Effective Leadership Style in a Sport Organization

Harsh Kedia\(^1\) and Nayana Nimkar\(^2\)*

\(^1\)Student, MBA. \(^2\)Professor, Symbiosis School of Sports Sciences, Symbiosis International (Deemed University), Pune, Maharashtra, India

*Corresponding author: director@ssss.edu.in (Nimkar)

Abstract

Background: Innovation and change is an essential element in most of the industries but when it comes to the sports industry it is the most important factor. With this rapid growth in this industry, there needs to be a significant leadership style that should be followed in the sports organization. This paper aims to find out the most effective leadership style feasible for a sports organization. This paper discusses the different leadership styles, the effective role of leadership in the performance of the sports organization, and the strategies to improve leadership among sports organizations. Methods: To investigate this an online, google questionnaire was sent to a specific population, and the results generated from that were converted into a simple percentage form. The researcher used some charts to interpret those percentages. Conclusion: This helped the researcher to conclude that innovation leadership is the most effective in a sports organization. The role of leadership has been proven to be very effective in the performance of sports organizations as the majority of the response showed that an organization can never be effective without leadership.

Keywords: Leader, Leadership, Sport Management, Sport Organization

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1. Introduction:

Sport is a piece of human culture. Sports mirror a sociocultural and educational phenomenon and are a piece of mankind's history since its inception\(^3\). It not only helps people to improve their physical fitness but it also teaches you some important life skills\(^2\). When you are playing a team sport it teaches you how to play fair, respect your opponents, control emotions, encourage and motivate your teammates, develops social skills, following the instructions of your coach/leader, handling pressure, time management, and many more but most importantly it develops your leadership skills. When you lead a team you have certain responsibilities and you have to show your commitment towards it which helps in to improve your leadership ability. These life skills can never be taught in any educational institution or organization.

Sports provide millions of employment opportunities around the world. The majority of the world’s population either plays or watches a particular sport. Sport has evolved from being just a pastime to a promising industry\(^3\). The progressions that have occurred in our society have pushed sports focuses on more feasible and productive administration. This was accomplished through sufficient arranging and programming of exercises and a consistent exertion to upgrade all assets\(^4\). This helps the organization to optimize all the assets which they have to help the organization in smooth functioning.

In the last few years, we have seen Asia as an emerging hub for sporting opportunities. India and China contribute about one-sixth of the world’s gross domestic product and 33% of the world’s consumers\(^5\). We can now see how much a country’s economy is dependent on the sports sector. This shows that sport is no longer seen as an entertainment aspect but it has grown to be a much bigger phenomenon. With this, Government intervention in sport has increased and they have started to invest more money in this sector. They are continuously trying to promote sports at
the grassroots level and are investing more money to build world-class infrastructures which will eventually lead to more participation and better competition.

In the past decade increase in globalization, commercialization, and responsibility in the sports industry has driven sports associations to adopt more advanced management frameworks and more business arranged methodology\(^{(6)}\). To operate effectively and efficiently the sports organizations must be head to head with the current demands and the market situation. This movement towards a progressively engaged workforce makes the need to address whether our ordinary models and ways to deal with leadership are as yet suitable—or, regardless of whether they require redevelopment and reconstitution\(^{(7)}\). If they need to be redeveloped or reconstituted, then it must match the demand and current market scenario. Also, it should be redeveloped with the strategy to meet future demands.

After almost an era of research on leadership, the question remains as to what makes an effective leader. But what we can say through our general knowledge is that a leader is an individual who has a vision, he knows which way to follow and the individuals start following him. A leader is anything but a solitary individual, who are made by their followers. An organization doesn’t only look for professional expertise but they also look for other qualities like experience, character traits for building positive relations with the customers, and the co-workers’ interpersonal and communication skills that will help leaders steer the team effectively. A leader with these traits and skills will advance faster in achieving organizational goals.

A massive number of people are voluntarily associated with the sport but their importance should not be diminished; rather, it must be supported with an increase in the number of full-time professionals\(^{(8)}\). There are a few viewpoints associated with being a good sports leader that request inspiration, direction, association, planning, tolerance, adaptability, vision, power, integrity, and relation-building abilities. Sports leaders manage a wide scope of individuals from different foundations including agents, athletes, scouts, media, and medical experts. They work in both accommodating and master settings which contains college sports, beginner sports, network sports associations, private sports clubs, sports showcasing and executive firms, media and correspondences, fields and civic centres, social help associations, and military sports. Different sports leaders like a coach’s behaviour or style can create a major impact of changes in an athlete’s variables\(^{(9)}\). Therefore, an athlete’s (follower) performance and his future are mostly in the hands of his coach (leader) whom he follows for some reason. Sports leaders should adjust three basic components of leadership: resilience, relationship, and responsibility, also referred to as three R of leadership\(^{(10)}\).

The three R’s of leadership are described below:

i. Resilience - The leader must have a strengthened feeling of certainty. He should have the option to confront fears and frame criticism into inspiration. The leader must follow an option that could be more noteworthy than himself. The leader must develop confidence in the group and the common vision of the gathering.

ii. Relationship - The leader must develop connections by helping everybody in their way. Leaders don't oversee connections, they develop them. It is excessively simple for a reality driven leader to treat workers and clients in a value-based way. You will be recollected a very long time from now dependent on the speculations you did or didn't make seeing someone during your darkest hours.

iii. Responsibility – The leader is answerable for their gathering, down to the individual. He grasps a do-no-hurt philosophy and takes a stab at the gathering to accomplish something genuinely noteworthy. To the illuminated leader, duty isn't tied in with making the best choice – it is tied in with doing an extraordinary thing. By tuning her mind to search out areas where the gathering can have any kind of effect, the leader lifts the team into a position of direction. This makes a supportable feeling of energy for the whole gathering, including its leader.
Working with such a significant number of various individuals in various setting requests incredible relationship-building abilities and communication skills. Having the option to chat with customers as well as being a successful audience is tremendously significant. Finding the harmony between being the chief and being a companion is a colossal bit of successful administration. A sports leader ought to have the option to convey well through composing contracts just as understanding authoritative archives. This profession includes a lot of haggling with numerous associations and athletes focusing on great correspondence. Superb relationship building abilities are a quality that incredible game leaders have. Interfacing and addressing a huge gathering of individuals, just as to people is required as often as possible in this profession. Staying calm and composed while making decisions and strategies is one of the most important characteristics of a sports leader.

Making collaboration among athletes, associations, and customers is something that a leader ought to have the option to progress admirably. Sports managers must be leaders, inspirations, and coordinators. They ought to have the option to inspire, influence, and inspire their followers to cooperate to reach the organizational goals and experience accomplishment as a group. Keeping this thing into account the main aim of this research is to find out the most effective leadership style in a sports organization.

2. Material & methods:

The methodology that was used to conduct the research paper was the selection of the sample, selection of the variables, data collection, and statistical techniques used.

2.1 Selection of the sample

The target audience for the study was the people who are connected with the sports industry. The sample for this research consisted of 110 people who are currently pursuing any sports courses, working in any sports companies, training and playing in any sports club, or coaching in any sports academy. Age and gender were not restricted to this research study. The average age was (23.36 ± 3.23) and the ratio of males and females was 9:2 respectively.

2.2 Selection of the variables

The research paper had two variables independent and dependent variables. An independent variable is actually what it seems like. It is a variable that remains solitary and isn’t changed by different factors, like in this research the leadership style is an independent variable. The dependent variable is something that depends on other factors, like the effective role of leadership in the performance and strategies to improve leadership is dependent upon the leadership style and thus it is a dependent variable.

2.3 Data collection

To collect data stratified sampling was used as this technique helps to highlight a specific group within the population. In this research, the specific group was the people who are connected with sports. The data were collected with the help of google forms which allowed the researcher to reach and get a response from a specific group of people who were connected with the sports industry in a very short period. At first, the questionnaire was sent to a group of ten people to check the responses and feedback of the questionnaire before sharing it with a large scale of people. All the survey respondents received google forms on their mobile phones and emails.

2.4 Statistical Technique

The researcher used Microsoft Excel 2016 to interpret the data collected and convert it into a percentage form for easy understanding. To investigate further he also used different charts for better interpretation of the data.

3. Results and Discussion:
This section shows the statistical analysis of the data which was collected with the help of an online survey. The responses from the survey were converted into a simple percentage form for a better understanding and generating the final results. The response which had the highest percentage was considered to be the best option available.

The percentage was calculated by summing up the number of responses from different questions, then dividing it with the total number of responses, and finally multiplying it with 100. The formula which was used is:

\[
\text{Percentage} \ (%) = \frac{m}{n} \times 100
\]

Where M is the sum of different responses and N is the actual number of responses.

The figures given below shows the results of the total number of responses:

**Figure 1. Conducive environment and facilities are important**

Figure 1 shows us whether a conducive environment and facilities are important or not in any sports organization. According to 83.6% (92) respondents’ conducive environment and facilities are important in sport organizations, 11.8% (13) of them were not sure whether it will be important or not, whereas 4.5% (5) say that it is not important.

**Figure 2. An organization can never succeed without proper leadership**
Figure 2 gives an insight into how strongly the respondents agree or disagree with the fact that an organization can never succeed without proper leadership. The results show 71.8% (79) respondents strongly agreed to the fact. 16.3% (18) just agreed while 6.3% (7) of them were neutral. 3.6% (4) disagreed and 1.8% (2) of them strongly disagreed with the fact.

Figure 3. Most effective leadership style

Figure 3 reveals the most effective leadership style in an organization. According to 56.3% (62), respondents Innovation leadership style is most effective in an organization. 14.5% (16) thinks the Autocratic leadership style is effective, whereas 12.7% (14) went with the Transformational leadership style. Democratic leadership style got 10% (11) and Transactional leadership style got the least responses of 6.3% (7).

Figure 4. An organization can never succeed without an efficient leader

Figure 4 gives an insight into how strongly the respondents agree or disagree with the fact that an organization can never succeed without an efficient leader. The results show 67.2% (74) respondents strongly agreed to the fact. 18.1% (20) just agreed while 8.2% (9) of them were neutral. 4.5% (5) disagreed and 1.8% (2) of them strongly disagreed with the fact.
Figure 5. Role of Leadership for the performance of the sport organization

Figure 5 describes the role of leadership for the performance of the sports organization. Where, 20% (22) respondents think that Leadership creates radical changes in an organization and its structure, 27.2% (30) thinks Leadership improves organizational effectiveness and efficiency, 22.7% (25) thinks Leadership increases workers sense of creativity and imagination, 30.9% (34) thinks Leadership enhances profitability and organizational value and finally 43.6% (48) respondents think that Leadership improves all of the above aspects.

Figure 6. Strategies to improve leadership among sport organizations

Figure 6 analyses the strategies to improve leadership among sports organizations. According to 21.8% (24) respondent’s Interpersonal relationship between the top management and workers is an important strategy, 13.6% (15) thinks Effective communication channel is important, 35.4% (39) thinks Seeking the opinion and advice of the workers is important, 18.1% (20) thinks Equity and fairness in the organization are important and the majority of 45.4% (50) thinks that all of the above strategies are important to improve leadership among sports organizations.

Discussion

The majority of the respondents were students who are currently pursuing courses in the field of sports. These students are going to be the face of sports organizations in the coming future and that
is the reason why they were asked to fill this survey. According to a research student who studies management, courses have a better understanding and higher knowledge about leadership than students who don’t take these courses. Thus it shows the value and importance of these courses which helps students to improve their skills and give them industrial exposure through practical tests from the beginning of the course which teaches them how to handle the situation in the real world.

Leadership research in sport management has determinedly fallen behind the ordinary leadership literature. This is quite shocking knowing the fact that how important is leadership on the field and off the field as well. The rise of some of the associated industry like the media industry (e.g. ESPN) and apparel industry (e.g. Nike) is largely due to their leaders and founders who followed a significant leadership approach in their organization. This shows how important is it to follow a particular leadership style in the organization.

Innovation leadership style prompts the advancement of a company’s key assets and gives it an upper hand which is important for organizational performance. Organizational performance is the most important element and therefore, it must empower innovation and guarantee productivity to accomplish the sustained organizational performance. Advancement in the following economy is about considerably more than designing. It is tied in with making sense of how and where you can include one of a kind worth. It is about how quick you can unlearn, relearn and ace new aptitudes. It is about how you draw in others at a more profound, increasingly humanistic, and enthusiastic level.

The innovation leadership style focuses on innovating technology, human resource, organizational system, culture innovation, and network innovation. Innovating technology simply focuses on the technological aspects to fulfill or solve the unaddressed needs which couldn’t be done in the past. This is only possible when the organization integrates an innovative culture and system in the workplace with innovative human resources. Innovation in the new work environment isn't your main thing after you complete your work; it is how you approach your work. In its least difficult structure, development is thinking of thoughts and rejuvenating them. To tackle issues. Make openings. Rather than advancement being a division (new item improvement, innovative work, IT, and so forth.), it is rapidly turning into everyone's business.

Innovative thinking is an expansion of traditional business thinking. Innovative thinking permits you to think out of the box and gives you an extra boost as a leader. It helps you in upgrading different monetary, relationship, and item execution results. It empowers a firm to change and adjust to its outside condition and by suggestion improve its presentation. Where others see issues, you sense potential. At the point when others worry over subtleties, you see the comprehensive view, the advancement being made, the vision of how things can be yet are not yet. You understand that your viewpoint and mentality decides everything. Also, you realize progress will occur, if just you keep the disposition right and press ahead.

Innovative leaders must figure out how to make a hierarchical atmosphere where others apply creative thinking to examine problems and develop new products and services. It is tied in with the growing culture of advancement, not just selecting several creative workers. In what manner can you help other people to think diversely and work in better approaches to confront difficulties? The answer is simple, by creating an innovative work culture in the organization, seeking advice, and encouraging its workers to think creatively, giving them enough opportunities, etc.

Organizational financial performance is emphatically connected with the level of organizations' accounted for organizational values regarding leadership. The profit in an organization is dependent upon the success of the organization which is dependent on a leader. Therefore, poor leadership can also lead to business failure. It is the job of the leader to find out how to optimize all the resources which are available and generate profit from it. Research shows that between 20 to 40 percent of the profitability of organizations can be clarified by its authoritative cultural values. To optimize the profit, the expenses should be minimized as much as possible.

Successful leadership is seen as fundamental for organizational value. To comprehend and distinguish the estimations of an association and to measure their effect on the organization, leaders should cautiously look at how that organization works. While it might be useful to tune in...
to individuals who depict what they accept the estimations of the association are, it is better to watch those individuals in their everyday exercises. Note how workers invest their energy, how they convey inside the association, and how they approach their day by day work duties and assignments. Even though qualities are regularly hard to characterize, they are normally uncovered by workers’ activities and thinking, how they set their needs, and how they allot their time and vitality. A representative's activities are more uncovering than their words.

When a workers’ opinion is heard and supported, the organization can remain to emphatically affect the primary concern, while drawing in the worker all the while. An organization that looks to improve daily must give its workers full access regarding the performance of the organization (23). Apart from the leader, the workers should also have a clear blueprint about the organization’s performance. This increases their trust and once they know about the current scenario of the organization they give their valuable inputs to put the organization into a better and more feasible position.

4. Conclusion:

This research aimed to find out the most effective leadership style feasible for a sports organization. With the help of all the data which were collected through questionnaires, it can be concluded that the Innovation leadership style is the most effective leadership style feasible for any sports organization. Also, the role of leadership has been proven to be very effective in the performance of sports organizations as the majority of the response showed that an organization can never be effective without leadership. The study showed that leadership creates radical changes in an organization and its structure, they improve organizational effectiveness and efficiency, increases workers' sense of creativity & imagination, and enhances profitability and organizational value.

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