

**COACHING LEADERSHIP STYLES AND TEAM
COHESION IN ETHIOPIAN PUBLIC UNIVERSITIES
MALE FOOTBALL TEAMS**

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Abstract:

The main purpose of this research was to examine coaching leadership styles and team cohesion in Ethiopian public universities male football teams. The statistical population consisted of 33 male football teams (N= 726) those who have participated in the 7th all Ethiopian public universities sport festival at Haramya University. So, the numbers of universities and respondents were determined via sample determination formula. Two stage random sampling techniques were used to selected 10 university teams and per university 14 respondents (n= 140), respectively. In this research, the adopted version of the leadership scale for sport (LSS) and the Group environment questionnaire (GEQ), were employed. Descriptive statistics (Mean and standard deviation), and Pearson product moment correlation were undertaken to analyze the data at the 5% level of significance. The result of the study indicates that the most persistent coaching leadership style in Ethiopian public universities male football team was training and instruction. Moreover, there was a positive and significant relationship between coaching leadership styles: training and instruction, democratic behavior and positive feedback to task and social cohesions. Therefore, it seems that employing training and instruction, democratic behavior and positive feedback coaching leadership styles would have a positive effect on team cohesion and would improve the team successes.

Key words: Coaching, cohesion, leadership styles

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INTRODUCTION

Coaches greatly influence athletes' performance and behavior, as well as their general psychological and emotional well-being (Chelladurai, 1990 and Andrew, 2009). The researches on the past two decades in sport coaching (e.g., Chelladurai, 1990; Moradi, 2004; Turman, 2006; Nazarudin, 2009; Nazarudin, 2009 & Mohades, Ramzaninezhad, Benar, Khabiri & Kazemnezhad, 2011) have primarily been conducted on identifying the characteristics, leadership styles, and behavioral patterns, which are most effective. These research studies, in general, have defined an "effective coach" as one who elicits either successful performance outcomes or positive psychological responses on the part of her or his athletes (Ramzaninezhad and Keshtan, 2009). In support of this notion, Anshel (2003) further asserted that beside to the technical skills of coaches, effective coaches need to occupy many roles within the lives of athletes. These may include being a leader, follower, teacher, role model, limit setter, psychologist/counselor/mentor, and infrastructure for progress.

Coaches are, therefore, the one who are able to understand the whole aspect of athlete's development, and their play in the climax level to realize the objectives. For this reason, to be a successful coach requires determining the best-fit leadership style, which accommodates the behavior of the players to retain sense of integrity in the team. In line with this, Chelladurai, (1990) and Saleh (1980) reported five different coaching leadership styles:

- Training and Instruction: coaching behavior aimed at improving the athletes' performance by emphasizing and facilitating hard and strenuous training; instructing them in the skills, techniques, and tactics of the sport; clarifying the relationship among the members; and by structuring and coordinating the members' activities;
- Democratic Behavior: coaching behavior that allows greater participation by the athletes in decisions pertaining to group goals, practice methods, and game tactics and strategies;
- Autocratic Behavior: coaching behavior this involves independent decision-making and stresses personal authority;
- Social Support: coaching behavior characterized by a concern for the welfare of individual athletes, positive group atmosphere, and warm interpersonal relations with members, and

- Positive Feedback: coaching behavior, which reinforces an athlete by recognizing and rewarding good performance.

Taken together, these five dimensions provide conceptually distinct categories of overall coaching leadership styles and determine the interpersonal relationship exist between the coach and players and the relationship between coach and team (Carron, 1982). Along this line, a number of studies have found out that training and instruction style was the most recurrent and persistent type of leadership style (Chelladurai, 1990; Riemer and Chelladurai, 1995; Serpa 1999; Mohades, Ramzaninezhad, et al. 2011; Turman, 2006; Bennett and Manuel (2000); Sherman et al., 2000; Villani, Martin and Mulski, 2006; and Nazarudin, 2009; Ramzaninezhad and Hosseini, 2009). Likewise, Sisay and Syam's (2012) research on football players of premier league clubs in Ethiopia indicated that coaches mostly use training and instruction behavior and less positive feedback and autocratic styles.

From the above point of view, it is possible to say that coaches typically give emphasis on technical skills. Undoubtedly, coaches should give attention not only on training and on performing sport skills, but also for the psychological aspect of players in particular and teams in general (Ronayne, 2004). Actually, this can be achieved when the group members' work together to realize desirable results, beside securing individual performance, they must pay attention to the forces, processes and factors affecting their performance as well (Joaquin, 2006). Relating to this, Moradi, (2004) attested, one of the psychosocial factor in team sport is team cohesion, which is a critical aspect that alters a non-regular collection of individuals into a team and plays a significant role in strengthening team performance and the feeling of satisfaction among the members, which is further classified as task and social cohesion.

A long with this, Wester & Weiss (1991) reported that there is a significant positive relationship between training and instruction, democratic, social support and positive feedback leadership styles to task and social cohesion. Peace and Kozub (1994) research on female high school basketball teams also showed a positive and significant relationship between coaches' leadership styles and task cohesion, but there was no significant relationship between these leadership styles and social cohesion.

With this background, one of a challenge for coaches seems to find out a leadership style that is conducive to team success. Despite considerable research on coaching styles, the answer to the following question remains hard to pin down; which coaching style is the most often used and effective for optimal team performance? Which leadership styles have a positive and significance relationship to team cohesion? Presently, as far as the researchers' capacity to solicit literatures are concerned, there is no attempt made to identify persistently employed coaching leadership style and quantify the association between coaching leadership styles and team cohesion, in particular, Ethiopian sport context. Therefore, it would be worthwhile to examine coaching leadership styles and team cohesion in Ethiopian public universities male football teams.

General Objective

The main objective of the study was to examine coaching leadership styles and team cohesion in male football players of Ethiopian public universities. Based on this general objective, this study is aimed:

- To identify coaching leadership styles in male football players of Ethiopian public universities.
- To find out the relationship, if any, between coaching leadership styles and team cohesion in male football players of Ethiopian public universities.
- To determine the coaching leadership styles to social and task cohesion in male football players of Ethiopian public universities.

Research questions

1. Which coaching leadership styles persistently used in male football teams of Ethiopian public universities?
2. Which coaching leadership styles associate to team cohesion in male football players of Ethiopian public universities football teams?
3. Which coaching leadership styles associate to task and social cohesion in male football players of Ethiopian public universities?

METHODOLOGY

Design and period of the Study: A cross-sectional study design was employed in order to determine coaching leadership styles and team cohesion in Ethiopian public universities male football teams. This study was carried out during the seventh all-Ethiopian public Universities sport festival in 2013/14, hosted by Haramaya University.

Source of Data: The population of the present research consisted of all male football player students (N= 726) those who have represented 33 public university teams. Accordingly, using sample size determination formula (Daniel, 1977) the number of respondents were determined (n= 140). Hence, all the sample respondents (n =140) were considered as a source of data.

Sampling procedure and Sample Size: two stage random sampling techniques were used in this study. First, from the total 33 participant public universities 30 % of the university representatives were randomly drawn; that is, 10 universities. Then, from these 10 universities per- university 14 football players were selected. (18-25 players were in each university squad). This was done with the intention to come across the number of respondents determined before (n=140).

Validity and Reliability: To ascertain the validity of the instruments expert opinions were sought from both psychology and education departments of Jimma University, Ethiopia. In fact, consultation with these experts helped to modify and improve the instruments. In addition, pilot test was carried out, involving 22 Jimma University male football players that did not participate in the actual study. Following the pilot study, the coefficient of reliability of the perceived version of the leadership scale for sport (LSS) and the Group environment questionnaire (GEQ) were 0.87 and 0.92, respectively. This clearly demonstrates both values are found to be within an acceptable range ($\alpha \geq 0.8$). Based on this pilot study result, appropriate corrections were made on the instruments. In addition, comments forward from the pilot study participants were incorporated to make the instrument more valid and reliable.

Method of data analysis: Statistical analyses were carried out based on the basic research questions that the study aimed to answer. Hence, SPSS version 20 software was used for the analysis the data. In the first part, descriptive statistics mean and standard deviation were computed. Thereafter, Pearson correlation coefficient was employed to correlate the relationship between coach leadership styles and team cohesion.

Limitation of the study: One of the serious limitations of the study was lack of adequate local researches pertaining to the subject under study.

Ethical Issues: All the necessary ethical issues including consent from the participants and confidentiality were entertained in this research.

RESULT

Table 1

Means and Standard Deviations scores of leadership scale for sport (LSS)

Coaching leadership styles					
Players (n=140)	Train.	Dem.	PosFeedback.	SocSuport	. Auto.
Mean	49.73	33.73	28.51	18.95	16.70
Standard deviation	8.047	5.781	4.421	5.781	3.288

Note: Train = Training and Instruction; Dem = Democratic; PosFeedback = Positive Feedback; SocSupport = Social Support; Auto = Autocratic.

As can be seen from table 1, Athletes perceived training and instruction coaching style with the highest mean score (M=49.73, SD=± 8.047) followed by democratic behavior (M=33.73, SD=± 5.781), positive feedback (M=28.51, SD=± 4.421), social support (M=18.95, SD=± 5.939), and Autocratic behavior (M=16.70, SD=± 3.288).

Table 2

Means and Standard Deviations for Group environment questionnaire (GEQ)

Team cohesion		
players (n=140)	TaskC	SocialC
Mean	27.85	27.7
Standard deviation	7.77	7.92

Note: TaskC= Task cohesion; SocialC= Social cohesion.

With respect to team cohesion, in table 2 Task cohesion ($M=27.85$, $SD=\pm 7.77$) followed by Social cohesion ($M=27.7$, $SD=\pm 7.92$).

Table 3

Pearson Correlation between coaches' leadership styles to task and social cohesion

(n=140)	Coaching leadership styles				
	Train	Dem	Auto	pos Feedback	SocSupport
TaskC	.464**	.262**	.096	.217	.268**
Sign.	.000	.006	.183	.020	.005
SocialC	.472**	.286**	.126	.203	.274**
Sign.	.000	.003	.117	.027	.004

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (1-tailed).

Note: Train = Training and Instruction; Dem = Democratic; PosFeedback = Positive Feedback; SocSupport = Social Support; Auto = Autocratic; TaskC= Task cohesion; SocialC= Social cohesion.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

The general objective of this research was to investigate the relationship between coaching leadership styles and team cohesion in male football players of Ethiopian public universities. Accordingly, the most persistent coaching leadership style in Ethiopian public university male football teams was found to be training and instruction leadership style, comparing it with other leadership styles such as democratic behavior, autocratic behavior, social support, and positive feedback. This leadership style relies up on improving the athletes' performance by emphasizing and facilitating hard and strenuous training; instructing players in the skills, techniques, and tactics of the sport. However, it takes no notice of the psychological and social phenomenon of the players.

The data found in the present study is also compatible with research findings (Jabal Ameli 2009; Kuran, et al 2008; Yousefi, 2007; Hosseini 2007; Riemer and Chelladurai 1995; Serpa 1999; Tsutsumi, 2000; and Nazarudin, 2009). In addition, Sisay and Syam's (2012) research on football players of premier league clubs of Ethiopia, in particular, indicated that coaches use

training and instruction leadership dimension but less positive feedback style, which reinforces an athlete by recognizing and rewarding good performance. Again, Ronayne (2004) contend that whether coaches are coaching professional athletes or amateur football players, coaches mostly give emphasis for technical skills. Undoubtedly, coaches should give attention not only on training and on performing sport skills but also for the psychological aspect of players in particular and teams in general.

The result obtained from correlations indicated that coaching leadership styles and team cohesion, in which a group stick together and remain united in the pursuit of its objectives, had a positive and significant relationship. This finding is consistent with the corresponding authors' work (Peace and Kozub, 1994; Murray, 2006; and Ramzaninezhad and Hosseini, 2009), as individual players participating in games should have to inter-act each other socially, for the sake of achieving team goal. The research result also revealed that training and instruction, democratic behavior and positive feedback leadership styles had a positive and significant relationship to task and social cohesion. However, autocratic and social support leadership styles do not have a positive and significant relationship. Supporting this, Moradi (2004), Ramzaninezhad and Hosseini (2009) pointed out that there was a positive and significant relationship between task cohesion and training and instruction, democratic behavior and positive feedback leadership styles.

In general, therefore, it seems that the type of leadership behavior displayed by the head coach can have a significant effect on the performance and psychological well-being of the athlete. In agreement with this, Carron et al. (1985) contented that long-term affiliation of players with the rest players, team practices and dedication to group goals lead to more team task cohesion. Hence, football coaches need to re-arrange the training session in a way that to realize, group task cohesion. To achieve this, one of the strategies could be to give emphasis on allowing enough time to practice together. In fact, this enables players to stay more collectively and develop their skill of play. With respect to reinforcement, at the time of good effort, the coach should provide with immediate feedback, so does for punishment. If the coach respects the above ideas, it can enhance performance of the players as a whole. For the same reason, coaches should

establish intimate relationship between his players to enhance the performance of a team social cohesion.

To this end, Joaquin,(2006) highlights that football is performed in a group form, when the group members' work together realize the desirable results, beside securing individual performance, they must pay attention to the forces, processes and factors affecting their performance as well. As a result, coaches in the respective universities should look outside the box to incorporate democratic behavior and positive feedback leadership styles, to have a positive effect on the team's performance and improve team cohesion. The results of this study may provide coaches with better awareness of the effect of their leadership styles on performance and help determine which style or styles are most effective. The current study shall help coaches better understand how their leadership behaviors relate to their team's performance, and enhance the literature in this area. Future studies on the current topic are therefore recommended, particularly in Ethiopian context.

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