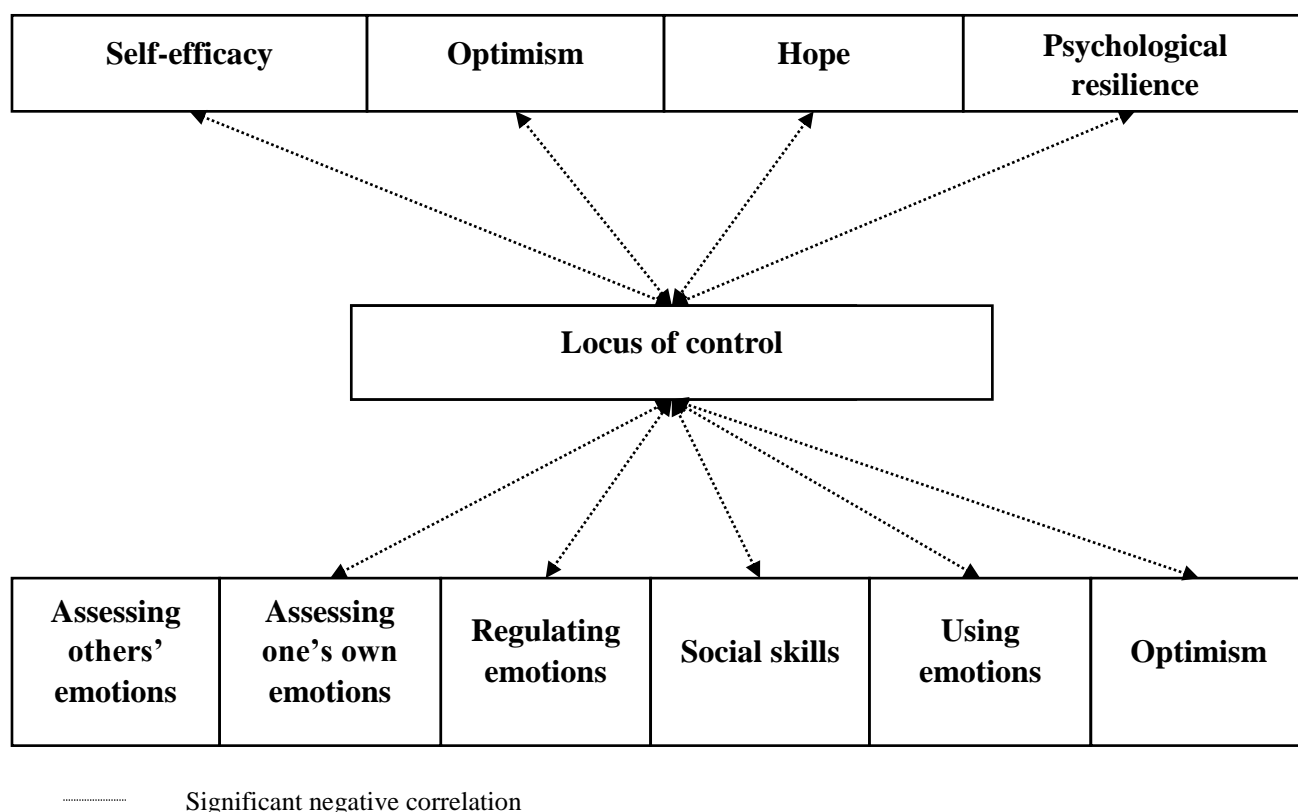


Fig. 7. Results of the correlation analysis between locus of control and psychological capital and locus of control and emotional intelligence

Coaches who feel more in control are also able to recognize their own feelings and emotions and understand how their performance could be affected by their psychological and emotional state. They are able to regulate their emotional states and influence the emotional states of others. The results of these researchers confirm what has been reported in the literature – namely, that one's level of emotional intelligence is related to an internal locus of control (Rutkovska, 2012).

We found a significant correlation between expectations of coaching efficacy and psychological capital (Table 11). Significant correlations were found between all subscales of coaching efficacy and components of psychological capital. Coaches who set high goals for themselves and believe in achieving them, showing perseverance and resilience in the face of difficulties in order to defend their positions and achieve success, are also confident in the effective performance of their coaching activities. Our results support the data presented in the literature that the development of the strengths, capacities and potential of workers can improve work performance (Luthans, Youssef, Avolio, 2007).

Table 11. Results of the correlational analysis between coaching efficacy expectations and psychological capital

	M	GS	T	CB	S	O	H
M	1						
GS	,621**	1					
T	,773**	,738**	1				
CB	,779**	,624**	,774**	1			
S	,229**	,294**	,286**	,230**	1		
O	,311**	,305**	,373**	,344**	,570**	1	
H	,321**	,292**	,358**	,251**	,590**	,686**	1
PE	,243**	,209**	,318**	,223**	,492**	,569**	,624**

****p<0.01 level (2-tailed)**

***p<0.05 level (1-tailed)**

Note: **M** – motivation; **GS** – game strategy; **T** – technique; **CB** – character building; **S** – self-efficacy; **O** – optimism; **H** – hope; **PE** – psychological resilience;

The correlation analysis performed revealed a significant positive correlation between expectations of coaching efficacy and emotional intelligence. Figure 8 shows that all components of coaching efficacy interact significantly with all subscales of emotional intelligence, except for “Assessing of own emotions”, which differs from the results presented by Prodanov (2020) in which it is demonstrated that coaches' ability to assess their own emotions correlated with all subscales of coaching effectiveness

The results of this research confirm what has been published in literature on the positive relationship between emotional intelligence and coaching efficacy, illustrating that a high level of emotional intelligence positively affects coaching efficacy (Totterdell & Leach, 2001;

Aftakami et al., 2011; Rutkovska, 2012; Hwang et al., 2013; Mehrpavar, Moosav, 2016; Iancheva & Prodanov, 2018; Teques et al., 2019; Prodanov, 2020).

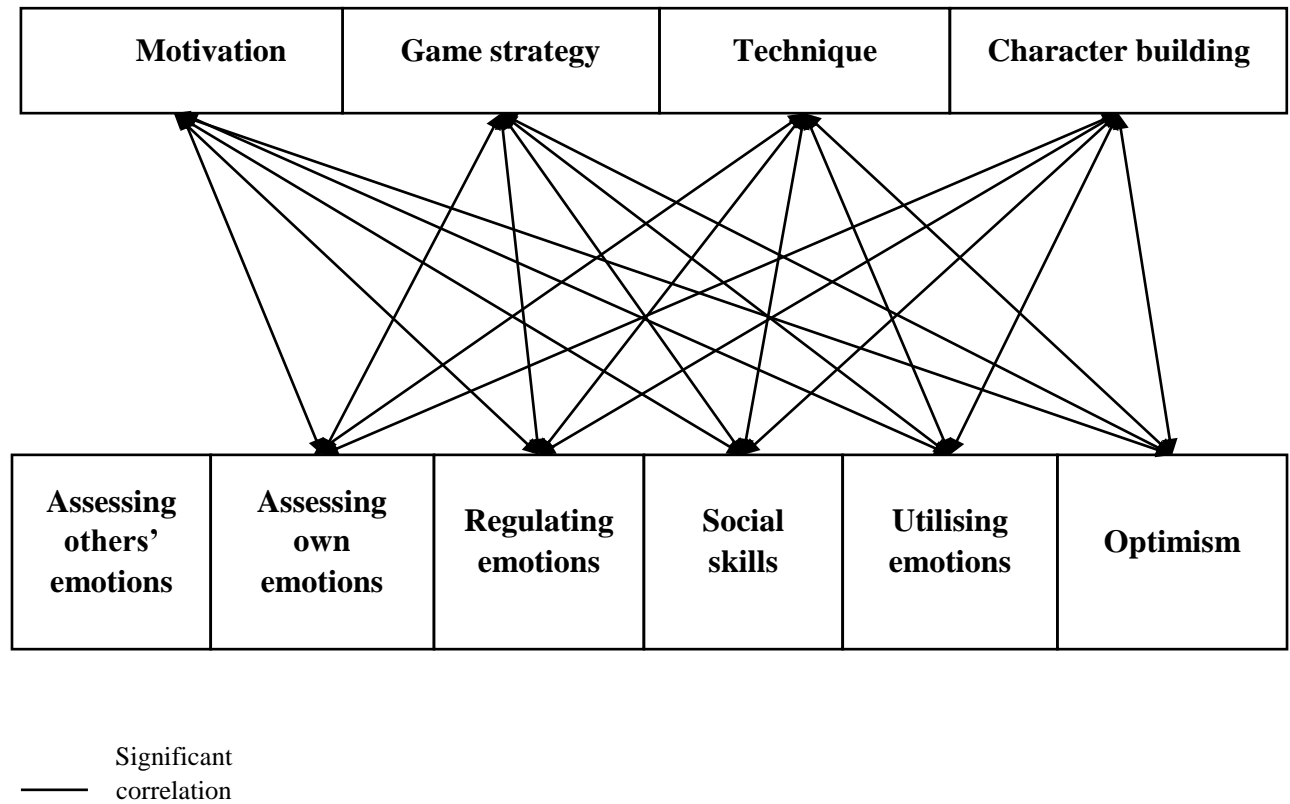


Fig. 8. Results of the correlation analysis between expectations of coaching efficacy and emotional intelligence

Emotional intelligence also correlates significantly with psychological capital (Fig. 9).

The results observed by these researchers are consistent with those published in literature about coaches' ability to recognize, experience, regulate, and use their emotions positively influencing their job satisfaction and achievement attitudes (Dulewicz & Higgs, 2000).

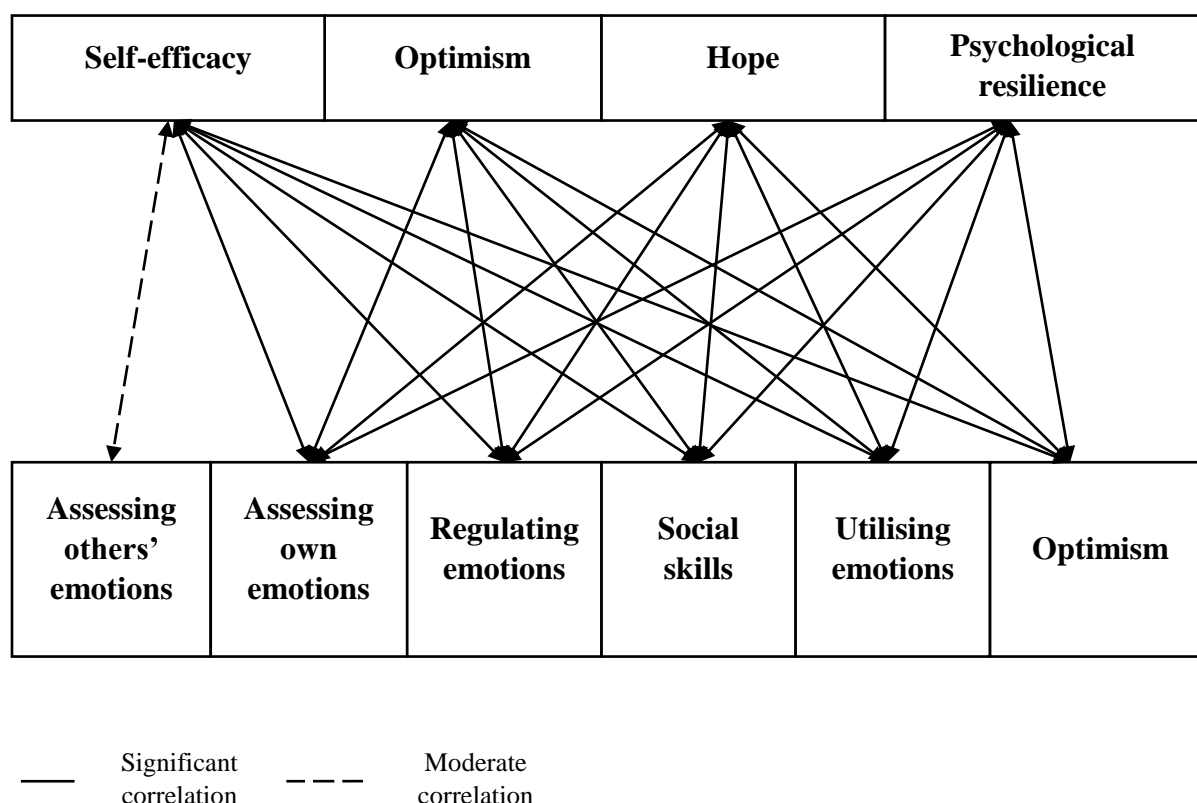


Fig. 9. Results of the correlation analysis between psychological capital and emotional intelligence

The results of this research correspond with those of George (2000) and Schutte (2007) that leaders with high levels of emotional intelligence also have high levels of mental resilience, are more flexible and confident in dealing with difficulties, and that emotional regulation, can lead to a state of optimal self-efficacy (Totterdell & Leach, 2001).

The results obtained confirm what Prodanov (2020) found that in the field of sports, emotional intelligence is studied as a variable that can predict other variable personality characteristics.

These researchers' main task was to reveal the influence of the studied personal characteristics on the sports achievements of the coaches studied.

From the correlation analysis made between the expectations of coaching efficacy and the sports outcome (Table 12), moderate correlations with two of the subscales were found - motivation ($r=-.168$; $p=0.05$), character building ($r=-.162$; $p=0.05$) and significant correlations with the game strategy ($r=-.221$; $p=0.01$) and technique ($r=-.236$; $p=0.01$) subscales. The more confident coaches are in their abilities to train their athletes, to positively influence their psychological processes and states, leading them to successful performance, the higher results their athletes achieve during competition. The results of this research

confirm what has been reported in the literature – namely, that good player preparation is a factor in high performance expectations on the part of coaches (Feltz, 1997), and that sports performance is among the most important sources of coaching performance expectations (Feltz et al. , 1999).

The results of these researchers confirm the findings of Iancheva (2012) in which it is shown that the coach's confidence in his or her own abilities and skills has an impact on athletes and their performance, with the coach's performance expectations considered one of the most influential psychological constructs mediating goal achievement in sports (Iancheva, 2012).

With regard to high performance expectations, the data collected through this research does not conform to that found within the literature regarding there not being a relationship or even a negative relationship between high performance expectations and actual achievement (Hardly et al., 2010; MacKenzie & Bommer, 1996). Instead, it does confirm that there is a positive relationship between high expectations for coaching efficacy and high athletic performance (Podsakoff et al., 1990).

Table 12. Results of the correlation analysis between the expectations of coaching efficacy and the sports outcome achieved

	Sports outcome
Motivation	-.168*
Game strategy	-.221**
Technique	-.236**
Character building	-.162*

**p<0.01 level (2-tailed)

*p<0.05 level (1-tailed)

Figure 10 presents the results of the correlation analysis between the level of education of coaches, psychological capital and sports performance.

There was found to be a significant correlation between self-efficacy and sports outcomes ($r=-.217$; $p=0.01$), that is, as the coaches' confidence in their own abilities increases, so do their results. A moderate correlation exists between the other subscales of psychological capital and the result - optimism ($r=-.158$; $p=0.05$), hope ($r=-.175$; $p=0.05$), mental resilience ($r=-.161$; $p=0.05$). Coaches who believe in success, show perseverance and flexibility in

achieving goals and stand up for their positions in order to move forward, achieve significant results in sports. The results of these researchers correspond with those in the literature, that those coaches who set high goals improve the achievement of their athletes and that personal coping resources are positively related to coach efficacy (Brief & Weiss, 2002).

These researchers found a moderate positive correlation between education and self-efficacy ($r=-.178$; $p=0.05$) (Fig. 10), which corresponds to what was found in the literature that the education of coaches is considered as a predictor of their efficacy (Prodanov, Iancheva, 2017 ; Sulivani et al., 2006; Knee & Nur, 2018).

We found a significant positive correlation between the education of the coaches and the sports result ($r=-.318$; $p=0.01$).

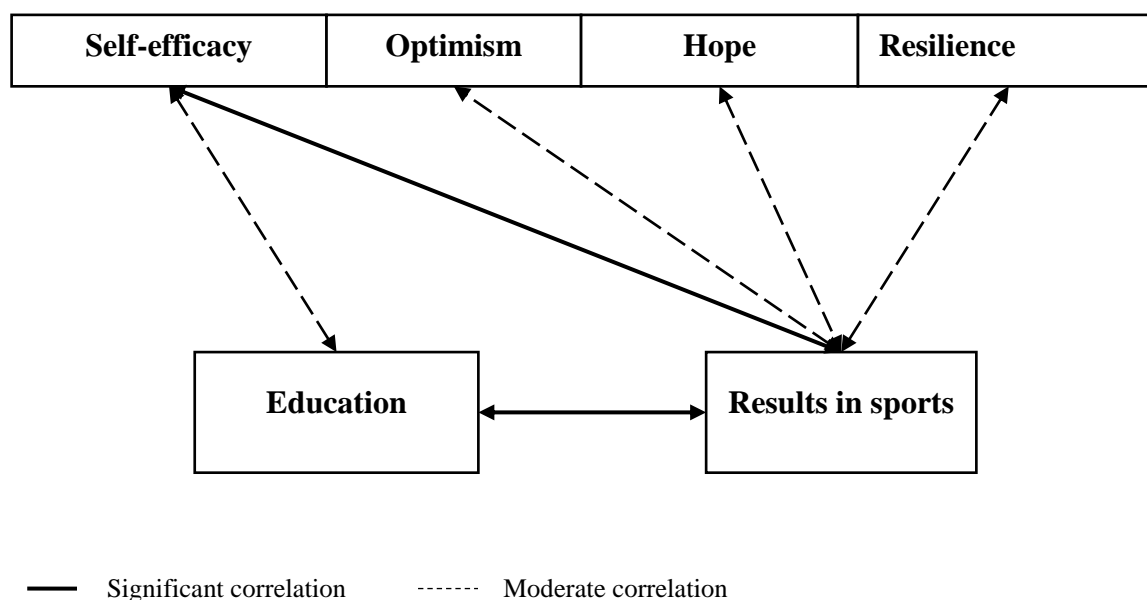


Fig. 10. Results of the correlation analysis between education, sports performance and psychological capital

In order to more deeply reveal the relationships between the studied personality characteristics - self-efficacy, locus of control, expectations of coaching efficacy, psychological capital and emotional intelligence and their influence on the sports achievements of the studied coaches, we used a stepwise regression analysis.

Figure 11 presents the regression relationships between the studied characteristics. In our studied coaches, high values of personal efficacy are associated with an internal locus of control ($\beta=.158$; $\text{Sig}=.0.050$), and coaches' beliefs in their personal control over events have an impact on their abilities to self-regulate their own feelings and emotional states ($\beta=-.165$;

Sig=.0.019), which in turn affects coaches' confidence in their abilities to influence the psychological processes and states of their athletes ($\beta=-.198$; Sig=.0.019). (Table 13).

Table 13. Results of the regression analysis of motivation

Indicator	Motivation		
	β	t	Sig.
Self-efficacy	.154	1.983	0.049
Regulation of emotions	.198	2.375	0.019
Social skills	.234	2.982	0.003

Coaches' ability to regulate feelings and emotions also affects their mental resilience ($\beta=.243$; Sig=.001), as well as affecting their persistence in achieving goals, job satisfaction ($\beta=.274$; Sig= .0.000) and overall optimistic beliefs about success ($\beta=.336$; Sig=.0.000) (Table 14), which in turn influence sports achievement ($\beta=-.181$; Sig=.0.032) ($\beta=-.173$; Sig=.0.004) (Table 19).

Table 14. Results of regression analysis of mental resilience, hope and optimism

Indicator	Psychological endurance		
	β	t	Sig.
Self-efficacy	.259	3.859	0.000
Regulating emotions	.243	3.292	0.001
Utilising emotions	.335	4.661	0.000
Level of education	.168	2.661	0.009
Indicator	Hope		
	β	t	Sig.
Self-efficacy	.336	5.188	0.000
Regulating emotions	.274	3.959	0.000
Social skills	.279	4.121	0.000
Indicator	Optimism		
	β	t	Sig.
Self-efficacy	.178	2.390	0.018
Regulating emotions	.336	4.519	0.000

Awareness on the part of coaches of how emotions can affect performance and, accordingly, the ensuing results, affects their ability to show flexibility and resilience in the face of difficulties and problems in their coaching ($\beta=.335$; Sig=.0.000) (Table . 14).

Coaches' ability to recognize their own emotional states has an impact on their confidence in leading their team to a successful performance ($\beta=.249$; Sig=.0.001) (Table 15) and on their confidence in taking the actions necessary for success in challenging situations ($\beta=.300$; Sig=.0.000) (Table 16), which affects the sports outcome ($\beta=-.163$; Sig=.0.045) (Table 19).

Table 15. Results of regression analysis of game strategy

Indicator	Game strategy		
	β	t	Sig.
Assessing own emotions	.249	3.244	0.001
Self-efficacy	.286	3.725	0.000

Table 16. Results of regression analysis of self-sufficiency

Indicator	Self-sufficiency		
	β	t	Sig.
Education	-.143	-2.054	0.042
Assessing own emotions	.300	4.079	0.000

The ability of coaches to change the emotions of others affects the confidence in their own abilities to influence psychological processes and states ($\beta=.234$; Sig=.0003) (Table 13) and on the positive attitude towards the competitive sports of their athletes ($\beta=.252$; Sig=0.002) (Table 17). Coaches' ability to regulate others' emotions also affects confidence in their own abilities to coach their athletes ($\beta=.207$; Sig=.0010) (Table 18), which in turn directly affects athletic performance ($\beta= -.189$; Sig=.0020) (Table 19).

Table 17. Results of regression analysis of character building

Indicator	Character building		
	β	t	Sig.
Social skills	.252	3.183	0.002

Table 18. Results of regression analysis of technique

Indicator	Technique		
	β	t	Sig.
Social skills	.207	2.598	0.010

Self-efficacy, i.e. coaches' confidence in their own abilities that their actions will lead to the desired result affects, on the one hand, coaches' confidence in their abilities to influence the psychological processes and states of their athletes ($\beta=.154$; Sig=.0049) (table 13), as

well as on their abilities to lead their team to a successful performance ($\beta=.286$; Sig=.0.000) (table 15).

On the other hand, self-efficacy influences coaches' mental toughness ($\beta=.259$; Sig=.0.000), as well as their resilience and flexibility in achieving goals ($\beta=.336$; Sig=.0.000) and their positive beliefs about success now and in the future ($\beta=.178$; Sig=.0.018) (Table 14), which influence sports achievement ($\beta=-.181$; Sig=.0.023) ($\beta=-.173$; Sig= .0.004) (Table 19).

Table 19. Results of regression analysis of sports outcome

Indicator	Sports outcome		
	β	t	Sig.
Education	-.241	-3.789	0.000
Technique	-.189	-2.343	0.020
Self-efficacy	-.163	-2.022	0.045
Hope	-.173	-2.898	0.004
Optimism	-.181	-.2.294	0.023

Regarding the education of coaches, from the stepwise regression analysis it was found that the level of education of coaches affects their ability to show flexibility and maintain positions despite problems and adversity in order to move forward ($\beta=.168$; Sig=, 0.009), as well as on confidence in their personal efficacy ($\beta=-.143$; Sig=,0.042) (tables 14 and 16), which affects the sports outcomes of the coaches studied ($\beta=-.163$; Sig= .0.045). Furthermore, as can be seen from Figure 11 and Table 18, coaches' education directly affects sports performance ($\beta=-.241$; Sig=.0.000).

In summary, we could say that self-efficacy and emotional intelligence influence both coaching efficacy expectations and psychological capital, which influence the achievement of high sports performance. Coaches' education affects both the components of psychological capital and sports performance directly (Fig. 11).

It can be concluded that the achievement of high sports results depends on the personal characteristics of the studied coaches - self-efficacy, locus of control, expectations of coaching efficacy, emotional intelligence and psychological capital, as well as on their

education. The personality of the coach is a factor for success in sports activity.

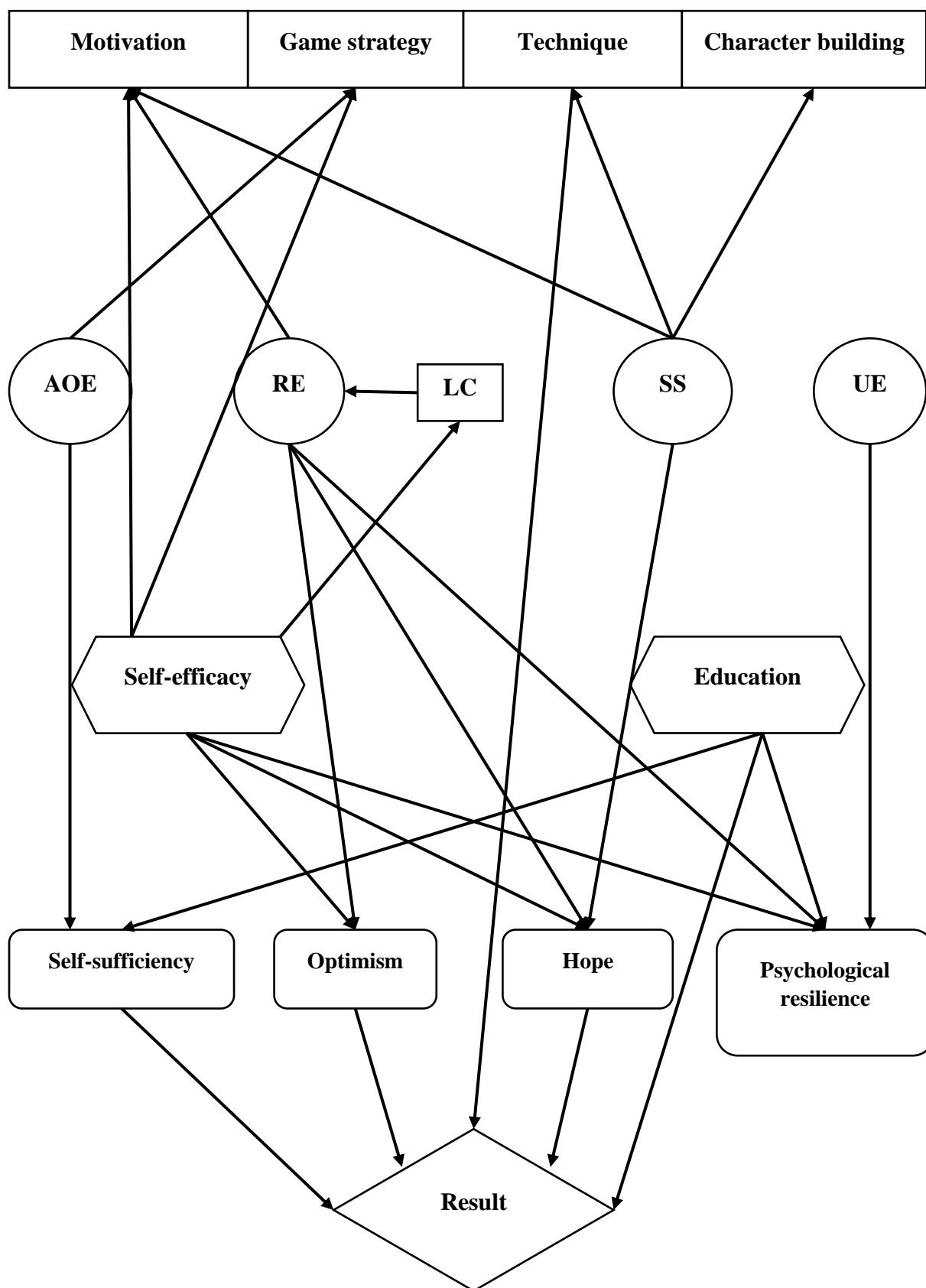


Fig. 11. Results of the regression analysis between the studied personality characteristics and their influence on sports performance

III.7. Profile of the successful coach

On the basis of the obtained results of the study of the derived personal characteristics, we could derive a "profile of the successful coach" (Fig. 12).

A successful coach has a high level of confidence in his or her own capabilities and abilities to achieve success. These coaches do not block their opportunities for growth by putting themselves in unfavorable positions. On the contrary, they set high goals for themselves, because they believe that success depends not on external circumstances, but on themselves and they therefore put in the necessary efforts in order to achieve it.

A successful coach is confident in his or her abilities to influence his or her athletes in the best way, by building up their technical skills and habits and influencing their mental processes and states. He or she would have a real and beneficial impact on their activity and their positive attitude towards competitive sports, leading them to a successful performance during competition.

A successful coach is satisfied with his or her work. Such satisfaction is characterized by standing up for one's positions and persistence in achieving one's goals. A successful coach exhibits the necessary flexibility to deal with the problems and challenges of coaching. He or she is mentally resilient and adaptable to the sporting environment.

A successful coach is able to recognize, regulate and use his own emotions and emotional states, realizing how they can affect his activity and the outcome of it. He is able to understand, appreciate, experience and regulate the emotional states of others.

A successful coach believes in success.

In summary, a successful coach is characterized by a high level of self-efficacy and a low level of self-obstruction. He or she should also be in possession of a high level of emotional intelligence, expectations of coaching efficacy and psychological capital, as well as with a pronounced internal locus of control (Fig. 12).

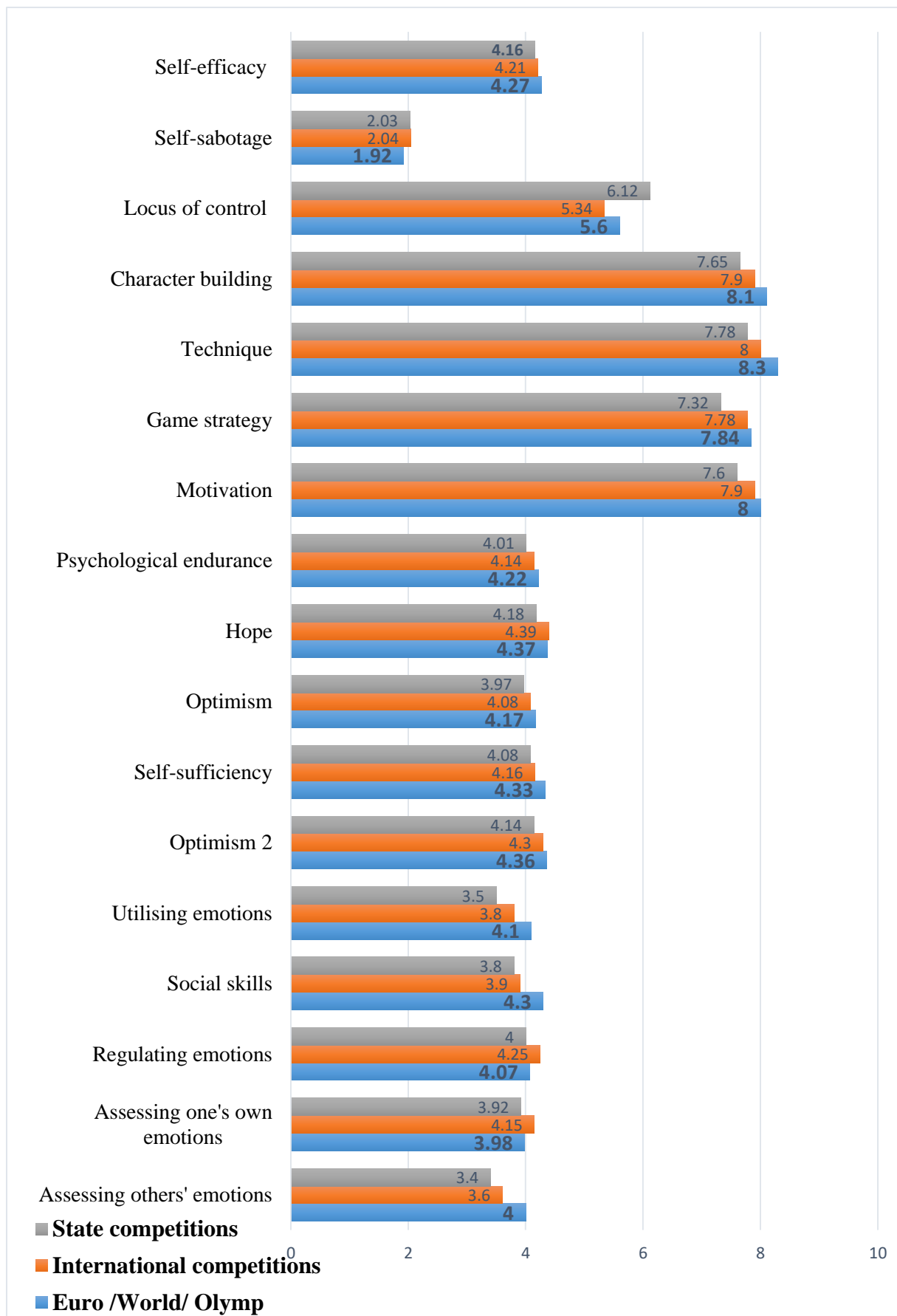


Fig. 12. Profile of a successful trainer

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

1. The theoretical analysis and the results obtained from this research gives these researchers reason to draw the following CONCLUSIONS:

The obtained results of the research reveal certain features regarding the derived personality parameters:

- The majority of the surveyed coaches - 71% - have internal locus of control.
 - The coaches studied have the highest levels of emotional intelligence on the optimism subscale, and the lowest on the evaluation of others' emotions subscale. Our results confirm those obtained by Prodanov (2020) in a study of football coaches.
 - The coaches studied have high levels of self-efficacy and low levels of self-sabotage.
 - The youngest coaches have the lowest expectations for coaching efficacy.
 - The coaches studied had the highest levels of hope, a subscale of psychological capital that is related to persistence in achieving goals.
2. Statistically significant differences were found depending on the type of sport in two of the subscales of emotional intelligence - assessment of one's own emotions and assessment of the emotions of others. Track and field coaches have the highest rates of assessment with regard to their own emotions, and rhythmic gymnastics coaches have the highest rates of assessment of others' emotions.
 3. The specificity of the sports environment, the psychological climate, the imposed style of work and the style of management in the various sports clubs have an impact on the development of the studied personal characteristics. Statistically significant differences were found depending on the affiliation of the coaches to the respective club, in terms of self-efficacy, self-sabotage and the subscales – motivation, technique, character building, optimism and hope.
 4. Statistically significant differences were found depending on the education of the studied coaches in terms of self-efficacy, as a subscale of psychological capital. Coaches with the highest educational degree (doctorate) are characterized by the highest levels of personal efficacy.
 5. Statistically significant differences were found depending on the qualifications of the studied coaches regarding self-efficacy as a component of psychological capital and three of the components of expectations for coaching effectiveness - game

strategy, technique and character building. The more elite coaches working with the national teams are characterized by high confidence in their abilities and actions to train their athletes in technical and psychological skills, to positively influence their attitude towards sports-competitive activity, to lead them to successful performance during competition.

6. Statistically significant differences were found depending on the sports outcomes achieved by the coaches studied in terms of game strategy, technique and character building, as components of expectations for coaching effectiveness; self-efficacy and mental resilience as components of psychological capital and assessment of one's own emotions, emotion regulation and optimism as components of emotional intelligence. The coaches who achieved the best sports results have the highest values of the specified components of coaching effectiveness, psychological capital and emotional intelligence.
7. The results revealed significant interrelationships between all the studied personal characteristics – self-efficacy, locus of control, expectations for coaching effectiveness, psychological capital and emotional intelligence, as well as between the education of the coaches studied and their sports results.
8. Regression dependencies between the studied characteristics were established.
 - Higher levels of self-efficacy and emotional intelligence can predict high levels of coaching effectiveness expectations and psychological capital, which in turn influence the achievement of high sports performance in the coaches studied.
 - The level of education of the coaches studied indirectly affects sports performance, through self-efficacy and mental resilience, and coaching education directly affects sports performance.
9. The results obtained confirmed our hypothesis that the coach's personality as a whole is an essential factor for achieving successful sports outcomes and achieving results in competitive sports activities.

Based on the obtained results and general conclusions, we can make the following
RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. Coaches need to be encouraged to increase their level of education, which would increase their much-needed confidence in their own abilities, in which way their expectations of coaching efficacy shall be positively impacted.

2. In the training of coaches, more emphasis should be placed on the knowledge of emotional intelligence, making it an integral part of their educational program.

3. The profile of the successful coach derived by way of this research and described herein should serve as a guide for the selection and development of coaches.