Environmental and Leadership Factors as Correlates of Team Performance Satisfaction of North-East Football Clubs in Nigeria Premier League

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Abstract:
This study examined cohesion (Environmental and Leadership) factors as correlates of team performance satisfaction of North-East Football Clubs in Nigeria Premier League in 2013/2014 season. To achieve this, the study was guided by two hypotheses. A correlational research design was used for this study and the population for the study was made up of all the registered players of three north-east football clubs in Nigeria premier league in 2013/2014 season. Comprehensive sampling technique was used for the study. One hundred and five (105) players were used for the study. A modified 52-item questionnaire and 17-item Self–Developed scale on team Performance Satisfaction Questionnaire (TPSQ) were used to collect information from the respondents with a reliability coefficient of 0.856. A modified 4 point Likert Type Scale was used. The Response Mode of Strongly Agree, Agree, Disagree and Strongly Disagree was used. Data were analyzed using inferential statistics of Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient (PPMC) to test the null hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance. The results showed that there is significant correlation between cohesion (Environmental and Leadership) factors and team performance satisfaction in the North–East Football Clubs in Nigeria Premier League. This showed that there is team performance satisfaction in three (El-Kanemi Warirs Football Club, Gombe United Football Club and Taraba United Club) clubs in the North-East Nigeria in 2013/2014 premier league. It was recommended among other things that Coaches and players should adopt good leadership styles to enhance team cohesion and team performance satisfaction.

Key Words: Cohesion, Environmental Factors, Leadership Factors and Team Performance Satisfaction

Introduction:
Cohesion in sports is the dynamic process which is reflected in the tendency for a team to stick together in pursuit of its goals and objectives. It is sacrosanct to any successful team unity and progression, and cannot, as such be sacrificed by team handlers. It is apparently noted that team cohesion is a complex phenomenon, a very strong component of group dynamics, which contributes to the winning formula implementation in sports.
Successful coaches have always been quoted as having attributed their team success to team cohesion as being an important component of team sports because it can influence a team’s collective effort, their persistence in tough situations or defeat, and is a characteristic often observed in successful teams [1]. Cohesion enables individuals to sacrifice personal desires and conform to team needs [2]. Great teamwork happens when those on the team have a philosophy of being the best persons for the team rather than the best persons in the team. Cohesion is important in team sports because it makes a team to be united and stick together to achieve set objectives. It also leads to successful performance of the team. Cohesion is the strive to maintain positive relationship with other group members.

The field of sport psychology has generally focused on investigating and enhancing individual motivation and performance in sports, though most sport activities occur in group setting [3]. However, the team’s performance does not appear to be the sum of individual efforts, but it is a more complex interaction of interpersonal and situational factors. Therefore, sport psychologists could not ignore the fact that cohesion factors would influence group performance. These cohesion factors include environmental, personal, leadership and team. Environmental factors are the normative forces holding a group together. It is present when players are under contract to the management or when athletes hold scholarship and geographical restrictions exist (having to play for a certain high school because of where you live). These influences can hold a group together, although other factors such as age, proximity or eligibility requirements can also play an important role. The role of environmental factors in relation to sports performance is also influenced to a large extent by the group size [4; 5]. When environmental factors are properly harnessed, performance satisfaction will be enhanced.

Leadership factor; is the process whereby an individual influences a group of individuals to achieve a common goal. The process of influence typically involves facilitating motivation in others [6]. When players are highly motivated by players, they tend to focus wholly on the task ahead of others. This would invariably affect performance satisfaction positively.

**Statement of the Problem:**

Cohesiveness of a team is a function of the ability of the team to be in a good state of mind and satisfy both the needs of individual members and that of the team.

For a team to be cohesive certain factors must be seen to be in operation in that team, such as environmental factors, personal factors, leadership factors and team factors of cohesion. A cohesive team has well defined roles and group norms; common goals, a positive synergy, trust, a willingness to cooperate, unity, good communication, pride in membership and synergy. The more cohesive a team is, the more it encourages peak performance in members. If cohesion is lacking, it can prevent the team from reaching its potentials. Consequently, the success of a sport team depends on being able to find strength in cooperation, build on mutual helpfulness and responsibility for fellow team mates [7]. Team work in sport competition requires that the task must be accomplished by a group of athletes working together in order to combine individual effort to win.

The El-Kanemi Warriors Football Club, Gombe United Football Club and Taraba Football Club whose performance profiles were investigated have shown performance indices pre-empting cohesion factors in their games. For example, in 2011/2012, El-Kanemi warriors football club topped the league table whereas in 2012/2013, a season later, it dropped to 4th position and in 2013/2014 season ended in position 14th. Gombe United, in 2011/2012 was 9th later move to 7th position in 2012/2013 season and in 2013/2014 were relegated while Taraba Football Club just qualified into the league in 2013/2014 and ended in 12th position. This dwindling performance underscores the need for investigating the team’s cohesive factors, which are...
predictors to team performance satisfaction and invariably team success. This study was conducted to examine cohesion factors such as environmental and leadership factors as Correlates of Team Performance satisfaction of North-East Football Clubs in Nigeria Premier League.

**Environmental Factors and Team Performance Satisfaction:**

Environmental factors, which are the most general and remote, refer to the normative forces holding a group together. Environmental factors are present when, for example, players are under contract to the management, athletes hold scholarship, family members have expectations of athletes, geographical restrictions exist (having to play for a certain high school because of where you live), regulations specifying the minimum playing time in a youth sport programme, and exercisers pay an extra fee for their class. These influences can hold a group together, although other factors such as age, proximity, or eligibility requirements can also play an important role, for example, having individuals in close proximity to each other with opportunities for interaction and communication foster group development. In addition, the size of a group affects cohesion, with smaller groups more cohesive than larger groups [4; 8]. [9] Found that if people are closed to one another, it will strengthen closer proximity that in turn, facilitates better performance. Furthermore, level of competition seems to influence cohesion, with high school teams being more cohesive than collegiate teams [10].

Environmental factors include factors which influence the team setting, such as the type of sport [11]. For example, a soccer team is much more collectivistic in nature, with eleven players working together to achieve the same goal, than more individualistic sports such as track. Track teams are typically highly individualistic with few team aspects, making it harder to unite towards a common goal. The differences in the nature of the sport, in this example, collectivistic versus individualistic nature, ultimately change the dynamics of the group environment affecting cohesion amongst team members.

For sport teams such as football, an excessive number of players can lead to a large number of problems such as player dissatisfaction, crowding, and lack of adequate instruction or feedback from the coach [12]. It is therefore clear as groups increase in size, cohesion between group members is reduced. This is supported, with research by [13]. Ringleman provide further evidence with an investigation over a hundred years ago based on a tug of war in [12]. Result showed that as group size increased, group performance was increasingly lower than would be expected from the simple addition of individual performance.

The association between group size and cohesion is not restricted to sport teams, on the basis of a meta-analysis of research undertaken with a wide cross section of groups. [4] concluded that cohesiveness is greater in smaller groups. The reduction in individual lack of effort when people work in groups compared to when they work alone is referred to as social loafing.

There are many factors that change amongst individuals and the group as a whole when there are changes in the size of the group. Cliques are related to group size, in any group of more than 4-6 people, cliques will naturally form. Knowledge of the changing dynamics of the group is essential to maintaining task cohesion [14]. In regard to the relationship between motivation and cohesion research [15, 16] has shown that intrinsically motivated players are easier to mould into cohesive teams.

Environmental factors are one of the hypothesized correlates of cohesion in team sports. These factors can be divided into two categories; cultural and organisational consideration and geographical considerations. Cultural and organisational considerations include contractual responsibility, organisational orientation, normative pressures and level of competition. Contractual responsibility refers to the obligations and/or restrictions that are placed on a team. Examples of this would be eligibility or transfer rules, contractual obligations (pertaining to professional contracts), and geographical restrictions (such as playing
locations/proximity for amateur sports). Normative pressures are also situational conditions that affect cohesion. Due to society’s low regard for those that quit, pressures to maintain membership among a team or group also play an important role in a team’s cohesiveness. The organisation’s orientation is another environmental factor which affects, or is related to, a group’s cohesion. This orientation factor refers to the different goals, achievement processes, and demographics of the participants within the group [17]. Spink and Carron [18] found that social cohesion was high among members of exercise groups within private fitness clubs while task cohesion was high among exercisers in groups within university settings.

The second category of environmental factors which may affect a group’s cohesion includes geographical issues. This facet includes physical and functional proximity, a group’s permeability, and the size of the group. Physical and functional proximity concerns the actual physical closeness that the athletes have when participating in the sport, whether it is playing position or locker location. Research has revealed that when teams are closer in physical proximity, friendships and relationships are more apt to develop which contributes to the social cohesion of the group. A group’s permeability, or the degree to which it is open to other groups, also influences the team’s cohesion. This aspect refers to the degree to which teams interact with other groups or individuals. When a group isolates itself totally, it is unable to utilize outside sources to fulfil its psychological needs and thus draws upon its own membership [17].

**Leadership Factors and Team Performance Satisfaction:**

The risk of team based work structures is perhaps one of the most salient characteristics of contemporary work places and the shift from individualised work structure to team work has spread throughout the organisation [19]. This shift has implications for leadership as modern management is primarily about managing groups, and leadership behaviour should thus be evaluated in relation to team effectiveness [20]. An important correlate of effective team – work is cohesiveness of the group. Therefore, development of cohesiveness among team members is an important part of team management [21]. Exploration of a leader’s effect on group cohesiveness is necessary to understand how the latter can be managed and maintain [22].

A leader knows where the group or team is going and provides the direction and resources to help it get there. Coaches who are good leaders provide not only a vision of what to strive for but also the day – to – day structure. Motivation and support to translate vision into reality – coaches, teachers, and exercise specialists are leaders who seek to provide each participant with maximum opportunities to achieve success. And successful leaders also try to ensure that individual success helps achieve team success [23].

Research has found that athletes who perceived their coaches as providing training and instruction, democratic behaviour, support and positive feedback perceived higher levels of task cohesion [24]. Athlete leaders display leadership behaviours to a different extent than coaches [25] and the leadership behaviours of both formal and informal athlete leaders impact team members perception on cohesion [26, 27]. This antecedent factor is of particular importance to this study because it provides for the possibility that coaching behaviours influence and predict cohesion in team group and also to enhance performance satisfaction in team.

Spink [28] noted that leadership factors are also important precursors of cohesion, when poor leadership is in place, the team may have a difficult time finding a common goal to work towards, thus making it more difficult to unite and become cohesive as a group, without a leader to direct a team towards a common goal, a team can become disjointed.

Leadership talent is the most scare resource in today’s world. It is clear that leaders need different tools be effective and effectiveness and power is one of the effective tools of leaders. What is important
in the process of leadership is influence process and power over others [29]. Influences over others are carried on through the power of imagination and the power of imagination requires access to source of power [30]. A team as sport organisation is formed of structure and processes that should be investigated by the scientific method.

A cohesive team role is desired to have group norms, common goals, positive team identity, a good working relationship, mutual responsibility, respect, positive energy, harmony and unity. Team cohesion or integration, is one of the consequences related to coaches behaviour. Generally, one of the important factors in team cohesion is to influence athletes by the coach applies strength procedures (team leader). Methods of coaching get more rational and effective and if coaches do not consider their athletes in their coaching, indeed it will not cause motivation, and they will not find any relish for executing commands of coaches [29]. Some coaches believe that the fundamental principle of selecting players for success is the player’s ability level. Thus, they know group efficiency due to athletes’ capabilities. These coaches often do not know the factors affecting group performance of players. Undoubtedly, many factors are involved in this field, such as behaviour of coaches, athletes’ group cohesion and satisfaction (31) in [29].

Leadership styles refer to how leaders express specific behaviours. Many leadership models differentiate two main types of leadership behaviours; task oriented and relationship oriented behaviour, also refer to as initiating structure and consideration [32], concern for production vs. concern for people, or as directive and supportive leadership [33; 34]. These two leadership dimensions also have received considerable attention in team leadership [35] and cross cultural leadership studies [36] conclude that the differentiation in task – oriented and relationship – oriented leadership is a relevant distinction for managerial research around the globe, not limited to the United States.

The research that has been conducted over the past two decades in the area of coaching effectiveness has primarily been focused on identifying the coaching characteristics, leadership styles and behavioural patterns which are most effective. In general, these research studies have defined an “effective coach” as one who elicits either successful performance outcomes or positive psychological responses on the part of her or his athletes [37]. Since coaches affect not only their athletes’ physical performance but also their psychological well – being, it is important for an effective coach to become attuned to the many personal and individual needs of the athletes.

Thus, in addition to the technical skills of their sport, effective coaches may be required to occupy many roles within the lives of their athletes. These may include being a leader, follower, teacher, role model, limit setter, psychologist/counsellor and/or mentor [38]. Coaches are those leaders who are prepared to meet the individual needs of their athletes and realise that they can make a difference in the team’s performance by improving their own coaching skills and understanding the effect that their behaviour can have on their athletes [38].

Given coaches substantial role in team development, it should come as no surprise that coaching behaviour is associated with team cohesion [39, 40, 41, and 42]. Specific leader behaviours have varied across studies, but generally higher levels of training and instruction, behaviour, social support behaviour, and positive feedback from coaches are positively associated with higher levels of task cohesion. A coach’s approach to decision making is also related to team cohesion (43, 42. Both a democratic and a delegative decision style have been shown to be positively associated with team task cohesion.

However, [42] have shown that it is not leader behaviours alone that are important in team cohesion. They found that athlete’s perception of the coach – athlete relationship (commitment, closeness, complementary) explained more variance in task and social cohesion than leader behaviours by themselves. Northhouse [6] define leadership as the process whereby an individual influences a group of individuals to achieve a
common goal. The process of influence typically involves facilitating motivation in others, where the leader focuses on getting individuals to collaborate in the pursuit of a common goal [44]. Warren Bennis (2007) contends that modern exemplary leaders create a sense of vision or mission for the group, motivate others to join them in pursuit of that mission, create social architecture for followers to function, generate optimism and trust in followers, develop other leaders within the group, and achieve result. In sport and exercise, dimensions of leadership also include making decisions, motivating participants, giving feedback, establishing interpersonal relationships, and directing the group or team confidently.

**Methodology:**

The design that was used for this study was the correlational research method. This design was adopted because it seeks to determine the existence of relationship and the extent of the relationship between two or more variables. The target population for this study was made up of all registered players of North-East Football Clubs for the 2013/2014 Nigeria Premier League season (El-Kanemi Warriors Football Club, Gombe United Football Club and Taraba United Football Club). Comprehensive sampling technique was used, because the sampling technique is used when every unit is included in the sample and when the number of units is small [45]. The research instrument that was used is Group Environment Questionnaire (GEQ) which was adopted from [46] and modified and self-developed items on performance. A 4 Point Likert Scale Type response mode; Strongly Agree, Agree, Disagree and Strongly Disagree was used. To establish the reliability of the instrument for this study, the instrument was administered on 20 soccer players of Taraba Queens Football Club prior to the actual study. The data was subjected to Cronbach alpha for local reliability; it produced an alpha reliability co-efficient of 0.856, which means the instrument was high or satisfactory. The inferential statistics of Correlation Coefficient of Pearson Product Moment Coefficient, (PPMC) was used to test the hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance.

**H0:** There is no Significant Relationship between Environmental Factors and Team Performance Satisfaction of North-East Football Clubs in Nigeria Premier League

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<th>Variables</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 Performance</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-0.189</td>
<td>-0.031</td>
<td>-0.046</td>
<td>-0.061</td>
<td>-0.076</td>
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<td>2.Size</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>0.271</td>
<td>0.339</td>
<td>-0.031</td>
<td>0.409</td>
<td>0.314</td>
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<td>3.Pressure</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-0.311</td>
<td>0.002</td>
<td>0.300</td>
<td>0.397</td>
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<td>4.Proximity</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-0.026</td>
<td>0.398</td>
<td>0.191</td>
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<td>5.Challenges</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-0.119</td>
<td>-0.251</td>
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<td>6.Communication</td>
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<td></td>
<td>0.611</td>
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<td>7.Crowding</td>
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<td>Total Subscales</td>
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<td>0.269</td>
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Table 1 is a summary of Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient on environmental factor subscale and team performance. The results on the size subscale ($r = -0.189$, $P < 0.05$, df 103, tab value $= 0.164$) shows negative correlation. The pressure subscale ($r = -0.031$, $P > 0.05$ df = 103, tab value $= 0.164$) shows no correlation. Proximity subscale ($r = -0.046$, $P > 0.05$; df = 103; tab value $= 0.164$) shows no correlation. Similarly, the challenges subscale ($r = -0.061$, $P > 0.05$; df 103; tab value 0.164) shows no significant correlation. Also,
communication subscale \( (r = -0.076, P > 0.05; \text{df 103; tab value} = 0.164) \) shows no significant correlation. Furthermore, crowding subscale \( (r = 0.023; \ p > 0.05; \text{df 103; tab value} = 0.164) \) shows no significant correlation. However, exploring the total subscales together, results \( (r = 0.269, P > 0.05, \text{df = 103 table value} = 0.164) \) shows positive correlation. The null hypothesis is therefore rejected. This implies that significant relationship exists between environmental factor and team performance. This means that environmental factor can significantly affect team performance during competition.

**H0:** There is no significant relationship between Leadership Factor and Team Performance Satisfaction of North-East Football Clubs in Nigeria Premier League

**Discussion:**

It was hypothesize in this study that, there is no significant relationship between environmental factors and team performance satisfaction. It was however, found that significant relationship exists between environmental factor and team performance. This is consistent with [5, 4] who reported that factors such as size, proximity, or eligibility requirements can also play an important role in sport performance. For example, having individuals in close proximity to each other with opportunities for interaction and communication

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 Performance</td>
<td>-0.121</td>
<td>0.068</td>
<td>0.087</td>
<td>0.089</td>
<td>-0.041</td>
<td>0.017</td>
<td>0.025</td>
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<td>2.Strategies</td>
<td>-0.084</td>
<td>0.098</td>
<td>0.278</td>
<td>0.241</td>
<td>0.253</td>
<td>0.146</td>
<td>0.094</td>
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<td>3.Impose</td>
<td>-0.120</td>
<td>-0.214</td>
<td>0.064</td>
<td>-0.142</td>
<td>0.182</td>
<td>0.062</td>
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<td>4.Settle</td>
<td>0.363</td>
<td>0.176</td>
<td>0.016</td>
<td>0.101</td>
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<td>5.Mistake</td>
<td>0.010</td>
<td>0.075</td>
<td>-0.092</td>
<td>0.188</td>
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<td>6.Confide</td>
<td>0.127</td>
<td>0.019</td>
<td>0.274</td>
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<td>7.Instructs</td>
<td>-0.218</td>
<td>0.256</td>
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<td>8.Recruitment</td>
<td>0.240</td>
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<td>9.Welfare</td>
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<td>Total Subscale</td>
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R, df =103, tab value 0.164 P> 0.05

Table 2 is a summary of Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient on leadership factor subscale and team performance. The result on the strategies subscale \( (r = -0.121, P > 0.05; \text{df 103; tab value} = 0.164) \) shows no significant correlation. Also the impose subscale \( (r = 0.068 P > 0.05; \text{df 103; tab value} = 0.164) \) shows no significant correlation. Similarly, the Settle subscale \( (r = 0.087, P > 0.05; \text{df 103; tab value} = 0.164) \) shows no significant correlation. Furthermore, the mistake subscale \( (r = 0.089, P > 0.05; \text{df 103; tab value} = 0.164) \) shows no significant correlation. Similarly, the confide subscale \( (r = -0.041, P > 0.05; \text{df 103; tab value} = 0.164) \) shows no significant correlation. Furthermore, the instructs subscale \( (r = 0.017, P > 0.05; \text{df 103; tab value} = 0.164) \) shows no significant correlation. The recruitment subscale \( (r = 0.025, P > 0.05; \text{df 103; tab value} = 0.164) \) shows no significant correlation. However, the welfare subscale \( (r = 0.110, P > 0.05; \text{df 103; tab value} = 0.164) \) shows no significant correlation. However,
foster group development and size of a group affect cohesion, with smaller groups more cohesive than larger groups. [8] Indicated that if people are close to one another, it will strengthen their proximity which in turn, facilitates better performance. Therefore, it is necessary to encourage clubs not only to obtain stronger learning capacity but also to have work environment characterised by group cohesion, since these are some of the main routes to generating a total improvement in team performance. [4] Concluded that cohesiveness is great in smaller groups. Research by [17] revealed that when teams are closer in physical proximity, friendship, and relationship are more apt to develop which contribute to the social cohesion of the group. According to [11] for sport teams such as football, an excessive number of players can lead to a large number of problems such as player dissatisfaction, crowding and lack of adequate instruction or feedback from the coach.

Examining the results of hypothesis 2, it was found that significant relationship exists between leadership factors and team performance satisfaction. This finding is in line with [39] who using the group environment questionnaire (GEQ) examined the relationship between coaching behaviours and team cohesion with high school football players. The result showed that higher levels of training and instruction behaviour, social support behaviour, positive feedback, and a democratic style were associated with higher levels of task cohesion in athletes. Research conducted by [24] found that athletes who perceived their coaches as providing training and instruction behaviour, democratic behaviour, support and positive feedback, perceived higher levels of task cohesion. Loughead and Hardy [25] reports that athlete leaders display leadership behaviours to a different extent than coaches, and the leadership behaviours of both formal and informal athlete leaders impact team members perception on cohesion. This factor provides for the possibility that coaching behaviours influence and predict cohesion in team group and also to enhance performance in teams.

**Conclusion:**

Team cohesion in sports constitutes important factors for enhancing team communication and performance. This is because without effective communication, performance will be elusive. However, Environmental and Leadership Factors are significant correlates of team performance satisfaction among football players of North – East states, Nigeria. This is so because the environment within which teams compete is essential as it will go a long way in enhancing their performance. Significant relationships exist between leadership factors and team performance satisfaction. This may be because factors within individual team members influence team performance satisfaction. Similarly, positive cohesion existed among players. This can be seen in their performance satisfaction during various competitions.

**Recommendations:**

Based on the conclusion of this study, the following recommendations were made;

1. **North – East Football Clubs should employ the services of sport psychologists to help build desirable atmosphere for wholesome interaction among players for team cohesion**
2. **Coaches should create a conducive atmosphere or environment to enhance team performance**
3. **Coaches and players should adopt good leadership styles to enhance team cohesion and team performance**

**References:**

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