

البحث الخامس عشر :

The Role of Leadership in Generating Financial and Nonfinancial Outcomes at Sports Clubs, from the Perspectives of Club Staff Members
دور القيادة في توليد النتائج المالية وغير المالية في الأندية الرياضية
من وجهة نظر العاملين بالأندية

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Abstract:

This study aimed to investigate the leadership practices needed for generating financial and nonfinancial outcomes at sports clubs, investigate the barriers to leadership practices needed for generating financial and nonfinancial outcomes at sports clubs, and reveal the existence of statistically significant differences at the significance level of (0.05) on the questionnaires' axes and its total score, as regards the variables (gender – years of experience). The population of the study consisted of all staff members at Saudi sports coaches. The final sample included (70) individuals. The study adopted the analytical descriptive approach, and data was collected using questionnaires. Findings of the study include the following: leadership practices necessary for generating financial and non-financial outcomes at sports clubs were rated (high) by sample members; barriers to leadership practices necessary for generating financial and non-financial outcomes at sports clubs were rated (very high) by sample members; and no statistically significant differences were found at the significance level of (0.05) among sample members' responses, as regards the variables of gender and years of experience. Recommendations of the study include the following: the necessity of paying attention to strengths and weaknesses in sports clubs; working on increasing clubs' participation in Arab, regional, and international tournaments; and conducting further similar research targeting other environments, regions, and sports communities in Saudi Arabia and comparing their findings with those of the present study.

Key words:Leadership –Generating Financial – Nonfinancial Outcomes – Sports Clubs – Perspectives of Club Staff Members.

دور القيادة في توليد النتائج المالية وغير المالية في الأندية الرياضية من وجهة نظر العاملين بالأندية د. عبد الله محمد فته

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• المستخلص:

هدفت هذه الدراسة إلى التحقيق في الممارسات القيادية اللازمة لتحقيق نتائج مالية وغير مالية في الأندية الرياضية، والتحقيق في العوائق التي تحول دون الممارسات القيادية اللازمة لتوليد النتائج المالية وغير المالية في الأندية الرياضية، والكشف عن وجود فروق ذات دلالة إحصائية عند مستوى دلالة (٠.٠٥) في محاور الاستبانة ودرجتها الإجمالية من حيث المتغيرات (الجنس - سنوات الخبرة). تكون مجتمع الدراسة من جميع أعضاء هيئة التدريس في المدرسين الرياضيين السعوديين. وشملت العينة النهائية (٧٠) فرداً. اتبعت الدراسة المنهج الوصفي التحليلي، وجمعت البيانات باستخدام الاستبيانات. تشمل نتائج الدراسة ما يلي: تم تصنيف

الممارسات القيادية اللازمة لتحقيق نتائج مالية وغير مالية في الأندية الرياضية (مرتفع) من قبل أعضاء العينة. تم تصنيف العوائق التي تحول دون ممارسات القيادة اللازمة لتحقيق نتائج مالية وغير مالية في الأندية الرياضية (عالية جداً) من قبل أعضاء العينة؛ ولا توجد فروق ذات دلالة إحصائية عند مستوى دلالة (٠.٠٥) بين استجابات أفراد العينة فيما يتعلق بمتغيري الجنس وسنوات الخبرة. وقد تضمنت توصيات الدراسة ما يلي: ضرورة الاهتمام بنقاط القوة والضعف في الأندية الرياضية. العمل على زيادة مشاركة الأندية في البطولات العربية والإقليمية والدولية. وإجراء مزيد من البحوث المماثلة التي تستهدف بيئات ومناطق ومجتمعات رياضية أخرى في المملكة العربية السعودية ومقارنة نتائجها مع نتائج الدراسة الحالية.

الكلمات المفتاحية: القيادة - توليد النتائج المالية - النتائج غير المالية - الأندية الرياضية - وجهات نظر أعضاء طاقم النادي

Introduction:

Overview:

The management of sports is an important requirement for making sports meaningful and valuable in society; this is akin to what corporations do in order to make their products be perceived by customers as valuable. Leadership is an important factor for achieving success in management and attaining organizational outcomes (e.g., business outcomes). In fact, several leadership styles are effective for influencing and directing staff members' engagement and actions. Therefore, it can be stated that leadership is a key requirement for attaining organizational outcomes in the sports sector in general (Martínez-Moreno et al., 2021, 2).

In fact, leadership is an essential element in sports, especially with regards to the quest for success of sports teams in competitions. Leadership has been a major area of research and interest, both within and outside the context of sports. As a result, several varied conceptualizations of leadership have emerged (Cotterill & Fransen, 2021, 589).

Leadership in sports clubs is not confined to the realm of managerial or administrative work, as it is intrinsically linked to another important area of management, which is athlete coaching. It is true that training sports teams is undertaken by well-education and experience individuals

referred to as "coaches", but these coaches are rather "leaders" because their work involves directing and influencing athletes through interaction and communication. As a leader, a sports coach's role is not the mere explanation to athletes how sports activities should be performed, but it also involves providing athletes with relevant and accurate scientific information (Yildiz & Altinok, 2021, 2195).

The preceding discussion shows that leadership plays a prominent role in achieving a variety of outcomes, including financial and nonfinancial, in contemporary sports clubs. Leadership represents the directing force in a club, as it involves influencing people toward performance with accordance to the club's organizational goals and interests. Therefore, careful attention must be directed toward the development of effective leadership at sports clubs. Clubs with effective and strong leadership would be more capable of adapting to the constant changes that clubs are encountering in contemporary times, which are characterized by high uncertainty and turbulence.

Statement of the Problem:

Leadership plays a decisive role in achieving success in any contemporary organization in any sector, including sports. Leadership provides an organization with management, control, and direction. It is by leadership that sports organizations, such as clubs, manage to achieve desired outcomes, both financial and nonfinancial. Therefore, the importance of the role of leadership in achieving success in sports clubs cannot be overstated.

Several studies highlight the role of leadership in attaining financial and nonfinancial outcomes at sports clubs. For example, the study of Escamilla-Fajardo et al. (2021) indicates that leadership that adopts an

entrepreneurial orientation is more capable of achieving performance improvements for in several aspects, both financial and nonfinancial, in sports clubs. This finding is congruent with the findings presented by the study of Wicker et al. (2015). This latter study highlights the role of leadership practices, such as revenue diversification, in mitigating revenue volatility. Another study that indicates positive effects of leadership on the achievement of outcomes is the study of Seun (2017). This study indicates that leadership for innovation is associated with higher levels of organizational efficiency in clubs.

Although recent studies indicate positive impacts of leadership on the attainment of financial and nonfinancial outcomes, this conclusion does not represent a consensus in literature. In fact, leadership may lead to negative or unfavorable performance outcomes. Whether leadership can lead to positive or negative outcomes depends on how leadership is undertaken in the organization. Therefore, it is imperative that leadership is undertaken properly in sports clubs.

One study that highlights potential negative impacts of leadership on financial and nonfinancial outcomes is the study of Ogunsemore and Jimmy (2011). However, the study emphasizes that negative impacts occur in the case of leadership instability. Potential negative impacts of improper leadership in sports clubs include lower effectiveness of administration, weaker financial performance, failure to achieve goals, and lower levels of commitment and morale among athletes. Mikalauskas et al. (2013) argues that leadership may contribute, either positively or negatively, to a club's level of competitiveness in performance and service delivery. The significant

influence of leadership in that regard encompasses several areas, including organizational structure, management, and strategy development. Thus, the failure of leadership in proper undertaking of activities in these aspects would lead to undermined performance and competitiveness in sports clubs.

The preceding discussion shows that there exists a research gap on the role of leadership in generating financial and nonfinancial outcomes. Research findings vary in that regard, with some studies indicating a positive role and others highlighting issues that may render leadership detrimental to organizational outcomes. The present study aims to contribute to addressing research gap by presenting findings that provide clear conclusions on the role that leadership can play in generating both financial and nonfinancial outcomes.

The problem of the study is highlighted in the following question: What is the role of leadership in generating financial and nonfinancial outcomes at sports clubs, from the perspectives of club staff members?

Research Questions:

- What are the leadership practices needed for generating financial and nonfinancial outcomes at sports clubs, from the perspectives of club staff members?
- What are the barriers to leadership practices needed for generating financial and nonfinancial outcomes at sports clubs, from the perspectives of club staff members?
- Do statistically significant differences exist at the significance level of (0.05) on the questionnaires' axes

and its total score, as regards the variables (gender – years of experience).

Research Objectives:

The present study aims to achieve the following objectives:

- Investigating the leadership practices needed for generating financial and nonfinancial outcomes at sports clubs, from the perspectives of club staff members.
- Investigating the barriers to leadership practices needed for generating financial and nonfinancial outcomes at sports clubs, from the perspectives of club staff members.
- Revealing the existence of statistically significant differences at the significance level of (0.05) on the questionnaires' axes and its total score, as regards the variables (gender – years of experience).

Significance of the Study:

The significance of the present study stems from the importance of the topic it discusses, which concerns the role of leadership in generating financial and nonfinancial outcomes at sports clubs. The significance of the study is highlighted in the following points:

First: Theoretical Significance:

- The present study may aid in investigating the most needed practices for maximizing outcomes at Saudi sports clubs.
- The present study may aid in drawing the attention of competent officials toward organizing training courses and workshops for coaches and workers in the sports sector.

- The author hopes to present a valuable contribution to literature investigating the role of leadership in generating financial and non-financial outcomes at sports clubs.

Second: Practical Significance:

- Findings of the present study may aid in proposing appropriate recommendations and suggestions for improving the leadership skills of sports coaches and achieving clubs' organizational goals.
- Finding of the study may aid in drawing the attention of researchers toward conducting more similar studies at other sports clubs and comparing their findings with those of the present study.

Hypotheses of the Study:

The present study aims to test the following hypotheses:

- No statistically significant differences exist at the significance level of (0.05) on leadership practices needed for generating financial and non-financial outcomes at sports clubs, from the perspectives of club staff members, as regards the variables (gender – years of experience).
- No statistically significant differences exist at the significance level of (0.05) on leadership practices needed for generating financial and non-financial outcomes at sports clubs, from the perspectives of club staff members, as regards the variables (gender – years of experience).
- No statistically significant differences exist at the significance level of (0.05) on barriers to leadership practices needed for generating financial and non-financial outcomes at sports clubs, from the

perspectives of club staff members, as regards the variables (gender – years of experience).

Definition of Terms:

• **Leadership:**

One of the definitions of leadership is that it is an ability by which someone can influence others to work towards achieving a set of goals (Kumar et al., 2014, 82).

Another definition of leadership is that it is a function undertaken by a leader, who guides a group of people (Campo, 2014, 1).

For the purpose of the present study, leadership is defined as a behavior by which a leader of a sports organization/club influences staff members for the purpose of achieving one or more organizational goals.

• **Sports Clubs:**

One of the definitions of sports clubs is that they are companies or organizations that are specialized in performing activities related to sports Maletic et al., 2017, 75 (Maletic et al., 2017, 75).

Another definition of sports clubs is that they are organizations in the sports sector that aim at promoting sports at the local level (Freimuth, 2018, 313).

For the purpose of the present study, sports clubs are defined as organization specialized in undertaking a variety of activities related to sports, with examples of these activities including promotion of sports in the community and training teams for preparing them for competitions.

Literature Review

Overview of the Concept of Leadership:

The concept of leadership drew the attention of some of history's most prominent thinkers. Ancient thinkers predominantly viewed leadership as a personal trait.

Chinese philosopher Confucius did not define what leadership is, but he emphasized that, in order to be a leader, one has to care for people and be virtuous. In other words, a leader's main goal in life is serving people. Greek philosopher Plato, who is, in fact, the person widely regarded as the founder of philosophy, argued that what makes a leader is to be wise. Italian philosopher Machiavelli believed that becoming a leader necessitates that one possesses intelligence, be virtuous, and be supported by people (Silva, 2016, 2).

The concept of leadership has received attention from scholars in different disciplines, such as organizational studies, political science, education, management, psychology, and sociology. Although definitions of the concept are numerous, there is no consensus on what exactly constitutes leadership. However, the vast majority of definitions proposed for the concept of leadership agree on the assumption that leadership involves exerting influence on others and affecting change in organizations. Although leadership is a highly investigated research area, it remains one of the most ambiguous concepts in social sciences. Leadership studies have spawned a wide variety of research areas, such as leadership skills and traits, management vs leadership, influence and power, role and leadership in achieving organizational effectiveness, and determinants of leaders' behaviors. Other areas of investigation that have received attention include the influence of culture and gender on leadership and the extent of similarity among different leadership approaches (Asrar-ul-Haq & Anwar, 2018, 179-180).

As Alekperov (2016, 68-70) highlights, leadership is not the same as management. In fact, they are two distinct

notions. The main differences between a leader and a manager include the following:

1. A leader manages to direct people with the influence of personal leadership character, while a manager directs people with the use of managerial authorities.
2. A leader primarily focuses on people, while a manager focuses on the organization's systems.
3. A leader influences people by inspiration, while a manager influences people by motivating them to work.
4. A leader creates the organization's vision and strategy, while a manager creates the systems for realizing the vision and strategy.

The preceding discussion shows that leadership is a crucial element in any contemporary organization. Leadership is the science and art of management and direction in an organization. Although leadership has been and is still a highly debated notion, there is a general consensus that it involves influencing people. Thus, leadership plays an important role in influencing the attitudes and behaviors of people in an organization. In the light of this role, leadership can be described as a way to direct people toward the achievement of organizational goals and thus financial and nonfinancial outcomes.

Significance of Leadership in Contemporary Sports Contexts:

Leadership has become a key requirement for organizational survival of sports clubs in the present era. This is largely attributable to the fact that the sports industry is characterized by high dynamicity. The emergence of new challenges is something constantly experienced in sports clubs. This has been especially noticeable in recent years, as many unexpected changes and events, such as the COVID-

19 pandemic and widespread protests. Such changes have resulted in seeing stadiums empty and creating challenges for sports clubs regarding working on remaining influential in society and adapting clubs' cultures to new developments. In the midst of all these extremely radical, unexpected, and devastating changes, leadership powers have witnessed major shifts, with long-time leaders becoming less influential than before and other low-ranking club members starting to assume more prominent leadership roles. Thus, leadership is an essential catalyst for success in contemporary sports clubs (Barnhill et al., 2021, 202).

One of the major areas of leadership in sports clubs is coach leadership. In essence, coach leadership is a set of behaviors that are performed for the purpose of promoting satisfaction and improving performance among athletes. Another way of describing coach leadership is that it is a system of influence that is structured and maintained through interpersonal interactions and relationships between athletes and their coach. Several assumptions are made on how coach leadership influences athletes (Cotterill & Fransen, 2021, 590):

1. The relationship between athletes and their coach does not have a direct influence on athletes, but it represents a factor that mediates that the correlation between behaviors of the coach and athlete outcomes.
2. The leadership behaviors of the coach are aimed at realizing desired athlete outcomes, including character, connection, confidence, and competence.
3. The nature of leadership behaviors adopted by the coach is defined depending on the context as well as characteristics of both the athletes and the coach.

Leadership provides the basis for undertaking administrative work. This is attributable to the fact that leadership is a core factor that defines the extent of success or failure of administration in any organization, especially in organizations such as sports clubs. The adopted and practiced leadership style aids administrative employees in sports clubs in encountering developments, challenges, and crises (Al Kalabi & Mohammed, 2021, 10472).

Based on the above, it can be stated that leadership is a crucial topic of interest in contemporary sports organizations. Sports clubs are constantly witnessing a wide variety of unexpected and radical changes that may threaten clubs' survivability and sustainability of operations. In sports clubs, leadership is not restricted to the confines of administrative activities, but it is strongly correlated with success in sport performance, which is one of the key areas of performance in most sports club. Therefore, it can be stated that success in contemporary sports clubs is largely reliant on the effectiveness and competence of leadership.

Types/Styles of Leadership at Sports Clubs:

From among all the commonly practiced leadership styles, two particular ones are notable at contemporary organizational contexts, including sports clubs, which are transformational and transactional leadership. In essence, in transformational leadership, leaders are individuals who lead people around them by inspiration and stimulation, while leaders who adopt the transactional leadership style rely on social exchange in influencing people. Transformational leadership consists of individualized consideration (directing individualized attention to each person's needs), intellectual stimulation (stimulating people

to think innovatively), inspirational motivation (adopting practices that inspire and motivate people), and idealized attributes (personal characteristics that subordinates value and respect, such as commitment to the organization's vision). Transactional leadership has three dimensions, which are management by exception-passive (taking practical corrective measures only after mistakes exceed a certain limit), management by exception-active (taking practical corrective measures whenever the need arises), and contingent reward (providing rewards to subordinates in return for success in achieving organizational goals) (Megheirkouni, 2017, 598).

There are a variety of leadership styles that are implemented in sport coaching. Table 1 provides a brief explanation of some of the most prominent of these leadership styles.

Table 1. Leadership styles that are commonly practiced by sports coaches (Perera & Pushpakumari, 2015, 84).

Leadership Style	Description
Instruction and Training	The coach provides athletes with support and training in order to help them attain their maximum athletic potential. The coach teaches them how to develop the needed set of skills and trains them on how to implement the tactics and techniques of the sport.
Autocratic Leadership	The coach keeps a social distance from athletes and focuses on exerting authority.
Democratic Leadership	The coach gives athletes the opportunity to participate in making decisions.
Social Support	The coach focuses on meeting athletes' interpersonal needs.
Positive Feedback	The coach is keen on exhibiting certain behaviors, such as reinforcement and praise, in response to athletes' performance results.

In the light of the previous discussion, it can be stated that leadership has become an important element of work at contemporary clubs. However, the ways by which

leadership is undertaken by sports clubs are highly heterogeneous. The selection of a proper leadership style necessitates careful studying of athletes' needs and the peculiarities of the internal and external contexts under which the club is operating.

Factors That Influence Leadership in Contemporary Organizational Contexts:

According to Merricks (2019), factors that influence leadership in organizations include those outlined in Table 2.

Table 2. Factors that influence leadership, according to (Merricks, 2019, 4-5).

Factor	Description
Organizational Structure	Organizational structure encompasses the way that an organization operates as well as its characteristics. The nature of organizational structure in contemporary organizations range between bureaucratic (closed) and open structures. Bureaucratic structures place more emphasis on concepts such competence, chain of command, division of workers, and work rules. On the other hand, open structures emphasize concepts such as promoting of cooperation, sharing of powers, leadership rotation, and collaboration in decision-making processes.
Leadership Behaviors	"Leadership behaviors" is a term that refers to the characteristics and actions of the organization's leader. These behaviors are categorized into masculine and feminine behaviors. Masculine leadership behaviors include competition, control, independence, and self-assertion. Feminine leadership behaviors include awareness of patterns, receptivity, cooperation, and interdependence.
Attitudes, Values, and Beliefs	Beliefs, values, and attitudes form the basis of the core principles by which leadership practices are guided. These three components differ in terms of persistence; while values and attitudes are generally persistent, beliefs may undergo changes as the leader is exposed to new information.
External Forces	External factors are factors that influence the leader and originate from outside the organization. Examples of such factors include laws, regulations by the government, and community resources.

The industry or sector to which an organization belongs has a significant effect on the selected leadership style in that organization. For instance, leaders at nonprofit institutions tend to select practicing transformational leadership when compared to leaders at healthcare institutions, at which leaders are more likely to prefer collective approaches of leadership. Thus, the nature of the organization and its industry influence and shape leaders' decisions regarding what leadership styles to implement (McDermott et al., 2011, 363).

The discussion above shows that leadership in contemporary organizations is not of (or at least should not be) a static nature. Rather, leadership is dynamic in nature, as it is shaped and influenced depending on the nature of internal and external circumstances surrounding the leader. This is of special significance in sports clubs, especially that sports clubs are constantly witnessing changes, many of which are unexpected. Thus, strong and effective leadership is an indispensable need in contemporary sports clubs. Without such leadership, the staff members of a club wouldn't be able to work toward achieving desired financial and nonfinancial outcomes.

Factors That Influence Achieving Financial and Nonfinancial Outcomes at Sports Clubs:

- **Financial Outcomes:**

One of the main sources of revenue in sports clubs is membership fees. Membership fee is a payment that a member makes to the club as a condition for being allowed to join the club and enjoy the services it provides. It is worth noting that membership fees represent a source of revenue for a very large number of sports clubs (Breuer et al., 2015, 202).

Effective use of social media is a viable source of revenue for many sports clubs in the digital era. Effective use of social media can help clubs generate substantial amounts of revenue. Social media can be used for a variety of purposes, such as broadcasting, announcement of partnerships, unveiling of players and kits, and announcement of goal scoring. A recent example of the potential of social media for generating revenue is the case of English football club Chelsea FC. Chelsea FC posted a video on social media outlet Instagram to announce the formation of a partnership with Delta Airlines and Adidas. The large viewership of the view helped the video generate approximately 225,000 pound sterling in revenue. Sports clubs use social media for marketing products of sponsors' brands. Sports fans are much more likely to buy products of sponsors' brands if social media is the source of introduction to these products (Raipurkar et al., 2020, 3).

The pattern of seeking financial outcomes significantly influences the amount of revenue that a clubs can generate. This pattern varies among clubs. For example, clubs differ in their approach of revenue diversification, which, in turn, varies with accordance to types of organizational activities. The structure of income and how private and public services are provided also influence clubs' ability to achieve desired financial outcomes (Kościółek, 2019, 284).

The preceding discussion shows that sports clubs are similar to virtually all organizations in any other sector in the sense that generating financial revenue is an essential outcome to be sought. However, due to the inherently unprofitable nature of the organizational activities of sports clubs, sports clubs need to adopt the necessary measure for

generating financial revenue, thereby leading to the maintenance of organizational survivability and sustainability. In order to achieve higher financial outcomes, clubs need to explore more commercial practices beyond the mere reliance on membership fees. This way, sports clubs can turn into profitable organizations. This has been of significant value in recent times, as sports are being increasingly commercialized with the continuous transformation of the sports industry into a business-oriented sector.

• **Nonfinancial Outcomes:**

One of the key nonfinancial outcomes in sports clubs is sporting performance. Achieving improved sporting performance is an important achievement for any sports club, as it plays a significant role in strengthening the financial situation of the club and increasing interest in the club. In fact, improved performance in sports competitions would normally lead to larger flows of income. Sources of incomes for clubs that are successful in competitions include commercial rights, sales of tickets, and membership fees (González - Gómez et al., 2011, 28).

The achievement of improved sporting performance is reliant upon how athletes are motivated. Motivation must be accompanied by behavioral control and positive activation. Success in the motivation process necessitates considering the motivational components of each athlete; these components include expectations, aspirations, desires, intentions, trends, beliefs, interests, purposes, and needs (Corlaci et al., 2013, 1647).

Although sporting performance is distinctly different from financial performance, the latter can actually influence the former. In reality, decision makers may make decisions

that lean toward making profit on the expense of sporting performance. An example of such decisions is the cases in which clubs sell highly talented players for substantial amounts of money; such decisions are ideal from a business standpoint, but they may undermine the club/team's sporting performance. Thus, it can be stated that sporting performance and financial performance may be, in many circumstances, negatively correlated (Sánchez et al., 2020, 26-27).

From the discussion above, it is evident that nonfinancial outcomes are no less important than financial outcomes. In fact, nonfinancial outcomes probably represent the main type of outcomes that sports clubs are assessed by in the eyes of the general public. Audiences and broader stakeholders may not be aware of or care about how a sports club is fairing financially, but what grabs their attention is how athletes and teams belonging to that club are performing in athletic competitions. Interestingly, nonfinancial outcomes and financial outcomes are, to a certain degree, correlated, as the latter may influence the former. This indicates the need for seeking the improvement of financial performance in order to realize improved performance in nonfinancial aspects.

The Role of Leadership in Achieving Financial and Nonfinancial Outcomes at Sports Clubs:

Leadership plays a significant role in sports clubs as a catalyst for the achievement of a variety of outcomes. In fact, there is a consensus on the belief that leadership is an essential requirement for setting the direction for organizations and staff toward the achievement of the organization's strategic objectives. Moreover, effective leadership is a driver of good performance among staff

members of the club as well as sports teams. Leadership also aids in the development and maintenance of good performance of sports teams over time (Martínez-Moreno et al., 2021, 2).

The positive effect of leadership on organizational outcomes at sports clubs is attributable to its effectiveness in promoting a spirit of cohesion in teams. Leadership is also important for promoting satisfaction among members of the team. The leadership behaviors of a leader have a direct effect on the self-perception, group identity, motivation, achievements, and success of athletes and teams. On the contrary, coaches how are incompetent leaders would have negative effects on the success and cohesion of their teams (Kebede, 2017, 82).

Leadership at sports clubs is of a versatile nature, as leaders may find themselves performing several leadership roles simultaneously, such as the roles of managerial leadership and team/department management. Such leaders belong to middle management at sports clubs. Effective and successful leadership at middle management is one of the most significant enablers of success in achieving organizational outcomes at any sports club (Iconomescu et al., 2017, 270).

The discussion above shows that effective leadership is an essential requirement for aiding sports clubs in achieving organizational outcomes, both financial and nonfinancial. Sports clubs are organizations at which people represent the main and most important resource, unlike many other organizations in which other forms of capital are considerably important. This further adds to the importance of leadership in achieving desired organizational outcomes at sports clubs. Therefore, sports clubs should place the

achievement of effective leadership in the list of top priorities, if not the very most important priority.

Challenges of Leadership toward Achieving Financial and Nonfinancial Outcomes at Sports Clubs:

Many Leaders of sports clubs encounter challenges in generating financial outcomes due to intrinsic challenges in the commercialization of sports. The transformation toward commercially oriented approaches of sports management is marred by barriers due to the fact that many clubs are still managed by volunteering-based boards that manage limited human and financial resources. As a result, the rise of tensions between full-time staff members and volunteering board members is a common challenge for leaders of sports clubs. The transformation of sports clubs from traditional management approaches to other business-oriented ones represents a significant challenge, as the latter approaches are generally more complex (Crawford, 2018, 11).

In addition, sports clubs commonly struggle with challenges in securing basic resources, such as infrastructure, networks, financial resources, and human resources. The nature of financial arrangements with external parties may result in major challenges for clubs in obtaining financial resources. For instance, the higher the proportion for a sponsor in a commercial partnership, the lower the proportion of revenue that the club receives, thereby resulting in higher likelihood of encountering financial challenges and thus generating lower financial outcomes for the club (Kościółek, 2019, 284).

The nature of financial arrangements with external parties may influence a club's ability to achieve nonfinancial outcomes. For instance, many sports receive public funding; under such circumstances, clubs may encounter challenges

in decision making due to increased power of governmental institutions providing the funds (Kościółek, 2019, 284).

Challenges encountered by club leaders are not restricted to those concerning financial outcomes, but they can also be found in areas relating to the achievement of nonfinancial outcomes, such as those concerning sporting performance. Club leaders often find themselves in a dilemma in making decisions on whether to retain or sack coaches. Club leaders may make such decisions with accordance to rational bases, mainly the quest for improvement of team performance. However, deciding to replace a coach during the seasons may have consequences that warrant careful consideration. Replacing a coach often entails reconsidering all the work and planning that had been undertaken prior to the beginning of the season; this, itself, is a significantly risky step to be made. Moreover, it is not easy to make accurate predictions of the resulting performance changes after appointing a new coach (González - Gómez et al., 2011, 29).

Based on the preceding discussion, it can be stated that leadership at sports club encounters a wide range of challenges in working toward the achievement of financial and nonfinancial outcomes. The major discrepancy between the nature of sports clubs and that of commercial firms creates a variety of challenges for leaders of sports clubs. The intrinsically unprofitable nature of organizational structure of sports clubs creates challenges for sports clubs in securing basic resources that are essential for operation. This often forces clubs to enter financial arrangements, mainly in the form of partnerships, with external parties, including organizations from both the public and private sectors. Such arrangements would be detrimental to sports

clubs in terms of both financial and nonfinancial aspects. Such partnerships may force a club to sacrifice a significant proportion of revenue for arriving at arrangements that may secure higher potential for the club's organizational survivability and sustainability. At the same time, such partnership may hinder working towards achieving improved nonfinancial performance outcomes. Partners may enjoy significant power privileges that may restrict a club's decision-making rights, thereby resulting in the threat of being forced to make decisions that serve the interests of stakeholders rather than those that serve the club's ability to achieve improved nonfinancial outcomes, namely success in athletic competitions.

Solutions for Overcoming Challenges of Leadership toward Achieving Financial and Nonfinancial Outcomes at Sports Clubs:

Overcoming the challenges of generating financial outcomes requires that a club's leader pays attention to two separate key managerial issues. First, the leader must focus on financial aspects separately and independently from any sport-related considerations. Second, the leader must pay careful attention to effective sports team building as well as the management of the club's reputation. In reality, if a club's leader decides to raise additional funds through financial markets, careful attention must be paid to promoting accounting discipline, which can be achieved through proper balancing of the club's financial budgets and reaching positive profitability. Failure in that regard would lead to undervaluation or stagnation of the club's stock in the market. Proper management of financial aspects of the club's affairs should involve implementing improved control measures on athlete payroll and transfers as well as working

on strengthening the club's reputation and competitiveness (Gimet & Montchaud, 2016, 31).

Sports clubs need to upgrade their leadership approaches and adopt improved management practices. This would help clubs in having adaptable and modern leadership practices. In fact, success in leadership for achieving desired outcomes largely depends on effectively responding to circumstances, not merely the competencies possessed by the leader. Regardless of the type of circumstances, the leader must maintain a climate of respect and cooperation in practicing leadership (Argyropoulou, 2021, 66).

Especially important for achieving organizational goals is the consideration of the club's mission portfolio. This is an important requirement for leadership to overcome the challenge of seeking both financial and nonfinancial outcomes at clubs. A leader must select missions carefully such that they are complementary, not conflicting. For instance, certain organizational missions, such as undertaking non-sport programs and fostering organizational traditions, would be complementary due to their potential positive impacts on financial outcomes, while other missions, such as fostering athletic competitiveness, may be conflicting due to clashing with financial goals. In order to arrive at a proper balance between the achievement of financial and nonfinancial outcomes, a leader must carefully study the combination of missions of the club (Wicker et al., 2013, 133).

The preceding discussion shows that in order to adapt to, or even overcome, the challenges of achieving financial and nonfinancial outcomes, leadership practices must be tailored for the specific nature and needs of the sports club. A leader should not ignore the critical importance of

financial aspects for the club, but managing these aspects should be undertaken without letting sporting performance be an interfering factor in financially rational decision making. At the same time, a leader must make improving sporting performance a top priority for the club. Success in arriving at a balanced leadership configuration may require exploring new leadership and management practices, as successful leadership of a sports club revolves around managing to achieve both financial and nonfinancial outcomes concurrently.

Relevant Studies:

An amplitude of research discussed the role of leadership in generating organizational outcomes, including in sports clubs. Recent relevant literature has focused on aspects and practices of leadership that are positively associated with the achievement of outcomes as well as factors and issues that may influence leadership effectiveness in that regard. This section of the current study presents a number of recent studies that are relevant to the research topic:

The study of Escamilla-Fajardo et al. (2021), titled: "Effects of Entrepreneurial Orientation and Passion for Work on Performance Variables in Sports Clubs".

This study aimed to investigate the influence of entrepreneurial orientation in leadership and work passion on different variables of performance in sports clubs. The sample of the study included a number of members of boards of directors, presidents, sport managers, and technicians working at (199) non-profit sports clubs in Spain. The study adopted a qualitative research

methodology, and questionnaires were used for data collection. Findings of the study include the following:

1. Entrepreneurial orientation (through risk-taking and innovation) in leadership was found to have positive effect on variables of performance.
2. Work passion leads to increased positive effect of entrepreneurial orientation in leadership on variables of performance.

Recommendations of the study include the following: conducting studies that address the limitations of this study, such as restriction to only one cultural context (Spain) and studying only a specific type of clubs (non-profit).

The study of Megheirkouni (2017), titled: "Leadership Styles and Organizational Learning in UK For-Profit and Non-Profit Sports Organizations".

This study aimed to examine the effects of transactional and transformational leadership styles on organizational learning. The population of the study consisted of all staff members of (8) non-profit and (6) for-profit sports organization in the United Kingdom. The final sample selected for analysis included (207) individuals. The study adopted the analytical descriptive approach, which involved using questionnaires for data collection. Findings of the study include the following:

1. Transactional leadership (through management by exception) was found to be positively associated with organizational learning.
2. Transformational leadership (through idealized leadership) was found to be positively associated with organizational learning.
3. Statistically significant differences were found in the levels of implementing transactional and transformational

leadership styles as well as in organizational learning, all for the favor of for-profit organizations.

4. No statistically significant differences were found among the sample members' responses, as regards the variables of gender, age, and education level.

Recommendations of the study include the following: conducting similar studies over larger research scopes in order to arrive at more generalizable findings; and conducting further research for investigating the relationship between transactional and transformational leadership on one hand and organizational learning on the other.

The study of Seun (2017), titled: "Roles of Leadership for Innovation in Sport Organisations in Nigeria".

This study aimed to investigate the role of leadership in fostering innovation in sports clubs in Nigeria. The population of the study consisted of all managers of (50) non-profit and (15) for-profit sports organizations across Nigeria. The final sample selected for analysis included the managers of (40) non-profit and (10) for-profit sports organizations. The study adopted a descriptive research methodology, and a questionnaire was used as the research instrument. Findings of the study include the following:

1. A statistically significant positive correlation was found between leadership for innovation and innovative practices at sports organizations.
2. A statistically significant positive correlation was found between leadership for innovation and organizational efficiency at sports organizations.
3. A statistically significant positive correlation was found between the implementation of strategies for fostering

innovative leadership on one hand and organizational performance at sports organizations on the other.

Recommendations of the study include the following: leadership at sports organization must put at the top of their priorities the improvement of employees' competencies; leaders of sports organizations must be keen on providing the facilities and equipment necessary for carrying out work activities; promotions among club staff members must be based on the principles of equity and fairness.

The study of Wicker et al. (2015), titled: "Revenue Volatility in German Nonprofit Sports Clubs".

This study aimed to analyze the volatility of revenue and its determinants in non-profit sports organizations. Population of the study consisted of board members of (19,345) sports clubs in Germany. Sample of the study included board members of (724) clubs. The study adopted a descriptive research approach, and questionnaires were used for data collection. Findings of the study included the following:

1. A negative correlation was found between the diversification of revenue and volatility of revenue.
2. Increased reliance on membership fees as a source of revenue was associated with decreased volatility of revenue.
3. Decreased reliance on subsidies was associated with decreased volatility of revenue.

Recommendations of the study include the following: conducting similar studies in other context other than Western Europe.

The study of Mikalauskas et al. (2013), titled: "Factors Affecting Competitiveness of Services Provided by Sports Clubs: a Case of Kaunas City Sports Clubs".

This study aimed to investigate the major factors that influence the level of competitiveness of services delivered by sports clubs. The population of the study consisted of all leaders of sports clubs located in Kaunas, Lithuania. The final sample included (16) leaders. The study adopted a descriptive research approach, and data was collected through interviews. Findings of the study include the following:

1. Internal factors influencing the competitiveness of services provided by clubs under study include the following: organizational structure, management (leadership), strategy development, and quality of services.
2. External factors influencing the competitiveness of services provided by clubs under study include the following: government-related factors, economic and social factors, and business opportunities.
3. Internal factors were found to be more influential on the competitiveness of services than external factors.

Recommendations of the study include the following: focusing in the design of services on the interests and needs of clients rather than any other social considerations.

The study of Ogunsemore & Jimmy (2011), titled: "Effect of Leadership Instability on Sports Administration and Development of Sports Organisations in Nigeria".

This study aimed to investigate the impact of instability in leadership on administration and sports development in Nigeria. The population of the study consisted of all athletes, coaches, association secretaries, sport directors, managers of teams, and sports administrators across Nigeria. The final sample selected for analysis

included (200) individuals. The study adopted a descriptive research approach, and data was collected using questionnaires. Findings of the study include the following:

1. A statistically significant negative effect was found between instability of leadership and effectiveness of administration at organizations of sports.
2. A statistically significant negative effect was found between dismissal of leaders from statutory positions and financial performance at organizations of sports.
3. A statistically significant negative effect was found between instability of leadership and achievement of goals at organizations of sports.
4. A statistically significant negative effect was found between instability of leadership and achievement of goals at organizations of sports.
5. A statistically significant negative effect was found between instability of leadership and levels of commitment and morale among athletes.

Recommendations of the study include the following: adoption of objective criteria and practices for hiring leaders in sports organizations; careful monitoring for detecting any corrupt practices committed by leaders of sports organizations; and adoption of appropriate management practices for addressing organizational conflicts at sports organizations.

Methodology

Research Approach:

The analytical descriptive approach is concerned with collecting, classifying, and categorizing data and facts, as well as placing them in a thorough and in-depth analysis, and also some interpretation of these results, therefore, the methods of measurement, classification, and interpretation

to extract significant conclusions, then reach generalizations about the phenomenon under study.

Research Population and Sample:

The population of the study consisted of all staff members at Saudi sports coaches. The final sample included (70) individuals.

Characteristics of the Study Sample:

Frequencies and percentages were calculated with regards to (gender –years of experience).

- 1- Distribution of sample members, according to gender:

Table 1: Distribution of Sample Members, According to Gender

S	Gender	Frequency	Percentage
1	Male	52	%74.3
2	Female	18	%25.7
Total		70	100.0%

Table (1) shows that (74.3%) of sample members are females, while (25.7%) are males.

- 2- Distribution of sample members, according to years of experience:

Table 2: Distribution of Sample Members, According to Years of Experience

S	Years of Experience in Teaching	Frequency	Percentage
1	Less than 5 years	18	%25.7
2	From 5 to 10 years	31	%44.3
3	More than 10 years	21	%30.0
Total		70	100.0%

Table (2) shows that (25.7%) of sample members less than 5 years of experience, (44.3%) have from 5 to 10 years of experience, and (30.0%) have more than 10 years of experience.

Research Instrument:

After reviewing relevant research, the author will design and prepare a questionnaire with the aim of investigating the role of leadership in generating financial and nonfinancial outcomes at sports clubs, from the perspectives of club staff members.

• **Description of the Research Instrument:**

In its final form, the questionnaire consisted of two main parts:

1. First part: this part concerned basic information (gender – years of experience of working at sports clubs)
2. Second part: this part included the questionnaire's axes. The questionnaires included (33) items distributed on two axes:
 - a. First axis: "Leadership Practices Necessary for Generating Financial and Financial Outcomes at Sports Clubs, from the Perspectives of Club Staff Members". This axis included (23) items distributed on (4) dimensions.
 - b. Second axis: "Barriers to Leadership Practices Necessary for Generating Financial and Financial Outcomes at Sports Clubs, from the Perspectives of Club Staff Members". This axis included (10) items.

A 5-point likert scale (very high – high – moderate – low – very low) was used for the purpose of investigating the role of leadership in generating financial and nonfinancial outcomes at sports clubs, from the perspectives of club staff members.

• **Validity of the Research Instrument:**

1) **Validity of the Internal Consistency of the Research Instrument:**

a. **Validity of the Internal Consistency of the Study's Axes:**

Validity of the internal consistency was calculated in the light of the sample members' responses. This involved calculating the Pearson correlation coefficient between each statement and its respective axis' total score, as illustrated in Table (3):

Table (3): Pearson Correlation Coefficients between Each Statement and Its Respective Axis' Total Score

First Axis: Leadership Practices Necessary for Generating Financial and Financial Outcomes at Sports Clubs, from the Perspectives of Club Staff Members					
Item. No	Correlation Coefficient t	Item. No	Correlation Coefficient t	Item. No	Correlation Coefficient t
1	.418**	9	.442**	17	.665**
2	.339**	10	.565**	18	.473**
3	.404**	11	.406**	19	.557**
4	.402**	12	.340**	20	.513**
5	.500**	13	.593**	21	.666**
6	.632**	14	.667**	22	.405**
7	.519**	15	.518**	23	.244*
8	.435**	16	.348**		
Second Axis: Barriers to Leadership Practices Necessary for Generating Financial and Financial Outcomes at Sports Clubs, from the Perspectives of Club Staff Members					
1	.732**	5	.858**	9	.646**
2	.474**	6	.714**	10	.542**
3	.730**	7	.659**		
4	.862**	8	.692**		

**Statistically significant at (0.01)

*Statistically significant at (0.05)

Table (3) shows that correlation coefficients between statements and their respective axes were all statistically significant at the significance level of (0.01). The values of all correlation coefficients were high. For the first axis, the values of correlation coefficients were within the range (.224*-.667**). For the second axis, the values of correlation coefficients were within the range (.474*-.858**). These values support the validity of the internal consistency of the questionnaire's axes.

b. Structural Validity of the Questionnaires' Axes:

The structural validity of the questionnaire's axes was obtained by calculating the correlation coefficients between the total score of each axis and the questionnaire's total score. The findings are presented in Table (4):

Table (4): Correlation Coefficients the Total Score for Each Axis and the Total Score for the Questionnaire's Axes

S	Axis	Correlation Coefficient
1	First axis: Leadership Practices Necessary for Generating Financial and Financial Outcomes at Sports Clubs, from the Perspectives of Club Staff Members	.934**
2	Second Axis: Barriers to Leadership Practices Necessary for Generating Financial and Financial Outcomes at Sports Clubs, from the Perspectives of Club Staff Members	.730**

**Statistically significant at (0.01)

Table (4) shows that the values of correlation coefficients between each axis and the total score for the questionnaire were all high, within the range (.730**-.934**). All values were statistically significant at the

significance level of (0.01). Thus, the questionnaire's axes' structural validity is high.

Table (5): Alpha Cronbach Coefficients for the Questionnaire's Axis

S	Axis	No of Items	Alpha Cronbach Coefficient
1	First axis: Leadership Practices Necessary for Generating Financial and Financial Outcomes at Sports Clubs, from the Perspectives of Club Staff Members	23	.826
2	Second Axis: Barriers to Leadership Practices Necessary for Generating Financial and Financial Outcomes at Sports Clubs, from the Perspectives of Club Staff Members	10	.964
Total		33	.856

Table (6) shows that all the values of reliability coefficients for the questionnaire's axes were high, being within the range (.826-.964). The total value of the reliability coefficients for the questionnaire's axes was (.856). These values of reliability coefficients indicate the validity of the questionnaire for application and the reliability of data obtained using it.

Findings and Discussion

A. Differences as Regards Gender:

Presentation and discussion of the study's hypotheses: no statistically significant differences exist at the significance level of (0.05) among sample members' responses on the questionnaire's axes and the total score, as regards the variables (gender – years of experience).

For investigate the differences among sample members' responses on the questionnaire's axes and total score, as regards the (gender) variable, the research used an Independent Sample Test (T-test). This was for the purpose

of identifying the differences among sample members' responses as regard gender, as illustrated in Table (9).

Table (9): Results of the Independent Samples Test (T-Test) for Identifying Differences among Sample Members' Responses on the Questionnaire's Axes and the Total Score, as Regards to Gender Variable

Axis	Gender	N	Mean	Standard Deviation	Degrees of Freedom	T Value	Significance	Significance Level
First axis: Leadership Practices Necessary for Generating Financial and Financial Outcomes at Sports Clubs, from the Perspectives of Club Staff Members	Male	52	3.67	.458	68	-1.676-	.098	Statistically insignificant at the level of > 0.05
	Female	18	3.87	.305				
Second Axis: Barriers to Leadership Practices Necessary for Generating Financial and Financial Outcomes at Sports Clubs, from the Perspectives of Club Staff Members	Male	52	4.51	.491	68	.172	.864	Statistically insignificant at the level of > 0.05
	Female	18	4.49	.603				
Total Score	Male	52	3.93	.415	68	-1.193-	.237	Statistically insignificant at the level of > 0.05
	Female	18	4.06	.321				

Table (9) shows the following:

- No statistically significant differences were found at the significance level of (0.05) among sample members' opinions on the first axis, as regards the gender variable.
- No statistically significant differences were found at the significance level of (0.05) among sample

members' opinions on the second axis, as regards the gender variable.

- No statistically significant differences were found at the significance level of (0.05) among sample members' opinions on the questionnaire's axes, as regards the gender variable.

These findings may be attributable to the proximity of sample members' levels of knowledge, regardless of gender, on the leadership practices adopted by sports clubs as well as their exposure to the same challenges. This, in turn, may be attributable to the similarity of environments and management methods adopted at Saudi sports clubs. These findings corroborate those presented by the study of Seun (2017), which indicates that perceptions of leadership practices are not influenced by staff members' demographic variables, but rather by the leader's degree of innovativeness in leadership.

B. Differences as Regards Years of Experience:

Table (10): Results of the One Way Anova Analysis if the Differences among Sample Members' Responses, as Regard the Years of Experience Variable

Axis		Sum of Squares	Degree of Freedom	Mean square	f	Significance level
First axis: Leadership Practices Necessary for Generating Financial and Financial Outcomes at Sports Clubs, from the Perspectives of Club Staff Members	Between-group	.535	2	.267	1.462	.239
	Within-group	12.254	67	.183	---	
	Total	12.789	69	---	---	
Second Axis: Barriers to Leadership Practices Necessary for Generating Financial and Financial Outcomes at Sports Clubs, from the Perspectives of Club Staff Members	Between-group	.635	2	.317	1.193	.310
	Within-group	17.832	67	.266	---	
	Total	18.466	69	---	---	
Total Score	Between-group	.224	2	.112	.714	.494
	Within-group	10.521	67	.157	---	

Axis		Sum of Squares	Degree of Freedom	Mean square	f	Significance level
First axis: Leadership Practices Necessary for Generating Financial and Financial Outcomes at Sports Clubs, from the Perspectives of Club Staff Members	Between-group	.535	2	.267	1.462	.239
	Within-group	12.254	67	.183	---	
	Total	12.789	69	---	---	
Second Axis: Barriers to Leadership Practices Necessary for Generating Financial and Financial Outcomes at Sports Clubs, from the Perspectives of Club Staff Members	Between-group	.635	2	.317	1.193	.310
	Within-group	17.832	67	.266	---	
	Total	18.466	69	---	---	
	Total	10.745	69	---	---	

Table (10) shows the following:

- No statistically significant differences were found at the significance level of (0.05) among sample members' opinions on the first axis, as regards the years of experience variable.
- No statistically significant differences were found at the significance level of (0.05) among sample members' opinions on the second axis, as regards the years of experience variable.
- No statistically significant differences were found at the significance level of (0.05) among sample members' opinions on the questionnaire's axes, as regards the years of experience variable.

The researcher that these findings may be attributable to the frequent interaction among sample members in work life at sports clubs, in which environments and management practices are similar, thus sample members were able to share experiences. As a result, sample members' responses were similar, regardless of experience. These findings are in line with those highlighted by the study of Megheirkouni (2017), which indicates that leadership practices at sports

are not influenced by any demographic variables, including gender, educational level, and years of experience.

Summary of Findings:

- Leadership practices necessary for generating financial and non-financial outcomes at sports clubs were rated (high) by sample members.
- Ranked first was the third dimension (the role of leaders in monitoring), with a mean of (4.06), a standard deviation of (3.71). Ranked second was the second dimension (the role of leadership in achieving goals), with a mean of (3.71) and a standard deviation of (.596). Ranked third was the fourth dimension (the role of leadership in organizational development), with a mean of (3.61) and a standard deviation of (.710). Ranked last was the first dimension (the role of leadership in the definition of goals), with a mean of (3.55) and a standard deviation of (.634).
- Barriers to leadership practices necessary for generating financial and non-financial outcomes at sports clubs were rated (very high) by sample members.
- No statistically significant differences were found at the significance level of (0.05) among sample members' responses to the questionnaire's axes, as regards the gender variable.
- No statistically significant differences were found at the significance level of (0.05) among sample members' responses to the questionnaire's axes, as regards the years of experience variable.

Recommendations:

In the light of the obtained findings, the researcher presents a number of recommendations:

- The necessity of paying attention to strengths and weaknesses in sports clubs.
- Working on increasing clubs' participation in Arab, regional, and international tournaments.
- Provision of needed financial resources to sports clubs.
- Improving and strengthening the systems of financial and non-financial incentives provided to staff at sports clubs.
- The necessity of attention to the provision of technical resources that sports coaches often need.
- The necessity that club management uses available resources efficiently in order to achieved desired goals.
- The need to benefit from competition among work groups at sports clubs in order to promote performance standards.
- The necessity for using feedback systems as a method for staff performance and achieving goals at sports clubs.

Research Proposals:

- Conducting further similar research targeting other environments, regions, and sports communities in Saudi Arabia and comparing their findings with those of the present study.
- Conducting further research aiming at investigating the possible ways for addressing the challenges of implementing leadership practices needed for generating financial and non-financial outcomes at sports clubs.

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