

THE RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN COMMUNICATION MANAGEMENT AND COACH-ATHLETE RELATIONSHIP AMONG SPORT TEAM ATHLETES IN PERLIS

Ellail Ain Mohd Aznan, Muhamad Faidhi Baseri & Mohd Nor Shahizan Ali

ABSTRACT

Communication management may encourage the self-confidence in an individual and it will also lead to the closeness or bonding between coaches and athletes. In addition, communication management is also believed will help in increasing the ability and preparedness upon the athletes for each game and competition. Nowadays, coach-athlete relationship had becoming outrageous studies as past study shows that despite having good relationship, it may also help in reducing stress, and conflict among them, not only that it can also enhance their athletes' satisfaction and reduce burn out. It was proven that coach-athlete relationship is very important in creating a positive environment around the coach and players. This study focused on the communication management and coach-athlete relationship among the team sport athlete in Perlis. A total of 100 questionnaires were distributed. The data collected were analyzed using the Statistical Package for the Social Science (SPSS) version 22. Pearson correlation was used in determining the relationship between communication management and coach-athlete relationship. The results proved that there was a significant between communication management and coach-athlete relationship. It was suggested that for future studies, the study could focus on identifying the mediating factors that influence the relationship between communication management and coach-athlete relationship.

Keywords: communication management, coach-athlete relationship, team sport athlete, Perlis

INTRODUCTION

In this modern era, communication had become the most important tools in developing new relationship and as well as in terminating it. Thus, communication is an important asset that enables people to connect, terminate and reconnect. Generally, communication can be defined as a process that requires numbers of skills which is complex and complicated (Aly 2014). According to Aly (2014), human tend to develop the verbal and non-verbal communication in various ways, in addition, he also mentioned that communication among coaches and athletes can lead towards improvement or deteriorate in an athlete performance. Communication management can be defined as a form of applied communication discipline (Botan & Hazleton, 1989), yet it is also a piece of management science (Verčič & Grunig, 2000). Communication management can also help to influence the decision making by an organization or an individual through monitoring the issues, publics and opinion (Macnamara, 2013).

In sports, coach and athlete were interrelated either for an individual sport or team sport, the relationship can be the factors in determining the success or loss for an athlete or a team. Sagar & Jowett (2012) proved that communication between coach and athlete may help in increasing the closeness or bonding within themselves. In addition, Coe (1996) also mentioned that, harmonious relationship between coach and athlete may resulting in an awesome outcome. Thus, this study was done in determining the relationship between communication management and coach-athlete relationship. It was focusing on the coach athlete relationship as by looking on the results from study done by Aly (2014) which stated that communication management dimension of development of communication, communication timing and communication style is significant in leading sport teams for success. From years, back till the present years, a lot of studies had been done on communication, however only few of the studies was focusing on the coach athlete relationship. Not to be mentioned, back here in Malaysia, there is a small number of studies that was focusing on the communication and the coach athlete relationship. In 2002, Campbell and Jones found that one of the best predictors of an athlete's stress and/or satisfaction with his/her teammates is the team's interaction and communication. According to McCready (1984) shown that mentors lean toward committing more push to system and association due to their "better-defined and more controllable nature". Disregarding the influential method for coach athlete connections could incapacitate the change of athlete's potential. In spite of the way that most academic research supports that coach athlete relationship expect an imperative piece of contenders' accomplishment in their athletic professions, researchers began to concentrate on the coach-athlete relationship from a game logical individual until the 1970s. The hypotheses generated for this study were there is a significant relationship between communication management and coach-athlete relationship for team sport athlete in Perlis.

COMMUNICATION MANAGEMENT

Communication management includes the process of observation, analysis, strategy, development, organization, implementation and evaluation of communication processes (Bentele, 2008). The communication management function can be given the mission to endorse the establishment and sustenance of organizational objectives, rules, values and norms. For example, during periods of organizational change, structures and processes need to be altered and management often highlights the importance of communication (Grandien & Catrin Johansson, 2011). Communication management should be viewed as a multi-dimensional concept of a managerial, operational, coaching and reflective function in or for an organization – not just as a professional function of managers and technicians. Communication management can be viewed as one way to describe or explain an organization or organizing, the same way finances describe and explain organizations from a financial perspective, or marketing from a market perspective (Van Ruler & Verc'ic', 2008). Basically, in communication management there are four dimensions which are development of communication, communication style, communication timing and motivation. In assuring the messages was passed appropriately, mentors need great relational abilities to make the viability in correspondence, for example, communication with the competitors, dealing with the groups, giving strategic and specialized directions, and others. Bloom (1996) stated that "Learning when to communicate with players is an intangible art; a skill that separates the competent coach from the great one. It takes years to learn to distinguish the best

communication style for each player” (p. 165). In this manner it is basic for both mentor and competitor to have a decent correspondence style to improve a superior relationship. Good communication styles require a high level of self-awareness and individuals who understand their style create positive relationships. A person who understands his or her own personal style of communicating may enhance good and lasting interpersonal relationships (Venneman, Fry and Mayaorga, 2014). According to scholars, interpersonal relationship is fundamental in the process of coaching as its nature is likely to determine the athletes’ satisfaction, self-esteem and performance accomplishments (Jowett and Meek, 2000a, Jowett & Meek, 2000b, Lyle, 1999 & Vealey, Armstrong, Comar & Greenleaf, 1998). In order to build an effective interpersonal relationship, interpersonal communication plays an essential role.

COACH-ATHLETE RELATIONSHIP

In the 1980s, analysts considering the connection amongst mentors and competitors concentrated essentially on how mentors use authority aptitudes to spur and influence athletes’ behaviours and performances (Chelladurai, 1984; Smith, Zane, Smoll, & Coppel, 1983). Amid this period, it was basic for don brain science scholars to use such estimation instruments as the Leadership Scale of Sport and Coaching Behaviour Assessment System (Jowett, 2006). In particular, research from social and cognitive psychology illustrating the interrelatedness of cognitions, emotions and behaviours in relationships (Hinde 1997; Kelley et al., 1983) was utilized to make an essential structure for depicting and investigating athlete-coach relationships (Jowett & Meek, 2000). That initial framework of interrelated components led to Jowett & Cockerill (2002) further refining their model by theorizing and testing three interrelated cognitive, emotional and behavioural components that have been shown to have a significant impact on coach-athlete relationships. They call these components the “3 C’s”, referring to the relationship constructs of closeness (Berscheid, Snyder, & Omoto, 1989), commitment (Rusbult & Buunk, 1993), and complementarity (Kiesler, 1997). *Closeness* refers to the emotional tone of the coach-athlete relationship and is found in their looks of relational loving and trust/regard for each other (Jowett, 2006). *Commitment* is characterized as the coach’s and athlete’s long-term introduction toward their relationship, advanced and maintained by such pleasing practices as valuing alternate’s penances, imparting and comprehension (Jowett, 2006). Lastly, *Complementarity* is described as coaches’ and athletes’ actions that are co-operative. It involves feeling good, skilled and concerned when within the sight of the other individual (Jowett, 2006). A good coach-athlete relationship has appeared to greatly affect a competitors’ fulfillment, execution, and personal satisfaction (Greenleaf, Gould, & Dieffenbach, 2001; Kenow & Williams, 1999; Vernacchia, McGuire, Reardon, & Templin, 2000; Wisberg, 1996 cited in Frey, Czech, Kent, Johnson, 2008) and a few variables may impact this relationship (Burke, Peterson, & Nix, 1995; Grisaffe, Blom, & Burke, in press, cited in Frey, Czech, Kent, Johnson, 2008). Based on Jowett and Ntoumanis (2003) past research, coach-athlete relationships have been defined as an interconnection of emotions, thoughts and behaviours. The coach-athlete relationship is intentionally developed through appreciation and respect for each other (Potrac et al. 2002).

METHOD

Sampling

The samples were selected from 100 team sport athletes in Perlis, the respondent were from selected team sport which were Football, Netball, Rugby, Frisbee and Hockey.

Instrumentation

This study was conducted using the quantitative method which is survey through questionnaire distribution. Self-administered questionnaire was adapted and adopted from original questionnaire Jowett & Meek (Coach-Athlete Relationship Questionnaire (CART-Q)) and Aly (Communication Management Questionnaire) dispersed to the team sport athletes in Perlis. Based on the number of athletes, the questionnaires were distributed and collected after completion. Each of the questionnaires includes questions that were measured using the Likert Scale. Items set were divided into three sections namely the respondent profile (A1), the communication management dimension (B1-B15), and the coach-athlete relationship dimension (C1-C13).

Data Analysis

The Pearson Correlation was adopted in analysing the relationship between communication management and coach-athlete relationship for team sport athlete in Perlis.

FINDINGS

TABLE 1
Pearson Correlation Analysis between Communication Management and Coach-Athlete Relationship

		CM	CAR
CM	Pearson Correlation	1	.706**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	100	100
CAR	Pearson Correlation	.706**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	100	100

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

Table 1 shows that there is a strong and positive correlation between communication behaviour and coach-athlete relationship ($r = .706, p < .01$). Thus, hypothesis is accepted, there is significant relationship between communication management and coach-athlete relationships among sport team athletes in Perlis.

Table 2
Pearson Correlation Analysis between Communication Management Dimensions and Coach-Athlete Relationship Dimensions

		DOC	CT	CS	CM	CAR (CL)	CAR (CMT)
DOC	Pearson Correlation	1	.397**	.387**	.308**	.345**	.353**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000	.000	.002	.000	.000
	N	100	100	100	100	100	100
CT	Pearson Correlation	.397**	1	.383**	.298**	.510**	.505**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000		.000	.003	.000	.000
	N	100	100	100	100	100	100
CS	Pearson Correlation	.387**	.383**	1	.475**	.483**	.526**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000		.000	.000	.000
	N	100	100	100	100	100	100
CM	Pearson Correlation	.308**	.298**	.475**	1	.588**	.515**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.002	.003	.000		.000	.000
	N	100	100	100	100	100	100
CAR (CL)	Pearson Correlation	.345**	.510**	.483**	.588**	1	.699**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.000		.000
	N	100	100	100	100	100	100
CAR (CMT)	Pearson Correlation	.353**	.505**	.526**	.515**	.699**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	
	N	100	100	100	100	100	100

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

Table 2 specifically shows the relationship between each dimension in communication management component and dimension in coach-athlete relationship component. Each of the dimension shows a significant relationship. Development of communication correlate by ($r=.345$), to closeness and ($r=.353$) to complementarity.

Communication timing is correlate by ($r=.510$) to closeness and ($r=.505$) to complementarity. Communication style then correlate by ($r=.483$) to closeness and ($r=.526$) to complementarity. The last dimension is communication motivation it correlates by ($r=.588$) to closeness and ($r=.515$) to complementarity. This proved that all the dimensions in communication management is significantly related to the dimensions in coach-athlete relationship component.

DISCUSSION

From the results, it shows that communication management is significantly related to coach-athlete relationship. This result was positively supported by the study done by Sagar & Jowett (2012) which revealed that communication between coach and athlete may help in increasing the closeness or bonding among them. In addition, Sagar & Jowett (2012) also stated that communication helps in increasing the ability and crucial in preparing the athlete for each games and competition. From the results we can see that each dimension was significantly related by having either weak, medium or strong connection, but all the dimension studied were significantly related. This also supported the study done by Yukelson (2010) which find that communication helps in making a person feel accepted and enhances the capability in creating a relationship that help in improving one's self-respect. In earlier stage of the study for communication. Past study mentioned that people interact to each other through many channels and this channel is a symbol of creating and sustaining the relationship between them (Burke, 2010). In addition, Burke (2010) also explained that the channel used in communicating can be the most important thing for coaches and athletes as it may be related to the emotions support, self-confident booster and as well as public relation enhancement. Building a relationship means that an individual is able to find or create way to communicates. Same goes to each coach and athletes, in making the team a success team, a coach and athletes should know how to get along. Covey (1990) stated that a central principle of affective communication is to seek first to understand the individual then to be understood, this was then seemingly aligned with the current results from this study which proved that communication management is significantly related to coach-athlete relationship. The results of this study indicate that the communication management can improve coach-athlete relationship. It was shown that, by having a good relationship with coaches, the team performance will increase. Not only has that, by all the dimensions study in communication management it surely proved that each dimension shared a positive relationship with coach-athlete relationship.

CONCLUSION

As a conclusion, coach and athletes plays an important role in determining the success of a team, thus, this study had already shown that communication management does affects the coach-athlete relationship. In creating a healthy relationship, both coach and athlete should have a better understanding in communication management especially by focusing on all the dimensions included. Being a coach was never easy same goes for being an athlete both was a real struggle pleasing everyone in the team was impossible but by learning on the importance of having a good relationship for the team success would a good consideration by understand each other in obtaining the same goal. Nevertheless, a good relationship between coach and athlete will create a warm and cosy environment for everyone. The most important thing is that coach need to understand and learn on being fair without any biases. Making the athlete and everyone in the team feel accepted was the key for a success, in

determining the relationship upon coach athlete relationship towards team success should be considerable as future study not to be forgotten in identifying mediating factors that influence the relationship between communication management and coach-athlete relationship

REFERENCES

- Aly, E. R. (2014). Communication Management Among Athlete And Coaches. *European Scientific Journal /SPECIAL/*, Vol.3 ISSN: 1857 – 7881.
- Bentele, G. (2008). Public relations theory: the reconstructive approach, in Zerfass, A., van Ruler, B. and Sriramesh, K. (Eds), *Public Relations Research: European and International Perspectives*, VS Verlag für Sozialwissenschaften, Wiesbaden, 19-32.
- Berscheid, E., Snyder, M., & Omoto, A. M. (1989). Issues in studying close relationships: Conceptualising and measuring closeness. In C. Hendric (Ed.), *Close relationships: Vol. 10. Review of personality and social psychology* , 63–91. Newbury Park, CA: Sage.
- Bloom, G. (1996). The importance of the mentoring in the development of caches and athletes. *International Journal of Sport Psychology*, 29, 267-281.
- Botan, C.H. and Hazleton, V. Jr (1989), “Preface”, in Botan, C.H. and Hazleton, V. Jr (Eds), *Public Relations Theory*, Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Hillsdale, NJ, p. xiii.
- Burke K.L. (2010). Constructive communication. In S. Hanrahan & M. Anderson (Eds.), *Routledge handbook of applied sport psychology: A comprehensive guide for students and practitioners*. New York: Routledge, 315-324.
- Chelladurai, P. (1984). Discrepancy between preferences and perceptions of leadership behaviour and satisfaction of athletes in varying sports. *Journal of Sport Psychology*, 6(1), 27–41.
- Coe, S. (1996) *Olympians: the Century of Gold*, London: Pavilion.
- Covey S.R. (1990). *The 7 habits of highly effective people*. New York: Simon & Schuster.
- Grandien, C., & Johansson, C. (2012). Institutionalization of communication management: A theoretical framework, *Corporate Communications: An International Journal*, Vol. 17 (2), 209-227.
- Greenleaf, C., Gould, D. & Dieffenbach, K. (2001). Factors influencing Olympic performance: Interviews with Atlanta and Nagano US Olympians. *Journal of Applied Sport Psychology*, 13, 154–184.

- Jowett, S. (2003). When the honeymoon is over: A case study of a coach–athlete relationship in crisis. *The Sport Psychologist*, 17, 444–460.
- Jowett, S. (2006). Interpersonal and structural features of Greek coach-athlete dyads performing in individual sports. *Journal of Applied Sport Psychology*, 18(1), 69–81.
- Jowett, S. (2009). Validating Coach-Athlete Relationship Measures with the Nomological Network. *Measurement in Physical Education and Exercise Science*, 13: 34–51.
- Jowett, S. & Cockerill, I. M. (2003). Olympic medallists’ perspective of the athlete–coach relationship. *Psychology of Sport and Exercise*, 4, 313–331.
- Jowett, S., & Meek, G. A. (2000). The coach–athlete relationship in married couples: An exploratory content analysis. *The Sport Psychologist*, 14(2), 157–175.
- Jowett, S., & Meek, G. A. (2000a). A case study of a top-level coach–athlete dyad in crisis (abstract). *Journal of Sports Sciences*, 18, 51–52.
- Jowett, S., & Meek, G. A. (2000b). Coach–athlete relationships in married couples: an exploratory content analysis. *The Sport Psychologist*, 14,
- Kiesler, D. J. (1997). *Contemporary interpersonal theory research and personality, psychopathology and psychotherapy*. New York: Wiley
- Lyle, J. (1999). Coaching philosophy and coaching behaviour. In N. Cross., & J. Lyle (Eds.) *The coaching process: Principles and practice for sport*, 25–46. Oxford: Butterworth-Heinemann.
- McCready, G. (1984). The coach as a developer of human resources. *Sports*, 3,1-6.
- Macnamara, J. (2013), “Beyond voice. Audience-making and the work and architecture of listening”, *Continuum: Journal of Media and Cultural Studies*, Vol. 27 No. 1, pp. 160-175.
- Potrac P, Jones R, Armour K (2002) ‘It’s All About Getting Respect’: The Coaching Behaviors of an Expert English Soccer Coach, *Sport. Educ Soc* 7(2), 183–202.
- Sagar, S. S., & Jowett, S. (2012). Communicative acts in coach–athlete interactions: When losing competitions and when making mistakes in training. *Western Journal of Communication*, 76, (2), 148-174
- Smith, R. E., Zane, N. W. S., Smoll, F. L., & Coppel, D. B. (1983). Behavioural assessment in youth sports: Coaching behaviours and children’s attitudes. *Medicine and Science in Sports and Exercise*, 15(3), 208–214.
- Van Ruler, B. and Vercic, D. (2008). Communication management in Europe – challenges and opportunities, in Zerfass, A., van Ruler, B. and Sriramesh, K.

(Eds), *Public Relations Research: European and International Perspectives*, VS Verlag für Sozialwissenschaften, Wiesbaden, 313-24.

- Vealey, R. S., Armstrong, L., Comar, W., & Greenleaf, C. (1998). Influence of perceived coaching behaviors on burnout and competitive anxiety in female college athletes. *Journal of Applied Sport Psychology*, 10, 297–318.
- Venneman1, S. S., Fry, J. D., & Mayaorga, M. (2014). Improving Communication Style Awareness in a Teacher Preparation Program. *British Journal of Education, Society & Behavioural Science*, 5(1): 10-19, 2278 – 0998.
- Verčič, D. and Grunig, J.E. (2000), “The origins of public relations theory in economics and strategic management”, in Moss, D., Verčič, D. and Warnaby, G. (Eds), *Perspectives on Public Relations Research*, Routledge, London, 9-58.
- Vercic, D., & Zerfass, A. (2016). A comparative excellence framework for communication Management. *Journal of Communication Management*, Vol. 20 (4), 270-288.
- Williams, J. M., Jerome, G. J., Kenow, L. J., Rogers, T., Sartain, T. A., & Darland, G. (2003). Factor Structure of the Coaching Behavior Questionnaire and Its Relationship to Athlete Variables. *Faculty Publications*. Submission 3. http://digitalcommons.linfield.edu/hhpafac_pubs/3
- Yukelson D. (2010). *Communicating effectively*. In J. M. Williams (Ed.), *Applied sport psychology: Personal growth to peak performance* (6th ed.). New York: McGraw-Hill, 149-165