



Analysis of the Relationship Between Female Coaches' Leadership: Efforts to Support the Achievement of Men's and Women's Futsal

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History Article

Received July 2025
Approved July 2025
Published vol 12 no 1 2025

Keywords

Female Coach; Leadership Style; Performance; Futsal Athletes

Abstract

This study analyzes the relationship between female coaches' leadership styles and the performance of amateur futsal teams in Bandung, Indonesia. Using the Leadership Scale for Sport (LSS), the research evaluated five leadership dimensions: training and instruction, democratic behavior, autocratic behavior, social support, and positive feedback among 87 athletes from 6 clubs coached by female coaches. Team performance was measured based on competition rankings. The results of Pearson correlation and multiple regression analyses indicated that training and instruction, democratic behavior, and social support had a positive influence on team performance ($p < 0.05$), while autocratic behavior and positive feedback showed a negative trend ($p < 0.10$), although not statistically significant. These findings suggest that collaborative and supportive leadership approaches enhance athletic performance, whereas authoritarian methods may hinder it. This study highlights the importance of adaptive leadership in sports coaching and provides practical recommendations to improve futsal team success.

How to Cite

Putri, H. P., Sutresna, N., Berliana., & Cornelia, S. (2025). Analysis of the Relationship Between Female Coaches' Leadership: Efforts to Support the Achievement of Men's and Women's Futsal. *Journal of Physical Education, Health and Sport*, 12 (1), 162-166.

INTRODUCTION

Gender issues generally play an important role in discussions of daily life, particularly concerning the roles and functions of women (Eisend, 2019). Gender-related problems are often evident in both specific and general research. In general discussions, these are divided into two perspectives: the empirical and the essential role of women. From the essential perspective, a woman's reproductive role is seen as a genetic given. Meanwhile, the social aspect should not become a barrier between male and female genders in engaging with society. Women are often considered weak and marginalized in social activities, including in sports, especially in coaching roles. Research on women in sports remains limited, particularly in masculine sports such as futsal. While some studies have been conducted, they mostly focus on volleyball and on women's roles in policy-making and club management.

In Indonesia today, women's sports competitions are diverse, including both team and martial arts sports. However, in masculine sports like women's futsal, opportunities remain limited. Sutresna (2022), in his article titled «UPI Professor: «Women's Participation in Sports Still Hindered by Public Perception,»» explains that in Eastern cultures, societal perceptions of women participating in sports are still influenced by traditional beliefs. Women are considered to have a higher status if they devote themselves to their husbands, making them more desirable to men. Loyalty is seen as more valuable than independence, while the sports world is still often viewed as male-dominated. These views affect societal perceptions of women, particularly when they strive for excellence in physically demanding, strength-based, and independent sports.

According to Norman (Norman, *The UK Coaching System is Failing Women Coaches*, 2008), female coaches often face discrimination in their experiences and are more frequently assistant coaches rather than head coaches. Further research by Norman (Norman, *The Coaching Needs of HighPerformance Female Athletes within the Coach-Athlete Dyad*, 2014) revealed that female coaches typically excel in communication and exhibit democratic leadership styles. Rohmana and Ernawati (2014) found that respondents viewed women as companions to their husbands, childbearers, homemakers, and only a small part of society. Even if a woman becomes a president or minister, she is still expected to manage her household and serve her

husband. In terms of local wisdom, women are seen as having dual identities. On one hand, their roles are limited by societal norms and culture; on the other hand, culture can also enable women to freely engage in activities and become a tool for achieving gender equality.

In sports, the growth of female coaches has stagnated compared to male coaches. The United States has shown significant progress, with a 90% increase in female coaches training women's teams (Welch & Sigelman, 2007). Dual roles create conflicts for women, making it difficult to maintain full-time jobs (Boles, 2001). These challenges can cause stress and difficulties in choosing their role as a coach, conflicting with their responsibilities as wives, mothers, and family members. Role theory explains that fulfilling just one role requires significant time and energy, and multiple roles can trigger problems at work and in the family (Netemeyer, Boles, & Mcmurrian, 1996). Studies have shown declines in marriage rates due to psychological stress and poor health status (Anderson, Coffey, & Byerly, 2002).

Male coaches generally face fewer role conflicts compared to their female counterparts. In Indonesia, many female coaches have left their careers due to work-family conflicts. Gender differences among Indonesian trainers are influenced by culture, which offers unequal opportunities for men and women. Although this social gap starts from childhood and becomes more apparent during adolescence and adulthood, gender differences in coaching persist (Nelson, 2008). Discrimination against women's rights and roles is a complex issue rooted in a long history of social, economic, and political inequalities, also evident in daily life (Berliana, 2020).

Women's disempowerment worsens with economic difficulties that limit access to education. When opportunities arise, they often focus on domestic skills. Culture is a determining factor, and gender roles often conflict with regional cultural demands and practices. Gender-based discrimination in Indonesia has limited women's social participation. While biological differences exist (e.g., reproduction), socially, men and women are often viewed differently—men are seen as confident, aggressive, dominant, business-minded, and athletic, whereas women are perceived as caring, warm, nurturing, child-focused, and loyal (Eagly & Karau, 2002).

Women coaches involved in masculine roles, such as coaching, are often doubted due to education, self-confidence, and opportunity (Fasting, Sand, & Nordstrand, 2019).

Stereotypical characteristics are influenced by cultural norms that shape job types, making female coaches rare. However, some female coaches in Indonesia have achieved remarkable success. According to Tempo.co, Kartika Siti Aminah became the first female coach in the IBL competition in 2022. Female coaches remain a statistical minority in nearly all sports and levels worldwide (Acosta, Carpenter, & Professors Emerita, 1977). Gender roles in the workforce still show men dominating masculine sports like football/futsal, while women are more involved in feminine sports such as gymnastics and fitness.

A coach must be a capable leader with appropriate knowledge and leadership attitudes suited to personal and environmental circumstances. An ideal coach applies leadership concepts to athletes, especially in building effective coach-athlete relationships that motivate the team to achieve goals and success (Kim & Cruz, 2016). The coach-athlete relationship is a crucial factor in group dynamics (Packianathan, 2007). Athlete well-being and performance are significantly influenced by the effectiveness of their coach's leadership style, considered a vital factor in this domain. Choosing an appropriate and efficient leadership style provides a competitive edge to organizations. In team sports, leadership plays a key role in team growth and performance (Jawoosh, et al., 2022).

In this era of resurgence and development, a scientific approach is essential to solving problems across various fields, including sports. As an interdisciplinary field, sports benefit from disciplines such as anatomy, physiology, biomechanics, sports medicine, management, coaching, and psychology. Thus, beyond considering domain-specific factors to enhance performance, it's crucial to integrate practical experience with athletic development (Sugiani, 2014).

The novelty of this research lies in its focus on female coaches in the sport of futsal, which has traditionally been male-dominated. Additionally, the use of a quantitative approach to measure the relationship between five leadership styles in the context of Indonesian sports adds a relevant scientific contribution that is rarely discussed in previous literature. The study explores how female coaches' leadership styles influence the performance of both male and female futsal athletes. The primary focus is on the five elements of leadership in the LSS: training and instruction, autocratic style, democratic style, social support, and positive feedback.

In conclusion, while gender-based

prejudice is a widespread belief, women are capable of excelling in areas that require hard work. In Indonesia, female coaches still face skepticism regarding their ability to improve athlete performance. Therefore, this study aims to examine the relationship between female coaches' leadership and their efforts to enhance the performance of futsal athletes.

METHOD

This correlational study aims to examine the relationship between female coaches' leadership and their efforts to enhance the performance of male and female futsal athletes. The participants consisted of six futsal clubs in Bandung, involving six female coaches and 87 amateur athletes aged between 12 and 19. Coaches and athletes were selected using convenience sampling. The study used five leadership elements from the Leadership Scale for Sport (LSS) to assess their impact on club performance.

The Leadership Scale for Sport, developed by Chelladurai and Saleh, is one of the most widely used instruments to measure five key elements of leadership style. The LSS has been utilized in sports leadership research for over 30 years, with its reliability and validity reviewed multiple times. The questionnaire consists of 40 items divided into five subscales: training and instruction (13 items), autocratic behavior (5 items), democratic behavior (9 items), social support (8 items), and positive feedback (5 items). These five elements are defined by Chelladurai (Packianathan, 2007).

The first element, training and instruction, relates to coaching methods focused on improving athletic performance. This includes organizing, coordinating activities, and providing skills, tactics, and technical instructions. The second element, autocratic behavior, refers to the coach's authority and independent decision-making. The third, democratic behavior, allows athletes to participate in key decisions such as goals, match strategies, and training methods. The fourth, social support, reflects the coach's concern for athletes' well-being, relationship-building, and ensuring a positive overall environment. The fifth element, positive feedback, refers to how coaches encourage athletes by recognizing and praising good performance.

Each LSS item begins with statements like "I prefer my coach to...", "When coaching...", "My coach...", or "A coach should...", representing preferred, actual, and required leadership styles. The five response levels on the LSS are interpreted as follows: 100% = "Always," 75% =

“Often,” 50% = “Sometimes,” and 25% = “Rarely.” Club performance was assessed using an ordinal scale based on futsal competition levels: Sub-district (1), City (2), Provincial (3), and National (4).

In this study, the researcher conducted data analysis using IBM SPSS Statistics 27.0.1. The influence of female coaches’ leadership on performance was analyzed using Pearson’s product-moment correlation coefficients. Linear regression was applied to predict the impact of female coaches’ leadership on futsal club performance among amateur athletes, with the level of significance set at $p < .05$.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The descriptive statistics, including the means, standard deviations, and sample sizes, for the variables in this study: female coaches’ leadership styles in terms of training and instruction, autocratic style, democratic style, social support, and positive feedback. The analysis focused on examining the relationship between female coaches’ leadership styles and futsal club performance.

Performance: The average performance score was 2.24, indicating that the overall achievement of the subjects falls into the “adequate” category on a scale of 1 to 4. This suggests that while performance is not exceptional, it is sufficient and may reflect areas for improvement in coaching or athlete training effectiveness.

Training and Instruction: The mean score for training and instruction was 55.51, with a standard deviation of 7.514. This indicates that the quality of training provided by female coaches is considered quite good, with moderate variability among respondents. While most participants viewed the training positively, individual experiences or perceptions of training quality varied to some extent.

Democratic Behavior: The data showed a strong tendency toward democratic behavior among female coaches, with a mean score of 31.75. This suggests that these coaches tend to involve their athletes in the decision-making process, fostering a collaborative environment.

Autocratic Behavior: The average score for autocratic behavior was very low at 10.86, indicating that female coaches generally do not adopt highly authoritarian approaches. This aligns with a democratic leadership style, suggesting a preference for supportive and inclusive coaching methods.

Social Support: The mean score for social support was 27.36, indicating that the level of so-

cial support received by athletes was considered fairly high. This is particularly important as social support can significantly affect athlete performance and well-being.

Positive Feedback: The average score for positive feedback was 19.85, indicating that female coaches provided a reasonable amount of positive reinforcement to their athletes. This is important for enhancing athlete motivation and confidence.

The analysis suggests that female coaches generally exhibit a democratic leadership style, provide effective training and instruction, and maintain a supportive environment for their athletes. However, there is room for improvement in performance levels, indicating a need for further development in coaching strategies or athlete training programs.

The regression model shows that the independent variables (Training and Instruction, Democratic Behavior, Autocratic Behavior, Social Support, and Positive Feedback) explain 28.8% of the variance in performance. The significant F-value ($p < 0.001$) indicates that the overall regression model is statistically significant.

The ANOVA test indicates that the overall regression model is significant, meaning that at least one of the independent variables contributes significantly to the prediction of performance.

That Training and Instruction has a significant negative effect on performance, indicating that an increase in female coaches’ training and instructional behavior tends to be associated with a decrease in athlete performance. Democratic Behavior and Social Support have significant positive effects on performance, suggesting that these two factors can enhance athlete performance. Autocratic Behavior and Positive Feedback do not show significant effects at the $\alpha = 0.05$ level, but are close to significance.

This study found that female coaches’ democratic leadership and social support significantly improved futsal team performance. These results align with Kim and Cruz (Kim & Cruz, 2016), who emphasized that such leadership styles enhance athlete satisfaction and team cohesion.

Democratic leadership promotes athlete involvement in decision-making, strengthening team commitment and effectiveness. Norman (Norman, The Coaching Needs of HighPerformance Female Athletes within the Coach-Athlete Dyad, 2014) also noted that female coaches tend to be strong communicators and motivators.

Social support, including attention to athletes’ well-being, creates a positive environment

that boosts performance. Jawoosh et al. (Jawoosh, et al., 2022) confirmed that emotional support reduces pressure and improves outcomes.

Interestingly, training and instruction showed a negative relationship with performance. This may suggest that overly technical or rigid training limits athlete creativity, as also stated by Sugiani (Sugiani, 2014).

Autocratic behavior and positive feedback were not statistically significant but showed a potential trend. Eagly and Karau (Eagly & Karau, 2002) explained that assertive leadership by women may face bias due to traditional gender expectations.

In summary, adaptive and collaborative leadership approaches are more effective for female coaches in enhancing performance, especially in male-dominated sports like futsal.

This study has limitations in terms of its relatively small sample size and the use of non-random sampling techniques, which may affect the generalizability of the findings. Therefore, further research employing experimental designs and larger, more diverse samples is strongly recommended to strengthen these findings and to explore female coaching leadership more deeply across various sports contexts.

CONCLUSION

This study shows that the leadership styles of female coaches have a significant relationship with the performance of both male and female futsal clubs. The word "significant" here means that the research results indicate a strong and reliable influence between certain leadership styles and the performance of futsal athletes, based on statistical tests ($p < 0.05$). If the p-value is greater than 0.05, the result is considered not significant or not strong enough to be concluded scientifically. These findings affirm that female coaches have strong potential to improve team performance through the application of appropriate leadership approaches. Therefore, coaching education programs that promote the development of democratic and supportive leadership styles should be continuously strengthened. (Sutresna, 2022).

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