

# COACHING LEADERSHIP STYLES AND ATHLETE SATISFACTIONS AMONG HOCKEY TEAM

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## ABSTRACT

*Successful coaching is the ability to treat athletes respectfully. Athletes have varied talents and each deserves respect for his/her uniqueness. Coaches need to vary their style with every athlete. The same training program does not suit everybody. Each athlete needs to be motivated differently. Chelladurai's Multidimensional Model of Leadership, which applies specifically to sport, recognizes the importance of leadership style: 1) actual leader behavior 2) leader behavior preferred by athlete and 3) required leader behavior. The degree of congruence among these three components determines athlete's satisfaction and performance. A Revised Leadership Scale for Sport (RLSS), developed by Zhang, Jensen and Mann (1997); a scale that examines style of coaching behaviors; 1) autocratic, 2) democratic, 3) positive feedback, 4) training and instruction 5) social support and 6) situational consideration behaviors is also used. The items of the Athlete Satisfaction Questionnaire (Chelladurai & Riemer, 1997), addresses the most aspect of athlete participation: 1) performance 2) leadership 3) the team 4) the individual. The purpose of this paper is to identify: 1) style of leadership behaviors athletes prefer from their coaches 2) factors of athlete satisfaction in team sport and 3) relationship between leadership style of the coaches and athletes satisfaction. According to Brian Mackenzie (2003), coaches motivate the athlete wish and provide them effective training and improve athlete performance. Asiah and Rosli (2008), indicated that the athlete in sport teams are satisfied with their teammates sense of fair play, sportsmanlike behavior, teamwork and shared the same goals. Based on this study, a few suggestions to the sport managers for continuing their assessment to develop university sports program are made.*

**KEYWORDS:** *leadership, coaching, university athlete, hockey team, behavior*

## INTRODUCTION

The most important successful factor of a coach is to help athletes to improve their athletic skill in a wide range of tasks from sequential development and mastery of basic skills, to the more specialized physical, technical, tactical and psychological preparation. Chelladurai (1978), effective coaching behavior varies across specific contexts as the characteristics of athletes and the prescribed situation change. The context of the sport situation and characteristics of the coach and the athletes themselves dictate appropriate leadership behavior. To achieve improvement in athletic performance, it may be necessary for the coach to engage in coaching behaviors to which the athlete is receptive.

The previous researches used in studying sport leadership (Fielder, 1977; Hersey & Blanchard, 1977; House, 1971; Osborne & Hunt, 1975, Chelladurai 1979, 1990) have

suggested that a multidimensional model provides an explanation to coaching behavior. Three different components of coaching behavior are: 1) actual leader behavior, 2) required leader behavior and 3) leader behavior preferred.

According to Smith, Kendall and Hulin (1969), coaches and administrators need to be concerned with making the athlete's experiences enjoyable and satisfying. The measurement of athlete satisfaction is an important precursor to the establishment of a general theory that may then serve as the foundation for practical action and future research.

## **PURPOSE OF STUDY**

Purposes of this study were to identify the leadership style of coaches, hockey player satisfaction and relationship between leadership style of the coaches and hockey player satisfaction. In addition, this study was designed to determine:

1. Leadership styles of coaches were preferred by universities hockey players.
2. Factors affecting athlete satisfaction in hockey teams.
3. Correlation between leadership style of the coaches and universities hockey players satisfaction.

## **LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **Multidimensional Model of Leadership Styles**

Chelladurai's Multidimensional Model of Leadership Styles, which applies specifically to sport, recognizes the importance of three interacting determinants of leader behavior: actual leader behavior, leader behavior preferred by the athlete and required leader behavior. The degree of congruence among these three factors determines athlete's satisfaction and performance. Chelladurai and Saleh's (1980) Leadership Scale for Sports (LSS) measure six leadership styles. The LSS has been used in a variety of contexts to measure leadership in sport and the relationship between leadership and other variables.

Chelladurai (1990) identified three main purposes for which the LSS has been used. It has been used to study Athlete's Preference for specific leader behavior (Chelladurai, 1984; Chelladurai, Imamura, Yamaguchi, Oinuma & Miyuchi, 1988; Chelladurai & Carron, 1981; 1983; Fuller, & Speed, 2000) and athletes' perceptions of their coaches' behavior (Chelladurai & Saleh, 1980; Horne & Carron, 1985). A Revised Leadership Scale for Sport (RLSS), developed by Zhang, Jensen and Mann (1997); a scale that examines style of coaching behaviors; 1) autocratic, 2) democratic, 3) positive feedback, 4) training and instruction 5) social support and 6) situational consideration behaviors is used.

#### **1. Training and instruction:**

Coaching behavior aimed at improving the athletes' performance by emphasizing and facilitating hard and strenuous training; instructing athletes in the skills, techniques and tactics of sport; clarify the relationship among the athletes; and structuring and coordinating the athletes activities.

## 2. Democratic behavior:

Coaching behavior that allows greater athletes participation in decisions pertaining to group goals, practice methods, game tactics and strategies.

## 3. Autocratic behavior:

Coaching behavior that involves independence in decision-making and stresses personal authority.

## 4. Social support:

Coaching behavior characterized by a concern for the welfare of individual athletes, positive group atmosphere, and interpersonal relations with members.

## 5. Positive feedback:

Coaching behavior that reinforces an athlete by recognizing and rewarding good performance.

## 6. Situational consideration behaviors

Coaching behavior aimed at considering situational factors such as time, games, environment, maturity states, individual, gender, skill levels and health conditions.

Zhang, Jenson and Mann (1997) attempted to revise the three versions of the Leadership Scale for Sport and expected that a more effective tool for measuring leadership in sport emerged. The revised version of the LSS maintained the same three versions (actual leader, prefer leader and perceive leader) and the same Likert response scale. Two factors were added, which takes into account the coaches behavior towards group cohesion and consideration of situational factors.

Fiedler (1967), model of leadership effectiveness, shows there are three important dimensions of leadership effectiveness; 1) leader-member relations 2) task structure and 3) power position. Fiedler (2002) emphasized the importance of situational factors in influencing the effectiveness of leaders. Fiedler contends that good leaders are flexible and they adopt their coaching behaviors to situational factors. Dale and Jody (2002), suggested that the expectations for situational leadership need to be developed.

Chelladurai and Carron (1978) state that, if a coach adapts his or her behavior to comply with athletes' preferred behaviors, the athlete may be more readily inclined to the coach through an improved satisfaction and performance. Preferred leader behavior refers to actual behaviors favored by athletes and athletes' perceptions of leader behavior are similar to required leader behavior.

Richards and Greenlaw (1966), defined leadership as an influence process in that, the dynamics of the function of the leader, his or her followers, and the nature of specific situation. This definition is more in keeping with the humanistic movement in psychology and suggests that leaders should flexible. William F. Straub (1980) contends that, leadership in sports is defined as the influence the coach has on his or her athlete and the nature of the specific situation. Tannenbaum and Schmidt's Model (1988) contend that effective leadership is a function of the leader, the followers and

situational variables. Effective coaches, like successful managers in industry seem to be able to vary their style with the needs of the situation.

Kristen Dieffenbachia et.al (2002), an important aspect of a good coach-athlete relationship is the coach's ability to understand each athlete as an individual and to tailor his/her coaching style and attention to suit those need. Multiple coach goals for their athlete are three goal focus categories included fun, development goals and winning. Fun-based goals included emphasizing fun, creating fun environment for training and focusing on fun. Development goals included focus on tactical, skill and technique development.

### **Athlete Satisfaction (Chelladurai & Riemer;1997)**

Chelladurai (1999) states, participant satisfaction is more complicated because participation takes several forms: 1) pursuits of pleasure, skills, excellence and health. Participants in each of these activities have differing orientations, needs and expectation.

Chelladurai and Riemer (1997) state, athlete satisfaction stems from two unique features of athletics; 1) athletes are the prime beneficiaries of intercollegiate athletics 2) the athletes become the prime produces of such entertainment. The subscales of the Athlete Satisfaction Questionnaire address, the most salient aspect of athletic participation: 1) performance (individual and team), 2) leadership, 3) team, 4) organization and 5) athlete.

#### **1. Performance**

Chelladurai et.al (1988) Whittal and Orlick, 1978, Petty, McGee and Cavender, 1978 have noted that performance is significant source of satisfaction in any organizational context and performance (both individual and team) may be judged by differences standards. Thus, an individual athlete could be differently satisfied with personal and team performance.

#### **2. Leadership**

Chelladurai (1984; 1995), indicated coaching leadership as a significant target satisfaction. In other words, the facet focus on athletes' reaction on how to coach; 1) employs the athlete's abilities (ability utilization), 2) Selects and applies appropriate strategies (strategy), 3) trains and instructs the athlete (training and instruction) and 4). Treats the individual athlete (personnel treatment)

#### **3. Team**

These facets relate to how the team worked together (team cohesion) how the team treated the individual (task contribution and social contribution and the leader behavior teammates (ethics).

#### **4. Organization**

The organization support (the athletic department) provided in term of monetary resources to a team (the budget), medical personnel) and the academic endeavor of athletes (academic support services) are important for the team and its members. Thus, the coach, the team, and the athletic department are closely associated with

sportsperson. Athletes can also develop a sense of satisfaction with external agents, such as the media, the university and local community, and the fans (external agents).

## 5. Athletes

The final facet relates to the individual's satisfaction with his/her own task and social contribution, as well as personnel dedication. An athlete may be more or less satisfied with his or her own contribution to the team in terms of effort, enthusiasm and dedication towards the team (personnel dedication)

## RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

### Sample of the study

The study comprises of 101 hockey players in Masum Hockey League (Zone B, Zone C and Zone D). The study was carried over two months period, which was conducted during the competition season. A descriptive study is used in carrying out this research.

### Delimitations of the study

This study is delimited to university hockey players representing the Masum Hockey League (Zone B, Zone C and Zone D). Generalization of this finding was delimited to these participants or those who could be shown to be similar in composition. Extensive extrapolation beyond this would not be directly supported by this study.

### Limitations of this study

The generalizations, which were an outcome of this research, were and are relevant and limited to the public universities used in this research. The individual profile questionnaire for this study was aimed at assessing the athlete and the experience of the subjects.

### Procedures

Two instruments basically, a revised version of Leadership Scale for Sport (RSLL) by Zhang, Jensen and Mann (1997) and Athlete Satisfaction Questionnaire (ASQ) by Chelladurai and Riemer (1997) were used to examine style of coaching behaviors which university hockey players preferred and their satisfaction in hockey team. This study also was also designed to identify the relationship between coaching leadership style of the university hockey coaches' and university hockey players' satisfaction. In the first questionnaire, players were asked to choose the style of leadership behaviors they prefer.

To define priority of the leadership styles which player preferred, a mean scale was used from the total answers given. This instrument consisted of 65 questions with a five point Likert type scale; 1 (absolutely disagree), 2 (disagree), 3 (undecided), 4 (agree) and 5 (absolutely agree). The second instrument contained of 56 questions with a five point Likert type scale: 1 (not at all unsatisfied), 2 (unsatisfied), 3 (undecided), 4 (satisfied) and 5 (extremely satisfied), to identify the satisfaction among university hockey player.

### Data Analysis

The data was analyzed using Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) version 12. The descriptive analysis of the data were analyzed using means, frequencies, percentage, and standard deviations for each item were found for males, females and each level of sport involvement. For the purpose of correlation, Pearson's correlation was used. Correlation was done with leadership style against athlete satisfaction. The level of significance was set at  $p = 0.05$ .

## RESULTS OF THE STUDY

### Respondents Profile

Table 1 shows that the respondents' profile according to years of study, age, gender, level of sport participation and years of sport participation.

Table 1: Respondents Profile

Characteristics	Frequency	Percents (%)
Years of study		
First year	36	35.6
Second year	31	30.7
Third year	23	22.8
Final year	11	10.9
Age		
18 – 21 years	53	52.5
22 – 25 years	45	43.5
> 26 years	3	3.0
Gender		
Male	46	45.5
Female	55	54.5
Level of sport participation		
School	3	3.0
College/University	22	21.8
District	26	25.7
State	39	38.6
National	11	10.9
Years of sport participation		
< 1 year	12	11.9
2 – 5 years	19	18.8
> 5 years	70	69.3

N= 101

### Coach Leadership Style Preferred by Athletes

Table 2 indicates that the athletes preferred training and instruction coaching behavior with the highest mean score ( $M = 3.01$ ,  $SD = .82$ ) and followed by positive feedback coaching behavior ( $M = 2.94$ ,  $SD = .85$ ), social consideration coaching behavior ( $M = 2.87$ ,  $SD = .86$ ), social support coaching behavior ( $M = 2.61$ ,  $SD = .90$ ), democratic coaching behavior ( $M = 2.37$ ,  $SD = .92$ ) and autocratic coaching behavior ( $M = 2.03$ ,  $SD = .96$ ).

Table 2 : Coach Leadership Style Preferred by Hockey Player

Leadership Styles	Mean	Std. Dev
Training and Instruction	3.01	.82
Positive Feedback	2.94	.85
Social Consideration	2.87	.86
Social Support	2.61	.90
Democratic	2.37	.92
Autocratic	2.03	.96

### Athlete Satisfaction in Universities Hockey Team

Table 3 shows that team integration ( $M = 3.74$ ,  $SD = .83$ ) was the most important subscale influencing athlete satisfaction in universities hockey team. The mean scores showed that training and instruction ( $M = 3.65$ ,  $SD = .84$ ) was the second highest mean score for athlete satisfaction. The others factors were external agents ( $M = 2.84$ ,  $SD = .92$ ) factors and the most obvious of this are media and local community; the lowest rated satisfied for athlete satisfaction.

Table 3 : Importance ratings of the various subscales contained in the ASQ for Athlete Satisfaction

Facets	Mean	Std. Deviation
Team integration	3.74	.83
Training and instruction	3.65	.84
Team social contribution	3.64	.87
Personal dedication	3.62	.85
Team task contribution	3.61	.88
Team ethics	3.59	.82
Team performance	3.56	.81
Strategy	3.48	.83
Personal treatment	3.46	.78
Ability utilization	3.42	.86
Individual performance	3.39	.87
Medical Personnel	3.27	.86
Budget	3.09	.89
External Agents	2.84	.92

### Correlation between Athlete Preferred Leadership Style of the Coaches and Athlete Satisfaction in Universities Hockey Team

Table 4 shows that Pearson correlations between athletes preferred coaching leadership styles and athlete satisfaction in universities hockey team. The overall correlations were moderate and positive indicating a substantial relationship for democratic ( $r = .407$ ,  $p = 0.01$ ), positive feedback ( $r = .442$ ,  $p = 0.01$ ), training and instruction ( $r = .456$ ,  $p = 0.01$ ), social consideration ( $r = .550$ ,  $p = 0.01$ ), social support ( $r = .428$ ,  $p = 0.01$ ) and autocratic ( $r = .413$ ,  $p = .01$ ).

Table 4: Correlation Leadership Styles and Athlete Satisfaction

Athlete Satisfaction	Coach Leadership Style	Pearson Correlation ( $r$ ), $p = 0.01$
	Democratic	.407
	Positive Feedback	.442
	Training and Instruction	.456
	Social Consideration	.550
	Social Support	.428
	Autocratic	.413

## DISCUSSION

This findings are discussed according to the following headings : coach's leadership style, athlete satisfaction and correlation between coach leadership style and athlete satisfaction in universities' hockey teams.

This study found that the university hockey players preferred training and instruction coaching behavior. The university hockey players preferred their coach to:

1. make complex things easier to understand and learn
2. pay special attention to correcting athletes' mistakes
3. explain to each athlete the techniques and tactics of the sport
4. use a variety of drills for a practice
5. stress the mastery of greater skills
6. use objective (rather than subjective) measurements for evaluation
7. conduct proper progressions in teaching fundamentals
8. supervise athletes' drills closely
9. clarify training priorities and work on them
10. possess good knowledge of the sport
11. provide feedback after a substitution
12. provide instructions that are brief, clear and concise

Amorose and Horn (2000) indicate that athletes with higher intrinsic motivation perceived their coaches to exhibit a leadership styles that emphasized training and instruction coaching behavior. Joel et. Al (2004), examined the differences of the student athletes' preferred leadership behavior for their coaches based on gender, competition level, task dependence and task variability. The study showed that female student-athletes for four NCAA Division I and six NCAA expressed their preferences using RLSS and had significantly greater preferences training and instruction and situational consideration. Tharp and Gallimore (1976) also have a similar finding, which identified 10 categories of behavior that former UCLA basketball coach John Wooden exhibited in the most excellent coaching by giving instruction (what to do and how to do it). Sherman et.al (2000) found that the Australian footballs players, netball players and basketball players preferred more positive feedback, followed by training and instruction, democratic coaching behavior and preferred social support and autocratic coaching behavior which is not the same as in this study. However, Asiah (2003), found that there is a correlation between motivational factors among university athletes and and sosial support leadership style of coaches. The study showed that there are no differences in the motivational factors and numbers of years of participation on sport involvement.

This study has indicated that team integration was the most important factor influencing athlete satisfaction in universities hockey team. This shows that the athlete in the hockey team were satisfied with their team members;

1. my teammates' sense of fair play
2. my teammates' 'sportsmanlike behavior'
3. how the team works (worked) to be the best
4. the degree to which teammates share (shared) the same goals

According to Chemers (1997), leadership is a process by which one individual is able to guide a group of other individuals towards a collective goal, action or accomplishment. Being so, the coaches have to plan and share the team set up, goal and all aspect related to athlete satisfaction.



This study also indicated that external agents factors which are most obvious of which are media and university/local community, the lowest rated satisfaction among universities hockey teams are:

1. the media's support of our program
2. the support from the university community
3. the supportiveness of the fans
4. the local community's support

This study has showed that the athletes preferred training and instruction leadership styles in universities hockey team. Based on the results obtained there was a moderate correlation between coaching leadership styles and athlete satisfaction in universities hockey team. Aminuddin (2002) found that transformational leadership behavior among soccer and netball Malaysian High School coaches were significantly related to player satisfaction. Also, the result showed athletes of soccer and netball were more likely to be satisfied with their performance if they were in good academic standing and a local Malaysian coach. However, Asiah and Rosli (2008), indicated that the athletes in sport teams were satisfied with their teammates sense of fair play, sportsmanlike behavior, teamwork and shared the same goals.

## CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Brian Mackenzie (2003), coaches wish to motivate the athlete work with and to provide performance. Communication from the coach to the athlete will initiate appropriate actions. This, however, requires the athlete not only to receive the information from coach but also to understand and accept it. Asiah (2004), indicated that the motivational factors and social support leadership style of coaches influences the motivation of athletes involvement in sports. Marten (1975) states that, being a successful coach is an enormous challenge. Successful coaching is much more than just winning. Successful coaches help athletes master new skills, enjoy competing with others, and feel good. Successful coaches are not only well versed in the skills of their sport: they also teach and model the skills needed for successful living in a society. The research was conducted only in three zones in Masum Hockey League. It would be more useful if the research on leadership style of the coaches and athlete satisfaction:

1. encompasses coaches in both individual and team sport throughout IPT
2. looks into others factors like coaches leadership style and athlete satisfaction in relation to the academic performance and soft skills.

Future research could be carried out using the same research instrument as in this study, therefore providing more comparable studies in the field of sport management in Malaysia.

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