

INVESTIGATION OF LEADERSHIP PREFERENCES OF INTER-UNIVERSITY LEVEL TRACK AND FIELD ATHLETES

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ABSTRACT

The Purpose of the study was to investigate and compare the leadership preferences of inter-university level male and female athletes of Track and Field. Two hundred and Eight (Males=108, Females= 100) All Inter-university level athletes of Track and Field representing their respective university in various inter-university competitions and who volunteered to participate in this study, were selected to serve as subjects for this study. Leadership Scale for Sports developed by P. Chelladurai was selected as a criterion tool to measure preferred behaviour preferences of inter-university level athletes. The mean, standard deviation, one way analysis of variance and t-ratio on five dimensions of preferred leader behaviour of Inter-university level male and female athletes were computed. The results of study revealed that inter-university level male and female track and field athletes exhibited different preferences on five dimensions of leader behaviour. Male and female track and field athletes of Inter-university level preferred more training and instruction followed by positive feedback, social support, democratic behaviour and autocratic behaviour. Significant difference was not found between Male and female track and field athletes on the set of five dimensions of preferred leadership behaviour.

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INTRODUCTION

Leadership is the behavioural process of influencing the activities of an organized group toward specific goals and achievement of those goals. But leadership is often for more complex attempt to understand leadership should be concerned with why people comply as well as with how one person influence another.

The leader is required to be have in certain ways by the demand and constrains placed by the demand and member's preferences for specific leader behaviours are largely a function of the individual characteristics of the group members. Personality variables such as need for achievement, need for affiliation, cognitive structure and competence in the task influence a members performances for coaching and guidance, social support and feed back. In addition the situation characteristics also affect member's preferences. For example, if there is an organisational expectation, which a leader will behave in a specific manner, this expectation is held jointly by both leaders and members.

The participation in sports contributes to building up self confidence, enhance intellectual level. personality development a no. out going tendency or extraversion as such proficiency leads to enhanced success in sports activities is highly valued in one's group.

Success in athletics seems to be dependent in part on psychological status and traits. The use of an athlete's personality profile, in concern with knowledge of their past experience, coach's rating, anatomic and physiological characteristics and so one can enhance the accuracy of prediction in a number of sports.

The personality make-up of an individual plays a vital role in his achievements in every field of life. "Human personality refers to the unique expression of the characteristics of an individual and it must be studied with in the social context in which it develops. It is not an isolated phenomenon, separate from the environment. Although it is often perceived in such a way. Personality is expressed through the complex and interdependent relationship formed between an individual and environment.

The Purpose of the study was to investigate and compare the leadership preferences of inter-university level male and female athletes of Track and Field. It was hypothesized that the significant differences in their leadership preferences. may exist among male and female athletes of Track and Field.

METHODOLOGY

Selection of Subjects:

Two hundred and Eight (Males=108, Females= 100)) All Inter-university level athletes of Track and Field representing their respective university in various inter-university competitions and who volunteered to participate in this study, were selected to serve as subjects for this study. The subjects were in age group of 19 to 25 years. All the subjects have taken part in All India Inter-university Track and Field, competitions during the 2008-2009 session.

Instrumentation:

Leadership Scale for Sports developed by P. Chelladurai was selected as a criterion tool to measure preferred behaviour preferences of inter-university level athletes. The Leadership Scale for Sports (L.S.S.) is a valid and reliable instrument. The scale consists of 40 items for athlete's perception of coach's behaviour and 40 items for preference version representing five dimensions of leadership behaviour i.e. training and instruction,

democratic behaviour, autocratic behaviour, social supports and positive feedback (Rewarding behaviour).

The scale consisted of 40 items for five dimensions in which training and instruction (13 items), democratic behaviour (9 items), autocratic behaviour (5 items), social support (8 items), and positive feedback (Rewarding behaviour) had 5 items on which there were no negative responses. Each question had five responses namely 1. Always, 2 Often, 3 Occasionally, 4 Seldom, 5 Never. According to above stated responses, scoring was carried out for preferred leader behaviour of athletes.. The score tabulated for all the items under dimensions of leadership behaviour were averaged out to get score for each dimension. The scale had test-retest reliability 0.72 for training behaviour, 0.82 for democratic behaviour, 0.76 for autocratic behaviour, 0.71 for social supports, and 0.79 for positive feedback.

Administration of Questionnaire:

The necessary permission from the organizing secretary of. All India Inter-university competitions was obtained by the research scholar to conduct this study on athletes during competitions. The coaches and subjects were contacted at the site championships personally and their sincere cooperation was solicited. Necessary instructions were given to the subjects before the administration of test. Confidentiality of responses was guaranteed so that the subjects would not camouflage their real feelings. No time limit for filling the questionnaire was set but subjects were made to respond as quickly as possible. As soon as a group of players completed the questionnaire, it was collected from the athletes and verified that no questionnaire was left without being answered.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

To assess the preferences on five dimensions of leader behaviour of Inter-university level male and female athletes of Track & field, mean and standard deviation, one way analysis of variance and t-ratio on five dimensions of preferred leader behaviour with all the subjects were computed and data pertaining to this have been presented in Table 1 to 5.

TABELE 1
DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS OF PREFERENCES ON FIVE DIMENSIONS OF LEADER
BEHAVIOUR OF INTER-UNIVERSITY LEVEL MALE AND FEMALE
ATHLETES OF TRACK & FIELD

S.NO.	Leader Behaviour Dimensions	Male		Female	
		M	SD	M	SD
1.	Training & Instruction	4.393	0.522	4.391	0.389
2.	Social Support	3.820	0.617	3.685	0.634
3.	Positive Feedback	3.987	0.810	3.993	0.717
4.	Autocratic Behaviour	2.877	0.862	3.014	0.826
5.	Democratic Behaviour	3.671	0.887	3.642	0.527

The mean scores of five dimensions of leader behaviour as preferred by male and female athletes of different games and sports i. e. Cross country, Track & field and Gymnastics of inter-university level have been depicted in figures 1 to 5.

TABELE 2**ANALYSIS OF VARIANCE FOR PREFERRED LEADERSHIP OF INTER-UNIVERSITY MALE ATHLETES OF TRACK & FIELD**

Source of Variance	df	Sum of Squares	Mean Square	F-ratio
Between Groups	4	124.131	31.033	
Within Groups	535	327.149	0.011	50.749*
Total	539	451.280		

*Significant at .05 level, $F_{.05}(4, 425) = 2.39$.

From Table 2, It is evident that the statistically significant difference existed among inter-university male athletes of Track & Field on preferred leadership was very high as the obtained F-value of 50.749 was much higher than the required $F_{.05}(4, 539) = 2.39$.

As the F-ratio was found to be significant, Scheffe's Test of Post-hoc comparison was applied to study the significance of differences among inter-university male athletes of Track & Field on five dimensions of leader behaviour of preferred leadership and the data pertaining to this have been presented in Table 3.

TABLE 3**SIGNIFICANCE OF DIFFERENCES AMONG INTER-UNIVERSITY MALE ATHLETES OF TRACK & FIELD BETWEEN ORDERED PAIRED MEANS ON FIVE DIMENSIONS OF PREFERRED LEADERSHIP**

T I	SS	PF	AS	DB	Paired mean difference	Confidence Interval (C. I.)
4.393	3.820	-	-	-	.573*	0.342
4.393	-	3.987	-	-	.406*	
4.393	-	-	2.877	-	1.516*	
4.393	-	-	-	3.671	.722*	
-	3.820	3.987	-	-	.167	
-	3.820	-	2.877	-	.943*	
-	3.820	-	-	3.671	.149	
-	-	3.987	2.877	-	1.110*	
-	-	3.987	-	3.671	.316	
-	-	-	2.877	3.671	.794*	

*Significant at .05 level.

It is quite obvious from the table 3, that there were significant differences on preferred leadership among inter-university male athletes of Track and field between training and instruction - social support followed by positive feedback, autocratic behaviour and democratic behaviour; social supports - democratic behaviour; positive feed back - autocratic behaviour and autocratic behaviour - democratic behaviour, as the paired mean differences of .573, .406, 1.516, .722, .943, and .794 respectively were higher than the confidence interval (CI) of 0.342. But the mean differences between social support - positive feedback followed by democratic behaviour; and autocratic

behaviour - democratic behaviour respectively were not significant at 0.05 level as the confidence interval of 0.342 was higher than the mean differences.

TABELE 4
ANALYSIS OF VARIANCE FOR PREFERRED LEADERSHIP OF INTER-UNIVERSITY FEMALE ATHLETES OF TRACK & FIELD

Source of Variance	df	Sum of Squares	Mean Square	F-ratio
Between Groups	4	136.594	34.148	
Within Groups	495	252.597	0.510	66.919*
Total	499	389.191		

*Significant at .05 level, $F_{.05}(4, 495) = 2.40$.

From Table 4, It is evident that the statistically significant difference existed among inter-university male athletes of Track & Field on preferred leadership was very high as the obtained F-value of 66.919 was much higher than the required $F_{.05}(4, 495) = 2.40$.

As the F-ratio was found to be significant, Scheffe's Test of Post-hoc comparison was applied to study the significance of differences among inter-university male athletes of Track & Field on five dimensions of leader behaviour of preferred leadership and the data pertaining to this have been presented in Table 5.

TABLE 5

SINGNIFICANCE OF DIFFERENCES AMONG INTER-UNIVERSITY FEMALE ATHLETES OF TRACK & FIELD BETWEEN ORDERED PAIRED MEANS ON FIVE DIMENSIONS OF PREFERRED LEADERSHIP

T I	SS	PF	AS	DB	Paired mean difference	Confidence Interval (C. I.)
4.391	3.685	-	-	-	.706*	0.313
4.391	-	3.999	-	-	.392*	
4.391	-	-	3.014	-	1.377*	
4.391	-	-	-	3.642	.749*	
-	3.685	3.999	-	-	.314*	
-	3.685	-	3.014	-	.671*	
-	3.685	-	-	3.642	.643*	
-	-	3.999	3.014	-	.985*	
-	-	3.999	-	3.642	.357*	
-	-	-	3.014	3.642	.628*	

*Significant at .05 level.

It is quite obvious from the table 5, that there were significant differences on preferred leadership among inter-university male athletes of Track and field between training and instruction - social support followed by positive feedback, autocratic behaviour and democratic behaviour; social supports - positive feedback followed by autocratic behaviour and democratic behaviour; positive feedback - autocratic behaviour followed by democratic behaviour and autocratic behaviour - democratic behaviour, as the paired mean differences of .706, .392, 1.377, .749, .314, .671, .643, .985, .357 and .628 respectively were higher than the confidence interval (CI) of 0.313.

TABLE 6

**SIGNIFICANCE OF DIFFERENCES BETWEEN MEAN SCORES OF INTER UNIVERSITY
MALE AND FEMALE ATHLETES OF TRACK AND FIELD ON LEADER
BEHAVIOUR DIMENSIONS OF PREFERRED LEADERSHIP**

Leader Behaviour Dimensions	Sex	Mean	MD	DM	t-ratio
Training & Instruction	Male	4.393	.002	.064	.031
	Female	4.491			
Social Support	Male	3.820	.135	.089	1.516
	Female	3.685			
Positive Feedback	Male	3.987	.006	.109	.055
	Female	3.993			
Autocratic Behaviour	Male	2.877	.134	.141	.950
	Female	3.014			
Democratic Behaviour	Male	3.671	.029	.101	.287
	Female	3.642			

Non-significant at .05 level, $t_{.05}(204) = 1.97$

It is evident from table 6, that there were no statistically significant differences between the preferences of inter-university level male and female athletes of Track and Field for the set of five dimensions of leader behaviour, as the obtained t-value of .031, 1.516, 0.055, 0.950, and .287 respectively were less than the required t-value of $t_{.05}(206) = 1.97$.

DISCUSSION

Findings of descriptive data of Inter-university level male and female athletes of track and field on five dimensions of preferred leadership behaviour indicated that male athletes preferred more training and instruction, social support, and democratic behaviour from their coaches than did female respondents.

The results of one way analysis of variance (ANOVA) for inter-university level male athletes of track and field on five dimensions of preferred leadership behaviour, they also expressed significant differences among male athletes of track and field in their preferences for preferred leadership. The Scheffe's Test of Post-hoc comparisons showed that male athletes of track and field also preferred more training and instructions behaviour in comparison of other dimensions of preferred leadership, but the significant differences exhibited by male athletes of track and field in their preferences between training and instruction - social support followed by positive feedback, autocratic behaviour and democratic behaviour; social supports - democratic behaviour; positive feed back - autocratic behaviour and autocratic behaviour - democratic behaviour.

In case of inter-university level female athletes of track and field on five dimensions of preferred leadership behaviour, they also expressed significant differences among female athletes of track and field in their preferences for preferred leadership. The Scheffe's Test of Post-hoc comparisons showed that female athletes of track and field also preferred more training and instructions behaviour in comparison of other dimensions of preferred leadership, but the significant differences exhibited by female athletes of track and field in their preferences

between training and instruction - social support followed by positive feedback, autocratic behaviour and democratic behaviour; social supports - positive feedback followed by autocratic behaviour and democratic behaviour; positive feedback - autocratic behaviour followed by democratic behaviour and autocratic behaviour - democratic behaviour.

When the inter-university level male and female athletes of track & field were compared together on five dimensions of leader behaviour, they had no significant differences in their preferences for the set of dimensions of leader behaviour, which showed that all the athletes both sexes at inter-university level preferred their coaches equally in all of the dimensions of leader behaviour.

It was hypothesized that the significant differences in their leadership preferences may exist among male and female athletes of Track and Field. This hypothesis has been partially accepted, as the track and field athletes had no significant difference in their preferences between social support - positive feedback followed by democratic behaviour; and autocratic behaviour - democratic behaviour and between positive feedback - democratic behaviour. The female track and field athletes had significant difference in their preferences between all dimensions of preferred leadership behaviour as indicated by scheffe's test of post-hoc comparison.

CONCLUSIONS

Within the limitation of present study, the following conclusions are enumerated :

1. Inter-university level male and female track and field athletes exhibited different preferences on five dimensions of leader behaviour.
2. Male and female track and field athletes of Inter-university level preferred more training and instruction followed by positive feedback, social support, democratic behaviour and autocratic behaviour.
- 3.. Significant difference was not found between Male and female track and field athletes of Inter-university level on the set of five dimensions of preferred leadership behaviour.

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