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The Difference of Role Ambiguity Players of Football Premier League.

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ABSTRACT

The study present was designed to investigate the difference in the role ambiguity experienced and less experienced players in the football premier league first semi-season done. Using descriptive- comparative study of three teams (72 players), the teams in the League, season 92-93, were available which were ready to cooperate with the researcher and they were selected as the sample. Role ambiguity players were examined using Beauchamp and colleagues Role Ambiguity Scale. Also, Whitney U man test was used for statistical analysis. Overall, the results suggest that role ambiguity experienced and less experienced players in the football league first semi-season significantly different. The results showed that the role ambiguity, there is a duties and responsibilities more offensive than defensive responsibilities. Overall, we can conclude If any of the players on the team have a thorough understanding of their role and are familiar with their duties and each team, be optimistic about teamwork, discipline and consistency is even greater.

Keywords: Role ambiguity, experienced players, less experienced players, Football premier league

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Introduction

Perception and understanding of individual role responsibilities is defined as one of the most important team variables in sport (Eys et al., 2005). Lack of knowledge about these responsibilities and expectations related to a special occasion is introduced as role ambiguity (Kahn et al., 1964).

Role ambiguity has been considered as a factor affecting the team performance and efficiency (Beauchamp et al., 2005). Experiencing the role ambiguity can lead to contradictory reactions, feelings of tension, loss of confidence, stress and dissatisfaction in individual (Kahn et al., 1964). Also, role ambiguity is associated with increasing physical and cognitive anxiety (Beauchamp et al., 2003), reducing the role efficiency (Beauchamp et al., 2002), loss of the team Cohesion (Bosselut et al., 2012), sport dissatisfaction (Doroudian et al., 2013 and Bahlekeh et al., 2013) and social loafing (Høigaard et al., 2010). In addition, the results of different studies have indicated clearly that the role ambiguity can have a negative effect on the athletes' performance (Eys and carron, 2001, Abolghasemi et al., 2006 and Narimani et al., 2008). Given the dependency of roles in group sports, lack of familiarity of players with duties of their roles means to not respect the rights of the other players' roles and this leads to dissatisfaction, disagreement and in acute cases, incidence of conflict and animosity between the team members (Rajab zade, 2006). This issue has been considered in the field of sport due to the important physical and behavioral outcomes of role ambiguity for athletes and researchers have attempted to create and develop assessment and theoretical models in the scope of sport teams (Doroudian et al., 2013).

Beauchamp et al (2002), for the first time used the concept of role ambiguity in the field of sports. They applied the Kahn conceptual framework in attempt to overcome the inherent limitations of Beauchamp, Bray, Eys and Carron approaches and developed it in operational definition for the role ambiguity in sport teams related to each other. Their scale has evaluated four dimensions of role ambiguity: scope of responsibility, behavioral responsibilities, the role evaluation and the role outcomes in each of the two areas of offense and defense (Eys et al., 2003). Football teams can usually be divided into two groups of experienced and young (less experienced) based on age differences and the number of years the players have played. The variable of experience is an important factor in the success of teams and all teams use experienced players in their original composition. Such players can be helpful for the team in key moments of the game, because they have had more opportunities for doing their responsibilities and tasks in exercises and competitions. The study results of Eys et al (2003), show that less experienced players understand higher levels of role ambiguity in attack compared with experienced players. Because, offensive positions have more variable number of responsibilities. Also, experienced players, who have been more years in a team, have more opportunities for receiving feedback about efficiency of their role and experience less role ambiguity. In other study, Eys et al (Eys et al., 2003), found that the athletes with more sport experience and being of a team members with together for a very long time, experience lower indices of role ambiguity compared with the young and beginners. They also showed that the role ambiguity may mostly occur in offensive roles and responsibilities; as the players spend a considerable time of exercise on concentrating on offensive roles. As a result, there are more opportunities for the role ambiguity due to the complexity of offensive roles.

Study results about investigating the relation of role ambiguity, role efficiency and role performance in rugby teams show that the role ambiguity exists more in attack. Because, rugby players are obliged to observe a lot of responsibilities for an offensive play. Rugby players may have to do a smaller range of responsibilities against the attack and while defensive play (Beauchamp et al., 2002). In other study, Beauchamp et al, have investigated the relation between the role ambiguity and competitive state anxiety. Their results indicate that the role ambiguity related to the scope of offensive responsibilities is in relation with cognitive competitive anxiety positively. Also, the role ambiguity related to the scope of offensive role outcomes is in relation with physical competitive anxiety positively. So, if the players spend more time on offensive responsibilities and think about the broadness of these responsibilities, there may be more pressure on players and finally suffer from cognitive anxiety (Beauchamp et al., 2003). Bebetos et al (2007), in their study showed that the players, who were together in a team for a long time (about 5 years) and had more sport experience, have experienced lower levels of role ambiguity. Thus, based on the results of provided studies, we can say that young and less experienced players have more indices of role ambiguity compared with experienced players in attack due to having less opportunities for doing responsibilities and getting involved in their roles. Considering that the Iranian Football Premier League teams use both experienced and young players in their original composition who may don't have the same perception from their

responsibilities in the team, so, the main question of this study is that is there any difference between experienced and less experienced players of Iran Premier League in terms of their perception from their role in the team?

METHODOLOGY

The method of present study is descriptive from the comparative type. Statistical population were 16 teams present in Iran Football Premier League (thirteens league) in 2013-2014 season. 3 teams were available in first semi-season which were ready to cooperate with the researcher and they were selected as the sample. The role ambiguity of players was measured using role perception scale of Beauchamp et al (2002). This scale is designed to evaluate the perception of each player from his role in the team. It contains 20 questions in offense position and 20 questions in defense position and 4 subsets: 1- ambiguity in scope of responsibility, as an example (I understand the extent of my responsibilities in offense) 2- role ambiguity related to behavior, for example (I am familiar with required behaviors to do my offense responsibilities) 3- evaluation of role ambiguity, for example (the criteria of evaluating the offensive role is clear to me) and 4- role ambiguity outcomes, for example (I am familiar with consequences of unsuccessful performance in offensive role). Each scale has 5 questions and their test answers is based on 7-point Likert scale from score 1 (completely disagree) to score 7 (completely agree). The highest score shows the role clearness more (which means the lower role ambiguity), while the lower score shows the role clearness less (which means the more role ambiguity). To ensure the content validity, the questionnaire was initially evaluated by a number of football coaches and physical education professors with football proficiency. Then, it was reviewed and confirmed with their conceptual expressions and contents. Obtained value of Cronbach's alpha for the questionnaire of role perception was 0/86. Also, based on one of the questions of the role perception scale, the players were asked about the number of years they have played in Premier League; experienced players with age range of 6 to 15 years of playing experience and less experienced players with age range of 1 to 5 years of playing experience in Premier League were measured (Bebetos et al., 2007). After coordinating with supervisors and coaches of the selected teams, to collect data, the questionnaires were distributed among the players of teams by the researcher after presenting related descriptions in place of exercises. Of 72 questionnaires distributed among the players, 4 questionnaires were omitted due to incomplete responses and the research sample group reduced to 68. After collecting the questionnaires and adjusting data, descriptive statistic indices were used to summarize and classify the data. In inferential statistics part, U test was used to investigate the score differences of the role ambiguity dimension in two groups of experienced and less experienced players. Also, the data analysis in this study was done using the software SPSS version 22 in significant level of 0/05.

RESULTS

Table 1: Distribution of age and experience play of the players

Players experience	N	percent	M age	SD
Less experienced	35	51/5		
experienced	33	48/5	26/07	4/07
total	68	100/0		

According to the statistics presented in table 1, the mean age of the players of studied teams is 26/07. Of the total studied players, 51/1% of players are less experienced and 48/5% of studied samples are experienced players.

Table 2: Descriptive Statistics for Role Ambiguity Scales

Variable	Subscales	M ± sd
Role perception Offensive	Scope of Responsibilities	20/43 ± 7/46
	Role Behavior	24/68 ± 2/74
	Role Evaluation	25/25 ± 2/47
	Role Consequences	21/10 ± 6/37
Role perception Defensive	Scope of Responsibilities	25/94 ± 1/64
	Role Behavior	26/43 ± 1/94
	Role Evaluation	26/25 ± 1/83
	Role Consequences	26/22 ± 1/83

According to table 2, the subjects in the scope of offensive role responsibilities (with average of 20/43) and in the scope of offensive role outcomes (with average of 21/10) had the lowest role perception respectively. There was no significant difference in other scopes.

Table 3: mann-whitney U test results to compare the role perception offensive an role perception defensive

Variable	Factors	Mean score		<i>p</i>
		players less experienced	players experienced	
Role perception Offensive	Scope of Responsibilities	14/46	26/76	0/001*
	Role Behavior	22/83	26/64	0/001*
	Role Evaluation	24/03	26/55	0/001*
	Role Consequences	16/09	26/42	0/001*
Role perception Defensive	Scope of Responsibilities	25/86	26/03	0/75
	Role Behavior	26/26	26/61	0/32
	Role Evaluation	25/97	26/55	0/20
	Role Consequences	26/06	26/39	0/52

* *p* < 0.05

The U test was used to evaluate the scores difference of the role ambiguity dimension in two groups of less experienced and experienced players which results are given in table 3. As you can see, less experienced players have lower perception of their role in dimension of offensive role perception compared with experienced players and this difference is significant at 0/05. Also, the obtained results indicate that there is no significant difference between the defensive role perception of experienced and less experienced players (*p* ≥ 0/05).

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

Generally, the results of this study indicate that there is a significant difference between the dimension of offensive role ambiguity (role perception) of experienced and less experienced players of Football Premier League in the first mid-season, so that the less experienced players had lower perception of their role towards the experienced players. The results of present study were consistent with findings of Beauchamp et al (2003), Eys et al (2003) and Bebetos et al (2007). Findings of this study showed that the less experienced players perceive higher levels of role ambiguity in offense compared with experienced players. In this study, the young and less experienced players may not be able to do the responsibilities of the role they should play due to their less presence in professional football level and opportunity of playing in Premier League and also because the coaches may use them less in original composition. On the other hand, the role ambiguity of most players at the beginning of the season may be due to late formation of teams and lack of regular exercises at the beginning of the season and as a result, lack of complete familiarity of players with all their tasks in playground, especially young players and new members of teams (because they have been put in new environment in which the roles have changed). In fact, regular sport exercises provide required opportunities to clarify the players' responsibilities and increase the perception of their roles over time (Eys et al., 2003). It is expected that by passage of time and at the end of the season, the players get familiar with their role and its dimensions, subtleties and constraints of their tasks more than before. The reason of this may be that the players have found more opportunities to get involved in their roles in continue of the season; they have become familiar with their responsibilities and have found a complete perception of their role and position in the team and respond well to the expectations of their role and in case of changing the position and post, they can change the role to suit the new conditions.

It is also necessary to note that when a player takes a role and do its' responsibilities well, it is not enough just to know the tasks of the role. Characteristics and abilities of a player in doing the post responsibilities is of the factors that must be considered (Rajab Zadeh, 2006). However, a part of results of this study about the existence of role ambiguity more in offensive tasks and responsibilities towards the defensive responsibilities is consistent with the results of Beauchamp et al (2002), Eys et al (2003) and Beauchamp et al (2003). In these researches, it was mentioned that there is more role ambiguity in attack, because offensive posts include more and variety number of responsibilities. Findings of present study indicate that there is more

role ambiguity related to offensive responsibilities. Broader offensive tactics and strategies in football requires the players to have more diverse and complex roles and tasks and it may leads to create more role ambiguity in attack. Also, applying different designs and styles of offensive play and successive changes in play system will cause changes in post and position of players continuously especially during attack and players will be under the pressure and cannot concentrate on their tasks and finally there will be chaos in the team.

Today, football is played in different styles, systems and strategies. Most of the teams use different patterns especially during attack and allocate a considerable part of their exercise time to the offensive play. Thus, the players have a variety of choices and options while attacking compared with a play while defensing. It is therefore important for players to know that which role they have in each part of the ground in different stages of game so that to not be trapped in role ambiguity. In the end, it should be noted that some limitations of this study was limiting the samples of research to three teams from Football Premier League teams due to the team's lack of cooperation; therefore, generalization of the results should be taken with caution. Considering the results of present study, it is suggested that in football teams, there should be emphasis on the role of each player especially beginner and less experienced players in victory and success of team. In a football team, the players should feel that their role in the team can be vital in achieving a great goal, even if their role is minor.

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