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# The Relationship Between Sunk Costs From The Perspective Of Young Players And Administrative Negotiation Among Youth Football Coaches (Category B)

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**Abstract**

**Objectives.** This study aimed to (1) identify sunk costs of Category (B) coaches from the perspective of young players, (2) identify administrative negotiation practices among Category (B) youth football coaches, and (3) examine the relationship between sunk costs and administrative negotiation.

**Materials and Methods**. A descriptive correlational design was employed. The sample comprised 70 Category (B) football coaches from selected southern governorates, recruited through purposive sampling. Data were collected using two instruments: the Sunk Cost Fallacy Scale (25 items across 5 axes) and the Administrative Negotiation Scale (24 items across 4 axes).

**Results.** Pearson correlation analysis showed a strong positive relationship between administrative negotiation and sunk cost fallacy ($r = 0.832$, $p < 0.05$).

**Conclusions**. Strengthening administrative negotiation is associated with better management of sunk costs in youth football coaching contexts. Federations and clubs may reduce ineffective investment decisions by setting negotiation conditions and monitoring coaching outcomes systematically.

**Keywords:** Sunk Cost; Young Players; Administrative Negotiation; Youth Football Coaches; Category B Coaching.

## Introduction

Sport organizations frequently make decisions about whether to maintain or change coaching staff, allocate budgets, and evaluate performance under uncertainty. In these contexts, sunk costs (irrecoverable investments of time, money, or effort) may bias decisions, encouraging continued investment even when future returns are unlikely.

In youth football, perceptions of results are shaped not only by match outcomes but also by coach behavior, communication, and the broader administrative environment. Administrative negotiation is a practical mechanism through which federations and clubs align interests, define expectations, and create workable conditions for coaching performance.

Accordingly, this study examines the relationship between sunk costs from the perspective of young players and administrative negotiation among Category (B) youth football coaches.

## Research Objectives

1. To identify the sunk cost of Category (B) coaches from the perspective of young players.

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2. To understand the administrative negotiation process with Category (B) youth coaches for young players.

3. To identify the relationship between the sunk cost of Category (B) coaches (from the perspective of young players) and the administrative negotiation process.

## Research Scope

The study focused on Category (B) football coaches in selected southern governorates. The timeframe extended from October 6, 2024 to May 30, 2025. Data were collected primarily at the official headquarters of sports federations and clubs and at selected schools for gifted students.

## Materials and Methods

### Study Participants.

The research population consisted of Category (B) football coaches in selected southern governorates. A purposive sample of 70 coaches was recruited for the main study, and an additional exploratory group of 14 coaches was used to support field procedures and instrument administration. Coaches were eligible if they held Category (B) status and were actively coaching youth teams during the study period.

**Table 1. Sample Distribution**

| No | Governorate | Exploratory Sample (n) | Main Sample (n) |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Maysan | - | 22 |
| 2 | Basra | - | 17 |
| 3 | Dhi Qar | - | 16 |
| 4 | Samawah | - | 15 |
| 5 | Muthanna | 14 | - |
| | Total | 14 | 70 |

### Study Organization.

Two instruments were administered: the Sunk Cost Fallacy Scale (25 items across five axes) and the Administrative Negotiation Scale (24 items across four axes). The instruments were applied to the main sample during the field phase. Personal interviews with specialists were conducted to support methodological decisions and contextual interpretation.

### Statistical Analysis.

Statistical analyses were conducted using SPSS. Descriptive statistics (mean, standard deviation, and percentage) were calculated for each scale. Pearson's correlation coefficient was used to test the relationship between sunk cost fallacy and administrative negotiation. Statistical significance was set at $p < 0.05$ with degrees of freedom (n - 2).

## Results

Table 2 presents the descriptive statistics and the correlation between administrative negotiation and sunk cost fallacy scores in the study sample.

**Table 2. Correlation Between Administrative Negotiation and Sunk Cost Fallacy**

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| Variable | Mean | Standard Deviation | r-value | Sig. |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Administrative negotiation | 95.23 | 8.456 | 0.832 | 0.000 |
| Sunk cost fallacy | 101.27 | 8.376 | — | — |

Significant at $p < 0.05$; degrees of freedom (n - 2) = 68.

## Discussion

The results show a strong positive association between administrative negotiation and sunk cost fallacy scores ($r = 0.832$, $p < 0.05$). This indicates that negotiation practices are closely linked to how coaching-related investments are perceived and managed.

One practical interpretation is that negotiation helps clarify expectations, define performance indicators, and reduce ambiguity in decision-making. When objectives, timelines, and evaluation criteria are explicit, federations and clubs can better judge whether continued investment is justified.

These findings emphasize the need to strengthen negotiation competencies among administrators responsible for coach selection, monitoring, and contract renewal. Improved negotiation may support rational allocation of resources and prevent escalation of ineffective investments in youth football settings.

## Conclusions

This study examined the relationship between sunk costs (from the perspective of young players) and administrative negotiation among Category (B) youth football coaches using a descriptive correlational approach. The findings revealed a strong positive correlation between the two variables, suggesting that negotiation processes are central to how coaching investments are interpreted and managed. Establishing clear negotiation conditions, monitoring coaching outcomes, and aligning resources with development targets may help reduce ineffective continuation of investment decisions in youth football environments.

## Recommendations

1. Conduct periodic and seasonal evaluations of coaching outcomes to distinguish constructive from ineffective investments and to diagnose shortcomings.
2. Develop comparative selection models for Category (B) coaches based on experience, education, and coaching philosophy.
3. Provide structured training in administrative negotiation for key negotiators to improve decision quality and alignment of expectations.
4. Strengthen negotiation skills for members who exhibit weaknesses in the negotiation process.
5. Conduct related studies to examine additional factors affecting sunk-cost decisions (e.g., organizational support, budget constraints, and player development indicators).

## Acknowledgment

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## Conflict of Interest

The author declares no conflict of interest.

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## Appendix A. Sunk Cost Fallacy Scale

Response options: Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Sometimes (S), Disagree (D), Strongly Disagree (SD).

| No. | Statement | SA | A | S | D | SD |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | 1. Team and Player Management | | | | | |
| 1 | The coach manages the team through collaborative work with the technical director and the administrative staff. | | | | | |
| 2 | The coach prioritizes the quality of players he selects to represent the team. | | | | | |
| 3 | The coach collaborates with the players during training. | | | | | |
| 4 | The coach values the positive social relationships he maintains with the players. | | | | | |
| 5 | The coach works to support players with weaknesses so they can overcome them. | | | | | |
| | 2. Training and Injuries | | | | | |
| 6 | The coach carefully plans and schedules training sessions. | | | | | |
| 7 | The coach carefully manages training loads. | | | | | |
| 8 | The coach avoids sudden increases in training load to prevent injuries. | | | | | |
| 9 | The coach monitors injured players and gradually compensates for their return to training. | | | | | |
| 10 | The coach pays close attention to the players' daily health and reviews their medical records regularly. | | | | | |
| | 3. Tactical Decisions During the Match | | | | | |
| 11 | The coach reads matches accurately and implements the necessary instructions. | | | | | |

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| | |
|---|---|
| 12 | The coach consistently fields the starting players, even in friendly matches. |
| 13 | The coach analyzes the opposing team's matches before our game to identify their strengths and weaknesses. |
| 14 | He works with the analysis team to develop a counter-strategy against the opposing team's dangerous players. |
| 15 | He works to reveal the winning strategies at the opportune moment in the match. |
| | 4. Strategic Planning |
| 16 | The coach, along with his assistant and in collaboration with the club's management, develops the team's strategic plan. |
| 17 | The coach analyzes the players' strengths and weaknesses and incorporates them into the strategic plans. |
| 18 | The coach reviews previous coaches' plans, implementing what works and correcting what's wrong. |
| 19 | The coach develops the team's monthly, seasonal, and annual plans. |
| 20 | The coach pays close attention to the details of training and ensures that contingency plans are in place. |
| | 5. Coach's Personality |
| 21 | The coach maintains emotional composure before and after matches. |
| 22 | He uses his strong personality when speaking with the players. |
| 23 | He answers questions at press conferences while keeping important information confidential. |
| 24 | He believes that one player is the whole team, and everyone is one player. |

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| | |
|---|---|
| 25 | He is strong and does not show fear in upcoming difficult matches. |

## Appendix B. Administrative Negotiation Scale

Response options: Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Sometimes (S), Disagree (D), Strongly Disagree (SD).

| No. | Statement | SA | A | S | D | SD |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | 1. Effective Communication Skills | | | | | |
| 1 | I have the ability to communicate directly with others without hesitation. | | | | | |
| 2 | I am skilled in body language, which helps me understand others. | | | | | |
| 3 | I look the speaker directly in the eye to emphasize that I am engaged and listening attentively. | | | | | |
| 4 | I listen to the speaker without interrupting to fully understand the conversation. | | | | | |
| 5 | I have diverse communication methods. | | | | | |
| 6 | I make a point of contacting others again at the end of every conversation. | | | | | |
| | 2. Persuasion Skills | | | | | |
| 7 | I possess a flexible and smooth communication style, which makes persuasion easier for me. | | | | | |
| 8 | I use polite and respectful language to avoid offending or provoking others and creating animosity. | | | | | |
| 9 | I have a background in psychological theories that help me understand others and are beneficial to my persuasive abilities. | | | | | |
| 10 | I actively study persuasion strategies and techniques. | | | | | |

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| | |
|---|---|
| 11 | I have a sharp intuition that enables me to persuade others effectively. |
| 12 | I have charisma that allows me to make a strong impression in meetings. |
| | 3. Planning |
| 13 | I develop appropriate plans for beginning and ending conversations in meetings that require persuasion. |
| 14 | I make a point of creating time for self-reflection before formal interviews and meetings. |
| 15 | My plans are flexible enough to accommodate any unforeseen circumstances. |
| 16 | I collaborate with team members to review the plans. |
| 17 | I study the plans proposed by management or the group I work with to determine the requirements for implementing them. |
| | 4. Strategic Thinking |
| 18 | I possess the necessary knowledge to develop appropriate strategic plans to persuade others. |
| 19 | I collaborate directly with leaders in the organization, and they do not create barriers to communication. |
| 20 | I take the initiative to propose new mathematical ideas. |
| 21 | I rely on my own insights when observing the external environment. |
| 22 | I tend to use logic in finding solutions to situations. |
| 23 | I value problem-solving by listening to diverse perspectives. |
| 24 | I analyze situations based on their descriptive (theoretical) indicators. |