

Examining possible relationships between perceptions of tennis coach transformational leadership behaviour with athlete basic need satisfaction and mindfulness.

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Extensive understanding across literature offers agreement on the prophetic merits of transformational leadership as a credible concept but criticisms continue to exist regarding the limited examination of follower traits and qualities (Arthur, Woodman, Wei Ong, Hardy, & Ntoumanis, 2011; Avolio, 2007; Dvir & Shamir, 2003). The context sport coaches and their athletes operate within are significantly dependant on the interactions with a broad range of individuals (peers, parents, athlete support coaches) and can define the effectiveness of athletes and coaches (Ng, Lonsdale, & Hodge, 2011; Kroon, Kroon, van Woerkom, van Woerkom, Menting, & Menting, 2017). Within this the deliberate practice of ensuring focus and paying attention has been shown to have significant performance effects within the context of sport (Van de Braam & Aherne, 2016), with the practice of mindfulness identified as an approach to developing high quality practice (Moen, Federici, & Abrahamsen, 2015) for both coaches and their athletes. The present study explored the relationship: self-regulation, focus, and competence within athletes has on excellence across sport coaching leadership practice. Three hundred and ninety-three tennis players in the United Kingdom (mean age = 38.40 years, SD = 13.56) completed an adapted version of Callow, Smith, Hardy, Arthur, & Hardy, (2009) Differentiated Transformational Leadership Inventory, the Basic Needs Satisfaction in Sport Scale (Ng, Lonsdale, & Hodge, 2011), and the Mindful Attention Awareness Scale (Brown & Ryan, 2003). Magnitude based inference (MBI) statistics were used to run multiple comparisons between the various combinations of transformational leadership, basic need satisfaction and mindfulness conditions allowing inference to be reported on how meaningful population differences were (Batterham and Hopkins 2006). This revealed evidence to support positive athlete perceptions of coach transformational leadership behaviour were related to athlete satisfaction (competence, autonomy and relatedness) and mindfulness. Furthermore, results illustrated that the coaches differentiated leadership behaviours predicted higher disposition of athlete mindfulness. These results offer further insight into the moderating effect of athlete satisfaction on coach transformational leadership behaviour, and the mediating impact of mindfulness on outcomes for coaches and athletes and how they may influence the ability of a coach to deliver excellence across their coaching practice.