

Identification of Causal Factors Affecting Teamwork Coaching in Iranian Public Organizations

Hosain. Ghafari¹, Kumars. Ahmadi^{2*}, Reza. Salehi³, Adel. Salvati⁴

¹ PhD Student in Public Administration, Department of Management, Sanandaj Branch, Islamic Azad University, Sanandaj, Iran

² Associate Professor, Department of Management, Sanandaj Branch, Islamic Azad University, Sanandaj, Iran

³ Assistant Professor, Department of Statistics and Mathematics, Sanandaj Branch, Islamic Azad University, Sanandaj, Iran

⁴ Assistant Professor, Department of Management, Sanandaj Branch, Islamic Azad University, Sanandaj, Iran

* Corresponding author email address: ahmadi1218@yahoo.com

Article Info

Article type:

Original Research

How to cite this article:

Ghafari, H., Ahmadi, K., Salehi, R., & Salvati, A. (2025). Identification of Causal Factors Affecting Teamwork Coaching in Iranian Public Organizations. *International Journal of Innovation Management and Organizational Behavior*, 5(4), 1-7.
<https://doi.org/10.61838/kman.ijimob.5.4.8>



© 2025 the authors. Published by KMAN Publication Inc. (KMANPUB), Ontario, Canada. This is an open access article under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial 4.0 International (CC BY-NC 4.0) License.

ABSTRACT

Objective: The aim of the present study is to identify the causal factors affecting teamwork coaching in Iranian public organizations.

Methodology: The research is a mixed-method study in terms of strategy, developmental and applied in terms of purpose, and descriptive-exploratory in terms of method. For this purpose, open interviews were conducted with 10 experts and experienced individuals in the fields of teamwork or coaching. Ultimately, the influential factors were identified through grounded theory analysis and a three-stage coding process, based on the Strauss and Corbin model.

Findings: According to the results, eight causal codes or factors were identified, which were subsequently categorized into two dimensions: individual (promotion of coaching concepts, employees' acceptance of teamwork, employees' enthusiasm for self-empowerment, and familiarity with coaching concepts) and organizational (managers' awareness of the coaching concept, organizational structure flexibility, organizational belief in coaching, and the organizational will for coaching).

Conclusion: This study identifies key individual and organizational factors influencing the establishment of teamwork coaching in Iranian government organizations, emphasizing the importance of coaching promotion, organizational flexibility, and leadership awareness.

Keywords: Coaching, teamwork, public organization, grounded theory.

1 Introduction

In recent years, the most significant concern of the government has been reducing public expenditure and increasing development among the human resources of all governmental agencies. For this reason, long-term human resource management programs must proceed in a way that reforms the administrative system and the management of public sector organizations, which in turn depends on increasing order and cohesion in implementing the planned strategies. The ultimate goal of these reforms is to transform the public administration system and, subsequently, enhance the capabilities of society as a whole in achieving the nation's greater objectives, ultimately leading to progress and development. This is precisely the focus of the general policies outlined by the Supreme Leader, the fifth development plan, the general policies of the government, and the 2025 vision document, where it is specifically targeted in the administrative reform program. The outcome of this program is the enhancement of the skills of governmental agencies and the promotion of entrepreneurial spirit among managers and experts. Therefore, it addresses issues such as reducing unnecessary government staff, transforming the organizational structure of the government, introducing new approaches to recruitment, training, and improving human resources, fundamentally changing how tasks are performed within organizations, improving technology management, enhancing customer service, increasing specialization over bureaucracy, improving the capacity to control personnel, and ultimately fostering teamwork (Tangestani & Moradi, 2023). The most significant point highlighted in the 2025 vision document and the policies of Article 44 of the Constitution of the Islamic Republic of Iran regarding administrative reform is increasing the efficiency of the administrative system without increasing organizational centralization, which also entails reducing individualism and organizational isolation. The concept of leadership based on teamwork emerges as a result of this efficiency, with characteristics such as globalization, increased dynamism in analyzing economic, political, social, and cultural conditions, self-sustaining capabilities for influencing economic growth alongside social development, and ultimately increasing organizational performance effectiveness. Organizations can move toward changes based on improving the knowledge and satisfaction of employees, by increasing motivation and enabling them to contribute ideas on fundamental organizational matters. The core of such changes is rooted in

enhancing the sense of participation and vitality resulting from teamwork. Therefore, how to reform and reclassify governmental positions, create an environment for collective and convergent thinking, and engage all stakeholders—both public and private sector professionals—with necessary prioritization based on their roles, status, and importance, alongside utilizing all available material and spiritual resources from various sectors and finding appropriate policy tools by the government, are among the questions and issues that can significantly impact the improvement of the administrative system structure (Farzadnia, 2011; Fathivajarah et al., 2015). According to the literature, the lack of a continuous and effective method to improve teamwork and performance (Fathivajarah et al., 2015), the absence of general and specific indicators for evaluating teamwork performance (Tahmasebzadeh & Jafari, 2020), guiding and transforming teamwork towards performance improvement (Heslin et al., 2006), and adopting appropriate methods in employee training (Podolchak et al., 2019) are some of the research gaps in the implementation of teamwork in organizations. Today, in human resource management, the concept of coaching is recognized as a common strategy among the challenges mentioned. Coaching, in addition to being an educational tool for enhancing human resource growth and development, improves learning and ultimately has a direct impact on increasing organizational productivity, or in other words, increasing profit and reducing costs (Renard, 2005).

There is limited research in this area. For instance, Ghafari et al. (2021) in a study identified a model for explaining the concept of employee performance coaching in Iranian public organizations. The findings, using common extracted concepts, led to the identification of five moderating, contextual, strategic, outcome, and causal factors for implementing a performance coaching system. The results indicate that modern organizations, with a better understanding of these factors, can respond more effectively to competitive pressure and, by developing and applying strategies such as coaching, can achieve more efficient results (Ghafari et al., 2021). Additionally, Hajizadeh et al. (2021) conducted a study identifying and explaining the factors influencing operational managers' coaching at the Persian Gulf Petrochemical Industries Company to motivate human resources. The results revealed 145 primary codes within 23 categories, including core category, causal conditions, contextual, intervening, strategies, and outcomes. The relationships between the variables in the model were found to be positive and significant (Hajizadeh

et al., 2022). Mashhadi & Ghoroneh (2021) examined the process of using coaching for succession planning in the Welfare Committee of Khorasan Razavi. The results showed that coaching could facilitate succession planning through mechanisms such as in-service learning, problem-solving skills enhancement, growth opportunities, foresight, delegation, job rotation, promotion, and risk-taking opportunities (Mashhadi & Ghoroneh, 2021). Podolchak et al. (2019) examined the impact of coaching on managerial skill development. Their findings suggest that only a manager with appropriate professional competencies, creativity in thinking, and organizational capacity can benefit from coaching. Rubin et al. (2016) conducted research on defining the role of coaching through a design study. This exploratory study used a knowledge framework to define the role of coaching in industrial engineering and industrial design, finding that the new coaching approach in design was successful among students (Podolchak et al., 2019).

Given the very limited research on the implementation of coaching in public organizations, the reasons and evidence identifying the importance and necessity of the current study are as follows: the importance and value of coaching, insufficient efforts for properly implementing teamwork coaching in human resources, the lack of research on the quality of coaching methods in the public sector workforce, and the usefulness of the results of this study in planning and adopting new approaches to teamwork training such as coaching in human resource management systems. Therefore, this study aims to make a modest contribution to the development of the concept of teamwork coaching by identifying and presenting the causal factors that affect it.

2 Methods and Materials

Given that the purpose of this study is to identify the causal factors affecting team coaching in Iranian public organizations, this research can be classified as developmental and exploratory in terms of its objective. In terms of methodology, it is a descriptive study of a correlational and survey-based nature.

In qualitative research, the sample size is generally determined through the researcher's judgment and decision-making, as there are no predefined rules. The statistical population of this study consists of Iranian public organizations. A non-random, purposive, and systematic snowball sampling method was used to select 10 experts with experience in team working or coaching.

This research, which aims to propose a new model and methodology, is considered applied. Regarding data collection, it falls within the category of descriptive (non-experimental) research. To solve the research problem and identify the causal factors for coaching, a qualitative research method, specifically grounded theory, was used (Sarmad, Bazargan, & Hejazi, 2014). The ultimate goal of grounded theory is to provide comprehensive theoretical explanations of a specific phenomenon. In general, this approach converts data from informational sources into a set of codes, which are grouped into categories, and then these categories are transformed into a theory. Accordingly, Strauss and Corbin view the theory derived from this process as the product of an inductive approach that emerges from the study of a phenomenon. In grounded theory, rather than the researcher seeking to confirm a preconceived theory from the start, the theory governing the behavior of the phenomenon under study is allowed to emerge from the data during data collection and analysis (Imam & Mohammadian, 2008). For the validity of the research, the method of face validity was employed, and after identifying the factors, the opinions of five university professors were used.

Grounded theory consists of three stages:

1. Open Coding

Coding in grounded theory is a form of content analysis aimed at identifying and conceptualizing the themes that emerge from a mass of data. In the process of analyzing an interview, the researcher will realize that the interviewee uses words and phrases that highlight relevant themes about the phenomenon being studied. The focus or emphasis of the interviewee on a particular subject is often expressed in a short phrase or specific term. Identifying these phrases, words, and terms is called coding (Danayi-Fard, 2005). According to Strauss and Corbin, coding should be performed through microanalysis. Microanalysis is a method in which the text is analyzed word by word, and meanings are extracted from individual words. Reviewing each word can sometimes be time-consuming and may complicate the analysis. According to Glaser, key point coding can be used, where instead of analyzing each word, key points are examined, and codes are extracted from them. In this study, key point coding was used.

2. Axial Coding

Classification and categorization in open coding reduce the number of units with which the researcher has to work (Strauss & Corbin, 2007, p. 65). This process helps the implementation of grounded theory in the axial coding stage. In this stage, by establishing connections between

categories, information is linked in new ways. The grounded theory researcher selects one of the categories from open coding and places it at the center of the process being analyzed (as the central phenomenon). Other categories are then linked to it. These categories include: causal conditions, strategies, contextual conditions, intervening conditions, and consequences. The categories derived from open coding are on the right side, while the axial coding model is on the left side. The researcher identifies one of the categories from open coding as the central category, which forms the foundation of the theory. Later, this central category becomes the core of the axial coding model.

Additionally, when observing the axial coding model from right to left, it becomes clear that causal conditions influence the central phenomenon, which, along with the contextual and intervening conditions, influences the strategies, and strategies impact the outcomes.

3. Selective Coding

Selective coding is the final stage of coding, where the main category is selected, and its connection with other categories is clarified. The interpretation and articulation of the relationships between the main category and other categories are done in accordance with the research model. This is because "in axial coding, the basis for selective

coding is established. During the selective coding process, once theoretical saturation is reached in the main categories, the core category is developed until it encompasses the main categories identified at the most abstract level of the model." The core category in this study is the secondary outcome of all main categories. In this stage, the researcher writes a theory derived from the relationships between the categories in the axial coding model. This theory provides an abstract explanation of the process under study. The process of theory integration and enhancement is carried out through techniques such as writing a storyline that connects the categories and categorizing through personal memos on theoretical ideas. In a storyline, the researcher examines how specific factors influence the phenomenon and lead to the use of particular strategies with distinct outcomes. A grounded theory study may conclude with hypotheses or propositions that clarify the relationships between categories in the axial coding model.

3 Findings and Results

In this study, after collecting interviews in the qualitative section, 8 open codes with different concepts were initially collected, as shown in [Table 1](#).

Table 1

Concepts and Extracted Codes Explaining Causal Factors Affecting Teamwork Coaching

Concept	Extracted Codes
Individual Factors	Training and Promotion of Coaching Concepts Acceptance of Teamwork by Employees Degree of Enthusiasm for Self-Empowerment in Employees Familiarity with Coaching Concepts
Organizational Factors	Awareness of Managers about the Concept of Coaching Flexibility of Organizational Structure Organizational Belief in Coaching Organizational Willingness for Coaching

Next, these codes were consolidated into 2 concepts and the causal factors for the establishment of teamwork

coaching in Iranian government organizations were identified as follows:

Table 2

Concepts Explaining Causal Factors Affecting Teamwork Coaching

Factors	Extracted Codes
Individual Factors	Training and Promotion of Coaching Concepts Acceptance of Teamwork by Employees Degree of Enthusiasm for Self-Empowerment in Employees Familiarity with Coaching Concepts
Organizational Factors	Awareness of Managers about the Concept of Coaching Flexibility of Organizational Structure Organizational Belief in Coaching

The individual factors influencing the establishment of teamwork coaching in Iranian government organizations include the promotion of coaching concepts, employee enthusiasm for teamwork, self-empowerment motivation, and familiarity with coaching concepts. Interviewees emphasized that fostering awareness of coaching concepts among employees is vital for encouraging teamwork. One participant stated, "When employees understand what coaching is about, they become more open to collaborative efforts." Another mentioned, "Self-empowerment among employees can significantly impact their motivation to engage in group work and accept coaching." These factors collectively enhance the likelihood of coaching success in organizational contexts.

Organizational factors such as managerial awareness of coaching concepts, flexibility in organizational structure, organizational belief in coaching, and the organizational will to implement coaching were identified as critical drivers. One manager shared, "Managers must be aware of what coaching entails to support its integration effectively." In line with this, another participant noted, "A flexible organizational structure that adapts to coaching methods can create an environment conducive to group work." Additionally, organizational buy-in was seen as crucial: "If the organization truly believes in the value of coaching, it becomes much easier to align employees with this initiative." The organizational will to implement coaching was underscored by a participant who remarked, "Commitment at the organizational level provides the necessary push for employees to engage with coaching practices."

4 Discussion and Conclusion

The present research was conducted with the aim of identifying the causal factors for the establishment of teamwork coaching in Iranian government organizations. The results of the study showed that 8 codes or causal factors affecting the establishment of coaching include individual factors (promotion of coaching concepts, acceptance of teamwork by employees, degree of enthusiasm for self-empowerment in employees, familiarity with coaching concepts) and organizational factors (awareness of managers about the concept of coaching, flexibility of organizational structure, organizational belief in coaching, and organizational willingness for coaching).

From the total interviews conducted, 8 codes were identified and consolidated. Based on the expanded concept of coaching embedded in the interviews, we were able to identify 2 concepts that share common contexts or at least have similar functions in the implementation of teamwork coaching. The nature of the grounded theory method and open coding enables the researcher to organize and categorize diverse features of individual and organizational concepts within the central phenomenon of teamwork coaching. For this reason, codes such as: training and promotion of coaching concepts, acceptance of teamwork by employees, degree of enthusiasm for self-empowerment in employees, familiarity with coaching concepts, awareness of managers about the concept of coaching, flexibility of organizational structure, organizational belief in coaching, and organizational willingness for coaching, are all recognized as incentives and driving forces for the acceptance and development of teamwork coaching. Therefore, these 8 codes were considered as causal factors for the establishment of teamwork coaching in Iranian government organizations.

In organizations where employees have the motivation and ability to embrace teamwork, they can mark the beginning of the coaching process. The desire to understand new concepts of teamwork, motivated by the goal of increasing work efficiency, is contingent upon having the knowledge and ability to implement these concepts under the supervision of a coach, which is the driving force that employees need in the organization to standardize their work performance. On the other hand, the conditions under which employees can demonstrate their abilities under coaching, controlled by the organization, serve as another driving force.

If the organization can align its formalization, focus, complexity, and hierarchy with the introduction of the concept of coaching within the organization, it will naturally cultivate in employees the belief that they can better engage in coaching through teamwork. Studies found that employees' beliefs fundamentally influence the emergence or decline of coaching. When individuals hold traditional beliefs, they resist new changes, whereas in emerging organizations, beliefs are more flexible. In some organizations, despite deficiencies in management and even in the structure of higher-level institutions, it is the organizational will that can serve as a spiritual reward, facilitating and clarifying the path for employees' acceptance

of teamwork coaching (Ghafari et al., 2021; Heslin et al., 2006; Mashhadi & Ghoroneh, 2021).

Thus, the 8 identified codes can be categorized as factors for the establishment of teamwork coaching under two dimensions: individual (promotion of coaching concepts, acceptance of teamwork by employees, degree of enthusiasm for self-empowerment in employees, familiarity with coaching concepts) and organizational (awareness of managers about the concept of coaching, flexibility of organizational structure, organizational belief in coaching, organizational willingness for coaching).

Therefore, given the emerging nature of the concept of coaching in especially public sector organizations in the country, it is recommended that future researchers focus more on the comparative aspects of this tool in organizations. The use of models from successful countries in implementing and integrating them with coaching frameworks for teamwork is more effective in achieving sustainable results.

Authors' Contributions

All authors have contributed significantly to the research process and the development of the manuscript.

Declaration

In order to correct and improve the academic writing of our paper, we have used the language model ChatGPT.

Transparency Statement

Data are available for research purposes upon reasonable request to the corresponding author.

Acknowledgments

We would like to express our gratitude to all individuals helped us to do the project.

Declaration of Interest

The authors report no conflict of interest.

Funding

According to the authors, this article has no financial support.

Ethical Considerations

In this research, ethical standards including obtaining informed consent, ensuring privacy and confidentiality were observed.

References

- Farzadnia, F. (2011). Coaching and Leading Models in Management (A novel approach in front management based on creativity). 1st Annual Conference of Management, Innovation, Entrepreneurship, Shiraz.
- Fathivajarah, K., Khorasani, A., & Daneshmandi, S. (2015). *Coaching in Training Development*. Tehran, Industrial Research and Training Center of Iran. <http://irtci.com/irtci-monitoring.aspx>
- Ghafari, F., Ahmadi, K., & Salvati, A. (2021). Designing a model for conceptual expansion of employee performance coaching in Iranian public organizations. *Naja Human Resource*, 15(65), 67-92. <https://www.sid.ir/paper/1038277/en>
- Hajizadeh, H., Makvandi, F., & Amirnejad, G. (2022). Design a coaching model for operational managers of the Persian Gulf Petrochemical Company for motivating human resources. *Quarterly Journal of Human Resources Training and Development*, 59(16), 141-169. <http://ensani.ir/fa/article/474439/%D8%B7%D8%B1%D8%A7%D8%AD%DB%8C-%D8%A7%D9%84%DA%AF%D9%88%DB%8C-%D9%85%D8%B1%D8%A8%DB%8C-%DA%AF%D8%B1%DB%8C-%D9%85%D8%AF%DB%8C%D8%B1%D8%A7%D9%86-%D8%B9%D9%85%D9%84%DB%8C%D8%A7%D8%AA%DB%8C-%D8%B4%D8%B1%DA%A9%D8%AA-%D8%B5%D9%86%D8%A7%DB%8C%D8%B9-%D9%BE%D8%AA%D8%B1%D9%88%D8%B4%DB%8C%D9%85%DB%8C-%D8%AE%D9%84%DB%8C%D8%AC-%D9%81%D8%A7%D8%B1%D8%B3-%D8%AF%D8%B1-%D8%B1%D8%A7%D8%B3%D8%AA%D8%A7%DB%8C-%D8%A7%D9%86%DA%AF%DB%8C%D8%B2%D8%B4-%D9%86%DB%8C%D8%B1%D9%88%DB%8C-%D8%A7%D9%86%D8%B3%D8%A7%D9%86%DB%8C>
- Heslin, P. A., Vande Walle, D., & Latham, G. P. (2006). Keen to help? Managers' implicit person theories and their subsequent employee coaching. *Personnel psychology*, 59-87. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1744-6570.2006.00057.x>
- Mashhadi, F., & Ghoroneh, D. (2021). Identify Mechanisms and Barriers to Employing Coaching for Managers' Succession (Case Study: Khorasan Razavi Relief Committee). *Quarterly Journal of Training and Development of Human Resources*, 8(24), 168-193. <https://doi.org/10.52547/istd.31185.8.28.168>
- Podolchak, N. Y., Prokopyshyn-Rashkevych, L. M., & Karkovska, V. Y. (2019). The influence of coaching on the development of manager's leadership skills. *Scientific Bulletin of National Mining University*, 1(4), 254-261. <https://doi.org/10.29202/nvngu/2019-4/22>
- Renard, L. (2005). *Executive Coaching for Professional Organizations* The American University of London]. <https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/8/8b/LRthesisExecutiveCoaching.PDF>
- Tahmasebzadeh, D., & Jafari, K. (2020). Compare the viewpoints of faculty members and students about the quality of the use of coaching method in educational activities of faculty members. *Educ Strategy Med Sci*, 12(2), 18-25.

<http://ensani.ir/fa/article/416368/%D9%85%D9%82%D8%A7%DB%8C%D8%B3%D9%87-%D8%AF%DB%8C%D8%AF%DA%AF%D8%A7%D9%87-%D8%A7%D8%B3%D8%A7%D8%AA%DB%8C%D8%AF%D9%88-%D8%AF%D8%A7%D9%86%D8%B4%D8%AC%D9%88%DB%8C%D8%A7%D9%86-%D8%AF%D8%B1-%DA%A9%DB%8C%D9%81%DB%8C%D8%AA-%DA%A9%D8%A7%D8%B1%D8%A8%D8%B3%D8%AA-%D8%B1%D9%88%D8%B4-%D9%85%D8%B1%D8%A8%DB%8C-%DA%AF%D8%B1%DB%8C-%DA%A9%D9%88%DA%86%DB%8C%D9%86%DA%AF%D8%AF%D8%B1-%D9%81%D8%B9%D8%A7%D9%84%DB%8C%D8%AA-%D9%87%D8%A7%DB%8C-%D8%A2%D9%85%D9%88%D8%B2%D8%B4%DB%8C-%D8%A7%D8%B9%D8%B6%D8%A7%DB%8C-%D9%87%DB%8C%D8%A6%D8%AA-%D8%B9%D9%84%D9%85%DB%8C>

Tangestani, M., & Moradi, B. M. (2023). An Introduction to the State Function of "Eliminating Unnecessary Organizations". *Quarterly Journal of Public Law Knowledge*, 12(39), 47-70. <https://volunteeractivists.nl/en/%D8%AE%D8%B7%D8%B1-%D8%BA%DB%8C%D8%B1-%D9%82%D8%A7%D9%86%D9%88%D9%86%DB%8C-%D8%B4%D8%AF%D9%86-%D9%87%D9%85%D9%87-%D8%B3%D8%A7%D8%B2%D9%85%D8%A7%D9%86-%D9%87%D8%A7%DB%8C-%D8%BA%DB%8C%D8%B1-%D8%AF-2/>