



## Role of Sports in Leadership A Socio Political Analysis

VIPUL K. MODI

Asso. Prof.

GMDC College, Nakhatrana.

### Abstract:

*The basic objective of developing this article was to know how sports and games have developed the leadership qualities maintaining the harmony of body and mind among individuals in the society. The nature of the work is largely theoretical in fundamental nature as most of the data used has been taken from secondary sources. Sports have multiple functions as it stimulates the enthusiastic aspects of the people and the state. The position of sportsman and woman has been remarkable as they face the crowd courageously to express leadership qualities in one's personality expressing maturity to deal with enormous number of complexes nature of issues that surround them in daily life concerning their socio-political behaviors.*

### INTRODUCTION

Socio-political study is normally referred to social values and group life. It emphasizes on the feelings that is regarded the most important segment for the success of any game. Discipline in the sports learning situation brings guidance in behavior, most conducive to learning process and effective for successful performance. It is important that investigation evaluate the drive to excel in leadership, to do better to surpass ones own previous performance, the records set by the others during competition of the moment, all of which are a part of the human striving for maximum output and efficiency. This paper is an attempt to assess that the outstanding sportsmen that lead healthy, active, peaceful and disciplined life. Social engineers could be the wonderful leaders if they experience outstanding sports background in their lives. Sports are also used for the purpose of achieving educational objectives. The social engineers of the society mainly emphasize on winning and targeting goals in their career. Sports develop the leadership qualities in one's personality. This term normally used to characterize the individual that grows, matures, and reacts to the thousands of environmental stimuli that surround him. The learning of social values, particularly sportsmanship, must be a part of the purpose of the individual as its results must be recognized and be made satisfying if learning is to take place (Gatrell, 2004).

Leadership is the process of providing direction and obtaining their voluntary commitment to the leader's vision. A leader creates a vision and goals influencing others to share that vision and work toward the goals. Therefore, they are concerned with bridging about change and motivating others to support that vision for better modification. Many scholars affirm that management involves coping with complexity, while leadership is about coping with change.

Leaders can be found at all levels of a sports organization, but not all immediately stand out before the crowd in different situations at different moments of organization that require different skills in leadership. A young person may be marvelous at exercising leadership in volleyball team and some time, may be unlikable in another environment. This happens frequently, and some brilliant young sports leaders' mode of undertaking exercise in their training projects and may not choose to work with just because they do not know how to do it. Such practice has different set of norms, authority structures and different sets of adaptive challenges that the individual may be unfamiliar with.

But apart from the different forms of authority traits leaders describe, how effective young leaders can influence others. These characteristics have been put into four categories of models: traits, behavioral, contingency and transformational. There is no simple answer to which type of the leadership works best. Almost half century ago, trait models of leadership were popular. Gradually, as evidence accumulated, traits models were replaced-first by behavioral models and then by contingency models. Currently, the transformational model has many supporters, reflecting efforts of many leaders to transform outdated forms of organizations into more competitive ones. Traits models are based on the assumption that certain physical, social, and personal characteristics are inherent in leaders. According to this view, the presence or absence of these characteristics distinguish leaders from non-leaders. Some of the key traits are physical, social background and personality traits (John, 1972). There is some common sense supporting the notion that effective leaders, young or older, have certain traits. However, research has not proved that traits consistently separate potential leaders from non-leaders. For example, the physical characteristics of a young baseball athlete do not necessarily correlate with his ability to exercise successful leadership later in his life. They relate only to perceive leadership ability.

## METHODOLOGY

This research paper was developed applying descriptive method to assess the major outcome of this work. This work was also undertaken to explore the dynamic impression of eleven internationally known former sports persons randomly selected from different countries that used their charisma to engage themselves in politics after retirement from sports, justifying effective popularity among people. Their very brief record has been discussed as role models proved themselves to be effective leaders in politics. Sports persons could be the wonderful leaders if they adopt the values of sportsmanship in their lives and political arena as well.

Modern education system in developed and under developed states have shown concern about leadership education that includes more distinct learning both as a separate curriculum and as a part of every course work taught in administrative sciences. This will take time, patience and financial investment, but it can be done. Many academic institutions at university level in Euro-America and Asia including Pakistan have made significant attempts to offer dedicated classes on leadership, and it requires many political students, undertake lengthy field exercises of speech training and legal aspects that concern our society, acquire practical experience prior to receive graduation.

There is no silver bullet for bridging the leadership gap among the nation's political institutions. But, the gap is real and need is clear when compared developing world with Euro- American nations, and change only happens when we make it a priority. Many perceive a crisis of leadership in Pakistan as perhaps our political institutions and higher education commission policies rarely take a stronger role in solving the problems of the society.

Today's world is on the fast track. Therefore, the leadership styles applied during the past decades differs substantially from the one needed to be applied in the present times. To illustrate this, consider the young members of a school baseball team who if unwilling and unable to perform well, the school coach will then definitely have to follow the autocratic leadership style. As the coach applies appropriate motivation and training techniques, the young trainees gradually become willing and able to perform well. Hence the situation is changing. This denotes that the leadership should also evolve from autocratic towards the democratic style. In a few words the leadership style should comply with the evolution of the outstanding situation. It illustrates, sports organizations, especially those that involve children, must confront with the years to come and learn from past practices by continuously adopting to the new instruction programs that evolve towards leadership in sports. The literature is at hand about denoting the close relationship between leadership and sportsmanship. The sociology deal and consider the two traits as linked with each other. Social psychology also elaborates that sports promote leadership and discipline (Kenneth et. al, 2002).

## PROMOTION OF LEADERSHIP QUALITIES

A healthy body makes a healthy mind and sports are vital for making leaders. There are similarities between a sportsman and a leader, some attributes and qualities which also make a sportsman a great leader. In sports one develops the qualities which make a sportsman successful in other spheres of life as well. While remaining in sports group one learns co-operation, co-ordination, enthusiasm to lead others and develop leadership skills and how to make individual physically and mentally strong living in groups. Leaders have charismatic personality, but have some peculiar and special qualities as well. Therefore, sports help developing athletes' unique personalities (Sherrill, 1988).

## SPORTS AND PROFESSIONALISM (ENGINEERING)

**Table1: Key elements that can be identified and taught**

|                            |                        |
|----------------------------|------------------------|
| Achievement motivation     | Hypnosis               |
| Athletic personality       | Mental practice        |
| Athletic task analysis     | Mottos learning        |
| Coaching Styles            | Peak performance       |
| Competition                | Positive Visualization |
| Control of attention       | Self-regulation        |
| Coping strategies          | Still acquisition      |
| Emotions and performance   | Social facilitation    |
| Exercise and Mental Health | Stress reduction       |
| Goal setting               | Team cooperation       |
| Group (team) dynamics      | Training procedures    |

Source: Introduction to Psychology, 8<sup>th</sup> Edition, Dennis Coon, Brook/Cole Publishing Company, USA, 2004.

The above table reflects the impact of various factors of self confidence, self-motivation and others which are usually considered as achieved. Motivation is the factor which is directly or indirectly related with hypnoses. Stress is relative with self acquisition, self regulation, social facilitation and team co-operation. The above table indicates the relationship between variables.

### Leadership qualities developed through sports participation:

The followings characteristics are essential for developing ideal leaders in a democratic society of the nations: Quality to lead; consultation; patience; commitment; to face the reality and to accept it; discipline; team work; taking up the challenge; planning /strategy and character building

## SPORT LEADERS AND MOTIVATORS

It is hard to ignore the fact that leaders have self-motivation and a great deal of energy to lead others. It is the energy that brings honor, self- respect, and grace as fruits of leadership. The psychological relationship between sports and leadership can be understood in the following contexts: Sport as an outlet for aggression in leaders: One accumulates aggression through the occasional (or frequent) frustration of daily life and piles up his aggressiveness at times. Sport as lessening inferiority feelings and make leaders. The normal person possesses inferiority feelings and wants success, popularity, and admiration from his fellows. Sports permit friendly rivalries and joyous interplay within one's own family and peer groups.

### Leadership discipline:

The discipline in sports facilitates adequate learning and motivates for peak performance, either of the individual or the group. The complete combination in the sport group takes one's mind away from self and focuses it outwardly and describes a direction of attention. The drive to excel, to do better, to surpass one's own previous performance and the records set by others are all part of the human striving for

maximum performance and efficiency.

Leadership is always something of a two-way lane in which leaders influence followers and in turn, hold some degree of influences over leaders. The major tasks performed by leaders is to make decisions, considering the situation in which high quality decisions are necessary as the leaders have enough information to decide alone, but the acceptance by follower is crucial as it may not work effectively without their active support.

### **ROLE OF SPORTS IN LEADERSHIP**

It is a fact that peak performance requires more than physical training. The mental and emotional conditioning is also very important to be a leader. Sports teach a leader how to relax, how to ignore distractions and cope up with emotions. The leader also learns that if someone is good in sports, he needs personal counseling for excelling performance by decreasing stresses and conflicts.(Dohrenwend et. al., 1974) A good leader may also benefit from sports. For many the payoffs are stress reduction, better self-image and improved general health. Researchers have reported, for instance, that running is associated with lower levels of tension, anxiety, fatigue, and depression than is found in the non-running population (Ken et. al., 2005).

### **INTERNATIONAL SPORTS CELEBERTIES IN LEADERSHIP ROLE**

Our society has several examples of the personalities who were great athletes as well as significant leaders. They developed the qualities of leadership through sport participation in their whole life. One could easily find many sport persistent personalities who later on became famous leaders with impressive leadership qualities. Such as:

**1.Imran Khan** A dynamic and enthusiastic personality in Pakistan, whose name is commonly associated with trust, leadership,captainship, business and charity success believed to be a man of inspiration to young generation. When he played cricket, he left all problems behind him to concentrate on winning the game, and got success by creating history by winning the World Cup in 1992 and later on he left the field of Cricket after wining the World Cup. He built Shaukat Khanum Memorial Cancer Hospital and Research Centre at Lahore in 1994. Later on he involved in Politics and founded “Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf” in 1996. He not only established a party but he won the election and got membership in National Assembly of Pakistan. He wrote several books including Imran Khan’s cricket skills, The autobiography of Imran Khan, Indus Journey: A personal View of Pakistan, All Round View, and Warrior Race: A Journey through the Land of the Tribal Pathans.

**2.Pele** the legendry player of Brazil known as the King of Soccer (Football) game, has remained outstanding player of the world, played a pivotal role in winning the World Cup and after retirement he was elevated as the minister for sport and culture in Brazilian government

**3.Qasim Zia** has remained outstanding Hockey player, represented Pakistan at Olympics of 1984 in Los Angles, USA and also at 1986 Hockey World Cup. His multi- dimensional personality made him provincial Legislator in the Punjab Assembly in Pakistan under the platform of Pakistan Peoples Party. He was appointed as the 23<sup>rd</sup> president of the Pakistan Hockey Federation by Prime Minister of Pakistan on October 15, 2008.

**4.Navjot Singh Sidhu** an enthusiastic and very intelligent person, also known as Sidhu Paaji. He was a successful Indian cricketer. After his retirement from cricket he became a sports journalist and took delight in presenting commentaries; he is also the popular anchor of Indian comedy TV channel. Sidhu was elected to the Lok Sabha from Amritsar in 2004 on Bharatiya Janata Party ticket. He later resigned, following allegation of culpable homicide. After the Supreme Court acquitted him, he successfully contested the Amritsar Lok Sabha seat, defeating his Congress rival, state finance minister Surinder Singla.

**5.Vince Lombardi** will be remembered forever linked with the unprecedented success of green bay packer’s professional American football. He had an unquenchable desire to succeed, to excel, and to



win. His famous slogan was “winning is not every thing, it is the only thing”. His statue is erected in his memory to recognize the services of legend.

**6. Idi Amin** former army general and President of Uganda who remained light heavy weight Boxing champion, used to call himself Lord of all Beast of the earth and fishes of the seas and conqueror of British Empire in Africa and Uganda in particular.

**7. Colin Moynihan** was the Cox of the winning oxford in boat racing and silver Medalist in Moscow Olympics. He was Tory M P and minister for sports under Prime Minister, Margaret Thatcher and worked as chairman, Olympic Association.

**8. Dawn Fraser** was Australia's greatest female athlete, a swimmer who won four Olympic Gold Medals. She has remained independent Member of Parliament in New South Wales, Australia.

**9. Miriam Blasco** of Spain has remained outstanding sports girl, won Gold medal in Judo at Barcelona Olympics and became Member of Parliament for Partido Popular, Spain's right wing opposition party.

**10. Ben Nighthorse Campbell** was a Native American who represented the US in judo at the Tokyo Olympics in 1964 and later on he became US senator who changed sides from Democrat to Republican.

**11. Bernard Laporate** was a promising coach of the French rugby union side and later on he became Minister for Sport in Nicolas Sarkozy's government.

## CONCLUSION

From above mentioned outstanding sport persons from different nations after retirement played their role in politics. It is assumed that popular sports persons can also perform well in holding political office. A high emotional involvement as a sportsman is more likely to increase the endurance or the charisma used in expressing ones skills of leadership trait and increases the reliability of movement and accuracy of performance in any leadership task. Normally people feel the need of the leadership skill and sports in their society and the role of media for social participation, social development and human understanding. Sport in personality is strongly motivated by the excess energy displayed and the urge to perform with excellence in individuals. The popularity and persistence of sports down through history and in most of the civilizations of the world today, could not be explained in words if sports did not bring pleasure, relief, and joy in performance. The emotional overtones of sports add color to life. Thus, sports and games develop the leadership qualities as well, the personality and help to maintain the harmony between body and mind. The outstanding sports persons can lead a peaceful and disciplined life.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

A subject pertaining to sports science and physical education should be included at Schools, undergraduate and post- graduation levels at the universities of Pakistan as introduced in many countries of Euro- America. 5% Job opportunities may be provided to the sportsmen in all public and private sector departments to facilitate outstanding players. Internship program during summer and winter vacations be introduced to train the youth in the field of sports and monthly adequate stipend be given to meritorious students.

Government should encourage and promote NGOs who are committed to sports development in the country through national departments and educational institutions. In order to divert the attention of the people towards healthy sporting activities, new Sports channels on TV are increased telecasting regular coaching and training programs, and various International competitions. In this regard, electronic and print media may also play its role in decent and effective manner. In public and private sectors mega projects in the form of sports Complexes, gymnasiums and Swimming Pools are constructed in educational institutions. It would promote and make the students mentally and physically fit to deliver the goods to the society effectively.

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