

# Challenges, Current Status and Prospects of Leadership Styles and Team Cohesion in Male Football Players of Ethiopian Public Higher Institutions

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## Abstract

The purpose of this research was to investigate the challenges, current status and prospects of Leadership Styles and Team Cohesion in Male Football players of Ethiopian Public Higher Institutions in Adama Science and Technology institute by 2015 GC. A cross sectional research design was employed to conduct the study. In this research, 265 Ethiopian public higher institutions were determined through simple random sampling technique. As a data gathering instrument, a standard questionnaire was administered for leadership scale for sport and group environment questionnaire. Descriptive statistics mainly Mean, standard deviation and Pearson product moment correlation, were used to analyze the data at ( $p < 5\%$ ). The most recurrent and persistent coaching leadership style was training and instruction leadership style. There is a positive and significant relationship between social cohesion and training and instruction, positive feedback, social support and democratic behavior styles. The result is consistent with task cohesion of football players. Thus, Ethiopian higher public institutions football coaches may use all leadership styles except autocratic leadership styles. Then social as well as task cohesion of the football players can be developed through the above variety of leadership styles.

**Keywords:** Football, Leadership styles and Team cohesion

## Introduction

Coach's coaching behaviors and leadership styles have great influence on their team, and have a great effect on the performance of their athletes (Rahim & Misagh, 2009). It is clear that, coaches are responsible for the whole development of athletes and to adjust their playing performance in the climax level to realize the predetermined objectives. They know exactly how to plan and teach athletes to try hard in compliance with the rules of the game (Sedighe & Omid, 2010). In the support of the above fact, no one player cannot be agitated from the sanctioned rules, this can be controlled by the sport specific governing bodies, FIFA (Federation de international football association) in football case.

However, coaching is much more than what a coach tells athletes to do; it would rather have many qualities and tasks to be done. According to Anshel (2003) coaching is defined as a behavioral process in which a coach pressures athletes to perform their desired responses. In this connection Carron (2002) believe that coaching differs considerably from any other jobs. The same author goes to add that, it is a hard, expectation-generating profession, which requires a variety of special skills not only fundamental techniques rather it has a dynamic game strategy. One important aspect of coaches' decision-making is the right selection of coaching styles and methodology, i.e. the ways of making decisions, selecting learnt skills and strategies, managing training and competition, maintaining team discipline, assigning roles and positions to athletes in the decision-making process as a democratic coach, making efforts to satisfy athletes' needs and creating an appropriate motivational climate and team cohesion (Chang, Duck & Brodia, 2006).

Even though there have been extensive studies on coaching styles, but none alone leads to desirable success (Chelladurai, 1990; Moradi, 2004; Turman, 2006 & Nazarudin, 2009). Similarly, Chelladurai et al. (1983) for the first time found that outstanding athletes cared more about gaining knowledge from their coach than maintaining personal communication with him, although young and less advanced athletes need, in fact, more emotional support. Therefore, when adopting an appropriate leadership style, coaches should always consider athletes' emotional needs and team cohesion. During training or competition, many situations require crucial leadership which encompasses control of information and guidance. In most sports situations, the coach makes the final decision and can obtain much information during players' training or rest period.

As processes affecting team cohesion and solidarity have always been taken into consideration by sport psychologists, who believe that setting a common goal on which the group's efforts can be focused is vital for success. The feeling of togetherness or group cohesion is considered as a key feature of any team. Gardner et al. (1996) and Rang (2002), found that in team sports (football) success is achieved when team members work together in an effective and coordinated manner. In favor of the above study, Carron (1982) believes that cohesion is a dynamic process manifesting itself in the group's tendency to pursue their common goals and objectives in a cohesive manner.

According to the study carried out by, Widmeyer, Brawley & Carron (1992) and Carron et al. (2002) in their review of over 30 studies on relationships between cohesion and performance, found that 83 percent of the

reviewed studies showed there was a strong, significant and positive correlation between cohesion and performance, and that teams with a high level of group cohesion achieved high performance results. Another study carried out by, Chelladurai et.al. (1980) on coaching revealed that there are five leadership styles: training and instruction, democratic, autocratic, social support, and positive feedback. By the same continuum, Yuosof (2007) revealed a significant relationship between the coach's behavior and team cohesion, and also showed that coaches who demonstrated democratic, training and instruction, social support and positive feedback leadership styles, tended to have athletes with higher group cohesion levels on their teams.

A study carried out by Ramezaninezhad et.al (2009) demonstrated that soccer coaches follow more the leadership style of training and instruction and less the democratic leadership style, and that there were significant differences between leadership styles of coaches of the Iranian football premier league. In addition, task and social cohesion was shown to have a significant positive correlation with the training and instruction, democratic, social support and positive feedback leadership styles, and a negative one with the autocratic leadership style.

In line with the above study in Ethiopian premier league football players, Sisay and Baboo (2012) found that, task cohesion had a statistically significant positive relationship with training and instruction, democratic and social support while autocratic and feedback leadership style had a non significant negative and positive relationship respectively. The same author goes to add that, the soccer coach in Ethiopia exhibited training and instruction leadership style more than the others style followed by the democratic style and social support while the positive feedback and autocratic style were the least ones.

Determining the good coach Leadership styles could be the one factor for having best team cohesion and observing the team success. However, understanding of team cohesion in Ethiopian clubs and national team, most specifically in Ethiopian higher public institutions male football team coaches are at grass root level. Due to lack of detecting the good leadership style, majority of the country's coach face a problem of disturbed team cohesion. Even if the coaches have technically disciplined players, they are not successful at most tournaments as expected and they are unable to secure consistent success. To tackle this problem the coaches need to choose one of the styles of leadership which can be the best fit for their players to realize the predetermined objectives. In line with this, Coaches need to be flexible in order to influence an athlete's perception of control. For example, the adoption of a collaborative style, if used appropriately, could facilitate confidence to achieve shared goals and allow the coach to provide contingent reinforcement and informative feedback. Ensuring effective social support to the athlete also serves as an important source of confidence in terms of his or her perception of the resources available to cope with the various demands of competitive sport (Murray, 2008). Therefore, the purpose of the research was to investigate the challenges, status and prospects of leadership styles and team cohesion of Ethiopian higher public institutions male football teams.

### **Research question**

1. What was the current status of leadership styles and team cohesion in Ethiopian public higher institutions?
2. What was the most frequently used type of leadership styles in male football players of Ethiopian public higher institutions?
3. What was the most prevalent type of team cohesion in male football players of Ethiopian public higher institutions?
4. Was there a significant relationship between leadership styles and team cohesion in male football players of Ethiopian public higher institutions?
5. What were the challenges and possible solutions of coach leadership styles male football players of Ethiopian public higher institutions?

### **Objectives of the study**

#### **General Objective**

The general objective of the research was to investigate the challenges, current status and prospects of leadership styles and team cohesion in male football players of Ethiopian public higher institutions. In doing so, the research will be carried out during 8<sup>th</sup> all Ethiopian public higher institutions football festival at Adama science and technology University.

#### **Specific Objectives**

- To determine the most frequently used type of coaches' leadership styles in male football players of Ethiopian public higher institutions.
- To determine coaches' leadership styles and team cohesion of Ethiopian public higher institutions male football players.
- To explain the significance difference between coach leadership styles and team cohesion in male football players of Ethiopian public higher institutions.

- To describe the socio demographic variables and its association with the current status of leadership styles and team cohesion.
- To identify the challenges of coach leadership styles and suggests possible solutions in male football players of Ethiopian public higher institutions.

### **Significance of the study**

The attainments of the aforementioned objectives were important for the investigation of team success and for future adjustment/right approach of the team journey and determination of their success. This is through determining/quantifying the relationship between the current status of leadership styles and team cohesion in male football players of Ethiopian public higher institutions, the study is expected to generate pertinent information for different stakeholders.

Sport administrators, including coaches also require information on the contributions of leadership styles for team cohesion made by different researcher. It is believed that information which will be generated through this study will help coaches to justify whether or not further interventions are needed.

## **RESEARCH METHODS**

### **Description of the study area**

The study was conducted in Adama Science and Technology University (ASTU), since the university is representative of all Ethiopian higher public institutions for organizing inter-collegiate tournament. Five years later, the university once again changed its name to (ASTU). Currently, the university is located in two different towns in Adama, where the main campus is located, and Asella, and the two different campuses hosting the School of Agriculture and School of Health Sciences, respectively. Moreover, ASTU is enrolling many Programs to produce skilled professionals in every discipline. From which, sport science department is one of the programs that produce sport specialist in the country. And also the University will be hosted the eighth Ethiopian higher public institutions.

### **Study design and period of study**

A cross-sectional study design was employed in order to determine the current status of leadership styles and team cohesion in Ethiopian public universities male football teams. This study was carried out during the 8<sup>th</sup> all-Ethiopian public Universities sport festival, hosted in 2015 G.C by Adama University- Oromia regional state-Ethiopia.

### **population of the study**

The population of the present research consisted of all male football player students (N= 850) those who were represent 34 public university teams.

### **Inclusion criteria:**

- All male football competing teams, at 8<sup>th</sup> Ethiopian public higher institutions sport festival.

### **Exclusion criteria:**

- In 8<sup>th</sup> Ethiopian higher institutions sport festival those who do not have male football team.

### **Sample size and sampling techniques**

Two stage random sampling techniques were employed in this study. First, from the total 34 participant public universities 50 % of the university representatives were randomly drawn; that was, 17 universities. Then via using sample size determination formula (Daniel, 1999), 17 universities per- university 16 football players were selected. (20-25 players were expected in each university squad). This was done with the intention to come across the number of respondents determined before (n=265).

Therefore, 265 participants of male football players were divided by 17 participant universities to allocate based on proportional method, 16 participant male football players were drawn from each selected participant universities.

### **Data collection Instruments**

Two sets of questionnaires were employed to determine the relationship between leadership styles and team cohesion as data gathering instrument. Leadership scale for sports (LSS)-Measures five dimensions of leadership behavior: training and instruction, democratic behavior, autocratic behavior, social support and positive feedback. Each dimension is scored on a 5-point Likert-type scale ranging from “always” to “never”. The psychometric properties of the LSS have been demonstrated in several studies (see for a review, Celladurai, 1990). Group Environment Questionnaire (GEQ) - is developed by Carron, Widmeyer and Bradley (1985). The GEQ, which assess two dimensions of group cohesion: task cohesion and social cohesion, contains 18 items (task cohesion –

9 items, social cohesion – 9 items), scored on a 9-point Likert scale. Each item is either positively stated or negatively stated. The score for each category was calculated by summing the indicated values and dividing it by the number of items in a given category. Using Cronbach’s alpha, the reliability coefficient of the questionnaire were calculated. And both of the instruments are applied in Ethiopian premier league football club and had strong internal consistency (Sisay et al., 2012).

### Pilot test

Pilot test were administered on Jimma university football club by 2013/2014, to endorse new information and to modify the questionnaire (Dagne & Abera, 2014). And also, the reliability of the questionnaire was estimated by cronbach alpha. After the pilot study has been conducted, leadership scale for sport (LSS) and Group environment questionnaire (GEQ) were 0.87 and 0.92, respectively. This result was correspondent with the previous study of the result and further the items were modified based on the result found. The researcher was used the previous result since it has administered on Ethiopian higher institution level. Secondary data was taken from published and unpublished sources. Moreover, recorded data were used to supplement the data collected through questionnaire.

### Procedures of data collection

The researcher was recruited six data collectors of sport professionals from different sport science departments of Ethiopian public higher institutions via rank of technical assistant. Even if the time bound for the sport festival is fifteen days, eighteen Ethiopian public higher institutions football teams were discarded from the competition within a week. So that, this teams were withdrawn themselves from the competition immediately and unable to fulfill the questionnaire, because they lose interest. Then training was given regarding the subject matter of the questionnaires and how they are proceeding to the next step. The questionnaires were filled by self administered manner.

### Methods of data Analysis

The collected data were analyzed in both descriptive statistics. From descriptive statistics mean, standard deviation will be used because they can show individual scores on the plot. Pearson product moment correlation coefficient is the major analysis because scale of measurement is interval and shows the relationship between variables. SPSS (statistical package for social science) version 20 Software was employed for the analysis of the data.

### Ethical Considerations

The purpose of the study was explained to study participants in order to get informed verbal consent. Then an informed verbal consent was received from each study subjects and anyone who was not willing to take part in the study had the full right to exclude himself/herself. To ensure confidentiality of respondents, their names were not being registered on the questionnaire.

### Result

Based on the research questions of the study, data were collected from Ethiopian public higher universities male football players in February 2015 GC, played in Adama science and Technology University (ASTU), where sport festival of all Ethiopian public higher universities hosted. The total of 265 questionnaires was distributed across the sample respondents of university football players, 230 Of the questionnaires were filled by the respondents and collected.

**Table 1: Demographic variables of football players**

	Variables	Age	Player’s experience
Players (N=230)	M	22.02	1.87
	SD	2.051	.944

Note: M=mean, SD=Standard deviation

As table 1 depicts that, Ethiopian public higher university football players age of the mean score were found (M=22.02, SD= ±2.051) and the playing experiences of football players were (M=1.87, SD= ±.944). This shows that, there was only 2 age difference between those participants of Ethiopian public higher university teams. The deviation was not seen as a significant factor for accepting the type of leadership styles and put effect on the creation of best team cohesion. With regard to the player’s experience, there was not more than 1 year experience found between Ethiopian public higher university teams male football players.

**Table 2: Means and standard deviations scores of leadership scale for sport (LSS)**

<b>Coaching leadership styles</b>		
players (N=230)	Mean	Standard deviation
Trai.	46.604	11.115
Demo.	32.543	7.506
Posfed.	18.352	4.283
Socsup.	27.943	6.892
Aut.	17.295	4.674

Note: Trai= Training and Instruction; Demo=Democratic; Posfed=positive; Socsup= social support; Aut= Autocratic.

As table 2 depicted that, the highest mean score displayed by the football players were training and instruction (M=46.604, SD= ±11.115) followed by democratic behavior (M=32.543, SD= ±7.506), social support (M=27.943, SD= ±6.892), positive feedback (M=18.352, SD= ±4.283) and Autocratic leadership style (M=17.295, SD= ±4.674).

**Table 3: Means and standard deviations for Group environment questionnaire (GEQ)**

Players (n=230)	<b>Team cohesion</b>	
	Tcohesion	Scohesion
Mean	34.1087	37.8217
Standard deviation	7.94476	7.61683

Note: Tcohesion= Task Cohesion; Scohesion= Social Cohesion.

As table 2 shown that, the social cohesion were found to be (M=37.8217, SD= ±7.61683) and followed by task cohesion (M=34.1087, SD= ±7.94476). It clearly indicated that social cohesion was high in Ethiopian public higher university male football teams. This explained that instead of prioritizing their task cohesion, they gave too much emphasis for their intimate relationship with their friends of the team.

**Table 4: Pearson product moment correlation between coaches' leadership styles with team cohesion dimensions**

(n=230)	<b>Coaching leadership styles</b>				
	Trai.	Demo	Posfed	Socsup	Aut
Tcohesion	.124*	.064 *	.279*	.211*	.059
Sig.	.030	.034	.002	.011	.065
Scohesion	.240*	.193*	.326*	.364*	.073
Sig.	.000	.002	.000	.000	.069

\* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (1-tailed)

Note: Tcohesion= Task Cohesion; Scohesion= Social Cohesion, Trai= Training and Instruction; Demo=Democratic; Posfed=positive; Socsup= social support; Aut= Autocratic.

As Table 4 shown that, team cohesion with training and instruction, democratic leadership styles, positive feedback and social support was, .124, .064, .279 and .211, respectively. However, task cohesion with Autocratic leadership style was .059. And also social cohesion with training and instruction, democratic leadership styles, positive feedback and social support was, .240, .193, .326 and .364, respectively. However, social cohesion with autocratic leadership style was .073.

**Table 5: Correlation between team cohesion and socio demographic variables**

(n=230)	<b>Socio demographic variables</b>	
	Agefpl	yearfpl
Tcohesion	.019	.075
Sig.	.779	.258
Scohesion	-.081	-.031
Sig.	.222	.645

\* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (1-tailed)

Note: Tcohesion= Task Cohesion; Scohesion= Social Cohesion, Agefpl = Age of football players yearfpl = Year of football players.

As Table 5 shown that, task cohesion with age and year of football players were .019 and .075, respectively. Social cohesion with age and year of football players were, -.081 and -.031, respectively.

**Table 6 Correlation with socio demographic variables with coaching leadership styles**

socio-d	Coaching leadership styles				
	Trai.	Demo	Posfed	Socsup	Aut
Agefpl	-.138*	-.058	-.118-.014	.039	
Sig.	.036	.385	.075	.835	.557
yearfpl	-.075	.083	-.030	-.029	.097
Sig.	.258	.211	.653	.666	.144

\* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (1-tailed)

Note: Agefpl = Age of football players, yearfpl = Year of football players, Trai= Training and Instruction; Demo=Democratic; Posfed=positive; Socsup= social support; Aut= Autocratic, socio-d= socio demographic variables.

As table 6 shown that, age of football players with Training and Instruction, Democratic, positive, social support and Autocratic were, -.138, -.058, -.118, -.014 and .039, respectively. Year of football players with Training and Instruction, Democratic, positive, social support and Autocratic were, -.075, .083, -.030, -.029 and .097, respectively.

### Discussion

Based on the findings of the study, Ethiopian public higher institutions male football team coaches' were mostly use training and instruction leadership style. In which football coaches rely on technical training for the university football players. The data which has been found from the present study is compatible with research findings such as Jabal Ameli(2009), Kuran, *et al* (2008), Yousefi(2007), Hosseini(2007), Riemer and Chelladurai(1995), Serpa(1999), Tsutsumi(2000) and Nazarudin(2009). By the same manner, Chelladurai and Carron (1983), asserted that top class players were gave emphasis for coaches' knowledge level than personal communication with players. As evidence showed that elite coaches' can be fruitful in terms of success, if they have trained athletes properly.

With respect to, team cohesion by considering the mean of the two dimensions high value in social cohesion. Which is consistent with the corresponding authors, Peace and Kozub(1994), Murray(2006) and Ramzaninezhad and Hosseini(2009). The significance of group integration and cohesion infer that every player in a team has a great commitment for personal foul or mistake which is committed in a competition or training. For the sake of achieving team goal, individual players particularly are expected to inter-act each other socially. Most often the performance of the team as a whole may decrease or beaten by the opponent team. So, they are ready to accept positive or negative feedback from the outside environment. Thus, football coaches' are not the only subject to be responsible for the failure of the team performance.

Carron *et al.* (1985) found that long-term affiliation of players with the rest players, team practices and dedication to group goals lead to more team task cohesion. Therefore, football coaches' need to arrange the training session in a way that to realize, group task cohesion. One of the strategies could be to give emphasis for allowing enough time to practice together. This enables players to stay more collectively and develop their skill of play. With respect to reinforcement, coaches' never isolate an individual player. At the time of good effort the coach should provide with immediate feedback, so does for punishment. If the above ideas are respected by the coach, it can enhance performance of the players as a whole. By the same token, football coaches' should establish intimate relationship with his players. Therefore, it enhances the performance of a team social cohesion.

Concerning the relationship between coach leadership styles and team cohesion, the present research indicated that a positive and significant relationship between training and instruction, democratic behavior and positive feedback styles. But there was no significant relationship between task cohesion and social support and autocratic style of leadership. The same finding has got with social cohesion. It had positive and significant relationship between training and instruction, democratic behavior positive feedback styles. Research results by Moradi(2004) and Ramzaninezhad and Hosseini (2009) confirmed that there was a positive and significant relationship between task cohesion and training and instruction, democratic behavior and positive feedback styles.

All of the findings done by the above authors showed that, there is a positive and significant relationship between social cohesion and training and instruction, positive feedback, social support and democratic behavior styles. In favor of the above findings, Mohades, Ramzaninezhad, *et al.* (2011) added that there was a positive and significant relationship between training and instruction and positive feedback leadership styles. In addition to this, Sisay and Syam (2012) studied on Ethiopian premier league match and found that, there was a positive and significant relationship between training and instruction and democratic behavior. All of the above findings are consistent with the present research findings.

While, there was no significant relationship between autocratic behavior and social support with task cohesion. Probably the reason was participant football players were low skill level for the sport festival. Even if the participation was recognized by the sport commission of the country, the tournament was not proceeding to

another level of competition. Thus, participant players may get lost their interest.

### Summary

The purpose of the current study is to examine the Challenges, Current status and prospects of Leadership Styles and Team Cohesion in Male Football players of Ethiopian Public Higher Institutions in Adama Science and Technology institute by 2015 GC. In this research a total of 265 sample respondents were used to fill the questionnaire and they have drawn through random sampling technique. The present research has employed a descriptive survey to conduct the study and standard questionnaire of Leadership scale for sport (LSS) and Group environment questionnaire for team cohesion. The questionnaires were administered previously by Ethiopian research scholar. With regard to demographic variables, there was only 2 age difference between those participants of Ethiopian public higher university teams.

The deviation was not seen as a significant factor for accepting the type of leadership styles and put effect on the creation of best team cohesion. With regard to the player's experience, there was not more than 1 year experience found between Ethiopian public higher university teams male football players. Regarding, Means and standard deviations scores of leadership scale for sport (LSS), the highest mean score displayed by the football players were training and instruction ( $M=46.604$ ,  $SD= \pm 11.115$ ) followed by democratic behavior ( $M=32.543$ ,  $SD= \pm 7.506$ ), social support ( $M=27.943$ ,  $SD= \pm 6.892$ ), positive feedback ( $M=18.352$ ,  $SD= \pm 4.283$ ) and Autocratic leadership style ( $M=17.295$ ,  $SD= \pm 4.674$ ). Means and standard deviations for Group environment questionnaire, the social cohesion were found to be ( $M=37.8217$ ,  $SD= \pm 7.61683$ ) and followed by task cohesion ( $M=34.1087$ ,  $SD= \pm 7.94476$ ). It clearly indicated that social cohesion was high in Ethiopian public higher university male football teams. This explained that instead of prioritizing their task cohesion, they gave too much emphasis for their intimate relationship with their friends of the team.

Team cohesion with training and instruction, democratic leadership styles, positive feedback and social support was, .124, .064, .279 and .211, respectively. However, task cohesion with Autocratic leadership style was .059. And also social cohesion with training and instruction, democratic leadership styles, positive feedback and social support was, .240, .193, .326 and .364, respectively. However, social cohesion with autocratic leadership style was .073. Task cohesion with age and year of football players were .019 and .075, respectively. Social cohesion with age and year of football players were, -.081 and -.031, respectively. age of football players with Training and Instruction, Democratic, positive, social support and Autocratic were, -.138, -.058, -.118, -.014 and .039, respectively. Year of football players with Training and Instruction, Democratic, positive, social support and Autocratic were, -.075, .083, -.030, -.029 and .097, respectively. In summary, the results of the present study displayed an evidence for the existence of relationship between leadership styles and team cohesion with reference to Ethiopian public higher institution male football teams. And also, there was 14.21% of common factor between coach leadership styles and team cohesion. In the future, scholars are encouraged to examine the leadership styles and team cohesion in all sports.

### Conclusion

Based on the major findings of the study, the most recurrent and persistent coaching leadership style were training and instruction leadership style, in this university level coaches were offering training, team work and coordination exercise without considering other factors of football coaching. Ethiopian public higher institutions football players have strong affiliation with their colleagues of football players. Socio demographic variables of football players were not association with the coaching leadership styles and team cohesion of football players. There is a positive and significant relationship between social cohesion and training and instruction, positive feedback, social support and democratic behavior styles. The result is consistent with task cohesion of football players.

### Recommendation

The purpose of the current study was to point out the challenges, current status and prospects of coach leadership styles and team cohesion in Ethiopian public higher institutions male football teams.

It is strictly forwarded that future researchers' may study on other related ball games and individual sport. And also, researchers' may choose to study on other levels of competition and consider gender of the participant.

Upon the above information, researchers' may alter specific conceptual variables that directly related to coach leadership styles. Giving special attention to the knowledge and skill development of the trainees' and ability of shifting game situation, coaches' should be flexible to use different leadership styles to enhance sense of belongingness in team members and cope up with the participants behavior of a team.

Based on the findings, football coaches' can pep up the level of team cohesion via applying appropriate leadership styles. If Ethiopian public higher institutions male football teams coaches' applying training and instruction, democratic behavior and positive feedback leadership styles, they could have well team spirit.

Plus coaches' may consider the skill level of their trainees' so they should be flexible to fit the best leadership styles. In addition to this, coaches' should understand that every individual player is coming from different culture, so the coach should accommodate the background of the trainees'. Therefore, coaching is a multicultural aspect to treat an individual based on their background.

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