

## STUDYING THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN LEADERSHIP STYLE OF COACHES AND SPORTSMANSHIP COMMITMENT OF ATHLETES (A CASE STUDY OF PROFESSIONAL ATHLETES IN I.R. I. KARATE SUPER LEAGUE)

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**Abstract.** *Purpose:* Today, when a group of people trying to reach the goal, manager and leader usually undertake the responsibility of the group. Coach renders influence on team members, while athletes work hard to achieve team goals. The purpose of the present study is relationship between leadership styles of coaches and sports actions of karate athletes. *Material:* The present study involves all active athletes of Super League karate in 91-92 season (N=100). The statistical sample was equal to statistical population (N=n). In order to collect information we used leadership style questionnaire Bos and Avlio (MLQ) and questionnaire of Scanlan & et al (SCMS). Internal validity questionnaire was approved by university professors and its reliability – by Cronbach's alpha test 0.86, and 0.79. Also for data analysis we used descriptive indicators of mean and standard deviation. Preliminary analysis of data proved normal distribution by Kolmogorov-Smirnov test. And then, we used measurements by Pearson, Spearman, Mann-Whitney U, Wilcoxon T, Friedman correlation coefficient of significance level ( $P \leq 0.05$ ). *Results:* there are significant differences between athletes' results and styles of leadership. There is significant correlation between the results with style Attraction (0.000), *Idealized Influence* (0.000), *Inspirational* (0.001), Intellectual stimulation (0.007), Individualized consideration (0.017), Exception Active (0.008) and *Laissez-faire* (0.041) ( $P \leq 0.05$ ). *Conclusions:* for increased of athletes' results coach should use style Attraction, *Idealized Influence*, *Inspirational*, Intellectual stimulation, Individualized consideration, Exception Active and if coach wants to see success of his athletes at athletic fields he should comply the applied styles with sportsmen's results.

**Keywords:** leadership style, commitment, karate, athletes.

### Introduction

In complex today's world, when a group of people try to achieve a goal, usually, there is a person who takes the responsibility of the group as manager or leader. To guide the group towards desired goals, this person must have necessary traits and skills. In sport fields, this role is played assumed by coach, because he guides and leads the players; his effective leadership has an important impact on the group's performance. Basing on the previous studies we can say that an effective coach is a person who can change the result of game, and be able to bring success and positive morale reactions to the team [1]. People involved in professional sports have realized that traditional method of last decades could no longer be relied on, and coaches found, that to participate in sporting events they have to use new scientific approaches to the subject; so scientific management methods have been implemented in order to organize major sporting clubs. Karate, as martial art, is not an exception from this rule. Leadership, due to its influence on effectiveness of individuals and team, is one of important processes in human resources management. An efficient leadership results in better performances, motives creation and team members' satisfaction. Therefore, every coach must have a precise understanding of leadership concept of organization [2]. Leadership is a fundamental process in every organization or team, where failure or success is attributed to its leadership. When an organization, university or a sporting team gains victory, usually all credits and honors go to its manager or coach. Even the subsequent advantages go mostly to managers and coaches rather than to the staff and the players.

Toosi, Rizo and Carol (1986) define the leadership as an art of influencing on followers and making them fulfill instructions and be obedient. They believe that leadership occurs, when an individual can obtain the acceptance of others towards achieving desired goals of an organization [3]. To Yomagogy and Maer, leadership is not only combination of personal characteristic but also a series of concentrated manners on duty and relationship [5].

Coach is the team's leader and leadership is the process of influencing on team members in order to make them to achieve team targets, through hard endeavor, commitment and satisfaction. To render influence on athletes, coaches have to use different leadership methods. At competitions and in professional sports experiences show, that coaches, who are elite in coaching knowledge and related technicalities, render more effective influence on team's success, on performance and players' satisfaction. In the field of coaching and teaching of sports skills to athletes, especially at national levels, recognition of factors, effecting on mental and physical conditions of the athletes, can be a determining factor in their success. Besides, athletes are the most principal human power in sports and they are true producers and consumers in this field. It is necessary that coaches and managers try to form happy and satisfactory experience for the athletes. Athletes should not only get required information about tactics and techniques from coaches, but also

should understand and accept them. Successful coaches are those who help the athletes to achieve high level in new skills, enjoy competitions and feel joy and commitment [8].

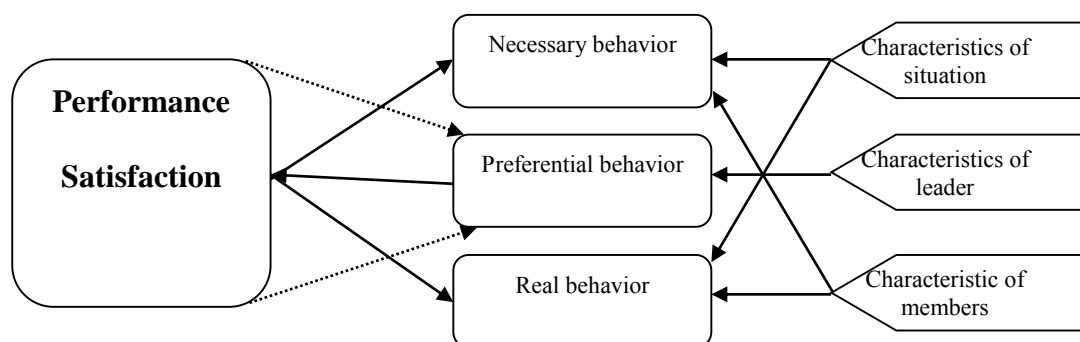
Coaching is a type of leadership in sports teams, in which the set goals are followed up purposefully. The main goal of coaching is improving the performance in sports competitions. The role of a coach is management, a process of performance's improvement, which is based on athlete's abilities. The main characteristic of this role is helping athletes to have proper performance at a proper time [9].

Coaching and management of national teams and premium league is more sensitive than that of other levels of competitions, where coaches must be able to utilize different styles of leadership in exercises, tours, camping and sports competition. Especially motives and sportsmanship are most important in such competition levels. Therefore evaluation and studying coaches' position, regarding management of their teams, should not be limited to their technical qualities, but it should consider other factors, which could have effect on team's success and failure. Leadership is a requisite of coaching. Some of important duties in leadership context include creating motive and commitment among the athletes, developing effective relationships with them, making coordination and improving satisfaction of the athletes.

Researchers have consistently showed that coaches' leadership type plays a determining role in sports participation of team members. This is an obvious fact to the coaches that they play a vital and effective role in the field of sports. Also this effective role goes beyond the field of sport and covers other aspects of athletes' lives. It is clear that coaches can have a positive or negative impact on athletes' living environment.

Different models have been presented for style of leadership. Chelladurai's (1990) is the model considered by this research. In this model the initial variables which determine leader's behavior, are divided into three groups: characteristics of members, characteristics of situation and characteristics of leadership, and performance and satisfaction of members are regarded as the outcome.

According to this model, the proper outcome (excellent performance and high level of athletes' satisfaction) is occurred, when there is a balanced relationship among these three aspects. In this model, it is proposed that, when a coach provides suitable environment and considers requirements and interests of athletes, team and individual performance and also satisfaction of athletes would be increased to its highest level. Besides, Chelladurai's model emphasizes on the reciprocal relationship between coach's behavior and performance and satisfaction of athletes. According to this model real behavior of the coach is greatly influenced by satisfaction and performance of the athletes [10].



**Figure 1.** Multi-dimensional model of leadership in sports [2].

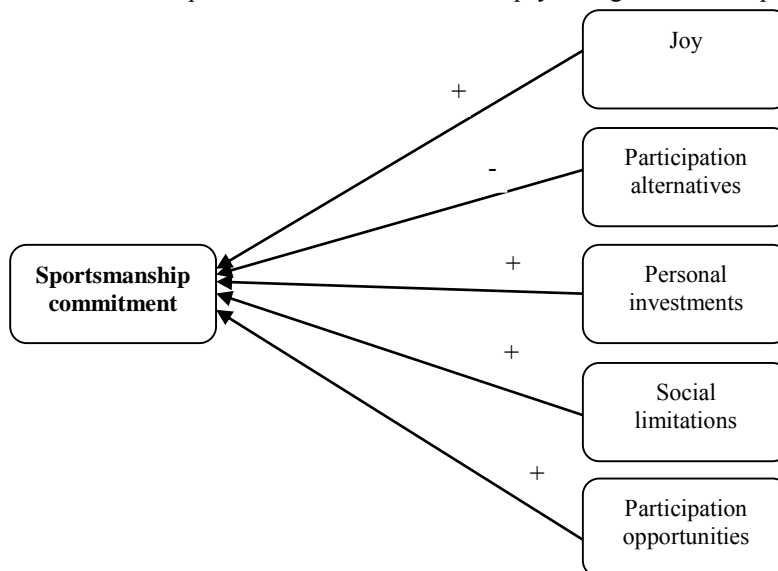
Several researchers have supported Chelladurai's multi-dimensional model and also it points that relationship among three types of leadership's behavior, which could lead to a desirable performance and satisfaction of athletes, is well defined. In this model there is a framework for understanding the elements, which could affect the behavior of coach. To his belief behavior of a coach (necessary, preferential, and real behavior) is influenced by three main variables: characteristics of situation, characteristics of members and characteristics of leader. Characteristics of leader such as age, sex, experience, character, etc., characteristics of situation such as condition of organizing of group or team, advantages of team and etc., and also characteristics of members such as age, level of skill, culture and personality. Behavior of coach could be affected by each of these three variables and in general they have a determining part in athletes' performance and satisfaction. One decade after publishing Chelladurai model (1980), many researches were carried out on examining and studying hypotheses of this theory. These examinations have supported the communicational processes among the variables of his model and therefore have endorsed it [10].

As it has been said, besides coach's style of leadership, sportsmanship commitment of the athletes could also be reckoned as a factor in achieving victory. Organizational commitment has been regarded as one of the important concepts in last decades, and has been defined as state of mind or an impulse that connects an individual with purpose and the establishment of an organization. The extent of this definition gives the researchers an opportunity to examine all types of commitments in organizations, their growth and their effects on individuals and organizations [11]. The

main portion of the studies has been concentrated on organizational structure. In fact most of what we know about commitment has come from our studies on organizational behavior [12]. It should be noted that sports teams as organizations are a target oriented structure with a defined sphere, therefore examining the concept of commitment as an effective factor on team's performance is of importance. In view of this, some studies have been done, where organizational commitment models have been used. Since sports environments have their own characteristics, examining the commitment, requires dealing with the matter of athletes' sportsmanship commitment on the basis of Scanlan's sportsmanship commitment model (1993).

Recently, with introducing sportsmanship commitment model, a great achievement has been gained by combination sport with commitment. According to Scanlan's model, sportsmanship commitment is a psychological structure which shows inclination and determination of continuing the participation in sport activities [13]. Sportsmanship commitment model is designed to examine the cause of participation of peoples in some particular sports. This model is a case beyond the general or working commitment and has been formed in the field of sport where there is a little attention to it.

Sports commitment is a psychological structure which shows the inclination and determination of continuing the participation in sport [14]. Scanlan & Carpenter have stated that athlete's behavior is influenced by both psychological factor and other forces .therefore through this model it would be possible to determine the desire of sportsmanship commitment and then measure the relationship between sportsmanship commitment itself and also the quantity of the relationship between these variables and psychological case of sportsmanship commitment [14].



**Figure 2.** Sports manship commitment model [14].

There are many studies about style of leadership and organizational commitment which we refer to some of them. Mount (1981), in a research entitled "application of situational leadership in sport" describes a leadership style model and concludes that a coach should consider the goals of the team and individuals and also the degree of players majority, when choosing his style of leadership. Case & Fisher (1984) in a study entitled "leadership in sport" dealt with the application of condition based theory in sports, and concluded that in condition based theory for achieving maximum effectiveness of leadership and management, there is non-concurrence in management behavior with prevailing conditions in the sport. Kellett (1999) in his research under the title of "Understanding coaching and managing behaviors of the coaches in Australia Football super league" concluded that creation of a supportive environment means provision of learning atmosphere for developing skills and team work in players, where opportunities should be provided for players to develop, and the coach should interfere only when there is possibility of a danger to happen for learning atmosphere. Serpa (1999) in a study related to athletes' perception and self perception of coaches showed that in general, exercise and teaching behaviors and positive feedback are the most important dimensions of leadership measure in sport. Bucher (2003) studied leadership style of university's female coach of lawn hockey and showed that coaches regarded their behavior towards the players as democratic. On this point there was a significant difference between the perceived behavior of athletes and that of the coaches.

Andrew (2004), in a research named "effect of harmony in leadership behavior on the motivation, commitment and satisfaction among tennis players" found that perceived and preferred harmonies of leadership behavior could affect the sportsmanship commitment and enjoyment. Sermones (2004) studied the effect of harmony in leadership behavior on the motivation, commitment and satisfaction of the athletes and concluded that harmonies of leadership

behavior perceived and preferred by the athletes are cause of an internal motive for learning, sportsmanship commitment, enjoyment of the sport, satisfaction from personal and team performance and also satisfaction from exercises and educations.

Kent & Sullivan (2008) have compared behavior of American and Canadian coaches. The result showed that Canadian coaches have significant level of democratic behavior, instruction, exercises and positive feedback, if compared with American coaches. Garcia et al (2010) have studied the effect of the joy of motivation and commitment on young players in competitive football. Results showed a clear paradigm of enjoyment from sport influenced by motivation and commitment, the outcome of which was a positive share of joy from internal and external motivation and the commitment. In general (Bass, 1985), (Hater and Bass 1988), (Morris and Sherman (1981), have shown in their research that style of leadership is an organizational feature whereby commitment is foreseen. Also Andrew states that studies on athlete's commitment and leadership is very rare to a point where he claims, have not seen any (Andrew 2004), (Glisson and Durick (1988). There are many studies on coaches' style of leadership, where relationships between coaches' styles of leadership and different team and individual outcomes like harmony and satisfaction, have been studied. But there is not much research on the relationship between coaches' style of leadership and athletes' sportsmanship commitment, and where there is such a research, organizational commitment have been considered instead of players' commitment. Since Iranian Karate has a good ranking in Asia and the world, therefore the findings of this research could be used by different parties concerned, such as clubs, coaches and all who are active in the field of sports at country level and karate federation, specially karate teams. Therefore this research answers the question whether there is a relationship between coaches' style of leadership and athletes' sportsmanship commitment in Islamic Republic of Iran Karate super league.

**Research methodology:**

The present research is of descriptive and correlation type, in which its data have been collected at the field of research. The field, in which this data have been gathered, consists of all karate athletes and coaches of country Karate Super league including 100 athletes. In this research statistical sample is equal to statistical society (N=n). Only 75 out of 100 athletes have completely answered the questionnaires. After studying reliable sources and various scientific papers and also after consultation with experts in sports management, Scanlan's commitment questionnaires (1993) and Chelladurai's questionnaires of leadership measurements in sports or understanding coach's behavior by athletes (1978) were chosen and translated.

**Table 1.** Reliability of questionnaires

Cronbach's alpha	questionnaire
0.79	sportsmanship commitment (SCMS)
0.86	leadership style (MLQ)

In this research descriptive and inference statistics have been used in order to organize and summarize the raw points and explanation of samples' sizes.

Cronbach's alpha data analysis method has been used for determining the degree of questionnaires' reliability. For determining that whether the distribution of data is normal Kolmogorov-Smirnov test, and for research hypotheses, correlation tests of Pearson, Spearman, Mann-Whitney U, Wilcoxon T, and Friedman have been used. Statistical operation has been done by SPSS software version 18 at the significance level of (p≤0/05).

**Result and finding of the research:**

Before testing research hypotheses Kolmogorov-Smirnov test has been used to verify that the distribution is normal.

Verifying that the distribution of sportsmanship commitment variable and its components is normal:

**Table 2.** Results of Kolmogorov-Smirnov test on sportsmanship commitment and its components

Participation opportunities	Social limitation	joy	commitment	
4.32	3.14	3.87	3.9	mean
0.77	0.96	0.86	0.75	Standard deviation
1.73	0.95	1.07	1.10	Z
0.005	0.32	0.20	0.17	Sig
normal	abnormal	abnormal	abnormal	condition of variables

Verifying that the distribution of leadership style variable and its components is normal:

**Table 3.** Results of Kolmogorov-Smirnov test on leadership style and its components

unrestrained	Inactive exception	Active exception	Conditional reward	Personal consideration	Sectional attitude	inspirational	Moral effect	attraction	
2.26	3.11	3.82	3.45	3.72	3.60	3.93	3.81	3.73	mean
0.91	0.89	0.85	0.86	0.84	0.83	0.98	0.83	0.68	Standard deviation
0.86	0.69	1.41	0.75	0.93	1.13	1.44	0.98	1.08	Z
0.45	0.31	0.03	0.61	0.34	0.15	0.03	0.28	0.19	Sig
abnormal	abnormal	normal	abnormal	abnormal	abnormal	normal	abnormal	abnormal	condition of variables

As seen in tables 2 and 3, Kolmogorov-Smirnov test's findings show that:

- 1- Participation opportunities from components of sportsmanship commitment variable, inspirational and active exception from components of leadership style variable have normal distribution.
  - 2- Social limitation, commitment and joy from components of sportsmanship commitment variable, and attraction, moral effect, sectional attitude, personal consideration, conditional reward, inactive exception and unrestrained from components of leadership style variable have an abnormal distribution.
- For normal data parametric statistics and for abnormal data non-parametric statistics were used.

**Table 4.** Results of Friedman test, the difference between athletes' commitment

Average of grades	Significance level	Freedom degree	Kai square	Levels of athletes' commitment
2.54	0.000	3	75.597	commitment
2.51				joy
1.58				Social limitation
3.37				Participation opportunity

As observed in table (4), regarding significance level of [0/00], there are significant differences between athletes' commitment. In order to clarify the difference between components Wilcoxon T test was used and the following results were obtained.

**Table 5.** Wilcoxon T test results - difference between components of athletes' commitment

Participation opportunity	Social limitation	joy	commitment	statistic	Levels of athletes' commitment
-4.360	-4.950	-0.261	.....	Z	commitment
0.000	0.000	0.794	.....	Significance level	
-3.742	-4.308	.....	.....	Z	joy
0.000	0.000	.....	.....	Significance level	
-6.749	.....	.....	.....	Z	Social limitation
0.000	.....	.....	.....	Significance level	
.....	.....	.....	.....	Z	Participation opportunity
.....	.....	.....	.....	Significance level	

As seen in table (5) and with regard to correlation coefficients obtained for components of sportsmanship commitment, there is a significant relationship between components of:

- (Commitment with participation opportunities)
- (Joy with participation opportunities)

- (Social limits with participation opportunities)
- But there is no significant relationship between components of:
- (Commitment with joy and social limits)
- (Joy with social limits)

Therefore, the relationship between participation opportunities components with other components of athletes' sportsmanship commitment has been approved.

**Table 6.** Friedman test results, difference between coaches' style of leadership.

Average of grades	Significance level	Freedom degree	Kai square	Styles of leadership
5.40				attraction
5.79				Moral effect
6.34				inspirational
5.06				Sectional attitude
5.66				Personal consideration
4.54	0.000	8	126.895	Conditional reward
5.87				Active exception
4.11				Inactive exception
2.24				unrestrained

As shown in table (6), considering the significance level of (0.000%), there is a significance difference between coaches' styles of leadership, therefore to show the difference between components Wilcoxon T was used and the following results were obtained:

**Table 7.** Wilcoxon test results, difference between different styles of coaches' leadership

unrestrained	Inactive exception	Active exception	Conditional reward	Personal consideration	Sectional attitude	inspirational	Moral effect	attraction	statistic	Significance level	Styles of leadership
-6.542	-4.267	-1.169	-2.428	-0.253	-1.058	-1.879	8.35	.....	Z		Attraction
0.000	0.000	0.242	0.015	0.800	0.290	0.060	0.404	.....	Significance level		Moral effect
-6.271	-4.051	-0.192	-3.475	-0.648	-2.175	-1.341	.....	.....	Z		inspirational
0.000	0.000	0.848	0.001	0.517	0.030	0.180	.....	.....	Significance level		Sectional attitude
-6.340	-4.438	-1.149	-4.273	-2.250	-3.218	.....	.....	.....	Z		Personal consideration
0.000	0.000	0.250	0.000	0.024	0.001	.....	.....	.....	Significance level		Conditional reward
-6.072	-3.064	-2.762	-1.358	-1.675	.....	.....	.....	.....	Z		Active exception
0.000	0.002	0.004	0.174	0.094	.....	.....	.....	.....	Significance level		Inactive exception
-6.108	-4.128	-1.220	-2.783	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	Z		

0.000	0.000	0.223	0.005	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	Significance level	unrestrained
-5.595	-2.391	-3.694	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	Z	attraction
0.000	0.017	0.000	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	Significance level	Moral effect
-6.295	-4.382	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	Z	inspirational
0.000	0.000	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	Significance level	Sectional attitude
-5.758	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	Z	Personal consideration
0.000	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	Significance level	Conditional reward
.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	Z	Active exception
.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	Significance level	inactive exception

- There are significant differences between attraction style and styles of conditional rewards, inactive exception and unrestrained, but there are no significant differences between attraction style and styles of Inspirational, sectional attitude, moral effect, personal consideration and active exception.
- There are significant differences between moral effect style and styles of sectional attitude, conditional rewards, inactive exception and unrestrained, but there are no significant differences between moral effect style and styles of attraction, Inspirational, personal consideration and active exception.
- There are significant differences between Inspirational style and styles of sectional attitude, personal consideration, conditional rewards, inactive exception and unrestrained, but there are no significant differences between inspirational style and active exception style.
- There are significant differences between sectional attitude style and styles of active exception, inactive exception and unrestrained, but there are no significant differences between sectional attitude style and personal consideration and conditional rewards style.
- There are significant differences between personal consideration style and styles of conditional rewards, inactive exception and unrestrained, but there are no significant differences between personal consideration style and active exception style.
- There are significant differences between conditional rewards style and styles of active exception, inactive exception and unrestrained.
- There are significant differences between active exception style and styles of inactive exception and unrestrained.
- There are significant differences between inactive exception style and unrestrained style.

**Table 8.** Pearson, Spearman test results; correlations between commitment and different leadership styles

Sportsmanship commitment	statistic	Style of leadership
0.0393	Pearson correlation coefficient	attraction
0.000	Significance level	
0.530	Pearson correlation coefficient	Moral effect
0.000	Significance level	

0.388	Spearman correlation coefficient	inspirational
0.001	Significance level	
0.307	Pearson correlation coefficient	Sectional attitude
0.007	Significance level	
0.257	Pearson correlation coefficient	Personal consideration
0.017	Significance level	
0.168	Pearson correlation coefficient	Conditional reward
0.151	Significance level	
0.304	Spearman correlation coefficient	Active exception
0.008	Significance level	
0.029	Pearson correlation coefficient	Inactive exception
0.803	Significance level	
-0.237	Pearson correlation coefficient	unrestrained
0.041	Significance level	
75		quantity

As shown in table (6), There are significant correlations between sportsmanship commitment with styles of attraction, moral effect, inspirational, sectional attitude, personal consideration, active exception and unrestrained, which rejects the assumption.

### Discussion

Friedman test showed that there are significant differences between components of sportsmanship commitment, so in order to verify these differences T Willcoxon showed that there is a significant difference between commitment with participation opportunities and social limitations, there is no significant difference between commitment and joy. The differences between component of joy and participation opportunities and social limitations, and differences between participation opportunities and social limitations are significant. Component of joy, which is one of motivation components, plays effective role in creating commitment for athlete. Omand, also, came to conclusion that athletes' satisfaction from coach's strategies and decisions appears because of joy component of motivation. Studying of commitment as sportsmanship commitment in sports teams and athletes is in accordance with findings of researchers such as Fathi (1390), Andrew (2004) and Garcia (2010)

Considering Friedman test, there are significant differences between coaches' leadership styles; therefore to determine the differences between leadership styles, T Willcockson test was used. The results showed that there are no significant differences between styles of attraction and moral effect and other coaches' leadership styles so that increasing of using attraction and moral effect components by the coaches could cause an increase in using other components of coaches' leadership styles. This in turn could bring about more respect from athletes towards their coach, making them proud of him and making them to believe in his values, beliefs and ideas. Therefore it is necessary for the coaches to consider more effective components such as attraction and moral effect styles while choosing the style of leadership.

Sportsmanship commitment is a psychological concept which shows the interest and inclination towards sports and paves the way for continuing participation in sports. This concept shows the psychological condition of athletes for participation in sports and has motivating value for them. On the matter of relationship between sportsmanship commitment of athletes and coaches' leadership style, based on Spearman- Pierson's correlation coefficient, this research shows that there is a significant relationship between sportsmanship commitment of Karatek athletes and coaches' styles of leadership. Therefore it could be concluded that adoption of leadership style by a coach could increase or decrease the level of commitment among the Karate-k athletes. So coaches should pay more attention while choosing style of their leadership.

Findings of this research on relationship between styles of leadership and sportsmanship commitment on Karate-k athletes show that sportsmanship commitment has significant relationships with attraction, moral effect, inspirational, sectional attitude, personal consideration, active exception styles of leadership, while it has no significant relationships with conditional rewards and inactive exception styles. It also has a negative significant relationship with unrestrained style.

This shows that for increasing the athletes' commitment, a coach should adopt such styles as attraction, moral effect, inspirational, sectional attitude, personal consideration, active exception, while leaving aside styles of conditional reward and inactive exception. He should also know that using conditional rewards and inactive exception styles decrease sportsmanship commitment of athletes specially those who are active in Karate.

These findings confirm theoretical bases of the research. On this basis, some important duties of leaders include: creating commitment and motivation, developing an effective relationship with the athletes, creating coordination and increasing satisfaction of athletes. Recognition of factors that have effect on mental and physical



condition of athletes, could be determining for success of coaches in their teaching effort, especially among athletes at the national levels. Besides, athletes are the most important human source in sports and the real producers and consumers of it. Therefore it is necessary for coaches and sport managers to create a pleasant experience and an atmosphere of satisfaction for athletes to continue their activities. Successful coaches help athletes to gain new skills and to be well versed in their field, and also have satisfactory feelings in competing with others. Therefore it is suggested that coaches use appropriate methods for creating motives. In order to do so, it is recommended to senior managers of ministry of sport and youth and sports federations, in particular Karate federation, to organize courses on the matter of motivation explanation and ways for creating motive among team members so that coaches get familiar with theoretical basis of motivation and effective leadership by which they can lead their teams in a more adequate way.

Among components of commitment it should be noted that restrictions and necessities, imposed by coaches, team-mates, family members and other persons related to the athletes, have lead the athletes to feel committed for participating in sports events. Even though the pressures exerted upon athletes by the coach make them stick to their commitments, but imposing unnecessary pressure by coaches should be avoided. Researches show that athletes who feel self committed based on others' expectations and necessities have continued participating in sporting activities. If these expectations be non realistic and beyond the abilities of athlete it may make him leave the team and even the sport altogether. On the other hand to have a lower expectation than athletes' abilities could cause commitment evasion and negligence in him.

Considering these explanations, generally all individuals relating to athletes, and especially coaches, should have reasonable and attainable expectations from him, so it could affect his commitment favorably. If athletes feel no joy in sport activities, we cannot expect much commitment from them towards their teams and clubs. This should be noted that having an opportunity for participating in sporting events could result in athletes' sportsmanship commitment. Result showed that participation opportunities create more commitment in Iran super league Karate athletes. These results confirm Sousa's findings (2007) but not that of researchers such as Andrew (2004) and Scanlan (1993). If opportunities for participating in daily activities are provided in sports, athletes would feel committed in joining such activities.

#### **Conflict of interests**

The authors declare that there is no conflict of interests.

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