

Relationship between Coach Leadership Styles and Athletes' Satisfaction at UiTM Seremban

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Abstract

Leadership styles are important for a coach applied to their athletes. To form a team who are diversified in terms of background, lifestyle and age needed a huge responsibility to achieve a common goal. Coach has expertise, experiences, and knowledge and is capable of managing all those differences. From the perspective of an athlete, they want to fulfill their satisfaction toward performance and results. Without cooperation from the coach and discipline from the athletes the goal is far from to be achieved. The researchers tend to look at coach leadership style and athlete's satisfaction at UiTM Seremban. The sample of 254 university students who voluntarily participated in this study. For data collection, a questionnaire with Likert scale is used for coaching leadership style and athlete satisfaction. Having an autocratic leadership style are not bad as thought, on top of that, it contributes to having good discipline and leads to athlete satisfaction.

Keywords: Leadership Styles, Athlete Satisfaction

Introduction

To be a successful team required a lot of cooperation between management, coaches, and athletes themselves. The most contributions are the relationship and communication between coach and athlete. A study done by Aly (2014) stated timing, development, and style of communication significantly lead to success in a team sport. Jowett & Lavallee (2007), said the coach and athlete relationship can be explained by looking at their interaction such as cognition, feelings, and time.

As a coach, they should inspire their players and through it would affect player performance. Leadership skills and research was done by a coach to determine their coaching style and impact on performance attitude (Smith & Smool, 1997). There are a few leadership styles that a coach applied during training and games. Undoubtedly, by understanding the importance of these leadership styles, athlete development will be greatly accelerated. Based on the previous finding by Coulter et al (2017), asserts that an athlete's growth and have a strong

overall performance is contingent between an athlete and coach. A strong motivation, understanding, enthusiasm, and support contribute to high-quality training. As supported by Brian Mackenzie (2003), reported coaches motivate athletes, provide effective training, and assist players in improving their performance.

Athlete satisfaction can be explained as a pleasant emotional state after a thorough examination of the structures, processes, and results involved with the sports experiences (Riemer & Chelladurai, 1998). Different coaches have a different style but indeed leader behavior possesses significant influences on athlete outcome (e.g., performance and satisfaction), (Lorimer, Ross., 2011; Pilus & Saadan, 2009). A coach should be knowledgeable about various aspects of athlete life to provide more comprehensive assistance. The study by Lorimer, Ross. (2011), said athlete satisfaction can occur when there is guided by a leader.

Literature Review

A Coaching Leadership Style (CLS) implies a leader uses coaching as the main method to achieve desirable results. Based on Hicks (2004), CLS is the approach that can create a high culture performance. It can be defined by cooperation, empowerment, and satisfaction. Likewise, an effective leader has a huge responsibility to provide, share the knowledge, and direct them for better performance. Coaching leaders are best at establishing mechanisms to match personal and corporate objectives which can foster responsibility and achievement shared (Eden Project, 2018; Sutton, 2021). This is supported by Ellinger et al (2003), who found there is a significant correlation between managers' coaching behaviors and athlete satisfaction and performance.

Training and Instruction

Instructive styles seek a relationship that is established not only with learners but also with the learner's environment (Goldring et al., 2009; Hallinger, 2011; Leithwood et al., 2010). Coaching behavior aims to enhance athletes' performance by looking at training, and teaching athletes in sport's fundamental skills, methods, and tactics. It also purifies athlete connection, organizing and directing athlete's action. As related to sport, training, and instruction focus on athletes' abilities, strategies, and physical performances (Kim & Cruz, 2016).

Autocratic Behaviour

This behavior makes a decision based on their power and authority. This style ensures that all the members need to work together in pursuing their objectives. As to determine coach efficacy, they need not only focus on skills but also on the psychology of the individual and team. An autocratic coach always sees and demonstrates a lack of empathy, and he is the one that determines the rules, incentives and standards (Lyle, 2003). Another finding from Kim & Cruz (2016); Asiah & Rosli (2009) this behavior, focuses on personal authority and independent decision.

Democratic Behaviour

This coaching behavior allows their athletes to participate in decisions aligned with group goals, practice methods, game tactics, and strategies. This style is totally in contrast to the autocratic leadership style. In a study conducted by Okoroji et al., (2014), this style was found to be the most effective style, especially in decision making, and motivates athletes to make choices about their goals, and training objectives.

Social Support

It concerns athlete wellbeing, a group atmosphere, and interpersonal connection with members. Having this kind of behavior could help athletes with personal problems; feels enjoyment as an athlete's life (Sabock & Kleinfelter, 1987). Having this behavior helps in the reinforced relationship between the coach and teammates.

Positive Feedback

One of the ways to improve performance is to receive positive feedback. Høigaard et al (2008), stated this as a behavior that expresses an appreciation that includes complementing athletes' contribution and performance. Furthermore, it helps in athletes' self-efficacy. This kind of behavior is needed when an athlete is in training and games specially to prevent them from making any mistakes. This is supported by another researcher, it is important to provide feedback when it comes to learning new skills (Tzetis et al., 2008). Therefore, a coach needs to give positive feedback to their athletes.

Athlete Satisfaction

Athlete Satisfaction Questionnaire (ASQ) is used to measure athlete satisfaction. Four subscales in the ASQ refer to (Ability utilization, Strategy, Personal Treatment, and Training Instruction) which could contribute to the relationship between coaching leadership styles and athlete satisfaction. Different coaches have different styles including individual and team sport. As for an athlete, not all athletes will have a similar taste in leadership style. Wilson (2007), when an athlete felt uneasy and dissatisfied with the coach's approach, it could affect team cohesion and the athlete may drop out. When an athlete felt satisfied with all management it could lead to the best performance. This is supported by Chelladurai & Riemer (1997), athlete satisfaction is a pleasant emotional state that results from sport comprehensive assessment, experience structures, process, and outcome.

Athlete satisfaction depends on the quality of service offered by a coach. A good coach with a clear context would lead to a good performance. Beller (2008), stated a coach that can motivate their athlete toward teamwork when the coach provides solid instruction and training and at the same time encourages a democratic and fair play as well with good positive feedback. It is necessary to provide clear training and instruction to an athlete because it can improve athlete performance by emphasizing and facilitating training instruction about skills, technique, and tactics (Saleh, 2012). Athlete satisfaction derives from coaching behavior and not successful team performance (Abernathy, 2012).

Research Methodology

The total number of respondents involved is 254 representing an athlete at Universiti Teknologi Mara Seremban 3. The data collected in this study were analyzed and treated using the following techniques: to identify which coach leadership style is most preferred by UiTM Seremban athletes and to determine athlete satisfaction in UiTM Seremban (Descriptive analysis) and to identify the relationship between coach leadership styles and athlete's satisfaction in UiTM Seremban (Pearson correlation analysis). SPSS version 25 was used in the analysis.

Research Findings

Table 1

The most coach leadership style preferred by UiTM Seremban athletes.

	Mean	Std. Deviation	Rank
Positive feedback	4.5816	0.45128	1
Training and instruction	4.5150	0.43522	2
Social support	4.2868	0.48115	3
Democratic behaviour	5.1969	0.60687	4
Autocratic behaviour	3.0461	1.08943	5

Table 1 shown, positive feedback is the most preferred coach leadership style chosen by the student with ($M=4.5816$, $SD=0.45128$) and autocratic behaviour was the least preferred with ($M=3.0461$, $SD=1.08943$).

Table 2

Athlete's satisfaction in UiTM Seremban

	Mean	Std. Deviation	Rank
Personal treatment	2.6063	0.42300	1
Training and instruction	2.5459	0.46516	2
Strategy	2.5217	0.39076	3
Ability utilization	2.5171	0.40573	4

Table 2 shown, the highest rank for athlete's satisfaction is from personal treatment with ($M=2.6063$, $SD=0.42300$) and the lowest as ability utilization with ($M=2.5171$, $SD=0.40573$).

Table 3

Pearson Correlation for Relationship between coaching leadership style and athlete's satisfaction

		Athlete's Satisfaction
Coach Leadership Styles	Pearson's correlation	0.226
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.001
	N	254

Table 3 interprets that there is a weak positive correlated relationship between coach leadership styles and athlete satisfaction with $r(254) = 0.226$, $p = .001$.

Table 4

Pearson Corelation for Relationship between coaching leadership style and athlete's satisfaction based on domain

		Athlete's Satisfaction
Training and Instruction (TI)	Pearson's correlation	0.300
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.001
Social Support (SS)	Pearson's correlation	0.130
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.039
Positive Feedback (PF)	Pearson's correlation	0.257
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.001
Democratic Behaviour (DB)	Pearson's correlation	0.177
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.005
Autocratic Behaviour (AB)	Pearson's correlation	0.037
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.559
	N	254

Table 4 interpret, there is a significant relationship between coaching leadership style and athlete satisfaction namely as $TI=r(254)=0.300, p=0.001<0.05$, $SS=r(254)=0.130, p=0.039<0.05$, $PF=r(254)=0.257, p=0.001<0.05$ and $DB= r(254) = 0.177, p=0.005<0.005$

Discussion

Based on the results, there are significant relationship between coach leadership styles and athlete satisfaction. Athletes preferred if their coach could give clear training and instruction, social support, positive feedback, and democratic behavior to them. This finding aligns with another study done by Khooran et al (2008), which found that there is a positive significant relationship between leadership behaviors realized by athletes (exercise training, democratic behaviors, social support, and positive feedback) with athlete satisfaction. While other research by Shapie et al (2016), also found there was a positive correlation between coaching leadership styles (training and instruction, democratic and social behaviors) and athlete satisfaction. Kim and Cruz (2016) also found there is a large relationship between leadership and satisfaction.

It stated that training and instruction have the highest contributor to the relationship. A study by Pido & Ph (2018), found that athletes preferred training and instruction from their coach. This is because a coach should instruct players on how to acquire the necessary skills and teach them the technique of sports. This contributes to employee performance and at the same, a coach can identify athletes' strengths and weaknesses during their training sessions. In addition, Saleh (2012), said training and instruction measure coaching behavior aimed to improve the athlete performance by emphasizing and facilitating hard and strenuous training, instructing them in terms of skills, techniques, and tactics.

Social support is also a contributor to athlete satisfaction. An athlete needs to receive social support. This study finding aligns with others from Rees (2007), social support from coaches, teammates, family, friends, and staff is considered affecting athlete's cognitive-emotional, and behavioral aspects. In addition, based on Hassell et al. (2010), support from a coach may lead to athlete's satisfaction. This finding contrasts with another finding that reported

inappropriate support coaches in a sport setting (McKay et al., 2008). Communication plays an important role between a coach and an athlete. The study by Kassing and Infante (1996) found athlete satisfaction low when a coach uses the antisocial form of communication compared to when a coach cultivates a supportive relationship (Cranmer & Sollitto, 2015). It's shown that communication context in the delivery of clear instruction affects athlete satisfaction.

Giving feedback to athletes could help in athlete performance such as game tactics, strategies, and self-efficacy. This is supported by other findings from Henderlong and Lepper (2002), positive feedback was more likely to increase intrinsic motivation. This finding aligns with other studies from Ramzaninezhad & Keshtan (2009); Khooran et al (2008), one of the factors to determine athlete satisfaction are positive feedback.

The current study also found that there is a significant relationship between democratic and athlete satisfaction (Asiah and Rosli, 2009). Through this style, communication between an athlete and coach can provide a better discussion and achieve a good result. A good coach will involve the athlete in decision making (Chelladurai and Saleh, 1980), this includes group goals and how those goals will be achieved (Tucker and Raymond, 2017). This might be a hard decision for the coach to involve their player in discussion for tactics, strategies, and decision making, but this way, it would lead to a positive outcome for the athletes. This is supported by Jowett (2017), athletes and coaches have a mutual interlink through feelings, thoughts, and behavior. Whilst a coach an athlete needs each other to achieve a common goal. Despite the differences from them, it is affirmed type of coach behaviour and ethic may influence athlete satisfaction, this is one of the factors in coaching in gaining athlete satisfaction (Maghsoudi, 2009).

Sports contribute to an athlete's discipline. Without any monitoring from the others, it can lead to a negative outcome. Eime et al (2013), stated the participation of youth in sports is associated with a variety of negative development outcomes. This is decisive as to why these groups of athletes prefer an autocratic style compared to others. This autocratic style of coaching is suitable for an athlete who wants to know exactly what is expected of them and exactly what the coach and manager is looking for from athletes (Travis, 2018). Furthermore, this kind of coaching style is most typically suitable for the millennial generation (Janssen, 2008).

Conclusion

It can be stated that coaches' leadership styles are the most significant factors to achieve success in the sports field. To conclude, lacking an improper leadership style would lead to lacking optimal motivation, and ability utilization especially in athlete satisfaction. Thus, knowing this style helps in managing athlete performance and satisfaction and knowing deeply what athlete needs and wants during their training and games.

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