

PERSONALITY AFFECTING COACHES-ATHLETES RELATIONSHIP OF MALAYSIAN FOOTBALL TEAMS

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Abstract

Personality has a great effect on performance and coach-athlete relationship in a team. Sports scientist asserts that a lack of certain personality traits could help to explain “why some individuals gifted at sport do not thrive at elite level.” Therefore, the purpose of this study was to examine any differences of personality traits between coaches and players of Malaysian football teams as well to identify any differences concerning to personality traits among Malaysian successful and less successful football teams. (n =16) coaches and (n = 200) players of the Malaysia Super League and Malaysia Premier League were identified to participate in the modified GEQ (2009) which measured personal attributes and personal qualities. Independent t-test apply and the results indicated that the null hypothesis was rejected with the statistically of n (214); t = 2.441, p = .015; <.05 and n (214); t= 2.434, p = .020; <.05. Personal qualities and attributes showed significant high mean value for Malaysian successful football teams n (106); t = 4.947, p = .000; <.05. This study distinguished personality traits that seem to set apart the successful high-performing coach and athletes. This study has contributed to Coaching Science, the body of knowledge.

Introduction

Sabah head coach, Jelius Ating highlighted the success of Sabah FA after claim first title in 23 years. “I joined Sabah at a time when things were not well with the team, so I had to introduce changes and re-teach football to the players. They have to have the desire to succeed and be good players, because victory begins with them. I am by no means an accomplished coach, but I worked on their character and mentality”.

Earlier research has established that interaction processes between coach and athlete endure basic components of the development of both groups’ performances. Coaches continuously structure evaluations about players based on several variables and frequently seek out ways to improve the quality of those relationships to optimize the talent of each player. However, an ample knowledge and skill needed to supervise an athlete's potential development. For this reason, Barić (2007) claimed that declared coach was one most important factor that affected athlete's development and progress. The characteristic of the coach, the competition experience, the experience in the sports preparation process, competition success achievement, and ability to transfer knowledge had important influenced on the accomplishment of an individual athlete in selected sport. Ogivile and Tutko (1971) also founded that when coaches were asked to rate personality traits of their players, the coaches were

perceptive in identifying of personality tendencies which were significant part of their own character structures.

While coaches were constantly making appraisal about their athletes, athletes as well formulated assessments about their coaches' personalities and behaviours (Cratty, 1983). Over these years, coaches did not interest in their athletes' perceptions of them. However, as player's drive has become a factor in team performance, the evaluation of coaches and interest in athletes' perceptions of coaches had become fundamentals in verifying maximum coaching effectiveness and achievement (Jubenville, 1999). If coaches comprehended the opinions of athletes concerning coaching roles, coaches were then arranged to adapt their coaching styles to improved team unity and bring out athletes to more competitive spirit (Weiss & Fredrichs, 1986). It was interesting to note any differences of personality traits between coaches and players as well to know what could be outcome of the personality traits of successful football teams were differing from those of less successful football teams.

Personality Variables

Individual characteristics and the outcome have always been the strongest factors to affect the relationship between coaches and players. Individual characteristics have been paid the greatest amount of attention in the research. The characteristics of experience and maturity (Chelladurai & Carron, 1983), motivation and cognitive structure (Chelladurai & Carron, 1981; Erle, 1981) have been examined. The outcomes, as operationalized by satisfaction and performance, have been investigated with reference to type of task (open, closed), player status (starters versus substitutes) and coach status (Chelladurai, 1978; Horne & Carron, 1985).

In 1971, Ogivile and Tutko had found that coaches had unique personality traits different from their athletes. It appeared that major difference between personality of the coach and the athletes may lead to discipline problems within the teams. Hence, Vealey (1992) suggested there may be more benefit in studying personality by investigating self-worth, perceived ability and achievement goal orientation of the coach and athlete.

Personal Attributes and Personal Qualities

Academics around the world have sought to express a definition about the nature of the education they offered to players through a description of the standard qualities and skills that players should possess. In past studies, both the United Kingdom players and players across Europe ranked personality, including personal attributes and personal qualities as the most important criterion in getting a position.

Personal attributes are the qualities, skills and understanding community agrees its players should develop during their time with the academy and consequently shape the contribution which they are able to make their profession and society. Whereas, the personal qualities of these football players were refer to speak effectively; write effectively; independent learning; computer skills; mathematics skills; research skills; develop self-confidence; work independently; provided leadership skills; conflict resolution skill; knowledge of political/social issues and well-versed knowledge of other cultures.

Players who self-assessed their profession experiences would start to fill the gaps of how coaches serve players, and what players face and what were their feelings after they have further their profession. Hence, it should lead to a clear picture of how players in reality relate to coaches' style about what is happening in the games and how players respond to their situation. Coaches' points of

view require players to be “adaptable”, “adaptive”, “transformative”, and “flexible” (Harvey et al, 1997).

Purpose of Study

The purpose of this study was to examine any differences of personality traits between coaches and players of Malaysian football teams as well to identify any differences concerning to personality traits among Malaysian successful and less successful football teams.

Methodology

Participants

The samples in this study comprised of a total of two hundred football players from four different teams in the Malaysia Super League (n = 100) and four different teams in the Malaysia Premier League (n = 100) based on the classification of less successful and successful football teams. It also consisted of data from sixteen coaches, (n = 8) from successful teams and (n = 8) were from less successful teams. This would indicate that the samples in the present study was closely representative of the population of Malaysia football players being investigated.

Instrumentation

The questionnaires to measure an independent variable was constructed by adopting items from Employability of Sport Science Graduates of Malaysian Public Higher Education Institutions, the Graduate Employability Questionnaire – GEQ (Chee Hian Tan, 2009). The original version of GEQ consists of five parts - demographic profile, personal attributes, personal qualities, students' satisfactory survey and competency of Sport Science Program/Courses.

However, for the purpose of this study, only the adopted version of personal attributes and personal qualities would be used, which helped to identified coaches' and players' personality traits. Perhaps GEQ (2009) had publication on - line in academic journal Malaysian Journal of Sport Science and Recreation (MJSSR) 2014 which was constructed high validity that assess two different aspects or dimensions of personality traits, namely personal attributes and personal qualities in this study.

The personal attributes and personal qualities consisted of 27 items and divided into 15 statements or factors of personal attributes and 12 statements or factors on personal qualities respectively and were highly reliable with Cronbach's alpha of .882 and .831.

Procedures

The football associations identified were contacted via mail, email and phone. Respondents were brief on the purpose of the study and were encouraged to participate in the study. Permission was granted by Football Association of Malaysia (FAM) and each state football association that were involved, and the appointment for on-site data collection was confirmed at least one week in advance. On the day of data collection, informed consent was obtained from the coaches and players. The respondents were briefed again on the purpose of the study. Prior to questionnaire administration, the respondents were assured that their participation in the study was completely voluntary, and that respondents may withdraw at any time without penalty. Data were collected using self-administered questionnaires and monitored by helpers. All the respondents completed the questionnaires within half an hour.

Results

This study had explicitly generated the hypotheses and t-test was used in the analysis. The null hypothesis examined if players' personality traits were different from their respective coach's personality traits. After analysis of t - tests for both variables (personal attributes and personal qualities), it showed that the coaches and players were significantly differed. The null hypothesis was rejected with the statistically of n (214); $t = 2.441$, $p = .015$; $<.05$ and n (214); $t = 2.434$, $p = .020$; $<.05$. It concluded that there was a significant difference between the personalities traits between players with the coaches, the results were presented in Table 1.

Table 1: Differences in the Personality Trait Variables by Coaches and Players of Malaysian Football Teams

Variables	Coaches		Players		t-value	Sig.
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD		
Personal Attributes	4.38	.214	4.21	.282	2.441	.015*
Personal Qualities	4.43	.353	4.21	.365	2.343	.020*

This study exclusively intended to retort if there any significant differences in the personality traits (personal attributes and personal qualities) between Malaysian successful football teams and Malaysian less successful football teams (Malaysia Super League and Malaysia Premier League). The null hypothesis could be generated as an independent sample t-test was conducted. Based on the findings, there was significant difference in mean score of Malaysian successful football teams and Malaysian less successful football teams n (106); $t = 4.947$, $p = .000$; $<.05$. The null hypothesis was rejected. As the results, both Malaysian successful and less successful of football teams showed highly differ in personal qualities but not personal attributes as personality traits was concerned, the results were presented in Table 2.

Table 2: Differences in the Personality Trait of Malaysian Football Teams

Variables	Successful		Less successful		t-value	Sig.
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD		
Personal Attributes	4.18	.231	4.26	.321	1.964	.051
Personal Qualities	4.10	.322	4.34	.374	4.947	.000*

Discussion

Personality traits between players and coaches of Malaysian football teams

One of the most asked question by sport scientist was 'does the personality traits of the coach differ from players and other coaches?' The first hypothesis examined if players' personality traits were different from their respective coaches' personality traits.

The findings of this study found that there was significantly differences in mean score of Personal Attributes and Personal Qualities among players' and their coaches. It concluded that there was significant difference in mean score between the personality traits of the players to those of their respective coaches. Personal attributes featured quite prominently among the candidate predictors of such transition, largely based on the growing evidence of the role personality plays in a range of important life outcomes such as sport and exercise related behaviour (Aidman & Schofield, 2004; Auweele et al., 2001; Silva & Weinberg, 1984; Vealey, 1992).

Personal quality was a psychological system that creates the person's characteristics. In fact that coaches showed consistent tendency to behave in a certain way. It concerns with how coaches behave in front of players, this was the first study to evaluate coaches and players on the personality traits. These findings were consistent with Ogilvie and Tutko (1971) which found that coaches and athletes do have difference and unique personality traits. A significant contribution to coaching science that it was a personal awareness of one's strength and weakness in terms of psychological structures (Ogilvie & Tutko, 1971).

Perhaps reasons for the higher ratings in both personal qualities and personal attributes for the coaches could be coaches used to have a relatively high desire for achievement. The need for achievement is an important motive among effective coaches. Successful coaches identified actions necessary to complete tasks and obtained results. In order to work their way up to the top of the team, coaches must full desire to complete challenging games and league. For example, organize and motivate players to accomplish goals while creating a sense of order and direction, this allows the coach to gain technical expertise; both through education and work experience as well establish a process for activities that lead to the implementation of systems, procedures or outcomes.

It was clear that leadership was a very demanding activity and that one's coach vital qualities to have advantage over the players who lack these qualities. According to Hargrove (1988) talented coaches showed a great range of skills and vary them to match changing situations. For instance, conflict resolution skills; in conflicts the coaches know how to control themselves and seldom manifest aggressive behaviour, know speak effectively, have good research skills and encompass self-confidence; which plays an important role in decision making and in gaining players' trust. Apparently, if the coach was not assured of what verdict to say or expressed a high degree of doubt, then the players were less likely to trust the coach.

Personality Traits between Malaysian Football Teams

An account of personality factors in distinguishing between successful and less successful football teams. The second hypothesis to examine if successful football teams' personality traits were different from less successful football teams' personality traits. The results demonstrated both successful and less successful of football teams showed highly difference in personal qualities but not the personal attributes as far as personality traits were concerned. Conceptually, these results were consistent with the notion of personality as a key factor in converting skills into achievement (Auweele et al., 2011). At any given level of ability, personality was likely to determine the style and quality of application of this ability and thus the ultimate success.

The concept of personality rests on the observation that individuals seem to behave somewhat consistently over time and across different situations, and from this perceived consistency comes the notion of "personality traits" that characterise individuals' regular ways of responding to their sports competition (Passer & Smith, 2001). Clearly, effective coach-athlete relationship was characterized by mutual trust, confidence in each other's abilities, good communication, especially good listening skills and a sense of collaboration or working together as a team.

Conclusion

In summary, partial of Graduate Employability Questionnaire (GEQ) that used in this study were personal attributes and personal qualities dimensions which helped to identify coaches' and players' personality traits. The overall personal readiness for the original GEQ was highly Cronbach alpha value of .856 and this indicated that these factors highly reliable and valid to be considered as one of the independent variables in the recent study.

The main goal of recent study was to identify the differences of personality traits between players and coaches of Malaysian football teams and to identify the differences of personality traits between Malaysian successful and less successful football teams. A review of the literature suggested that there was a considerable gap between personality theories that were unsuccessfully applied to sport in efforts to understand personality traits and behaviours that predicted leadership effectiveness (e.g. Danielson, Zelhart, & Drake, 1975; Hendry, 1969; Lenk, 1977; Ogilvie and Tutko, 1966; Penman, Hastad & Cords, 1984; Tutko & Richards, 1971). This gap between these theories are vital to be studied.

The findings revealed that players viewed their coaches as someone who was always ready to provide support and enjoyable to work with. Marten (1975) stated that being a successful coach was an enormous challenge. Successful coaching was much more than just winning. Successful coaches helped athletes master new skills; enjoyed competing with others and feel good. Successful coaches did not only well verse in the skills of their sport, but also be the role model of those skills needed for successful achievement.

Finally, personal qualities in sports were strongly motivated by the ability displays to perform excellently. Therefore, the needs of the skill in sports were significant for social development and players understanding and that was why the personal qualities were rated higher than personal attributes among successful and less successful of Malaysian football teams. Through an analysis of personality traits and the events in which coach-athlete relationship demonstrated, athletes are likely to have friendly relationships with coaches. The enjoyment in learning and interacting atmospheres are important. For successful team players, this means feeling part of the team and knowing a valuable role. Approach in the study of personality traits outlined simple understandings of coach-athlete relationship and it allowed for further elaboration and subtle investigation.

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