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The Relationship between Leadership Styles and Team Cohesion of Amhara League Volleyball Players; In Ethiopia

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Abstract

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Leadership styles have a different effect on the cohesion level of players. Therefore the purpose of this study was to examine the relationship between leadership styles and team cohesion of Amhara league volleyball players, Ethiopia. The study employed 11 volleyball teams (N = 124) that participated in Amhara league volleyball competition. Therefore, participants were selected by using comprehensive sampling methods so that all volleyball players in the 11 Amhara league teams were samples of the study. Each athlete completed, a Group environment questionnaire, to measure team cohesion, and a leadership scale for sport for leadership style. Data were analyzed by using descriptive statistics Mean and standard deviation, and Pearson correlation and the result showed that training and instruction style was the player's most perceived coaching style and autocratic style was the least and there is a positive and significant relationship found between task cohesion and all leadership styles except autocratic style and social cohesion with all leadership styles except social support style. This indicates that coaches should use different leadership styles to develop their player's team cohesion.

1. INTRODUCTION

Leadership is regarded as an underlying factor that impacts the social interaction process, the cohesion of the team, and the development of sports operations to the highest possible degree of efficiency, effectiveness, and achievement. Successful

coaching can immediately change the style and activity of individuals in achieving the intended goals through good engagement and communication (Ismail et al., 2020). The most important success factor for a coach is to help athletes improve their athletic skills in a wide range of tasks, from sequential

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Ethiopian Journal of Sport Science (EJSS)

<https://ejss-esa.edu.et/index.php/ejss>

development and mastery of basic skills to the more specialized physical, technical, tactical, and psychological preparation (Chiu et al., 2013).

According to Challadurai & Saleh (1980), there are five leadership styles of coaches. These are:

1. **Training and instruction** refer to improving athletes' performance by emphasizing and facilitating hard and strenuous training; instructing them in the skills, techniques, and tactics of the sport; clarifying the relationship among members, and structuring and coordinating the members' activities.
2. **A democratic** style allows athletes to participate in decisions about team goals, practice methods, game tactics, and strategies.
3. **An autocratic** style refers to using independent decision-making and stressing authority when working with athletes.
4. **The Social Support** style concerns the welfare of athletes and builds a warm interpersonal relationship with them regardless of performance.

5. **Positive feedback** refers to consistently praising or rewarding athletes for good performance.

Within any sports team, there is a bond that keeps the team together for it to achieve certain goals or objectives. The strength of this bond determines the level of cohesiveness of the team. Team cohesion is "a dynamic process that is represented by the tendency for a team to keep together and remain unified in the pursuit of its instrumental goals and/or for the satisfaction of members' affective needs" (Carron et al., 2002). Team cohesion as a psychological concept is an important factor that converts a non-regular collection of individuals into a team and plays a significant role in strengthening team performance and the feeling of satisfaction among the members (Mohades et al., 2010).

In many studies it has been found that a coach's leadership style can affect a team's level of cohesion for the better or worse. In general, the leadership styles that are desirable to build team cohesion are training and instruction; democratic style; social support; and positive feedback; while autocratic coaching has been linked to negative cohesion (Gardner et al., 1996;

Cited as: **Gizachew Birhanu** (2023): *The Relationship between Leadership Styles and Team Cohesion of Amhara League Volleyball Players; In Ethiopia: Ethiopian Journal of Sport Science (EJSS) V.4 page 97-105:*

Ethiopian Journal of Sport Science (EJSS)

<https://ejss-esa.edu.et/index.php/ejss>

Ramzaninezhad & Keshtan, 2009; Vahdani et al., 2012).

Murray (2006) entitled the differential effect of team cohesion and leadership style in high school sports, the relationship revealed a significant relationship between leadership styles and team cohesion.

In another study conducted by Mohades et al. (2010) entitled "Coaching leadership style and team cohesion among Iranian Professional Games", the result shows that athletes perceived training and instruction and a positive and significant relationship between leadership style in training and instruction, positive feedback, and social support with task cohesion. However, there was no evidence for a significant relationship between autocratic style and democratic style with task cohesion, and the result showed a positive and significant relationship between all dimensions of leadership styles and social cohesion.

Nascimento- Junior et al., (2019) carried out "Effect of the coaches' leadership style perceived by athletes on team cohesion among elite Brazilian players". There were 120 male adult athletes, with an average age of 25.55 years old. Their findings suggest that

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the coach's leadership style, although it can positively influence both task and social cohesion, has a much higher impact on task cohesion and also that these athletes' perceptions of leadership style did not include an autocratic style as a substantial characteristic of their coaches.

Whereas Craciun and Rus (2009) conducted 81-sample research on the relationship between perceived coaching styles and team cohesion among Romanian athletes, and they discovered a negative correlation between coaching styles of training and instruction, autocratic style, social support, and positive feedback with both task and social cohesion, and the democratic style was the only leadership style that correlates positively with task and social cohesion. This means that a high coach's focus on improving the athletes' performance is associated with low feelings of involvement by athletes about their involvement in the group task, productivity, goals, and objectives.

Nejad, Hosseini & Benar (2010) studied the relationship between leadership styles and group cohesion, and team success in female volleyball teams with a sample of 135 athletes. Results showed a positive, significant relationship between leadership

Ethiopian Journal of Sport Science (EJSS)

<https://ejss-esa.edu.et/index.php/ejss>

styles of training and instruction, social support, and positive feedback with team cohesion. There was no significant relationship between democratic and autocratic styles with team cohesion.

2. METHOD

2.1. Participants

The target population of this study was Amhara league volleyball players. The total population of the study was 124 male volleyball players, and the researcher used a census sampling technique to select the representatives therefore all players were part of the study.

2.2. Data collection

Leadership Scale for Sports (LSS) constructed by Chelladurai and Saleh (1980) was used to collect the coaching styles of volleyball coaches. The instrument consists of 40 items scored on a 5-point Likert scale, according to their level of agreement with that phrase; always, often (about 75 % of the time), occasionally (about 50 % of the time), seldom (about 25 % of the time), and never. The scale has five dimensions: training and instruction (13 items), democratic style (9), autocratic style (5), positive feedback (5),

and social support (8). Group Environment Questionnaire, developed by Albert V. Caron and his colleagues (1985), was used to collect data about team cohesion from volleyball teams. The 18-point Likert scale ranging from strongly disagrees to strongly agree (ranging from 1 to 9) has two dimensions task cohesion (9 items) and social cohesion (9 items).

2.3. Data analysis

Descriptive statistics such as mean and standard deviation to measure the extent of perceived leadership styles and team cohesion and give simple summaries about the sample and the measures used. The statistical package for the social science version (SPSS 23) was used to analyze the data. The researcher used Pearson's correlation analysis to determine the relationship between and leadership styles team cohesion.

Table 2.1 utilized cronbach alpha

Variabl	TC	SC	TI	AS	DS	PF	S
es							S
Cronbac	.77	.75	.90	.80	.88	.76	.82

h alpha

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Ethiopian Journal of Sport Science (EJSS)

<https://ejss-esa.edu.et/index.php/ejss>

3. RESULTS

Table 3. 1 Descriptive statistics of player's age and playing experience

Variables	Mean	Standard Deviation
Age	26.76	±3.47
Playing Experience	6.85	±3.41

As shown in table 4.1, the result of descriptive statistics showed that athletes who participated in the study were the age ($M = 26.76$), ($SD = 3.47$), with playing experience ($M = 6.85$), and ($SD = 3.41$).

Table 3. 2 Descriptive statistics of team cohesion

Variables	Mean	Standard Deviation
Task cohesion	7.53	±1.11
Social cohesion	7.07	±1.19

From the above table, participants perceived the following team cohesion scores: task cohesion has a higher value with a mean score of ($M = 7.53$, $SD = ±1.11$) followed by social cohesion ($M = 7.07$, $SD = ±1.19$).

Table 3. 3 Descriptive statistics of leadership styles

Variables	Mean	Standard Deviation
Training And Instruction	4.26	±.122
Democratic Style	4.23	±.164

Cited as: **Gizachew Birhanu** (2023): *The Relationship between Leadership Styles and Team Cohesion of Amhara League Volleyball Players; In Ethiopia: Ethiopian Journal of Sport Science (EJSS) V.4 page 97-105:*

Positive Feedback	3.97	±.409
Social Support	3.94	±.444
Autocratic Style	2.92	±.464

The above table shows the result of descriptive statistics showed that athletes perceived training and instruction ($M = 4.26$, $SD = ±.122$), followed by democratic style ($M = 4.23$, $SD = .164$), positive feedback ($M = 3.97$, $SD = ±.409$), social support ($M = 3.94$, $SD = ±.444$), and autocratic style ($M = 2.92$, $SD = ±.464$). So the players perceive the training and instruction leadership style first and the autocratic style last.

Table 4. 4 The correlation between team cohesion and coaching styles

Variables	TI	DS	AS	PF	SS
TC	.586**	.700**	.082	.376**	.209*
SC	.350**	.431**	.467**	.516**	.084

Note: TC = task cohesion SC = social cohesion TI = training and instruction, AS = autocratic style, DS = democratic style PF = positive feedback, SS = social support.

** Significant at the level of 0.001 and* significant at the level of 0.05

According to the data presented in table 4.5, task cohesion correlates with training and instruction .586, with democratic style .700,

Ethiopian Journal of Sport Science (EJSS)

<https://ejss-esa.edu.et/index.php/ejss>

with positive feedback .376, and social support .209, and social cohesion with training and instruction .350, autocratic style .467, democratic style.431, positive feedback .516, and social support .084 respectively. This means that both task and social cohesion were significantly correlated with training and instruction, positive feedback, and democratic styles; whereas the autocratic style has a significant correlation with social cohesion and low task cohesion, and the social support style has a significant correlation with task cohesion and low social cohesion.

4. DISCUSSION

The result obtained from correlations indicated that leadership styles and team cohesion had a positive and significant relationship. Task cohesion correlated with all leadership styles except autocratic style and social cohesion correlated with all leadership styles except social support styles. The findings suggest that the coach's leadership style, although it can positively influence both task and social cohesion, has a much higher impact on task cohesion. The data found in the present study is compatible with the research findings of (Nascimento-Junior et al, 2019; Kim & Cruz 2016; Nejad,

Hosseini & Benar, 2010; Yosuf, Vasuthevan & Shah, 2008; Murray, 2006; Sarpira et al. 2012; Mohades et al. 2010; but incompatible with (Craciun & Rus, 2009). The significance of cohesion and integration in achieving team goals shows the acceptance of responsibility shown by the players for lost or poor team performance; collective spirit to solve problems; and appropriate interactions among team members during training and competition. Therefore, coaches should be able to provide sufficient time and opportunity for exercise and enhance their performance to train and enhance athletes' skills and similar moving patterns. This could help to improve the coach's understanding of his /her role and the roles of other athletes on the team. Establishing an intimate atmosphere in the group, supporting all the athletes, and providing equal rewards for them by the coach would lead to improved social cohesion among team members and their concentration on a common goal. Kim & Cruz (2016) founds a positive and significant relationship between team cohesion and training and instruction; democratic style; positive feedback; and social support; and no significant relationship between an autocratic style and the influence of leadership styles on cohesion and athlete

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Ethiopian Journal of Sport Science (EJSS)

<https://ejss-esa.edu.et/index.php/ejss>

satisfaction, concludes that the autocratic style in competitive environments (elite) can be related to the players' positive satisfaction, since they consider the sport as highly demanding.

Notably, the coach's influence on team cohesion differs when considering the dimensions of cohesion (task and social) Nascimento-Junior et al, (2019). Mohades et al, (2010), the relationship between team cohesion and leadership styles and found that a positive and significant relationship between task cohesion and training and instruction, positive feedback, and social support and social cohesion correlated with the five dimensions of leadership styles, thus coaches can use different leadership styles to support and maintain task and social cohesion. Whereas Craciun and Rus (2009), finds a negative relationship between task and social cohesion with leadership styles of training and instruction, autocratic style, social support, and positive feedback and democratic style was the only leadership style that correlates positively with task and social cohesion. Ramzaniezhad & Keshtan (2009) found a positive relationship between team cohesion and leadership styles of training and instruction, democratic style, social support, and positive feedback styles.

According to Vasuthevan & Shah (2008), most of the researchers found that coaches place more emphasis on training and instruction while expressing a lower preference for the autocratic style their findings are similar to this finding. Team cohesion is part of a team's success because the more cohesion among the team members the better they will be able to demonstrate their abilities. That way coaches can create high levels of team cohesion depending on the coach's motivational techniques to ensure that their athletes will compete at the highest level (Sarpira et al., 2012). The results from this study and previous studies show that a coach's leadership styles have a great effect on team cohesion and demonstrated the valuable role a coach plays in the development of cohesion for his/her team.

Implications: Based on the findings of this study, coaches can raise cohesion levels using proper coaching styles of training and instruction, and democratic, and positive feedback styles, which have the greatest impact on task cohesion and social cohesion to help establish friendly relationships among the players, create social peace, resolve disputes among team members, and create maximum opportunities for team members to

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Ethiopian Journal of Sport Science (EJSS)

<https://ejss-esa.edu.et/index.php/ejss>

be together. Coaches should emphasize more on task cohesion and use training and instruction and relation-oriented styles (Sarpira et al., 2012) This study aids a coach's ability to speculate on how they should lead by seeing what styles athletes may prefer and determining what will elicit the strongest cohesion and produce the best performance results on the field or court. Coaches should do so in advance to increase their team's cohesion, spirit, and communication (Mohades et al., 2010).

5. CONCLUSION

Team cohesion has a significant and positive relationship with training and instruction; democratic style, positive feedback, and social support styles have a positive relationship with task cohesion; and autocratic style has a positive and significant relationship with the social cohesion dimension of team cohesion.



Ethiopian Journal of Sport Science (EJSS)

<https://ejss-esa.edu.et/index.php/ejss>

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