

Role of Sports in developing Leadership behaviour among Students: A Analytical Study

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ABSTRACT

Effective leadership skills in sports at an elite level make a lot of difference between failure and success. However, even though the significance of leadership has been acknowledged, there are little evidences regarding the requirements of skills and why is it important to develop them. There are various leadership development programs which are designed and managed by elite cricketers. The intervention of professionals focusses on 3 main levels of development of captaincy, development of leadership skills and personal growth as well as leadership development. The effectiveness of program is analysed through feedback which is provided by players. The evaluation and assessment of these programs suggest that formal programs for development may prove to be beneficial as well as impactful for improving the capabilities of a leader and elite players. Thus, it is considered that sports has an important role in developing leadership behaviour amongst the students. It develops leadership qualities in them.

Keywords: leadership, effective leadership, sports and leadership, developing leaders through sports.

INTRODUCTION:

Globally, sports has been emerging as an extremely competitive and a highly lucrative market that churns a good amount of revenue. Some of the key players of the industry include the sports organisations, sponsors of sports events and the fans.

Within the sports organisations, the sport coaches and athletes play an important role for producing services for sports consumers. Without the 2 crucial players, it's just not possible for any sport event to be staged properly. The relationship between the coach and an athlete is vertical wherein the coach has an important role of a leader. A lot of studies consider coach to be a leader. Researches on leadership have been conducted in different disciplines like history, psychology, education, theology, philosophy, sports, etc. The direct effect of coaches on the athletes has been reported in a number of studies from different perspectives. These perceptive comprise of involvement of sports, withdrawal and enjoyment, satisfaction of the athletes, the psychological status and the physical status of the athletes, optimum performance of sports and successful performance of sports. In most of the studies that explore the relationship between coach and the athlete, the crucial role of leadership of the coach has been attested to. Most of the researches in sports leadership focus on coach with a special emphasis on the personal traits, the behavioural attributes of the athletes and the situational determinants. The present studies focus on the preferences of the athletes. Consensus hasn't still been reached on the universal conceptualisation of the leadership concept. This might be because of complexity of construct of leadership (Cotterill, 2016).

Leadership is generally defined as an ability of influencing the behaviour of humans. It brings everyone together for some common cause, delegates the responsibilities, takes the ownership of programmes and works with some

particular purpose. On the contrary, leadership has been described as the phenomenon which deals with different dynamics of a group and also interpersonal communication. Its effectiveness can be determined through relationship between different factors like the coach and the behaviour of the athlete, the characteristics of the athlete and the situational factors.

Leaders are expected to set the direction and also achieve the desired results. Leaders need not be confused with the managers. Managers and leaders have some distinct and complimentary roles. Every role has some specific characteristics, responsibilities and duties. Both management and leadership abilities are needed within an organisation for it to be successful in the extremely competitive and complex global world. Management mainly focusses on dealing with the crucially while leadership is mainly concerned with the change. The capability for the success of an organisation is improved greatly when strong management as well as strong leadership capabilities combine with each other in the balanced synergistic manager in an organisation. The technologies like software tools, computers as well as global networking have been contributing towards globalisation of businesses. They have also created the capabilities for unprecedented change and volatility. The need and demand for leadership skills are not just confined to some executive officers. It's possible for different people to play important leadership roles within the organisation. A number of organisations don't just wait for their leaders to come along. They actively try and develop them by looking for people who have the leadership potential and expose them to different types of career experiences which are designed for developing their skills of leadership. With the proper program for providing leadership opportunities along with mentoring and nurturing environment, a lot of people may develop as well as practice skills of leadership. Obviously when the students are given an opportunity of developing leadership skills as a part of the education, they get a competitive edge after graduation. Researchers have also found that one crucial challenge while designing any program which would help in developing the leadership skills is to make sure that they would get an equal access to opportunities of learning which may foster leadership (Ludlam et al. 2015).

LITERATURE REVIEW:

The researches that have been done demonstrate just a limited assistance for adage that sport builds leaders. There are multiple reasons behind this weak linkage. First, the primary aim of participating in sports isn't developing leadership skills. The activities are basically designed for developing physical skills and strategies related to some specific sport. Researchers point that efficiently designed activities of leadership activities comprise of correctly chosen learning challenges which are ordered in some particular sequence. The coaches of the teams choose activities and then order them in such a way for developing athletic and not leadership development skills. Secondly, while it's possible for sporting fields and arena to serve as the venue for experience based leadership skills, some of the main elements required for learning are not there. The authors also outline 3 main phases of experience based learning i.e. preparation, development and preservation. Proper preparation demands an assessment of weaknesses and strengths, learning styles and personal values. Developing includes practicing skills while also preserving includes feedback as well as revision of the objectives of learning. Consistent with preservation factors, it has been pointed out that effective leadership development programmes encourage students to focus on the processes of leadership inside as well as outside the classroom. It is often argued that while typical sport teams experience might develop leadership skills, a systematic approach is not adopted for preservation and preparation. In studies which focus on sports, the character development and special experience conclude that sport helps in building character only when coaches deliberately seeks to do it and is informed adequately from the study participants during. Even when the participants are designated a captain, hardly receive any feedback from the coach regarding the leadership role. The team leaders report that they try to model their own behaviours for the participants of the team. Finally, leadership behaviour which is developed with the help of sports might not be transferrable to the classroom than the boardroom (Zehnder, Herz, Bonardi, 2017), Just like classroom teaching, abstract leadership construct is criticised because of a lack of proper transferability at the workplace. Thus, the skills which are learned in the competitive athletic contests could not transfer to corporate setup. It has been often argued that the managerial skills can't be developed without this context. Athletes might just see the skills developed for their field as applicable in sports. Thus, they might not use and practice them at the workplace (Narwal, 2017).

Whether its choosing a team of children for street hockey or a CEO taking the decision for the future of the company, people are constantly leading and looking up to their leader. People often take the involvement in schools as well as other activities of learning it for granted. The different activities related to drama, sports and youth groups prepare the children for assuming different roles of leadership. However very less is known regarding nature of the process. In fact, the educational institutions often advertise that their programmes foster

as well as groom the qualities of leadership amongst youth. Still programs evaluations on methods and the amount of total time which is devoted for this practice give little or no evidence for supporting this (Imbroda et al. 2015). Further, the complexity of evaluation of developing leadership skills is made complex since different people have implicit as well as explicit ideas regarding what constitutes leader's skills and how good leaders are expected to behave. General theories of leadership till date reveal that academics have developed various theories primarily for increasing the production within the privacy and the public sectors. The theorists espouse different behaviours as well as styles for helping businesses and military for fulfilling needs of the subordinates. Very less research has assessed the emergence of leadership development. This is quite peculiar considering that leadership development is a constant process. Therefore, researches should learn more about the experience with peers, subordinates, superiors, etc. for shaping one's performance as the leader (Billsberry, 2018).

The key to professional success for the coach lies in their relationship with the players. Coaches through behaviours they assume, have a lasting and a profound impact on the athletes as well as teams. Whether it's encouraging the youth for pursuing a lifetime of sport or physical activity, effecting developmental and psychological variables like self-esteem or simply inspiring youth athletes for pursuing successful career in the professional sports, coaches are important for this. Therefore, it's very important that robust and vigorous scientific methods area applied in sports coaching research. Various leadership models and theories are reviewed and also some empirical investigations within the context of sports leadership are done (Elgar, 2016).

An interest in the sports coaches has been withstanding in sports psychology domain. Indeed, some researchers also highlight that sports coaches are important. They also suggest that observing what effective coaches do or transmit the information on less experienced leaders was a good way of improving best practices of coaching. Since the inception of sports psychology, examining the behaviour that the coaches use, why they behave in a particular way and effectiveness of the behaviour of the coach have received a considerable attention from sports psychology. In some studies, the development as well as application of theories of leadership in the context of sports has been studied (Epitropaki et al., 2017).

Within the context of sports and leadership there's been 4 broad domains of research have been discussed. These include:

- Researchers have created theories and models of leadership within the sport
- Researchers have often applied theories of leadership are developed in the other disciplines in the context of sports
- Researchers have often observed that great coaches and learning from these coaches
- Researchers have also created standalone measure of the behaviour of the coach without underpinning theories (Ferkins & Shilbury, 2015)

Within the review, it can be summarised that the extent knowledge has been created regarding major approaches of leadership within the sports context.

It has also been often argued that application of vigorous scientific techniques if extremely important. If we are looking to advance and develop our understanding of social environment of sports it is important to apply rigorous scientific methods. While conducting an evaluation of leadership knowledge, it can be drawn on the methodological developments from other domains like economics. It provides a commentary on leadership in sports. The discussions are based around the notion of endogeneity and causality. They explain the reason for latter impeding the development of researches in sports. They also provide solutions in form of the research design, statistical techniques and coding the behaviour. (Foti, et al. 2017)

While considering different factors which differentiate leaders from their fans or followers, it may be distinguished between the traits of leadership, attributes of leadership and the behaviour of leaders. Regarding the traits of leadership, the athlete leaders are often characterised by higher level of ambition, dominance, responsibility as well as competitiveness. Also, researchers reveal that the competitive traits, masculinity and anxiety are some of the characteristic straits of athletic leaders. Some authors also explain the list of characteristic traits of leaders with the instrumentality traits as well as expressiveness traits.

While searching for characteristic attributes of leadership, most of the researches focus on age as well as tenure of the team. The findings of the research constantly reveal that the older players who belong to some teams since a long time have better chances for being perceived as athlete. Also, the experience level and the popularity of the players in a team have been considered to have an influence on the status of leadership of the player and their impact on teams. Furthermore, leaders are chosen on the basis of level of skills, starting status and experience specific to sports. Leaders are mostly characterised by central playing positions than the teammates. A study also explore recruitment of captain. The result of the study highlight that most of the captains played at the central position (Junker et al., 2016).

You would wonder if choosing the captains on the basis of level of performance or the playing position could be a good option. Researchers examine the qualities of athlete leadership and specifically to an extent where the teammates perceive the leader as a good quality leader on different role of leadership. The findings of studies demonstrate that neither the time of playing nor tenure of the team nor age or the sports experience are important determinants of the leadership quality of the player. It needs to be noted that these studies are cross sectional because of which direction of these studies may flow in opposite direction. However, some studies also point towards the significance of friendship qualities to predict leadership skills of the athletes while interviewing the soccer players as well as their coaches. Speaking more specifically the findings of these studies reveal that even though the coaches have exclusively determined leadership skills on the basis of playing ability, players highlight the significance of a wide range of mental variables including quality of friendship, the expressiveness, peer acceptance and instrumentality (MacLeod, 2015).

Also, these studies confirm that the leadership status of the players is linked to the rating of the peer acceptance and interpersonal attraction of their teammates.

Coaches have got the maximum attention from the researchers of sports leadership. This is due to the multifaceted nature of roles and responsibilities they have. They spend a lot of time in counselling as well as training the athletes. They play multiple roles like setting the goals, developing the skills, analysing the techniques and tactics and adjusting the behaviours for fulfilling individual; needs and goals. They are generally called upon for developing significant relationship with the athletes, managers and the assistant coaches (Nichols, 2015).

They also have the responsibility of making the final decision in different issues related to the team like tactics, strategies as well as team personnel. At the college and university level, they're expected to counsel and guide the student athlete who have academic concern, career decisions or social difficulties. The coaches even have the ones to build sound and positive relationship with the athletes as they have a huge impact on athletes, the outcomes of performance, and processes of training and different aspects of the personal lives. Coaches play an important role in the psychological and the physical development of athletes as it has been already mentioned.

For bringing improvements in the performance of the athletes, it might be important for coaches to engage in the coaching behaviour to which the athletes may be receptive (Peachey & Burton, 2017).

CONCLUSION:

Researches in youth sports illustrate that role of the contextual factors like race, gender as well as the economic status might create difference in types and number of the opportunities that kids of different groups get. Thus, it may be assumed that pattern of development which is found in these studies might be apply in the other contexts. However, since these findings generally examine broad areas of the developmental process, its often speculated that equal amount of results may be found in multiple contexts like socio-economic status, gender and race. It's often hypothesised that on contact of different disciplines, the main elements of sports leadership including work ethics, skills, rapport and tactical knowledge would still be significant. However there may be a difference in the way they develop. Athletes belonging to different economic status, gender and race would still be provided different opportunities of influencing the role of coaches, peers and parents. However weight of the influences could be little different. Thus, given that the athletes belong to the similar background, it's important that all the future studies consider role of various contexts on development of leadership abilities in sports. Further, even though measures are implemented for ensuring some trustworthiness from data gathered, data obtained from interview procedures depend mainly on retrospective recall of the leader. The claims which are advanced in these retrospective investigative studies of the leaders need to be tested further.

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