

Relationship between Management Styles and Performances of Professional Athletes in Kwara State Colleges of Education, Nigeria

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Abstract

This study examined the relationship between management styles and performances of professional athletes in Kwara State Colleges of Education. The population for this study comprised of the director of sport, members of the sport committee, sport co-ordinator, athletes of Colleges of Education in Kwara State. One hundred and eighty respondents were randomly selected as sample for the study from three Colleges of Education in Kwara State. The instrument used for data collection for the study was a researcher structured questionnaire which was validated and tested with the use of test – re-test method. The reliability coefficient result of 0.76 was obtained. Pearson product moment correlation coefficient (r) was used to test the hypotheses generated at 0.05 alpha level of significance. The result showed that there was strong relationship between management styles adopted by managers and performances of professional athletes in Kwara State colleges of education.

Introduction

Management is an act of getting things done through people. It involves leading people toward realization of organizational objectives. It is a process of impelling others to carryout a given task that is germane to corporate existence of an organisation (Abubakar, 1998). The term “Management is often used interchangeably to signify the body of authority within the organisation. Ayodele (1996) noted that management refers to body of decision makers within an organisation that is saddled with responsibility of annexing human and material resources within an organisation, i.e. sports directors, coaches, game masters, principal, chairman, NFA.

The basic underlying principle of management is to perform a given task or function through application of human and material resources abound in an organisation. Ladani (2007) stated that management consists of orienting human,

material and financial resources in dynamic and structured units towards realization of stated objectives or goals of an organisation.

The term “Management” has a wider application in our day-to-day activities. Management as an act of leading and starts right from the homes and moves in an ascending order to the society at large. In the primary and secondary schools for instance, the headmasters/principals are managers of their different schools. They assign various roles to teachers, non-teaching staff and students/pupils. Ladani (2007) stated that in institutions of higher learning, sports unit is usually established to oversee all sporting activities in the institution. The unit or directorate is headed by a sports director, ably assisted by assistant directors and other principal officers.

Bucher (2001) conceived management as a process of organizing and employing resources to accomplish predetermined objective. Management is associated with high level of human performance and often employed to minimize the chance of unnecessary error. Management is a pivot or force in man's search for effective ways of utilizing the world's scarce resources. It can be a prime stimulant or a major deterrent to the progress of a given society, depending on prevailing situations within the organisation.

The functions performed by managers in many organizations are almost the same. In case of any slight difference, it will be as a result of their different areas of specialization. In a broad perspective, they all have the same responsibility to carryout. In the field of physical education, sports managers, sports directors, coaches, chairmen sports committees in institutions are saddled with the responsibilities of monitoring of facilities, organizing and planning training of athletes, provision of standard equipment for training of athletes, etc.

One of the duties of management is to lead others to action. It is one of the essential functions that must be performed by all supervisors and executive directors. Leadership is a vital element in social relationship of people and groups. A group needs a leader; likewise a leader also needs followers (Oyedepo, 2003).

Leadership as perceived by Oyedepo (2003) is a dynamic process of work among group of people in which an individual over a particular period of time in a particular organisation influences the other group members to commit themselves freely to the achievement of group tasks or goals. Leadership in any organisation is inevitable. The disputable area of leadership is what constitutes best leadership style for followers (Wikipedia, 2000). The psychologists accept that no single configuration of leadership trait is predictive of successful performance.

In the light of the foregoing, it is clear that no single leadership style can be adjudged as the best. The style a leader employs to direct affairs of an organisation depends to a large extent on prevailing situation and applicability of the method. In justifying this assertion, Ajeigbe (2010) affirmed that two leaders

cannot be the same in their styles of leadership. There are different styles of leadership that can be employed by managers in sports organisation to enhance optimal performance of their athletes in sport competition.

Autocratic management style of leadership reflects a narrow span of management, tight supervision and a high degree of centralization (Zaccaro, 2007). In an autocratic management style of leadership, the interest of the members of the group does not normally count. Leadership decisions are not to be challenged by any subordinate. The leader commands and uses threats of punishment for non-compliance as well as assigns tasks and decides training period or session without consultation with those concerned. The athletes are not given the opportunity to use their initiative.

In addition to the above, Ladani (2007) described autocratic leader (manager) as a leader who strongly believes in strict compliance and obedience to the command of directive given to his subordinates without considering their opinions or suggestions. According to Ladani, athletes only perform well when the manager is around because of fear of intimidation and embarrassment that the manager can cause them for non performance.

Democratic leadership style of management according to Akintunde (2010) emphasized a non-pressure orientation which maximizes group and individual participation in the decision making process, and shares planning with members of the team. The leader also gives the team members proper guidance to create and express themselves. He also creates a social climate, in which each individual athlete in a team will want to do his best without any compulsion. A free flow of communication is encouraged among all members of sports committee so that a climate of understanding can be built upon a formation of honesty and trust.

In sports organisation where this type of management style is employed by the manager/administrator in dealing with his athletes or players, athletes are always more committed to their work and strive hard to achieve organizational goals. It is a style that encourages consensus and joint decision making (Peter, 2001). *Laisses-faire* management style implies that members should be left to sort themselves out. The athletes are often left alone to plan and schedule their training programme. The manager usually pays non-challant attitude to supervision and management of the organisation (Oyedepo, 2003; Clark, 2005).

The manager is so permissive that his subordinates may take advantage of his permissiveness to do what they deem fit. However, in a team where a manager is a *laizzes- faire* kind of leader, the athletes will always be in disarray. The manager often finds it difficult to call the players/athletes (subordinates) to order. It is a management style that employs a kind of 'I don't care attitude' which pervade in the team and the resultant effect is chaos and instability (Ajeigbe, 2010).

To this end, it is very difficult to conclude that certain method of management style of leadership is preferred or superior in all situations. Obviously, each of these styles has its place in management and accomplishment of a given task.

A good leader knows when to use and when not to use them. The use of any management style depends on the prevailing situation. A manager may be highly autocratic in an emergency situation. It is therefore succinct to remark that the prevailing situation would determine the type of leadership style a leader employs at a given period of time (Peter, 2001).

Research Hypotheses

The following hypotheses were formulated to guide the study:

1. Democratic management style of employed by administrators/managers will not have significant relationship with athletes performance in Kwara State Colleges of Education.
2. Autocratic management style employed by administrators/managers will not have significant relationship with athletes performance in Kwara State Colleges of Education.
3. Laissez-faire management style employed by administrators/managers will not have significant relationship with athletes performance in Kwara State Colleges of Education.

Methodology

The descriptive survey method was used for this study because it entails the direct observation of prevailing situation of the object to be investigated. Stratified random sampling technique was used to select 1800 respondents out of 1,800 athletes from the three Colleges of Education in Kwara State. A self-structured questionnaire was the instrument used for the study. The questionnaire was validated by experts in the field of sport administration and exercise physiology in the Department of Human Kinetics and Health Education, University of Ilorin. The reliability of the instrument was ascertained through test re-test method within an interval of two weeks. The scores obtained were using Spearman ranking order and a coefficient of 0.76 was obtained. Pearson Product Moment Correlation (ppmc) was used to analyse the data collected in testing the hypotheses formulated at 0.05 level of significance.

Hypotheses Testing

H01: Democratic management style employed by an administrator/manager will not have significant relationship with athletes performance in Kwara State Colleges of Education.

Table 1: Pearson(r) showing relationship between democratic management style and athletes performance

Variable	No	Mean	Std	Df	Cal r value	Critical r value	Remark
Democratic style of leadership	180	13.1889	1.78309	178	0.724	0.139	H0 ₁ rejected
Athletes performance	180	16.1167	3.24128				

P<0.05

Table 1 shows that the calculated r-value (0.724) is greater than the critical r value (0.139) with 178 degrees of freedom and at 0.05 level of significance. Since the calculated r value is greater than critical r value, Hypothesis 1 is hereby rejected and alternative hypothesis is accepted. That is, there is a positive significant relationship between democratic management style employed by administrator/manager and athletes performance.

Hypothesis 2: Autocratic management style of employed by administrator/manager will not have significant relationship with athletes performance in Kwara State Colleges of Education.

Table 2: Pearson (r) showing relationship between autocratic management styles employed by administrator/managers and athletes performance.

Variable	No	Mean	Std	Df	Cal r value	Critical r value	Remark
Autocratic leadership style employed by administrator/manager	180	13.1889	1.78309	178	0.724	0.139	H0 ₂ Rejected
Athletes performance	180	16.1167	3.24128				

P<0.05

Table 2 shows that the calculated r-value is 0.567 while the critical r-value is 0.139 with 178 degrees of freedom and at the 0.05 level of significance. Since the calculated r-value is greater than critical r-value, hypothesis 2 is therefore rejected and alternative hypothesis is accepted. That is, there is a positive

significant relationship between autocratic management styles employed by administrator/manager and athlete performance.

Hypothesis 3: Laissez-faire management style employed by administrator/manager will not have significant relationship with athletes performance in Kwara State Colleges of Education.

Table 3: Pearson (r) showing relationship between laizzer-faire management style employed by administrator/manager and athletes performance

Variable	No	Mean	Std	Df	Cal r value	Critical r value	Remark
Laizzer-faire leadership styles employed by administrator/manager	180	13.3278	1.69963	178	0.673	0.139	H0 ₃ Rejected
Athletes performance	180	16.1167	3.24128				

P<0.05

Table 3 showed that the calculated r-value (0.673) is greater than the critical r-value (0.139) with 178 degrees of freedom and at 0.05 level of significance. Hypothesis 3 is hereby rejected and alternative hypothesis accepted. That is, there is a positive significant relationship between laissez-faire management style employed by administrator/manager and athletes performance.

Discussion of Findings

The study was carried out to examine relationship of management styles of leadership and performance of professional athletes in Kwara Stare College of Education. The result of tested hypothesis one revealed that there was significant relationship between democratic styles employed by administrators/managers and athletes performance in Kwara State Colleges of Education. This means that for any successful performance of an athlete, the need of the athletes are taken care under democratic management styles employed by administrator/managers where interest and the satisfaction in happiness of athletes are considered. Clark (2005) stated that democratic styles allows a leader to plan with members of his team and gives proper guidance to create free flow of communication among members of sports committee and athletes while people in the system are kept actively involved in the administrative process and allowed to function and interact with each other. This encourages athletes to perform effectively in any competition. Democratic managers are not unilateral in decision-making because they employ consultation with group members which ensure full participation, create confidence, admiration and commitment of athletes for better performances.

Hypothesis two shows that there is significant relationship between autocratic management styles employed by sport managers and athletes performance directors and coaches in Kwara State Colleges of Education. This style is repressive. It has domineering power to enforce rigid discipline on the athletes despite the fact that the decisions are challenged by subordinates and athletes. Esere (2005) emphasized that autocratic manager spend a considerable part of their time giving orders, making disruptive command and giving non-objective praise and criticism. This management style usually ginger the athletes to put up their best in order to meet up with the activities to be carried out.

The result obtained in in testing hypothesis three reveals that there is significant relationship between Laizzer-faire management styles employed by administrators/managers with athletes performance in Kwara State Colleges of Education. This implies that athletes were left to do their training themselves while the administrator tries to satisfy every athletes in the system. Ladani (2007) affirmed that this type of leadership gives the teams, allows sport committee, athletes to do things for themselves in term of training, planning and strategies to use. Peter (2001) also emphasized that the athletes may take advantage of this permissiveness to do what they deem fit. This may involve excessive freedom to the athletes in the course of carrying out their assigned task. It may often lead to poor performance of professional athletes.

Conclusion

The study found that there is significant relationship between management styles adopted by administrators and athletes performance. Therefore, one cannot conclude that certain method of management styles is preferred or superior in all situations and for all leaders. The use of any style depends on the prevailing situation. Simply put, it is the situation that would dictate leader in any organisation.

Recommendations

Based on the findings above, the following recommendations were made;

1. Managers should be diplomatic and endeavour to give athletes freedom to contribute their quota to decisions concerning their work.
2. The needs of an athlete should be taken care of under any management styles adopted by the leader.
3. That managers should understand their athletes so as to discover their areas of need and make them develop optimally.
4. Managers should try to commit athletes into practice session so as to improve their level of performance in sports competition

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