Perceived Transformational Leadership Behavior of Soccer Coaches and Its Relation to Players’ Satisfaction at Arab Universities

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Abstract

This study aimed at investigating the perceived leadership behavior of university soccer coaches and its association with players’ satisfaction according to Bass’ (1985) transformational leadership theory.

A total of 101 soccer players representing 16 Arab universities participated in this study. They completed a modified and translated version of the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire developed by Bass and Avolio (1995) and Athlete Satisfaction Questionnaire developed by Riemer and Chelladurai (1998). Data were analyzed using descriptive statistics, Pearson product-moment correlation coefficients, and stepwise regression.

The results of the study indicated that coaches were perceived by their players’ as utilizing moderate transformational leadership behavior. In addition, soccer players reported moderate levels of satisfaction. Moreover, the findings revealed a significant positive correlation between transformational leadership behavior and players’ satisfaction. The regression model indicated that transformational leadership factors, idealized influence, intellectual stimulation, and inspirational motivation were significant predictors of players’ satisfaction.

Keywords: transformational leadership, satisfaction, coaches, soccer, athletes, Arab universities.

ملخص

هذفت هذه الدراسة إلى التعرف على أنماط السلوك القيادي لدى مدربى كرة القدم وعلاقته برضا اللاعبين في الجامعات العربية.

السلوك القيادي التحويلي لمدرب كرة القدم وعلاقته برضا اللاعبين

كانت الهدف من هذه الدراسة (101) لاعب كرة قدم بمتوسط (16) جامعة عربية، أتجاوز على مقياس السلوك القيادي لدى مدربى كرة القدم (Bass and Avolio, 1995) ونسبة معدلة ونسبة مقياس القياس متوسط مسعود العمالي الذي أعدده باس وأفوليو (Riemer and Chelladurai, 1998) والمقياس القدم الذي أعده ريمير ورشيلد (Avolio, 1995) باستخدام المتوسطات الحسابية، والانحرافات المعيارية، وتحليل الازداد، ومعاملات الاستخدام الدردشة. أظهرت النتائج أن المدرسين يمارسون السلوك القيادي التحويلي بدرجة متوسطة حسب رأي اللاعبين، وأظهرت كذلك أن مستوى الرضا عند اللاعبين كان متوسطًا. كما أشارت النتائج إلى وجود علاقة إيجابية دائمة بين سلوك القيادى الربى عند اللاعبين، حيث أوضحت نتائج تحليل الانزجار أن أعاد التأثير المتبادل، والاستنارة العقلية، والحيز الإلهامي كانت أهم العوامل التي ساهمت في تفسير الربى في الربى عند اللاعبين، حيث أوضحت نتائج تحليل الانزجار أن أعاد التأثير المتبادل، والاستنارة العقلية، والحيز الإلهامي كانت أهم العوامل التي ساهمت في تفسير الربى في الربى عند اللاعبين.

الكلمات المفتاحية: قيادة تحويلية، الربى، مدربين، كرة قدم، لاعبين، جامعات عربية.

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Introduction and Theoretical Background

Leadership is a burgeoning discipline in industrial and organizational psychology. Many researchers and scholars have proposed many theories and models in this area. The most popular leadership theories currently being discussed by researchers include charismatic, transactional, transformational, and servant leadership which have been collectively termed the ‘new leadership’ (Bryman 1992; Doherty and Danylchuk, 1996).

Of the ‘new leadership’ theories that have gained recent and widespread attention is transformational leadership. It has become one of the most significantly and frequently emphasized research areas not only in the corporate world but also in the field of sport. Therefore, many writings have shifted to this paradigm (e.g., Bass, 1990; Bass and Avolio, 1994a; Kent, 1999; Kent and Chelladurai, 2001, 2003; Song, 2002; Wallace and Weese, 1995; Yusof, 1999). This new theory challenges existing assumptions of leadership. Specifically, rather than viewing leadership as an exchange process, as in previous leadership theories, this new theory views leadership as a process of transforming the mindset of subordinates and empowering them to perform beyond what is normally expected of them (Yusof, 1999).

Transformational leadership, according to Bass (1985), is defined as a process in which a leader tries to increase his or her followers’ awareness of what is right and important and to motivate them to perform “beyond expectations”. Transformational leadership has been conceptualized as containing four behavioral components: idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration (Bass, 1985, 1996; Bass and Avolio, 1994a, 1994b).

Idealized influence is described as behavior that results in follower admiration, respect, and trust. Idealized influence involves risk sharing on the part of leaders, a consideration of follower needs over personal needs, and ethical and moral conduct. Inspirational motivation is reflected in behavior that provides meaning and challenge to followers’ work. It includes behaviors that articulate clear expectations demonstrating commitment to overall organizational goals. In addition, team spirit is aroused through enthusiasm and optimism. Intellectual stimulation promotes intelligence, rationality and careful problem-solving. Behaviors related to intellectual stimulation include seeking differing perspectives when solving problems, suggesting new ways of examining how to complete assignments and encouraging rethinking of ideas that have not been questioned in the past (Bass and Avolio, 1994a). Finally, individualized consideration is directed at treating the followers as individuals and not just members of a group. Behaviors related to individualized consideration include spending time in teaching and coaching, helping others develop their strengths and listening attentively to others’ concerns (Bass and Avolio, 1994a).

Review of Literature

An extensive review of the literature in both Arab and Jordanian environments revealed that studies on transformational leadership behaviors in sport settings and its relationship to athlete satisfaction and performance are rare, and to the best knowledge of the authors, no single study as such has been reported in the literature of leadership. On the other hand, studies of transformational leadership behavior and its relation to job satisfaction, commitment and organizational performance have been reported in the western environment although such studies are still considered to be rare. Such conclusion may not be surprising since the concept of transformational leadership and the models that dealt with it may be considered a recent development in the field of sport.

A review of several previous studies on transformational leadership in the western environment seemed to be appropriate. For example, Chen (2007) investigated the relationship between the leadership behaviors of coaches and the influence of these behaviors on player satisfaction and performance among intercollegiate basketball players in Taiwan. The researcher utilized the Transformational Leadership Questionnaire, the Transactional Leadership Questionnaire, and the Athletes’ Satisfaction Questionnaire to collect the data from 165 basketball players in Taiwan. The results indicated that there was a statistically significant positive correlation between the observed transformational leadership behaviors of the coach and the levels of satisfaction of the players. In contrast, there was no correlation between the transactional leadership behaviors and the level of players’ satisfaction. The results also indicated that there was a correlation between both transformational leadership and player satisfaction and the performance of the team. These findings led
to the conclusion that the use of transformational leadership behaviors by coaches of intercollegiate basketball teams in Taiwan can increase athlete satisfaction and improve the performance of the team.

Wang (2006) explored the relationship between Tae Kwon Do coaching leadership behaviors and Taiwanese collegiate Tae Kwon Do competitors' satisfaction and determined whether there were differences in satisfaction with regard to demographics, experience, and achievement levels. This study also investigated whether the coaches' leadership skills have an impact on their competitors' satisfaction with training and competing in Tae Kwon Do. A Chinese version of the Leadership Scale for Sports (LSS) and the Athlete Satisfaction Questionnaire (ASQ) were used to collect the necessary data from the athletes. The results showed that there were significant correlations between the coaches' leadership behaviors and total satisfaction score with Tae Kwon Do competition. All of the competitors' perceptions of coaches' leadership behaviors in the Leadership Scale for Sport had significant strong positive correlations, but only degree of autocratic behavior had a negative correlation with the other leadership behaviors. Coaches' leadership behaviors had strong relationships to affect Taiwanese collegiate Tae Kwon Do competitors' satisfaction.

Tsung-Teng (2004) examined the leadership behavior of university volleyball coaches in Taiwan and its association with athletes' satisfaction according to Bass (1985) transformational/transactional leadership model. The participants included 89 players (41 males and 48 females), and 15 coaches representing Divisions I, II, and III from volleyball teams competing in the Chinese Taipei University Sports Federation. Three survey instruments were used to measure transformational leadership, transactional leadership, and athlete satisfaction. The results revealed that players' satisfaction with leadership was positively and strongly associated with transformational leadership, whereas negative relationship was observed for contingent reward behavior. Moreover, differences in transformational/transactional leadership behaviors were observed for the coaches with more education and coaches' experience. Specifically, the coaches with more education and experience found it easier to develop transformational leadership behavior.

Huang (2004) conducted a study to identify the transformational and transactional leadership styles of physical education directors and its association to physical education teachers' and coaches' leadership satisfaction in Taiwanese colleges. Survey instruments were distributed to 200 physical education teachers, and 10 physical education directors. The findings of this study indicated that there was a significant negative relationship between transformational and transactional leadership styles. In addition, this study indicated that there was no significant relationship between high transformational, high transactional, and both high transformational-transactional leadership styles of physical education directors and physical education teachers' and coaches' leadership satisfaction.

Çakioğlu's (2003) study aimed at investigating the relationship among preferred and perceived leadership, their congruence and satisfaction with leadership. In addition, it aimed to investigate the differences among the offensive, the defensive and the mid-field players of soccer teams in preferred leadership, perceived leadership and satisfaction with leadership. The subjects of the study were 138 male university soccer players from 7 universities in Ankara Region of Turkey. The athletes consisted of 38 offensive players, 49 defensive players, and 51 mid-field players. Data were collected through the Leadership Scale for Sport and the Athlete Satisfaction Questionnaire. The study employed hierarchical regression procedures to test the congruence hypothesis derived from the multidimensional model of leadership. Results indicated that athlete satisfaction was not dependent on the congruence between preferred and perceived leadership behavior. Additionally, results showed that there were no differences among the offensive, defensive, and mid-field players in preferred leadership, perceived leadership, and satisfaction with leadership.

Bebetsos and Theodorakis (2003) measured the satisfaction of a sample of 234 team handball athletes from the Youth Team Handball Finals Tournament in Greece. Ninety-nine men and 135 women completed the Scale of Athlete Satisfaction. Analysis indicated that the athletes were satisfied with their leaders' behavior and their personal outcomes. No differences between the sexes were noted. Also, the more practices per week in which the athletes were engaged, the more satisfied they were. In conclusion, the study demonstrated that the Scale of Athlete Satisfaction is a promising tool for measuring satisfaction of athletes in team handball in Greece.
In a study by Song (2002), 171 professional or semi-professional players from seven different types of South Korean team sports were profiled to examine the relationship between leadership behaviors and organizational culture. Using the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ) and the Organizational Culture Assessment Questionnaire (OCAQ), Song found that players generally preferred transformational leadership behaviors over transactional leadership behaviors but that transactional behaviors were dominant among the coaches of the selected sports teams. In addition, the preferred leadership behaviors significantly differed from sport to sport.

Park, DeSchriver, Bestmann, and Lim (1999) examined the level of satisfaction of elite track and field athletes in South Korea with six factors; facilities, equipment, financial support, head coach's technical ability, training methods, and leadership. The participants were 194 track and field athletes selected from a 1997 ranking list of the top five athletes in each track and field event. The results of this study indicated that the majority of the track and field athletes were satisfied with all aspects of their facilities, head coach's technical ability, training methods, and leadership. However, athletes were not satisfied with financial support from the club, company or school. Results of this study indicated that financial support should be improved for track and field athletes in South Korea.

Yusof (1999) examined the relationship between transformational leadership behaviors of athletic directors and job satisfaction of coaches at NCAA Division I and III institutions. Data were collected using the Transformational Leadership Behavior Inventory and the Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire from a national sample of 618 coaches from NCAA Division I and III institutions. Data were analyzed using descriptive statistics, discriminant analysis and logistic regression. The results of the study suggested that there was a significant relationship between transformational leadership behaviors of athletic directors and coaches job satisfaction at both NCAA Divisions. It was discovered that situational variables such as coaching ability, group cohesion, organizational rewards, and winning record to be significant predictors of coaches' job satisfaction at NCAA Division I institutions. It was concluded that transformational leadership behaviors of athletic directors have a direct relationship with coaches' job satisfaction in the absence of a strong leadership substitute or neutralizer.

In another study, Yusof (1998) studied the relationship between transformational leadership behaviors of athletic directors with coaches' job satisfaction at NCAA Division III institutions. The subjects were 308 male and female coaches from NCAA Division III institutions. They were asked to complete the Transformational Leadership Behavior Inventory and a short form of the Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire. Sequential logistic regression was used to analyze the data collected for this study. The results indicated that there was a significant relationship between transformational leadership behaviors of athletic directors with coaches' job satisfaction at NCAA Division III institutions. The direction of the relationship suggests that coaches who evaluated their athletic directors as highly transformational were more likely to be satisfied with their jobs than their counterparts who evaluated their superiors as low in transformational leadership behaviors. Furthermore, this study has shown that transformational leaders exist not only in business organizations but also in intercollegiate/education settings (Yusof, 1998).

Hsieh (1998) examined the relationship between transformational leadership of physical education administrators and physical education teachers at the college level. The results showed that there is a significant relationship between transformational leadership of physical education administrator with the job satisfaction of physical education teachers. The direction of the relationship suggested that physical education teachers who evaluated their physical education administrators as highly transformational were more likely to be satisfied with their jobs than their counterparts who evaluated their superiors as low in transformational leadership behaviors.

Doherty and Danylchuk (1996) examined the relationship between coaches' job satisfaction with the leadership behaviors of athletic directors at several Ontario universities. A sample of head coaches from Ontario universities (N = 114) completed the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ Form 5X) with regard to their athletic directors. The resultant profile was one of predominantly transformational as opposed to transactional or nonleadership behavior. Coaches' satisfaction, perceived leadership effectiveness, and extra effort were positively and strongly associated with transformational leadership behaviors of athletic directors, whereas negative relationships were observed for transactional and nonleadership behaviors.

Wallace and Weese (1995) investigated the links between transformational leadership, organizational culture, and employee job satisfaction in the 69 Canadian YMCA organizations. The
results of MANOVA and subsequent ANOVA statistical treatments allowed the researchers to conclude that significant differences in organizational culture existed between the YMCA organizations led by high transformational leaders and those led by low transformational leaders. In addition, the YMCA organizations led by high transformational leaders administered organizations that carried out the culture-building activities of managing change, achieving goals, coordinated teamwork, and custom orientation to a greater degree than YMCA organizations led by low transformational leaders. No significant differences in employee job satisfaction existed between the YMCA organizations led by high transformational leaders and those led by low transformational leaders.

Problem and Significance of the Study

Despite the promising results obtained with studies conducted in business settings, very few studies have been done to examine the transformational leadership model in sport settings. The few studies conducted in sport settings have obtained conflicting results and showed little support of the impact of transformational leadership behaviors on subordinates' outcome such as job satisfaction, commitment, Organizational culture, or performance (Doherty and Danylchuk, 1996; Huang, 2004; Song, 2002; Wallace and Weese, 1995; Yusof, 1999). These conflicting results suggest that more research is needed to test this theory in sport settings. Moreover, considering that this theory is a relatively new theory, the applicability of this theory in non-business settings needs to be addressed. Certainly, findings from sport settings will provide a stronger validation of the propositions of transformational leadership theory.

The findings of this study may have specific significance for the coaches and players by providing information regarding the way in which coach leadership behaviors affect the levels of satisfaction of players, and thereby influence the performance of the teams. The results of this study may also have significance for coaches in other sports and at other levels of competitions because of the general nature of leadership behaviors in sport and the way in which it is related to athletes' satisfaction and performance. Finally, it is hoped that this study will help to fill the void in the current research at this level of sports and provide coaches and sport managers' insight into how to better lead their teams and organizations.

Purpose of the Study

The specific purposes of the study were:

1- To assess the transformational leadership behaviors of soccer coaches as perceived by soccer players.
2- To examine the level of players’ satisfaction.
3- To investigate the correlation between coaches’ leadership behaviors, as perceived by soccer players, and players’ satisfaction.

Research Questions

In terms of the purposes, the following research questions were developed:

1- How do soccer players perceive their coaches’ transformational leadership behaviors?
2- What is the level of college players’ satisfaction at Arab universities?
3- Is there any relationship between coaches’ transformational leadership behaviors and players’ satisfaction?

Definitions of Terms

For the purposes of this study, the following terms were defined:

Leadership: while there is no universal definition of leadership, it is generally accepted as a process in which one individual articulates a vision for the future, inspires others to adopt the vision and to work towards the implementation or achievement of the vision (Chen, 2007).
Transformational leadership: a theory and method of leadership in which the leader motivates followers to perform beyond their normal abilities or expectations by transforming their beliefs about their capabilities to adopt and implement the vision articulated by the leader (Chen, 2007).

Player: an amateur student athlete who is a member of an intercollegiate soccer team.

Soccer coach: the person who helps prepare and train soccer players for competitions, provides understanding, and follows the rules of the sport.

Satisfaction: a general feeling of adequacy or contentment with a situation.

Limitations of the Study

The following limitations may be inherent in this study:

1- The teams participating in the study may not be representative of all Arab intercollegiate athletes.

2- The translation of the surveys from English into Arabic language may have some limitations and may result in distortion of the exact meaning.

3- The study was limited by the restrictions imposed by the validity and reliability properties of the selected instruments.

4- The data were collected from soccer players during the first Arab championship for indoor soccer held in Egypt from November 11-17, 2005.

Study Variables

- The independent variable was leadership style as defined by the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ).
- The dependent variable was athlete satisfaction as defined by the Athlete Satisfaction Questionnaire (ASQ).

Methodology

Research Design

This is a non-experimental, descriptive correlational design. Self-administered questionnaires were used to collect the players’ perceptions of the leadership behaviors of soccer coaches and players’ satisfaction levels.

Population and Sample

The population of the study consisted of university soccer players representing 16 Arab universities participating in the first Arab championship for indoor soccer, which took place at South Valley University in Egypt during November 11-17, 2005.

The sample consisted of 101 university soccer players. They ranged in age from 17-25 years (M = 20.86, SD = 1.87), had played an average of 2.5 years of varsity sports (SD = 1.13), and reported that they spent about 15 hours per week in participating in sport (M = 12.85, SD = 5.21). Additional demographic information indicated that 17.8% of the athletes were freshmen, 22.8% were sophomore, 31.7% of them were juniors, and 27.7% were seniors.

Measures

Data were collected using a three-part questionnaire, The Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ; Bass and Avolio, 1995, 2000), The Athlete Satisfaction Questionnaire (ASQ; Riemer and Chelladurai, 1998), and a demographic data sheet.

The Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ Form 5X-Short; Bass and Avolio, 1995, 2000) is the most widely used instrument to measure transformational leadership. The MLQ is comprised of 45 items that identify and measure key leadership styles (constructs) of behavior defined as transformational, transactional, and laissez-faire. Also, it included questions measuring three behavioral
outcomes (effectiveness, extra effort, and satisfaction) which have been shown in prior research to be linked strongly with both individual and organizational success using transformational leadership.

The MLQ employs a five-point Likert-type scale ranging from 0 (not at all), 1 (once in a while), 2 (sometimes), 3 (fairly often), to 4 (frequently, if not always). Scores were obtained by summing the responses on each scale and dividing by the number of items answered within the scales. A copy of the instrument used in this study is located in Appendix (1).

For the purposes of this study, transformational leadership was the main style evaluated. Therefore, only 20 items from the 45 questions about transformational leadership were used. The transformational leadership contained four leader behaviors: idealized influence, intellectual stimulation, individualized consideration, and inspirational motivation.

The validity and reliability of the MLQ-5X was established earlier and reported in the manual of the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (Bass and Avolio, 2000). The reliability of each leadership and outcome factors in the MLQ was established using responses from nine samples (N = 2145). The reliability was relatively high for this instrument; Cronbach alpha reliability coefficients ranged from .74 to .94.

Athlete Satisfaction Questionnaire (ASQ; Riemer and Chelladurai, 1998). The ASQ is a multidimensional scale developed by Riemer and Chelladurai (1998) to measure athlete satisfaction. The ASQ contains 56 items grouped into 15 subscales with respondents using a 7-point Likert-type scale ranging from 1 (not satisfied at all) to 7 (extremely satisfied).

The format of this questionnaire allows researchers to include those dimensions of satisfaction most salient for a particular situation (Riemer and Chelladurai, 1998; Riemer and Toon, 2001). For this study, satisfaction was assessed using four of the ASQ’s 15 subscales: training and instruction satisfaction (3 items), personal treatment satisfaction (5 items), team performance satisfaction (3 items), and individual performance satisfaction (3 items). The first two subscales concentrate on satisfaction with the process of coaching behavior, while the second two assess satisfaction with outcomes associated with the processes of leadership (Riemer and Chelladurai, 1998).

Riemer and Chelladurai (1998) reported internal consistency estimates (Cronbach’s alpha) ranging from .78 to .95 (mean = .88). Riemer and Chelladurai also provided initial evidence of construct validity for the ASQ. They used confirmatory factor analyses and the item-to-total correlations to confirm the construct validity of the scale. Correlations between the ASQ (Riemer and Chelladurai, 1998) subscales and the subscales measuring the constructs of “Desire to Quit” and “Team Commitment” (Chelladurai and Riemer, 1997) and the Negative Affective Scale (Levin and Stockes, 1989) provide evidence for the criterion-related validity.

Translation of Questionnaires

The instruments used in this study had been originally developed in English and were translated into Arabic. A standard three-step protocol reported by Blaschko and Burlingame (2002) was used when translating the questionnaires. First, the instruments were translated from English into Arabic language by a professional scholar who is fluent in both English and Arabic languages. Second, the instruments were translated back from Arabic into English language by a second scholar who is also competent in both English and Arabic languages. In the final step, a third professional scholar, fluent in both English and Arabic languages compared and evaluated the original English and the translated-back copies in order to verify the accuracy and validity of translation.

Pilot Study

A pilot study was conducted to pretest the Arabic version of the instruments for clarity and timing. It was conducted with a group of 30 college athletes from the Hashemite University in Jordan. The results indicated that the instruments were understandable and clear, and the time needed to respond to the questions did not exceed 20 minutes.
Procedures

Questionnaires were distributed during the first Arab championship for indoor soccer held in Egypt from November 11-17, 2005. A letter explaining the general purpose of the study and asking for permission to conduct the study was given to the coaches. Once permission was granted, one of the researchers and his assistants distributed the questionnaires to the participants with the promise that their responses would be used only for the study, would be held in confidence, and would not be shared with anyone else. Upon the completion of the questionnaires, participants were told to seal the questionnaires in the provided envelop and return them to the researcher and his assistants.

Initially, 120 questionnaires were distributed, and with follow-up phone calls, 107 surveys were returned. From the total returned, 6 were omitted from all analyses because of missing or unusable data. The final usable return rate was 84.2% (N = 101).

Data Analyses

Statistical analysis was conducted using the Statistical Package of Social Sciences (SPSS) version 13 software. Data were analyzed descriptively to determine the transformational leadership style, athlete satisfaction, and the basic characteristics of the participants. Stepwise regression analysis was conducted to determine the effects of the four independent variables of transformational leadership, as predictors of athlete satisfaction. Additionally, the internal consistency of the instruments used in this study was determined by calculating Cronbach alpha coefficients.

Results

Scale Reliabilities

As a first step in analyzing data, scale reliability coefficients (Cronbach alpha) for the questionnaires used in this study were calculated. The results are reported in Table 1. As shown in the table, all coefficients were judged to be acceptable based on Nunnally and Bernstein’s (1994) criterion of alpha being greater than .70.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Measure</th>
<th>Alpha</th>
<th>No. of Items</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Transformational Leadership</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inspirational Motivation</td>
<td>.80</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Idealized Influence</td>
<td>.79</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intellectual Stimulation</td>
<td>.76</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Individualized Consideration</td>
<td>.75</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>.89</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Athlete Satisfaction</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Training and Instruction Satisfaction</td>
<td>.84</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Team Performance Satisfaction</td>
<td>.83</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal Treatment Satisfaction</td>
<td>.81</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Individual Performance Satisfaction</td>
<td>.81</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>.89</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Research Question One

To answer the first research question, that is to identify the coaches’ transformational leadership behaviors as perceived by the players, means and standard deviations were computed. The results presented in Table 2 show that inspirational motivation was the most perceived leadership behavior (M = 3.426, SD = .699), followed by intellectual stimulation (M = 2.965, SD = .731), and idealized influence (M = 2.860, SD = .657). Individual consideration was the least perceived leadership behavior with a mean of 2.543 and a standard deviation of .873.
Table 2: Means and Standard Deviations of the Players’ Perceptions of the Transformational Leadership Style of the coaches

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Inspirational Motivation</td>
<td>3.426</td>
<td>.699</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intellectual Stimulation</td>
<td>2.965</td>
<td>.731</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Idealized Influence</td>
<td>2.860</td>
<td>.657</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Individual Consideration</td>
<td>2.545</td>
<td>.873</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>2.931</td>
<td>.571</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

According to the percentile criteria, percentile scores of 2.6 or lower indicate low transformational leadership, percentile scores between 2.61 and 3.35 display moderate transformational leadership, and percentile scores of 3.36 or higher represent high transformational leadership. Based on this definition, the players’ perceived their coaches to display moderate transformational leadership behaviors.

Research Question Two

What is the level of soccer players’ satisfaction at Arab universities? To answer this question, means and standard deviations were computed. The results of players’ satisfaction levels are presented in Table 3. The mean scores of the ASQ were 5.373 (SD = .935) for general satisfaction, 5.762 (SD = 1.021) for Individual Treatment Satisfaction, 5.366 (SD = 1.272) for Practice Satisfaction, 5.211 (SD = 1.151), for Individual Performance Satisfaction, and 4.891 (SD = 1.483) for Team Performance Satisfaction. According to the percentile criteria, percentile scores of 4.5 or lower indicate low satisfaction, percentile scores between 4.51 and 5.99 display moderate satisfaction, and percentile scores of 6 or higher represent high satisfaction. Based on this definition, the players’ level of satisfaction reported in this study represented was moderate.

Table 3: Means and Standard Deviations of the Levels of Players’ Satisfaction

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Individual Treatment Satisfaction</td>
<td>5.762</td>
<td>1.021</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Practice Satisfaction</td>
<td>5.366</td>
<td>1.272</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Individual Performance Satisfaction</td>
<td>5.211</td>
<td>1.151</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Team Performance Satisfaction</td>
<td>4.891</td>
<td>1.483</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>5.373</td>
<td>0.935</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Research Question Three

Is there any relationship between coaches’ transformational leadership behaviors and players’ satisfaction?

To answer this question, Pearson Product-Moment Correlation coefficients (PPMC) were computed to examine the hypothesized relationships among perceived leadership behaviors and athletes satisfaction. The results presented in Table 4 show positive and significant correlations between coaches’ leadership behaviors and players’ satisfaction, with the exception of the correlations between players’ satisfaction and inspirational motivation.
Table 4: Correlations between Perceived Transformational Leadership and Players’ Satisfaction

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Team Performance Satisfaction</th>
<th>Individual Treatment Satisfaction</th>
<th>Practice Satisfaction</th>
<th>Individual Performance Satisfaction</th>
<th>General Satisfaction</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Intellectual Stimulation</td>
<td>.330**</td>
<td>.419**</td>
<td>.445**</td>
<td>.334**</td>
<td>.494**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Idealized Influence</td>
<td>.396**</td>
<td>.378**</td>
<td>.341**</td>
<td>.428**</td>
<td>.495**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inspirational Motivation</td>
<td>.162</td>
<td>.123</td>
<td>.038</td>
<td>.147</td>
<td>.153</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Individual Consideration</td>
<td>.308**</td>
<td>.365**</td>
<td>.296**</td>
<td>.288**</td>
<td>.409**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transformational Leadership</td>
<td>.401**</td>
<td>.423**</td>
<td>.371**</td>
<td>.407**</td>
<td>.517**</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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

To further examine which of the four leadership behaviors had specifically the strongest relationship with players’ satisfaction, stepwise regression was conducted using the four leadership factors (intellectual stimulation, idealized influence, inspirational motivation, and individual consideration) as the predictor variables, and players’ general satisfaction as the criterion variable. The results are presented in Table 5.

Table 5: Linear Regression of transformational Leadership Behaviors as Predictors of Players’ Satisfaction

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>Standardized Coefficients (β)</th>
<th>t</th>
<th>R</th>
<th>R²</th>
<th>ΔR²</th>
<th>ΔF</th>
<th>Overall F</th>
<th>p</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Idealized Influence</td>
<td>399</td>
<td>4.205**</td>
<td>495</td>
<td>.245</td>
<td>.000**</td>
<td>19.044</td>
<td>000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intellectual Stimulation</td>
<td>425</td>
<td>4.314**</td>
<td>.576</td>
<td>.332</td>
<td>.087</td>
<td>.001**</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inspirational Motivation</td>
<td>-237</td>
<td>-2.447*</td>
<td>.609</td>
<td>.371</td>
<td>.039</td>
<td>.016*</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Individual Consideration</td>
<td>048</td>
<td>4.55</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Significant at the 0.05 level.
** Significant at the 0.01 level.

As can be seen in Table 5, the results of stepwise regression analysis show that coach behaviors of idealized influence, intellectual stimulation, and inspirational motivation were significant predictors of players’ satisfaction. The three-variable prediction model was statistically significant (F(3, 97) = 19.044, p < .000) and accounted for 37.1% of the variance in players’ satisfaction. Examination of the beta weights showed that idealized influence was the most important contributor to players’ satisfaction. It explained 24.5% of the variance in players’ satisfaction. Intellectual stimulation and inspirational motivation were also significant predictors of players’ satisfaction and explained 8.7% and 3.9% of the variance, respectively. On the other hand, individual consideration was the only variable that did not contribute to the explained variance of players’ satisfaction.

Discussion

The main purpose of this study was to examine the relationship between coaches’ leadership style and soccer players’ satisfaction. Three specific questions were addressed to accomplish study objectives.

Coaches’ Transformational Leadership Behaviors

The first research question sought to identify the transformational leadership behaviors of soccer coaches as perceived by college athletes. The results revealed that soccer players perceived their coaches as moderately utilizing transformational leadership behaviors (M = 2.931). According to Bass and Avolio (2000), transformational leadership occurs when followers are encouraged to perform and
achieve beyond expectations, or are encouraged to transcend their immediate interests for the needs of the leader, needs to the group, or for higher-order self-actualizing needs.

Of the four dimensions of transformational leadership, inspirational motivation was found to be the most important leadership behavior. Inspirational motivation is a transformational factor in which leaders clarify an appealing vision and provide meaning and a sense of purpose in what needs to be done (Bass and Avolio, 2000). Therefore, a leader (coach) who practices inspirational motivation provides a vision that energizes subordinates (players) to achieve higher performance levels (Bass, 1985).

Results obtained in this study were consistent with previous research conducted in western countries, which reported that all of the transformational leadership behaviors were more often allocated in intercollegiate sport organizations (e.g., Chen, 2007; Doherty and Danyluck, 1996; Hsieh, 1998; Huang, 2004; Kent and Chelladurai, 2001; Wallace and Weese, 1995; Yusof, 1998, 1999). Furthermore, transformational leadership was the dominant leadership profile of recreational organizations (Wallace and Weese, 1995). The findings are however different from those of Song (2002) who found that transactional leadership behaviors were dominant among coaches of sports teams in South Korea.

Satisfaction Level of Soccer Players

The purpose of research question two was to describe the satisfaction level of soccer players. The findings showed that the mean was 5.762 for individual treatment satisfaction, 5.366 for practice satisfaction, 5.211 for individual performance satisfaction, and 4.891 for team performance satisfaction (see Table 3). The results indicated that soccer players were moderately satisfied in general (M = 5.373). It might be that the complements, recognition, and rewards player receives from his/her coach for good performance led to this feeling of satisfaction. Another possible explanation is that all athletes were students and played soccer for exercise and enjoyment, and therefore negative feelings toward coaches, and teammates were not observed. This finding is consistent with the findings from previous studies which propose that athletes in different sports tend to be satisfied (e.g., Bebetsos and Theodorakis, 2003; Park et al., 1999; Tsung-Teng, 2004).

Relationship between Coaches’ Transformational Leadership and Players’ Satisfaction

The third research question sought to investigate the relationship between transformational leadership behaviors and players’ satisfaction. The resulting correlations (see Table 4) were found to be significant. All satisfaction factors were found to be significantly correlated with all transformational leadership behaviors with the exception of inspirational motivation.

The regression analyses also demonstrated unique contributions of coaching behaviors to the variance explained in players’ satisfaction. Coaches’ behavior of idealized influence was found to be the most important contributor to players’ satisfaction. It accounted for 24.5% of the variance in players’ satisfaction. Idealized influence is coaching behavior that occurs when leaders behave as role models. They are admired, respected, and trusted because of their ethical characters (Bass and Avolio, 1994a). The leaders have high standards of morale and conduct and seek to do the right thing. Also, followers identify with these leaders and desire to emulate them (Northouse, 2004). It seems that soccer players appreciate such a behavior exhibited by their coaches to improve their abilities, performance, and satisfaction.

Intellectual Stimulation was also identified as a significant predictor of players’ satisfaction. The results indicated that intellectual stimulation accounted for 8.7% of the variance in satisfaction. According to Bass and Avolio (1994a) intellectual stimulation promotes intelligence, rationality and careful problem-solving. Behaviors related to intellectual stimulation include seeking differing perspectives when solving problems, suggesting new ways of examining how to complete assignments and encouraging re-thinking of ideas that have not been questioned in the past. It is not surprising that soccer players desire and appreciate more involvement in the decisions pertaining to team goals, practice methods, and game tactics and strategies. Since the athletes’ success or failure depends mostly on themselves, they may feel the need to be involved in the training process, and they seem to prefer coaches who stimulate their effort to be innovative and creative (Bass and Avolio, 1994a).
In addition to the idealized influence and intellectual stimulation behaviors, the results also revealed that inspirational motivation was a predictive of athlete satisfaction and accounted for 3.9% of the variance. Inspirational motivation occurs when transformational leaders behave in ways that motivate and inspire those around them by providing meaning and challenge to their followers’ work. In addition, inspirational motivation is the result of leaders’ ability to provide followers with a clear sense of purpose that is energizing and empowering (Bass and Avolio, 1994). A possible reason explanation is that players seem to appreciate and prefer coaches who inspire them by continuously communicating; listening carefully; tolerating failure as a learning experience; maintaining a commitment to innovation, creativity, diversity, and social development; and continuously encouraging development (Bass and Avolio, 2000).

In general, there were significant positive correlations between transformational leadership behavior and players’ satisfaction. The results indicate that approximately 37.1% of the variance in players’ satisfaction could be attributed to coaches’ leadership behaviors. It is not surprising that transformational leadership behavior was strongly associated with players’ satisfaction.

The results of this study were similar to other studies examining the relationship among leadership behaviors and athletes’ satisfaction (e.g., Doherty and Danylchuk, 1996; Hsieh, 1998; Park et al., 1999; Tsung-Teng, 2004; Wang, 2006; Yusof, 1998, 1999). In these studies leadership was found to have a positive and significant relationship with athlete satisfaction. However, the results of this study are somewhat at odds with the findings from Huang (2004) and Wallace and Weese (1995) studies. Huang (2004) indicated that there was no significant relationship between high transformational, high transactional, and both high transformational-transactional leadership styles of physical education directors and physical education teachers’ and coaches’ leadership satisfaction. Also, Wallace and Weese (1995) found no significant differences between employee job satisfaction transformational leadership behaviors.

Conclusions

The results of this study revealed that soccer players at Arab universities were moderately satisfied and perceived their coaches as moderately utilizing transformational leadership behaviors. The results of this study also revealed that there were significant positive correlations between coaches’ leadership behaviors and players’ satisfaction. The regression model indicated that transformational leadership factors, idealized influence, intellectual stimulation, and inspirational motivation, were significant predictors of players’ satisfaction.

Recommendations for Future Research

Players are an important source of information to assess coaching behaviors. If coaching behavior is important to the coach for players’ performance and satisfaction, players’ input should be sought as a source of documentation. In order to obtain genuine information, players and coaches should give full attention for future research in this vein of sport leadership studies. Therefore, players input will be beneficial to the coach for understanding what players prefer and what behaviors that coach is utilizing.

Future research will help continue the understanding of the multi-dimensional aspects of coaching. Furthermore, the following recommendations are offered for future studies examining relationships between coaches’ behaviors and levels of satisfaction.

1- Further research is needed with the transformational leadership theory in varying sport populations and with greater number of participants to identify other situational and behavioral factors associated with athlete satisfaction.

2- This study was limited to male athletes and it is conceivable that the coach leadership behaviors-athlete outcomes links may vary depending on athletes’ gender, age, ability, and competitive level. Therefore, future research should take these variables into consideration. Also, further research should obtain additional information about coaches’ characteristics such as gender, experience, ability, and so on, because leader characteristics affect actual behavior.

3- Future research should attempt to examine the relationship between coaches’ leadership behaviors and athlete psychological outcomes such as effectiveness, satisfaction, burnout, performance in
different sports. Each of these sports may have unique characteristics that could affect the leader-athlete relationship.

4- Most instruments used to measure transformational leadership and athlete satisfaction in Arab environments were designed in the West. Although the translated version of the MLQ and ASQ have acceptable reliabilities, an instrument designed by Arab researchers may better fit with Arab culture and make the participants feel more comfortable when they answer the questions. Future studies may focus the instruments of leadership and athlete satisfaction in connection with Arab culture. Such work might help to identify other important variables that will explain the other 63% of variation in players’ satisfaction.

References:

Bass, B. M. (2000), and Avolio, B. J., Multifactor leadership questionnaire (form 5x). Redwood City, CA: Mind Garden, Inc.


