

The Congruence between Preferred and Perceived Coaching Styles With Respect to Experience Difference in the Volleyball Clubs of Ethiopian Premier League

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Abstract – Effective leadership is dynamic and is based on a complex series of interactions among leaders, group members and situational constraints. Positive outcomes will occur when there is congruence between the leaders' actual behavior and the types of behavior desired by athletes. Thus, this study investigates the congruence between preferred and perceived coaching styles with respect to experience difference in the volleyball clubs of Ethiopian Premier League. A quantitative research approach of correlation design was employed to attain the objectives of the study. The eight volleyball clubs players (83 in number) selected through comprehensive sampling were the participants of the study. In this study Leadership Scale for Sports (LSS) questionnaire developed and validated by (Chelladurai & Saleh, 1980) was used. Descriptive statistics like correlation was computed to see the congruence between the preferred and perceived leadership styles and one way ANOVA to find out the difference between preferred and perceived styles with different experience groups. The result revealed that the most preferred coaching style was training and instruction with a mean score of 3.80 in 5-point scale of never to always. Players also perceived their coaches to use training and instruction style most of the time (with a mean score 3.61), the correspondence between preferred and perceived coaching style was found to be significant at $p < 0.01$ (with a value of Pearson's $r = .811$ indicating 65.77% of congruence). No significant difference was observed in both preferred and perceived coaching styles with respect to difference in experience ($F = .273$ for preferred & $.071$ for perceived).

Key Words: Coaching Style, Preferred Coaching Style, Perceived Coaching Style

INTRODUCTION

Good coaches have insight, personality and skill that can honestly help athletes to reach their own potential performance because the primary role of the coach is to help athletes to improve their performance (Jones, 2006). Teams with such coaches are typically successful and their members are often very satisfied and pleased. What coaches do and how they act impose significant effect on attitudes, feelings, stress, motivation, satisfaction and performance of athletes (Beiginia & Kalantary, 2008).

What sort of coaching philosophy, coaching style, or coaching behavior best develops athletes toward expert performance and athletic success? Answering this key question has been the focus for researchers and practitioners for several decades (Abraham,

Collins & Martindale, 2006; Blom, Watson II, & Spadaro, 2010; Chelladurai, 2007). In relation to the investigation of the most effective coach behavior for improving performance, the leadership model that has received most researchers' attention was the multidimensional model of leadership scale in sport developed by Chelladurai (1990; 1993).

Even though, researches and theories from non-sports settings provided useful frameworks for understanding leadership, specific approaches that reflect the unique demands of sports settings were required. In response to that Chelladurai, (1990; 1993) developed the multidimensional model of leadership to provide a conceptual framework that allowed the effectiveness of leadership to be studied in the sports domain. Chelladurai, (1990) proposed that effective leadership is dynamic and is based on a

complex series of interactions between leader, group members and situational constraints. The model suggests that positive outcomes (performance and satisfaction) will occur when there is congruence between the leader's actual behavior, players' preference and prescribed behavior by the sport organization.

In addition, since behavior does not occur in a vacuum, antecedent factors such as leader and member characteristics are expected to influence both the actual behavior of the leader and group preferences for leadership behaviors. The challenge for sport managers and coaches as leaders is to show flexibility in adapting their dominant leadership style to suit specific leadership situations, and keep everyone satisfied (Crust & Lawrence, 2006).

If members are to achieve maximum satisfaction and performance, a certain level of congruence must exist between the three types of behavior. For example, when actual, prescribed and preferred behaviors become congruent, the performance and satisfaction level of athletes expected to increase. When incongruence exists among the three behaviors, either performance or satisfaction fails low (Chellandurai, 1990).

In his instrument on multidimensional leadership model in sports Chellandurai, (1990) identified five dimensions of coaching behaviors as:

The first factor, Training and Instruction, reflects one of the important functions of a coach to improve the performance level of the athlete. The coach trains and instructs the athletes to help them reach their maximum physical potential. He or she is also expected to instruct them in how to acquire the necessary skills and to teach them the techniques and the tactics of the sports. In addition, in the case of team sports, the coach coordinates the activities of the team members.

The second factor, Democratic Behavior, reflects the extent to which the coach permits participation by the athletes in decision making. These decisions may be related to the setting of group goals and/or the ways in which these goals are to be attained.

The third factor, Autocratic Behavior, indicates that the extent to which a coach keeps apart from the athletes and stresses his or her authority in dealing with them. In such situations, it is expected that the coach would demand strict compliance with his or her decisions. It is of interest to note that the dimensions of Democratic and Autocratic Behavior refer to the decision style adopted by the leader whereas the other dimensions refer to the substance of the behavior.

The fourth factor is Social Support. Whereas the training and instructing behavior is task oriented and the democratic and autocratic behaviors reflect the decision making approaches adopted by the coach. The Social Support factor refers to the extent to which

the coach is involved in satisfying the interpersonal needs of the athletes. The coach's behavior may directly satisfy such needs or the coach may create a climate in which the members mutually satisfy their interpersonal needs. It should be noted that social support is provided independent of member's performance.

The fifth factor is Positive Feedback. Athletic competitions, in general, are zero-sum games in which victory is attainable by only one of the contestants. An athlete or team may perform at the maximum potential and yet lose a competition. Further, in team sports including volleyball, contributions by certain positions may go unnoticed and unrecognized. It is therefore important for the coach to express appreciation and to compliment the athletes for their performance and contribution. Positive feedback from the coach is crucial in maintaining the motivational level of the athletes (Vaughan, 2017).

So, application of the five dimension coaching styles and congruence between the three interactive features of coaching that are: the behavior of the coach, the behavior of members of a team (players) and the situation in which the sport training and competition operates should be studied in accordance with the different characteristics of the different sports. Hence it is significant to identify the congruence between the coaching style preferred and perceived by players in the context of Ethiopian volleyball premier league clubs.

STATEMENTS OF THE PROBLEM

Volleyball is a team sport that is practiced by many people of different age and sex groups. The sport is believed to be widely spread in the world and to get love of the people 2nd to soccer. It's easy and relaxing nature helped the sport to have many practicing and loving groups. When considering the sport as one of the team sport for competition, it needs to have many stake holders that interact and communicate each other like other organizations, one of which is the leadership. Coaches of volleyball are considered as leaders in the sport. They are given the status of leadership because they are the ones who plan, give training and lay down a strategy for the team to be used during competition.

As of the model of leadership proposed by Chellandurai (1990, 1993), leadership in sports is dynamic and is based on a complex series of interaction between leaders, group members and the situational constraints. The model suggests that performance development and satisfaction of players occur when there is congruence among these three features.

Amy, Wah & polman, (2018) ; Amanchukwu, Stanley, & Ololube, (2015) conducted a study on the need and selection of leadership based on the behavior of the leader, the preference of players and

the prevailing situation and their finding showed that the congruence among these three interacting features determines the success of the team in the sport that they compete in.

In addition, Moen, Hoigared & Peters, (2014) studied on performance progress and leadership behavior and found that, the athletes who are most satisfied with their performance progress perceived their coaches behavior as higher in the domains: Training and instruction, democratic behavior, social support and positive feedback. The finding highlighted the training and instruction behavior highest.

Moreover, San-Fu Kao, Yu-Fang Chen, Jack, Watson II, (2015) studied on Relationships between the Congruence of Required and Perceived Leadership Behavior and Satisfaction in Athletes, and found that athletes were more likely to be satisfied when their perceptions of their coaches' positive feedback behavior conformed to the expectations of their athletic directors.

Even though different researchers conducted studies on the topic in different countries as described above the present researcher did not come across any study conducted on the relationship between the preferred and perceived leadership styles of coaching with special reference to the volleyball sport in Ethiopia. Therefore as a long time volleyball player, coach of the sport and a physical educator, the researcher found it important to conduct study on the topic to contribute for the development of volleyball sport in the country. More specifically the researcher investigated the following research questions.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

1. What is the most preferred style of coaching by the players of volleyball clubs in Ethiopian premier league?
2. What is the perception of the premier league clubs players about the coach style that their coaches are using?
3. What is the correspondence between the preferred and perceived coaching styles?
4. How is the preferred and perceived leadership styles related to the different experience of players in the clubs?

OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY

The purpose of this study was to assess the preferred and perceived leadership styles of volleyball players in terms of their congruency as well as players' choice and experience in the Ethiopian premier league.

METHOD

Research Design - This study applied quantitative research approach. Based on the purpose of the study correlation design was also employed; this is because the researcher focused on detecting and describing status and relationships between preferred & perceived coaching styles.

Population, sample size and sampling technique - The population of the study was volleyball players of the Ethiopian premier league males' clubs. They are eight in number and have 8-12 players in each club and totally there are 83 players. All of the players were taken as data sources using comprehensive sampling. According to Damico, (2018) if the population is well defined and small or manageable in number all of them can be included in the study.

Data gathering instruments - A questionnaire was used to collect data on players' perceptions and preference of leadership styles of coaches. It was a Leadership scale for sports (LSS) developed by (Chelladurai & Saleh, 1980) that has a prefix before every question that says "the coach ..." for asking perception of the players about their coaches and "I prefer my coach to..." for asking players preference of the coaching style used.

The questionnaire consists of 40 items that are divided into 5 subscales. 13 items related to Training and Instruction, 9 items relate to Democratic Behavior, 5 items related to Autocratic Behavior, 8 items relate to Social Support, and 5 items related to Positive Feedback. The questionnaire is a Likers Scale type with a five response categories of: Always (has a point of 100%), Often (75%), occasionally (50%), Seldom (25%) and Never (0%). The reliability of the instrument to the context was checked by a pilot study and found to be high (.89 for the preferred and .96 for perceived leadership styles).

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Findings

1. On coaching style preferred most by the players in the volleyball clubs of Ethiopian premier league.

As table 1 indicates training and instruction was the first preferred coaching style followed by positive feedback (with a mean score of 3.80, 3.73 respectively). On the other hand the third and the fourth preferred coaching styles were democratic and social support (with mean scores of 3.27 and 3.17 respectively). The last one was autocratic coaching style (with a mean score of 2.26). This means that the first and the second rank coaching styles (training & instruction as well as positive feedback) have been preferred often or above 75% of the time and the third and fourth ranks were preferred occasionally

(that is 50 - 75% of the time). The least preferred was autocratic coaching style preferred seldom (25% of the time). Therefore most preferred coaching style as to the question is concerned was found to be training and instruction coaching style.

Table 1. Descriptive Statistics for the Preference of Coaching Styles by Players

Styles of coaching	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation	Rank
Training and instruction	83	1.46	5.00	3.7970	.87661	1
Autocratic	83	1.00	6.40	2.2627	1.09897	5
Democratic	83	1.33	5.00	3.2744	.87167	3
Social support	83	1.00	5.00	3.1732	.85000	4
Positive feed back	83	1.00	5.00	3.7373	1.06607	2

2. On the perception of players about the coaching style their coaches are using.

Similar pattern of responses is also observed with respect this issue except the slight difference in the mean values. Training and instruction coaching style got the first rank followed by positive feedback democratic, social support and finally autocratic type (table 2).

Table 2. Descriptive Statistics for Coaching Style Perceived by Players

Coaching style	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation	Rank
Training and instruction	83	1.69	5.00	3.6154	.94219	1
Autocratic	83	1.00	5.00	2.2867	.95417	5
Democratic	83	1.22	5.00	3.2369	.90263	3
Social support	83	1.00	5.00	3.1732	.85000	4
Positive feed back	83	1.00	5.00	3.5904	.98818	2

3. On the correspondence of preferred and perceive leadership styles

The correlation between preferred and perceived scores were very high ($r = .811$ and significant beyond $p = .01$). This implies that the two measures fit or correspond each other more than two third of the time (65.77%). Note that the ordinary correlation coefficient (Pearson's r is used to determine the degree of concordance instead of Lin's because it is assumed that the measures have liner relationships and easy to convert and see in present. In addition the consonance correlation coefficient is nearly identical with Pearson's r (the difference is on the third decimal (Nickerson,1977).

4. On the difference of preference and perception with respect to experience of players

ANOVA was run to examine the variation of preferred or perceived leadership styles with respect to experience of players. As Table 4 indicates there is no significant difference in experience for preferred and perceived coaching styles respectively (F is .273 and .071). This score showed that there is no significant difference between preference and perception of coaching style among players of beginners, juniors and seniors experience group.

Table 4. One- Way ANOVA for the variation of preferred and perceived coaching style among different experience group players.

Variable	Variation	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Preferred coaching style	Between Groups	.207	2	.104	.273	.762
	Within Groups	30.388	80	.380		
	Total	30.596	82			
Perceived coaching style	Between Groups	.053	2	.027	.071	.931
	Within Groups	29.930	80	.374		
	Total	29.983	82			

DISCUSSION

The purpose of this study was to identify the coaching style most preferred by players of volleyball teams taking part in the Ethiopian premier league, detect the perception they have about their coaches' actual coaching style and find out the congruence between these styles with respect to the different experience level of players. As the above results indicate the top ranked type of coaching style by players found to be the training and instruction in both preference and perception of players followed by positive feedback and democratic coaching styles. This result is consistent with the finding of several studies like Moen, (2014) who studied on performance progress and leadership behavior and found that, from the five different dimensions of coaching training and instruction method was chosen first and has high relation to performance progress of players. Similarly Raymond, (2008) who studied the influence of leadership qualities on male and female athletes in the middle school interscholastic team sports revealed that training and instruction coaching style was most preferred by females. In addition, Chang, Ko-Hasin , (2008) studied on "the influence of coaches leadership styles and organizational commitment on athletes satisfaction of college track and field athletes in Taiwan" and found that coaches training and instruction behavior and positive feedback were key elements of influence as they were most preferred by players.

Considering the congruence between the coaching style preferred and perceived, the result indicated that the two measures found to have a score with higher degree of concordance. In other words preferred and perceived styles of coaching are similar in rank except the slight difference of magnitude they appear to be. In addition to this even the least and the top ranked styles were the same in both preferred and perceived coaching styles. Training and instruction is the top ranked and autocratic coaching style is the least ranked in both cases. This result is consistent with Seymour, (2012) who studied the similarity of leadership styles and level of an amateur athletic union and reported no change in the degree of similarity between coach and players leadership style.

Finally according to the finding the coaching styles preferred and perceived were found to have no

significant difference with respect to experience of players. The result showed that the difference in experience is not a factor for the variation of preferred or perceived leadership styles. There may be other factors that influence preferred and perceived coaching styles and this needs further investigations.

CONCLUSION

According to the results found in the present study players not only preferred their coaches to give them good training and instruction but also need to get support in the social carriers and positive feedback during training and competition. Similar studies state that coaches' relationship with their athletes involves much more than the simple teaching and instruction of technical skills and tactics (Jones, 2006; Moen & Verburg, 2012). In general the preference and perception of players about their coaches' coaching style corresponds positively. The correspondence helps to develop performance and satisfaction of players.

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