

**GENDER AND TYPE OF SPORTS DIFFERENCE ON PERCEIVED
COACHES' BEHAVIOR DURING COVID-19 PANDEMIC: A CASE
STUDY OF FEDERAL TERRITORY SPORTS COUNCIL SUKMA 2021
ATHLETES**

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GENDER AND TYPE OF SPORTS DIFFERENCE ON PERCEIVED COACHES' BEHAVIOR DURING COVID-19 PANDEMIC: A CASE STUDY OF FEDERAL TERRITORY SPORTS COUNCIL SUKMA 2021 ATHLETES

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ABSTRACT

The coach's actual conduct is thought to be influenced directly by his or her personal characteristics, such as age, gender, appearance, skill, and experience, as well as the demands of the situation. However, the coach's behavior set by both the organisational structure and the environment, and include factors including sport, team size or level, role variability, and playing conditions. This study aims to investigate on the different of perceived coaches' behaviour in terms of gender and type of sports among athletes in Federal Territory Sports Council, Sukan Malaysia (SUKMA) 2021 contingent. The research design of the study is quantitative research design. Total number of 468 samples was randomly selected from Federal Territory Sports Council, Sukan, Sukan Malaysia (SUKMA) 2021 contingent. The instrumentation used in this study is questionnaire which is Coaching Behavior Scale for Sport. The statistical analysis used is Independent T-test. The results showed significance result in the factor of negative personal rapport between gender and significance result showed in the technical skills between types of sports. In conclusion, depending on the pandemic scenario, all genders have a good view of coaches' actions, except for a negative personal rapport. Different types of sports exhibited similar perceptions of coaching behavior, except for technical skills, where individual athletes reported higher positive feedback than team athletes.

Keywords: *coaching behavior, Physical training and plaining, technical skills, goal setting, mental preparation, competition strategies, personal rapport, negative personal rapport*

INTRODUCTION

Athletes and coaches were another group of people who were affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. The coaches needed to explore the most effective ways to coach the athletes under circumstances that they have never experienced. They may not be able to allocate enough time and energy to focus on their athletes' conditions, since they need to take care of themselves as well as their families. Due to the current uncertain situation, coupled with continued cancelation or postponement of other local and national level games, they too faced difficulty in systematically scheduling their education and training their athletes. The coach's actual conduct is thought to be influenced directly by his or her personal characteristics, such as age, gender, appearance, skill, and experience, as well as the demands of the situation (Sherman et al., 2000).

A crucial role of a coach in a competitive sport is to enhance the athletes' performance (Marten, 1987). This covers a wide range of tasks to create more functional, physical, technical, tactical, and psychological preparation of top-notch athletes (Bompa, 2009). Athletes are prone to develop intense mental and physical pressure during competition as well as during practice. Hence, a coach's engagement with the athletes is necessary in improving their performance. One aspect that is vital in influencing athletes' performance is coaching behaviour (Bebetsos, Filippou and Bebetsos, 2017). Previous studies in sport psychology (Jowett & Cockerill, 2002; Jowett, Paull, & Pensgaard, 2005) indicated that a coach's behaviour is important as it has a core effect on the quality and success of the athletes' athletic experience. Ineffective coaching behaviours can, on the other hand, result in a negative experience and deter participants from competing in sports (Koh et al., 2012). However, limits or boundaries on a coach's behavior are set by both the organisational structure and the environment, and include factors including sport, team size or level, role variability, and playing conditions (Sherman et al., 2000).

The social structure of both team sports and individual sports determines the difference in the effectiveness of coaching (Bebetsos et al., 2017). The coach focuses on the teamwork in team sports while for individual sports, the focus should be on the athletes. Guidance and support of the coach is also crucial for the team sport athletes apart from the attention,

assistance as well as confidence of their teammates. The coach should be able to generate a sense of unity among team members. This will only be achieved when they feel, think and act like a person (Jowett, 2009). Team sports athletes regarded their bond with their coach contributed to their success (Olympiou, Jowett, & Duda, 2008). This verified that intrinsic motivation created by coaches influences athletes' perceptions of team commitment.

According to Chiu, Mahat and Radzuan (2013), team sport coaches, unlike individual sport coaches, are better on strategy decisions, and apply suitable coaching techniques to boost effective athletic traits as they have better management skills. In addition, it was also found that team sport athletes preferred coaches who can give instructions and feedback, possess autocratic behaviour, and were concerned with training. Athletes' skills are more instructional oriented in individual sports instead of social focused. Furthermore, these skills developed as the athletes' effort is being rewarded by their coach and vice versa (Boen, Cuyper, & Opdenacker, 2006). However, recent study conducted by Ismail (2019) found that individual athletes were better in using performance strategies during practice (i.e., goal setting, relaxation, and self-talk) and competition condition (i.e., goal setting and self-talk) compared to team sport athletes.

Successful coaches are normally the ones with strong personalities to coach athletes with strong presence and willpower (Gosselin, 2002). Gosselin also added that male athletes demanded respect from their coach and not merely having personal relationships with their coach. However, Singh, Nadim, & Ezzedeen (2012) stated that guiding male athletes usually involves intimacy, which involves using power, force and authoritarian style by the bosses and coaches. However, coaches' excessive obsession with competitiveness may adversely affect female athletes. Therefore, male athletes may accept coaching behaviour, which is considered hard, rude, and not supportive but not the women athletes (Stewart & Taylor, 2000).

In summary, the comparison and contrast between male and female athletes in their coaching preferences is still unclear in Malaysia, hence, further investigation is required. Previous studies have shown that athletes' gender partially influences the preference of coaching behaviour and that generally there is an overall similarity in the coaching preferences

between male and female athletes. Therefore, because there are limited studies which focused on the gender interaction, type of sport and coaching behaviour in Malaysia, this study aims to address that area. More specially, this study intended to investigate on the coaching behaviour effects on gender and type of sports among athletes in Sukan Malaysia 2021.

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

The research design of the study is case study. Case studies are used to gather data about a single object, event, or action, such as a specific business unit or organisation. The case in a case study is the person, group, organisation, event, or circumstance that the researcher is interested in (Uma & Roger, 2016). This design had been chosen to answer the research objectives which is to determine the difference on the perceptions of athletes towards coaching behavior between male and female and individual and team sport during pandemic Covid-19 among Federal Territory Sports Council SUKMA 2021 athletes.

Sampling Technique

Athletes from the Federal Territory Sports Council's Sukan Malaysia (SUKMA) 2021 contingent were studied. There were around 500 athletes in attendance. Out of the total, 468 samples were chosen at random to participate in the survey. The survey was conducted utilising an online technique due to the movement control order. The responders filled out a Google form that was circulated across the online communities. The UiTM Research Ethic Committee granted ethical approval. The study was certified to have been carried out in line with the 2013 revision of the Helsinki Declaration.

Instrumentation

The instrumentation used in this study is questionnaire. It consisted of 2 sections:

Section A: Demographic Questionnaire

To record every participant's name, age, position, and years of experience, the researcher designed the demographic questionnaire. The questionnaire's main purpose is, nevertheless, to verify positions experienced and age and, therefore, to choose participants who meet the criteria for this study.

Section B: Coaching Behavior Scale for Sport (CBS-S; Cote, Yardley, Hay, Sedgwick, & Baker, 1999).

The questionnaire was adapted and adopted from the CBD-S questionnaire to fit the present COVID-19 pandemic condition. CBS-S comprises of 44 items, measuring seven dimensions of coaching behaviours (i.e., Physical training and plaining (7 items), technical skills (8 items), goal setting (6 items), mental preparation (5 items), competition strategies (7 items), personal rapport (6 items), and negative personal rapport (8 items). Example items from the CBS-S are "During COVID-19 pandemic, my coach provides me with structured training sessions" (Physical training and plaining), "During COVID-19 pandemic, my coach makes sure I understand the techniques and strategies I am being taught" (Technical skills), "During COVID-19 pandemic, my coach shows understanding for me as a person" (Personal rapport). Respondents rated their coach's behaviours by answering the items on a 7-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 (never) to 7 (always). The internal consistency coefficient (Cronbach's alpha) of the CBS Scale was .95.

Statistical Analysis

The data analyses performed to meet the objectives of the present investigation. The descriptive analysis used to describe demographics data. The following demographic variables are age, gender, type of sports and years of experience in sport. This is important to determine homogeneity and normality of the data collection. The Independent T- Test used to determine

the difference on perception of athletes (male and female) on coaches behavior. All statistical analyses conducted by using the IBM SPSS statistics for Windows version 26.0 (2019). The alpha level will be set at 0.05.

RESULTS

Table 1 below reported the demographic profile of the respondents. Most of the respondents age less than 18 years old (n=257, 54.9%), male (n=251, 53.6%), individual sports (n=343, 73.3%) and have more than 5 years' experience in sports (n=243, 51.9%).

Table 1: Descriptive Results of Demographic Profile

Variables		Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
Age in years	Less than 18 years	257	54.9
	18-25 years	208	44.4
	26-30 years	3	0.6
Gender	Male	251	53.6
	Female	217	46.4
Types of sports	Individual	343	73.3
	Team	125	26.7
Years of experiences	Less than 1 year	14	3.0
	1-3 years	110	23.5
	4-5 years	101	21.6
	More than 5 years	243	51.9

Table 2 below showed the respondents reported, most of the coaching behavior very often focusing on technical skills (M=6.14, SD=1.03) of the athletes and the competition strategies (M=6.04, SD=1.10). Then followed by mental preparation (M=5.95, SD=1.23), goal setting (M=5.86, SD=1.18), physical training and planning (M=5.85, SD=1.14), and personal rapport (M=5.74, SD=1.29). The coaching behavior focusing on negative personal rapport reported the lowest (M=3.39, SD=2.01) where the coach sometime focusing on that.

Table 2: Descriptive Results on Factors in Coaching Behavior

Coaching behavior	Mean (M)	SD
Physical training and planning	5.85	1.14
Technical skills	6.14	1.03
Mental preparation	5.95	1.23
Goal setting	5.86	1.18
Competition strategies	6.04	1.10
Personal rapport	5.74	1.29
Negative personal rapport	3.39	2.01

Table 3 reported a significance result showed in the factor of negative personal rapport. The male (M=3.60, SD=2.09) reported significantly high negative personal rapport compared to female (M=3.14, SD=1.90), $t(464.80) = 2.48$, $p=0.013$. Other factors reported no significance result between gender. There is no significance results on physical training and planning between male (M=5.85, SD=1.20) and female (M=5.85, SD=1.07), $t(466) = 0.03$, $p>0.05$. There is no significance results on technical skills between male (M=6.11, SD=1.10) and female (M=6.18, SD=0.93), $t(466) = -0.79$, $p>0.05$.

There is no significance results on mental preparation between male (M=5.99, SD=1.11) and female (M=5.90, SD=1.24), $t(466) = 0.84$, $p>0.05$. There is no significance results on goal setting between male (M=5.90, SD=1.20) and female (M=5.80, SD=1.16), $t(466) = 0.91$, $p>0.05$. There is no significance results on competition strategies between male (M=6.08, SD=1.14) and female (M=6.00, SD=1.06), $t(466) = 0.74$, $p>0.05$. There is no significance results on personal rapport between male (M=5.80, SD=1.32) and female (M=5.68, SD=1.26), $t(466) = 0.96$, $p>0.05$.

Table 3: Comparison on Factors in Coaching Behavior between Gender (N=468)

Coaching behavior	Gender [Mean (SD)]		<i>t</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>p</i> value
	Male (n=251)	Female (n=217)			
Physical training and planning	5.85 (1.20)	5.85 (1.07)	0.03	466.00	0.977
Technical skills	6.11 (1.10)	6.18 (0.93)	-0.79	466.00	0.430
Mental preparation	5.99 (1.11)	5.90 (1.24)	0.84	466.00	0.403
Goal setting	5.90 (1.20)	5.80 (1.16)	0.91	466.00	0.366
Competition strategies	6.08 (1.14)	6.00 (1.06)	0.74	466.00	0.462
Personal rapport	5.80 (1.32)	5.68 (1.26)	0.96	466.00	0.340
Negative personal rapport	3.60 (2.09)	3.14 (1.90)	2.48	464.80	0.013

Table 4 reported a significance result showed in the technical skills. The individual sports (M=6.20, SD=0.95) reported significantly high technical skills compared to team sports (M=5.98, SD=1.20), $t(466) = 2.10, p=0.037$. Other factors reported no significance result between types of sport. There is no significance results on physical training and planning between individual (M=5.91, SD=1.07) and team (M=5.69, SD=1.32), $t(186.23) = 1.07, p>0.05$. There is no significance results on mental preparation between individual (M=5.94, SD=1.25) and team (M=5.97, SD=1.16), $t(466) = -0.21, p>0.05$.

There is no significance results on goal setting between individual (M=5.87, SD=1.18) and team (M=5.84, SD=1.18), $t(466) = 0.23, p>0.05$. There is no significance results on competition strategies between individual (M=6.08, SD=1.05) and team (M=5.94, SD=1.23), $t(194.14) = 1.19, p>0.05$. There is no significance results on personal rapport between individual (M=5.70, SD=1.31) and team (M=5.86, SD=1.22), $t(466) = -1.16, p>0.05$. There is no significance results on negative personal rapport between individual (M=3.83, SD=2.01) and team (M=3.40, SD=2.03), $t(466) = -0.10, p>0.05$.

Table 4: Comparison on Factors in Coaching Behavior between Types of Sports (N=468)

Coaching behavior	Types of sport [Mean (SD)]		<i>t</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>p</i> value
	Individual (n=343)	Team (n=125)			
Physical training and planning	5.91 (1.07)	5.69 (1.32)	1.70	186.23	0.092
Technical skills	6.20 (0.95)	5.98 (1.20)	2.10	466.00	0.037
Mental preparation	5.94 (1.25)	5.97 (1.16)	-0.21	466.00	0.831
Goal setting	5.87 (1.18)	5.84 (1.18)	0.23	466.00	0.820
Competition strategies	6.08 (1.05)	5.94 (1.23)	1.19	194.14	0.237
Personal rapport	5.70 (1.31)	5.86 (1.22)	-1.16	466.00	0.245
Negative personal rapport	3.83 (2.01)	3.40 (2.03)	-0.10	466.00	0.924

DISCUSSIONS

Overall score of coaching behavior reported were all higher than 5 on a 7-point scale. It showed the athletes has positive experience with their coaches. Study in Singaporean's athletes by Koon & Chee (2014) reported the same situation before pandemic. The pandemic does not affect to the perceived of the Federal Territory Sports Council athletes on the positive experience gained with their coaches.

The results showed during COVID-19 pandemic, there is significantly high negative personal rapport reported among male compared to female. Negative personal rapport in coaching behavior such as use fear method, yelling, disregard's opinion, favouritism, physical intimidates, manipulation, etc. This approach may occur among males because of the behavior of the male itself, which is more aggressive, and rough compared to female. Gosselin (2002) reported, male athletes demanded respect from their coach and not merely having personal relationships with their coach. Singh, Nadim, & Ezzedeen (2012) stated that guiding male athletes usually involves intimacy, which involves using power, force and authoritarian style by the bosses and coaches. Stewart & Taylor (2000) reported male athletes accept the coaching behavior, which is considered hard, rude, and not supportive but not to the women athletes. A few researcher reported male are preferred more on Autocratic behavior than women

(Chelladurai & Saleh, 1978; Sherman et al., 2000; Terry, 1984). It aligns with the finding which showed coaching behavior among male are more on negative personal rapport because of the nature of the behavior of the male athletes itself.

Others factor in coaching behavior show non-significant results. It contrast with study by Koon & Chee (2014) which showed goal setting, mental preparation and competition strategies are different between gender. Both gender experience the same behavior of their coaches throughout the training session during pandemic.

The individual sports reported significantly high positive feedback on technical skills compared to team sports. The result is similar with a study by Aleksic Veljkovic et al. (2016) where coaches of individual sports gave more instruction to athletes about performance of the skills, techniques and tactics of their sports compare to team sports. But Koon & Chee (2014) reported types of sports not plays an important role in athletes perceptions of their coaches behavior. Both groups showed similar perception on coach behavior.

In conclusion, depending on the pandemic scenario, all genders have a good view of coaches' actions, except for a negative personal rapport. Different types of sports exhibited similar perceptions of coaching behavior, except for technical skills, where individual athletes reported higher positive feedback than team athletes.

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