How servant leadership impact the cohesion and burnout of female athlete and how self-identity intermediate the association between servant leadership, cohesion and burnout

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Abstract

This paper focuses on the growing importance of servant leadership on the behavior of female athletes. It seems that in the sports sector, servant leadership is not adequately discussed as an important factor in terms of the role of the team captain. Most studies discuss the servant leadership on the upper management point of view, signifying a need to conduct a study on servant leadership in the team captain context because of its potential positive effect on team cohesion, and reduced burnout among female athletes. Serving the followers on a priority basis is the main feature of servant leadership. In the context of sports , servant leadership has been studied and shows positive association with athlete satisfaction, motivation and performance. The aim of the present study is to investigate the association between servant leadership, cohesion and burnout. This study also examine that how self-identity mediates the relationship between servant leadership, cohesion and burnout. Most of the previous studies discuss servant leadership in the setting of upper management, coaches and mentors. However, this study discusses the impact of team captains as servant leader vis-a-vis female athlete cohesion and burnout. To this end, almost 300 questionnaires was distributed, out of which a total of 245 questionnaires are collected from the participants. For data collection, the simple random sampling technique was used. Therefore, in this way it is easier to understand how servant leadership effects the cohesion of female athletes. Servant leadership reduces the levels of anxiety, depression and stress among team members which improves their confidence and enhances their motivation level. The Smart PLS is used for data analysis. The findings of the study elaborated that all hypothesis are accepted, demonstrating a positive influence on cohesion and negative influence on burnout. Furthermore, at the end of study, the practical implications, limitations and future directions for further studies are discussed.
Keywords: servant leadership, task cohesion, social cohesion, burnout, social identity

Introduction

Sports have the capacity to facilitate individual development among members of the youth by providing opportunities for them to create social networking among team players. The connection among players enhances the unity of team members and reduces the anxiety and depression levels among athletes. On the basis of this, servant leadership plays an active part in enhancing the cohesion among team members. On the other hand, "athlete leadership is defined in terms of athlete leaders who have formal and informal role to lead team members and has great influence on team members, for achieving common goals" (Loughead et al., 2016). Moreover, a formal role entails specific roles and duties to be performed by the leader to help achieve high performance of team, these roles and duties are specifically defined by the organization through this leader is appointing (Carron & Eys, 2012). The informal roles and duties are the activities which are perform by the team member without any captaincy position. This requires the interaction of team members whereby one of the team member motivates and mentors the other team players, and in doing so, enhances the overall team performance (Carron & Eys, 2012). Servant leadership places the followers' needs before their own needs, thus playing an important role in creating cohesion, and

reducing the anxiety and depression levels among team players. A captain who plays an active role and knows understands the needs of their team contributes positively to social and task cohesion. The teams of servant leaders are more involved in positive behaviors and they have more trust on their leaders, helping the team achieve its common goals (Worley, Harenberg, & Vosloo, 2020).

Furthermore, both, formal and informal leadership are a vital part of teams which illustrate the important sources for team players. Leadership has a positive association with cohesion , team efficacy, and social identity (Vincer & Loughead, 2010). Within the context of sports teams, athlete leaders play a dynamic role in enhancing performance. Previously, Carron (1982) demonstrated that the leader's behavior and their mode of dealing with the team enhances the cohesion levels among team players. This incorporation gives emphasis to the activities that leaders put on emerging cohesive groups. Cohesion is described as "a dynamic process that is reflected in the tendency for a group to stick together and remain united in the pursuit of its instrumental objectives and/or for the satisfaction of members' affective needs" (Carron, Widmeyer, & Brawley, 1985). Moreover, in subsequent section. Carron describes the theoretical model of cohesion which shows that there is a distinction between task cohesion and social cohesion. Task and social cohesion amalgamation, magnetism to a group has a distinctive importance. In accordance with principles propounded by Carron's (1982) theoretical model, leaders of team members may possibly raise cohesion by demonstrating actions that intensifies team members' insights into the desirability and harmony towards task and social intentions. Specifically, athlete leaders demonstrate positive behaviors such as positive feedback, social support and self-governing attitude which are prominent factors affecting the development of team cohesion (Westre & Weiss, 1991). Within the context of sports, the athlete leaders play an active role in building the cohesion of teams. Both, formal and informal behaviors of leaders in sports teams shows the positive attitude of team players which improves the association among players, and provides peer social support and fosters the acceptance of group goals. The social and task cohesive teams can be originated through leaders behavior which emphasise common goals (Callow, Smith, Hardy, Arthur, & Hardy, 2009). According to Vincer and Loughead (2010), the captain of a team creates team cohesion through positive attitude, and genuine care and concern for the followers.

Burnout involves the phenomenon of anxiety and depression among athletes; it may be described in terms of three different constructs; emotion and physical exhaustion such as fatigue and feelings of anxiety about sports activities and their roles and regulations; reduced self-efficacy such as reduced sense of accomplishment and sports devaluation such as decreasing interest in sports. Previous studies indicated that athlete burnout reduces their self-confidence and motivation of players (Fransen, McEwan, & Sarkar, 2020). Therefore, leader's supports can help reduce their level of emotional and physical exhaustion, enhancing their sense of accomplishment and interest in sports.

Leadership supports team members and this supportive behavior can create an eas link with team functioning. For instance, when teams are united and less demotivated, their performance boosts up. Furthermore, leaders' positive behaviors towards teams motivates team members to fulfill their common goals. Recent research on leadership shows that leadership is no single level process; it is a group level process where leaders and follower exert social influence on each other. According to the social identity theory, the group leaders and followers have shared goals and leaders have an effective relationship with other team players. In essence, the social identities of team players mediates the leader's way of doing things and having a certain different effect on other outcome (Slater, Coffee, Barker, & Evans, 2014).

In addition, this tactic postulates that individuals describe their sense of self in two different ways i.e. personal identity and social identity. In terms of personal identity, the individual thinks about her/himself as a unique group member; in terms of social identity, an individual will think about the group first and have shared goals and values for the overall group (Haslam, Reicher, & Platow, 2020). The extent to which individuals think about "we" first as compared to "I" enhances the value of the group (Haslam et al., 2017). Within the context of sports, the athlete leader has an ability to maintain shared goals and maintain the social identification. So far, the majority of studies have focused on leadership and social identity with only a limited number of studies available on servant leadership and social identity. One previous study has demonstrated that social identity mediates the leadership and task cohesion and social cohesion (Fransen, Decroos, Broek, & Boen, 2016). In

sum, all the arrangement of a shared social personality might be a basic instrument by which leaders effect task cohesion and social cohesion inside a group. Moreover, comparative literature has uncovered that team identification proof intervenes the association between team member and captain and coaches confidence (Fransen et al., 2015). These researches propose that expanding individual identification with the group is a significant way through which leaders have an impact on the outcomes of team players.

The purpose of the current study is to examine the relationship between servant leadership (captain of team) cohesion such as task and social cohesion and burnout. This study also investigates the mediating effect of social identity with servant leadership, cohesion and burnout.

Enlisted below are the research objectives of the current study:

- Does servant leadership affect social cohesion?
- Does servant leadership affect task cohesion?
- Does servant leadership affect burnout level?
- Does servant leadership affect social identity?
- How does social-identity have an impact on social cohesion?
- How does social-identity have an impact on task cohesion?
- Does social identity impact on burnout levels?
- To what extent does social identity mediate the association between servant leadership and cohesion such as social and task cohesion?
- To what extent does social identity mediate the relationship between servant leadership and burnout levels?

Therefore, the present paper is broadly related with servant leadership which enhances the cohesion and reduces the burnout levels among female athletes. Moreover, social identity enhances the association between servant leadership and cohesion e.g. task and social cohesion and reduces the burnout level among athletes. In the following sections, the study presents a literature review of variables, research methodology, results of the study as well as a discussion on future research prospects and limitations.

Literature Review

Cohesion

In the context of sports teams, is may prove difficult to discuss the success of teams without discussing team cohesion. The success of the groups and their cohesion in task and social matters are closely linked. Further,

only a few voices in the sports sector who may contest the significance of the relationship of group cohesion and positive performance outcomes. Cohesion is one of the important variables of a sports team regardless of the size of the team itself. Studies conducted over the past ten years, focus on inspecting cohesion in adolescent sports. One cannot exaggerate the significance of this forthcoming trend in literature, as level of cohesion shown by youth sport members corresponds with numerous significant results (Martin, Paradis, Eys, & Evans, 2013).

Cohesion is one of the most important factors in a sports environment as it creates unity among players of the same team. Cohesion has historically been a crucial factor in sports. In sports team there is a need to sync effective team players with group cohesion as one team as opposed to individual talented members. For achieving success in the game, the team member needs to work with unity and use their capabilities and efforts in unity function. For instance, there is number of examples available in history where there is a lot of talent available among team players, but their loss of game occurred due to low level of cohesion among team players and captain of the team.

Additionally, cohesion plays an active part in overcoming challenges faced by a sports team. It may be further divided into two parts which are as follows: task cohesion and group cohesion. Previously, cohesion is discussed in sports team as unity of group, but it is not defined properly in sports context, Cohesion can be defined as "a distinctive attribute of the successful groups in the range of work, military, and sports and exercise. Moreover, cohesion is a dynamic factor of sports team where sports team shows the tendency to remain united for fulfilling the group needs and satisfying the other group members of team (Carron, 1982). The sports teams who have chieved higher or performed better do so as a result of their sense of task cohesion and social cohesion. In addition to these features, different researchers have also advanced a theoretical model of cohesion. They proposed that there are two kinds of cohesion within sport teams: task and social. According to Carron et al. (1985) "Task cohesion relates to team members' unity toward achieving their collective performance goals whereas social cohesion pertains to the quality of the social interactions and the tendency for members to spend time with one another".

In addition, task cohesion involves the perception of team players about the unity of common team goals and activities. Moreover, social cohesion involves the

perception of team players where social or interpersonal; aspects are considered as compare to common team goals achievement. For achieving success in sports, the task and social cohesion both are seen as fostering positive outcomes for the sports team (Worley et al., 2020). These results propose that insights of inordinate unity contiguous tasks and friendships on a team raise adaptive proficiencies and positive improvement through sports. Most studies discuss the cohesion as a combined construct with only a few studies discussing the cohesion in terms of two distinct conceptual categories i.e. task cohesion and social cohesion (Pacewicz, Smith, & Raedeke, 2020). However, this study fills this gap, and discusses the cohesion levels in sports teams on the basis of social and group cohesion.

Burnout

Burnout is an extended reaction to long-lasting emotive and personal stressors on work. Burnout can be divided into three parts such as exhaustion, skepticism and inefficacy vis-a-vis job duties. As a consistently recognizable job strain condition, 'burnout clearly places an individual's stress experience within a larger working place context of people's relation to their work'. Burnout damages both personal and social activities. The damages that can occur due to burnout not only affect the individual physical and psychological health but also affect the other person who engages with that individual (Maslach & Leiter, 2016). The author explained that burnout divided into three main components namely, exhaustion, cynicism, and professional inefficacy. Firstly, exhaustion intensifies the feeling of individuals where he or she feels overextended and operates at a low level of individual emotional and physical resources. Secondly, cynicism refers to an undesirable, inimical, or a disproportionately isolated reaction to the job such as loss of idealism. Cynicism occurs in job due to excessive emotional exhaustion and a feeling of detachment. Detachment reduces the aspect of humanization in individuals. Lastly, professional inefficacy means reduction in productivity of the individuals due to higher levels of stress faced by individuals at work. Moreover, the individual faces a growing sense of insufficiency about the capacity of doing the job in an effective manner, creating a feeling of failure among individuals that affect the mind-set of the person. The employees are evaluating their self and burnout emerges as a result of low self-evaluation.

Athlete burnout can be viewed in three dimensions; emotional and physical exhaustion, sports devaluation, and inefficacy. Emotional and physical exhaustion is a state of mind where athletes experience fatigue and anxiety and have no pleasure to work well. On the other hand sports devaluation is state where athletes have no interest in sports activities and have developed a negative attitude towards sports. Moreover, inefficacy in sports signifies sense of failure where players themselves devalue their sports performance and productivity. Athletes can experience the segregated or combined impact of these dimensions on their burnout levels. There are a number of research studies available studying athlete burnout which may ultimately affects the sports experience and the emotional and physical exhaustion of team members. Athlete burnout also reduces the motivation of the employees because of the devaluation of their work. The commitment of players is also effected by the burnout (Pacewicz, Mellano, & Smith, 2019; Smith, 1986). Early empirical efforts grounded within these perspectives have shown that "perceptions of exhaustion, reduced accomplishment, and sport devaluation" are influenced by social factors (Pacewicz et al., 2020).

In addition, athlete burnout may occur due to an increasing number of training loads. Mostly, due to a higher demand and amount of training may push the athlete towards a sense of feeling burnout. Increased burnout levels among athletes lead to lowered productivity and performance. To leave the job altogether represents an extreme reaction to burnout but players are not always leaving the team because of family pressure and some financial reasons. So, in this situation athletes show less motivation and commitment vis-a-vis team goals, lower level of satisfaction, poor performance and emotional detachment (Gould, Tuffey, Udry, & Loehr, 1996). Therefore, under this study, athlete burnout can be reduced through proper leadership. The captain of the team can enhance the motivation levels among employee by giving them confidence in terms of goal achievements and reducing their stress, fatigue and depression that they may face due to overload of trainings and high goal standards goal.

Servant Leadership

There are a number of studies available on leadership in the context of the sports sector; mostly, studies consider the transformational perspective of leadership. On the contrary, servant leadership's primary focus is not the achievement of organizational goals but the fulfilment of the needs of players is the major concern of team captain(s). According to

Cronin, Arthur, Hardy, and Callow (2015) servant leadership behaviors are manifest in sports leaders and most important vis-à-vis the sports captain who performs formal roles and duties. Even though, both formal and informal sports leaders, satisfy necessary leadership activities, mentors report that formal captains are preferred in view of their capacity to lead others how they perform and set the standards for team, fostering the qualities that coordinate with the group climate (Bucci, Bloom, Loughead, & Caron, 2012). Formal athlete leaders likewise fulfill the activities for example, acting as liaison between the training staff and players, serving as a good example for different athletes, and participating in encouraging task and social (Dupuis, Bloom, & Loughead, 2006; Gilchrist & Mallett, 2020). Due to innate characteristics of the leadership roles that formal captains satisfy, team captains might be especially encouraged to show leading behavioral characteristics that personify the values of team players (i.e., "what our identity is"). Moving a leader's concentration toward supporter prosperity and improvement might be a successful method to expand the positive impact that formal captains have in the group climate.

A number of studies in sports sector discuss leadership as a general term; traditionally, leadership studies focus on the the perspective of transformational leaders and leadership. More recently, this leadership terminology is understood in terms of servant leadership; however, only a few studies have focus on servant leadership till now. Hence, in the present situation, servant leadership is considered as a viable and important concept in sports era. The concept of servant leadership notified that servant leadership is the servant first who serves the follower on highest priorities as compared to personal needs (Worley et al., 2020). Additionally, another study on servant leadership divided the servant leadership into five different constructs (Barbuto Jr & Wheeler, 2006). Firstly, the servant leadership is motivated by "altruistic calling" - under this construct, the leaders really want to change the follower's life and create a positive difference through submission to servant leadership. Secondly, servant leadership works as a process of "emotional healing" by constructing a promise to supporters and representative skill in nurturing spiritual recovery in care of followers suffering from destitution or trauma. Further, servant leadership determines the wisdom because servant leaders are familiar with their surroundings; analyze the consequences of certain events, permitting them to annotation signals from the environment and comprehending the associations of these signals on their followers. Likewise, servant leaders' practice "persuasive mapping" as they have the capability to use complete reasoning and conceptual contexts that generate shared and convincing drivers or inhibitors of action. Lastly, servant leaders are taking on social responsibilities in light to the the positive contribution of players at a social, inter-personal or communal level. Furthermore, Van Dierendonck (2011) described the conceptual framework of the servant leadership and demonstrated six features of servant leaders such as humility, authenticity, empowering and developing people, interpersonal acceptance, providing direction, and stewardship. Moreover, servant leadership emphasizes trust, humility and service, showing the positive outcomes of sports team. It is one of the most important predictors of cohesion (Worley et al., 2020). Further, servant leadership is highly focused on followers' care and development; it was first introduced by Greenleaf (2002) when considers the followers needs vis-à-vis their priorities. Servant leadership is a style of leadership which can be highly effective among sports players, provided that the sense of empowerment essential for these positive differences to achieve organizational outcomes. Barbuto Jr, Gottfredson, and Searle (2014), described that servant leadership is an "altruistic-based form of leadership in which leaders emphasize the needs and development of others, primarily their followers". The leadership behavior where leaders behave on the basis of ethical values and are not the self-centered. Additionally, mostly leaders are not self-centered and not considered their power and control first, they mostly provide services to others and focus on others needs rather than their own. Previous studies show the positive outcome of servant leadership in general and sports context. Furthermore, the servant leadership is recently accepted idea in sports sector.

Social Identity as mediator

In the 1970s, the social identity theory was developed with a view to understanding the psychology of team relationship as played out in the context of the surroundings of large-scale social conflict. Moreover, social identity can be described as "a person's sense of who they are based on their group membership(s)". Tajfel, Turner, Austin, and Worchel (1979), suggested that these groups such as social class, family, and sports team etc. which people belonged to were an important source of pride and self-esteem. In the sports context, Individual identify (i.e. one's sense of self) is bifurcated into two categories; personal identity and social

identity. In terms of personal identity, the athlete thinks about her/himself first;with social identity, the individual thinks about the other team players and group goals on priority basis. Furthermore, social identification is the sense of belonging to particular groups and working on common interest of the groups. Social identification is when individuals give more importance to group benefits as compared to the personal benefits (Worley et al., 2020). For example, when the captain of the team thinks about the team first and recognizing the team benefits before their own benefits, they identify him or herself as team captain as compare to "I". They lead the team for gaining the sports team goals and become more productive team.

More commonly, social identity theory emphases on the role of three key components in constituting social identification, and hence, group behavior: the perceived stability and legitimacy of an in-group's position in relation to other groups, and the perceived sponginess of group boundaries. Traditionally, in some perspective the person thinks about self and behave as unique and separate individual consider under self - term. In fact, under many of these theoretical frameworks, the individual considers group benefits to be fall under the definition of self with these behaviors included under the social identity. Consequently, while psychosomatic hypothesizing in the sporting domain generally tends to interpret the self in only personal terms (i.e., as bring up to a person's considerate of themselves as 'I' and 'me'), social identity hypothesizing affirms that the self might be, and frequently is, defined in social expressions (as 'we' and 'us'). It is therefore social identity that strengthens people's sense that they are part of a particular team, group, club, or union.

Social identity fully mediated the association with servant leadership, cohesion (task and social) and burnout. On the other hand, social identity assists the team member's perception about similarities with other group members such as in-group. The importance that groups members receive being a part of a group creates a positive feeling which provides a way for athlete captain as servant leader enhances the cohesion of sports team (Bruner& Benson, 2018) and reduces their burnout expressions. It is reflected that when leaders are familiar with the identity of the team by knowing "who we are", then leaders are competent to change the environment (Rees et al., 2015). In particular, a captain of team exhibit servant leader behavior might be perceived by co-players as the leader acting in resemblance with team well-being, and extending team aims, and thus raising levels of cohesion.

Additionally, the current study lends support towards the argument that servant leaders work more effectively to achieve positive outcomes when members of the group have strong social identification. Another study shows that social identity mediates the relationship with athlete leadership and cohesion within the sports context (Fransen et al., 2016). Moreover, their results indicated that leadership has a capability to enhance the social identity which, in turn, has a strong impact on cohesion. Social identity significantly reduces the athletes' stress about an overloading training schedule, and therefore, fatigue levels among employees go down. Aligned with the above mentioned argument, the formal captain of the leadership and social identity have strong association where team members think about the team interest as compared to self-interest. This result is in line with a servant leadership viewpoint where the most important focus of the leader is to serve their followers first (Greenleaf, 1977). Hence, the current study hypothesizes that formal team captain who exhibit characteristics of servant leadership are able to impact group outcomes by adding social identity as mediator. Another point to consider is the means by which the leader's styles who consider the followers first as compare to him/herself such as servant leadership add to social identity leadership approach (Haslam et al., 2011). One clarification might be because an athlete captain'a capacity to improve social fascination by leading conduct of an exceptionally prototypical part (Hogg, 2001). Given that when leaders are seen as dependable, humble, and ready to forfeit for the good of the group, they might be bound to be seen as condensing "what our identity is" and being "one of us". Along these lines, they are viably ready to exemplify the shared character of the group. When a shared identity is made, it generates a feeling of fellowship between group individuals and prompts expanded impression of trust, collaboration, and social help (Reicher, Haslam, and Platow, 2018), along these lines possibly affecting view of cohesiveness. Taken together, servant leadership might be a successful approach in sports sector whereby leaders such as the team captain can build up, and follow up on shared group identification, which also impacts other group outcomes. Mostly, studies consider social identity as a mediator between peer leadership and positive outcomes. Under this study, social identity is also considered as a mediator which can create a positive link with servant leadership

and task cohesion and social cohesion with social identity of the athlete reducing the burnout levels because lowered levels of stress and fatigue affect the athlete's performance in this case.

Hypothesis Development

Based on the above mentioned literature, this research proposes the following:

H1. There is a significant and positive relationship with servant leadership and task cohesion.

H2. There is a significant and positive relationship with servant leadership and social cohesion.

H3. There is a significant and negative relationship with servant leadership and burnout.

H4. Social identity has a significant and positive relationship with task cohesion.

H5. Social identity has a significant and positive relationship with social cohesion.

H6. Social identity has a significant and negative relationship with burnout.

H7. There is a significant and positive relationship with servant leadership on task cohesion while conciliating by social identity.

H8. There is a significant and positive relationship with servant leadership on social cohesion while conciliating by social identity.

H9. There is a significant and negative relationship with servant leadership on burnout cohesion while conciliating by social identity.

Theoretical Model

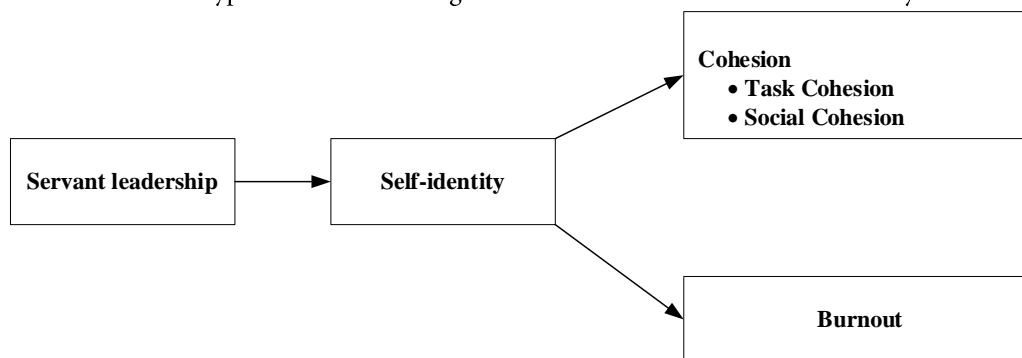On the bases of the hypothesis the following are the theoretical framework of the study

Figure 1: Conceptual Framework

Methodology

The sample of the study comprises female athletes of Thailand in light of the growing visibility and trend among women to engage in sports. Servant leadership enhances the positive behavior of female athletes towards group cohesion and reduces the chances of burnout situations. The unit of analysis of the study is specific group of individuals i.e. female athletes studying in the college. Prior permission is sought from their respective college faculties before data collection. After approval from the coach and college management, the questionnaire was administered players. Confidentiality of responses was guaranteed and players were told that they had the opportunity to withdraw participation at any time. The nature of the study is cross-sectional as compared to the longitudinal as data is only collected against one point of time. Due to the fact that he target population for this research design was a large one, a smaller sample of the study is selected to represent the whole population.

There are different methods for selecting the sample size in order to create a generalized sample that represents the overall populations studied. According to Kotrlik and Higgins (2001), the technique is to select a sample size that comprises at least 20% of the whole population studied. In most cases, the total number of populations is finite, therefore, such cases it becomes easier to select the sample and collect data. For the finite population, the (Krejcie & Morgan) table is used for selecting the sample size (Krejcie & Morgan, 1970). Conferring to Raune (2005) for sample size the scholar essentials to usage the ratio, from the large population size there is small ratio sample size. However, in current situation the population was not limited. On the bases of above mentioned arguments, a total of 245 employees were identified in order to collect data.

Further, the next question that the researcher must address is choice of sampling technique once sample size has been determined. A large number of sampling techniques are available, but the simple random sampling technique is used during this study for collecting data. Moreover, the data were collected from individuals through self-administered questionnaires. The questionnaire consisted of two sections; Section A related with demographics and Section B included all variables questions. The 5-point Likert scale is used,

ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree. Under this study, the researcher adopted the questionnaire. The 22 items scale was used for measurement of servant leadership (Hammermeister et al., 2008), furthermore, the scale was divided into three dimensions i.e. trust, humility and services. 11 items measure the trust,6 items measure humility, and 5 items measure services. By using 12 items scale, the cohesion can be measured (Eys, Carron, Bray, & Brawley, 2007). The 15 item scale can be used for measuring burnout (Raedeke & Smith, 2001) by using the 9 items scale social identity can be measured (Bruner & Benson, 2018). The smart PLS was used for

data analysis. The results of the study are presented in the next section.

Results

To validate the questionnaire confirmatory factor analysis was performed. As per Table 1, the values for the reliability of questionnaire for each single variable are 0.845, 0.84, 0.89, 0.88 and 0.75 respectively. As per the parameter, the scale is said to be reliable when the value of reliability is greater than 0.7. As shown in the table, all values for reliability fall under the acceptable range, thus establishing scale reliability.

Table 1: Confirmatory Factor Analysis

Constructs	Items	Loadings	Alpha	CR	AVE
Burnout	BO2	0.796	0.845	0.883	0.526
	BO3	0.812			
	BO4	0.72			
	BO5	0.451			
	BO8	0.75			
	BO10	0.787			
	BO11	0.698			
Social Cohesion	SC1	0.792	0.84	0.893	0.676
	SC2	0.831			
	SC3	0.842			
	SC4	0.823			
Self-Identity	SI1	0.703	0.89	0.912	0.567
	SI2	0.741			
	SI3	0.627			
	SI4	0.783			
	SI5	0.803			
	SI6	0.818			
	SI7	0.783			
	SI8	0.749			
Servant Leadership	SL1	0.755	0.88	0.907	0.585
	SL2	0.799			
	SL3	0.759			
	SL4	0.786			
	SL5	0.795			
	SL6	0.619			
	SL7	0.821			
Task Cohesion	TC1	0.845	0.675	0.82	0.603
	TC2	0.726			
	TC3	0.755			

Measurement model has been assessed by performing a confirmatory factor analysis. Table 1 and Figure 2 show the results of CFA. As per the parameter, factor loadings, CR and AVE should be in range. CR should be greater than 0.8; as shown in the table, all the values

for CR are greater than 0.8. Similarly, the values of AVE for all the variables are greater than 0.5 which meets the criteria. All the factor loadings are greater than 0.6 which assures that there is no problem with the factor loadings of the variables. All the three parameters are

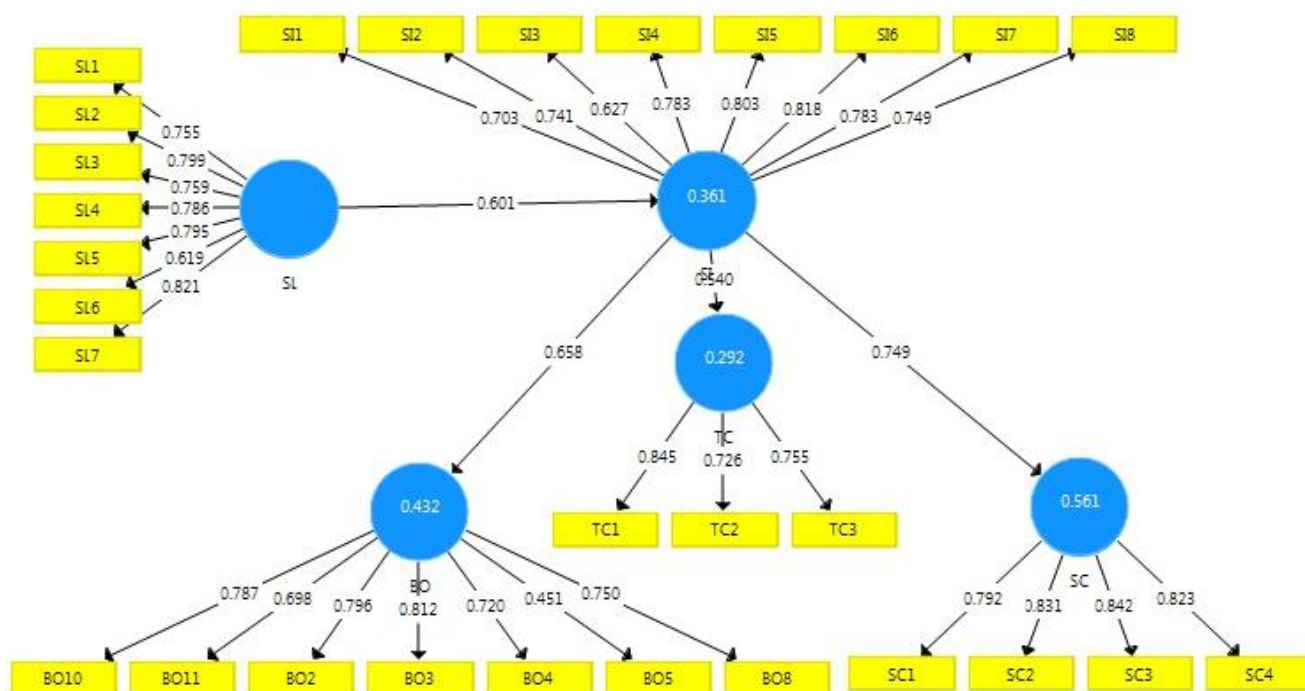justified which affirms the convergent validity of the measures.

Figure 2: Confirmatory Factor Analysis

Table 2: Fornell & Larcker Criterion

	BO	**SC**	**SI**	**SL**	**TC**
BO	0.725				
SC	0.59	0.822			
SI	0.658	0.749	0.753		
SL	0.488	0.563	0.601	0.765	
TC	0.506	0.574	0.54	0.458	0.777

Table 2 shows the values for the Fornell & Larckers Criterion which are used as a determinant of the discriminant validity. As per this criterion, the value of correlation of a particular variable must be greater than the others in the table. As per the table, all correlational values of a variable are greater than its correlation with others. Thus, discriminant validity is established.

Table 3: Cross Loadings

	BO	**SC**	**SI**	**SL**	**TC**
BO2	0.796	0.521	0.6	0.427	0.376
BO3	0.812	0.378	0.448	0.36	0.38
BO4	0.72	0.418	0.437	0.405	0.387
BO5	0.451	0.309	0.285	0.243	0.265
BO8	0.75	0.482	0.546	0.348	0.365
BO10	0.787	0.346	0.418	0.318	0.347
BO11	0.698	0.475	0.508	0.342	0.429
SC1	0.483	0.792	0.599	0.436	0.332
SC2	0.46	0.831	0.622	0.439	0.363
SC3	0.503	0.842	0.631	0.493	0.565

SC4	0.494	0.823	0.612	0.484	0.624
SI1	0.586	0.506	0.703	0.492	0.398
SI2	0.437	0.576	0.741	0.559	0.409
SI3	0.478	0.368	0.627	0.372	0.407
SI4	0.541	0.601	0.783	0.428	0.419
SI5	0.443	0.592	0.803	0.467	0.343
SI6	0.532	0.669	0.818	0.433	0.485
SI7	0.546	0.673	0.783	0.449	0.448
SI8	0.366	0.465	0.749	0.405	0.322
SL1	0.336	0.391	0.393	0.755	0.297
SL2	0.383	0.416	0.444	0.799	0.289
SL3	0.361	0.379	0.395	0.759	0.309
SL4	0.34	0.441	0.443	0.786	0.381
SL5	0.373	0.417	0.439	0.795	0.354
SL6	0.386	0.41	0.514	0.619	0.383
SL7	0.406	0.521	0.533	0.821	0.4
TC1	0.49	0.565	0.492	0.416	0.845
TC2	0.326	0.332	0.313	0.293	0.726
TC3	0.339	0.404	0.425	0.34	0.755

Table 3 illustrates the values for cross loadings. The value of the loadings for a particular variable must be greater than 0.7 and all other variables vertically. As per the table, all the values falls under this range, thus establishing discriminant validit

Heterotrait-Monotrait Correlation

Table 4

	BO	SC	SI	SL	TC
BO					
SC	0.69				
SI	0.737	0.856			
SL	0.558	0.647	0.667		
TC	0.655	0.737	0.675	0.575	

As per the findings reported, all the values are less than 0.90 which meets the criterion for establishing discriminant validity.

Discriminant Validity

Table 4 shows the values of HTMT ration which is the latest technique to assess discriminant validity.

Table 5 shows the values of the association among the variables. As per the findings which are reported in the table, servant leadership is found to be associated with social identity valued at 0.601

Structural Equation Modeling

Table 5: Direct Results

Relationships	Beta	SD	T value	p value	Decision
SI -> BO	0.658	0.023	29.177	p<0.05	Supported
SI -> SC	0.749	0.019	39.972	p<0.05	Supported
SI -> TC	0.54	0.028	19.469	p<0.05	Supported
SL -> SI	0.601	0.025	23.954	p<0.05	Supported

Social identity has associated with social cohesion and task cohesion, valued at 0.749 and 0.54, respectively. The relationships are significant and positive.

However, social identity a found to have a greater influence on social cohesion as compared to task cohesion. Similarly, the burnout levels also link with

social identity. The relationship is visibly significant, supporting the study's hypothesis. It shows that burnout of the athlete has negative relationship with

social identity. Interestingly, the entire hypothesis shows substantial and meaningful results.

Table 6: Specific Indirect Effect

Relationships	Beta	SD	T value	p value	Decision
SL -> SI -> BO	0.395	0.025	16.056	p<0.05	Supported
SL -> SI -> SC	0.45	0.026	17.144	p<0.05	Supported
SL -> SI -> TC	0.324	0.024	13.508	p<0.05	Supported

Table 6 shows the results for the mediation analysis. As per findings reported in the table, social identity is found to be a significant mediator between the relationship of servant leadership and burnout, it means when athlete get proper help from the main captain their depression about overloaded

training remains low and when they identify their self withina particular group, their situation of burnout will decrease. Moreover, as shown in the table, athlete social identity meditated the relationship with servant leadership, social cohesion and task cohesion. Therefore, mediation hypothesis is supported. Figure 4 shows the outcome of structure equation modeling.
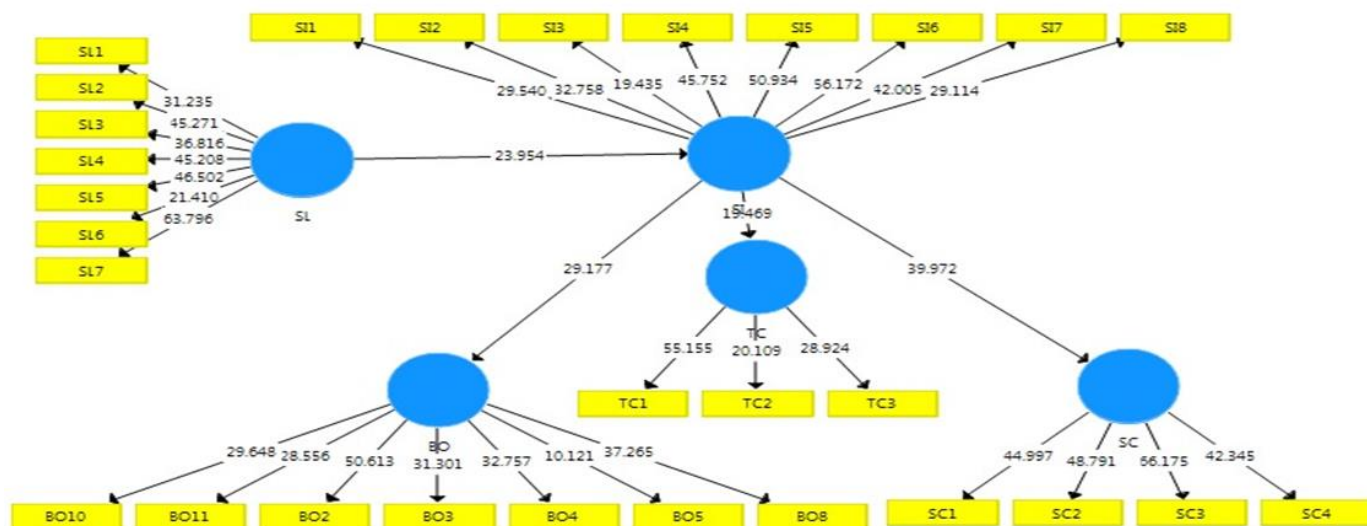

Figure 3:Structural Equation Modeling

Discussion

Sports leaders facilitate the development of individual athletes. The aim of the current study is to investigate the effect of servant leadership on task cohesion, social cohesion and burnout. Moreover, the current study examines the effect of social identity as mediator between servant leadership, task cohesion, social cohesion and burnout. It is pertinent to note that there is a lack of studies which investigate the relationship of servant leadership in sports sector. Mostly, sports sector consider transformational leadership as the most important predictor. Further, the relationship between servant leadership and task cohesion and social cohesion still remain unexplored as most studies discuss and chose to focus on cohesion as a whole. This study fulfills the above mentioned purpose by studying the relationship between servant leadership, task cohesion, social cohesion, burnout and social identity. All the hypothesis of the study are accepted.

Hypothesis H1 is accepted which shows that servant leadership has a positive and significant influence on task cohesion. Similarly, same Hypothesis H2 is also accepted which shows the positive influence of servant leadership and social cohesion. Mostly studies discuss the cohesion as a whole, while this study fulfill the gap by studying tcohesion as dimensional basis task cohesion, and social cohesion (Pacewicz et al., 2020).

Hypothesis H3 is also accepted which shows that servant leadership has a significant influence on burnout. The servant leader has an ability to reduce the burnout situation of athletes by focusing on their needs first. Furthermore, Hypothesis H4 is also accepted which shows that social identity is positively correlated with task cohesion. The identification of players within a particular team fosters them to unite in their task performance which ultimately enhances the group performance and productivity (Fransen et al., 2016; Loughead et al., 2016; Worley et al., 2020). Hypothesis

H5 also shows the positive and significant result of social identity with social cohesion (Haslam et al., 2020; Pacewicz et al., 2019). H6 hypothesis shows that when social identity of athletes enhances, their burnout situation is reduced. Moreover, the hypothesis H7, H8 also show that social identity mediates the relationship between servant leaders, task cohesion and social cohesion (Rees et al., 2015). Therefore, these two hypotheses are also accepted and point to the positive and significant influence of social identity as mediator between them. The hypothesis H9 also accepted which shows that servant leadership reduces the burnout while mediating by social identity.

Practical Implications

The current study provides an opportunity for team captains to better understand the behavior of athlete. The findings of the current study are not only important for the team captain as leaders but also have significant value for the upper management team coaches, athletes and the practitioners of sports psychology. According to coaches' point of view, they can formally elect the team captain from the team on which other athlete members have trust and who provide better services to their team. The coaches elect the team captain on the basis of the sacrifices that he or she do for their team and consider the team first as compared to their personal interest. Coaches may potentially select numerous formal front-runners to share leader obligation and strengthen the leader's primary responsibility to serve the collective needs of other team members and the team as a whole. Moreover, social identity plays an important role among vis-à-vis servant leadership and team cohesion. Coaches use team building strategies for enhancing the unity of the team members; the more the athletes identify themselves as a group, the more they are involved in group benefits. This study is also important for practitioners to understand how leaders work on team building strategies and howtheir social identities affect the performance of athletes. Researchers agreed that leadership success may depend on members' self-identification with the group (Rees et al., 2015).Practitioners may desire to contemplate how the team captain is incorporates team-building strategies for players. For instance, through team-building practices, a team leader could be trained to deliberately imitate on how their arrangements signify or align with the shared group identity.

Limitation and Future Direction

Despite the contributions of current study, there are some limitations to consider. Cross sectional data is used in this particularly study, signifying the need for longitudinal studies in future to collect data on different times. It will show more authentic results of servant leadership that affect the task cohesion, social cohesion, and burnout while mediating by social identity. The current study collected data from female athletes. In the future, researchers can perform comparative studies with other sports-engaged population sets such male athletes, male and/or female adolescent athletes. The unit of analysis in this study is female athlete population engaged in the sports sector. However, future researchers can collect data form coaches and team captains to better understand how servant leadership plays an effective role in enhance group unity and reducing the burnout of athletes. In a developing economy, there is a need to develop the sports sector, providing more facilities to female athletes for encouraging youth development. Servant leadership is still a new concept in the sports sector there is a need to conduct more studies on servant leadership because it is capable of generating positive outcomes in female athletes. To expand its scope and level of generalizability, this study can be performed on other developing economies such as Pakistan, India, Indonesia and Bangladesh.

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