An Examination of Leadership Style and Player-Coach Relationships in College-Level Soccer Programs

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Abstract
This study of leadership style and player-coach relationships in the college level soccer programs focused on five intercollegiate soccer coaches and 15 senior student athletes in four universities in San Antonio, Texas. The purpose of the study was to examine what role leadership style and player-coach relationships have in college-level soccer programs. It is important to find out the characteristics of effective leadership styles within the organizational structure for developing a successful college-level soccer team and program. This information then would help in setting up college soccer programs in Taiwan. This study employed the method of triangulation within a qualitative research model. The results of the historical literature review, Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ) survey, and data from the interview questions provided the factors for the triangulation process. Results from the qualitative analysis indicated that the coaches viewed themselves as using a collaborative leadership style while valuing good communication skills as an important factor for success. Results from the supportive quantitative survey revealed that the collaborative coaches scored high in the areas of inspiration motivation, contingent reward, and effectiveness. The review of literature supported the findings of both research methods.

Key words: leadership, leadership style, soccer coach, player,
Introduction

Today’s horizontal business organizations and rapidly changing markets demand a new approach to leadership. A leader must truly inspire, guide, and reward his or her team continuously. During any given day, leaders call upon different skills and qualities to handle the tremendous variety of situations that arise; this is also true of sports leaders. Adding to the challenge, as a team evolves and grows, it requires different capabilities from its coach. Whether the coach is managing a team, a leadership council, or a group of key players, he or she must realign the leadership style frequently to elicit the desired results from the group.

A leader is any person who influences individuals and groups within an organization, helps them in the establishment of goals, and guides them toward achievement of those goals, thereby enabling them to be effective. A leader is effective when his or her followers achieve their goals, function well together, and can adapt to changing demand from external forces (Nahavandi, 2000).

The leadership that immediate supervisors and top-level administrators provide helps employees understand their roles, performance expectations, and relationship to organizational goals and reward systems. In addition, good leadership enhances employees’ personal growth and development, motivation, performance, and job satisfaction. Therefore, managers need to have a clear understanding of the dynamics of leadership within organizations (Chelladurai, 1999).

Taiwan has 53 sport organizations, including soccer, or football as it is generally known outside North America, represented nationally under the Republic of China (ROC) Sports Federation (Amateur Sports in the ROC, 2001). Taiwanese athletes at all levels from high school to the Olympics face two major problems: a lack of funding and a lack of suitable facilities, with only two national training centers on the entire island.

In schools, participation in some type of physical activity theoretically is mandatory, starting in elementary school and going all the way up to the university level. However, more emphasis has always been placed on academics, with time allocated for physical education often used to study for entrance exams. Physical education courses are supposed to cover such things as physical hygiene, sports physiology, and individual sport skills. The reality is that few in school acquire sufficient skills in any particular sport to become proficient. Studies show that less than 20 percent of all Taiwanese take part in regular exercise or sports, and it is difficult to accumulate enough players to have university teams competing at high levels.

The greatest emphasis on school sports is given during high school. Baseball is the most popular sports activity as evidenced by Taiwan’s typically high rankings in amateur baseball. The nation won a silver medal at the 1992 Olympics, and national teams have captured many victories in Little League championships. Other popular high school team sports include basketball, softball, volleyball, and soccer. The problem is that few of these team activities are continued once a student enters college or university. At this point, most students have to choose between an athletic or academic career; the two are seldom combined. Since 1992, the best players have been able to attend one of nine colleges specializing in sports. Other universities and colleges also...
can recruit outstanding athletes as needed. In practice, this option has remained limited because athletes are admitted only if they meet the needs of the school’s sports teams. Most athletes end up majoring in physical education at one of the sports colleges (Sports in the Schools, 2001).

Among the ideas and plans being considered by Taiwan are (a) the National Physical Education Development Medium-Range Plan at a cost of $740 million, leading to the building or renovation of 100 athletic facilities in schools and 36 recreation centers, or both; (b) the National Taitung Experimental Senior High School of Physical Education, which would create an integrated training system; (c) the revision of the Regulations for the Counseling and Academic Advancement of Athletically Gifted Students at the Secondary School level; and (d) the creation of sport aptitude classes to identify potential elite athletes at a very early stage as is done in other countries. (Promotion of Sports in the Schools, 2001).

One of the model athletic programs is at the decade-old National College of Physical Education and Sports. Located on a 175-acre campus, the college has state-of-the-art athletic equipment and offers both undergraduate degrees in health, physical education, and sports technique, and graduate degrees in physical education and sports science. Anyone wishing to enter must have the right combination of a high academic marks and athletic skills. The college also has the only Department of Recreational Sports on the island; its goal is to “train specialists in recreational sports coaching, planning, management, and promotion” (Recreation, 2001). For the most part, however, Taiwan’s athletic programs and sports organizations do not compare favorably with those found in the United States, even in a sport such as soccer.

In Taiwan, collegiate soccer programs are still in their beginning stages. In addition to the lack of suitable facilities and inadequate funding, the programs also suffer from a lack of qualified coaches. This study concerns different college soccer coaches and players and the soccer programs, examining the impact of effective leadership styles within the organizational structure and the implications for a leadership model that can be used in Taiwan.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to examine which leadership style and player-coach relationships are most appropriate for college-level soccer programs. Part of the goal is to understand the difference between competitive, top-down versions of organizational leadership and collaborative bottom-up versions and to determine which style is more likely to produce success. It is important to find out the qualities that may be used in setting up college soccer programs in Taiwan.

The Grand Tour Question

What appears to be the most effective leadership style within the organizational structure for coaching a successful college-level soccer team and program?

The Sub-questions

1. Regarding organization structure, is a cooperative, collaborative, decentralized, horizontally integrated organization more effective in setting up and running college-level soccer programs than a vertically structured, top-down, centralized command structure?
2. Regarding leadership, are leadership styles of sports programs culturally bound? Part of the study will test leadership styles from the viewpoint of coaches, and part will examine how these coaches see themselves as opposed to how their athletes see them.

**Methodology**

**Assumptions and Rationale for Qualitative Design**

Subjective self-reported data were collected and analyzed, and the methods for triangulation of the data were also mainly comparative and qualitative. The study of separate groups and viewpoints allows for triangulation in examining the assumptions and the research questions.

Three principle methodologies employed for examination of the data are:

1. A review of existing literature and a qualitative analysis of the literature to evaluate (a) the current status of leadership (especially collaborative organizational leadership) studies, (b) how these studies fit into the sports segment (with particular reference to intercollegiate sports in the United States), and (c) what the possibility is of carrying over these findings to a model appropriate for Taiwan’s intercollegiate sports program.

2. A double set of quantitative measures, including a standardized testing instrument administered to student athletes and coaches in the Central Texas area. The survey instrument administered to coaches in the San Antonio, Texas area was the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire or MLQ (Bass & Avolio, 1995), which was commonly used to measure both transformational leadership and transactional leadership. This instrument, which contained 12 scales, was a 45-item questionnaire that was scored on a frequency scale.

3. An interview series of open-ended questions was administered to two groups of student athletes and coaches in Texas.

The rationale for this triangulation of qualitative methodologies was to provide answers to the following research assumptions:

1. Assumption One: Taiwanese and American university conditions may not be identical, but they are similar enough to allow an exchange of ideas when it comes to the establishing of intercollegiate sports in Taiwanese universities and colleges.

2. Assumption Two: There should be some intercollegiate soccer program model in North America that can be successfully adapted to Taiwanese conditions and circumstances.

3. Assumption Three: All organizations require visionary leaders to survive. University athletic programs either in the United States or Taiwan are no exception to that rule, with good programs being nurtured by visionary leaders and bad programs simply moving along through their own inertia.

4. Assumption Four: The notion of leadership transcends cultural boundaries and can thus be applied with some adjustments to any part of the world.

Given these assumptions, I contend that the most appropriate style of leadership for an intercollegiate soccer program is the collaborative style, a transformational model that stresses cooperation. I believe it is this type that has the best chance of success for
these kinds of programs in Taiwan. American collegiate athletic programs often emphasize many of the traits of collaborative leadership, including community, teamwork, and responsibility. The similarities between U.S. and Taiwanese universities should allow a successful transfer to and adoption of this collaborative style in Taiwan. Furthermore, this type of leadership also serves the student athletes best, fulfilling the two factors cited by Chelladurai (1993) as performance and satisfaction as the consequences of good leader.

**Type of Research Design Used**

As indicated previously, triangulation involves checking information that has been collected from different sources or methods for consistency of evidence across source of data (Mertens, 1998). This study employed a qualitative multimethod triangulation design, combining a literature review with analysis of survey data and interviews. The deficiencies of such a methodology lie mainly in the inability to quantify the variables within the assumptions, or to exactly pinpoint where the problems and solutions lie. However, the methodology does enable the researcher to create a larger overall picture, which includes results and conclusions from studies already performed, and to draw parallel conclusions on the basis of analogy.

Though this type of research design may not be accepted as completely scientific by some researchers, this is not a serious limitation in a case such as this in which many factors come into play. The qualitative design supports an attempt to describe psychological and emotional interactions; constructs such as charismatic leadership, performance and satisfaction; and the build-up of historical evidence to present as support for the assumptions (Mertens, 1998).

The survey portion of the methodology employed a descriptive research design. The data analysis itself followed a quantitative statistical approach, yet the statistics are descriptive and the measures are of qualitative phenomena. Descriptive research, as is the case with this part of the study, involves collecting data in order to answer questions concerning the current status of the phenomenon or subject of the study (Gay, 1994). In this case, I attempted to describe and define what university athletic coaches perceive to be the most effective leadership strategies for dealing with intercollegiate athletic programs, and what the athletes involved in these programs feel are the most effective leadership strategies. In the belief that all levels of people in intercollegiate sports programs should have the opportunity to provide their thoughts and opinions, I used two separate questionnaires.

The Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ) was employed because the first part of the survey instrument allows for the creation of a statistical chart upon which respondents can be plotted. Though the Frequency Scale still only rates opinions and perceptions (ranged from 0 = not at all, to 4 = frequently), it has the advantage of giving a researcher an idea where the majority of respondents stand on a particular subject or question. This, in turn, allows for a feedback mechanism for both the specific answers and the overall responses.

**The Survey Instruments**

*Part A: Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire.* Bass and Avolio (1995) developed the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ), which is a short but
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A comprehensive survey of 45 items, with 12 scales to measure a “full range” of leadership styles. Dimensions include Idealized Attributed, Idealized Behavior, Inspirational Motivation, Intellectual Stimulation, Individual Consideration, Contingent Reward, Management-by-Exception (Active), Management-by-Exception (Passive), Laissez-faire Leadership, Extra Effort, Effectiveness and Satisfaction. The newly revised MLQ Form 5X (Bass & Avolio, 2000) has excellent validity and reliability, and has been used extensively worldwide. The MLQ has proven to be a strong predictor of leader performance across a broad range of organizations.

**Part B: Open-ended questions.** Open-ended interview questions are items that interview participants answer in their own words, with their own interpretation and direction. The responses can be long or short, and I chose to make my interviews verbal only. Unlike Likert-scale surveys or structured interview items, these questions give the subjects full freedom of expression. The interviewer directs the interview only investigator and the subject, most often through the by asking the initial question regarding an area, issue, or concept under study.

**Data Collection Procedures**

Descriptive qualitative research involves collecting data in order to answer questions concerning the current status of the phenomenon or subject of the study (Gay, 1994). There are various methods and strategies for collecting data of a qualitative nature; the appropriate method of collection varies for surveys, interviews, and literature reviews.

The data used for this study come from the MLQ questionnaires given to five coaches and from transcripts of interviews with 5 coaches and 15 senior student athletes. The same five coaches participated in both the survey and interview. I selected those coaches who have indicated a management or leadership role in some form of soccer program in U.S. colleges or universities and student athletes who are involved in soccer sports or team programs at selected American colleges or universities.

**Data Analyses Procedures**

For the interview data analysis, transcripts of the recorded conversations were reviewed and comparative data extracted, based on the themes devised in the research design of transformational versus transactional leadership, collaborative versus competitive approach, and centralized versus decentralized administration. After the themes have been extracted, the findings were compiled and compared to develop a composite portrait of the attitudes and behaviors of the coaches.

For the MLQ survey, data will be collected and submitted to the standard procedure for analysis prescribed by the authors of the instrument. The different categories (Appendix A) were measured using the mean, standard deviation, and the standard error of the mean. Those categories scoring with higher means were used as the determinants for describing the emerging leadership characteristics.

The historical review of the literature was collected through conventional academic library and online data gathering methods, in which copies of articles were collected, books read, and historical themes and trends compared.
Methods for Triangulation

Because this study involved the collection and analysis of qualitative, subjective data, the methods of triangulation were also comparative and qualitative. The combination of the literature review, survey questionnaire, and qualitative method interview present a comprehensive methodology for supporting the researcher’s conclusion. Triangulation of the findings were performed via a comparative analysis of the results of the surveys and interviews with other studies that have employed the MLQ and the structure interview method to investigate styles of leadership.

The final outcome of this triangulation should present a “best fit” model for leadership of soccer programs and for the “collaborative” type of soccer program in particular. Once that has been done, a determination can be made as to the viability of setting up similar intercollegiate soccer programs in Taiwan.
Data Analysis and Results

Introduction

Coach Interviews

Five coaches were interviewed, three females and two males, from four university soccer teams in or around San Antonio, Texas. The interviews were conducted from March 20 to March 25, each taking 15 to 20 minutes. Following are summaries of the interviews and an analysis of the themes recurrent in the interviews.

This respondent favors collaborative leadership because he/she recognizes that players sometimes have to make decisions on the field independently of the coach. His/Her relationship with players is like that of a good friend, but the relationship focuses on working hard and achieving goals, as well as having fun. He/She recommended that coaches develop good listening skills and get to know the players as individuals.

Identification of Themes

There were several recurring themes that emerged from the interviews. With regard to the important aspects of a coach, several respondents mentioned communication skills, in addition to being able to teach soccer skills and being a mentor to youth.

The recommendations these respondents gave to other coaches were also remarkably similar. Most respondents commented on the need for excellent communication skills, mutual respect, an willingness to listen, and the ability to get to know players as individuals.

Table 4.1 summarizes the themes identified and selected from the interviews. The themes were extracted from the interview material by a process of content analysis and can be correlated indirectly to the results of the interviews of student athletes and to the findings from the MLQ quantitative survey.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Coach</th>
<th>Important Aspects</th>
<th>Leadership Qualities</th>
<th>Leadership Style</th>
<th>Relationship with Players</th>
<th>Recommendations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Overall personality</td>
<td>General</td>
<td>Collaborative</td>
<td>Pseudo-parent</td>
<td>Communication</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Communication</td>
<td>Soccer skills</td>
<td>Collaborative</td>
<td>Friends</td>
<td>Communication</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Role model</td>
<td>Responsibility</td>
<td>Both</td>
<td>Pseudo-parent</td>
<td>Discipline</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Communication</td>
<td>Conflict resolution</td>
<td>Collaborative</td>
<td>Friends</td>
<td>Mutual respect</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Ability to teach</td>
<td>Motivating</td>
<td>Collaborative</td>
<td>Professional/friend</td>
<td>Communication</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Interviews of Players

Of the 15 players interviewed, eight were male and seven female, from four university soccer teams in and around San Antonio, Texas. The interviews were conducted March 20 to March 25 and each lasted 10 to 15 minutes. Themes of the players’ interviews focused on important aspects of coaches, leadership qualities of coaches, leadership styles of coaches, relationship with coaches, and recommendations of coaches who desire to have a good relationship with the players on the team.

The players first were asked to describe the qualities they most admired in a coach. Many of them said commitment to the team, knowledge of the game and being able to impart that knowledge, an ability to understand different types of players, and being honest with players about issues both on and off the field. Several players also mentioned leadership. It appears that players are more positive about coaches who have played the game themselves at a reasonably high level. Players tended to feel that coaches without that hands-on experience cannot have a complete grasp of the game.

Most of the interview participants described the ideal relationship between the player and coach as one in which there was open communication, honesty, professional yet friendly advice, and mutual trust. A number of players said that the ideal relationship has two different components: the relationship on and off the playing field. On the field, players expected their coaches to be professional decision-makers, taking charge of the team and instilling skills and discipline; off the field, they expected coaches to be more personal and understanding of the player’s individual problems and personalities.

The style of leadership that the players preferred appears to differ by gender. Five of the male respondents preferred their coaches to be autocratic decision-makers, while only two of the female players preferred this style. Nearly all of these seven respondents said that the coach has the final word in making decisions and those decisions should be respected by the players even if the players do not agree.

Almost all respondents said their relationship with their coaches was “close.” Respondents reported that they were friends with their coaches, that their relationships were very open, and the relationships sometimes took on that of pseudo-family. Their recommendations for successful coaches revolved largely around honesty, good communication skills, and the ability to make impartial decisions.

Several players commented that coaches should not show favoritism among the athletes. One respondent mentioned this several times, saying that coaches should not have favorite players and should take pains to ensure that discipline is meted out fairly. This suggests that this respondent may have had some negative experience with these issues.

One of the female respondents also indicated that her team was having “problems.” She repeatedly pointed to the importance of the coach being honest with the players about where the team was headed in terms of recruits, players, and other issues. This respondent also seemed to recognize that her relationship with her coach needed some improvement.

Another female respondent indicated that she was both a player and a coach, which may have influenced her responses. For instance, she commented that although she
favored an autocratic style coach, because this is the way she coaches, the style of leadership did depend on the chemistry of the team.

One of the drawbacks with the survey instrument that was used with the players was the players’ understanding of the terms collaborative and autocratic. In several instances, it appeared that respondents were not quite sure what autocratic actually meant. Explaining the difference between the two types of leadership at the beginning of the study would have been beneficial.

Table 4.2 summarizes the themes taken from interviews with the players.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Player</th>
<th>Important Aspects</th>
<th>Leadership Qualities</th>
<th>Leadership Style</th>
<th>Relationship with Coaches</th>
<th>Recommendations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Positive outlook</td>
<td>One-on-one availability</td>
<td>Collaborative</td>
<td>Personal</td>
<td>Communication</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Respect coach as a player</td>
<td>Treat players the same</td>
<td>Autocratic</td>
<td>Personal</td>
<td>Consistent with discipline</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Commitment to team</td>
<td>Professional and friendly</td>
<td>Collaborative</td>
<td>Personal</td>
<td>Work ethic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Experience with the game</td>
<td>Mutual trust</td>
<td>Both</td>
<td>Personal</td>
<td>Mutual trust</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Honesty</td>
<td>Professional and friendly</td>
<td>Collaborative</td>
<td>Personal with mutual respect</td>
<td>Communication</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Honesty</td>
<td>Professional and friendly</td>
<td>Autocratic</td>
<td>Personal and professional</td>
<td>Honesty and knowledge of the game</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Knowledgeable with good work ethic</td>
<td>Personal</td>
<td>Autocratic</td>
<td>Personal and professional</td>
<td>Good work ethic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Good teacher and caring</td>
<td>Personal</td>
<td>Autocratic</td>
<td>Friendly</td>
<td>Communication</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Good work ethic and high standards</td>
<td>Personal, pseudo family</td>
<td>Autocratic</td>
<td>Friendly</td>
<td>Honest communication</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Understands different players</td>
<td>Professional</td>
<td>Autocratic</td>
<td>Close mutual respect</td>
<td>Professional and remaining confidential</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Leadership</td>
<td>Trusting</td>
<td>Collaborative</td>
<td>Friendly and mutual respect</td>
<td>Honesty</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Teaching</td>
<td>Honesty</td>
<td>Collaborative</td>
<td>Friends</td>
<td>Honesty</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Knowledge of game</td>
<td>Professional and friendly</td>
<td>Collaborative</td>
<td>Friends, pseudo-family</td>
<td>Communication</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Leadership</td>
<td>Honest communication</td>
<td>Collaborative</td>
<td>Friends</td>
<td>Professional and friendly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>Professional and friend</td>
<td>Communication</td>
<td>Collaborative</td>
<td>Friends and role model</td>
<td>Equality among players</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Comparisons Between Coaches and Players

Some interesting comparisons can be made across the two samples. With regard to qualities, communication was the desirable quality or skill most frequently cited as necessary by a coach. This concept included being able to communicate with players on and off the field and being able to communicate a knowledge of the game to the players.

There were also many similarities between the players’ and the coaches’ responses to Question 2 (Coach: What sorts of leadership qualities do you need to be successful that as a coach? Player: How would describe an ideal relationship between a coach and his or her athletes?). Again, communication skills was stressed, as was the ability of a coach to be personable yet also professional. One major difference between the two groups’ responses was that many players stressed honesty more. The coaches may have assumed honesty to be part of an ideal relationship and therefore did not focus on it as much as a personal concern.

With regard to the leadership styles, the coaches overwhelmingly favored a collaborative style. Their players however, were split on this question. This suggests that coaches feel that if they ask for input from the players, they are collaborative leaders, whereas players recognize that coaches have the last say and will make a decision regardless of whether the players agree with the decision. Most players seemed to recognize the need for a decision-maker coach because of the problem of disagreements and rivalries among players.

Relationships between players and coaches were described by both sets of respondents as professional and yet friendly, with many respondents alluding to the pseudo-family type situation of a college sports team. Coaches recommended that other coaches develop good communication skills, something also stressed by the players. In addition, players were more concerned with honesty, while coaches were more concerned with walking the fine line between being a professional and a confidant.

The frequencies to the survey responses for both groups are presented in Table 4.3.
### Table 4.3

**Frequencies for Major Study Variables.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gender</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leadership Qualities</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Soccer skills</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leadership Style</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Autocratic</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collaborative</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Both</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>N = 20</strong></td>
<td><strong>100</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Overall, the demographics for the total study sample were equal with regard to gender, but breaking this population down into the coach and player groups showed that 60 percent of the coaches were females and 53 percent of the players were male. Almost all of the coaches reported that they preferred collaborative styles of leadership.

**Supporting Quantitative Results**

The MLQ leadership survey was administered to the coach group. The content of MLQ is presented in Appendix A. The 12 sections in MLQ survey are: (a) idealized attributed, (b) idealized behavior, (c) inspirational motivation, (d) intellectual stimulation, (e) individual consideration, (f) contingent reward, (g) management-by-exception (active), (h) management-by-exception (passive), (i) laissez-faire leadership, (j) extra effort, (k) effectiveness, and (l) satisfaction. The content of each section is presented in Appendix B: The MLQ Scoring Key (5 X) Short. The results from the quantitative survey given to the five coaches follow.

**Descriptive Statistics**

Twelve forms of leadership were measured using the MLQ. Beginning with idealized influence attributed, this variable ranged from 10 to 15 ($M = 13.2; SD = 2.49$). Idealized influence behavior ranged from 8 to 16 ($M = 12.8; SD = 3.27$). Both of these
variables have high means and low standard deviations, indicating that there is not much variability in the scores even given the possible ranges of both variables (0 to 16).

The scores for the variable inspirational motivation have no variation at all. There are four questions in this section: (a) I talk optimistically about the future, (b) I talk enthusiastically about what needs to be accomplished, (c) I articulate a compelling vision of the future, and (d) I express confidence that goals will be achieved. All five coaches scored 16 on this scale, which is the highest possible score on the scale. This indicates that this is the type of leadership that is actually most valued and most used by these coaches. Table 4.4 displays the frequency distribution for this variable.

Table 4.4

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Valid Percent</th>
<th>Cumulative Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Valid</td>
<td>16.00</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The variable intellectual stimulation ranged from 11 to 14 ($M = 12.8; SD = 1.30$), again indicating low variation. Scores for individual consideration ranged from 11 to 15 ($M = 14.0; SD = 1.7$).

Contingent reward scores ranged from 13 to 16 ($M = 14.4; SD = 1.14$). The questions for this variable are: (a) I provide others with assistance in exchange for their efforts, (b) I discuss in specific terms who is responsible for achieving performance targets, (c) I make clear what one can expect to receive when performance goals are achieved, and (d) I express satisfaction when others meet expectations.

Table 4.5 displays frequencies for contingent reward. This style of leadership also appears to be very important among soccer coaches, probably because they reward players’ hard work with the opportunity to play games.

Table 4.5

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Valid Percent</th>
<th>Cumulative Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Valid</td>
<td>13.00</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>20.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14.00</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>40.0</td>
<td>40.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15.00</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>20.0</td>
<td>20.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16.00</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>20.0</td>
<td>20.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Figure 4.1 shows the frequencies for this variable in a graph.

**Figure 4.1. Pie Graph Showing Frequencies for Contingent Reward**

Management by exception (passive) also had very low variability. Table 4.6 depicts the frequency distribution for this variable. The scores ranged from 5 to 7 ($M = 5.8; SD = 1.09$), indicating that coaches did not favor this style of leadership.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Valid Percent</th>
<th>Cumulative Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5.00</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>60.0</td>
<td>60.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.00</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>40.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Management by exception (active) was somewhat more popular among coaches, with scores ranging from 3 to 12 ($M = 6.6; SD = 3.57$). Laissez faire leadership also was not favored by soccer coaches. The attitude seemed to be that players running free without direction on the soccer field is not likely to improve team performance. Scores on this variables ranged from 0 to 5, even given the possible range of 0 to 16. The mean for laissez faire leadership was 2.8 and standard deviation was 1.92.

Extra effort leadership was popular among these coaches. Scores for this variable ranged from 9 to 12 ($M = 10.8; SD = 1.30$). Figure 4.2 shows the frequency distribution of this variable.
Effectiveness was also highly favored by these coaches, with scores for the variable ranging from 13 to 16. Given the possible range of 0 to 16, this indicates that most of these coaches are using effectiveness techniques ($M = 14.40; SD = 1.14$). Table 4.7 depicts the frequency distribution for this variable.

**Table 4.7**  
*Frequency Distribution for Effectiveness.*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Valid Percent</th>
<th>Cumulative Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>13.00</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>20.0</td>
<td>20.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14.00</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>40.0</td>
<td>60.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15.00</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>20.0</td>
<td>80.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16.00</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>20.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The last variable was satisfaction. Scores ranged from 6 to 8 ($M = 7.20; SD = 0.83$).

**Confidence Intervals**

An analysis of the descriptive statistics showed that the most popular forms of leadership adopted by coaches in this sample were inspirational motivation, contingent reward, and effectiveness. The next steps in this analysis were to construct confidence intervals for these variables and estimate the means of these types of leadership for a
population of coaches. The important element to keep sight of here, however, is that the sample comprises only five coaches.

The mean score for inspirational motivation among a population of college soccer coaches will fall at 16.0 given there was no variation in this variable. This suggests that all soccer coaches working in programs similar to the ones in the sample are likely to score 16, or the maximum on the scale of inspirational motivation. The mean score for contingent reward for a population of soccer coaches is likely to fall between 14.30 and 14.50 at a 95% confidence level. The mean score for effectiveness would also fall between 14.30 and 14.50, given these this variable has the same mean and standard error as contingent reward. This also is at a 95% confidence level. All of these confidence intervals are extremely narrow, which indicates that the population scores can be predicted with a great deal of accuracy. By contrast, the variable management by exception (active) showed more variation. With 95% confidence, the mean score of this variable would be expected to fall between 3.29 and 9.91, a much wider interval.

**Measures of Associations**

Pearson’s product moment correlations were calculated for the selected variables. Because there are only five cases for the MLQ, any associations that are close to or actually statistically significant are important. An alpha level of 0.10 was employed because of the sample size and the exploratory nature of the research.

**Table 4.8**

**Correlations.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Effectiveness</th>
<th>Contingent Reward</th>
<th>Idealized Influence Attributed</th>
<th>Intellectual Stimulation</th>
<th>Idealized Influence Behavior</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Satisfaction</td>
<td>.681</td>
<td>.419</td>
<td>.336</td>
<td>.733*</td>
<td>-.347</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Effectiveness</td>
<td>1.000</td>
<td>.423</td>
<td>-.387</td>
<td>.404</td>
<td>-.308</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contingent Reward</td>
<td></td>
<td>1.000</td>
<td>.317</td>
<td>.740*</td>
<td>.630*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Idealized Influence</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attributed</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intellectual</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stimulation</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note.* * Indicates significance at the 0.10 level

Among the statistically significant relationships, there is a strong, positive relationship between intellectual stimulation and satisfaction. This indicates that as intellectual stimulation increases, so does satisfaction ($r = 0.733; p<0.10$). There is also a significant, positive relationship between contingent reward and intellectual stimulation, indicating that as contingent reward increases, so does intellectual stimulation ($r = 0.740; p<0.10$).
The only other significant correlation in Table 4.8 is between contingent reward and idealized behavior \( r = 0.630; p<0.10 \). This association indicates that as contingent rewards increase, so too does idealized behavior.

**Summary**

This chapter has included an analysis of the findings of the types of leadership styles that exist among college soccer coaches and the dynamics of the relationship between a coach and his or her players. The qualitative section of the results outlines common themes found among coaches and players and provides comparisons of the two.

The qualitative analysis indicated that coaches viewed themselves as using collaborative leadership and valued communication skills as both qualities of a good coach and as a recommendation for coaching success. Among the players, there was also an emphasis on communication, although almost half the respondents said their coach used an autocratic style. This was said with the understanding that a coach may ask for input from players, but the final say rests with the coach.

Another theme that was prevalent in the qualitative analysis was the closeness of the relationship between the coach and the players. Many respondents alluded to a family-type scenario, although coaches often pointed out that a balance of the parental and professional roles was necessary. The players also viewed experience with the game of soccer as an integral part of coaching, where the coaches did not.

Results from the quantitative analysis revealed that inspirational leadership was used by all respondents to the highest degree possible. Extra effort leadership and effectiveness also were determined to be important to coaches. Confidence intervals constructed to predict the population means were all very narrow, indicating that many coaches would be likely to use these methods of leadership.

The following chapter provides a discussion of results, suggestions for further research, discussion of limitations of the study, and implications for soccer programs in Taiwan.

**Conclusions and Recommendations**

**Discussion of Results**

The results from the interviews with the five coaches reveals a very close agreement with the original assumption put forward in this study. The results support the first half of the assumption having to do with how effective collaborative leadership would be in the organization of collegiate soccer programs. In fact, despite the number of leadership styles and approaches available, all five of the coaches favored the collaborative model of leadership to varying degrees with only one even mentioning some other form of leadership model. This collaborative model of leadership involves discussion, seeking of opinions, and input from all the stakeholders rather than an autocratic model in which decision making is strictly a one-person task with no input from anyone else unless it is to seek confirmation.

At the same time, given the structure of the coach/collegiate player relationship (which has elements of both the top-down hierarchical elements and horizontal or
bottom-up systems), the collaborative model only applies to soccer programs to a certain extent. The coaches and players are mixing a competitive, top-down leadership with a collaborative, bottom-up system, resulting in a collaboration that is defined by parameters that the individual coaches set up. That explains the various types of leadership values described by the individual coaches in the survey. For example, Coach One identified “overall personality” as the single most important element while Coach Two identified the “coach/player relationship,” Coach Three “role model,” Coach Four “ability to communicate,” and Coach Five “ability to teach.” These are all elements of a collaborative leadership program, with individual emphasis changing for each of the coaches, depending on what value each coach put on any particular element of “collaborative leadership.”

The key element in the responses of the five coaches is how tightly they are grouped around the collaborative instead of the autocratic notion of coaching. Only Coach Three talked about discipline, setting limits, and placing boundaries. This consistency existed despite the fact the coaches were selected from different university campuses and, perhaps more importantly, despite the fact both male and female coaches were represented in the sample.

Judging from these preliminary results, and despite the small sample (vindicated somewhat by the almost complete agreement among the five coaches), it is safe to argue that the majority of collegiate soccer coaches in this study see themselves as practicing a collaborative style of coaching. Although the conclusion is not definitive, there is little reason why this conclusion cannot be extrapolated to the rest of the United States, assuming the same level of competition. The question that remains is whether it can be applied to soccer programs and coaching methods in Taiwan.

The supportive quantitative results from the MLQ leadership survey given to the five coaches shows the same type of general agreement about what type of leadership was most effective. In every single one of the 12 possible types of leadership variables, the ranges were extremely tight, indicating an extraordinary agreement among the five coaches. It also suggests (but does not prove) that a larger sample of similar coaches under similar conditions in other parts of the United States and even in other parts of the world would probably fall within the same tight range. The general implication is that exceptions to the “collaborative coaching style” would be hard to come by.

The most surprising result was in the score for “inspirational motivation” as a leadership factor. All five coaches scored 16, the highest possible on the shortened version 4-item Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire, a score that indicates no variance whatsoever. Of course, it is a good idea to bear in mind an “instrument effect” where coaches may want to see themselves in a traditional light of sportsmanship: collaborating with players, inspiring them to great accomplishments, and rejecting autocratic behaviors and intentions.

This score for inspirational motivation fits in well with Chelladurai’s (1999) example of transformational leadership qualities within even small organizations:

A typical example is that of a coach of an athletic team who transforms his or her team from a “perennial doormat” into a winning team. This type of coach begins by expressing a feeling of discontent with the current image of the team,
articulating a vision wherein the team is performing in a winning fashion, and convincing the members that the vision is attainable and that they have the ability to be a winning team. (p. 173)

Although the other leadership variables were not quite as tight, with some variances ranging as much as 8 points between the high and low, the overall tendency was for low variation. This indicates the kind of quantitative clustering effect that enables the development of some clear conclusions and larger generalizations about soccer coaches in other programs and other countries. There is, however, another side to the story. The coaches (three female and two male) overwhelmingly saw themselves as collaborative leaders who sought to inspire and motivate their student athletes; the athletes themselves were more ambivalent when it came to the leadership style they preferred. This difference split closely along gender. Five of the eight males said they preferred an autocratic style, while only two of the seven females said they preferred such a style. This might point to the possibility that the use of the word “preferred” is misleading. In reality, the players who opted for an autocratic style indicated they said this because of what they felt was the reality of the coach-player relationship; the coach, according to them, had the last word when it came to making a decision, and the players had to abide by that decision, whether they agreed with it or not. In this view, collaboration had its limits and lost much of its appeal as a method of creating a more democratic system. The male players seemed to seek a more hierarchical, military style of leadership, possibly believing that this would improve performance and success in competition.

At the same time, these same players tended to describe their relationships with their coaches as both “open” and “close.” Some made a distinction between what happened on the field and what happened off the field and how an ideal coach would handle these distinctions. For the players, key words were “honesty,” “communication,” “fairness,” and the ability to be impartial when it came to handing out discipline. At the same time, the players reiterated their belief that the coach had the final say in any decision and that they could do nothing about it. This decision-making process has been singled out by researchers as a way of determining what type of leadership is being used within a particular organization. For example, Vroom and Yetton (1973) describe two types of decision-making: the cognitive and the social. The cognitive determines how rational a particular decision is made, and the second places more stress on group participation. Under the second type, Vroom and Yetton (1973) outline five subtypes of decision-making style (see Table 2.2).

Within these, the coaching styles in the interviews and survey seem to fall under Consultive I and II. In the Consultive I style, the coach would discuss the situation with individual members of the team and then make the decision alone. In the Consultive II style, the coach would discuss the situation with the entire team assembled and then make the decision alone.

The third collaborative style, Group II, does not seem to fit into the coach-player relationship at the collegiate level. This is where the coach brings the team together to share ideas about a situation, condition, or problem, and allows the group to come up with a consensus solution. In this instance, the coach would play the role of a moderator or someone who articulates the problem.
There are thus various ways in which to describe what collaborative coaching means. This is in keeping with the literature, which indicates some confusion within the corporate world as to what exactly the collaborative style of leadership really means and how much it differs from previous types of leadership. There is an ambivalence between ideals and the reality of the situation.

For example, studies conducted on collaborative or democratic leadership styles (Davids, 1995; Luthar, 1996; Odomirok, 2001) indicate that the collaborative style works best for late 20th and early 21st century corporations in an ideal sense. This seems to be aligned with how the coaches see themselves and their style of coaching. As Odomirok (2001) puts it:

*Great groups with collaborative purpose acknowledge the singular dimension of each individual as well as the existence of strong personal commitment, and they tend to operate with an awareness that their true mission is loftier than performance goals and achievement objectives. These great groups are made up of highly talented people. There is strong cooperative leadership, competitive optimism, and dedication among individuals who are accomplishment- and achievement-centered. (p. 29)*

However, other researchers are not as optimistic about the benefits of collaborative leadership in the corporate world and question its true meaning. Huxham and Vangen (2000) argue that what theorists have called “collaborative” (ideally cooperation among equals with equal say in decision-making) is still contained within structures and processes created by others. Decision making and leadership of the team or the program is not completely controlled by some of those involved. And no matter how democratic a leadership style might be, someone still has to make the decisions at the end of the day. There also is the question of what type of participation is being allowed and which questions are being decided collaboratively and which by the people nominally in charge.

This seems to be the position of the students in some of their responses to the interview questions in this study. They are not openly negative about the “collaborative” label but they definitely express some skepticism. In other words, there seems to be the same sort of tensions being expressed in the coach-collegiate soccer player relationship that exists in the corporate world. When you come right down to it, the horizontal organization needs to be redefined. It is not really completely flat but rather horizontal with a slight peak. As some of the male players expressed this idea, someone has to be in charge at the end of the day. Whether both the coaches and the students realize this cannot be determined through this kind of study. The coaches in their position of power do not have to address these issues and can afford to describe themselves as collaborative, compassionate and so on. The student-athletes, on the other hand, have nothing to lose by “telling it like it is.”

There are many arguments as to the correct or most appropriate definition of collaborative leadership. This argument goes beyond the bounds of this paper, but one thing is clear: Both coaches and students agree in principle as to the type of leader that is needed and the types of relationships needed to be developed. Both coaches and players spoke of the need for open and honest communication. This communication includes
both the ability to pass on the skills needed to play the game at the collegiate level and
the ability to inspire and motivate, to pass on enthusiasm for the game. Both wanted
“professional yet friendly” relationships and there were several allusions to “family” on
the part of the students. Once more, although the meaning behind the concept of a
family outside one’s natural family is beyond the scope of this paper, the indication is
that openness and trust and the ability to speak one’s mind are valuable ingredients for
both coaches and players.

As stated previously, the results of the interviews and pretest survey show that the
first half of the assumption that the most appropriate style of leadership for an
intercollegiate soccer program is the collaborative style has been proved correct for
soccer programs in this study. The second part of the hypothesis that it is this type of
administration that has the best chance of creating a viable infrastructure for these kinds
of programs in Taiwan is less certain. This conclusion relies on the ability to generalize
to an even greater extent the outcomes from the interviews and surveys. The fact there
was so little variance in the coaches’ responses to the MLQ leadership survey and the
interviews is promising for the generalizability of the results across cultures.
Unfortunately, cross-cultural empirical leadership studies are rare, and the majority of
leadership studies (until recently) were conducted by North Americans on North
Americans. It is quite possible that a very different model of leadership and management
in Asian culture would put a completely different interpretation on these theories.

House and Aditya (1997) admitted this limitation to their own study of leadership
and to the research literature in general.

The leadership literature is based on a limiting set of assumptions, mostly
reflecting Western industrialized culture. Almost all of the prevailing theories of
leadership, and about 98 percent of the empirical evidence at hand, are rather
distinctly American in character: individualistic rather than collectivistic,
stressing follower responsibilities rather than rights … (p. 409)

Many theories of ethics, political science, and sociology have pointed out these
important differences between Eastern and Western cultures and societies. However, if
any leadership style can be called collectivistic and stress follower rights rather than
simply responsibilities, it is the collaborative one. This style brings the most people into
the decision-making process. And it is the one researchers are concluding is the way of
the future: “In the very near future, leaders will be those who can accomplish goals with
people without reward or the threat of punishment. And those leaders will adopt a more
collaborative way of thinking” (Hays, 1999, p. 30). The question, of course, is how
things actually get done in this type of system (this refers back to the idea that someone
has to make the final decision). According to Cleveland (2000):

If all organizations are becoming “nobody-in-charge-systems,” how will anything
get done? As I used to ask students in a management class: How do you get
everybody in on the act, and still get action? We will do it, I think, by creating
systems that manage to minimize, and clearly define, what “everybody” must
agree on common norms and standards and in all other matters maximize each
participant’s opportunity and incentive to use his or her common sense,
imagination, and persuasive skills to advance the organization’s common purpose. (p. 298)

These seem to be universal concepts that do not rely on a specific culture or way of life. In this light, it can be argued that the second part of the hypothesis also has been proved, although further research on the Eastern side of the equation are definitely needed.

In conclusion, the coach/player interviews and coach MLQ leadership survey were found to be in agreement with the majority of the corporate leadership literature to the effect that collaborative leadership styles of one kind or another work better in this day and age than strictly authoritarian or autocratic ones. This is mostly because collaborative leadership allows for input from a wider group of participants and because it can better cope with fast-changing conditions. They are also in agreement with the theory put forward by Chelladurai (1993) that this type of leadership best serves the student-athletes, fulfilling the two factors performance and satisfaction considered most important for both on-field and off-field behavior.

Finally, there seem to be no serious obstacles to the four assumptions:
1. The similarity between Taiwanese and American universities being enough to allow an exchange of ideas for the establishing of collegiate-level soccer programs in Taiwan (i.e., there are some colleges and universities in Taiwan that can be compared to those in the United States);
2. The ability to find a collegiate soccer program model in the United States that can be adapted to Taiwan (collaborative versus autocratic; hierarchical versus horizontal; top-down versus bottom-up);
3. The need for visionary leaders to make the programs work to the best of their potential (corresponding to the “inspirational motivation” so highly prized by the coaches in the survey); and
4. The idea that, despite cultural differences, some essential elements of the leadership paradigm can be transported from one culture to another (e.g., traits, abilities, styles, approaches).

If these assumptions can be assumed to be correct, then it can be stated that both parts of the hypothesis put forward in the study have been proved both qualitatively (in the unanimous option of collaborative leadership as the most effective coaching style) and quantitatively (in the very tight grouping and lack of variance among the responses to the MLQ survey).

Response to the Ground Tour Question

What are the characteristics of effective leadership styles within the organizational structure for developing a college-level soccer team and program? The research results indicate that most of soccer coaches used the collaborative leadership style. The individual coaches, working within parameters that they themselves set up, define this collaboration. That explains the various types of leadership values described by the individual coaches. These are all identifiable as elements of a collaborative leadership program, with individual emphasis changing for each of the coaches, depending on what value each coach put on any particular element of collaborative leadership. Research
results also indicate that most of soccer coaches suggested that a good coach needed to use good communication skills with their players.

**Response to the Sub-questions**

Regarding organization structure, the first sub-question was whether a cooperative, collaborative, decentralized, horizontally integrated organization is more effective in setting up and running college-level soccer programs than a vertically structured, top-down, centralized command structure. Through this study I found that the most appropriate style of leadership for an intercollegiate soccer program is the collaborative style. In depth, this kind of leadership style could be more effective in setting up and running college-level soccer programs because most of respondents said that the collaborative leadership style provides good communication, decision-making, and professional direction between the players and coaches on the sports team.

Regarding leadership, the second sub-question asked whether leadership styles of sports programs are culturally bound. Part of the study tested leadership styles from the viewpoint of coaches, while the other part examined how these coaches saw themselves as opposed to how their athletes see them. The coaches overwhelmingly saw themselves as collaborative leaders who sought to inspire and motivate their student athletes. The athletes themselves were more ambivalent when it came to the leadership style they preferred. The players also believed that the coach had the final say in any decision and that they could do nothing about it. I believe the collaborative style has the best chance of creating a viable infrastructure for these kinds of programs in Taiwan.

**Response to the Methods for Triangulation**

This study employed the methods of triangulation within a qualitative research model, using the results of the literature review, Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ) survey, and the interview questions.

The literature review included a description of collaborative coaching. Also, the review indicated some confusion within the corporate world as to what exactly collaborative style of leadership really means.

Supportive quantitative results from the MLQ leadership survey given to the five coaches showed the same type of general agreement about what type of leadership was most effective. The highest possible on the MLQ survey is “inspirational motivation” (all five coaches scored 16). It is a good idea to bear in mind an “instrument effect” where coaches may want to see themselves in a traditional light of sportsmanship.

Results from the qualitative analysis of the interviews indicate that the coaches viewed themselves as using the collaborative leadership style, and players tended to describe their relationship with their coaches as both “open” and “close.” Some made a distinction between what happened on the field and what happened off the field and how an ideal coach would handle these distinctions.

The final outcome of this triangulation presented a “best fit” model for leadership of soccer programs and for the “collaborative” type of soccer program in particular. This determination was made as to the viability of setting up similar intercollegiate soccer programs in Taiwan.
Implications for Collegiate Soccer Programs in Taiwan

Collegiate soccer programs in Taiwan are still in their infancy. Apart from the lack of suitable facilities and inadequate funding, the programs suffer from a lack of qualified coaches. The majority of the coaching positions are filled by part-time volunteers who receive little or no formal training. They tend to be former soccer players who wish to see the game continued at the collegiate level. Others are former professional players who see college as a kind of “semi-professional” sports environment. In essence, it is a system that very much resembles the high school system in other countries: volunteer coaches with varying degrees of skill and leadership ability whose full-time job is teaching.

The effect of this is that most students, despite their athletic activities in high school, must make a choice when they enter university: either academics or sports. The two activities are rarely combined. As for the sports colleges (there are about 10 in Taiwan), the emphasis is more on physical education than actual team sports. So while some students manage to keep up their physical exercise regimen, very few actually become proficient in any individual sport or go on to lead programs themselves.

Fortunately, some efforts are being made to improve the situation: (a) bringing in elite coaches from other nations to train home-grown coaches in Taiwan; (b) running early childhood tests on students to see who might have the aptitude, skills, and physique to eventually become top athletes or coaches; (c) increasing funding for university athletics programs; and (d) putting money into the building of a stadium and a field infrastructure.

The results of this study suggest that the timing is right to introduce a structured set of collegiate soccer programs into Taiwan. This framework will enable those students interested in soccer to continue playing it throughout their college career, regardless of any future plans. It is generally considered that the United States has one of the best structured collegiate programs in the world, with experienced administrators and skilled coaching staffs. An examination of what it takes to make these programs work seems a logical way to find out if similar programs would fit the Taiwanese situation.

One of the contentions stated at the beginning of this study was that a model for intercollegiate soccer programs could be built for Taiwan using the information garnered from the methodology used in this paper. It is hoped that this newly built model could avoid the majority of the difficult problems being faced by intercollegiate programs in the United States (especially those programs in the larger universities).

The results show that the collegiate soccer programs studied produced an ideal leadership model (the collaborative) that can be translated to the Taiwanese experience (or at least there do not seem to be any strong reasons why it cannot). As well, the results also show that this particular model does not have the difficulties of some of the elite university sports programs in the United States (e.g., problems with scholarship violations, excessive competition for potential athletes, overachieving coaches who earn as much money as professional coaches). This may be because soccer programs are not as financially significant as football or basketball programs in the United States, but the point is well taken anyway.
### Table 5.1

**Summary of Themes from Literature Review, Interviews, and Survey.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Important Aspects</th>
<th>Leadership Qualities</th>
<th>Leadership Style</th>
<th>Relationship with Players</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Literature Review</td>
<td>Intelligence</td>
<td>Intelligence</td>
<td>Charismatic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Confidence</td>
<td>Assertiveness</td>
<td>Autocratic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Energetic</td>
<td>Confidence</td>
<td>Collaborative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Motivation</td>
<td>Energetic</td>
<td>Task-achievement oriented</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Person-oriented</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Motivation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Flexible</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Sensitive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interviews</td>
<td>Overall personality</td>
<td>Soccer skills</td>
<td>Collaborative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communication</td>
<td>General</td>
<td>Autocratic</td>
<td>Pseudo-parent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ability to teach</td>
<td>Responsibility</td>
<td>Professional</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Role model</td>
<td>Conflict resolution</td>
<td>Personal</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Positive outlook</td>
<td>Motivating</td>
<td>Mutual respect</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commitment</td>
<td>Available one-on-one</td>
<td>Friendly</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Honesty</td>
<td>Treats players the same</td>
<td>Role model</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Respect</td>
<td>Leadership</td>
<td>Professional and friendly</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leadership</td>
<td>Experience</td>
<td>Mutual trust</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Experience</td>
<td>Professional</td>
<td>Personal</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional</td>
<td>Friend</td>
<td>Pseudo-family</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friend</td>
<td>High standards</td>
<td>Honesty</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Communication</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Survey</td>
<td>Inspirational motivation</td>
<td>Optimistic</td>
<td>Inspirational motivation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Contingent reward</td>
<td>Enthusiastic</td>
<td>Collaborative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Effectiveness</td>
<td>Confidence</td>
<td>Management by exception (passive)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Extra effort leadership</td>
<td>Communication</td>
<td>Management by exception (passive)</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>Responsibility</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Rewards performance</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Effectiveness</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
With these factors in mind, it can be stated that the implications of this study for collegiate-level soccer programs in Taiwan are:

1. There is a very good chance such programs will work, even if some adjustment needs to be done.
2. A model can definitely be created that will use some of the best features of American programs: collaborative leadership, openness and honesty, inspirational motivation, a family-like atmosphere, satisfaction, and performance and then shape them into something that will be accepted in Taiwan.
3. Though many of the personal skills advocated by both coaches and students in this study cannot be taught, the motivation behind these skills can be taught and assessed so that coaches have a way to measure how well they are doing.
4. The model for the collegiate soccer programs, once successfully adopted, can be used to spawn models for other collegiate sports programs outside the world of soccer.

**Recommendations**

This specific study into the role of leadership styles on collegiate soccer programs in the United States and the implications of that for Taiwan is limited in several ways, as previously noted. It is a preliminary study that needs a great deal of work before a full-blown model can be created. Thus, further study and research in this area is definitely needed. Among some of the recommendations for further study are:

1. An expansion of the test sample to include more soccer coaches and students: This expansion could be done along several levels: within Texas, within the United States, and in Taiwan. This would go a long way to being able to fully test the universality of the present results and to allow for a more meaningful extrapolation of both qualitative and quantitative results.
2. An expansion of testing to include the elite NCAA Division I soccer teams in the survey. This would be an important way to determine if similar coaching styles and philosophies are found at this level as well as on the lower competitive levels or if the styles and philosophies change with the increased visibility and pressure to win. In other words, how do elite coaches and elite players differ from those who participate more for the enjoyment and exercise?
3. An expansion of testing into other collegiate sports (both at the same level and on different division levels). This would be a good way to test the universality or uniqueness of the collegiate soccer coaching experience and program. Does collaborative leadership hold sway in the other sports or is it confined to soccer? Does the level of collaborative leadership shift as one examines more popular sports (e.g., basketball) and less popular sports (e.g., field hockey)?
4. An objective examination of collegiate coaching conduct rather than self-reported conduct as in the present study. It is important to know if what the coaches say about themselves and their approach to the game translates into similar on the field behavior or if it is a case of “do as I say not as I do.” This could be examined using Chelladurai’s Multidimensional model of leadership (1993) (see Figure 2.1) in the organizing and running of athletic
An Examination of Leadership Style and Player-Coach Relationships in College-Level Soccer Programs

programs. In his model, Chelladurai distinguishes among three types of leadership behavior: required, preferred, and actual. Required refers to outside constraints, rules, and protocols, over which the coach has no control and certain parameters within which he or she must act. Preferred refers to the type of behavior that either the coach sees himself or herself as carrying out or that the players set up as what they ideally would like to see in a coach. Actual is the result of objective observation as to the coach’s behavior rather than self-observation or from the viewpoint of the student-athletes.

The study could be used to determine how close a particular coach’s actual behavior (expanded to a set of soccer coaches) corresponds to required and preferred and this, in turn, would determine the success or failure of a program.

5. A comparative study of coaching methods between an American collegiate soccer program and one from another part of the world. How similar are collegiate soccer programs in the United States and South America, for example? How do European collegiate coaches feel about their leadership styles, considering the much greater emphasis placed on the sport in those countries? What types of training programs do these coaches have to undergo? This would help determine the universality of the collegiate programs uncovered in this study and provide more answers to the ability to export those program philosophies to Taiwan.

6. Similar studies that involve the athletics administration from colleges and universities rather than just the coaches and student athletes. It is generally understood that collegiate athletics programs do not rely entirely on coaches to work properly. There is also a large administrative factor involved: sports directors, athletics directors, administrators, and managers. Studies pinpointing the role of these administrators in the success or failure of a program would help immensely in the creation of successful programs elsewhere.

In these cases, the leadership roles of the administrators would refer to their handling of the various sets of coaches and other employees working within the program and would probably require a different style of leadership, maybe even a Group II collaborative one (for the coaches, at least, if not the administrative, secretarial, or custodial staff). Or it might lead to a more autocratic leadership style, where the relationship is not on a voluntary basis but rather employer-employee.

These studies also could examine whether the majority of athletic administrators employed a transactional leadership style (e.g., priorities and needs are the right ones, all that is needed is to put the correct plan in motion) or a transformational style (e.g., status quo is no longer an option, a new vision is required) as defined by Bass (1985), Chelladurai (1999), and Yukl and Van Fleet (1992). In addition, it could address which of these styles would be most appropriate for a Taiwanese model. Previous studies, among them those conducted by Doherty (1997) and Doherty and Danylchuk (1996) in a Canadian university athletic context, found that the use of transformational (visionary or inspirational) leadership among athletic administrators tended to percolate its way down to the coaches and from there to the student-athletes. There was a strong correlation between transformational administrators and success on the field.
There is also an area of study open to examine the connection between collaborative styles of leadership and transformational styles: In the context of collegiate sports, do transformational leaders stick to collaborative styles or are they more autocratic in their approach? In other words, are there different types of transformational leaders who use different types of motivation to get their message across? Are there transformational leaders who are willing to sit down and discuss in a collaborative fashion their vision? Or is this type of vision necessarily that of an individual? In other words, does the creative energy flow both ways from group to leader and from leader to group or does it flow one way only?

**Concluding Remarks**

As noted previously, this study is preliminary and leaves many questions unanswered. At the same time, it sets up a solid basis for confirming the study hypothesis about leadership styles and for further studies of either leadership or athletic programs and the best ways to lead them. The results also seem to agree with most of the major studies in the literature with reference to leadership styles and their effectiveness. The study has shown that leadership styles can be carried from the world of business and large corporations into that of the collegiate soccer field and that these leadership styles are just as important in this area; this conclusion was previously suggested by Chelladurai, (1993, 1999). That conclusion was supported by the fact that all five coaches mentioned leadership approaches as a key to motivating their athletes and the athletes looked upon their coaches as more than simply someone they would come into contact with several times a week. There was a strong element of teaching as well as elements of family and parenting involved in the whole leadership process.

Finally, it is hoped that a descriptive model for such a collegiate soccer program in Taiwan can be created as a result of this study, along with other research into sports team and program leadership. This model then could be used to create actual programs, starting with small-scale test programs and working toward full-scale ones. It is my sincere hope and desire that such a thing comes to pass. Of course, at some point, the descriptive model must be turned into a real program. That, in turn, would be up to the administrators within Taiwanese colleges and universities and government athletic funding agencies. The benefit would be a collegiate soccer program that would compare with the very best in the world.
REFERENCES


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An Examination of Leadership Style and Player-Coach Relationships in College-Level Soccer Programs

大專院校足球隊課程中教練領導風格以及教練與球員關係之研究

李忠穎(1)  陳敦禮(2)  謝武進(3)

摘要

本研究以德州聖安東尼奧地區 5 位不同大學中之足球教練與 15 位高年級大學生球員為研究對象，研究目的在檢視教練領導風格與教練-球員關係在大專院校足球隊課程中扮演的角色。找出組織中有效領導風格的特質，將有助於大專院校足球校隊與足球課程之建立，這是非常重要的事。此方面的訊息可供台灣地區大專院校建立足球課程之參考。本研究以三角測量之質的研究法為研究工具，結合歷史文獻探討、多因子領導行為問卷調查，以及面談所得資料結果進行分析。

分析結果顯示，受訪教練認爲以共同合作式的領導加上良好的溝通技巧，為成功領導的關鍵。此外，量的研究調查結果顯示，教練運用合作式的領導，在激發球員動機、給予獎勵以及領導效能方面得分較高，本研究結果與文獻探討結果相符。

關鍵詞：領導、領導型態、足球教練、運動員

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