



INFLUENCE OF LEADERSHIP AND REWARDS SYSTEM ON TEAM PERFORMANCE IN NIGERIA PREMIER LEAGUE (NPL)

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Abstract:

Leadership and rewards are two key management constructs that plays significant roles in organization's effectiveness. Thus, this study investigated the impact of these two management variables on team performance in Nigerian Premier League (NPL). A total of 75 respondents comprising of 60 players and 15 coaches from 3 NPL teams were selected through a stratified random sampling technique and used in the study. The Club Structure-Performance Questionnaire (CSPQ) was the instrument used for data collection ($r=0.88$). A total of seventy five copies of the questionnaire were administered on selected respondents (Players=60; Coaches=15) and the data collected were analyzed using inferential statistics of t-test and one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) at $\alpha < 0.05$. The findings revealed that transformation leadership (mean=3.22) and direct financial reward (mean=3.44) recorded higher influences on team performance as compared with other variables in each group. In addition, a stronger correlation was recorded between rewards and performance as compared with leadership.

Keywords: leadership, rewards, team, performance

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1. Introduction

The game of football no doubt is the fastest growing brand in the global sports industry. This can be buttressed by the media hype and attention that football presently enjoys as compared with any other brand in the sports industry. The present 2013/2014 football season in England saw the television revenue value of the EPL totaling a whopping 5 billion pounds (\$7.6 billion) (uk.eurosport.yahoo.com/ws/football-global-brand..., 2013). This clearly corroborates the opinion of Moronfolu & Adeniyi (2012) that the game of football is a financially rewarding investment and also attests to the domineering power of the game in modern day business world. As the most celebrated sports world over, the game of football enjoys an overwhelming followership and this is an indicator that football is the most loved sports. On global ranking, football stands amongst the five highest paid sports and contributes to the overall relevance of the sports industry as one of the highest income generating sectors in world economy (Kasap, 2010; Moronfolu & Ndaks, 2012).

The rivalry and strive for stardom, glory and international recognition among committee of football nations which has climbed to a climax in the football circle has its roots in the elitist status the game presently enjoys. This has necessitated the need for improved sophistication of methods in the organization of the game and has made football the most competitive sport with significantly high impact on socio-political and economic development in many nations of the world (Drezner, 2006; Igbanugo, 2010). The demands of the modern game of football, evident by high cost of players transfer across clubs, construction of clubs stadia, travelling to honour away games, hosting and competing in international championships to mention but a few, calls for pragmatic approach to football development in our nation.

Effectiveness in any organization, football clubs particularly, rests solely on the management practices adopted in the organization. This is because; management in organizations helps ensure the right mix of resources to achieve maximum results. One commonly significant concern of management teams in all organizations is how to motivate the work force towards desired output (Roberts & Corbett, 2009). Motivating the work force requires making effort to influence individuals and groups in an organization to willingly exert high level effort to achieve organizational goals, conditioned by the effort's ability to satisfy some individual needs. Effectively influencing individuals and groups to exert high level effort depends on two motivation constructs i.e. leadership and reward systems.

Leadership as management and motivation construct in organizations is vital to success, as effective leadership can help promote and develop the right direction for

achieving set goals and objectives without stress. This stems from the fact that leaders in any organization remain the major drivers of organizational resources (human, physical, material & financial) in the quest to achieve desired targets. Khurana (2002) maintained that leadership is essentially the "secret" to successfully fulfilling demanding roles in today's society and that effective leadership is a fundamental tool in maximizing company performance. Moronfolu (2005); Corbett (2009); both described leaders as those who significantly influence the thoughts, behaviours and feelings of others. They are those who possess the ability to get others do what needs to be done to attain set targets. Thus, employee performance on the job is contingent upon how content he/she is under the leader. Employees who are content with their jobs as the result of an effective leadership on their managers' part are less likely to perform poorly (Corbett, 2009; Fasan, Moronfolu & Oyewunmi, 2011).

Rewards on the other hand stand as an important tool that can be used in the process of motivating high performance in individuals. When rewards are properly administered on employees by leaders to ensure compatibility between efforts exerted and personal goals and desires, they are bound to achieve positive outcomes. Proper administration of rewards by managers lies in the use of the right reward, at the right time and at the right quantity. This is because; the potency of one reward varies from that of another (Chellandurai, 2004). Patrick and Connor (2004); Yalowku (2009), analyzing the expectancy theory maintained that the desire by employees to produce extraordinary effort for outstanding performance at a given time on the job is a function of the strength of believe that the attempted task is achievable and if achieved, will he or she be adequately rewarded. Adopting appropriate employee rewards programs motivate employees to achieve higher performance levels, especially when leaders use nonmonetary forms of employee recognition. The cyclical relationship among employee motivation, performance and reward results in a positive impact throughout the workforce (Fasan, Moronfolu and Oyewunmi, 2011).

Consequent from the above, the need for sport managers to be more sensitive to the significant roles effective leadership and reward systems play in employee motivation in organizations, particularly in football club is becoming increasingly significant with the prevailing success driven targets in the world of football. The need to evolve a leadership-reward formula by football club managers and used as a recipe for drawing out the best from their players and teams based on the peculiarities of the players and club in question informed this study. Thus, the study therefore aimed at investigating:

- i. The impact of leadership behaviour on team performance in the NPL
- ii. The impact of differential reward systems on team performance in NPL

iii. Relationship among leadership, rewards and team performance in NPL

2. Methodology

2.1 Research Design

The survey research design was adopted in the study. Data were collected through the Club Structure-Performance Questionnaire (CSPQ), collated, analyzed, interpreted and used as basis for drawing conclusions about the perception of players and coaches on the impact of football club structure on team performance in the NPL.

2.2 Sample

A total of 75 respondents were selected through the stratified random sampling technique and used in the study. They were made up of 60 players and 15 coaches selected from 3 NPL teams in the south-west of Nigeria. Thus, 15 players and 5 coaches were selected from each football club.

2.3 Data Collection

Data were collected through the Club Structure-Performance Questionnaire (CSPQ) designed by the researcher and validated by a panel of four experts in sports management for content and criterion-related validities. The reliability of the instrument before administration was established through a pilot study using the test-retest method with samples of the validated questionnaire being administered on five players and three coaches from an NPL team not included in the study, with two weeks interval between the first and second administration. The reliability coefficient of $r=0.88$ was obtained following the use of Pearson's Product Moment Correlation (PPMC) in comparing the two scores. A total of 75 copies of the CSPQ were administered on selected respondents (Players=60; Coaches=15) within two weeks, using the spot administration for high percentage returns.

3. Results

Table 1: t test result of leadership behavior impacts on team performance

Leadership	Team Performance		DF	LS	t. critical	t. calculated
	Mean	S.D.				
Transactional	2.48	0.90				
Transformational	3.22	0.95	74	0.05	2.668	24.833*

t. calculated – significant

Table 2: ANOVA result of reward system impacts on team performance

Rewards System	Team Performance		Source	Sum of Square	DF	Mean Square
	Mean	S.D.				
Direct Financial	3.44	0.98				
Indirect Financial	3.02	1.02	Between Groups	20.860	2	10.430
Status	2.51	0.96	Within Groups	83.220	72	1.156
Recognition.	2.88	0.87	Total	104.080	74	

P < 0.05, F. Value = 9.024* Significant

Table 3: Correlation of leadership, reward and performance

Variables	1	2	3
1. Leadership	-		
2. Reward	0.058	-	
3. Performance	0.085	0.240*	-

* p<0.05

4. Discussion

The significant calculated t value obtained on table 1 implies that leadership behaviors influence team performance differently in sports organizations. Though both forms of leadership behaviors exerted some measure of influence on team performance, transformational leadership (mean=3.22) however recorded a higher influence on team performance as compared with transactional leadership (mean=2.48). This finding agrees with that of Gregory (2006) who discovered in his study of 303 public-sector mental health service clinicians and case managers from 49 programs who were providing mental health services to children, adolescents, and their families that both transformational and transactional leadership were positively associated with providers' having more positive attitudes toward adoption of evidence-based practice, but transformational leadership was negatively associated with providers' perception of difference between the providers' current practice and evidence-based practice. Khanin (2007) stressing the strength of transformational leaders maintained that leaders in this category are highly receptive of their followers' needs and wants, as well as, striving for their professional development at various fronts that would result in followers eventually replacing leaders in the future. Supporting the above, Walumba and Hartnell (2011) attributed high achievement of transformational leaders to their attractive behaviour, charisma, and the ability to motivate their followers. Garcia-Morales, Llorens-Montes and Verdu-Jover (2008) suggested the adoption of transformational leadership as an effective method of motivating workforce based on

the ability of such leader to clearly develop and communicate the vision to pursue. The main distinction between transformational and transactional leadership styles can be specified as the ability of the former style to address higher, intangible needs of employees as well as material needs. In other words, transformational leaders promote creativity, positive team spirit and challenging working environment, thus achieving increased level of performance through highly motivated workforce (Sosik and Godshalk, 2000; Moronfolu and Adeniyi, 2012). Jacobides (2007) also submitted that the leader's style of coordinating the subordinates reporting to him/her is a key determinant of performance of the subordinates. He further stressed that personnel are usually motivated to perform higher on the job when they align with the style adopted by the leader. The above finding further agrees with earlier researches Yoo, Kim, and Yang (2006); Won and Kim (2009); Won, Kim and Kim (2010); and establishes the fact that employees performance climbs to the peak when organizational leaders and managers provides adequate support and encouragement rather than excessive control, and become accelerators of active participation and cooperation rather than assuming commanding roles when solving problems of both individual and collective orientation. When subordinates are led by superiors who pay greater attention to their concerns and developmental needs, they are usually excited and inspired to give more than hundred percent efforts to achieve assigned tasks or functions and this stands as the outstanding peculiarities of transformational leaders. Employees thrives better when they operate under an atmosphere that reflects the relationships between the leader and followers to involve factors such as friendship, mutual trust, warmth, building rapport and communication than the one that establishes rules, regulations and operating systems that are designed to move a group towards pre-established goals (Moronfolu and Adeniyi, 2012).

The result on table 2 and 3 further strengthens the influencing power of rewards on employees' performance. The significant positive correlation between rewards and performance implies that the higher the value of a reward to an employee, the greater the motivation and subsequent performance from such employee. Direct financial reward however stands out as the most potent reward regarding team performance. This was closely followed by indirect financial and recognition rewards, while the status reward recorded the lowest impact on team performance. This finding is in congruent with the findings of Moronfolu and Setonji, (2010) in their study of 200 Nigerian coaches in which they found out that direct financial reward was generally agreed by majority of the respondents to have exerted the highest influence on job performance. They further submitted that variation in coaches perception about the four rewards investigated suggests that each reward has a value and is capable of

influencing job performance to a reasonable extent depending on the respective attraction to each individual. Caudron (1993); Moronfolu (2005) in their separate studies discovered that employees showed stronger preference for financial compensation as compared with other forms of compensation. Thus, when players are adequately motivated through rewards either before or after performance, there is every tendency for their performance to be reasonably enhanced. The direct financial reward, like salary, winning bonus, remains more potent in motivating team performance because money act as the only means by which sport organizational employees can quickly evaluate their worth and make quick comparison with their counterparts within and outside their organization. It is therefore logically necessary that football managers desist from arbitrary distribution of rewards to players, but rather painstakingly investigate and discover the most influencing reward to specific players and use the findings as basis for administering rewards. This will not only ensure that rewards are rightly distributed to players, but also ensure that the purpose for which the reward has been given is maximally achieved.

5. Conclusion

In view of the above findings, the importance of leadership and rewards in motivating team performance in football cannot be over-emphasized. Leadership on one hand provides the direction for team and players in the drive towards accomplishing personal and organizational goals. Reward on the other hand provides the push needed for employees to give their best to achieve both personal and collective goals. Thus, club managers should pay good attention to these two management constructs in order to obtain peak performance from players and a team.

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