

Mentoring Relationship in Sports and Its Applicability to Positive Youth Development Context: A Literature Review and Recommendation

Ye Hoon Lee^{1*}

Hankuk University of Foreign Studies, Republic of Korea, Assistant Professor

Boyun Woo²

Endicott College, USA, Associate Professor

Despite a growing interest in mentoring relationship in sports, definitional, theoretical, and methodological deficiencies reduce the usefulness of existing research. This article provides a critical review of the literature on mentoring with an emphasis on the links between mentoring and positive youth development. The first section describes a variety of ways in which mentoring has been studied within the field of education, management, psychology, and sports. The second section provides a critical review of research about positive youth development and the relevant coaching style – autonomy-supportive interpersonal style. The third section introduces several recommendations for such practitioners in sports as coaches and administrators when they are interacting with athletes or employees.

Key words: mentoring, positive youth development, self-determination theory, sports, coaches

* Corresponding author.

Email address: leeye@o365.hufs.ac.kr

Introduction

Mentoring has been defined as a developmental relationship between a more experienced experts (the mentor) and a less experienced novice (the protégé) in which the mentor provides support, guidance, and feedback in order to facilitate protégé's career plans and personal growth (Russell & Adams, 1997). Ragins (1997) described mentors as an individual who has experience and knowledge, and uses those resources to enhance his or her protégé's careers. Kram (1988) identified mentor's two major functions including career and psychosocial functions. Career function involves mentor's efforts to deliver skills and knowledge which enhance protégé's career development including coaching, sponsorship, and challenging assignments. Specifically, coaching involves providing necessary strategies to be successful in organizations such as letting protégés know whom to trust, who has a power, and who may attack in the organization through sharing information (Pastore, 2003). Mentors provide sponsorship assistance when they "highlight the protégé's potential and present the individual in highly favorable light" (Weaver & Chelladurai, 1999, p. 28). Finally, challenging assignments refers to mentor's efforts to enhance protégé's "technical and managerial skills that will be useful later in a career" through critiquing performance (Weaver & Chelladurai, 1999, p. 29). Psychosocial functions refer to the mentor's effort to enhance the protégé's sense of competence, intimacy, identity, and effectiveness through support, friendship, acceptance and confirmation, counseling, and role modeling (Kram & Isabella, 1985). Specifically, acceptance and confirmation involves the mentor's expression of confidence and confirmation in protégé's abilities, thus creating mutual trust by providing support and encouragement. In addition, counseling refers to the process of mentor's guidance to solve protégé's conflict while role modeling involves setting mentors as an example for protégés to follow (Pastore, 2003). In sum, mentoring guides protégés to learn professional and personal skills (as a career function) and to facilitate the growth and development of the protégé (as a psychosocial function) through providing various resources (Miller, Salmela, & Kerr, 2002).

Previous literatures have suggested that mentoring is beneficial for protégés as well as mentors (Russell and Adams, 1997). Regarding the benefits for protégés, Odell (1990) found that novice teachers as protégés had a higher level of motivation to stay in teaching, favorable attitudes toward teaching, and were less stressed when they receive mentoring. Moreover, according to Weaver and Chelladurai (1999), mentoring was related to protégé's experience in advancement outcomes including salary, promotion, status, and power and growth outcomes including competence, identity, and effectiveness. In addition, mentoring generates favorable outcomes for mentors as well. For instance, Brzoska (1987) found that mentoring allowed mentors to become rejuvenation and to think that they contributed to the profession (Ganser, 1992). Weaver and Chelladurai (1999) states that mentors experience both intrinsic rewards including job satisfaction and extrinsic rewards including continuous

promotion based on the existing network with past and present protégés. As such, due to the various benefits for mentors and protégés, there has been a substantial body of research on mentoring from a variety of fields such as education, business, and sports coaching.

Together, mentoring involves the mutual relationship between experts and novice, which includes two functions such as career function and psychosocial function. There has been growing interests regarding this topic in various fields since mentoring have been found to associate with favorable outcomes for both mentors and protégés, and organizations as well. Description of the research in various fields such as education, business, and sports setting will be presented in the following sections.

Mentoring in Education

There has been largest body of research on mentoring in the field of education because they need to train novice teachers effectively. In the education setting, three-way partnership among mentor, novice teacher, and university was identified and it has been found to be a critical element for teaching success and novice teachers' optimal growth in the profession (Jones, Harris, & Miles, 2009). Here, mentors play a critical role in the professional development of both novice teachers and schools (Zeek, Foote, and Walker, 2001). Previous literatures in the educational setting have shown the benefits of mentoring for mentors. For instance, as mentioned above, Brzoska (1987) found the mentor-teachers' increased level of renewal and rejuvenation in their teaching while Ganser (1992) found the positive relationship between mentoring role and job satisfaction among mentor-teachers based on their perception of contribution to the profession. In addition, Borman and Colson (1984) reported that mentoring programs in educational institutions promoted mentor's interpersonal relationship skills and increased their knowledge of the work place. Regarding the benefits for proteges, Abell, Dillon, Hopkins, McNery, and O'Brien (1995) found that protégé teachers experienced higher level of self-confidence, classroom management strategies, lesson planning, discipline, eye contact, and review techniques after engaging in mentoring program. Together, previous research studies in the educational settings have confirmed the existence of mentoring and shown that it has been positively related to various favorable outcomes for mentors and protégés as well.

Mentoring in Business

There are several differences on the focus of mentoring program between business and educational setting. For instance, the primary purpose of the mentoring program in business setting is to achieve organizational goals, whereas the focus of mentoring program in educational setting is on the personal growth and development. Consequently, in the business setting, mentoring programs is designed to improve employees' performance and to increase organizational profits (Jones et al., 2009). In addition,

it is possible that younger generation can become a mentor of older generation in today's rapid-changing world in the business setting. It is possible that mentor can be younger but also can be more experienced and insightful in a certain area such as computer use (Busen and Engebreston, 1999; Klasen and Clutterbuck, 2002).

Regarding the benefits of mentoring, business setting reported the similar outcomes with mentoring program in educational settings including protégé learning, career planning, and psychosocial support (Eby and Lockwood, 2005). Particularly, previous literatures suggest that employees learn and develop faster when they are engaged in a formal mentoring program, which is similar with consequences from other fields (Godshalk and Sosik, 2003). Garvey and Alred (2001) explained that the reason for this perception is the complexity of the working context. Since business environment contains few rules, no right answers, and no predictable outcomes, mentoring programs lead individuals to tolerate the ambiguity through information sharing and supportive behaviors. Finally, Liu, Xu, and Weitz (2011) examined the effects of interns' mentoring received during the internship periods on their job satisfaction, affective commitment, and attitude toward the organizations. The result indicates that mentoring had a significant impact on intern's (i.e., protégés) affective commitment, and positive attitude toward the organizations. Interestingly, the role of organization was also found to be important to achieve successful mentoring program. Recently, in the study of Eby, Lockwood, and Butts (2006) using 458 samples employed in a variety of industries, the results indicated that perceived support for mentoring from organizations was positively associated with protégé's favorable career-related and psychosocial support. Regarding organization's benefits, the authors also found that when mentors felt they received sufficient support for their mentoring behaviors, they would be more likely to mentor others in the future which have a potential to generate positive outcomes for organizations.

Together, previous literatures in business domains have suggested that objectives of mentoring program is different from those of educational settings in that it plays a critical role in new employee's performance and adaptability rather than focusing on the personal growth among protégés. However, the outcomes from mentoring were found to be similar with those in the educational settings.

Peer Relationship

Klasen and Clutterbuck (2002) stated the possibility of peer mentoring in many American and British organizations through matching new employees with a peer mentor during a certain period of time. Kram (1988) and Pastore (2003) also talked about the importance of such relationship for career and psychosocial development across various fields and all stages of an individual's career.

In her book *Mentoring at Work: Developmental Relationships in Organizational Life*, Kram (1988) provided the conceptual framework which stressed the types, functions, and features of peer relationship

and then integrated concept of peer relationship into mentoring process as an additional step to improve this area.

According to her framework, peer relationships consist of both career and psychosocial functions like mentoring. Specifically, career functions in peer relationship contains information sharing, career strategizing, and job-related feedback while psychosocial functions include confirmation, emotional support, personal feedback, and friendship. Specifically, information sharing involves exchanging technical knowledge and perspective on the organization, which is beneficial for finishing their work. Career strategizing involves discussing one's own career options and problems while job-related feedback involves discussing working condition and clarifying one's own strengths and weaknesses. In addition, confirmation allows peers to share their perceptions, values, beliefs, and adjusting commonality. Emotional support refers to peers listening to and advising each other during hardship period while personal feedback involves discussing personal strengths and weaknesses beyond just professional-related concerns. Finally, friendship is considered the most important area of the psychosocial functions and it happens when peers develop a concern for each other beyond the professional setting (Patore, 2003).

Kram (1988) also identified several differences in peer relationship compared to mentoring. First of all, mutuality is important in peer relationship, which indicates that each person in the relationship serves both a helper and recipient of help role. Although mentoring relationship designates one person as the role of sponsor in a hierarchical order, peer relationship posits that each person is on the same field, which allows them to provide equal assistance to one another. Secondly, in terms of the availability, peer relationship allows easier accessibility toward each other and it can occur at any time. Finally, in terms of the duration, peer relationship which often last 20-30 years can be longer compared to mentoring relationship which usually lasts 3-8 years (Pastore, 2003).

Kram (1988) also suggested the three types of peer relationships including information peer, collegial peer, and special peer. She stated that there types are on the continuum. First of all, information peers serve as sources of career function such as information sharing. The interaction between peers at this point is social and each peer does not expose their personal concern. The information peer also allows each to know more about the organization and expect to provide information about career opportunities. Secondly, collegial peer follows after the information peer period whose primary functions are "career strategizing, job-related feedback, and friendship" (p. 138). Peer started to have an increased level of trust and self-disclosure and talk about their personal life and provide more personal feedback. Finally, a special peer's primary function is "confirmation, emotional support, personal feedback, and friendship" (p. 138). A best friend is the most precise description of a special peer which individuals discuss both the professional and personal concerns.

According to Kram (1988), this type of peer relationship provides reliable and candid personal feedback, emotional support, career strategizing, ongoing validation of individuals' competence and potential" (p. 141).

Together, mentoring has expanded its area by shifting its focus to peer relationship, from expert-novice relationship. Although peer mentoring involves the similar functions such as career and psychosocial functions, it also contains different features in terms of mutuality, the degree of accessibility, and the duration.

Mentoring in Other Domains

There has been growing interests in the role of mentoring over the past 10 years in nursing field in order to develop nurse's professional development (Jones et al., 2009). According to Hughes (2004), mentoring in this field was conducted as a means of strengthening student-nurses' theoretical knowledge and increasing their adaptability in the practice. Despite its conceptualized ambiguousness, previous literatures have shown the positive effects of mentoring among nurse practitioners. For example, nurses with consistent experience in the mentoring process considered them as more effective and supportive compared to those without the experience. Similarly, mentors were rated more positively and favorably by students regardless of their competence (Andrews & Chilton, 2000). Finally, Theobald and Mitchell (2002) found that mentoring has a negative impact on graduate nurses' stress when they are in the transition period in the practice and it is positively associated with their professional growth and learning.

There has been one research study related to a mentoring program in the military field. Payne and Huffman (2005) conducted a longitudinal examination in order to investigate the relationship among mentoring, affective commitment, continuance commitment, and turnover behavior among U.S. Army officials. The result indicated that protégés with mentors showed higher level of affective commitment and continuance commitment compared to employees without mentors after one year. The authors also found that affective commitment partially mediated the negative relationship between mentoring and actual turnover behavior after ten years later. Together, mentoring research in other domains including nursing and military field also have shown the positive effect of mentoring program on mentors' and protégé's favorable outcomes consistently.

Mentoring in Sports

There has been growing interests in mentoring relationship in sport settings for the past two decades. For instance, Weaver and Chelldurai (1999) identified the importance of conducting mentoring research for the development of sport management field while Pastore (2003) introduced the concept

of peer relationship on mentoring to sport management field and suggested several recommendations for advisor-doctoral students mentoring relationship. In the athletic setting, Gould, Krane, Giannini, and Hodge (1990) and Bloom, Durand-Bush, Schinke, and Salmela (1998) investigated the mentoring relationship between experienced and novice athletic coaches. They both found that mentoring program was a critical element for the future development of elite coaches. Specifically, Bloom and his colleagues (1998) reported that expert coaches had experience in mentoring relationship when they began coaching profession. Those coaches received encouragement to continue coaching careers, assistance to secure their positions as assistant coaches, and eventually were able to move on head coaching positions from experienced coaches. It was interesting to find that those coaches who were mentored during their early coaching careers began to mentor young and novice coaches when they became more experienced. Like other domains, expert coaches in athletic settings with mentoring experience performed many of the mentoring functions including delivering technical and tactical skills and facilitating the career progression of young coaches.

Now, the focus can be shifted from expert coaches-novice coaches mentoring relationship to coaches-athlete relationship. One can state that there are many commonalities between the coach-athlete relationships and traditional or classic mentoring relationships, particularly teacher-student relationship. Coaches are generally more experienced and older figures compared to athletes and have opportunities to promote children and young adults to learn a particular set of skills (Kwon, 2020; Miller et al., 2002). Also, the two spend a great deal of time together, (Adler & Adler, 1985) while coaches are considered significant agents to help their young athletes enhance their athletic performance (Gordon, 1986; Horn, 2002; i.e., career development), academic progress (Miller et al., 2002; i.e., career development), and positive youth development (Gould, Collins, Lauer, & Chung, 2006 & 2007; i.e., psychosocial development).

However, there has been little research examining whether mentoring relationship exists between coaches and athletes. Perna, Zaichkowsky, and Bocknek (1996) empirically investigated the incidence of mentoring relationship among inter-collegiate male athletes and non-athletes. The results suggested that athletes reported more mentoring experience compared to non-athletes and most of those mentors for athletes were coaches. More importantly, Walton (1992) conducted interviews with six expert coaches regarding their lives and philosophies and found that these coaches were more than just teachers of sport skills. The athletes under the guidance of those coaches had a chance to learn life skill and had realized the importance of those life skill lessons throughout their life.

Furthermore, Miller and her colleagues (2002) conducted the in-depth interview with 8 coaches to investigate whether athletic coaches perceive the role of mentor as their responsibility and examine the nature of coach-athlete mentoring relationship. Overall, they confirmed that mentoring relationship

existed in the university athletic environment. Specifically, the results indicated that athletic coaches agreed with the idea that one of their responsibilities was serving as mentors in addition to their roles as technicians and tacticians. Coaches believed that their behaviors had significant and positive influences on athletes' growth and development. Miller and her colleagues (2003) also found that coaches performed the similar mentoring functions to those described in the business and education settings (i.e., career function; facilitating professional development and psychosocial functions; promoting self-referent competencies) in their interaction with athletes. The results suggested that coaches fulfilled the commitment to intellectual competence and some components of the commitment to personal competence (e.g., the role modeling of cooperation, teamwork, and communication) as a similar form of performing career function. These commitments were associated with facilitating academic progress and degree completion, the major career pursuit of late adolescents. As such, the authors found that coaches fulfilled career function or commitment to intellectual competence as mentors by stressing the importance of a university education. In addition, coaches were found to fulfill the commitment to personal competence, similar with psychosocial functions, contributing to the development of self-confidence, self-assertion, and discipline. Therefore, these results indicated that coaches in the athletic context fulfilled the two broad categories of mentoring functions (i.e., career and psychosocial functions) found in business and educational settings (Miller et al., 2003).

Together, previous literatures have suggested that mentoring relationship exists between expert coach and novice coach as well as coaches and athletes (Walton, 1992, Perna et al., 1996, Miller et al., 2003). Since it has been found that coaches perceive themselves as mentors for their athletes and perform the mentoring functions similar to those found in business and educational settings, athletic contexts may be relevant area to investigate the nature and the process of mentoring relationship.

Critiques in Mentoring Research

Until now, the current paper has looked at a number of research studies examining the critical role of mentoring on individual and organizational outcomes in education, business, sports, and other domains. Despite its obvious benefits and potentials derived by mentoring programs in practical settings, there are several drawbacks in its research and practices as well.

First drawback is an obvious one in that many researchers identified a lack of clarification of conceptual definition (Jones et al., 2009). As a matter of fact, Gibson (2004) reviewed the mentoring literatures in business settings and concluded that there was no consistent definition of mentoring or description of mentoring roles or functions. That is, the conceptual definitions were different depending on people, levels, and settings, which exacerbated its ambiguity. For example, as mentioned above, the definition of mentoring in educational setting can be different from that of business setting in

that mentors in business do not have to be older in age or greater rank than the protégés in the case that younger people possess more experience or expertise. For example, in the rapid-changing world, younger employee can have more experience or expertise in several contents such as computer use or latest trend. As such, more concrete and universal definition of mentoring is warranted. However, there is no doubt that mentoring basically is an effort to enhance the total personal growth of the individuals (Jones et al., 2009).

Secondly, although previous literatures have consistently shown a number of benefits provided by mentoring programs in various fields, mentoring programs seem like a more the complex process which has a potential to produce both rewards and losses for mentors, protégés, and organizations. That is, previous literatures in mentoring used the mentoring program solely to predict a certain consequence. However, it is possible that different phenomena can take place depending on each personal relationship between a mentor and a protégé. One can assume that it is not the mentoring program itself to generate specific outcomes, but the unique relationship between a mentor and a protégé in terms of personality, goal orientation, and social status dimensions is the latent factor generating different kinds of outcomes. In the case that a particular relationship between both parties is found to generate a certain outcomes, the practitioners are able to apply this result when they match mentors and protégés in the mentoring program. Also, different consequences can happen depending on the different stages of the mentoring relationship proposed by Kram (1983). According to her, mentoring relationship is an evolving one and consists of four phases including the initiation phase, cultivation phase, separation phase, and re-defining phases. She specifically stated that the magnitude and direction of the relationship could be different depending on where each mentoring relationship takes place. As such, different the level of relationship quality based on the different stages of mentoring relationship possibly generates different outcomes respectively. Thus, research based on the relational approach considering the different relationship quality between two parties and individual difference should be taken account on mentoring research.

In the similar vein, under a certain circumstances, mentoring programs possibly result in negative effects for mentors such as increased burnout, pressure, and stress, as well as for protégés such as decreased independence. For example, performing mentor role in addition to their primary responsibility as employees, teachers or coaches may lead them to experience higher level of burnout. A lack of considerations regarding the situational factors possibly in mentoring research possibly interferes with providing a comprehensive understanding of mentoring programs. As such, it is important to identify what kinds of context might result in favorable outcomes in mentoring relationship.

By extension, Larson (2006) argued that previous literatures tended to explore the nature of mentor-protégé mentoring relationship, rather than suggesting the tools for mentors' use in this

interaction. This trend has resulted in “a limited view of what *tends to* happen as opposed to the rich possibilities of what *can* happen” (Colley, 2003, p. 3). In the practical situation, without providing a clear guidance how to proceed with successful mentoring programs, its process can be very mechanical which possibly reduce its intrinsic values (Kwon, 2017). In response, it is necessary to explore how mentors can enhance protégés’ career and psychosocial development. This will expand the clarity in relation to what it actually can provide in practice.

Consequently, this paper will discuss the informative *process* for mentors to enhance protégé’s career and psychosocial development in their profession. Before discussing the process, there are several premises related to this paper. First of all, this paper will focus on the coach-athlete relationship by serving a coach as a mentor and an athlete as a protégé. As a matter of fact, the term mentoring recently has become a common topic within sport coaching (Jones et al., 2009).

Furthermore, this paper will be based on educational perspective in sports, thus it designates youth and intercollegiate sports where one of its objectives is nurturing student-athletes’ optimal personal growth as primary focus. There are three major objectives of sport including: a) winning; b) having fun; and c) athlete’s physical, psychological and social development (i.e., education). This distinct objective can be shifted depending on its level of competition. For example, competitive sport programs such as professional sports or NCAA Division I sports value winning more than youth or recreational sports (Martens, 2004). As such in order to follow the educational objective of sports, this paper will focus on the youth and intercollegiate athletic settings. As a matter of fact, there has been a plenty of research studies concerning how coaches in youth and intercollegiate sports can promote positive youth development by teaching life skills and in competition and training settings. In addition, according to Miller and her colleagues (2003) coach-athlete mentoring relationship share many common things with educational settings because high schools, colleges, and universities also put efforts to enhance students’ career and personal development. As youth and young adults struggle with critical developmental tasks throughout high school and college or university including identity formation, the development of independence, self-esteem, and vocational purpose (Chickering, 1969; Chickering & Reisser, 1993), intercollegiate student-athlete also have hard time with many of these developmental challenges due to the role conflict and role overload associated with the dual roles of athlete and student (Ferrante, Etzel, & Lantz, 1996). Subsequent support and assistance how to deal with those developmental challenges is necessary for those student-athletes at this developmental stage and athletic coaches may be the one for high school, college or university student-athletes (Miller et al., 2003).

Together, this paper will attempt to identify the appropriate *process* which mentors (i.e., coaches) in youth and intercollegiate sport settings can display in order to promote protégé’s (i.e., student-athletes) personal growth. Subsequently, this paper will review one relevant coaching style (i.e.,

autonomy-supportive interpersonal style) and related theory (i.e., self-determination theory). The outcome will focus on student-athletes' intrinsic motivation and other psychological development.

Positive Youth Development in Sports

As Plato (1920) quoted, “the moral value of exercises and sports far outweigh the physical value” (p.46), sport has been regarded as a vehicle for adolescents' psychosocial development from antiquity. The capacity of sport to build more than a participant's physical strength or skill has been acknowledged by many researchers and educators. Kleiber and his colleagues (Kleiber & Kirshnit, 1991; Kleiber & Roberts, 1981) insisted that sport was a structured forum which encourages learning responsibility, persistence, risk-taking, courage, conformity, and self-control. Eccles, Barber, Stone, and Hunt (2003) also argued that structured, organized activities are a valuable use of adolescents' time because those activities include opportunities (a) to acquire and practice specific social, physical, and intellectual skills that may be useful in a wide variety of settings including school; (b) to contribute to the well-being of one's community and to develop a sense of agency as a member of one's community; (c) to belong to a socially recognized and valued group; (d) to establish supportive social networks of peers and adults that can help in both the present and the future; and (e) to face and deal with challenges.

Consistent with this trend, much of the empirical evidence has supported the relationship between participation in sport and positive development among youth. For example, researchers have reported positive connections between participation in sport and various psychological indices such as increased feelings of self-worth and self-esteem, social responsibility, and better psychological adjustment (Bailey, 2006; Broh, 2002; Frederick & Eccles, 2006a; Lee, Hwang, & Choi, 2017; Smoll, Smith, Barnett, & Everett, 1993). Furthermore, participation in sport, compared to participation in other extracurricular activities, has predicted the development of initiative (Larson, 2000; Larson, Hansen, & Monetal, 2006). However, the evidence examining the relationship between participation in sport and positive youth development showed mixed results since other research have shown that sport participation on children can result in negative effects in youths' development such as increased alcohol consumption (Eccles & Barber, 1999; Eccles, Barber, Stone, & Hunt, 2003), and reduced moral development (Shields & Bredemeier, 2001). More recently, several research studies have investigated how sport leaders may contribute to the development-oriented culture in high school sport settings (Lee, 2019a; 2019b)

In sum, various research studies have shown that mere participation in sports might not facilitate or hinder healthy development in youths. In fact, outside of the physical activity benefits, just playing,

competing, or kicking a ball do not appear to be related to youths' healthy development (Brunelle, Danish, & Forneris, 2007). Therefore, understanding what might instill positive values through sport for youth is critical.

Positive Youth Development in Mentoring

Recently, Larson (2006) discusses youths' proactive role to motivate themselves, which in turn lead to achieve positive youth development (PYD) based on mentoring perspective. Based on the psychology literature, she assumes that humans possess a motivational system which drives their own development. Subsequently, under the right conditions, people can become intrinsically motivated. For example, when they face challenging tasks, it will lead them to engage in activities more intrinsically motivated (Ryan & Deci, 2000). Thus, the role of adults or mentors is to support and lead youth to control and motivate themselves, rather than to control or mold them. By extension, one can conclude that it is coaches' role as mentors providing more opportunities for youth to become intrinsically motivated, which has a potential to achieve PYD (Larson, 2006).

Combining the discussion of PYD in sports with PYD in mentoring, it is logical progression to investigate the role of coaches which helps young athletes become more intrinsically motivated and promote positive youth development. Coaches' role here can serve as the process that has a potential to achieve a successful mentoring relationship associated with positive youth development in the sport setting. Then, what are the processes coaches can perform that occur in successful mentoring relationship? One key answer for this question is a coach's autonomy-supportive interpersonal style (Mageau & Vallerand, 2003) which has a potential to promote young athletes' intrinsic motivation and PYD. However, before introducing the concept of coaches' autonomy-supportive interpersonal style, the explanation regarding self-determination theory (SDT; Ryan & Deci, 2000) is necessary.

Self-Determination Theory

Self-determination theory (SDT; Ryan & Deci, 2000) assumes that all individuals have the three basic needs (e.g., need for competence, need for relatedness, and need for autonomy). The need for competence means an individual's need to feel a sense of effectiveness in "one's ongoing interactions with the social environment and experiencing opportunities to exercise and express one's capacities (Ryan & Deci, 2002, p. 7). The need for relatedness means an individual's need to feel sense of belonging and a good interaction with others (Baumeister & leary, 1995). Finally, the need for autonomy refers to individuals' need to feel control of their works and they are the origin of their own behaviors (Deci, 1995). According to SDT, when these three basic needs are satisfied by the

contexts, they are likely to experience higher level of intrinsic motivation and the optimal development and growth, as well as psychological well-being, whereas to the extent the environmental factor restrain these basic needs, individuals will experience ill-being and a less portion of optimal development (Ryan & Deci, 2000; 2002). In conclusion, SDT suggests that the differences in the result youth experiences, in terms of optimal development and intrinsic motivation, depends on the degree of individuals' basic needs are satisfied or inhibited (Gagné, Ryan, Bargmann, 2003; Reinboth, Duda, Ntoumanis, 2004; Conroy & Coatsworth, 2007). Thus, finding what might serve to positively influence these three basic needs is critical. One key social environmental factor assumed to promote the basic need is a coach's autonomy-supportive interpersonal style

Coaches' Autonomy-Supportive Interpersonal Style

Many sport programs for children and youth are led by adult coaches. These coaches are often considered as significant agents in shaping the environment that children and youth experience, and have a role in the outcomes that youth derive from participation by allowing them to be self-directed and voluntary. In this way, a primary role of the coach is to help their young athletes enhance their athletic performance. For example, many research studies have reported that a coach's interpersonal style, as well as the behaviors influenced athletes' performance and satisfaction (Gordon, 1986; Horn, 2002). Within the behavioral perspectives of coaches, there has been growing interests on the autonomy-supportive interpersonal style of coaches since the various research have consistently showed that it is positively related to promoting positive youth development in training and competition settings.

Mageau and Vallerand (2003) defined being autonomy-interpersonal style as "an individual in a position of authority (e.g., an instructor [or a coach]) takes the other's (e.g., a student's [or an athlete's]) perspective, acknowledges the other's feelings, and provides the other with pertinent information and opportunities for choice, while minimizing the use of pressures and demands" (p.886). According to them, autonomy-supportive individuals demonstrate behaviors including (1) providing choices within specific limits and rules; (2) providing reasons for tasks, limits, and rules; (3) asking about and confirming others' feelings; (4) encouraging others to take initiatives and do something independently; (5) giving competence feedback in non-controlling ways; (6) keeping out of overt control, guilt-inducing criticisms, controlling statements, and external rewards; (7) avoiding ego-involvement from taking place. In contrast, an individual in a position of authority who uses extrinsic rewards, criticize others to induce guilt, and do not acknowledge the subordinates' thoughts and feeling is considered as an individual with controlling interpersonal style.

Considerable research within and outside sport domain has shown that an autonomy-supportive interpersonal style are positively connected to positive youth development. For example, within the

sport contexts, Richer and Vallerand (1999) found that when young athletes perceived their coaches as autonomy-supportive figures, they reported increased feelings of autonomy and competence and being more intrinsically motivated. Conversely, the more the coaches perceived as controlling by the athletes, the less they reported their intrinsic motivation. Gagné et al., (2003) found that gymnasts' perceptions regarding their parents' and coaches' autonomy-support were positively connected to more intrinsic motivation for practicing gymnastics. In addition, the extent to which the athletes' needs were satisfied in practice significantly predicted their well-being. In addition, Amorose and Anderson-Butcher (2007) explored whether high school and college athletes' three basic psychological needs mediated the relationship between autonomy-support provided by coaches and intrinsic motivation. Result from this study showed that need satisfaction plays an arbitrational role between autonomy-supportive interpersonal style and intrinsic motivation.

Evidence regarding the importance of an autonomy-supportive interpersonal style is also found within the domains of physical education, physical activity, and weight loss. For example, Standage, Duda, and Ntoumanis (2003) explored the role of autonomy-supportive environments, as well as mastery climates, within the context of physical education classes. More specifically, they explored whether the needs for autonomy-competence, and relatedness mediated the relationship between autonomy-support and intrinsic motivation. In addition, they examined whether intrinsic motivation predicted future intention to engage in physical activity. Results of their study supported both aforementioned hypotheses.

Together, it is logical progression to conclude that coaches' autonomy-supportive interpersonal style has a capability to fulfill psychosocial functions described in mentoring literatures. As coaches engage in autonomy-supportive interpersonal style, the three basic needs (needs for competence, relatedness, and autonomy) will be satisfied, which in turn lead to athletes' optimal growth and increased level of intrinsic motivation.

Recommendations for Coaches and Administrators

In order to fulfill mentor's role by promoting student-athletes' intrinsic motivation and optimal personal growth, coaches are expected to engage in autonomy-supportive interpersonal style in their interaction with student-athletes. This can be achieved by taking student-athletes' perspective, acknowledging their feelings, providing relevant information and opportunities for choice, and minimizing the use of pressures and demands (Mageau & Vallerand, 2003). For example, when a student-athlete showed a slow performance enhancement in progress, coaches should consider his or her ability level and give a competence feedback in non-controlling ways. In other words, their

instructions should be angled towards each student-athlete's skill level.

In addition, coaches need to involve goal setting for the mentoring experience (Eby and Lockwood, 2005). For example, Coaches should provide achievable challenges to athletes. Csikszentmihalyi (1993) found that individuals experience the strongest intrinsic motivation when they face challenges that are equal to their abilities. Otherwise, they lose their interests in the goals that are either too easy or too hard for them. Thus, coaches need to help athletes find realistic goals which will lead them to achieve success and continue their motivation to the next step. Similarly, coaches need to be enthusiastic and showing confidence in their student-athletes in order to sustain their motivation.

In depth, coaches should seek a student-athletes initiative by supporting intrinsic motivation rather than seeking a student's compliance by introducing consequences and verbal directives (Reeve, Bolt, & Cai, 1999). This can be achieved by the different types of goal that coaches set. When coaches set mastery goal orientation (Ames, 1992) which allows student-athletes to focus on enhancing performance to the best of their ability, they will be more likely to increase their intrinsic motivation. However, when student-athletes are involved in performance goal orientation (Ames, 1992) which leads them to achieve external indicators of success such as winning, it will decrease motivation in the case they perform badly or they face failure. In sum, coaches are able to nurture student-athletes' intrinsic motivation when they engage in autonomy-supportive interpersonal style in the form of setting achievable objective and mastery goal orientation.

However, it is critical to note that one of the coaches' primary responsibilities is athlete's performance enhancement, thus winning as technician and tactician. Athletic coaches are often evaluated in terms of team performance and athletic performance of their athletes (Sperber, 1990). As such, it would be dangerous for coaches' career if they neglect the importance of athlete's performance enhancement and disregard their role as technician or tactician. As a matter of fact, coaches' role as technicians or tacticians emphasizing athlete performance enhancement can be considered fulfilling career function as mentors. As such, some degrees of authoritative style need to be performed under the right condition. It is no doubt that sport contexts do need a high standard of discipline among athletes to achieve mutual goals. Then, how can coach do this in an appropriate way? Previous literatures in parenting suggested that authoritative parenting is most effective when they control children and also provide explanations for their actions and give children opportunities for input (Larson, 2006). Applying this, coaches need to control athletes' actions but they need to provide some rationales and explanations for their controlling behaviors. In the similar vein, in the case that coaches need to give harsh feedbacks to student-athletes, it is recommended to provide clear rationale for the negative feedbacks. For example, when a young baseball player keeps making errors in fielding because he or she did not bend his or her knees, coaches should explain clearly that high

posture makes him or her difficult to predict a ball bounce and to continue to throw balls, rather than just yelling. It is also encouraged to remind athletes that the negative feedback is intended to enhance their performance, which in turn steps toward better team performance. Also, they need to clearly deliver their own values and set clear limits on activities the two do together. These actions are all included in the categories of autonomy-supportive behaviors.

Together, coaches are expected to engage in autonomy-supportive interpersonal style in coaching in order to fulfill a mentor's psychosocial function. However, it is also coaches' role enhancing athlete's performance, thus team performance. As such, it is inevitable for coaches to control athlete's behaviors while providing relevant rationale for their negative feedbacks at the same time.

There are also recommendations for athletic directors in higher level of competition leagues. Admittedly, it would be almost impossible to recommend coaches at the NCAA Division I level to engage in autonomy-supportive interpersonal style in their work places. Revenue-generating sports like men's football and basketball at NCAA Division I level and professional level requires winning and excellent athletic performance to survive in the jungle. Unfortunately, if we consider those coaches' enormous responsibility inherent in their coaching role, the situations can be even worse. We can posit that if coaches have to fulfill both responsibilities (i.e., performance enhancement and mentoring role), they would possibly experience burnout due to the work overload. As such, it may be better for the university or athletic system to reward or promote coaches based on their ability to mentor athletes toward performance success and healthy personal development (Miller et al., 2003). This can be achieved by letting the coach receive the public recognition for their commitment to athlete's personal growth.

Conclusion

This paper starts with reviewing literatures regarding mentoring, positive youth development, and then the relationship between mentoring and positive youth development. Subsequently, several critiques regarding research in mentoring were proposed in order to make future studies firm. In addition, the relevant theory connecting the two constructs (i.e., self-determination theory) was reviewed in order to articulate the process (i.e., autonomy-supportive interpersonal style) which enhances positive youth development in the sport setting. Finally, some recommendations for coaches and administrators were suggested in order to help coaches engage in autonomy-supportive behaviors more effectively, which in turn fulfill mentoring role successfully. Situational factors and relational approach which have a potential to influence the nature of coach-athlete mentoring relationship was also discussed in terms of the level of competition and the different stage of mentoring relationship.

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