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AN EMPIRICAL STUDY OF SITUATIONAL, LEADER AND TEAM MEMBER CHARACTERISTICS ON COACH LEADERSHIP BEHAVIOR STYLES EXHIBITED BY THE COACHES OF STATE UNIVERSITIES IN WESTERN PROVINCE

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Leadership in sports has been studied mostly in terms of coach-leadership. Coach leadership behavior has an impact on players' performance. The purpose of this study was to investigate the impact of situational characteristics, leader characteristics, and team member characteristics on coach leadership behavior styles in sports in state universities in Western Province (University of Colombo, Kelaniya, Moratuwa and Sri Jayewardenepura) Sri Lanka. This study was conducted during the inter-university games held in 2014 considering the events of basketball, netball, volleyball, and Elle. Two hundred and ninety one athletes from Western Province state universities participated in this study. Gender, age, locus of control, and level of education and training variables were considered under coach characteristics. Nature of the sport, level of competition, and previous success and/or failure record were considered as situational factors which affect coach behaviors. Team member characteristics taken into consideration were gender, age, culture, and experiences. Data were collected through a standard questionnaire which was derived from the revised leadership scale for sports. The questionnaire was further modified to suit the Sri Lankan context. Mean calculations were used as a parametric test to derive the influence of situational characteristics of the coach, leader characteristics and team member characteristics on coach leadership behavior. Statistical calculations were done using SPSS. It was found that coaches carry out more training and instruction behavior in relation to females than males. Further, compared to females, males urge a higher influence on coaches to exhibit an autocratic behavior. Results further revealed that when the experiences of the athletes are less, they prefer their coaches to be more democratic. Additionally, it is found that the coaches carry out more situational consideration behavior when the level of competition is high. It can be concluded that situational, leader, and team member characteristics have a moderate influence on coach leadership behavior. Further, the research on sports management is in primary stages in Sri Lanka. The findings of the present study may influence researchers to engage in further research and also will be helpful for coaches to make decisions on athletes.

Keywords: Coach leadership, team member characteristics, situational characteristics, leader characteristics, athletes