

The application of paternalistic leadership of table tennis coach Yi-Wei Chiu and Mei-Jen Huang

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Abstract: Every team needs effective leadership for management, while the leadership behavior of coach will affect tournament performance and team cohesion, and it would even concerns the development and success or failure of the entire team. Among Chinese community, paternalistic leadership is not only reckoned with paternal style, but also ingredients of caring for subordinate as well as moral leadership. Therefore, it is considered as the kind of effective way of leadership for sport team.

As pointed out from the study, paternalistic leadership has been verified its existence within sport domain among Chinese community. However, there are few studies conducted table tennis. Hence, the author would hope to provide a novel athletic leadership mindset and model for table tennis coach. Based on the results of literatures review, this article has put forth following suggestions regarding the application of paternalistic leadership by table tennis coach: 1. aspect of authoritarian leadership: way of training tends to be authoritarian and it is considered part of the leadership, and it is found existent within the community, with its value hardly to be denied. The ratio of authoritarian leadership for various levels of athletes by table tennis coach should be suitably increased and decreased. 2. benevolent leadership: it is found from the study that concern of coach for athletes is relatively lesser, and it is why benevolent leadership of table tennis coach is considered to be more important; 3. moral leadership: moral leadership is considered such leadership that athletes will evidently be aware and found with predictive effect, and table tennis coach should make use of moral leadership to build up sense of trust and understanding with athletes.

If table tennis coach can appreciate their leadership behavior and mingle the essence of paternalistic leadership, it is believed that there can be great help enhancing efficiency of coach, and interaction between athlete and coach. It is thus hoped that this article can be used as reference for table tennis coach in their subsequent leadership of athletes.

Keywords: table tennis coach, paternalistic leadership.

1. INTRODUCTION

Sport coach is the foundation of development for national game and sport, and their work is no longer merely to athletic instruction. As indicated by Westre and Weiss in 1991, leadership behavior of coach is given with critical value of decisive factor to the improvement of athlete and team performance. Along with blooming development of table tennis around the world, the extent of professionalization of international table tennis has turned higher and higher, so that the competition among each and every outstanding table tennis. In view of the scenario, it is critical that a country must be in possession excellent sport coach before they can cultivate outstanding athletes. Due to the fact that there is such close relationship between coach and athlete, tournament performance of athlete and leadership behavior of coach is vitally interrelated.

In Taiwan, coach needs to play the role both as teacher and friend, and what matters most is that coach would have significant impact upon score performance as well as physiological and psychological development of the athlete, and the importance of coach is thus beyond words as coach can have exercised profound and intense effect on athletes (Wang, 2010). In the study by Tu (2000), it is mentioned that a coach must be in possession of related knowledge on physiology, psychology, biomechanics, training instruction, leadership and management competence, and first-aid to injury, and they must also master professional athletic skills before the expertise of coach can be turned into

professional trade. It is also pointed in the study by Chou (2003) that if there is any gap between the leadership behavior of coach and training behavior bewared by athlete it will then affect the performance of athlete, and even impact the motive of athlete to take part in the tournament. Therefore, if leadership behavior of coach can better accommodate to the need and expectation of athlete it can help facilitate athlete to more aggressively receive training, and also achieve the objective and athletic performance in pursuit by the coach and athlete. As a matter of fact, every team needs effective leadership for management, whereas the leadership behavior of coach would also affect tournament performance of athlete and team cohesion; most of all, it would concern the entire development and success or failure of the team (Wang, 2010).

With regard to present status in the country, the concept of traditional leadership as strict coach brings forth excellent student has widely prevailed. Besides, it is taken as a part of the leadership as athletes are fully in obedience to advice from coach with overtly authoritarian ways of training, which is found within the community, and no one can ever deny its value.

In recent years, the leadership study of sport coach in the country has followed after the research trend from overseas. Though diverse cultures can display different viewpoints for leadership models, the leadership models developed by the western world might be less capable to demonstrate the original façade of Chinese leadership if

these models are planted upon Chinese community of wholly different cultural background. As viewed, leadership should not be merely perceived in style, leadership can also be affected by culture. Thus, paternalistic leadership found with features of Chinese culture is able to better interpret the phenomenon of Chinese leadership (Kuo, 2004; Hsu, 2007; Yen, et al., 2008).

Among studies on paternalistic leadership within the country, there is not yet study focused on table tennis, while background factors of coach and athlete will affect the leadership behavior of coach. Therefore, the researcher is most interested with regard to the style generated from ways of leadership with coach and the entire sport team, and it has, thus, triggered the desire to investigate the application of paternalistic leadership upon the study of leadership behavior from table tennis coach. In fact, this can be a start table tennis, and it is hoped that such a concept can be further promoted to see if it can be different from leadership theory of the western world and better interpret the phenomenon of leadership behavior with Chinese coach.

2. PATERNAL LEADERSHIP

As a matter of fact, studies on leadership theory have constant on the rise during early 20th century, including trait theory in the 1940s, behavior theory in the 1960s, and contingency theory in the 1970s, and “new leadership approach” occurred after 1980s. Scholars who study on leadership have gradually appreciated a fact that the prediction of successful leadership can be a matter of great complication, and different scenarios would need different leadership for coping because there is no such universal leadership behavior that can be applied on all contexts and scenarios.

Paternalistic leadership has integrated Confucian cultural, legalist thought, and family concept so that a set of leadership of segregated from the western world can be used upon Chinese leadership, and such a thought is found existent within domain of movements among Chinese community (Chou, 2003). As indicated from the study by Chen (2009), theory of paternalistic leadership is found with greater strength of interpretation for leadership behavior of coach in Taiwan than the theory of sport leadership behavior from the western world. Instruction of paternalistic leadership refers to Chinese leaders who are in possession of clearly transparent and might authority as paternal and these leaders are coped by athletes with authoritarian submission; besides, these Chinese leaders would also demonstrate ingredients of concern, understanding, and morality upholding profile of harmony (Westwood, 1997).

Paternalistic leadership is a triad leadership gratefulness, authority, and kindness, which are respectively found as authoritarian leadership, benevolent leadership, and moral leadership, and it is

also the kind of atmosphere within rule by man, demonstrating paternal benevolence and authority as well as moral and selfless code of conduct (Yen, et al., 2008). As noted in the study by Kao (2001), it has helped extending paternalistic leadership developed by corporate organization to sport team. Nonetheless, the concept of moral leadership among leadership studies of sport team is somewhat different from that of corporate organization for moral leadership of sport team has covered partial concept of the instruction and professional expertise, it is why moral leadership is named as virtuous leadership. Based on the analysis by Fan and Cheng (2000), they have sorted out paternalistic leadership and subordinate response to respectively establish “triad model” on paternalistic leadership. They have taken the parts of gratefulness, authority, and kindness of paternalistic leadership as responses of gratefulness and feedback, reliance and obedience, and respect and recognition from subordinates. These three items are being elaborated in detail in the following:

1. The authority of coach is absolute, and allows no challenge from the team; in addition, the coach must control stringently, and demands unreserved obedience from the team. The content of authoritarian leadership is of dictatorial, image grooming, and instructional behavior. When the coach displays authoritarian leadership behavior, the response from the team is veneration and obedience.

2. The coach will demonstrate concern and care for feelings of the team in terms of leadership performance, and he will provide timely instruction for violation of the team-mate, so that the entire team can perceive it and render reciprocation. Benevolent leadership is given with the concept of reciprocation, which is when subordinate receives benefit from the leader they will reciprocate to the leader. The content of benevolent leadership includes individual attention and caring for face of subordinate. Thus, benevolent leadership can be called as favor-bestow. When leader demonstrates benevolent leadership behavior, subordinate response is gratefulness and feedback.

3. Coach can exemplify with their own conduct to build up personal paradigm, and resort to favorable conduct and behavior to win respect and trust from their team-mate. On the other hand, team-mate will display imitation and emulation after coach's behavior. Virtuous leadership will stress personal moral cultivation of the leader, and its content is being scrupulous between private and public interests and exemplification with one's conduct. Therefore, virtuous leadership is also reckoned as virtue establishment. When leader demonstrates such behavior, response of subordinate will be recognition and emulation.

In view of “paternalistic leadership” claimed by Cheng, while the comprehensive concept by Hsu in

2007 in figure 1 can be used to demonstrate paternalistic leadership and subordinate response.

In the past, study of paternalistic leadership that have been used on sport coach is: the study findings by Tang and Sung (2004) are that the higher the virtuous leadership and benevolent leadership with the coach there will be higher emotional recognition of athletes with the team, and they will be more willing stay at the team. On the other hand, if the authority of coach is turned higher, it will result in the sign that athletes tend to stay with the team because of personal benefit and interest. Besides, paternalistic leadership of coach, cultural sense of value with the team, and team commitment are interrelated. The study findings by Tang and Sung (2009) regarding paternalistic leadership of senior high school volleyball team and transformation leadership have discovered that every factor of transformation leadership are positively related with team efficiency. Besides, the entire team efficiency is conducted through the primary factors as moral leadership, benevolent leadership, and charm influence.

The study of Chen and Tsai (2005) investigates Chinese paternalistic leadership, emotional perception, and athletic burnout. Subjects of study include track and field, table tennis, badminton, judo, and taekwondo, and the study findings have discovered that perception of negative emotion, virtuous leadership, and positive emotional perception can effectively predict athletic burnout, while authoritarian leadership and positive emotional perception are found in negative correlation, and found in positive correlation with negative emotional perception and athletic burnout.

The study by Chou (2003) investigates the paternalistic leadership of coach across the Taiwan strait, and study findings discover that moral leadership from mainland Chinese athlete is prominently higher than that of Taiwanese athlete. If Taiwanese and mainland Chinese athlete are aware of higher moral leadership they will have higher work atmosphere and satisfaction; on the other hand, if Taiwanese athlete is aware of higher moral leadership there will be higher social and work cohesion; if mainland Chinese athlete are aware of higher benevolent leadership, there will be higher work cohesion. From the study by Chen and Lin (2009), it is found that the awareness by tchoukball athletes in elementary school for leadership behavior of coach is respectively as virtuous leadership, benevolent leadership, and authoritarian leadership. For male tchoukball athletes, their awareness at the two aspects of benevolent leadership and virtuous leadership is higher than that of female athlete, while tchoukball athletes from various grades are found without any difference for awareness of authoritarian leadership, benevolent leadership, and virtuous leadership.

The study by Tseng and Lun (2008), explores how

paternalistic leadership behavior affects athletic burnout of college baseball players, and the study shows that benevolent leadership, virtuous leadership, and athletic burnout display negative correlation, while authoritarian leadership and athletic burnout display positive correlation. Besides, if the coach tends to display authoritarian leadership, college baseball players are found with stronger sense of burnout for sport depreciation. In addition, seniority in sport and authoritarian leadership are found prominent prediction regarding athletic burnout, whereas authoritarian leadership is considered an important variable of prediction for athletic burnout.

As learned from the above-mentioned literatures, the motive and emotional perception of authoritarian leadership and athlete are negatively related, while they are found with positive relationship with occurrence of competition burnout. As for motive of virtuous leadership, benevolent leadership, and athlete are found with positive relationship, but negatively related to competition burnout. Therefore, paternalistic leadership exercises both positive and negative relationship on the psychological variable of athlete, such as motive, emotional perception, competition and burnout. In addition, moral leadership, benevolent leadership, and charm influence can have exerted influence upon the efficiency of the entire team. As such, paternalistic leadership is found with prominent effect of prediction for team efficiency.

3. APPLICATION OF PATERNALISTIC LEADERSHIP BY TABLE TENNIS COACH

Table tennis is considered the kind of exquisite sport, while brain plays rather important function, and the sport is, as well, reckoned as the one of the fast ballgames (Li and Tu, 2004). Hence, players have to come out with effective and accurate ball-strike with the fast speed and gyration created by table tennis. Then, it is necessary to focus spirit or gather concentration; during the period of competition, we would need to rely on the shouting and reminder of coach outside the court. As such, it is believed to be of the major issue for both athlete and coach as how one can be nurtured of competence for concentration. From the study by Chou and Tseng (2008), it mentioned that the key of success and failure for table tennis would be of the first three strokes. Since the physique of Asian is relatively smaller than that of European, but with faster and agile foot-step, and Asian also enjoys better nimbleness. Therefore, table tennis coach can focus the particular features of table tennis to cope with their ways of leadership and explore model of development as reference to promote the game of table tennis.

Leadership behavior of coach is considered as one of the important factors that affect athlete to take part in team activity and training, while ways of coach of

leadership will, as well, influence the motive of athlete and so as the model of team cooperation, and even team and personal satisfaction. In view of the investigation from the above-mentioned literatures, following suggestions are thus put forth:

1. Authoritarian leadership

The study by Chen and Tsai (2005) pointed out that authoritarian leadership is an integration of multiple aspects. Though it is found with ingredients of reprimand and deprecation, it also contains the elements of instruction and demand for high performance. As viewed, coach has rendered athlete to see more highly of personalized style of sport, lay more stress on personal strength, and take greater importance for competition result as under authoritarian leadership, and athlete would hard work in pursuit for championship.

(A) In the study by Pai and Tu, (2008), it is noted that spirituality is the decisive factor of competition outcome under similar physical and technical conditions. For athlete with higher resilience to pressure, they are less likely to be affected of their performance from nervous. Since table tennis is the sport with high dexterity and short span of time for response, it is why coach has to place pressure upon athlete during exercise, similar to the tournament within the team in simulation of formal competition and arrangement of friendship competition so that athlete won't panic in competition.

(B) There are competitions almost every month for juvenile and teenager, and the ratio for authoritarian leadership would vary for athletes from different levels. Therefore, table tennis coach must resort to authority and strict attitude to demand athlete so as to achieve high-efficient result within short span of time. In such a way, the training of athlete can achieve better efficiency as they counter serial games one after the other.

2. Benevolent leadership

The reason that the coaches are benevolent because they have to match up the interpersonal gap resulted in by authority on athlete, while the study by Kuo (2003) shows that with more democratic behavior and training and instructional behavior from table tennis coach the integral team cohesion can be higher; since concern behavior by coach to the athlete is relatively lesser the benevolent leader of table tennis coach will become more important.

(A) During more advanced level of competition, when the score of athletes are close and the nervousness of competition is enhanced and their technical competence is well-matched, the extent of psychological cultivation will become evidently more important (Kao, 2001). Under the context that a score is considered to the outcome of the competition, athlete would, very much, rely on the reminder of the coach. Hence, if the coach and athlete share good understanding, the athlete would know what to do for the next with an eye-sight from the coach outside the court. As seen, the coach is taken as the pendulum of mind-soothing for athlete, and the athlete will not only be stabilized of their emotion to finish the game. Of

such interaction, it is founded on the benevolent leadership by coach during their regular training, and the coach has shown concern not just on the training, but also care of life, paying much understanding to the hard effort of training, schooling of athlete, face upholding, and even reduction of punishment in public when athlete makes mistake with training. All of these can fully demonstrate the concern behavior of coach, while athlete will then head towards the objective set down by the coach.

(B) When the score system of table tennis has changed into 11 points in 2001, psychological pressure of athlete has turned higher than that of 21 points. Aside from the duration of game is shortened as athletes will find unlosable pressure, the new system will also constrain them in terms of tactics use for serving and attack for strike, and it will indirectly affect their psychological aspect (Liu, 2006; Wu et al., 2005).

3. Virtuous leadership

As indicated from the study by Chou (2003), it points out that if it is aware that there is high virtuous leadership within paternalistic leadership in Taiwan there can be higher social and work cohesion. As seen, virtuous leadership is of such leadership behavior that athlete finds with obvious awareness and is found with predictive effect.

(A) An outstanding and professional table tennis coach should find betterment with their training work so as to enhance the effect of technical training, not to mention their endowment with strong sense of responsibility and noble moral integrity. Given the context of diversified community we have today, it would take balanced development in diversified aspect for a coach to consider successful (Chen, 2009).

(B) As noted from the study by Pai and Tu (2008), it has pointed out that the problems of negligence of academic study and alienation from regular school life by table tennis athlete are considered most critical. Since every word and deed of their coach are perceived with exemplification, it is why coach must further demonstrate higher personal discipline and conduct as to become example of the athletes.

4. CONCLUSIONS

Sport coach has been playing quite a many roles, and the relationship between coach and athlete are very closely related; besides, the leadership behavior of coach is also intensely linked to the performance of athlete. In fact, the impact of sport coach upon athlete is significantly profound in Taiwan, and a successful and well-respected coach would, surely, have their own ways of leadership so that they can lead the athletes to create climax of their performance within silent and formative influence. In addition, every team needs its effective way of leadership for management, whereas leaders do share its existence of importance among athletic team. Furthermore, studies have shown that paternalistic leadership does exist within the domain of

sport within Chinese community, while triad model of leadership with gratefulness, authority, and kindness with paternalistic leadership should be able to best reflect the leadership theory of Chinese leadership behavior as it is most close to the cultural phenomenon of Chinese. Therefore, the researcher does hope that it can be taken as a brand new athletic leadership mindset and model for table tennis. Actually, it is merely perceived as a beginning in table tennis, and it is further desired that such a concept can be promoted, hoping that paternalistic leadership can better interpret the phenomenon of leadership behavior with table tennis coach.

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