

**The Effects of NCAA Division III Athletic Departments Hiring Fulltime Soccer Coaching Staffs On The Programs' Win Percentage.**

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## Table of Contents

List of Tables	i
Abstract	ii
I. Introduction	1
Statement of the Problem	2
Statement of Research Hypothesis	2
Operational Definitions	2
II. Review of the Literature	3
Divisions within The National Collegiate Athletic Association	3
The Athlete Coach Relationship	4
What a Collegiate Coaching Job Entails	8
Comparison Of Full Time Versus Part Time Employees	10
Summary	12
III. Methods	13
Design	13
Participants	13
Instruments	14
Procedure	14
IV. Results	15
V. Discussion	18
Implications of Results	18
Threats to the Validity	18
Connections to Previous Studies	19
Implications for Future Research	19
Overview	20
References	21

## List of Tables

1. Men's Team Coaching Staff: Shown by Year, by Institution, and by Employment (Full Time vs. Part Time)	15
2. Men's Team Coaching Staff: Shown by Year, by Institution, and by Employment (Paid /Volunteer)	15
3. Women's Team Coaching Staff: Shown by Year, by Institution, and by Status (Full Time vs. Part Time)	16
4. Women's team Coaching Staff: Shown by Year, by Institution, and by Employment (Paid/Volunteer)	16
5. Correlations between Team Record and Full-Time and Total Coaching Staff	17

## **Abstract**

The purpose of this study was to determine if hiring fulltime coaching staffs for Landmark Conference soccer teams would have an effect on the teams' win and loss record. The measurement tools were the Equity in Athletics Data Analysis Cutting Tool and each team's personal athletic website. The results concluded that there was no significant correlation between the total number of coaches on staff and win percentage and no correlation between the number of fulltime coaches and games won. Research in this area should continue since there is very limited data on the productiveness of having fulltime employees verse part time employees.

# **CHAPTER I**

## **INTRODUCTION**

In the history of collegiate athletics, the focus has shifted from sports as an extracurricular activity to sports as a major money maker. This change holds true both for individual colleges as well as the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA).

### **Overview**

Coaching in athletics is a multifaceted job which is built on relationships and the amount of time dedicated to work. Coaches tend to work more hours than the typical fulltime employee. There are many details a coach needs to sort out in order to be successful on the field. The main details are building positive trusting relationships with all their athletes, being harmoniously passionate about the sport they are coaching, dedicating many hours to the program for recruiting, scouting, planning, practices, travel etc. An argument could easily be made that in order to successful all head coaches should be hired on a full time basis. This way their complete focus is on their players, program, and building a successful team who will win games on the field.

## **Statement of Problem**

The purpose of this study is to determine if there is a correlation between having a full time soccer staff and win percentage of the soccer team.

## **Hypothesis**

The null hypothesis for this study is that there is no statistically significant correlation between having a full time coaching staff and their team's win percentage.

## **Operational Definitions**

Overall program success: defined as a) winning percentage over .500 for the season and b) making their respective end of season conference tournament.

Coaching Staff: defined as the head coach and a minimum of one assistant coach.

Employment status for each member of the coaching staff is defined as any of the following:

Fulltime: Salary based contract for at least 10 months of the year

Part time: Stipend based contract and works less than 20 hours per week according to Human Resources.

Graduate Assistant: A coach who receives a free graduate education and in return helps coach on a part time basis.

Volunteer: No pay or minimal stipend for in season only.

## **CHAPTER II**

### **REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE**

In the history of collegiate athletics, the focus has shifted from sports as an extracurricular activity to sports as a major money maker. This change holds true both for individual colleges as well as the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA). The first part of this review of the literature examines the divisions within the NCAA. The second section focuses on the qualities needed in successful coaching. In the third part, some of the difficulties of coaching are described, and the fourth section is a discussion of full-time versus part-time coaching.

#### **Divisions within The National Collegiate Athletic Association**

This shift in focus, apparent in both individual schools and the NCAA organization, has primarily occurred at the Division I level where scholarships, media, and the fan base are larger than other divisions. According to the NCAA's Revenue and Expense Report ("Finances of Intercollegiate Athletics", 2010) the median revenue per institution for Division I academic institutions from athletics is \$29,016,000. More Division I colleges are fully funding their teams, entire coaching staffs are being hired on a fulltime basis, and there are many additional support staff working within the athletic departments.

Division III level schools within the NCAA face a completely different situation. At the Division III level the official NCAA mission statement ("Welcome to NCAA Division III", 2013) is for the college experience to be well rounded with opportunities to experience various activities. The main focus is on classroom learning and earning a degree. Though the emphasis in Division III is on academics there is currently a trend of placing more funding into athletics. According to the NCAA Revenue and Expense Report ("Finances of Intercollegiate Athletics",

2010) expenses have increased by 109 percent from 2004 to 2010 with salaries, benefits, indirect institutional support, and travel being the top expenses. With the increase in salaries, some Division III institutions have moved from hiring part time coaches to full time. There are no regulations or rules on the number of coaches or to what capacity, full or part time, a school can hire them. This situation creates an advantage for institutions who can afford to put more money into their athletic programs.

### **.The Athlete Coach Relationship**

Being recognized as a good collegiate coach is directly correlated to the results within the win and loss columns. Gearity (2010) spoke about how win percentage is not the best tool in determining the quality of coach. There is much more that goes into being a coach than just producing wins. Coaching college athletes demands a person to have many different responsibilities throughout the day. For example, a coach might be an administrator, counselor, teacher, academic advisor, parent, etc. all in a day's time. A coach who is able to balance all of those and who also possesses a few other important characteristics, which will be discussed, tends to have more success on and off the field with his/her student athletes.

Teams train and work year round in order to compete in games and determine who is the winner at the end of regulation. With the universal belief being that quality coaches win games there is a lot of pressure placed on the collegiate coaches to win games, championships, and move on to the NCAA tournament consistently. Over recent years there has been an increase in studies trying to find out what makes a coach successful. Studies have ranged from certain coaching styles, personalities, experience, and quality of the athletes. Many of these studies have linked the coach-athlete relationship to the success of the athletes' performance (Jowett & Cockerill, 2003). A positive relationship between a coach and athlete tends to be built on trust,



common goals, and respect which goes both ways. Also, it has been identified if a coach genuinely cares about their athletes' well-being and performance it will promote a positive relationship (Poczwardowski, Barott & Henschen, 2003). Athletes may find it easier and more motivating to work hard for a coach whom they have built a relationship with, know is invested in them and truly cares about their success and overall well-being.

Another major characteristic of being viewed as a good coach by the athlete, is if the coach is passionate about what he or she does (Lafreniere, Jowett, Vallerand & Carbonneau 2011). For example, a passionate soccer coach would love the sport, spend many hours working with his/her athletes, devoting a lot of time and energy into his/her team, and enjoy his/her job (Vallerand, 2008, 2010). According to Vallerand and colleagues, (Vallerand, 2008, 2010; Vallerand, Blanchard, Mageau, Koestner, Ratelle & Leonard, 2003) there are two types of passion in their Dualistic Model of Passion which are harmonious and obsessive.

The type of passion which has been found to be most conducive to coaching athletes is harmonious passion. This type of passion would be when the coach loves their sport and identifies with it but at the same time does not believe the sport and their success within that sport determines their personal identity (Lafreniere et al., 2011). In Philippe, Vallerand, Houliort, Lavigne, and Donahue's (2010) study these coaches tend to have more positive emotions and experiences while coaching and through their overall attitude and positive outlook are able to connect with their athletes. A soccer coach who loves coaching, helping his/her athletes become successful on the field, and winning games but at the same time will not have a break down or have an identity crisis when he/she is not successful has a better chance in connecting and building strong relationships with his/her athletes.

On the opposite side of harmonious passion is another type of passion, obsessive passion. If a coach has this type of passion it has been found to be detrimental for his/her athletes. Obsessive passion is when the coach links success on the field with internal identity. This often leads to the coach being extremely demanding, narrow minded and can produce a negative effect on the activity (Lafreniere et al., 2011). It has been shown that athletes have a difficult time performing under a coach with obsessive passion than those with harmonious passion. The study conducted by Philippe et al. (2010) shows that the negative emotions that come out in a person with obsessive passion can hinder building a positive relationships with others. A coach with an obsessive passion is likely to create a negative atmosphere by being narrow minded, demanding and have difficulty building strong positive relationships with his/her athletes. Since the coach-relationship has been proven to be linked with overall coaching success this particular type of characteristic could harm team success on and off the field.

The athlete-coach relationship has many various facets and factors which could contribute to either having a positive or negative relationship. One aspect which will help in creating a productive working unit of the athlete-coach relationship is if the coach and athlete are complementary to each other. Jowett and Cockerill (2003) interviewed twelve Olympic medalists about the relationships with their coaches. The Olympians discussed the importance of 'working hard on both sides' and 'co-operation and responsiveness'. The majority of the interviewed athletes felt that they were most successful because their coach worked equally as hard as they did.

Once the complementary roles were established the relationship allowed each person to focus their energy toward the goals they had both set together. If these roles are not established or the relationship does not complement each other the implications could be negative for the

athlete's performance. Jowett and Meek (2000) stated that "under such conditions not only does the quality of the coach-athlete relationship suffer, but so do the athletes' sport and psychological well-being; the latter was reflected in feeling frustrated, angry, and dissatisfied" (as cited in Jowett & Cockerill 2003, p. 13). If a coach and athlete can establish a positive relationship which both feel they and their counterpart are invested equally in the goal then the outcome has a higher chance of becoming a reality.

Athletes can also benefit from a coach who is able to build a relationship with their athletes where the athletes feel they can share their opinions and be heard by their coach. If an athlete feels their coach is not open and is inaccessible then they very well could be resentful towards their coach (Alvarez, Balaguer, Castillo & Duda, 2009). As mentioned previous the coach-athlete relationship has the potential to be stronger if the roles are complementary. The job of a coach is to give feedback, both positive and negative, but they also should be able to listen to the opinions of their athletes. This type of back and forth with open communication can help form a positive and trusting coach-athlete relationship.

The coach-athlete relationship is very complex. It involves trust, an open line of communication, established and complementary roles, the coach's passion and more. A strong relationship between the coach and athlete is necessary because athletics naturally puts people in stressful environments during training and in games. If a positive relationship is in place then the coach and athletes have a better chance of being successful during those high stress situations.

## **What a Collegiate Coaching Job Entails**

As mentioned earlier coaches have many responsibilities besides the on field job of coaching. The job description of coaching today has become an occupation which requires more hours than a typical full time job. Knoppers (1992) spoke about how "the multifaceted, high-paced work setting full of practices, recruiting, off-season workouts, administrative responsibilities, and teaching duties has created an environment in which only those willing to work 12 hours a day, 6 days a week, for 50 weeks a year can thrive" (as cited in Dixon & Bruening 2005, p 384). If coaches want to be successful they need to dedicate many hours to various facets of their athletic program besides coaching. For example, coaches do not only need to build positive relationships with their current athletes but also with potential future athletes. This commitment requires going and watching potential players, writing various emails, phone calls and meeting with them on campus. Coaches need to build a trusting relationship with recruits all in hopes that they will decide to apply and commit to their school.

The typical day in the life of a coach involves many various tasks. Lumpkin and Anshel (2012) interviewed 16 coaches who worked in collegiate athletics and one question was to describe their typical work day. All the coaches spoke about going into their office early each morning and leaving for home late each evening. The typical work day is filled with planning practice, meeting with coaches and players, administrative paperwork, watching film, recruiting emails and phone calls, running team training and other various tasks. The amount of hours which are required of a coach are many and also not regular. The schedule is not the same day in and day out which makes it more difficult to balance work with life at home or outside of coaching.

The long hours of work put in by collegiate coaches label many of them as workaholics. There is not one consistent definition of a workaholic. A combination of recurring definitions could be a person who works more than 50 hours a week and can be categorized as obsessive about their job (Harpaz & Snir, 2003; Robinson, 1998). People who are placed in this category tend to think about work even when they are not working and put extra self-imposed pressure on themselves (Spence & Robbins, 1992). The nature of coaching has built in pressure since the end goal of the job is to win games. Brown (2003) discussed how coaches feel the pressure to spend long hours in the office. The perceived pressures come from his/her internal demands as well as external demands from his/her athletic departments, the players, alumni and any outside supporters. (as cited in Lumpkink & Anshel 2012). It is a unique situation where a person, the coach, can have a lot of influence but at the end of the day the athletes on the field physically need to win the contests. This situation creates a lot of uncertainty and can lead to stress and obsessive behaviors for the coach.

Even though, by definition, many coaches can be considered workaholics they also can be considered work enthusiasts. According to Spence and Robbins (1992) coaches are workaholics who enjoy their job and can be labeled as enthusiastic workaholics. This means coaches do fall into the category of being workaholics due to the long hours but they also are satisfied with their jobs. The majority of coaches are extremely happy with their profession and feel coaching is a rewarding and life fulfilling job (as cited in Lumpkin & Anshel, 2012). There are many different jobs which are required by a coach and most of which often cause stress. The coaching of the players on the field is the reason they stepped into the profession but coaching on the field is not what the majority hours are spent on. The coaching portion of job seems to cancel out many of the other stressors of the job. All the coaches in Lumpkin's and Anshel's study

(2012) reported that they were extremely satisfied with their chosen career and felt achievement and success. There appears to be an agreement across the board that even with the long hours and large workloads coaches do feel satisfied with their jobs.

The job description to be a collegiate coach should be to coach athletes and win games, but that simplicity of just coaching is not possible in order to properly run a program. Coaches feel the need to constantly be working in order to progress their program and get a step up on the competition. The coaching profession comes with a high amount of stress and long hours but most coaches are happy with their career choice and enjoy the coaching aspect which makes all the other job details worth it.

### **Comparison Of Full Time Versus Part Time Employees**

Coach is a title which has officially stepped out of the athletics world and moved into the business environment. The core principles of coaching have been found to be beneficial in many different work settings. Krazmien and Berger (1997) studied managerial coaching in a hotel setting, During their study they were able to answer some of the misconceptions about coaching. Those misconceptions are that coaching is only reactive, training employees is coaching, and that coaching employees is only a part time job.

The business world has taken certain ideas from coaching and brought them into the workplace. One example of this is that managers preached the need for constant improvement and also consistent performance (Krazmien & Berger, 1997). In order to help employees or players continue their growth while maintaining consistent performance the manager/coach needs to assist them until they can take on greater responsibilities (Krazmien & Berger, 1997). This type of coaching takes an assertive effort over a long period of time. As a situation or problem occurs a coach should try and enable their player to find the solution, solve it, and

grow from it. Coaches need to develop players who are problem solvers on their own. That way when an issue arises in the middle of a game, and there are no timeouts, the players can adjust or fix the problem on their own.

Managers in the business world and head coaches of their athletic programs have many similar parallels. Managers and coaches both need to administratively run their business and at the same time coach their employees or players respectively. Coaching defined by Krazmien and Berger (1997) is being able to consistently give feedback to employees about their performance which clarifies standards but also encourages employees to continue their growth and improvement. "Inherent in the definition of coaching is the element of continuous feedback. Coaching is not a part-time process. Rather it is an ongoing function as managers continually look for opportunities to coach their employees through feedback on performance problems or praise on successful completion of a responsibility" (Krazmien & Berger, 1997 p. 8). Coaching your players or employees is not a task which you can only do halfway or sometimes. The desired outcome, productivity or wins on the field, has a better chance of occurring if the coaching is happening on a consistent basis.

## **Summary**

Coaching in athletics is a multifaceted job which is built on relationships and the amount of time dedicated to work. Coaches tend to work more hours than the typical fulltime employee. There are many details a coach needs to sort out in order to be successful on the field. The main details are building positive trusting relationships with all their athletes, being harmoniously passionate about the sport they are coaching, dedicating many hours to the program for recruiting, scouting, planning, practices, travel etc. An argument could easily be made that in order to successful all head coaches should be hired on a full time basis. This way their complete focus is on their players, program, and building a successful team who will win games on the field.



## **CHAPTER III**

### **METHODS**

This study examined and compared the relationship between the individual Landmark Conference soccer team's success and the employment status of their individual coaching staffs. The information gathered for the comparison was collected throughout the fall of 2014.

#### **Design**

This study had a causal-comparative design. The independent variable in this study was the Landmark Division III soccer coaches' employment statuses. The dependent variable was the overall program success, their winning percentage, during their competitive Fall season. This study used the Equity in Athletics Data Analysis Cutting Tool to gather employment status of the Landmark Conference women's soccer coaches. Team records were gathered on their individual school's athletic website.

#### **Participants**

The participants of this study were the Landmark Conference men's and women's soccer coaches and their respective men's and women's soccer teams. The Landmark Conference consists of eight women's soccer teams and nine men's teams: Catholic University of America, Drew University, Elizabethtown College, Goucher College, Juniata College, Moravian University, Susquehanna University, the University of Scranton and the ninth team on the men's side is Merchant Marine.

### **Instrument**

This study did not require an instrument but used two websites to gather the necessary information. The first website was the location of the Equity in Athletics Data Analysis Cutting Tool. The tool allows a person to look up any NCAA athletic team and research their financial information. The second website was each individual teams' athletic website where their competition records are provided.

### **Procedure**

The first step was to go on the Equity in Athletics Data Analysis Cutting Tool website. Here each Landmark Conference women's soccer team will be looked up. The information being gathered is the number of coaches on staff and the work status of those respective coaches. The second step is to go to the individual athletic websites and find out how they performed during their competitive seasons. Once all this information is gathered the winning percentages will be compared against the status of the coaching staffs.

## CHAPTER IV

### RESULTS

Data was collected for each soccer program, men's and women's, in the Landmark Conference. The schools included Catholic University, Drew University, Goucher College, Juniata College, Moravian College, Scranton University, and Susquehanna University. The employment status of each coach on the individual coaching staffs and their respective win percentages were accounted for over the last four years.

Table 1:

Men's Team Coaching Staff: Shown by Year, by Institution, and by Employment (Paid (Yes)/Volunteer) (no)

YEAR	CATHOLIC		DREW		GOUCHER		JUNIATA		MORAVIAN		SCRANTON		SUSQUEHANA		TOTAL CONFERENCE		
	FT	PT	FT	P T	FT	PT	FT	PT	FT	PT	FT	PT	FT	PT	FT	PT	TOTAL
2010	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	2	0	1	1	8	6	14
2011	1	1	1	2	1	1	2	0	1	1	2	0	2	0	10	5	15
2012	1	1	1	2	1	1	2	0	1	1	2	0	2	0	10	5	15
2013	1	1	1	2	1	1	2	0	1	1	2	0	2	0	10	5	15

Table 2:

Men's team Coaching Staff: Shown by Year, by Institution, and by Employment (Paid/Volunteer)

Year	CATHOLIC		DREW		GOUCHER		JUNIATA		MORAVIAN		SCRANTON		SUSQUEHANNA		TOTAL CONFERENCE		
	Y	N	Y	NO	Y	NO	Y	NO	YES	N O	YES	N O	YES	NO	PAID	VOLUNTEER	TOTA L
2010	2	2	2	1	2	2	2	0	2	1	2	3	2	1	14	10	24
2011	2	2	3	0	2	2	2	0	2	1	2	2	2	1	15	8	23
2012	2	2	3	1	2	2	2	2	2	1	2	2	2	1	15	11	26
2013	2	2	3	1	2	2	2	2	2	1	2	3	2	1	15	12	27

Table 3:

Women’s Team Coaching Staff: Shown by Year, by Institution, and by Status (FullTime vs PartTime)

YEAR	CATHOLIC		DREW		GOUCHER		JUNIATA		MORAVIAN		SCRANTON		SUSQUEHANA		TOTAL CONFERENCE		
	FT	PT	FT	PT	FT	PT	FT	PT	FT	PT	FT	PT	FT	PT	FT	PT	TOTAL
2010	0	2	2	0	1	2	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	7	8	15
2011	0	2	2	0	1	2	2	0	1	1	2	0	2	0	10	5	15
2012	0	2	2	0	1	1	2	0	1	1	1	1	2	0	9	5	14
2013	0	2	2	0	1	2	2	0	1	1	1	1	2	0	9	6	15

Table 4:

Women’s team Coaching Staff: Shown by Year, by Institution, and by Employment (Paid/Volunteer)

Year	CATHOLIC		DREW		GOUCHER		JUNIATA		MORAVIAN		SCRANTON		SUSQUEHANA		TOTAL CONFERENCE		
	YES	NO	Y	N	Y	NO	Y	NO	YES	NO	YES	NO	YES	NO	Paid	Volunteer	Total
2010	2	3	2	0	3	0	2	0	2	1	2	1	2	1	15	6	21
2011	2	2	2	1	3	0	2	0	2	1	2	0	2	1	15	5	20
2012	2	2	2	1	2	2	2	0	2	1	2	0	2	1	14	7	21
2013	2	2	2	1	3	2	2	0	2	1	2	2	2	1	15	9	24

Table 5:

## Correlations between Team Record and Full-Time and Total Coaching Staff

	Team Record (Per cent wins)	
	Mean	SD
Men's Team Full-Time Coaches		
1	48.24	18.03
2	54.76	17.56
Men's Team Total Coaches		
1	NA	
2	41.67	11.78
3	50.68	22.21
4	52.01	11.65
5	48.86	14.09
Women's Team Full-Time Coaches		
0	47.28	13.27
1	44.96	16.27
2	46.31	22.02
Women's team Total Coaches		
2	54.19	13.36
3	38.40	18.75
4	57.40	15.40
5	39.44	7.86

Correlations between the total number of coaches on staff and the per cent of games won during a season for both men's and women's teams were not significant ( $r=0.05$  for women's teams and  $0.12$  for men's teams). Correlations between the number of full-time coaches and the per cent of games won during a season for both men's and women's teams were not significant ( $r = 0.091$  for women's teams and  $r=0.04$  for men's teams). There appears to be a slight positive relationship between size of coaching staff and wins. However, because of the limited number of teams involved (seven) and the lack of variation among the teams in coaching staff size, it is not possible to determine a relationship.

## **CHAPTER V**

### **DISCUSSION**

For this study the null hypothesis that there is no statistically significant correlation between having a full time coaching staff and their team's win percentage was supported.

#### **Implications of Results**

The results of this study show that there is no significant relationship between a team's success, the number of coaches and the work status of those coaches. This type of information could potentially help athletic directors when making decisions to add more fulltime coaching positions. If there is not a positive relationship between having fulltime assistant coaches and a team's success in win percentage then it may not be worth the investment of adding more fulltime positions.

#### **Threats to the Validity**

Athletics are very complex and have many parts involved which can help contribute to an individual team's success or failure. Some examples of the different variables are roster size, injuries of players, quality of the athletes, quality of the coach(s), different training styles, team culture, the opposing team etc. All these different types of factors can directly or indirectly affect a team's overall success during a season. The coaching staff itself definitely can influence a team in a positive or negative way but that influence has its limitations, especially during a game. During competition itself the players are expected to take what the coaches have taught them during the training sessions and apply it to their performance.

Even though this study was limited to the Landmark Conference, which includes teams from similar schools, each individual team and program have the potential to be completely different from season to season which makes the threats to validity significant. If this study were to be

done in the future it could possibly be more accurate to look at goal differential throughout each season instead of win and loss percentage.

### **Connections to Previous Studies**

There was a recent study which looked at the team's overall diversity and their success. Though the studies are not an exact match, they are both attempting to link one aspect of a soccer team to overall team success. Ingersoll, Malesky, & Saiegh (2014) used statistics and data from the UEFA Champions League tournament from years 2003 through 2013. The researchers wanted to discover if there would be a link between diversity and group performance. The tool which this study used was to determine team success was goal differential. Goal differential is the number of goals scored minus goals conceded. At the end of the study it was determined that there was a positive correlation between high team diversity and overall team performance. The teams whose rosters were composed of mostly one country and did not bring in a variety of international talent were not as successful as teams with high diversity.

### **Implications for Future Research**

For future studies, it could be suggested to use goal differential and a strength of schedule tool, instead of win loss percentage, to measure team success. The sport of soccer does not produce many high scoring games. The difference between a team winning and losing could be one small success or mistake which potentially makes win and loss percentage not an accurate portrayal of a team's quality. A high quality team may lose some games throughout their season but should not lose by a high margin. Goal differential and strength of schedule could potentially be a better indicator because they are more forgiving than the blunt results of a win or loss. For example, a team could be playing many high level teams and losing by a small margin then be

compared to a team who has been playing many low level teams and only winning by a small margin.



### **Overview**

Many factors within an individual athletic team can affect their overall success or failure during each season. This study found that the number of coaches who are hired on a full time basis is not a significant factor in the win and loss results. Although this study did not provide a clear outcome on what factors help a team's success more studies can be done on the factors listed as threats to the validity.



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