ANALYSIS OF THE ROLE OF LEADER IN TEAM SPORTS

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Abstract. *Within a group there is a role that rises hierarchically above the others because it has the ability to influence people's attitude and behaviour more than it is itself influenced. This is the leader. The purpose of this review is to identify leadership models in sports based on the hypothesis that there are necessary qualities, but not sufficient to fulfil this role, and to demonstrate on a theoretical level, that "versatility" is the primary requisite for success. Through literature review on social groups, 16 studies are analysed, dating from 1990 to 2020 and using the keyword "leader in sports". The goal is to understand the characteristics of the figure of the leader in sports and to lay the foundation to create awareness on the characteristics the trainer has to improve in order to increase the team performance. Some models focus on the idea of leader as innate, others on its behavioural style; still, others on the characteristics of the situation in which the coach finds himself acting, and some on the needs and expectations of the other team members. One finding of this study is that a particularly frequent characteristic in the sports field is the existence of several leaders in the group. Through the analysis of the studies, it can be stated that this fact may turn out beneficial, but the absence of collaboration between the different leaders may become a negative aspect.*

Keywords: *leader, behavioural style, models*

Introduction

Coaches need psychological tools to help athletes achieve their desired goals. This is enabled by learning of new habits and values related to improvement, sacrifice and perseverance, as well as by developing psychological skills aiming at improving well-being and consequently the performance itself. An intervention model (Vallée & Bloom, 2005) that focuses on the most important aspects for coaches is presented in Figure 1.
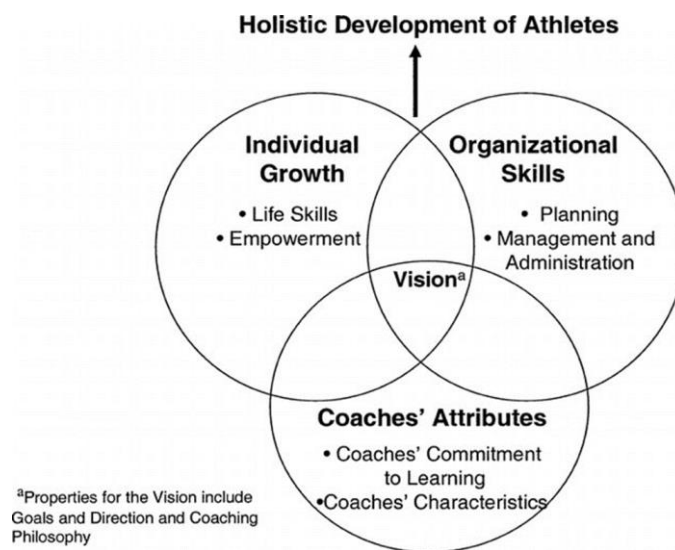

Figure 1: *Conceptual model of the perspectives of experienced coaches when building a successful program.* Source: (Vallée & Bloom, 2005), p. 185.

The coach's philosophy is placed at the center of the model and the model is based on the individual characteristics and skills needed to manage a sports team and on the analysis of the concept of success in athletic performance, extrapolated from other areas of life. This is achieved by considering three key aspects: individual growth, group management, administration and planning; and qualities of coach.

During the group management process coaches focus on direct goals, as well as those of their athletes and the team. According to (Balaguer, 1994), (Figure 2) the most effective skills for leading a sports group are leadership, motivation and communication
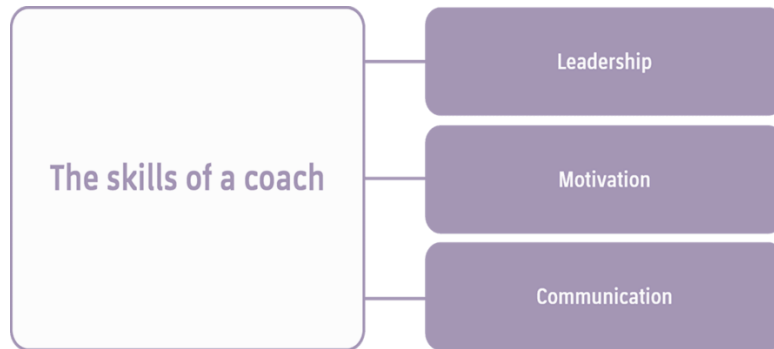

Figure 2: *The skills of a coach*
Source: (Balaguer, 1994), p. 67.

This paper focuses on studying the skills that a coach must possess for achieving high performance (Figure 1) and specifically on the characteristics of leadership (Figure 2).

Each social group, and consequently each sports team, has a structure of positions defined by specific relationships with other members and with a scale of prestige within. The natural assignment of roles of each member of the group determines both the amount of power he possesses and the possibility of influence on his companions.

Some models have focused on the idea of a leader, such for innate and natural gifts, others for his behavioural style, still others for the characteristics of the situation in which he finds himself acting and some, finally, for the expectations and needs of others group members.

With the intent of shaping the different processes that a coach goes through in a given context, leadership is a dynamic interaction between the individual characteristics and behaviours of a leader, the perception of the group and the context in which this influencing process takes place.

A different conceptualization of what it means to be a leader can be summarized (Cei, 2021):
- It is the leader who directs the group, considered the most influential person, and the individual who generates the most interactions.
- The leader is the person who is able to lead the group towards their goals.
- Considered the leader of the group.
- The leader will have the support of group members and will have the ability to positively influence the group.

We can summarize the leader as a person who knows the goals of the group and provides the direction and resources needed by the group members to achieve the goals. Coaches are

good leaders when they guide the goals to be achieved, as well as the methods and procedures necessary to achieve them. Furthermore, the coach tries to optimize the performance of his athletes.

A leader with a true vocation for leadership does not want subordinates or subjects, but rather followers who believe in him. This can be achieved in various ways based on the coach's leadership style (Table 1).

Table 1: Coaching roles
Source: (Balaguer, 1994), p. 201

1	Technical instructor	Leading training
2	Teacher	Teaching knowledge
3	Motivator	Creating a positive focus
4	Judge	Designing and legislating
5	Director-Leader	Leading the athletes
6	Administrator	Solving bureaucratic issues
7	Public Relations	Dealing with the press and the public
8	Advisor	Giving advice
9	Friend	Sharing
10	Parent	Supporting
11	Scientist	Analysing, evaluating, etc.
12	Actor	Changing roles
13	Politician	Supporting
14	Student	Listening, learning, studying

Currently, the trend is that of a model that allows the integration of the positive aspects of previous theories by analysing the phenomenon of leadership without underestimating any of them. It is now evident that the leader must not be a rigid person from a mental and behavioural point of view, thus avoiding that any change in the structure or in the aims of the group would lead to its inevitable fall, even if, at the same time, he must possess specific characteristics that allow him to reach this position. In fact, not everyone with the same skills can be leaders. The main of these skills is "versatility", that is the ability to adapt one's behaviour to problematic situations that are always unique and different, which require specific responses and reactions from those in power (Hughes et al., 2018).

The study of leadership models in sport seem to confirm the idea that it is impossible to talk about leadership behaviour in a universal sense since there is no universal leader. In many cases, the role of leader may be assumed by team captains, while in others some players have a significant influence on their teammates due to their prowess as an athlete, charisma or experience.

It remains true that there are, however, qualities that are not sufficient but necessary to carry out the tasks associated with this role. The leader will learn from experience, know how to adapt to different problems, know and be aware of their behaviour and its consequences for both team performance and satisfaction.

In team sports we frequently observe two very distinct figures in their characteristics: the institutional leader, that is the coach, and the intimate leader, often the captain. The first is the team leader outside the team, elected by the management and endowed with legitimate power and competence. The second (defined for convenience since the figure who plays the role of official captain may not coincide with the intimate leader) holds the leadership within the group, elected by the other members of the team and charged with considerable responsibility because he is recognized as the most suitable person. and competent to have it. Due to their different origins and positions, they are placed in a different way towards the community. Both must maintain a versatile attitude to bring the team closer to its goals, and it is often easier for one to solve problems that the other struggles to face and vice versa.

By comparing the characteristics of the two leaders with both the performance and the satisfaction of the group, it turns out that both the coach and the captain must pay attention to both factors mainly because performance and satisfaction are two interdependent variables (Hackman & Wageman, 2005).

The goal is not only to describe the unique characteristics of the figure of the leader in sport but to identify how, according to the authors who have dealt with the subject, the latter must behave in order to promote team performance and satisfaction; demonstrating, on a purely theoretical level, how this "versatility" is the primary requirement for success.

Further future investigations may concern the tools that allow analysing and evaluating the leader's behaviour as well as the study of the other two skills presented in Figure 2, i.e. motivation and communication.

Statement of the problem in field of coaching and leader concept

The goal was to identify the characteristics, conditions and situations that can lead a person to the top of the structural hierarchy of the group to which they belong, or to the status of leader.

To understand the particularities of the figure of the leader in sport it is appropriate to refer to how this concept has been considered and defined in the socio-psychological context, specifically the development of leadership in social groups.

The analysis of the relationship between the behaviour of the two leaders, performance and satisfaction and the confirmation of their interdependence represents nothing more than further evidence of the necessary "versatility" of the leader, or rather, of the leaders.

It is also not easy to establish a single definition of the concept of leadership, as leadership occurs within various environments and contexts.

This objective will be achieved through the description of the main theories and the main models inherent in leadership, the analysis of the two types of leaders found in sports and their similarities and differences in different contexts and the study of the relationship between each of the two leaders and their primary goals, namely team performance and satisfaction.

Methodology

Is Versatility a characteristic the Coach (as Leader) must possess in order to achieve high performance?

In order to achieve the greatest possible number of relevant citations, a wide range of psychological, social and economic databases has been researched, with the aim of identifying broad leadership studies and, particularly, team sports leadership studies. Such databases

include Scopus and Scientific Research Publishing (SCIRP). We started looking for keywords that had leadership as their topic. Specifically, starting from more generic words such as leader, behavioural style and models, deciding that we want to study leadership in team sports in this paper, we have inserted further more specific words such as coaching, soft-skills, sport team and leadership. This allowed us to limit the analysis to a smaller number of studies without however neglecting studies that, even if apparently dated, it is our firm belief that they are the basis on which the concept of leader rests.

The theory of conversion (Moscovici, 1981) tackles two determining treats: influence and power and demonstrates how influence can be exercised even in the absence of power. Moreover, according to the Asch paradigm (Asch, 1955), the change in attitudes and behaviours is determined through informational processes. We tend to consider these theories as verified empirical evidence.

Identifying the characteristics, conditions and situations that can lead a person to the top

In Asch's idea (Asch, 1955) they are unidirectional processes, that is, they are determined starting from the majority over the minority. In Moscovici's provocation the idea arises that, if only a majority influence really existed, no difference in people's behaviour could be observed.

The minority can, on the other hand, cause a change in people's attitudes and behaviours, which turns out to be much more profound and lasting than that exercised by the majority, holders of power. The influence exercised by the minority runs through a validation process in which the comparison and reflections are not the different opinions but the idea expressed by the minority, the reality itself, which results in a profound, lasting change that remains independently by the presence of the entity that generated it (Moscovici, 1980).

For this reason, social influence is a reciprocal process in which the position of the leader is distinguished as occupied by that person who is able to influence the other members of the group more than can be influenced by them.

The particularities of the figure of the leader in sport

It is inevitable to have to consider the endowment of power in the hands of the leader, which, if it is not the basis of influence in general, is still a solution that allows a social agent "O" to modify the attitudes and behaviours of another person "P". By separating it from the concept of influence, power becomes associated with a system of dominance-submission processes which are considered a structural aspect of group life (Giovannini & Savoia, 2002). These relationships do not have a natural foundation but depend on a system of social norms confused with institutional norms, in every sphere as well as in sport. The coexistence of these two types of norms can lead to the development of different leaders at different levels.

A power relationship rests on several foundations. The five typologies, where the social agent "O" can intervene on the attitude and behaviour of the other members of the group, represent the different ways in which those who have a hand in power are able to act. These are: *Reward power, Coercive power, Legitimate power, Referent power* and E*xport power* (Huang et al., 2020). Each of these is applicable without too much difficulty to the world of sport and in particular within the team disciplines.

There are different positions in the status structure that characterizes a team, to which a certain amount of power is conferred. For this there are different statuses and there may be

different leaders, a source of power. Reward power and Coercive power can be considered a characteristic almost totally attributed to the management (usually represented by a figure outside the sport itself) and to the coach (delegate of the management itself as holder of power and leadership within the activity sporty). Legitimate power is enshrined in institutional rules and contracts that bind players to respect it. Based on rewards (such as the so-called match prizes) or penalties (mostly economic but also related to sporting activity), it is guarded by the same holders of the previous types of power. As for the Referent Power and the Export power hardly concern the management or any person outside the sporting activity (especially for Export power). They can be recognized as a coach if he has proven to be an expert in the sport he trains or if he is particularly famous. In this case he can become a term of comparison for his own behaviours, a symbol to follow, or in any case a person with a knowledge and experience on the subject that cannot be questioned and that no one intends to contradict. At the same time, a team member, especially if among the veterans, often but not always the team captain, could take this position with respect to younger players, acquiring a power that allows him to be recognized as another leader, this time around. within the team.

Some models inherent in leadership

Leadership is a process aimed at influencing or modifying the attitudes and behaviours of other people (Hersey & Blanchard, 1984). From this definition, many authors have developed models and theories to identify the essential characteristics that a person must possess to assume the position of leader.

The goal was to understand what makes some people able to influence others more than themselves. It is important to reiterate how today the debate is completely open in all areas and especially in the sports one. One of the first is that which is based on trait theories.

It is based on trying to identify, through questionnaires such as Cattel's 16-factor questionnaire, characteristics that are typically common to most leaders. The basic idea is that to be a leader you need some natural skills identified in specific personality traits. It is an extremely naturalistic position where the chances of becoming a leader derive from one's natural characteristics, giving rise to models labeled as Theories of the great man. The limitations of these researches are evident (Hollander & Offermann, 1990), such as in considering only one category of factors, those related to the leader's abilities, excluding other important ones.

The ineffectiveness of this model, in the sporting field in vogue until the early 1980s, was verified by analysing 150 researches (Stogdill, 1975)belonging to the great man trend, and the failure of such theories has led to the need to identify alternatives. There are two different types of leaders (Bales & Parsons, 1956) defined by two distinct functions: the first (socio-emotional leader) focuses on maintaining the morale of the group and a serene climate for all members, the second (task-centered leader) is geared towards achieving the goals for which the group was born and therefore organizing and managing the work. These two orientations can be identified in the same person or there can be two leaders linked to different functions.

Leadership, understood as a process of influence that occurs between a leader and his followers, involves a whole series of activities and duties on the part of the leader or leaders, calling this process "co-leadership". Talking about leadership means for the leader to make decisions that have positive results for the group, develop problem solving, have skills in

managing social skills, etc., a group that recognizes these abilities and that has accepted and recognized a person from the group as a leader (Flores & Mendo, 2010).

Results

Particularly important distinction in the sports field is the optimal performance that can be achieved through the work of a team-oriented leader, who cannot ignore the intrinsic satisfaction of the team members.

While not denying the possibility that the same figure can adhere to both leadership styles, it can be observed that, in most cases, the optimal performance of the team requires the presence of more than one leader. This is because often one is unable to optimize team performance and satisfaction in all situations.

It can be observed how the consequences of the leader's behavior determine consequences substantially at two levels: that of productivity and that of the morale of the group.(Lewin et al., 1939). The styles identified are: *Authoritarian*, *Democratic* and *Laissez-faire.*

The main features of the three styles are presented in Figure 3.

Authoritarian	• Substandard performance level when the leader is absent. • Conflictive motivational climates (including loss of interest or excessive aggressiveness among group members).
Democratic	• Group performance does not decline when the leader is not present. • Support autonomy, responsibility and greater satisfaction when faced with a task. • Less internal tension within the group.
Laissez-faire	• Group performance is not dependent on the leader's presence or absence. • Unproductive groups, low cohesion and satisfaction due to inadequate tasks. • Less commitment.

Figure 3: Leadership styles in relation to the group

Different leadership roles and styles have different levels of effectiveness when it comes to leading a group. These differences, in the way of acting and relating to others, will result in different reactions towards the leader himself. Differences presented in Figure 4.

Characteristics of the coach-leader		
Authoritarian	**Democratic**	**Permissive**
• Provides discipline • Rule-driven • Regular punishment in order to enforce rules • Cold personality • Does not allow other points of view • Motivates using threats • Look down on the weak	• Allows the players to enjoy playing • Is concerned for the players' problems • User reinforcement as motivation • Is open to other playing and training systems	• Passive, relaxed and distant during competition • More improvisation that planning • Controls their emotions • Appears to control the situation by improvising as events take place
Advantages		
• Disciplined team • Strong, tough and aggressive team • Good organization • Favours physical fitness • Good atmosphere following a victory	• Players perform better than expected • Relaxed team that enjoys competition • Good group cohesion • Players with issues, more effective	• Little control over the athletes (seems "cold") • No hard work • A sense of independence among the players in relation to the coach • Players are receptive in the absence of repressive measures
Disadvantages		
• Sensitive players cannot keep up with demands • Problems after defeat • Athletes are tense, under pressure and do not feel needed • The coach are feared	• Judged as weak • Problems managing lazy athletes • May lose insecure players who need a "tough" coach	• Appears disinterested in the sport • Failures typically blamed on the coach • Low physical fitness • Players are unprepared for competition • Not respect for the coach

Figure 4: Characteristics of the head coach

According to the approach focused on the importance of situational characteristics, in opposition to the theories of the "big man", the leader becomes the one able to carry out certain optimal actions to achieve a goal and potentially each situation places emphasis on a different person as leader. By subjecting pairs of subjects to three tasks of different nature (Carter & Nixon, 1949) it is observed that it is difficult for the same person to assume the role of leader in all conditions. This system of theories, despite highlighting the importance of the variables that characterize the situation, exaggerates on the opposite side (Hollander & Offermann, 1990), completely neglecting the individual qualities of the members of the group.

In sports, this exaggeration derives from the fact that every game situation requires a different leader figure. In this way, a match would be analysed as a set of individual actions, neglecting the importance of the general organization of the team and the person who manages it.

An attempt was made to develop models that were positioned in an intermediate position from the continuum given by the importance of individual and situational aspects.

Defined as interactionists, the contingency model (Fiedler, 1964) attempts to relate individual aspects to situational characteristics. Taking up the distinction made between a relationship-centered and a task-centered leader, he correlates the effectiveness of these two categories to a series of variables depending on the situation, for example the quality of the

leader-member ties, the characteristics the structure of the task or the type of power in the hands of the leader.

Task-centered leaders are more effective in conditions of extremely high or extremely low control of the situation, conversely, those centered on relationships achieve greater results if the control over the situation is placed at an intermediate level.

In sports (Giovannini & Savoia, 2002) they highlight how with a behaviour attributable to a task-centered style (Bales & Parsons, 1956), (Fiedler, 1964) and an authoritarian style (Lewin et al., 1939) a coach achieves better results only when is well liked, since his authority is not questioned and, leaving aside the morale of the team, he concentrates on the task, or when he is disliked by the members of the group, since he still has little power, he is not able to intervene on the morale, but in any case he can try to solve problems related to the task. In intermediate situations, the action on the morale of the group can have some motivational effect that also affects its performance. For this reason, both skills are important, considering that it is difficult for the same person to manifest an absolute mastery of each, often a double figure of leader is needed, this to maximize results both in relationships and in group performance.

A further hypothesis (Hollander, 1958) which by definition belongs to the transactional models, that is to the paradigms that can be traced back to the main concept of a two-way relationship between leader and group members, places the leader in a power of influence through the establishment of an idiosyncratic credit towards his peers, obtained through the demonstration of his skills. When each member of the group recognizes, through a test of experience of the potential leader, the possibility of obtaining a common gain as a team, he is willing to invest his trust in him, thus favouring the achievement of team objectives.

On the contrary, other authors (Mendo, 2005) propose an alternative concept, suggesting a difference between transactional and transformational leaders.

To explain the leadership style through a model called situational leadership they analyse the various needs that arise in a given situation, keeping in mind the level of maturity of the team members. Leadership is the process of influencing the activities of an individual or group in an attempt to achieve a goal in a given situation.

Also, there are two management styles (Hersey et al., 1998): a more supportive or collaborative style (supportive behaviour) and the other more managerial (managerial behaviour), where the leader defines tasks and controls the result.

The leader can use both types of management styles (managerial or supportive) to varying degrees based on the level of maturity and skills of the group members. There are four levels:
- Level 1: the leader controls;
- Level 2: the leader supervises;
- Level 3: the leader advises;
- Level 4: the leader delegates.

Figure 5 and Figure 6 highlight the relationship between the level of maturity of the group members and the leadership style chosen by the leader.
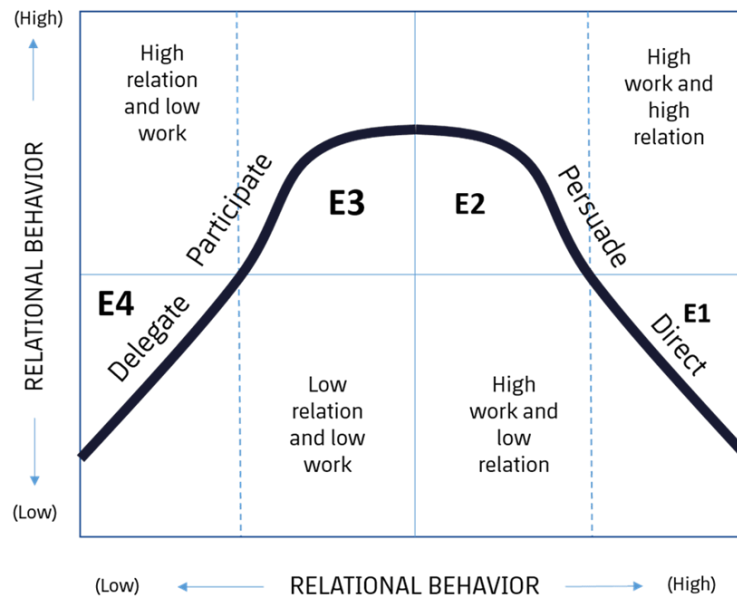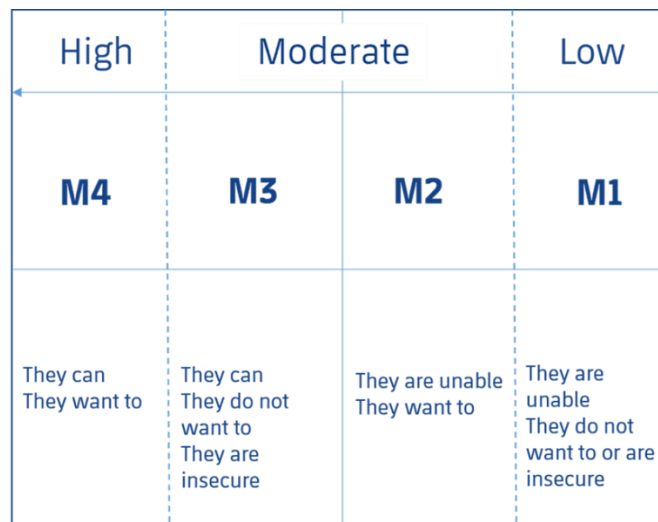
Figure 5: Maturity of the team members

Figure 6: Leadership styles and team maturity

1. Maturity level M1: athlete or team group who has little skill in carrying out a task and / or is insecure, with little experience. Leadership style applied: directive, instructive, giving orders, guiding.

2. Maturity Level M2: Skill is low but motivation is high. Leadership style applied: persuasive, through explanations, clarifications and convincing.

3. Maturity level M3: the athlete is able to carry out a task, albeit with a certain degree of insecurity, and there is a willingness to learn. Applied leadership style: participation, the athlete works together with the leader, shares ideas and facilitates decision making.

4. Maturity Level M4: The athlete is highly skilled, willing and has high levels of confidence. They are highly qualified and highly motivated. Leadership style applied: delegation. The leader observes and monitors but barely intervenes in the execution of the task.

It is a phase in which the athlete participates in the decision-making process, adds value and works together with the team (Balaguer, 1994).

It is important to present a model that considers the different categories of variables that can influence the leadership of the group and which focuses mainly on the sports field. The theory of leadership (Chelladurai, 1990) (Kellett, 1999) (Liu, 2015) belongs to the field of multidimensional models and considers the level of performance and satisfaction of the employee team among three orders of factors related to the behaviours of the leader:

- By the situation: it includes all the variables expressed by the situationist approaches and by the contingency model.
- By the members: they depend on the characteristics of the athletes and on the type of relationship that binds them to the leader. The implicit reference to the concept of idiosyncratic credit (Hollander E. P., 1958) as a consequence of this relationship is inevitable.
- By the leader: they depend on the personal characteristics of the person who occupies the position of leader and can be linked to personality traits, to his lived experience, to his degree of competence.

The Multidimensional Model of Leadership (Chelladurai & Saleh, 1980), designed specifically for sports situations, essentially takes into account the behaviour of a leader, the background of that behaviour, the influence of the transformational leadership style and the effects that the behaviour of the leader has on the sports group. The hypothesis is that athlete performance and satisfaction are positively correlated with the degree of congruence between preferred behaviour, required behaviour, and actual behaviour.

This explains how the personality characteristics of a leader and the members of the sports group interact with other aspects such as the type of task and the environment. It focuses on what is called situational leadership, also known as the ability of leaders to adapt their style to the current situation.

Understanding this model will allow a coach to have influence on the group and encourage a positive environment among its members. For this to happen, the following three aspects must be considered:

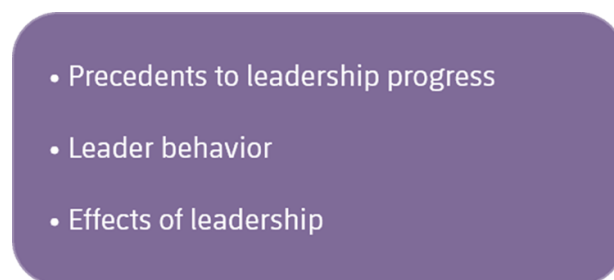- Precedents to leadership progress
- Leader behavior
- Effects of leadership

Figure 7: Elements of the multidimensional model

The congruence is at the basis of both the satisfaction and the performance of the team, consequently the main task of the coach is to identify and create a balance between the demands of the situation and of the members of the group combined with their personal characteristics,

so that you can tackle any problem using the appropriate skills, whether they are task-centered or relationship-centered. It be said that the characteristics that the leader must absolutely possess are **competence and versatility.**

"Acting" for the leader means "making decisions" and "deciding" means "selecting an alternative among several opportunities, in order to achieve the desired goal" (Cei, 2021). The processes that imply a choice of this type require work on two levels: cognitive aspects and social aspects. While the former can be summarized in solving the logical problems inherent to the obstacle in question, the latter present greater difficulties, if only for the apparent ambiguity about their effectiveness. Ambiguity that emerges when the opinions and researches expressed in this regard in the social and sports fields are compared. It must be specified that when we talk about social aspects in this area, we mainly refer to the opportunities offered by the leader to other subjects to participate in decision-making processes.

Continuing with this theory (Chelladurai, 1990) (Kellett, 1999) (Balaguer, 1994) (Liu, 2015) we divide:

- Situational characteristics.
- Characteristics of the leader.
- Member characteristics.

The characteristics are presented in Figure 8.

Figure 8 Prior to the leadership process

This model suggests three types of leader/coach behaviour:

- Required Behaviour: Refers to what the leader is expected to exhibit. This is the behaviour that best meets the needs of athletes.
- Effective Behaviour: It is based on the characteristics of the coach such as his personality, skills and experience, which directly affects the way he trains or manages.
- Preferred Behaviour: This refers to the behaviour that the coach would modify according to the needs or wishes of the athletes.

The researches that have analysed decision-making styles in the social field have focused their attention on the role that conflict of opinions plays within the group (Moscovici &

Zavalloni, 1969). Dynamics within the group defined as polarization, that is, as "an increase given by the group to an orientation already present in the individual components". The results actually showed that there were two different and opposite tendencies. Groups reached a consensus on more polarized attitudes, while others reached him on less polarized opinions and closer to the average of the totality of alternatives supported by the subjects individually (process defined as normalization).

The characteristics of leadership appear to be, together with the sense of involvement of the members and the formality of the group, one of the determining factors of the type of conflict that characterizes the decisions. Starting from these considerations, and here is the ambiguity, precisely the type of socio-cognitive conflict, based on an explicit and direct comparison of points of view, turns out to be the most productive for the purposes of achieving the objectives of the group.

Studies specifically oriented to the analysis of decision-making styles in the sports field seem to have reached diametrically opposed considerations. The characteristics of the leader that influence the type of conflict present within the team, are summarized in five different decision-making styles, summarized in Table 2.

Table 2 Decision-making styles

Style	Behaviour
Autocratic I	autonomously makes decisions based on his knowledge alone
Autocratic II	autonomously makes his decisions on the basis of information gathered from the members of the group.
Consultative I	discusses problems with the most influential members of the group, taking into account their opinions and decides for himself.
Consultative II	discusses problems with all members of the group, taking into account their opinions and decides for himself.
Group	discusses the problems with all the members of the group and lets them work out the possible solutions together, deciding which one to implement. His function is that of a simple coordinator.

In numerous researches in the sports field (Chelladurai & Arnott, 2013) (Chelladurai et al., 1989) it has been found that both the coaches and the players appear convinced that the autocratic style, in which the leader decides alone, and to be preferred especially when the situations to be solved are particularly complex or too trivial. However, it is important for the leader to know how to use the different decision-making styles in relation to different situations (Cei, 2021) since only in this way can he be able to face any problem in order to positively promote team productivity, reaffirming the concept that there is no universal choice but that the leader must be able to adapt their actions and choices.

The characteristic of team sport is the ability to distinguish an institutional leader, defined a priori, from an intimate leader, determined at an unconscious level within the group soul.

One can hardly speak of a single leader even if in some rare cases the absence of a player with the necessary skills can make the captain bear all the responsibilities of the role of the coach. Table 3 summarizes the most important differences between the two:

Table 3 Team sports leadership

	Institutional Leader	**Intimate Leader**
Origin	External	Internal
Position in the team	Head Coach	Captain/Athlete
Behavioural style	Task-oriented	Relationship-oriented
Decisional style	Authoritary	Participatory
Assumed power	Reward power, coercive, legitimate, competent	Example power and competent

These two categories represent only ideal types, clear, simple and useful on a theoretical level. In fact, while recognizing a main orientation to the coach to achieve the goals set by the club and to the captain a main orientation to interpersonal relationships, the need for an intermediate attitude on the part of both. The type of leader who uses his authority by drawing it from the acceptance of the group is defined as a "catalyst" leader.

All these characteristics are decisive elements for the satisfaction and performance of the team (Chelladurai, 1990) (Chelladurai & Arnott, 2013) (Liu, 2015). Concept that we draw from the idea that the management of the locker room, and therefore of the socio-emotional and performance problems of the team, is always a transitory moment in which there are no universally valid behaviours since each group represents a reality in its own right.

It is essential that the leader possess skills that allow him to adapt his behaviour to better deal with the most varied situations. In light of what we have seen to be the main characteristic for leader success, namely behavioural versatility, this association between the type of leader and behavioural styles (Bales & Parsons, 1956), although likely, appears excessively rigid. Both the coach and the team leader must be able to activate one or the other behavioural style.

The internal leadership of a team is a varied phenomenon with a different and unique structure for each sports team that is taken into consideration. Often there may be several leaders in open hostility between them, perhaps each supported by a part of the team, and the relationship between coach and captain, that is, between institutional leader and intimate leader, always turns out to be a thorny point, the resolution of which can lead the team to obtain excellent results and work compactly and united to achieve success.

If a conflict arises all the members of the group are affected, both from a performance and a relational point of view. The very different point of view from which the coach and captain observe the internal relations of the team and its performances, are a source of possible misunderstandings when one tries to impose one's ideas on the other. The captain's view is internal and linked to the particularity of the situations, on the contrary that of the coach is external and allows a general analysis of the team's conditions.

Resolving this relationship through the supremacy of one of the two leaders is harmful. If the captain succumbs, all the stability and security that his role gives to the team begins to be lost. If it is the coach who is defeated, the leadership is totally left in the hands of his players. Without institutional guidance, the captain finds himself in a position that does not allow him to make critical and objective evaluations. The results obtained in this case are extremely variable and can still go through periods of success, which do not give guarantees, however, on their future continuity.

The best solution to this situation is, above all, building an agreement with the intimate leader that involves the mutual investment of trust in each other and that allows to clearly distinguish the different tasks and functions and to outline the limits of the own field of action.

According to (Giovannini & Savoia, 2002) "the coach is the institutional leader of the sports team; his role is characterized by various and complex functions and activities that require skills in various fields (educational, technical, psychological, managerial) and require a great emotional balance". The absence of this versatility can lead some coaches to achieve excellent results in certain situations, which adapt to the limits imposed by their abilities, and exclusively failures in others, which would require a behaviour and a style different from their own and rigid one. His ability to adapt to the most varied conditions and needs is naturally directly proportional to the actual performance of the team, to its performance.

The coach-leader is the component on which a large part of the results obtained depend. If on one hand it is true that those who take the field are the players, on the other it is equally true that the organization and preparation of the performance is entrusted to the coach and that the latter, by virtue of the power granted to him by its position, is able to influence the performance of its athletes in a very incisive way. Such as not paying attention only to the purely technical and tactical aspect, but by caring both for individuals and for the group as an entity in its own right, and, in particular, for those characteristics that are important for maximizing the results of the latter.

The importance of the versatility of the coach is also manifested in the ability to choose to interpret the role (between that of leader, trainer or organizer) that is most suitable for a situation or a specific problem.

Also, a leader must not implement behaviours exclusively task-oriented but in some conditions, better results can be achieved with a relationship-oriented behaviour.

Leadership variables are believed to be one of the key elements in developing a sense of satisfaction in athletes. Among these, those that the authors of sport psychology (Carron, 1982), (Collins & Durand-Bush, 2015) identify as the main ones are: the behavioural style of the leader, the decision-making style of the leader, the coach / athlete relationship and the coach / team relationship. To these can also be added the communicative style of the leader.

The behaviour of the coach, in relation to situational or personal factors that can be limitedly controlled, can increase the level of individual motivation of each individual athlete, thus increasing the importance of belonging to the latter for the latter. team and the ability to commit to achieving specific objectives and, consequently, also the satisfaction that depends on these factors.

Additional leadership-related variables that can influence the level of satisfaction in a team's athletes are represented by the decision-making styles of the leader. These have been divided, as we have seen, into 5 categories attributable, for simplification, to an autocratic style and to a participatory or consultative one.

This could be mainly due to the fact that the participatory decision-making style allows the athlete to highlight their skills and enhances the importance of each player within the group, positively qualifying their role identity. A positive role identity determines an increase in personal satisfaction and, for this reason, it is important for the coach to know when it is necessary to use an autocratic style and when the situation allows a participatory one to also act on morale and take advantage of both, reaffirming the concept of versatility.

Finally, the coach has two types of responsibilities. On the one hand, they focus on ensuring that organizational needs are met and on the other hand, they ensure that group members are comfortable with their needs and expectations. However, there is no solid set of characteristics that constitute effective leadership, but:

1) True leadership depends on how you respond to specific situations.
2) Leadership styles can change.
3) Depending on the situation, leaders may change from a relationship-oriented style to a more task-oriented one, or vice versa.
4) With such a wide variety of parameters, it is important to adapt according to the group and circumstances.

One style isn't necessarily better than the other. What is most important to keep in mind are the characteristics of each of the team members (staff and players) as mentioned in almost all theories, as well as how the leader adapts to the circumstances and conditions of the athletes while maintaining their needs and in mind expectations. In one word, versatility.

Discussion and Conclusions

Team sports allow us to analyse the complex set of intra-group dynamics, with the limits that may be encountered in dealing with these issues.

It is difficult to say that we have come to an end on the subject of leadership, even less so for the sports leader, where until just over twenty years ago most of the research was still based on theories of personality traits.

However, we can make some relevant considerations. First of all, we can certainly give the importance of not considering the leader as a status with rigid and universal characteristics. In order to improve both the productivity level of the team and the satisfaction among the team members it has been seen that the leader is not the one who knows how to behave in a way but the one who knows how to behave in the right way at the right time.

This consideration allows us to conclude that the leader able to maintain, and not reach, his position is the one who knows how to be versatile and eclectic in his behaviour.

The sports team represents an environment that, in some respects, differs from most social groups. One of these aspects is the almost total tendency to present different leadership positions, which we have defined as institutional or hierarchical and intimate leader or natural leader, respectively occupied by the coach and the captain.

Both are leaders and have the duties of a leader; the former is chosen by the owners, the latter by teammates.

Within a social group it is not certain that the leader according to the hierarchy is always the person with the greatest charisma, the one with the most extensive social ties and with the greatest ability to influence. Often a situation is created in which several leaders coexist: the official ones, who command by virtue of their position in the hierarchy, and one (or more) people who are "de facto" leaders, by virtue of their centrality in the social network.

This shared leadership situation is represented explicitly and formalized within a sports team: the official leader, the one elected by the club, is represented by the coach. Then there is the leader chosen by the team for his human, relational and sporting qualities, namely the captain.

This makes clear the importance that the collaboration of the two leaders has for the team and, at the same time, the damage that a possible open conflict can inflict on them. In particular, the variables that, belonging to leadership, influence the productivity and morale of the athletes are influenced by the behaviour of both. Coach and captain must be able to work together if they want the sporting project to be successful.

In conclusion, the Key Performance Indicators that the coach and the captain have to worry about in order to carry out their duties are essentially two: performance and team satisfaction. As we have seen, there are many variables that influence one or the other of these Key Performance Indicators even though most of the factors considered act on both.

Team performance and morale are obviously interdependent, i.e. acting on one is equivalent to influencing the other as well. In this sense, it is important to avoid maintaining an excessively polarized attitude on the task or relationship since, by doing so, the risk is that of being counterproductive, not only for the other aspect but also for the one on which efforts are being focused.

This interdependence (Martens & Peterson, 1971) (Williams & Hacker, 1982) is a further confirmation of the importance, to compensate for both, of maintaining a versatile and adaptable behaviour to different needs of the situation or of teammates.

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