

Leadership in Sports Management: Strategies to Enhance Athlete Performance and Well-Being

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1. Round 1

1.1. Reviewer 1

Reviewer:

The quote "Leadership not only drives the performance outcomes of athletes but also significantly impacts their subjective well-being" could benefit from clearer delineation between leadership and coaching roles. Consider adding a few sentences clarifying this distinction early in the article.

The mention of COVID-19's impact on athlete well-being (Collins et al., 2022) is valid, but it lacks sufficient empirical data. A deeper dive into recent studies quantifying this impact on both mental health and performance could strengthen this section.

The distinction between "coaching styles" and "leadership strategies" is underdeveloped. Consider adding more detailed examples of how each affects athlete outcomes, especially regarding mental health and resilience.

The claim "leadership plays a significant role in developing athletes' psychological resilience" could be enhanced by more recent studies, possibly post-2020, examining how this resilience was tested during global sports disruptions.

The discussion on mental conditioning is quite broad. Consider specifying techniques such as mental imagery, focus drills, or cognitive restructuring that have empirical support.

The claim that servant leadership enhances "athlete satisfaction and personal development" is strong but lacks quantifiable evidence. Please provide concrete data from studies to support this assertion.

Authors revised the manuscript and uploaded the new document.

1.2. Reviewer 2

Reviewer:

The objective is clearly stated but lacks specificity in terms of how different leadership styles will be compared. Consider providing a more precise framework for evaluating transformational, transactional, and servant leadership.

The review includes articles over the past 15 years. Consider justifying why this timeframe was chosen and whether newer studies, particularly post-COVID, hold more relevance to the current state of athlete well-being.

While the selection process is outlined, it is unclear whether bias was mitigated during the article selection. Please include details on how articles were evaluated for methodological rigor to avoid selection bias.

It would be helpful to include a summary table or figure categorizing the leadership styles and their effects on both performance and well-being, to provide a more visual synthesis of the themes identified.

"Transformational leaders work to develop their athletes both on and off the field" is a strong statement. However, it could benefit from more detailed examples of specific transformational leadership behaviors and their measurable impacts.

The discussion on transactional leadership mentions that it "may not foster emotional connection." Consider expanding on how this impacts long-term athlete development and morale, providing empirical examples.

The section on positive reinforcement could benefit from a discussion on potential downsides, such as over-reliance on external rewards, and how leaders can strike a balance between intrinsic and extrinsic motivation.

The emphasis on communication is important, but the article does not explore non-verbal communication between leaders and athletes, which can be critical in high-pressure environments. Consider integrating this aspect.

The mention of "autocratic leadership leading to short-term success" lacks examples. Include case studies or examples from sports teams where this approach led to success and/or burnout.

Authors revised the manuscript and uploaded the new document.

2. Revised

Editor's decision after revisions: Accepted.

Editor in Chief's decision: Accepted.