Research Article

# The Impact Of Coach's Leadership Style On Team Cohesion Among Female Football Players

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| ARTICLE INFO | ABSTRACT |
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| | This study examines the influence of coaching leadership styles on team cohesiveness among female football players in Kerala, India. The research, including one hundred fifty female college football players aged 20 to 25, used the coaches' Leadership framework to examine the correlation between coach behavior and team cohesiveness. Data collection was conducted online using Google Forms, and the findings underscore the need for coaches to modify their leadership strategies to address their players' distinct demands and motivations. The results indicate that coaches who cultivate a friendly and collaborative atmosphere, promoting open communication and mutual respect, are likelier to improve team cohesiveness and overall performance. This research enhances the comprehension of leadership dynamics in women's sports and provides practical insights for coaches aiming to bolster team cohesiveness in female football teams. |
| | **Keywords:** Football, Female, sports |

## Introduction

Football has transformed from a simple sport into a comprehensive enterprise in contemporary society. Numerous research within this business have examined athletes' group cohesiveness and self-perception in teams. Analysis of team sports across a season reveals that athletes experiencing dissension may struggle with group cohesion and self-doubt over their talents. Occasionally, players operate alone instead of in concert with the team. While individual reflexes might be essential, they may lead to suboptimal judgments by prioritizing team cohesion (Durdubas, 2013).

The coach's effective leadership is essential for promoting team cohesiveness and performance among female football players (Ismail et al., 2020). Coaches are vital to sports teams since they provide the environment for athletes to achieve their maximum potential. In addition to enhancing players' physical and tactical abilities, coaches must prioritize players' psychological well-being to elevate their motivation and performance Weinberg, R. S., & Gould, D. (2023). Coaches must evaluate the team's requirements, comprehend players' motivating approaches, and implement appropriate coaching tactics within a transparent, supportive, and collaborative environment. Consequently, coaches must possess strong leadership skills and the requisite knowledge and disposition to adjust to diverse personal and environmental variables. Exemplary coaches use leadership concepts with their players, creating a robust coach-athlete connection that engenders motivation, propels the team towards collective objectives, and culminates in success.

Coaches significantly influence their athletes' ideas, emotions, and behaviors, especially within the training context. Roberts et al. (2014) Madrigal, 2019 The coach's leadership style significantly influences motivation, commitment, and team dynamics. Current research has mainly concentrated on the correlation between coaching methods and player motivation in male sports, with no exploration of the effects on female football teams. Roberts et al. (2014) and Matošić et al. (2015) This research seeks to investigate the impact of the coach's leadership style on team cohesiveness among female football players. Effective leadership may directly influence the behavior and engagement of people in achieving desired objectives via constructive contact and communication Ismail et al. (2020). In sports, the coach serves as the formal leader of the group, and their methodology may either promote or impede the team's capacity for successful collaboration. Coaches who

customize their motivating environment to meet the specific requirements of their players are more likely to improve team cohesiveness and performance significantly. Roberts et al. (2014).

Researchers often use the Multidimensional Model of Sports Leadership (MMSL) (Chelladurai, 2007) to analyze the impact of coaches' leadership behaviors on players' sport-related outcomes. The MMSL posits that athletes' enjoyment and performance are determined by requisite, actual, and desired leader behaviors, which are affected by the situational, leader, and member attributes. Numerous psychological characteristics are considered advantageous in sports due to their association with performance, such as enjoyment and cohesiveness. Satisfaction is characterized as a favorable emotional state based on assessing the frameworks, procedures, and results associated with sports activities (Horn TS,2008).

## Methodology

The research entailed the selection of one hundred fifty female football players from different colleges in Kerala, all of whom had competed in at least intercollegiate events. Participants' ages varied from 20 to 25 years and had at least three years of playing experience. This research primarily investigated the coach's leadership style and team cohesiveness.

Data collection was performed online with Google Forms. To guarantee clarity, all inquiries and descriptions were translated into Malayalam, the participants' native language, and respondents received previous instructions for properly completing the questionnaire items. Participants were urged to respond to all inquiries honestly and were guaranteed anonymity in their answers.

Two validated tools were used for data collection: the Leadership Scale for Sports (LSS; Chelladurai & Saleh, 1980) to evaluate coaching leadership styles and the Group Environment Questionnaire (GEQ; Carron, Widmeyer, & Brawley, 1985) to examine team cohesiveness. Descriptive statistics were computed to encapsulate the gathered data, including mean and standard deviation. At the same time, Pearson Correlation analysis was used to investigate the correlations among the chosen variables and their dimensions

*MEAN, STANDARD DEVIATION AND CORRELATION*

| | Mean | Sd | PEARSON CORRELATION | | |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| | | | GEQ | LSS | |
| GEQ | 18.03 | 3.31 | 1.00 | .499** | r |
| LSS | 25.61 | 5.17 | | | |
| Year of experience | 1.15 | 0.66 | -0.16 | -0.05 | |

*\*\*.Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed.)*

## RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Displays the mean values of LSS (18.03325) and GEQ (25.61439), reflecting the average scores assigned by respondents in assessing the coach's leadership style and group cohesion, respectively. The standard deviations of LSS (SD = 3.312624) and Group Cohesion (SD = 5.174120) indicate the degree of variability in the answers. The correlation coefficient "r" between the Leadership Style Scale (LSS) and Group cohesiveness (GEQ) is 0.499**, indicating a moderate positive association between the perceived leadership style of the coach and team cohesiveness. The research shows that Years of Experience exhibits no significant correlation with LSS (r = -0.050) or GEQ (r = -0.161). The double asterisks (\*\*) indicate that the association between LSS and GEQ is statistically significant at the 0.01 level (two-tailed).

*Analysis of Correlation between the dimensions of LSS &GEQ*

|  | T & I | DB | AB | SS | PF | ATG-S | ATG-T | GI-T | GI-S |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **T& I** | 1 | .656** | -.027 | .552** | .632** | .385** | .273* | .530** | .405** |
| **DB** |  | 1 | .021 | .590** | .551** | .331** | .353** | .503** | .363** |
| **AB** |  |  | 1 | .236 | .107 | -.155 | -.086 | -.140 | -.047 |
| **SS** |  |  |  | 1 | .647** | .303* | .310* | .381** | .396** |
| **PF** |  |  |  |  | 1 | .456** | .370** | .426** | .423** |
| **ATG-S** |  |  |  |  |  | 1 | .398** | .509** | .289* |
| **ATG-T** |  |  |  |  |  |  | 1 | .506** | .470** |
| **GI-T** |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | 1 | .647** |
| **GI-S** |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | 1 |

*Mean And Standard Deviation Of Coaches' Leadership Style And Team Cohesion*

|  | LSS | | | GEQ | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
|  | Mean | SD |  | Mean | Sd |
| TI | 4.20 | 0.77 | ATGS | 6.45 | 1.44 |
| TB | 3.81 | 0.96 | ATGT | 6.58 | 1.74 |
| AB | 2.63 | 1.05 | GIT | 6.45 | 1.72 |
| SS | 3.43 | 0.97 | GIS | 6.12 | 1.72 |
| PF | 3.94 | 0.91 |  |  |  |

The Pearson correlation coefficient findings demonstrate substantial positive correlations between many aspects of the Leadership Style Scale (LSS) and Group Cohesion (GEQ). Training Instruction has substantial positive connections with Democratic Behaviour (r = .656**), Social Support (r = .552**), and Positive Feedback (r = .632**) in the context of the coach's leadership style aspects. Notable positive correlations were identified among group cohesion metrics, specifically Individual Attraction to the Group-Social (ATG-S) (r = .385**), Individual Attraction to the Group-Task (ATG-T) (r = .273*), Group Integration-Task (GI-T) (r = .530**), and Group Integration-Social (GI-S) (r = .405**). Autocratic behavior is negatively correlated with other variables of leadership style and team cohesiveness. All relationships were significant at p < .05, except Individual Attraction to the group task, which was substantial at p < .01.

The findings reveal that Training and Instruction is the most favoured coaching leadership style among players (M = 4.20, SD = .77), whilst Autocratic Behaviour is the least favoured (M = 2.63, SD = .97).

The average ratings for the Group Environment Questionnaire (GEQ) components suggest that players experience more cohesion regarding individual attraction to the group in both social and task settings (M = 6.45, SD = 1.45; M = 6.58, SD = 1.75). Conversely, players indicate less coherence in group interactions across both social and task dimensions (M = 6.13, SD = 1.72; M = 6.45, SD = 1.72).

## Discussion

The results demonstrate that coaches' autocratic behavior correlates poorly with team cohesion. Training and Instruction is the preferred leadership style, exhibiting significant positive correlations with democratic behavior (r = .656**), social support (r = .552**), and positive feedback (r = .632**), indicating that coaches emphasizing effective training are likely to cultivate an inclusive, supportive, and encouraging atmosphere for

players. Conversely, autocratic behavior has a minor negative connection with Training and Instruction (r = -0.027), indicating that this method may somewhat diminish player engagement.

Democratic behavior coaches autocratic behavior and mutual support among players. Social support has a significant correlation with training and instruction (r = .552**), democratic behavior (r = .590**), and positive feedback (r = .647**), underscoring the significance of a supportive team environment in fostering cohesiveness.

The different dimensions of Group Cohesion, comprising Individual Attraction to the Group-Social (ATG-S), Individual Attraction to the Group-Task (ATG-T), Group Integration-Task (GI-T), and Group Integration-Social (GI-S), exhibit positive correlations with effective training, democratic behavior, and social support. Players seem to exhibit more cohesion for personal motives for group affiliation (M = 6.45, SD = 1.45; M = 6.58, SD = 1.75) compared to collective social and task integration (M = 6.13, SD = 1.72; M = 6.45, SD = 1.72). The data indicate that players prioritize personal relationships within the group above team unity, with autocratic behavior exhibiting a negative link with these cohesiveness elements.

The findings corroborate previous studies, including those by Hoseini (2010), Ramazaninezhad (2009), Moradi (2009), and Chelladurai (1995), affirming that training and instruction, democratic undermines it. The results corroborate Carron's (1982) viewpoint that leadership is vital for team cohesion, as coaches that use inclusive, supporting, and less dictatorial approaches cultivate enhanced unity among players.

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