



Universiteit Leiden

Faculteit der Sociale Wetenschappen



Football Managers: The Relation Between Leader Behaviour, Team Atmosphere and Team Performance

Benoît Wiersma

Master thesis Psychology, specialization Social and Organizational Psychology
Institute of Psychology
Faculty of Social and Behavioral Sciences – Leiden University

Date: 16th March 2015

Student number: s0724475

First examiner of the university: Dr. Herman Steensma

Second examiner of the university: Dr. Wim van Breukelen

MSc Thesis (20 ECTS)

ABSTRACT

This paper proposes a mediation model to describe the relation between leadership behaviour and team performance in football teams. The model argues that leadership behaviour is a key component to the success of football teams, mediated by the atmosphere amongst the players. The model is then used to predict team performance. Leadership behaviours used in this study were style approach, path-goal theory, leader-member exchange theory, transformational leadership and authentic leadership. Questionnaires amongst 68 (ex) football players were used for data gathering. Support was found for the importance of managerial behaviour and team atmosphere on team performance in football teams. Using the model to predict team performance needs further research. Limitations of the current study, recommendations for future research and implications for practice are discussed.

INTRODUCTION

Are football matches won by players, or by tactics? Some believe that player quality is the most important, deciding factor which wins football matches. Others put great faith in designing elaborate tactics to counter opposition strength's or exploit their weaknesses. The truth, as always, will probably be somewhere in the middle.

Football isn't played on paper. If it was, one could just look at the players involved in both teams and already know who was going to win the match, without the match even needed to be played. Matches would always be won by the favourites. Thankfully, football isn't played on paper. There are countless examples of clear underdogs upsetting the odds and claiming the scalp of a much stronger team. Clearly then, player quality is no guarantee for victory. Sometimes the weaker team will have come up with a brilliant game plan to neutralize an opponent's attacking threat and then strike with a beautiful counter attack in the dying seconds. "It was a tactical victory", many would proclaim. However, even the best of tactical ideas won't always help an underdog grind out a victory. What is undeniable however is that in the end, there are twenty-two players out on the pitch and it's between them that a match will be decided. For all the control and influence a manager has before the match, as soon as his eleven players set foot on the pitch, a manager relinquishes most of his influence. A manager can very carefully have decided which eleven players would suit the task at hand best. He can take into account player quality, fatigue, playing style etc. He can have come up with a thoroughly laid out tactical plan. None of these matter though, if the players involved don't live up to their expectations. What is the worth of a brilliant tactical plan, if your players can't execute it to perfection? What is the worth of a player's technical brilliance, if nothing he does comes

off on the day? It is this third variable which I believe to be of paramount importance in deciding whether a team performs at or above expectations or falls way below expectations. It's a variable which seems to largely go unnoticed. In the end, it's all about the *mental state* of a player.

The difference between a player full of confidence and one completely bereft of confidence can be as big as the difference between day and night. Imagine an entire team full of confidence or completely bereft of it. The inherent player quality will still be the same. The tactical ideas of the manager will still be the same. Yet results can vary wildly, depending on the players' mental state. Because this factor seems to largely go unnoticed, people are quick to label an underperforming player as just not being good enough. A change of scenery though, such as a new manager, or a transfer to a different club, and all of a sudden this very same player turns out to be an absolute star. Did he just learn to play football over night? Or did the change in scenery allow him to live up to the potential he always had?

It is my opinion that this factor, the *mental state* of a player, is a factor often neglected. Not only by the general public, but also by football managers. To be a truly successful football manager, one needs to be an excellent man manager, atop of the many other necessary qualities, such as tactical expertise. A lack of expertise in any particular area can be balanced by being very good at another area, allowing you to still be a successful manager. Those who manage to combine expertise in all the required areas though, are the ones who become truly successful, for a prolonged amount of time and regardless of their team or in what nation they are managing. Regardless of what challenge they come up against, they have the knowledge and expertise to expertly deal with it. They are rarely found wanting.

There are very few managers who possess all the required traits to be classed as an absolute world-class manager though. This just goes to show how difficult it is to accomplish this. As mentioned earlier, it is my opinion that the psychological side of football often gets neglected or at best, gets undervalued for its true importance. This is not entirely surprising though. After all, other important factors, such as player quality and tactics, are directly linked to football. Anything a player does on the pitch, is a combination of what he *can* do (player quality) and what he's been *told* to do (tactics). These are factors which only apply to footballers on the pitch. However, the mental state of a person is present whenever and wherever. This is not unique to footballers and it does not only apply when being on the pitch. How you feel, who you are, determines anything you do, as well as how you do it. It's a combination of your personality and your environment. Because this factor is ever present and not directly tied to football, it is easy to overlook or undervalue this factor.

Being able to work with, understand and motivate people is a useful skill which can be applied in any environment involving more than one person. In an environment where a group of people rely on these skills from a single person, they are imperative. It either requires great

psychological knowledge of people or a natural talent of knowing how to get the most from a person. Not only because there are so many factors which have an influence on a person's mental well-being, but also because every person will need a personalized approach. It requires great attention to detail and effort to not only want to attenuate to this information, but to also be able to handle it properly, in order to be a truly effective leader. For this you need more than just being intelligent and having lots of technical knowledge. Goleman (1998) argues that whilst IQ and technical skills are important, having high emotional intelligence is what separates the good from the best leaders. This draws some parallels with the importance of the mental state of a player, in that it largely flies under the radar, yet its influence could very well be critical.

Influencing the mental state

The *mental state* of a person is affected by many variables. How you feel and your level of self-confidence. The trust you feel from your environment, the level of conflict with teammates, how much pressure you are under etc. All these factors in turn can influence your level of motivation, which in turn can affect performance. Hardre and Reeve (2003) showed that the level of autonomy support in classrooms predicted self-determined motivation and perceived competence in students. Motivation and perceived competence in turn predicted students' intentions to persist versus drop out. Research by Robbins, Le, Davis, Lauver, Langley and Carlstrom (2004) showed that achievement motivation was an important predictor of Grade Point Average for college students.

Not only can motivation have a big influence on performance, there's even different types of motivation where one can be more successful than others. *Intrinsic motivation* is a motivation to pursue interesting tasks which challenge one's skills and foster growth (Deci & Ryan, 1985). *Extrinsic motivation* on the other hand, are external rewards such as prize money or fame. It is generally considered that intrinsic motivation leads to better performance than extrinsic motivation. For example, Vidic and Burton (2011) showed that intrinsically oriented leadership styles were significantly related to better performance in high school and college athletes at a military institute. In contrast, Readdy, Raabe and Harding (2014) showed that while extrinsic rewards were enjoyable, they did not lead to more motivation or better performance in college football players.

Leaders have a big influence on a person's level of motivation. Hollembeak and Amorose (2005) showed that several coaching behaviours significantly predicted perceived competence and autonomy in college athletes, which in turn predicted intrinsic motivation. Coaching behaviours used include a coach's decision making style (democratic and autocratic) and instructional tendencies (training and instruction). Charbonneau, Barling and Kelloway (2001) demonstrated that transformational leadership may enhance intrinsic interest in a task in university athletes.

It is clear from this that if motivation can have such a big effect on performance and leaders can have a big influence on a person's mental state (and therefore motivation), that the role of the leader is crucial. The influence of a leader extends beyond this however, as a leader can also have a big influence on team atmosphere, which Fletcher and Arnold (2011) showed as one of several important factors in performance leadership and management in elite sport. In addition, leaders can also influence how an individual approaches his or her job. This is also important, because Rogerson and Hrycaiko (2002) showed that the use of two particular mental skills (relaxation and self-talk) improved the save percentage of goaltenders in ice hockey. Thelwell, Greenlees and Weston (2006) reported improved results on football players using particular psychological skills (relaxation, imagery and self-talk).

The interesting part comes from translating all this prior research to the domain of football. What does and doesn't hold up? In this article, I will focus on the one person who has the most influence on the players in a football team. Although some players, especially a team's captain, can often act as a leader and exert great influence over the other players, it is the manager who in the end is held responsible for team performance. It is very much his job to act as the leader of the team. He has the power to decide how things are run and done. It is his job to make sure players go out on the pitch with the right state of mind. How can one accomplish this though? Are there any clear cut rules for this? Every individual has his own personality. Does this mean one needs a full understanding of the psychology of the human being, before being able to become an accomplished football manager? Or are there general guidelines one can follow which are likely to lead to success? And just how important is it how a manager interacts with his players?

It is my aim in this article to provide new information on what makes a football manager a successful football manager. How do general management theories hold up in the domain of football? Just how important is it to be a good man manager? And what do good man managers do, which differentiates them from the less successful manager?

Leadership

Leadership is defined by Northouse (2010) as "a process whereby an individual influences a group of individuals to achieve a common goal". The group of individuals are the *followers*. The individual exerting the influence is the *leader*. Without followers, there can be no leader. It is a *process*, because the leader and followers interact with each other in both directions. It involves *influence* to affect followers. Without influence, there can be no leadership. It involves *common goals*, because the leader directs his energy to affect his followers towards a goal they have in common.

According to this definition, leadership, or more precisely, being a leader, is not solely restricted to certain individuals. A manager will act as the leader of the group, by virtue of being put in that position. Certain players (who may or may not be a team's captain) could also act as a leader, by virtue of displaying certain personality traits, such as intelligence or extraversion. As a leader, you try to influence your followers. In order to successfully influence your followers, you need power. French and Raven (1959) have identified five forms of power. Legitimate, reward, coercive, expert and referent power. People with legitimate power, have power because of their position, such as a police officer. People with reward power have power because they can provide or withhold rewards, such as bonuses or payments. Coercive power is the ability to inflict negative influences on others, such as punishment. People with expert power have power because they have expert knowledge of something. Knowledge which others don't have. People with referent power, such as many celebrities, have power because they influence feelings others have about themselves. When people do what you do or want them to do, they feel better about themselves. A leader may combine more than one of these bases of power. Generally, an effective leader makes use of expert and referent power, as this leads to satisfaction and commitment. Legitimate, reward and coercive power will generally only lead to obedience of followers. A player who is also a successful leader, will generally not have much legitimate, reward or coercive power. Instead, he will most likely have a fair bit of referent and/or expert power. A manager on the other hand, most certainly has legitimate, reward and coercive power, but most likely also expert power and if his reputation is high enough, also referent power.

Aside from being the manager of a football team and therefore having the power to influence his players, the question is how he goes on about this. There are many ways in which a manager can act. Some managers apply very strict rules, others are very lenient. Some managers are always supportive of their players, others frequently criticise their players. Some are very confrontational and regularly stir up the pot, others are forever the gentleman. Does it matter how the manager behaves? Does a certain type of behaviour more often lead to success on and off the pitch? Or do different situations require a different approach and is the good manager the one who realizes this and adapts his approach according to the situation at hand?

Leadership styles and theories

There are many different leadership styles and leadership theories describing a particular style. Taking into account the context of the current research, I deem the following leadership styles and theories to be most relevant and therefore these are the ones that will be evaluated in this

research: Style approach, path-goal theory, leader-member exchange theory, transformational leadership and authentic leadership.

Style approach focuses on the behaviour of leaders. It is assumed that there are two kinds of behaviours: *task behaviour* and *relationship behaviour*. Task behaviour focuses on attaining a certain goal. Relationship behaviour focuses on making the people feel comfortable. With themselves, with others and with the situation itself. The style approach therefore only describes how one leads. If we consider that a leader could be more or less concerned with task behaviour and leadership behaviour, we can identify five different leadership styles if we combine these two behaviours. Blake and Mouton (1964) have identified these as *Authority-Compliance* (high task and low relationship emphasis), *Country-Club Management* (low task and high relationship emphasis), *Impoverished Management* (low task and low relationship emphasis), *Team Management* (high task and high relationship emphasis) and *Middle-of-the-Road Management* (medium task and relationship emphasis). I believe that neither one of task behaviour nor relationship behaviour is necessarily more important than the other and that it depends on the context where you should put the emphasis. In general though, I believe a leader who is successful in emphasizing both aspects at the appropriate times to have a better chance of achieving his goals. As such, I define higher levels of task behaviour and higher levels of relationship behaviour as *Positive Leadership Behaviour (PLB)*.

Path-goal theory focuses on varying the leadership style depending on the work setting and the personality characteristics of those involved. The main idea of path-goal theory is to increase performance and satisfaction, by focusing on increasing the motivation of followers (Northouse, 2010). High motivation will lead to increased performance and satisfaction. Different people and different situations will require different leader behaviour to increase follower motivation. Path-goal theory distinguishes between four leadership styles. Leaders can use more than one style. The best leaders are able to vary their style based on the demands of the task and his followers. *Directive leadership* focuses on setting clear rules and regulations and defining clearly the level of performance expected and when this is to be expected. *Supportive leadership* focuses on being friendly and approachable. They make work pleasant, give people respect for their status and attend to another person's well-being and human needs. *Participative leadership* focuses on inviting followers to share in the decision making. Followers are asked about their ideas and opinions and these are used in the decision making process. Lastly, *achievement-oriented leadership* is focused on extracting the highest level of performance. Followers are continually challenged to meet this level and the leader also shows a high degree of confidence that this level can be reached and maintained. Because all four styles are geared towards increasing performance and satisfaction, I define higher levels on each of these four styles as *PLB*.

The focus in *leader-member exchange theory* is how a leader interacts with each of his followers. Instead of assuming that a leader applies a certain leadership style equally to all his followers, leader-member exchange theory focuses on potential differences between a leader and each of his followers (Northouse, 2010). The quality of the relationship between the leader and his follower is the key concept. The level of mutual respect, trust and feelings of obligations vary depending on the quality of the relationship. Graen and Uhl-Bien (1995) have shown that a higher quality relationship is related to better performance, job climate, organizational citizenship behaviour and other important organizational variables. I therefore define higher quality relationships as *PLB*.

Transformational leadership is quite different compared to the aforementioned leadership styles. In transformational leadership, the focus is on the charismatic and affective elements (Northouse, 2010). Transformational leadership is not just about an interaction between a leader and a follower, it is about a process where the follower, but also the leader, can be transformed to accomplish more than what is expected of them. By attending to the needs and motives of a follower, such as emotions and values, a leader helps a follower to accomplish his or her true potential. A transformational leader is often seen as a role-model and they are often described as charismatic and trustworthy. On the opposite end to transformational leadership, sits the *laissez-faire leadership* style. This style is characterized by a lack of leadership. The leader takes no responsibility, delays decisions, doesn't attend to the needs of followers and gives little feedback. In between these two styles we find the *transactional leadership* (Bass & Avolio, 1994). This style differs from transformational leadership in that it doesn't focus on attending to an individual's needs and personal development. Instead, it focuses on the exchanges of things of value to followers (such as money or goods), in order to accomplish their and their followers' goals. Research by Yukl (1999) showed that transformational leadership was positively related to motivation, performance and subordinate satisfaction. As such, I define higher levels of transformational leadership as *PLB*.

Authentic leadership is very similar to transformational leadership. Authentic leadership is a fairly new concept and as of yet doesn't have a clear definition. As the name implies however, authentic leadership is about whether leadership is genuine and "real". Northouse (2010) proposes three viewpoints to define authentic leadership. The *interpersonal* definition of authentic leadership is fairly similar to transformational leadership, in that it emphasizes the relation between a leader and his follower. The values advocated by leaders need to be identified with or accepted by followers, in order for the leader to be effective and accomplish change. The second definition of authentic leadership is the *developmental* definition. Avolio, Walumbwa and Weber (2009) suggested that authentic leadership is composed of four components: self-awareness, internalized moral perspective, balanced processing and relational transparency. *Self-awareness* is a process for a

person to really understand themselves. It is about knowing who you really are and what you stand for. It's about being able to reflect on aspects such as your core values and emotions. *Internalized moral perspective* is a self-regulatory process to allow a person to guide his behaviour according to his internal moral standards and values. *Balanced processing* is also a self-regulatory process. It refers to being able to analyse information objectively and unbiased. It also includes exploring the viewpoints of others, before drawing your own conclusions. *Relational transparency* is about being open and honest towards others. It's about presenting your true self to others by communicating openly and freely. An authentic leader is he who learns and develops each of these components during his life. The third definition is called the *intrapersonal* definition. In this definition, authentic leadership is about what goes on within a leader. It deals with a leader's self-knowledge, self-regulation and self-concept. How well does a leader really know who he is and how he behaves? Due to the similarities between transformational and authentic leadership, I define higher levels of authentic leadership as *PLB*.

Prior and current research

Van Breukelen, Van Der Leeden, Wesselius and Hoes (2010) investigated differential treatment within sports teams. They used the theoretical framework of the leader-member exchange theory and investigated many players playing for various sports teams such as football, hockey and basketball. They measured to what extent social and task-related differential treatment was associated with team atmosphere and team performance. They found that social differential treatment was negatively associated with team atmosphere, but unrelated to team performance. The two forms of task-related differential treatment which they used in their study showed that they were unrelated to team atmosphere and differently associated with team performance.

The current study has certain similarities to this previous study, but some of the key differences are that 1) this study will focus exclusively on football teams and 2) rather than focusing on just a single leadership theory (within which they considered two types of behaviour), the current study will incorporate five different kinds of leadership styles and theories in order to determine to what extent team atmosphere and team performance are associated with a particular leadership style.

The key similarity between both studies is to what extent a certain leadership behaviour/leadership style is associated to team atmosphere and team performance. In addition, Charbonneau et al. (2001) developed and tested a model where intrinsic motivation acted as a mediator between transformational leadership and sports performance. Using university athletes, they found considerable support for their proposed model. Their results isolated intrinsic motivation

as a mediator in the relationship between transformational leadership and sports performance. This suggested that transformational leadership might increase intrinsic motivation in the task. To this extent, I propose the research model as shown in Figure 1.

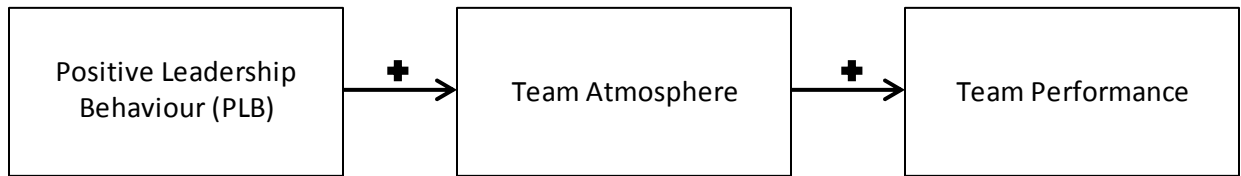


Figure 1. The research model

In this model, team atmosphere acts as a mediator between leader behaviour and team performance. I believe that team atmosphere, which encompasses factors such as team cohesion and team morale, which in turn can influence an individual's level of motivation, is positively associated with team performance. Positive leadership behaviour can lead to positive team performance, whereas negative leadership behaviour can lead to negative team performance. I consider team atmosphere to be a mediator between these two variables. When team atmosphere is high, I believe that positive leadership behaviour will be associated with positive team performance, whereas when team atmosphere is low, I believe negative leadership behaviour will be associated with negative team performance.

In order to find evidence in support of the proposed mediator model, I propose the following three hypotheses:

- 1) *Increased levels of PLB are associated with increased levels of Team Atmosphere*
- 2) *Increased levels of Team Atmosphere are associated with increased levels of Team Performance*
- 3) *Increased levels of PLB are associated with increased levels of Team Performance*

This research will try to shed light on to what extent currently known psychological processes can also be found in a football context, in order to give recommendations on what is important for football managers in order to improve results on the pitch. After all, managers fall and rise by results and these are subsequently the single most important aspect on whether a manager is seen as a success or failure and whether he gets to keep his job or not.

METHOD

Participants

Participants were 68 (ex) footballers recruited from various (amateur) football clubs in The Netherlands. All 68 participants were male. The average age was 31,93 years (age range: 17-72 years). The average career length of the participants was 18,32 years (career length range: 2-46 years). Two participants were currently active on a professional football level (2,9%), 51 were active on an amateur level (75%) and 15 were ex-footballers (22,1%).

Tests and measures

A questionnaire was used for data gathering. Participants were asked to recollect a season in which their team performed above expectations. They were given a range of statements about this season to which they were asked to indicate to what extent they agreed with the statement. These statements mostly inquired about the relation between their manager and the team. Statements were organized per leadership theory. A total of five leadership theories were used. For the second part of the questionnaire, the same statements were used, but this time the participants were asked to recollect a season in which their team performed below expectations. The full range of statements for each leadership style and team atmosphere can be found in the appendix.

Style Approach. The style approach measures two types of leadership behaviour: Task oriented and relationship oriented. 10 items per behaviour were used on a 5-point scale (1 = never, ..., 5 = always). All 20 items from Northouse (2010) were used. An example question of task behaviour is: "The manager tells group members what they are supposed to do." An example question of relationship behaviour is: "The manager acts friendly with members of the group".

Path-Goal Theory. The four styles measured with the *Path-Goal Leadership Questionnaire* are directive, supportive, participative and achievement-oriented. Each style is measured by four items on a 7-point scale (1 = never, ..., 7 = always). All items are from an adapted version of the Path-Goal Leadership Questionnaire used by Northouse (2010). This adapted version consists of 20 items. For statistical reasons, four items from this list were dropped. Example questions include: "The manager lets subordinates know what is expected of them" and "The manager consults with subordinates when facing a problem".

Leader-Member Exchange Theory. The *LMX 7* (Graen & Uhl-Bien, 1995) is a seven-item questionnaire, measured on a 5-point scale, in order to measure the quality of an individual relationship between a follower and his leader. All items from the original questionnaire have been

used. An example question is: “How well does your manager understand your job problems and needs?”.

Transformational Leadership. A 4-item questionnaire, measured on a 5-point scale (1 = not at all, ..., 5 = frequently, if not always), was used to measure to what extent a leader’s style was transformational. These items were used from Northouse (2010), who used sample items from the original MLQ (Bass & Avolio, 1995). An example question is: “I help others to develop their strengths”.

Authentic Leadership. A selection of items from Northouse (2010) were used to measure authentic leadership. Because this questionnaire was answered by football players about a former manager, the component *self-awareness* could not be measured and hence it’s items were dropped. The remaining 12 items were used to measure the level of authentic leadership on a 5-point scale (1 = strongly disagree, ..., 5 = strongly agree). An example question is: “Other people know where the manager stands on controversial issues”.

Team Atmosphere. This was measured with a 10 item list on a 7-point scale (1 = strongly disagree, ..., 7 = strongly agree). Some of these items (based on appropriateness for the current setting) were used from the team cohesion instrument used by Wendt, Euwema and Van Emmerik (2009). An example question is: “The players trusted each other”.

Team Performance. Participants were asked to rate the team performance during the season they had in mind when filling out the questionnaire, relative to the expectations of their team, on a scale from 1 to 10.

Background variables. Additional variables were measured for background information. These were gender, age, level of football they were currently active in (professional, amateur or ex-footballer) and career length.

Table 1 gives an overview of the important statistics for each scale used in this article.

Table 1

Overview of Cronbach's alpha, valid-N, means and standard deviations for each scale for both a positive and negative season

Dimension	Positive season				Negative season			
	α	N	M	SD	α	N	M	SD
Style (Task)	.88	57	3.87	.65	.83	26	3.45	.50
Style (Relationship)	.89	57	3.58	.65	.88	26	3.22	.63
Path-Goal (Directive)	.83	43	4.91	1.10	.81	25	4.35	.96
Path-Goal (Supportive)	.75	43	4.66	1.01	.83	25	4.10	1.07
Path-Goal (Participative)	.85	43	4.68	1.05	.85	25	4.02	1.02
Path-Goal (AO)	.84	43	4.91	1.06	.87	25	4.25	.97
LMX	.83	42	3.55	.66	.89	25	3.14	.69
Transformational	.67	41	3.54	.66	.78	25	3.12	.73
Authentic	.81	39	3.50	.54	.85	24	3.13	.53
Team Atmosphere	.93	39	6.13	.71	.97	24	4.39	1.23
Team Performance	-	68	7.63	1.58	-	33	5.79	1.80

Noteworthy are the differences in valid-N between leadership styles and between the positive and negative seasons. One likely factor influencing this is the order of the questions. Another factor is that a listwise deletion was used for the analysis, rather than pairwise. A fully completed questionnaire is not required for every analysis. Data was used where available, accounting for the differences in valid-N. This could potentially influence some results.

Procedure

Participants had received a link to the online questionnaire. The questionnaire first gave a little background about the study. It was then stressed that the questionnaire could be filled in completely anonymously. Participants were asked to fill in the questionnaire when they were sitting comfortably behind their computer without time pressure. There would be no right or wrong answers, so participants were asked to go with their feeling when filling in the questionnaire. Lastly, they also had the ability to save the questionnaire at any point and resume later. The results of the study were sent to the participants and football clubs whom had indicated their interest in the results.

RESULTS

For a complete overview, table 2 shows a correlation matrix of all variables used and relevant paired t-test scores. An overview of the correlations only for the positive season can be found in table 3, whilst an overview of the correlations only for the negative season can be found in table 4.

Table 2

Overview of correlations between all variables and paired t-test results

Variables	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(11)	(12)	(13)	(14)	(15)	(16)	(17)	(18)	(19)	(20)	(21)	(22)	
(1) Style Task (P)	-	1.57																					
(2) Style Task (N)	.15	-																					
(3) Style Relationship (P)	.29*	.37*	-	1.94*																			
(4) Style Relationship (N)	.14	.47**	.19	-																			
(5) PG-directive (P)	.83**	.05	.26*	.00	-	1.06																	
(6) PG-directive (N)	.17	.82**	.43*	.60**	.13	-																	
(7) PG-supportive (P)	.43**	.37*	.79**	.19	.48**	.48**	-	1.55															
(8) PG-supportive (N)	.23	.46*	.17	.87**	.10	.71**	.22	-															
(9) PG-participative (P)	.18	.29	.82**	.12	.27*	.33	.60*	.03	-	2.01*													
(10) PG-participative (N)	.22	.35*	.05	.79**	.01	.54**	.03	.87**	-.00	-													
(11) PG-achievement (P)	.77**	.09	.39**	-.11	.84**	.11	.54**	-.03	.40**	-.04	-	1.73*											
(12) PG-achievement (N)	.13	.67**	.26	.54**	.04	.86**	.27	.72**	.14	.71**	.12	-											
(13) LMX (P)	.47**	-.13	.37**	-.13	.40**	-.01	.32*	-.01	.30*	.04	.50**	.06	-	2.66**									
(14) LMX (N)	-.00	.41*	.04	.73**	-.22	.55**	-.08	.73**	-.08	.72**	-.29	.60**	.12	-									
(15) Transformational (P)	.25	-.01	.58**	.07	.18	.05	.42**	.12	.46**	.09	.35*	.10	.39**	.15	-	1.96*							
(16) Transformational (N)	.14	.23	.07	.73**	-.03	.36*	.03	.70**	-.07	.72**	-.13	.47**	.20	.83**	.22	-							
(17) Authentic (P)	.46**	.26	.71**	.15	.46**	.25	.60**	.05	.63**	-.05	.41**	-.02	.51**	.01	.47**	.14	-	1.77*					
(18) Authentic (N)	.36*	.31	.03	.78**	.15	.44*	.06	.85**	-.09	.87**	.04	.54**	.05	.69**	.20	.74**	.09	-					
(19) Atmosphere (P)	-.00	.17	.45**	-.23	.09	-.02	.41**	-.29	.42**	-.25	.28*	-.01	.14	-.28	.33**	-.29	.39**	-.30	-	5.09**			
(20) Atmosphere (N)	-.04	.30	.09	.50**	-.11	.34	-.13	.45*	.27	.57**	-.28	.33	-.22	.42*	-.10	.38*	.23	.44*	-.18	-			
(21) Performance (P)	.36**	-.04	.11	-.31	.38**	-.17	.10	-.44*	.19	-.43*	.39**	-.17	.15	-.47**	.01	-.33	.19	-.44*	.33*	-.27	-	4.55**	
(22) Performance (N)	.31*	.38*	.31*	.30	.29*	.44*	.24	.46*	.21	.32	.23	.41*	.26	.52**	.23	.21	.20	.34	.01	.31	-.05	-	

Note. Values above diagonal are t-scores (1-tailed), values below diagonal are Pearson correlations (1-tailed).

* $p < .05$

** $p < .01$

Table 3

Overview of correlations between all variables in a positive season

Variables	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)
(1) Style Task	-									
(2) Style Relationship	.29*	-								
(3) PG-directive	.83**	.26*	-							
(4) PG-supportive	.43**	.79**	.48**	-						
(5) PG-participative	.18	.82**	.27*	.60*	-					
(6) PG-achievement	.77**	.39**	.84**	.54**	.40**	-				
(7) LMX	.47**	.37**	.40**	.32*	.30*	.50**	-			
(8) Transformational	.25	.58**	.18	.42**	.46**	.35*	.39**	-		
(9) Authentic	.46**	.71**	.46**	.60**	.63**	.41**	.51**	.47**	-	
(10) Atmosphere	-.00	.45**	.09	.41**	.42**	.28*	.14	.33**	.39**	-
(11) Performance	.36**	.11	.38**	.10	.19	.39**	.15	.01	.19	.33*

* $p < .05$ ** $p < .01$

Table 4

Overview of correlations between all variables in a negative season

Variables	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)
(1) Style Task	-									
(2) Style Relationship	.47**	-								
(3) PG-directive	.82**	.60**	-							
(4) PG-supportive	.46*	.87**	.71**	-						
(5) PG-participative	.35*	.79**	.54**	.87**	-					
(6) PG-achievement	.67**	.54**	.86**	.72**	.71**	-				
(7) LMX	.41*	.73**	.55**	.73**	.72**	.60**	-			
(8) Transformational	.23	.73**	.36*	.70**	.72**	.47**	.83**	-		
(9) Authentic	.31	.78**	.44*	.85**	.87**	.54**	.69**	.74**	-	
(10) Atmosphere	.30	.50**	.34	.45*	.57**	.33	.42*	.38*	.44*	-
(11) Performance	.38*	.30	.44*	.46*	.32	.41*	.52**	.21	.34	.31

* $p < .05$ ** $p < .01$ *Hypothesis 1: Increased levels of PLB are associated with increased levels of Team Atmosphere*

In a positive season, significant correlations were found between Team Atmosphere and Style Relationship ($r = .45, p < .01$), Path-Goal Supportive ($r = .41, p < .01$), Path-Goal Participative ($r = .42, p < .01$), Path-Goal Achievement ($r = .28, p < .05$), Transformational Leadership ($r = .33, p < .01$) and Authentic Leadership ($r = .39, p < .01$). Nonsignificant correlations were found between Team Atmosphere and Style Task ($r = -.00, p = n.s.$), Path-Goal Directive ($r = .09, p = n.s.$) and LMX ($r = .14, p = n.s.$).

In a negative season, significant correlations were found between Team Atmosphere and Style Relationship ($r = .50, p < .01$), Path-Goal Supportive ($r = .45, p < .05$), Path-Goal Participative ($r = .57, p < .01$), LMX ($r = .42, p < .05$), Transformational Leadership ($r = .38, p < .05$) and Authentic Leadership ($r = .44, p < .05$). Nonsignificant correlations were found between Team

Atmosphere and Style Task ($r = .30, p = n.s.$), Path-Goal Directive ($r = .34, p = n.s.$) and Path-Goal Achievement ($r = .33, p = n.s.$).

Hypothesis 2: Increased levels of Team Atmosphere are associated with increased levels of Team Performance

A significant correlation was found between Team Atmosphere and Team Performance ($r = .33, p < .05$) in a positive season. In a negative season, a nonsignificant correlation was found between Team Atmosphere and Team Performance ($r = .31, p = n.s.$).

Hypothesis 3: Increased levels of PLB are associated with increased levels of Team Performance

In a positive season, significant correlations were found between Team Performance and Style Task ($r = .36, p < .01$), Path-Goal Directive ($r = .38, p < .01$) and Path-Goal Achievement ($r = .39, p < .01$). Nonsignificant correlations were found between Team Performance and Style Relationship ($r = .11, p = n.s.$), Path-Goal Supportive ($r = .10, p = n.s.$), Path-Goal Participative ($r = .19, p = n.s.$), LMX ($r = .15, p = n.s.$), Transformational Leadership ($r = .01, p = n.s.$) and Authentic Leadership ($r = .19, p = n.s.$). In addition, significant correlations were also found between Team Performance in the positive season and certain leadership styles in the negative season. These were Path-Goal Supportive ($r = -.44, p < .05$), Path-Goal Participative ($r = -.43, p < .05$), LMX ($r = -.47, p < .01$) and Authentic Leadership ($r = -.44, p < .05$).

In a negative season, a significant correlation was found between Team Performance and Style Task ($r = .38, p < .05$), Path-Goal Directive ($r = .44, p < .05$), Path-Goal Supportive ($r = .46, p < .05$), Path-Goal Achievement ($r = .41, p < .05$) and LMX ($r = .52, p < .01$). A nonsignificant relationship was found between Team Performance and Style Relationship ($r = .30, p = n.s.$), Path-Goal Participative ($r = .32, p = n.s.$), Transformational Leadership ($r = .21, p = n.s.$) and Authentic Leadership ($r = .34, p = n.s.$). In addition, significant correlations were also found between Team Performance in the negative season and certain leadership styles in the positive season. These were Style Task ($r = .31, p < .05$), Style Relationship ($r = .31, p < .05$) and Path-Goal Directive ($r = .29, p < .05$).

t-tests

Because I expect PLB and Team Atmosphere to be more prevalent in positive seasons, t-tests were performed 1-tailed. Players in a positive season (1), compared to players in a negative season

(2), reported significantly higher levels of Style Relationship ($M1 = 3.53, SD = .63$ vs. $M2 = 3.22, SD = .63$), $t(25) = 1.94, p < .05$, Path-Goal Participative ($M1 = 4.59, SD = .98$ vs. $M2 = 4.02, SD = 1.02$), $t(24) = 2.01, p < .05$, Path-Goal Achievement ($M1 = 4.70, SD = .98$ vs. $M2 = 4.25, SD = .97$), $t(24) = 1.73, p < .05$, LMX ($M1 = 3.57, SD = .48$ vs. $M2 = 3.14, SD = .69$), $t(24) = 2.66, p < .01$, Transformational Leadership ($M1 = 3.46, SD = .66$ vs. $M2 = 3.12, SD = .73$), $t(24) = 1.96, p < .05$, Authentic Leadership ($M1 = 3.39, SD = .50$ vs. $M2 = 3.13, SD = .53$), $t(23) = 1.77, p < .05$, Team Atmosphere ($M1 = 6.02, SD = .79$ vs. $M2 = 4.39, SD = 1.23$), $t(23) = 5.09, p < .01$ and Team Performance ($M1 = 7.73, SD = 1.57$ vs. $M2 = 5.79, SD = 1.80$), $t(32) = 4.55, p < .01$. Nonsignificant differences were found on Style Task ($M1 = 3.69, SD = .64$ vs. $M2 = 3.45, SD = .50$), $t(25) = 1.57, p = n.s.$, Path-Goal Directive ($M1 = 4.65, SD = 1.17$ vs. $M2 = 4.35, SD = .96$), $t(24) = 1.06, p = n.s.$ and Path-Goal Supportive ($M1 = 4.50, SD = 1.00$ vs. $M2 = 4.10, SD = 1.07$), $t(24) = 1.55, p = n.s.$

Regression analyses

In order to test for (partial) mediation, the four step approach by Baron and Kenny (1986) was used. If one or more of these steps is nonsignificant, (partial) mediation is not possible or likely.

Style Approach (Task). No support for mediation was found in the positive season; Style Task explained 0% of the variance for Team Atmosphere ($R^2 = .00, F(1,37) = .00, p = n.s.$). Adjusted R^2 is $-.03$. Style Task did not significantly predict Team Atmosphere ($\beta = -.00, p = n.s.$).

Style Approach (Relationship). No support for mediation was found in the positive season; Style Relationship explained 1% of the variance for Team Performance ($R^2 = .01, F(1,55) = .71, p = n.s.$). Adjusted R^2 is $-.01$. Style Relationship did not significantly predict Team Performance ($\beta = .28, p = n.s.$).

Path-Goal Theory (Directive). No support for mediation was found in the positive season; Path-Goal Directive explained 1% of the variance for Team Atmosphere ($R^2 = .01, F(1,37) = .27, p = n.s.$). Adjusted R^2 is $-.02$. Path-Goal Directive did not significantly predict Team Atmosphere ($\beta = .05, p = n.s.$).

Path-Goal Theory (Supportive). No support for mediation was found in the positive season; Path-Goal Supportive explained 1% of the variance for Team Performance ($R^2 = .01, F(1,41) = .41, p = n.s.$). Adjusted R^2 is $-.01$. Path-Goal Supportive did not significantly predict Team Performance ($\beta = .14, p = n.s.$).

Path-Goal Theory (Participative). No support for mediation was found in the positive season; Path-Goal Participative explained 4% of the variance for Team Performance ($R^2 = .04, F(1,41) = 1.52, p = n.s.$). Adjusted R^2 is $.01$. Path-Goal Participative did not significantly predict Team Performance ($\beta = .26, p = n.s.$).

Path-Goal Theory (Achievement-oriented). No support for mediation was found in the positive season; Path-Goal AO explained 8% of the variance for Team Atmosphere ($R^2=.08$, $F(1,37)=3.04$, $p=n.s.$). Adjusted R^2 is .05. Path-Goal AO did not significantly predict Team Atmosphere ($\beta = .18$, $p=n.s.$).

Leader-Member Exchange Theory. No support for mediation was found in the positive season; LMX explained 2% of the variance for Team Performance ($R^2=.02$, $F(1,40)=.94$, $p=n.s.$). Adjusted R^2 is -.00. LMX did not significantly predict Team Performance ($\beta = .33$, $p=n.s.$).

Transformational Leadership. No support for mediation was found in the positive season; Transformational Leadership explained 0% of the variance for Team Performance ($R^2=.00$, $F(1,39)=.01$, $p=n.s.$). Adjusted R^2 is -.03. Transformational Leadership did not significantly predict Team Performance ($\beta = .03$, $p=n.s.$).

Authentic Leadership. No support for mediation was found in the positive season; Authentic Leadership explained 4% of the variance for Team Performance ($R^2=.04$, $F(1,37)=1.44$, $p=n.s.$). Adjusted R^2 is .01. Authentic Leadership did not significantly predict Team Performance ($\beta = .53$, $p=n.s.$).

Negative Season. No support for mediation was found for any of the leadership styles in the negative season; Team Atmosphere explained 10% of the variance for Team Performance ($R^2=.10$, $F(1,22)=2.36$, $p=n.s.$). Adjusted R^2 is .06. Team Atmosphere did not significantly predict Team Performance ($\beta = .37$, $p=n.s.$).

Background variables

Table 5 shows an overview of the correlations of the background variables with team atmosphere and team performance in both a positive and negative season. No significant correlations were found.

Table 5
Overview of correlations between background variables and team atmosphere (TA) and team performance (TP) in a positive and negative season

Variables	Positive season		Negative season	
	TA	TP	TA	TP
Age	.07	.11	-.11	.17
Active vs. retired	.07	.09	-.30	-.08
Career length	.19	.11	-.34	.02

* $p < .05$

** $p < .01$

Unique contributions

In order to see which leadership styles have the biggest impact on team atmosphere and team performance, a regression analysis was performed using all leadership styles together in step 1. Since no background variables were significantly correlated with team atmosphere or team performance, they were not used in a prior step for regression analysis.

Several high correlations between leadership styles could indicate multicollinearity. Together with an already low valid-N, this could make the interpretation of the results for unique contributions difficult. Table 6 therefore shows the variance inflation factor of all the leadership styles in both the positive and negative season.

Table 6
Overview of Variance Inflation Factors (VIF) for leadership styles in the positive (P) and negative (N) seasons

Dimension	VIF (P)	VIF (N)
Style (Task)	4.86	4.19
Style (Relationship)	8.00	7.11
Path-Goal (Directive)	7.05	15.91
Path-Goal (Supportive)	3.78	13.33
Path-Goal (Participative)	4.15	10.39
Path-Goal (AO)	5.99	10.66
LMX	1.93	4.29
Transformational	1.75	4.87
Authentic	3.08	6.88

In the positive season, three values were greater than 5, though none were greater than 10. In the negative season, six values were greater than 5 with four of them greater than 10. Multicollinearity in the negative season seems highly likely, making any interpretations very difficult. The positive season is less affected, though in any case, any interpretations have to be made very carefully.

Finally, table 7 shows an overview of the standardized and unstandardized regression coefficients for the various leadership styles when used together to predict either team atmosphere or team performance, for the positive and negative season.

Table 7

Overview of standardized (S) and unstandardized (U) coefficients for leadership styles in multiple regression analysis on team atmosphere (TA) and team performance (TP)

Dimension	Positive season				Negative season			
	TA (U)	TA (S)	TP (U)	TP (S)	TA (U)	TA (S)	TP (U)	TP (S)
Style (Task)	-.51	-.48	-.54	-.25	.34	.14	.59	.20
Style (Relationship)	.06	.06	.10	.05	-.07	-.04	-.47	-.21
Path-Goal (Directive)	-.27	-.44	.41	.32	.86	.69	-.75	-.50
Path-Goal (Supportive)	.09	.13	-.45	-.31	-.59	-.53	1.19	.88
Path-Goal (Participative)	-.06	-.09	.15	.11	1.69*	1.44*	-.81	-.57
Path-Goal (AO)	.58*	.87*	.58	.42	-1.11	-.89	.41	.28
LMX	-.21	-.20	-.06	-.03	.10	.05	2.13*	1.02*
Transformational	.04	.04	-.26	-.11	.04	.02	-1.5	-.77
Authentic	.62	.47	.39	.14	-.57	-.25	.31	.11

* $P < .05$

In the positive season, all the leadership styles together significantly predicted Team Atmosphere; 41% of the variance was explained ($R^2=.41$, $F(9,29)=2.26$, $p=.05$). Adjusted R^2 is .23. For Team Performance, no significant prediction was found for all the leadership styles together; 23% of the variance was explained ($R^2=.23$, $F(9,29)=.98$, $p=n.s.$). Adjusted R^2 is -.00.

In a negative season, all the leadership styles together did not significantly predict Team Atmosphere; 47% of the variance was explained ($R^2=.47$, $F(9,14)=1.37$, $p=n.s.$). Adjusted R^2 is .13. For Team Performance, no significant prediction was found for all the leadership styles together; 52% of the variance was explained ($R^2=.52$, $F(9,14)=1.71$, $p=n.s.$). Adjusted R^2 is .22.

Due to the high variance inflation factors in the positive and particularly the negative season, interpretation of individual leadership style contributions is very difficult. In the negative season, results show Path-Goal (Participative) to have a significant influence on Team Atmosphere, with LMX having a significant influence on Team Performance. These results are most likely too affected by multicollinearity however, making interpretations of these results 'as is' impossible.

In the positive season, only Path-Goal (AO) has a significant influence, on Team Atmosphere. Here too multicollinearity cannot be ruled out however.

DISCUSSION

The results of this study provide support for all three hypotheses:

- 1) *Increased levels of PLB are associated with increased levels of Team Atmosphere*
- 2) *Increased levels of Team Atmosphere are associated with increased levels of Team Performance*
- 3) *Increased levels of PLB are associated with increased levels of Team Performance*

When directly comparing the results between the positive and negative seasons, six out of nine leadership styles had a significantly higher level of *PLB* in the positive season than in the negative season. The cause of the three nonsignificant results is likely the low valid-N. Differences found between the positive and negative season for these three leadership styles indicate sufficiently higher levels of *PLB* in the positive season compared to the negative season to expect a significant difference given a higher valid-N, assuming similar results. In addition, none of the correlations between the positive and negative season for each leadership style was particularly high, let alone significant. Team atmosphere and team performance were also rated significantly higher in the positive season compared to the negative season. This provides initial support for hypothesis 1, as both higher levels of *PLB* and higher levels of team atmosphere were found in the positive season. Initial support for hypothesis 2 is found due to higher levels of team atmosphere and team performance in the positive season. Both higher levels of team performance and higher levels of *PLB* found in the positive season meanwhile give initial support for hypothesis 3.

Correlations also provide support for the first hypothesis. In both the positive and negative seasons, six out of nine leadership styles were significantly positively correlated with team atmosphere. The three leadership styles which did not correlate significantly in the negative season, were likely affected by the low valid-N. The strength of their correlations lends weight to the idea that with a higher valid-N, all three would correlate significantly and positively, assuming similar correlation levels.

Further support was also found for the second hypothesis. The correlation between team atmosphere and team performance in the positive season was significant and positive. Whilst the correlation in the negative season was found to be nonsignificant, again the strength of the correlation lends weight to the idea that with a higher valid-N and similar correlation levels, this correlation would also be considered significant and positive.

The third hypothesis has slightly mixed additional support. In the negative season, five out of nine leadership styles correlated significantly and positively with team performance. In addition,

three of the four that didn't correlate significantly would likely be considered positively significant with a higher valid-N, assuming similar correlation levels. In the positive season however, only three out of nine leadership styles correlated significantly and positively with team performance.

This suggests that whilst in a negative season there is still a clear positive link between leadership behaviour and team performance, this link is less evident in a positive season. This could indicate that when results are better than expected, the influence of leadership behaviour on team performance is lessened. A possible explanation could be that a high level of *PLB* is initially responsible for higher team atmosphere, which then leads to higher team performance. It is not unlikely however that a series of results which are better than expected also have a positive influence on team atmosphere. This would subsequently slightly lessen the influence of *PLB* on team atmosphere and therefore on team performance. Future research would do well to also incorporate the influence of performance on team cohesion, as the literature, amongst which Mullen and Copper (1994) and Carron, Colman, Wheeler and Stevens (2002), suggests this interaction to be a two-way street. Alternatively however, it could simply be that when results are better than expected, players like to think their own influence played a bigger role in the results and as such give less credit to the behaviour of the manager. A phenomenon known as the self-serving bias (Kaplan & Ruffle, 1998).

On top of this, there were also some significant negative correlations between leadership styles in the negative season and team performance in the positive season, as well as positive correlations between some leadership styles in the positive season with team performance in the negative season. As the questions within the positive season framework were given with an independent scenario compared to the scenario for the questions in the negative season, no further logical explanation was found for these findings.

Taken together, these results indicate that when the leader exhibits high levels of *positive leadership behaviour*, team atmosphere is good and team performance is good. In contrast, when the level of *positive leadership behaviour* is much lower, team atmosphere is much lower and team performance is much lower.

But what about actually predicting team atmosphere and team performance from leadership behaviour, as per the model depicted in figure 1? Unfortunately, the results do not give support that given any particular leadership behaviour, we can predict the level of team atmosphere or the level of team performance. Though again, the low number of valid-N probably plays a big role in the lack of support, rather than an outright lack of support for the expected findings. For the time being, it is not possible however to say for any particular leadership style what its effect is on team atmosphere and team performance. The results are also inconclusive in order to pinpoint any particular leadership style to be preferred over another. The apparent existence of multicollinearity makes this even more difficult. When using all leadership styles together to predict team atmosphere and team

performance there was often a big discrepancy between the R^2 and the adjusted R^2 . Evidence however does support the notion that higher levels of *PLB* in general seems a good starting point in order to achieve high levels of team atmosphere and team performance.

Noteworthy are also the ratings given for team performance. Whilst a significant difference was found between the positive and negative season, at a little below a 6 it doesn't appear the rating in the negative season seems all that bad. The participants weren't asked to rate an outright poor season, rather a poor season relative to the expectations. This raises the question of what actually determined the expectation and how far below the expectations they fell. A team finishing third who were expected to finish first would've fallen below expectations, though would probably still be considered to have had at least a decent season, even compared to the expectations. If differences in managerial behaviour can be found when results overall aren't even that bad, this increases the importance of the role of managerial behaviour. After all, there are plenty of chairmen out there who are all too willing to sack a manager for finishing third, rather than win the league!

Overall, the results of this study expand on previous work to show that when only focusing on football, there seems to be a clearer link between the quality of the leader-member exchange, team atmosphere and team performance. In addition, this study has also expanded the field of research to incorporate other leadership styles and theories to show that the link between leadership behaviour, team atmosphere and team performance extends beyond the quality of the leader-member exchange and that these various leadership styles and theories also apply to the domain of football.

Limitations and strengths

A particular limitation of this study is the low valid-N, making it much more difficult to obtain significant results. Another limitation is the lack of experimental data. With the current data it is not possible to draw definitive conclusions about the proposed model and the direction of the found effects. The used research method is also certainly not without its flaws. Whilst questionnaires have been used regularly in the past for memory recollection data, the potential always exists for incorrect memory recollection. Individual and contextual differences may influence or bias one's memory. Depending on how long ago something happened, many details about the situation may well have been lost already. Memories about a person might then be more influenced by inferences about the person rather than actual behaviour. This could introduce for example the 'halo effect', whereby the evaluation of one attribute about a person is extrapolated to other attributes about that person. Hansbrough, Lord and Schyns (2014) have written about the difficulties in obtaining accurate follower ratings of leader behaviour. In this research it is not known how long ago the

events happened which the participants used for the questionnaire. A potential consequence of using a memory from many years ago is that the many ratings about a leader will become very similar, as details have been lost. This could either manifest itself in similar ratings between a positive and negative season, or similar ratings within a leadership style. Results however have shown there to generally be a significant difference between the positive and negative season. The standard deviations per variable are also not extremely small. This indicates there is still a decent spread in the ratings given by the participants. In addition, most of the participants were still active footballers. This reduces the chances of having to dig back many years in their memory compared to retired footballers. Furthermore, considering the average career length, most participants should have experienced a wide variety of scenarios during their career. This not only increases the chances of them being able to choose a scenario of which they still have a proper memory, it also means they would have been able to better choose an appropriate scenario for the purpose of this study. Nevertheless, incorrect memory recollection will no doubt have had an (unknown) impact in the results, making this research only a tentative first step in this field.

Another important note is that this study focused solely on the influence of the manager on results. Other factors outside the direct control of the manager might also play a big role in results however, such as the amount of injuries during the season, player fatigue and involvement in cup competitions.

Recommendations for future research

Future research would do well first and foremost to use a much higher valid-N in order to attribute results to the actual data, rather than a lack of valid-N. Further improvements can be made in the design of the study, in order to draw conclusions on the causality of found effects. A longitudinal study might be a good way to achieve this. This could also reduce the impact of incorrect memory recollections, an issue which should also be given due attention. Getting good performances from amateur footballers might involve a different approach compared to professional footballers. Future research would do well to also incorporate professional footballers, particularly as the stakes are much higher at this level with more money involved.

Implications for practice

The main implication of this study is that if you want to achieve the best results, you cannot hide from the importance of the relationship between the manager and his players. Results indicate that *positive leadership behaviour* and good team performances go hand in hand. A manager failing

to grasp this concept and who only focuses on other factors such as tactics, will have a much harder time getting good results. An unmotivated player is not only likely to individually perform below their optimum, it also knocks on to them being a less effective part of the team, which also renders team tactics less effective. Imagine the effects of several unmotivated players in the same team. The whole is always greater than the sum of its parts.

REFERENCES

- Avolio, B. J., Walumbwa, F. O., & Weber, T. J. (2009). Leadership: Current theories, research, and future directions. *Annual Review of Psychology, 60*, 421-449.
- Baron, R. M., & Kenny, D. A. (1986). The Moderator-Mediator Variable Distinction in Social Psychological Research: Conceptual, Strategic, and Statistical Considerations. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 51*, 1173-1182.
- Bass, B. M., & Avolio, B. J. (1994). *Improving organizational effectiveness through transformational leadership*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Bass, B. M., & Avolio, B. J. (1995). *Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire for research*. Menlo Park, CA: Mind Garden.
- Blake, R. R., & Mouton, J. S. (1964). *The managerial grid*. Houston, TX: Gulf Publishing Company.
- Carron, A. V., Colman, M. M., Wheeler, J., & Stevens, D. (2002). Cohesion and Performance in Sport: A Meta Analysis. *Journal of Sport & Exercise Psychology, 24*(2), 168-188.
- Charbonneau, D., Barling, J., & Kelloway, E. K. (2001). Transformational Leadership and Sports Performance : The Mediating Role of Intrinsic Motivation. *Journal of Applied Social Psychology, 31*, 1521-1534.
- Deci, E. L., & Ryan, R. M. (1985). *Intrinsic motivation and self-determination in human behavior*. New York, NY: Plenum Press.
- Fletcher, D., & Arnold, R. (2011). A Qualitative Study of Performance Leadership and Management in Elite Sport. *Journal of Applied Sport Psychology, 23*, 223-242.
- French, J., & Raven, B. H. (1959). The bases of social power. In D. Cartwright (Ed), *Studies in social power* (pp. 150-167). Ann Arbor: University of Michigan, Institute for Social Research.
- Goleman, D. (1998). What makes a leader? *Harvard Business Review, 76*, 93-102.
- Graen, G. B., & Uhl-Bien, M. (1995). Relationship-based approach to leadership: Development of leader-member exchange (LMX) theory of leadership over 25 years: Applying a multi-level, multi-domain perspective. *Leadership Quarterly, 6*(2), 219-247.
- Hansbrough, T. K., Lord, R. G., & Schyns, B. (2014). Reconsidering the accuracy of follower leadership ratings. *The Leadership Quarterly, http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.leaqua.2014.11.006*.
- Hardre, P. L., & Reeve, J. (2003). A Motivational Model of Rural Students' Intentions to Persist in, Versus Drop Out of, High School. *Journal of Educational Psychology, 95*, 347-356.

- Hollembeak, J., & Amorose, A. J. (2005). Perceived Coaching Behaviors and College Athletes' Intrinsic Motivation: A Test of Self-Determination Theory. *Journal of Applied Sport Psychology, 17*, 20-36.
- Kaplan, T. R., & Ruffle, B. T. (1998). Self-serving Bias. *The Journal of Economic Perspectives, 12*, 243-244.
- Mullen, B., & Copper, C. (1994). The Relation Between Group Cohesiveness and Performance: An Integration. *Psychological Bulletin, 115*(2), 210-227.
- Northouse, P. G. (2010). *Leadership: Theory and practice*. Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications Inc.
- Readdy, T., Raabe, J., & Harding, J. S. (2014). Student-Athletes' Perceptions of an Extrinsic Reward Program: A Mixed-Methods Exploration of Self-Determination Theory in the Context of College Football. *Journal of Applied Sport Psychology, 26*, 157-171.
- Robbins, S. B., Le, H., Davis, D., Lauer, K., Langley, R., & Carlstrom, A. (2004). Do Psychosocial and Study Skill Factors Predict College Outcomes? A Meta-Analysis. *Psychological Bulletin, 130*, 261-288.
- Rogerson, L. J., & Hryciako, D. W. (2002). Enhancing Competitive Performance of Ice Hockey Goaltenders Using Centering and Self-Talk. *Journal of Applied Sport Psychology, 14*, 14-26.
- TheIwell, R. C., Greenlees, I. A., & Weston, N. J. V. (2006). Using Psychological Skills Training to Develop Soccer Performance. *Journal of Applied Sport Psychology, 18*, 254-270.
- van Breukelen, W., Van Der Leeden, R., Wesselius, W., & Hoes, M. (2010). Differential treatment within sports teams, leader-member (coach-player) exchange quality, team atmosphere, and team performance. *Journal of Organizational Behavior, 33*, 43-63.
- Vidic, Z., & Burton, D. (2011). Developing Effective Leaders: Motivational Correlates of Leadership Styles. *Journal of Applied Sport Psychology, 23*, 277-291.
- Wendt, H., Euwema, M. C., & Van Emmerik, I. J. H. (2009). Leadership and team cohesiveness across cultures. *The Leadership Quarterly, 20*, 358-370.
- Yukl, G. A. (1999). An evaluation of conceptual weaknesses in transformational and charismatic leadership theories. *Leadership Quarterly, 10*(2), 285-305.

APPENDIX – QUESTIONNAIRE ITEMS

Background variables

1. Wat is uw geslacht? (Man of vrouw)
2. Wat is uw leeftijd?
3. Wat is het niveau waarop u op dit moment actief bent? (Professioneel, amateur of ex-voetballer)
4. Hoe veel seizoenen bent u actief (geweest) als voetballer? Dit geldt voor zowel amateur als professioneel niveau. Tel deze bij elkaar op.

Team performance

1. Hoe succesvol zou u het (deel van het) seizoen onder deze trainer bestempelen, in vergelijking tot wat er van het team verwacht werd in dit (deel van het) seizoen? Geef een rapportcijfer van 1 t/m 10, waarbij 6 net een voldoende is.

Style approach

De trainer...

1. Vertelde de spelers wat ze moesten doen.
2. Ging vriendelijk om met de spelers.
3. Maakte duidelijk welke prestaties er van de spelers verwacht werden.
4. Hielp spelers zich comfortabel te voelen.
5. Kwam met suggesties hoe problemen opgelost konden worden.
6. Reageerde positief op suggesties van anderen.
7. Maakte duidelijk wat zijn mening was.
8. Behandelde anderen eerlijk.
9. Had een duidelijke koers voor ogen voor het team.
10. Gedroeg zich op een voorspelbare manier richting de spelers.
11. Maakte elke speler duidelijk welke verantwoordelijkheden die speler had.
12. Communiqueerde regelmatig met de spelers.
13. Maakte duidelijk wat de positie van hem als trainer binnen het team was.
14. Liet medeleven zien voor het lot van de spelers.
15. Creëerde een plan hoe er gespeeld moest worden.
16. Liet flexibiliteit zien bij het maken van beslissingen.
17. Gaf criteria voor wat er van de spelers verwacht werd.
18. Deelde ideeën en gevoelens met de spelers.
19. Moedigde spelers aan zo goed mogelijk te presteren.
20. Hielp spelers goed met elkaar om te gaan.

Path-goal theory

1. Hij liet spelers weten wat er van ze verwacht werd.
2. Hij onderhield een vriendschappelijke werkrelatie met zijn spelers.
3. Wanneer er problemen waren, besprak hij deze met zijn spelers.
4. Hij luisterde aandachtig naar ideeën en suggesties van spelers.
5. Hij informeerde zijn spelers wat er gedaan moest worden en hoe dit gedaan moest worden.
6. Hij liet zijn spelers weten dat hij van ze verwachtte dat zij op hun hoogste niveau presteerde.
7. Hij deed de kleine dingen om ervoor te zorgen dat het fijn was onderdeel van het team te zijn.
8. Hij vroeg spelers zich aan de regels te houden (buiten het veld).
9. Hij creëerde doelen voor de spelers die uitdagend waren.
10. Hij vroeg suggesties aan de spelers hoe bepaalde taken het best aangepakt konden worden.
11. Hij moedigde spelers aan om zich constant te blijven ontwikkelen.
12. Hij legde uit welk niveau van presteren hij verwachtte van de spelers.
13. Hij hielp spelers problemen te overwinnen die voorkwamen dat ze hun taken uit konden voeren.
14. Hij vroeg de spelers om suggesties over welke taken verricht moesten worden.
15. Hij creëerde constant uitdagende doelen voor de spelers om te bereiken.
16. Hij gedroeg zich op een manier waarbij hij rekening hield met de persoonlijke behoeftes van spelers.

Leader-member exchange theory

1. Wist u waar u stond in relatie tot uw trainer en wist u over het algemeen hoe tevreden de trainer was over u?
2. Hoe goed begreep de trainer uw problemen en behoeftes?
3. Hoe goed erkende de trainer uw potentieel?
4. Ongeacht hoe groot de officiële autoriteit van uw trainer was, wat was de kans dat uw trainer zijn macht zou gebruiken om u te helpen met uw problemen?
5. Ongeacht hoe groot de officiële autoriteit van uw trainer was, wat was de kans dat hij u zou verdedigen ten koste van zichzelf?
6. Ik had genoeg vertrouwen in mijn trainer dat ik zijn beslissing zou verdedigen en rechtvaardigen wanneer hij er zelf niet zou zijn om dat te doen.
7. Hoe zou u de werkrelatie met uw trainer omschrijven?

Transformational leadership

1. Hij schoof zijn eigenbelang opzij in het belang van de groep.
2. Hij dacht aan de morele en ethische gevolgen van zijn beslissingen.
3. Hij praatte optimistisch over de toekomst.
4. Hij hielp anderen hun sterke punten te verbeteren.

Authentic leadership

1. Zijn acties weerspiegelden zijn innerlijke normen en waarden.
2. Hij wilde de meningen van anderen horen, voordat hij conclusies trok.
3. Hij deelde zijn gevoelens openlijk met anderen.
4. Groepsdruk had geen invloed op hem.
5. Hij luisterde aandachtig naar de ideeën van diegenen die het niet met hem eens waren.
6. Hij liet anderen weten wie hij echt was als persoon.
7. Anderen wisten wat zijn mening was op controversiële onderwerpen.
8. Hij benadrukte niet zijn eigen mening ten koste van de mening van anderen.
9. Hij deed zich zelden voor als iemand die hij niet was.
10. Zijn normen en waarden bepaalden hoe hij zich gedroeg als leider.
11. Hij luisterde zeer aandachtig naar de ideeën van anderen voordat hij beslissingen nam.
12. Hij gaf zijn fouten toe.

Team atmosphere

1. Er was een vriendschappelijke sfeer binnen de groep.
2. De spelers vertrouwden elkaar.
3. De spelers waren warmhartig en vriendelijk.
4. De spelers behandelden elkaar met respect.
5. De spelers werkten goed samen als een team.
6. De spelers hielpen elkaar.
7. De spelers praatten altijd positief over de groep.
8. De spelers waren trots om bij deze groep te horen.
9. De stemming binnen de groep gedurende deze periode was positief.
10. De stemming binnen de groep gedurende deze periode was stabiel.