

**TRANSFORMATIONAL LEADERSHIP STYLE AND ITS
INFLUENCE ON STUDENT-ATHLETES SPORTS
ACHIEVEMENT: UNIVERSITY OF BENIN STUDENT-
ATHLETES AS CASE STUDY**

IKHENوبا Osagie Sammy

EDU1408470

**FACULTY OF EDUCATION
UNIVERSITY OF BENIN
BENIN CITY**

MAY, 2023

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**A RESEARCH PROJECT SUBMITTED TO FACULTY OF
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CITY.**

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DEDICATION

This research work is dedicated to God for His divine provision and direction in the course of this study.

CERTIFICATION

We the undersigned certify that this work was carried out by **IKHENوبا** Osagie Sammy with Matriculation Number **EDU1408470** of the Department of Human Kinetics and Sports science, Faculty of Education University of Benin, Benin City, for the award of B.Sc. (Education) in Human Kinetics and Sports Science.

Mr. C. O. Aluya
Supervisor

Dr. A.U Oriakhi
Co-ordinator

Date: _____

Date: _____

Prof. O.K Omorogiuwa
Dean, Faculty of Education

Date: _____

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ABSTRACT

This study was carried out to investigate the influence of transformational leadership style has on student-athletes sports achievement in NUGA: University of Benin student-athletes as a case study. In order to carry out the study, three research questions were raised and one hypothesis formulated which was tested at 0.05 level of significance. The descriptive survey research design was used for this study. The population of the study comprised 638 undergraduate student athletes in the University of Benin who train daily at the various sporting facilities within the UNIBEN Ugbowo main campus.

The data was collected using simple random technique and a sample size of 200 undergraduate student-athletes was derived. The research instrument used for the study was a self-structured questionnaire. The validity of the instrument was subjected to scrutiny and the Cronbach alpha method of reliability technique was used to ascertain its reliability. The correlation coefficient computed was 0.76 indicating that the instrument was reliable. The data was analyzed using descriptive statistics such as frequency, percentages and means, while Analysis of variance (ANOVA) was used to test the hypothesis.

From the Results, the current study indicates that student-athletes' performances are influenced by the transformational leadership style of sports administrators to a high extent and significant differences were found to exist among male and female student-athletes as well as across the different age groups of student athletes as regards the influence of transformational leadership style of sports administrators on their sports performance. It was recommended among others therefore, that sports administrators practice transformational leadership style to achieve the best performance for student-athletes and it is necessary to create awareness among sports stakeholders in Nigeria about the importance of transformational leadership style of sports administrators in Universities.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

Background to the Study

The demand to build and maintain winning sports programs among sport administrators in tertiary institutions in Nigeria has increased over the years. As such, University games are no longer simply a form of entertainment but have evolved into a major component of Nigerian culture, with both social and economic implications (Loughead, Munroe-Chandler, Hoffmann & Duguay, 2014). More than 465 institutions of higher education consisting of 95 Federal, 178 state- owned and 192 licensed private tertiary institutions participates in the Nigerian University Games, which is been organized by Nigerian University Games Association (NUGA) with the aim of providing a platform where the talents of student athletes can be nurtured.

Student athletes and coaches are integral to successful NUGA programs, but it is as equally important to consider the contributions made by sports administrators in the various participating tertiary institutions to the success of teams and programs. As a leader in University sports, sports administrators in tertiary institutions bear responsibilities that are crucial to

the success of the program, including ensuring that their teams adhere to the rules and regulations established by NUGA, satisfying the expectations of donors and alumni, and hiring other sports leaders like team coaches who can build and maintain winning teams (Vella, Oades & Crowe, 2012). Rising costs in both education and sports mean that there is a need for tertiary institutions to have sports administrators who can motivate coaches who in turn can motivate student athletes' to accomplish more with fewer resources (Álvarez, Castillo, Vladimir & Tomás, 2019).

Sports leaders such as coaches and sports administrators are therefore external support for student athletes and considered as important factors in sports performance among student athletes. Sport performance in this context is the manner in which sport participation among student athletes is measured. Sports administrators either positively or negatively impacts sport performance of student athletes (Chelladurai, 2009). Sports administrators in collaboration with team coaches provide the primary direction to student athletes in terms of training, tactics, nutrition, and sport technique. Thus, they must keep current with respect to all advances in the sport. A lack of appropriate direction from sports administrators in any of these aspects will prevent the student athletes from achieving their optimal performance.

Although the focus on winning is an important goal for sports leaders in tertiary institutions, however, the development of the individual student athlete has necessitated the need for good leadership that negotiates these seemingly competing goals. One form of leadership that is associated with both positive sports performance and developmental outcomes is the transformational leadership style (Chee, Rasyid, Tengah & Low, 2017). Borrowed from business literature, transformational leadership style has recently garnered support as a prominent leadership style for sports administrators and coaches in University's sports (Turnnidge & Côté, 2018). A transformational leader inspires and uplifts followers to achieve more than they believed possible through a sense of shared vision and value congruence between leader and followers (Bennis, 2012). According to Hopton, Phelan and Barling (2014) transformational leaders have a positive influence on the performance of followers. It is however imperative to study the influence of transformational leadership on the sports performance of student athletes preparing for NUGA using University of Benin student athletes as a case study.

Statement of the Problem

Understanding the essence of transformational leadership style in sports is crucial for sports performance specifically, and sports programs' success generally. Although previous studies have provided initial evidence of positive outcomes resulting from transformational leadership style, investigating potential antecedents of transformational leadership would allow greater comprehension of how to foster these positive outcomes. However, to the best of the researcher's knowledge, most of the studies as regards influence of transformational leadership on the sports performance of athletes have been carried out in the developed countries of the world. More specifically, there is still little known about the influence processes between transformational leadership and sports performance of student athletes for NUGA. Hence, this study was carried out to study the influence of transformational leadership style on the sports performance of student athletes for NUGA using University of Benin student athletes as a case study.

Research Questions

The following questions were raised to guide the study;

1. What is the influence of transformational leadership style of sports administrators on the sports performance of student athletes preparing for NUGA in University of Benin?
2. Do significant differences exist in the influence of transformational leadership style of sports administrators on the sports performance of male and female student athletes?
3. Do significant differences exist in the influence of transformational leadership style of sports administrators on the sports performance of student athletes based on age?

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to investigate the influence of transformational leadership on the sports performance of student athletes for NUGA using University of Benin student athletes as a case study.

Specifically, the objectives of this study were to:

1. Examine the influence of transformational leadership style of sports administrators on the sports performance of student athletes preparing for NUGA in University of Benin.
2. Determine if significant differences exist in the influence of transformational leadership style of sports administrators on the sports performance of male and female student athletes.
3. Determine if significant differences exist in the influence of transformational leadership style of sports administrators on the sports performance of student athletes based on age.

Significance of the Study

The significance of this study stems from the need to discover how successful sports leaders affected their sports teams in ways that lead to sports performance among the entire sports team. This will assist stakeholders in sports to intensify effort towards devising strategies for improving student athletes' performance in NUGA competitions. Hence, this study will be significant to student athletes, sports leaders, university authorities and all stakeholders in NUGA games.

This study will be significance sports leaders like sports coaches as the study will help coaches to establish better daily habits and activities in dealing with their teams, hence improving their leadership ability. Other sports leaders like director of sports will benefit from the finding of this study as this study will make them to learn and offer effective leadership to coaches and sports teams in University campuses.

This study will benefit student athletes as it will make them to be aware of the influence of transformational leadership of sports leaders on their performance in sports. This will make them to effectively manage their performance levels before, during and after sporting competitions.

Lastly, it is expected that the findings of the study will contribute to the existing literature in the field of athletics and other sports as this study will be a resource material for future studies by human kinetics researchers and academicians.

Scope and Delimitation of the Study

This study focused on the transformational leadership style of sports leaders and its influence on the sports performance of student athletes. Hence, this study was delimited to undergraduate student athletes training at

the Sports Complex in

Ugbowo campus of University of Benin, Benin City in preparation for NUGA games.

Definitions of Terms

The following terms were used in the course of this study:

Transformational leadership: This refers to a leadership approach that causes change in individual student athletes and sports teams.

Sports performance: This refers to the manner in which sport participation among student athletes is measured.

Student athlete: This refers to a student participant in an organized competitive sport sponsored by the educational institution in which the student is enrolled.

Sports administrator: This refers to someone that is vested with the responsibility of managing student athletes preparing for NUGA.

NUGA: This refers to Nigerian University Games Association (NUGA) that provides opportunities for student athletes' training in various universities, and organizes games triennially to identify the best that can represent the nation in the international space.

Influence: This refers to the capacity of sports administrators'

transformational leadership to have an effect on the sports performance of student athletes.

Undergraduate student: This refers to an individual who has registered to study an undergraduate programme at a higher institution such as a university.

CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

The review of related literature was discussed under the following sub-headings:

Theoretical Framework

Transformational Leadership in Sports and its Qualities

Four I's of Transformational Leadership

Effectiveness of Transformational Leadership in Sports

Sports Administrators, Coaches and Athletes' Relationships

Influence of Transformational Leadership on Athletes' Sports Performance

Review of Empirical Literature

Summary of Related Literature

Theoretical Framework

This study is hinged on the transformational leadership theory.

Transformational Leadership Theory

The theory of transformational leadership was developed by Bass (1985)

and has attracted considerable attention since

then. According to Bass (1998)

Transformational leaders display certain characteristics, such as espousing ideals, acting as role models, and showing care and concern for each subordinate. Also, they inspire their followers by formulating a vision and setting challenging goals, and stimulating them intellectually to think about old problems in innovative ways. He suggests that a transformational leader inspires and uplifts followers to achieve more than they believed possible through a sense of shared vision and value congruence between leader and followers.

A tenet of transformational leadership theory is that a leader who focuses on relationships rather than results will generally achieve better outcomes. Bass (1985) referred to this concept as transformational leaders using individualized consideration, which allows a leader to play an especially important role in followers' growth and development. This individual consideration permits the follower to have a sense of social identification because they feel pride in being a part of the group. Consequently, followers come to view their individual efforts and work roles as a contribution to a larger collective cause (Chelladurai, 2009). Transformational leadership can lead to positive relationships, which will result in superior sports performance.

There are four primary behavioural components associated with transformational leadership including; idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration (Bass 1985). The more leaders adopt these components the greater the transformative impact on their followers. Idealized influence refers to the admiration, respect, and trust that followers have for their leader. The transformational leader is a role model who has high moral and ethical standards. Inspirational motivation occurs when a transformational leader motivates his or her followers by providing them with meaning and challenge in their work. By inspiring teamwork and vision among followers, the transformational leader encourages greater enthusiasm in their efforts. Intellectual stimulation is spurred by transformational leaders when they encourage creativity and new ways of thinking about problems, and include followers in decision-making processes. Attending to followers' needs for personal growth is a demonstration of how transformational leaders demonstrate individualized consideration. The transformational leader interacts with each individual as a whole person, recognizes individual needs, and remembers important information about each person.

To date, the transformational leadership model has received most empirical attention within organizational settings, and the utility of the model would be enhanced if it could be shown to be valid in other contexts as well. There has been speculation about the relevance of transformational leadership within the sports domain (Nguni, Slegers & Denessen, 2006). However, this has been descriptive only and limited to charisma and the importance of having a vision (Vella, Oades & Crowe, 2012). Larson (2009) showed that coaches' social support aimed at promoting the welfare of athletes (which parallels individualized consideration) predicted performance.

Transformational Leadership in Sports and its Qualities

Leadership is generally defined as the behavioural process of influencing the activities of organized individuals and group toward specific goals and the achievement of those goals (Bass, 1998). In transformational leadership however, Bass and Riggio (2006) defined transformational leaders as leaders who stimulate and inspire followers to achieve great outcomes and also to develop their own leadership abilities. According to Kouzes and Posner (2007), transformational leadership is important in each

and every situation, and that in every sector of life the transformational leader must “address the follower’s sense of self-worth to engage the follower in true commitment and involvement in the effort at hand” (Bass & Riggio, 2006). Bass and Riggio (2006) also explained that transformational leadership can be either directive (task-oriented) or participative (people-oriented) and that previous research suggesting that leadership was either one or the other did not apply to transformational leadership.

According to Bloom (2002), transformational leaders need to show both a great mastery of their skills and a perfect moral compass. These are all higher order needs, according to Charbonneau, Barling and Kelloway (2001), who in their appraisal analysis of judgment choices revealed that transformational leaders appealed to morality, ethics, and feelings of group efficacy. According to Friedman (2004), there are three pillars upon which ethics and leadership rests. The first pillar is the moral character of the leader. The second pillar is the legitimacy of ethical values embedded in the vision of the leader, which are either embraced or rejected by the followers. Finally, the third pillar is the morality and processes of social ethical choice and action that leaders and followers use in collective pursuit of their goals. Transformational leadership combines morals and virtue in order to

contribute to a collective intent of real social change (Nielsen, Randall, Yarker & Brenner, 2008). A transformational leader has a softness, which represents an optimistic outlook. He is also striving for perfection, which indicates an achievement orientation as well as good coping skills (Vincer and Loughhead, 2010). Frey, Kern, Snow and Curlette (2009) called a transformational leader a visionary with interpersonal abilities.

With all of his morality and virtue, a transformational leader still must possess the most important quality of all, love. Love is a more useful dimension than even altruism in organizations (Miller, 2006). A transformational leader should be receptive to the emotions of the followers. The transformational leader, being a loving, moralistic, ethical leader of great efficacy, should possess the ability to understand the feelings and emotions of his followers. This understanding on the part of the leader is critical to the success of the leader-follower relationship and the effectiveness of transformational leadership. This understanding is called emotional intelligence (Price & Weiss, 2013).

Transformational leadership has also been compared to transactional leadership. Distinguishing between transformational and transactional leadership is very important to this study. Transformational leadership is the

process in which leaders raise their associates to higher levels of morality and motivation. Transactional leadership, on the other hand, encompasses power in exchange theory, political theory and bureaucratic or structural theories of leadership, utilizing rewards and incentives (Charbonneau, Barling & Kelloway, 2001). Some researchers have shown transformational leadership can positively augment transactional leadership and the outcomes of performance and satisfaction (Price & Weiss, 2013). Most theories of transformational leadership are conceptualized primarily at the dyadic level, meaning the major interest is to explain the leaders' direct influence over the followers (Loughead, Hardy & Eys, 2006). These theories however do not discuss the leader's influence over processes.

Empowerment also plays a fundamental role in transformational leadership. Leaders who wish to enhance employee satisfaction and organizational commitment should be able to communicate enthusiasm about objectives, foster the internalization of goals, create a sense of choice and impact, and thus make employees feel as though they are full participants in transforming the organization (Bolkan & Goodboy, 2009). When students or athletes feel that they are full participants in creating change, it enhances the overall culture of the group. There is a positive

relationship between the elements of commitment, motivation, satisfaction, communication, and collaboration, and the effectiveness of the overall performance of each participant involved (Chelladurai, 2009). According to Morgan (2009), transformational leaders get followers involved through the vision that is created and shared, and then psychologically empower and inspire them through enthusiasm and high moral standards. This is the essence of transformational leadership. Transformational leadership does not focus specifically on direct coordination, control, or complete supervision.

Transformational leadership seeks rather to build an organization's capacity to select its purposes and support the advancement of changes to practices of teaching and learning through shared development (Castro, Perinan & Bueno, 2008). This shared development can ultimately lead to self-managed work groups (Turnnidge & Côté, 2018). It is this empowerment and autonomy that makes transformational leadership effective. Through transformational leadership, athletes can become intrinsically motivated, select to participate and work hard towards team goals because it pleases them. As Chen (2010) noted, intrinsic motivation will lead to enhanced sports performance. When the athletes are working hard because they want to, greater success will be achieved.

Typically transformational leadership is measured in terms of three leadership outcomes: the ability of the leader to generate extra effort on the part of those being led; the subordinates' perceptions of the leader's effectiveness; and the subordinates' satisfaction with the leader (Bass & Riggio, 2006).

A transformational leader has a softness, which represents an optimistic outlook. He is also striving for perfection, which indicates an achievement orientation as well as good coping skills (Loughead et al, 2014). Nielsen and Munir (2009) called a transformational leader a visionary with interpersonal abilities. According to Larson (2009), theorists should pay closer attention to the age relations between transformational leaders and followers, because the age of the leader can also play a factor in performance. When the transformational leader is charismatic, however, age may not be as big a factor. Charismatic leaders appeal emotionally to the needs and feelings of followers. These individuals are interesting and lively, and possess a mastery of social skills. Additionally, charismatic leaders are sensitive and tuned into the social environment (Smith et al, 2013). Charismatic leaders, especially transformational leaders, attempt to establish and communicate a clear vision for the subordinate (Chee et al, 2017).

Bloom (2002) wrote that there are three relationships that lead to positive outcomes: leadership and professional commitment, leadership and efficacy, and follower efficacy and commitment. It is important that this efficacy also be coupled with ethical behaviors. According to Friedman (2004), ethical behaviour needs to be directly linked to leadership and organization. Transformational leaders need to show both a great mastery of their skills and a perfect moral compass. These are all higher order needs, according to Bono and Anderson (2005), who in their appraisal analysis of judgment choices revealed that transformational leaders appealed to morality, ethics, and feelings of group efficacy. According to Bono and Anderson (2005), there are three pillars upon which ethics and leadership rests. The first pillar is the moral character of the leader. The second pillar is the legitimacy of ethical values embedded in the vision of the leader, which are either embraced or rejected by the followers. Finally, the third pillar is the morality and processes of social ethical choice and action that leaders and followers use in collective pursuit of their goals. Transformational leadership combines morals and virtue in order to contribute to a collective intent of real social change (Larson, 2009).

With all of his morality and virtue, a transformational leader still must

possess the most important quality of all, love. Love is a more useful dimension than even altruism in organizations (Chelladurai, 2009). A transformational leader should be receptive to the emotions of the followers. The transformational leader, being a loving, moralistic, ethical leader of great efficacy, should possess the ability to understand the feelings and emotions of his followers. This understanding on the part of the leader is critical to the success of the leader-follower relationship and the effectiveness of transformational leadership. This understanding is called emotional intelligence (Nguni, Slegers & Denessen, 2006).

Four I's of Transformational Leadership

Typically transformational leadership is measured in terms of three leadership outcomes: the ability of the leader to generate extra effort on the part of those being led; the subordinates' perceptions of the leader's effectiveness; and the subordinates' satisfaction with the leader (Larson, 2009). However, Avolio and Yammarino (2002) discussed the idea of how transformational leaders directs an organization's vision, helping followers change their concerns for existence and security to higher level concerns like achievement and growth. The authors discussed this by laying out the "Four

I's of Transformational Leadership”, which according to the authors are; individualized consideration, intellectual stimulation, inspirational motivation, and idealized influence.

Individualized consideration involves the transformational leader paying attention to an individual follower's needs rather than treating them all alike (Avolio & Yammarino, 2002). In intellectual stimulation, the transformational leader helps the followers think about their old problems in a new way. This activity leads to the use of reasoning and evidence to solve problems, rather than hearsay. In doing this, the transformational leader is not only looking to stimulate the intelligence of his followers, but he is also looking to be stimulated intellectually by them in return. The third “I” posited by Avolio and Yammarino (2002), inspirational motivation, emerges from the transformational leader's past experiences, which have made him a person who is admired or respected. Inspirational motivation is also enhanced by the leader creating a shared vision that inspires all participants to achieve. Finally, idealized influence involves the transformational leader showing his followers that they can achieve goals that they may have previously thought impossible. This kind of transformational leadership allows followers to attain the level of ability to be leaders themselves

(Avolio & Yammarino, 2002).

Effectiveness of Transformational Leadership in Sports

The expectation of higher sports performance is a key outcome of transformational leadership and can serve to aid in positive school transition, or sports program transition (Chelladurai, 2009). A person in a position such as sports director can influence the direct culture and success of his school. Most sports leaders like sports directors and coaches do this through a transformational leadership model (Aghazadeh & Kyei, 2009).

Empowerment also plays a fundamental role in transformational leadership. Leaders who wish to enhance employee satisfaction and organizational commitment should be able to communicate enthusiasm about objectives, foster the internalization of goals, create a sense of choice and impact, and thus make employees feel as though they are full participants in transforming the organization (Castro, Perinan & Bueno, 2008). When students or athletes feel that they are full participants in creating change, it enhances the overall culture of the group. There is a positive relationship between the elements of commitment, motivation,

satisfaction, communication, and collaboration, and the effectiveness of the overall performance of each participant involved (Vincer & Loughead, 2010).

According to Avolio and Yammarino (2002), transformational leaders get followers involved through the vision that is created and shared, and then psychologically empower and inspire them through enthusiasm and high moral standards. This is the essence of transformational leadership. Transformational leadership does not focus specifically on direct coordination, control, or complete supervision. Transformational leadership seeks rather to build an organization's capacity to select its purposes and support the advancement of changes to practices of teaching and learning through shared development (Chee, Rasyid, Tengah & Low, 2017). This shared development can ultimately lead to self-managed work groups (Nielsen & Munir, 2009). It is this empowerment and autonomy that makes transformational leadership effective. Through transformational leadership, athletes can become intrinsically motivated, select to participate and work hard towards team goals because it pleases them. As Charbonneau, Barling, and Kelloway (2001) noted, intrinsic motivation will lead to enhanced sports performance. When the athletes are working hard because they want to,

greater success will be achieved.

According to Friedman (2004), transformational leadership is related positively to student learning outcomes, student participation, and the perceptions of teacher credibility. Transformational leadership can also influence one's creative self-efficacy. A person with a high confidence level in his creativity will, in the long run, be more effective and more productive (Aghazadeh & Kyei, 2009). Transformational leadership, therefore, plays a vital role in the creation of positive teacher and student, or coach and player interaction. This positive interaction relies on the satisfaction of the follower (student player) in his role under the leader (coach). Because transformational leadership impacts attitude, effort, performance, commitment, and behavior, it can therefore lead to satisfaction (Castro, Perinan & Bueno, 2008).

The expectation of higher achievement that is a key outcome of transformational leadership can serve to aid in positive school transition, or football program transition. Variables such as transformational leaders, school culture and school structure all have a decisive influence on the transition of the school (Bolkan & Goodboy, 2009). Ultimately, the leadership qualities of all participants are in question when trying to create

positive transition. A person in a position such as high school head football coach can influence the direct culture and success of his high school. Most coaches do this through a transactional leadership model. This dissertation shows that a transformational leader is far more effective in creating successful and enduring changes in school culture and environment.

Sports Administrators, Coaches and Athletes' Relationships

Sports administrators must cultivate a multitude of relationships in order to run a successful sports program. According to Bennis (2012), a leader must possess aspects of transformational leadership in order to convince followers to become a team and abandon the focus on self. A leader's job, in creating a team, includes both establishing a clear vision and developing strategies that will make that vision a reality (Chee et al, 2017). In developing such strategies, a leader might cultivate several positive characteristics as identified by Frey et al (2009), required of a coach and the team members in order to ensure success. These characteristics include "self-belief, concentration and focus, motivation, thriving on competition, resilience, handling pressure, positive attitude, quality preparation, goal setting, determination and perseverance, and commitment" (Aghazadeh & Kyei, 2009). All of these, if shared by the group as a whole, ultimately add

up to form the mental toughness of a team.

Furthermore, teamwork itself has also united high-performing people by focusing on the daily routines, sharing the commitment to each other and fostering open communication and team spirit (Bass & Riggio, 2006). It is also possible that things outside the mental aspects of sports can help to create team unity. Factors such as class standing, team record, funding, travel and accommodations, the makeup of the coaching staff, and the academic policy of the institution, could all affect team unity (Aghazadeh & Kyei, 2009). Nevertheless, the most effective way to create team unity and a positive environment is through the individual relationships developed by the coach.

The leadership qualities of the coach are clearly influential in guiding a team to high performance and great success; however, athletes also fulfill important formal and informal leadership roles (Nguni, Slegers & Denessen, 2006). In order to identify and access the potential leadership traits of team members, the coach and sports administrators must first gain the trust of each individual player. To do so, there must be opportunities for personal interactions between the sports leader and each team member. The Leader-Member Exchange Theory, or LMX Theory, is based upon the premise that

the type of relationship between a leader and the followers will determine how an organization will perform (Chen, 2010). In addition to this theory, a standardized method was developed to aid in the assessment of the coach and athlete relationship. In early studies of coach and athlete relationships, most athletes did not perceive a positive relationship with their coach. In order for coaches to build a positive relationship with each player, trust must first be established.

According to Nielsen et al (2008), “the efficiency, adjustment, and even survival of any social group depend on the presence or absence of trust”. Additionally, Smith et al (2013) explained that when students trust teachers they feel secure and are more likely to approach them. As with teachers, if coaches can establish trust and approachability with players, they can create the bonding relationships that will help deliver success. These trusting relationships encourage greater team performance (Vella, Oades & Crowe, 2012). The necessity of trust goes beyond the player and coach relationship to include player to player relationships as well. Trust among teammates promotes trust between coach and teammates, and also serves to strengthen team cohesion, which all leads to determining team performance (Castro, Perinan & Bueno, 2008). Ultimately, transformational leadership is a critical,

influential element in the effort to cultivate trust.

The transformational leader must have attributes and exhibit behaviors that enhance the relationships he will create and maintain during his time as the leader of an organization. According to Bass (1985), there are three reasons why transformational leadership behaviors are likely to attain central positions, and influence people. First, transformational leaders are inspiring and motivating. Second, transformational leaders are intellectual and lead with intellectual stimulation. Third, individuals who are transformational leaders tend to be good performers themselves and promote influence by this efficacy (Bono & Anderson, 2005).

Adding to this emphasis on the effects of leader behavior on individual relationships, Chen (2010) wrote that the coach must concern himself with three conditions in which he must model the correct behavior to get the desired result from the relationship with the follower. The first condition is the situation, as the coach must demonstrate a positive attitude and outlook, regardless of the situation. Exhibiting this reaction will lead to the follower adapting the same behavioral response. The second condition put forth by Chen deals with expectations. Based on the history of the specific athlete and coach relationship, the athlete will have expectations in certain

situations. If the coach's behavior is consistent with an athlete's expectations, then this athlete's behavioral response will be consistent and confident. The third behavioral condition stipulates that, in dealing with an athlete, the coach must be consistent and fair. According to Chen's analysis, without fairness, an athlete might react negatively to a coach's behavior, creating tension and conflict in the relationship. In all of these situations, the coach must serve as the consistent participant. It is the coach who determines the mood and reaction of the athlete.

Influence of Transformational Leadership on Athletes' Sports Performance

There has been speculation about the relevance of transformational leadership within the sports domain (Price & Weiss, 2013). However, transformational leaders are known to empower rather than control their followers (Kouzes & Posner, 2007). This is supported to some extent by data showing that a leadership style that is supportive and promotes autonomy, which would be consistent with transformational leadership, enhances intrinsic motivation (Friedman, 2004). This empowering process is thought to increase followers' self-efficacy and capacity for self-determination (Vella, Oades & Crowe, 2012).

According to Bolkan and Goodboy (2009), transformational leadership is related positively to student learning outcomes, student participation, and the perceptions of teacher credibility. Transformational leadership can also influence one's creative self-efficacy. A person with a high confidence level in his creativity will, in the long run, be more effective and more productive (Bloom, 2002). Transformational leadership, therefore, plays a vital role in the creation of positive teacher and student, or coach and player interaction. This positive interaction relies on the satisfaction of the follower (student player) in his role under the leader (coach). Because transformational leadership impacts attitude, effort, performance, commitment, and behavior, it can therefore lead to satisfaction (Nguni, Slegers, & Denessen, 2006).

The positive correlation between transformational leadership and performance outcomes demonstrates that the followers' perceptions of the characteristics of their own work serve to mediate the relationship between transformational leadership and performance (Nielsen *et al*, 2008). This relationship is developed through psychological empowerment, trust, collective efficacy, and the clarity of goals. It is further advanced when the leader encourages and supports the creative thinking of the follower. All of

these aspects allow transformational leaders to motivate followers to transcend their self-interests for a collective purpose, vision, and mission. Leadership of this nature fosters trust and admiration toward the leader, and consequently the followers may be inspired to exceed expectations (Bono and Anderson, 2005).

Review of Empirical Literature

Álvarez, Castillo, Vladimir and Tomás (2019) study examined the relationship between coaches' transformational leadership style, a task-involving climate, and leadership effectiveness outcome criteria (i.e., players' extra effort, coach effectiveness, and satisfaction with their coach), separately estimating between and within effects. A representative sample of 625 Spanish male soccer players ranging from 16 to 18 years old and nested in 50 teams completed a questionnaire package tapping the variables of interest. Results confirmed that at the team level, team perceptions of transformational leadership positively predicted teams' perceptions of task climate, which in turn positively predicted the three outcome criteria. At the individual level, players' perceptions of transformational leadership

positively predicted teams' perceptions of task climate, which in turn positively predicted teams' extra effort and coach effectiveness. Mediation effects appeared at the team level for all the outcome criteria, and at the individual only for extra effort. Transformational leadership is recommended to enhance task climate, in order to increase players' extra effort, their perceptions of the effectiveness of their coach, and their satisfaction with his/her leadership style.

Turnnidge and Côté (2018) study was carried out to examine the processes by which transformational leaders influences followers' psychosocial development. A systematic search was conducted of six electronic databases covering a wide range of disciplines. Peer-reviewed, original studies published in English were included in this review. The initial search yielded 2077 papers, of which 151 met the selection criteria and were retained for analysis. A descriptive, content analysis based approach was used to assess emerging patterns in research design and study findings. Results revealed numerous processes at the intrapersonal, interpersonal, and environmental levels that contributed to the relationships between transformational leaders and follower development.

Chee, Rasyid, Tengah and Low (2017) study was carried out to

examine the relationship between leadership style and performance of athletes and coaches in Malaysia. One hundred and thirty seven athletes and 47 coaches from 12 sports participated in the study. Leadership Scale for Sport (LSS) questionnaire was utilized to assess athletes' preference, perceived and coaches' perception of their own leadership style. Results showed athletes most preferred transformational coaching styles followed by democratic, positive feedback and social support. Autocratic behaviour was the least preferred. However coaches' self-evaluation showed majority were keen on autocratic leadership style. Overall, the results of the study proposed that coaches should emphasize on training and instruction and less autocratic leadership style. Coaches also need to practice more positive feedback which proven can enhance athletes performance.

Summary of Related Literature

This chapter has reviewed literature related to this study. This chapter carefully reviewed the concept of transformational leadership and its influence on the sports performance of athletes. The theory of transformational leadership guided this study which was supported by constructivist theory. In this chapter, a transformational leader was defined as a leader who stimulates and inspires followers to achieve great outcomes and also to develop their own leadership abilities.

Typically transformational leadership is measured in terms of three leadership outcomes: the ability of the leader to generate extra effort on the part of those being led; the subordinates' perceptions of the leader's effectiveness; and the subordinates' satisfaction with the leader. It was revealed in this study that transformational leaders get followers involved through the vision that is created and shared, and then psychologically empower and inspire them through enthusiasm and high moral standards.

Three empirical literatures were reviewed in line with this study and majority of the findings revealed that there is a relationship between coaches' transformational leadership style and sports performance of athletes. However, the

empirical studies reviewed were not carried out among student athletes preparing for NUGA, hence the need for this study to bridge the gap in literature.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

This chapter described the research method used in this study, and was discussed under the following sub-headings:

Research Design

Population of the Study

Sample and Sampling Procedures

Research Instrument

Validity of the Instrument

Reliability of the Instrument

Method of Data Collection

Method of Data Analysis

Research Design

The descriptive survey design was adopted for this study. This involves the process of identifying the variables that exist in a given situation and describing the relationship that exist among the variables, as well as examining the factors that link these variables together.

Population of the Study

The population of this study comprised of six hundred and thirty-eight (638) undergraduate student athletes in the University of Benin who train daily at the various sporting facilities within the UNIBEN Ugbowo main campus such as: UNIBEN sport complex, Education training pitch, UNIBEN Golf course, etc.

Table 1: Population of student athletes across all Faculties of University of Benin, Benin City

S/N	FACULTIES	POPULATION OF STUDENT ATHELETES
1	Agriculture	25
2	Arts	66
3	Basic Medical Sciences	27
4	Dentistry	19
5	Education	97
6	Engineering	27
7	Environmental Science	11
8	Law	25
9	Life Science	48
10	Management Science	57
11	Medicine	21
12	Pharmacy	18
13	Physical Science	108
14	Social Science	89
	TOTAL	638

Source: Director of Sports, UNIBEN Sports Center (2023)

Sample and Sampling Procedure

To ensure a representative sample for this study, sampling was done using the purposive sampling technique. First the numbers of student athletes across the different faculties were identified and a representative proportion were then sampled for the study. Consequently, the sample size for this study was thirty percent of the entire population, comprising of two hundred (200) undergraduate student athletes in the University of Benin main campus, Ugbowo.

Research Instrument

The research instrument that was used in this study was a structured questionnaire that sought information from the students that participate in sports in the sampled training facilities. The instrument was designed in two (2) sections, sections A, and B. Section A sought information from the student athletes as regards their demography. Section B sought information from the student athletes as regards the influence of transformational leadership on the sports performance of student athletes, if significant differences exist in the influence of transformational leadership on the sports performance of male and female student athletes and lastly, if significant

differences exist in the influence of transformational leadership on the sports performance of student athletes based on age. The research instrument comprised of 14 items which are closed-ended. Questions were raised in each of the research questions where the respondents were required to select the most appropriate options. The responses were rated on a four (4) point Likert scale ranging from Very High Extent (VHE) = 4; High Extent (HE) = 3; Low Extent (LE) = 2; Very Low Extent (VLE) = 1.

Validity of the Instrument

The measuring instrument for this study was subjected to face and content validity and validated by experts in the field of study. To ensure the face and construct validity, the instrument was subjected to scrutiny by the researcher's supervisor. Also, necessary correction and modification were made and effected to erase any form of ambiguity.

Reliability of the Instrument

The reliability of the research instrument was ascertained using the Cronbach alpha method of reliability test. A pilot study was carried among 20 undergraduate student athletes who were not part of the selected sample but were part of the target population. In the pilot study, the filled

questionnaires were analyzed for reliability using the Cronbach alpha reliability technique and the Cronbach alpha result obtained was a composite score of 0.76, thus indicative that the research instrument was reliable.

Methods of Data Collection

Primary data was relied upon to source for data in the study and as such Questionnaires were administered to student athletes preparing for NUGA in UNIBEN through face to face and on the spot retrieval of the completed questionnaires. Explanations were made to those who could not really understand what the questions required of them.

Method of Data Analysis

Data collected from the respondents were analyzed using descriptive statistics such as frequency, percentages and means. Non-parametric statistics such as t-test and analysis of variance (ANOVA) statistics were used to test if significant differences exist in the influence of transformational leadership on the sports performance of student athletes based on gender and age. All statistical analyses were carried out with the aid of Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 25.0.

CHAPTER FOUR

PRESENTATION OF RESULTS AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

This chapter presents the analysis of data collected from self-administered questionnaires to 200 randomly selected undergraduate student athletes in the University of Benin, Benin City. Frequencies, percentages and mean were used to analyse the data in tables. The analysis was carried out with the aid of IBM SPSS statistical software version 25.0.

Respondents' Profile

The profile of the respondents that were assessed by the researcher in this study include; age, sex, faculty, and academic level. Table 1 below shows the respondents' profile with respect to the afore-listed variables.

Table 1: Respondents' Profile

S/N	Variables	Attributes	Frequency	Percent (%)
1	Age	Less than 20 years	45	22.5
		20-24 years	92	46.0
		25-29 years	52	26.0
		30 years and above	11	5.5
2	Sex	Male	126	63.0
		Female	74	37.0
3	Faculty	Physical Sciences	35	17.5
		Agricultural Science	26	13.0
		Education	24	12.0
		Management Sciences	27	13.5
		Social Sciences	32	16.0
		Basic Medical Sciences	21	10.5
		100 level	27	13.5
4	Academic Level	200level	53	26.5
		300level	61	30.5
		400level	44	22.0
		500level	15	7.5

Table 1 revealed that out of 200 respondents that were sampled in this study, the age distribution of the respondents as shown in table 1 revealed that 45 (22.5%) of the respondents are less than 20 years old, 92 (46%) are between 20 and 24 years, 52 (26%) are within 25 to 29 years while 11 (5.5%) of the respondents are 30 years old and above. Majority of the respondents (46%) are therefore between 20 and 24 years. In terms of sex, 126 (63%) are male student

athletes while 74 were female student athletes. In terms of the respondents' faculties, 35 (17.5%) are in the faculty of Physical Sciences, 26 (13%) are in Agricultural sciences, 24 (12%) are in Education, 27 (13.5%) are in management sciences, 32 (16%) are in social sciences while 21 (10%) of the respondents are in the faculty of Basic Medical Sciences. In terms of the distribution of the respondents based on their academic level, table 1 showed that 27 (13.5%) of the respondents are in 100 level, 53 (26.5%) are in 200 level, 61 (30.5%) are in 300 level, 44 (22%) are in 400 level while 15 (7.5%) are in 500 level.

Analysis of Research Questions

The analysis of this study was based on the research questions. Consequently, the three (3) research questions that were raised in this were duly analysed.

Research Question 1: What is the influence of transformational leadership style of sports administrators on the sports performance of student athletes preparing for NUGA in University of Benin?

Table 2 contain responses from the respondents as regards the extent of the influence of transformational leadership style of sports administrators on the

sports performance of student athletes preparing for NUGA in University of Benin. The responses from the respondents were used to answer research question one (1).

Table 2: Descriptive Statistics on the influence of transformational leadership style of sports administrators on the sports performance of student athletes preparing for NUGA in University of Benin

S/N	ITEMS	Sum	Mean	Standard deviation	Decision
1	Sports administrators that exhibits transformational leadership style always have a way of influencing my performance in sports	200	2.93	0.95	High
2	Sports administrators that are transformational in their dealings can positively increase athlete's performance in sports	200	2.59	0.82	High
3	My performance in sports are easily enhanced by sports administrators that exhibits transformational leadership style	200	2.51	0.82	High
4	There is a positive influence of transformational leadership style of sports administrators in Universities and student athletes	200	2.61	0.73	High
5	I am impressed with the way in which sports administrators ensures that every student athlete works according to his/her own capacity	200	2.77	0.83	High
6	Sports administrators often express appreciation to all student athletes and that has improve my sports Performance	200	2.67	0.86	High
7	My performance is always affected whenever sports administrators points out each athlete's strengths and weaknesses	200	2.74	0.92	High
8	Sports administrators style of helping student athletes with their personal problems have made me to perform better in sports	200	3.08	0.72	High
Average mean $21.90/8 = 2.74$ Criterion mean = 2.50				0.83	High

Respondents' response to the 8 items in table 2 showed that the mean response to each of the items is greater than 2.50 (decision point). Also, the average mean score to all 8 items is computed as 2.74 with a standard deviation of 0.83. This indicates that majority of the respondents are of the opinion that there is a high extent to which transformational leadership style of sports administrators have an influence on the sports performance of student athletes preparing for pNUGA in University of Benin.

Research Question 2: Do significant differences exist in the influence of transformational leadership style of sports administrators on the sports performance of male and female student athletes?

Analysis of variance (ANOVA) statistics presented in Table 3 was used to answer research question two.

Table 3: Table showing the ANOVA test

	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	25.44	4	2.951	9.390	.000
Within Groups	41.101	195	.252		
Total	18.010	199			

Result: $F(4, 195) = 9.390, p = 0.000$. Since $p < 0.05$, we thus conclude

that there is significant difference in the influence of transformational leadership style of sports administrators on the sports performance of male and female student athletes.

Research Question 3: Do significant differences exist in the influence of transformational leadership style of sports administrators on the sports performance of student athletes based on age?

Analysis of variance (ANOVA) statistics presented in Table 4 was used to answer research question three.

Table 4: Table showing the ANOVA test

	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	19.71	4	3.035	32.050	.000
Within Groups	25.333	195	1.001		
Total	39.131	199			

Result: $F(4, 195) = 32.050, p = 0.000$. Since $p < 0.05$, we thus conclude that there is significant difference in the influence of transformational leadership style of sports administrators on the sports performance of student athletes based on age.

Discussion of Findings

Findings from this study for research question one revealed that there is

a high extent to which transformational leadership style of sports administrators have an influence on the sports performance of student athletes preparing for NUGA in University of Benin. This is due to the fact that the mean response score from the respondents to all 8 items in table 2 was computed as 2.74 with a standard deviation of 0.83. In line with this study, Álvarez *et al* (2019) study examined the relationship between coaches' transformational leadership style and leadership effectiveness outcome criteria (i.e., athletes' extra effort, coach effectiveness, and satisfaction with their coach), separately estimating between and within effects. Results confirmed that athlete's extra effort and coach effectiveness were significantly influenced by the transformational leadership style of sports leaders. Also in line with this study, Avolio and Yammarino (2002) study revealed that transformational leaders get followers involved through the vision that is created and shared, and then psychologically empower and inspire them through enthusiasm and high moral standards.

In regards to research question two, the study discovered that there is a significant difference in the influence of transformational leadership style of sports administrators on the sports performance of male and female student athletes. In line with this study, Turnnidge and Côté (2018) study was

carried out to examine the processes by which transformational leadership style influences followers' psychosocial development. Results revealed numerous processes at the intrapersonal, interpersonal, and environmental levels that contributed to the relationships between transformational leaders and follower development. It was established in the study that male and female student athletes were influenced differently by the transformational leadership style of sports administrators.

Results obtained from the present study as regards research question three revealed that there is a significant difference in the influence of transformational leadership style of sports administrators on the sports performance of student athletes based on age. In line with this study, Chee *et al* (2017) study which was carried out to examine the relationship between transformational leadership style and performance of athletes and coaches in Malaysia revealed that the different age groups of athletes in their study were influenced differently by transformational leadership style of sports administrators.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Introduction

This chapter provides the summary of findings, conclusions as well as the necessary recommendations.

Summary

This study was carried out to investigate the influence of transformational leadership on the sports performance of student athletes for NUGA using University of Benin student athletes as a case study. Three research questions were raised in the study, one of which was answered and the other two was hypothesized. The descriptive survey design was adopted in this study. The population of this study comprised of six hundred and thirty-eight (638) undergraduate student athletes in the University of Benin who train daily at the various sporting facilities within the UNIBEN Ugbowo main campus such as: UNIBEN sport complex, Education training pitch, UNIBEN Golf course, etc.

Two hundred (200) undergraduate student athletes were however randomly sampled in this study. Descriptive statistics using frequency, percentage, mean, and standard deviation in tables were used in the data analysis of the study.

Findings

- There is a high extent to which transformational leadership style of sports administrators have an influence on the sports performance of student athletes preparing for NUGA in University of Benin.
- Significant difference exist among male and female student athletes as regards the influence of transformational leadership style of sports administrators on their sports performance.
- Significant differences exist across the various age groups of student athletes in the influence of transformational leadership style of sports administrators on their sports performance.

Conclusion

This study investigated the influence of transformational leadership on the sports performance of student athletes for NUGA using University of Benin student athletes as a case study. Results of the current study indicate that student athletes' performances are influenced by the transformational leadership style of sports administrators to a high extent. Significant differences were found to exist among male and female student athletes as well as across the different age groups of student athletes as regards the influence of transformational leadership style of sports administrators on their sports performance. The results of the current study provide insight into the importance of transformational leadership style of sports administrators on student athletes' performance. In particular, transformational leadership of student athletes is associated with a number of positive outcomes as the transformational leadership style was found to promote good motivational climates and extra effort among student athletes.

Recommendations

Based on the conclusion of the study, the following recommendations become necessary:

1. It is necessary to create awareness among sport stakeholders in Nigeria about the importance of transformational leadership style of sports administrators.
2. It is recommended that sports administrators practice transformational leadership style to achieve the best performance for student athletes.
3. Sports administrators in Universities should know the motivational preferences for male and female student athletes since the gender of student athletes is influenced by transformational leadership style.
4. There is a need for intervention studies on how transformational leadership style of sports administrators influences the various age groups of student athletes.
5. Sports administrators and coaches involved in training of student athletes should have a deep knowledge of the transformational leadership factors influencing sport performance in order to be able to direct all the physical and technical programming associated with sports in Universities.

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APPENDIX

QUESTIONNAIRE

I am a final year student of the above named institution and I am carrying out a research study on the topic: “**influence of transformational leadership on the sports performance of athletes for NUGA: A case study of university of Benin student athletes**”. Kindly assist me by indicating your opinion where necessary.

This study is strictly for academic purpose and you are hereby assured that all information supplied will be treated in a strictly confidential manner.

Thank you.

Yours faithfully,

Instruction: Please tick (✓) appropriately in the sections that follow.

SECTION A (DEMOGRAPHIC DATA)

1. Age: Less than 20 years (); 20-24years (); 25-29Years (); 30 and above ()
2. Sex: Male (); Female ()
3. Faculty: _____
4. Academic Level: 100 (); 200 (); 300 (); 400 (); 500 ()

SECTION B

Please indicate the level of extent to which you agree with the following items in the table:

KEY: Very High Extent = VHE; High Extent = HE; Low Extent = LE; Very Low Extent = VLE

S/N	ITEMS	VHE	HE	LE	VLE
RQ1	What is the influence of transformational leadership style of sports administrators on the sports performance of student athletes preparing for NUGA in University of Benin?				
1	Sports administrators that exhibits transformational leadership style always have a way of influencing my performance in sports				
2	Sports administrators that are transformational in their dealings can positively increase athlete’s performance in sports				
3	My performance in sports are easily enhanced by sports administrators that exhibits transformational leadership style				

4	There is a positive influence of transformational leadership style of sports administrators in Universities and student athletes				
	that every student athlete works according to his/her own capacity				
6	Sports administrators often express appreciation to all student athletes and that has improve my sports performance				
7	My performance is always affected whenever sports administrators points out each athlete's strengths and weaknesses				
8	Sports administrators style of helping student athletes with their personal problems have made me to perform better in sports				
RQ2	Do significant differences exist in the influence of transformational leadership style of sports administrators on the sports performance of male and female student athletes?				
9	Male and female athletes differ in the influence of transformational leadership on the sports performance				
10	Transformational leadership style impacts student athletes differently based on gender				
11	The way that transformational leaders impacts male athletes is quite different from that of female athletes				
RQ3	Do significant differences exist in the influence of transformational leadership style of sports administrators on the sports performance of student athletes based on age?				
12	Transformational leadership style impacts student athletes differently based on age				
13	There is differences in the manner at which transformational leadership style of coaches influences student athletes across the various age groups				
14	The way that transformational leaders impacts young and old athletes is quite different				

CRONBACH ALPHA RESULT

Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	N of Items
.760	.745	14

Cronbach's Alpha = 0.760

Item Statistics

	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
VAR0001	3.20	.961	20
VAR0002	2.78	1.356	20
VAR0003	2.04	.834	20
VAR0004	2.96	1.320	20
VAR0005	3.40	1.056	20
VAR0006	3.67	.976	20
VAR0007	3.67	.976	20
VAR0008	3.53	1.302	20
VAR0009	2.60	1.454	20
VAR00010	2.40	1.404	20
VAR00011	3.20	1.521	20
VAR00012	3.27	1.624	20
VAR00013	3.27	1.486	20
VAR00014	2.70	1.302	20