

**ROLES OF DIFFERENT COACHING STYLES ON THE IMPACT OF TEAM  
AND INDIVIDUAL ATHLETES PERFORMANCE**

**FAVOUR AHEYBOR**

**EDU2102440**

**FACULTY OF EDUCATION**

**UNIVERSITY OF BENIN**

**BENIN CITY**

**NOVEMBER 2025**

**ROLES OF DIFFERENT COACHING STYLES ON THE IMPACT OF TEAM  
AND INDIVIDUAL ATHLETES PERFORMANCE**

**FAVOUR AHEYBOR**

**EDU2102440**

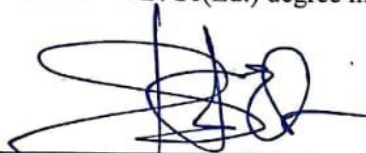
**A RESEARCH PROJECT SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF EDUCATION,  
UNIVERSITY OF BENIN, BENIN CITY, EDO STATE.**

**IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE AWARD  
OF BACHELOR OF SCIENCE (EDUCATION) B.Sc. (Ed.) DEGREE IN HUMAN  
KINETICS AND SPORTS SCIENCE, UNIVERSITY OF BENIN, BENIN CITY.**

**NOVEMBER 2025**

## CERTIFICATION

We, the undersigned verify that this work has carried out by **AHEYBOR FAVOUR** with matric. Number **EDU2102440** of the department of human kinetics and sports science, faculty of Education, University of Benin, Benin city Edo state in partial fulfillment of the requirements of B. Sc(Ed.) degree in Human kinetics and, sports science.

---

**PROF. E. I. AGBONLAHOR**  
Project Supervisor


17-12-25  
Date

---

**DR. R. F. ANI.**  
Project Coordinator

17-12-25  
Date

---

**DR. A. U. ORAKHI**  
Head of Department

17<sup>th</sup> Dec. 2025  
Date



## **DEDICATION**

This research project is dedicated to Almighty God, my constant source of strength and support. He has been my guide, my helper in every moment of need, and the reason I was able to complete my Bachelor's degree at the University of Benin. All glory goes to Him.

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

I am deeply grateful to God Almighty for giving me the strength, guidance, and grace to begin and successfully complete this research work.

My heartfelt appreciation goes to my supervisor, Prof. E. I. Agbonlahor. His fatherly support, clear direction, and constructive corrections shaped this work from start to finish. His academic, moral, and leadership qualities truly inspired me.

I also acknowledge the Head of the Department of Human Kinetics and Sports Science, Dr. A. U. Orakhi, my project coordinator, Dr. R. F. Ani, and all the lecturers in the department. Their teachings, advice, and support contributed greatly to my growth. I am equally grateful to all academic and non-academic staff for their efforts.

To my amazing dad, Jacob Aheybor, and my brother, Joel Osaro Aheybor, thank you for believing in me and for your love, moral support, and financial sacrifices throughout my education. My deep appreciation also goes to my mother and my sisters, Mrs. Justina Ofure Akhile, Mrs. Precious Aheybor Saturday, and Jennifer Aheybor for being a constant source of motivation, encouragement, and love. I truly appreciate you all.

Finally, my sincere gratitude goes to my friends and course mates for their care, support, and presence throughout this journey. Thank you all for making this experience worthwhile. May God bless each and every one of you.

## TABLE OF CONTENT

<b>TITLE</b>	<b>PAGE</b>
TITLE PAGE - - - - -	ii
CERTIFICATION - - - - -	iii
DEDICATION - - - - -	iv
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS - - - - -	v
ABSTRACT - - - - -	viii
<b>CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION</b>	
Background of the Study - - - - -	1
Statement of the Problem - - - - -	4
Research Questions - - - - -	5
Purpose of the Study - - - - -	5
Significance of the Study - - - - -	6
Scope and Delimitation of the Study - - - - -	8
Operational Definition of Terms - - - - -	9
<b>CHAPTER TWO: REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE</b>	
Theoretical Framework - - - - -	12
Concept of Coaching and Coaching Styles - - - - -	21
Relationship Between Coaching Styles and Athlete Performance - - - - -	26
Coaching Styles and Motivation of Athletes - - - - -	28
Coaching Styles and Discipline in Athletes - - - - -	33
Psychological and Emotional Outcomes of Coaching Styles - - - - -	37
Athletes' Perception of Coaches - - - - -	41
Challenges in Coaching in Nigerian Sports Institutions - - - - -	44
Empirical Studies on Coaching Styles and Performance - - - - -	47
Summary of Reviewed Literature - - - - -	59

### **CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

Research Design	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	61
Population of the Study	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	62
Sample and Sampling Technique	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	62
Research Instruments	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	62
Validity of the Instrument	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	62
Reliability of the Instrument	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	62
Method of Data Collection	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	64
Method of Data Analysis	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	64

### **CHAPTER FOUR: DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION**

Data Presentation	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	65
Analysis of Research Questions	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	65
Discussion of Findings	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	69

### **CHAPTER FIVE: SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

Summary of Findings	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	73
Conclusion	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	75
Recommendations	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	76
Suggestions for Further Studies	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	77
REFERENCES	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	78
APPENDIX I	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	84
APPENDIX	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	88

## ABSTRACT

This study examined the **ROLES OF DIFFERENT COACHING STYLES ON THE IMPACT OF TEAM AND INDIVIDUAL ATHLETES PERFORMANCE**, The research specifically explored the most commonly used coaching styles, how these styles influence team dynamics, the impact on individual athletes, athletes' perceptions of their coaches' behaviour, and the coaching styles considered most effective for improving overall performance. A descriptive survey design was adopted, and data were collected from 108 student-athletes using a structured questionnaire. The data were analyzed using frequencies, percentages, weighted means, and standard deviations.

The findings revealed that transformational, democratic, transactional, and athlete-centered coaching styles were the most commonly practiced, while autocratic and laissez-faire styles were used moderately. The results further showed that coaching styles significantly influence team performance by enhancing communication, cooperation, unity, and conflict management. Individual performance was also positively affected, as respondents agreed that supportive coaching methods improved motivation, discipline, confidence, skill development, and concentration. Athletes expressed more positive perceptions toward coaching styles characterized by open communication, encouragement, and emotional support. The study identified transformational, democratic, and athlete-centered coaching styles as the most effective for improving both team and individual performance.

## **CHAPTER ONE**

### **INTRODUCTION**

#### **Background of the Study**

At its most basic level, coaching involves the process of showing, telling, and developing individuals and teams so that they would be able to achieve their goals. In sports, a coach is a person who is the team's leader, mentor, and strategist working out the tide, direction, and team's spirit. By the Martens' definition (2019), the coaching style is a coach's general approach in terms of communicating with and training the athletes. It involves the methods of their communication, their decision-making style, motivational techniques, and disciplinary strategy. The most common coaching styles are autocratic, democratic, and laissez-faire. The autocratic style is strict and focuses on the coach, who makes all the decisions and closely directs athletes' activities. In contrast, the democratic style focuses on athlete participation. It encourages team members to take part in decision-making and engage actively in the training process. The laissez-faire style is non-intrusive. It allows athletes the freedom to practice and play as they choose, with little guidance from the coach. These styles are widely recognized in sports coaching research (Cheon et al., 2020). In addition to these, there are other coaching styles, such as transformational, transactional, and athlete-centered/holistic. Each has its own characteristics and potential effects on athlete performance.

Coaching styles are crucial and a necessity in player development and welfare. These styles can affect so much in the athletes' life like their psychology, their performance, how they behave as a team, and even the speed of recovery from an injury (Becker, 2021). Although intrinsic talent, gear for training, and financial backing are all important, it is surprising that research shows the character and the approach of the coach can be exactly what will make the difference between a team that wins consistently and one that underperforms. To illustrate, Jowett & Cockerill's work (2020) reported that in a situation where a coach is democratic, the athletes were found to be more motivated, while in autocratic leadership, the opposite was true, with some athletes experiencing performance anxiousness. Coaching styles' magnitude and its numerous benefits in the Nigerian sports context, especially in the school and university settings, have not been investigated by researchers as much as is desirable. It is only recently that the topic of coaching styles has become of interest. Historically, more emphasis has been placed on the physical training, funding, and facilities side of the sports industry in Nigeria. The preliminary information shows that coaching is a determining factor in the performance of the students. Judging from the statements of athletes who were interviewed informally and through observation, the coaches were a major root cause of how student performances came out both in team and individual sports. It is reported by many athletes in Nigerian institutions that some coaches motivate them to put in more effort and set higher standards, while others create fear and animosity that result in weaker performances.

Historically, Nigerian sports at the grassroots and tertiary level have produced remarkable talents, many of whom gained international recognition despite limited resources. Unfortunately, inconsistency in coaching quality and style often results in wasted potential. Some athletes lose interest entirely because of coaches who use harsh or demeaning methods. Some people need a supportive and constructive guide in order to prosper. This variation has brought up a question in the minds of many stakeholders: which coaching approach is the most effective and how it can be adapted to sports played both in teams and individually? There is evidence that this is a real concern. As a matter of fact, Ogbonna and Okeke (2021) conducted a survey and observed a lot of university-level athletes in Nigeria who were looked upon by their coaches as amiable and inclusive were among the winners in the intercollegiate tournaments. On the other hand, those who described their coaches as excessively strict or absent-minded often ranked lower in their academic and motivation performance. Furthermore, Okonkwo (2020) finds that team sports like football and basketball are such that they need open communication and confidence to exist between the players and the coach. They can hardly do without the assistance of the coach.

Generally, the progress of individual athletes like sprinters, swimmers, or tennis players is mainly influenced by their coach. Building personal discipline, mental health, and strategic confidence is not possible without the help, correction, and support of the coach. Athletes whose trainers use negative reinforcement or bad communication skills with them will not only struggle with performance anxiety and burnout but also, they might go the extra mile of quitting the sport right there.

Despite the increasing volume of research on coaching styles, there's still a noticeable lack of studies that really dig into how these styles affect both team dynamics and individual athletes in Nigeria's unique setting. Most of the literature out there either comes from outside the country or glosses over the specific social and educational backgrounds of Nigerian athletes. This study steps in to fill that gap, zeroing in on coaching methods within selected Nigerian sports institutions and analyzing their effects on both group and solo athletic performance. The aim is to examine how coaching styles impact discipline, motivation, group dynamics, and overall performance among these athletes.

### **Statement of the Problem**

Despite the increasing importance of sport within Nigerian institutions and the presence of a myriad of talented sportspeople, the majority are underperforming due to the incompatibility of coaching regimes and athlete needs.

Despite facilities, finances, and equipment being faulted for poor sports performance, increasing evidence today points towards the coach's leadership style as being a leading driver of athlete development and success (Becker, 2021). Nigerian students' and university athletes' typical grouses include authoritarian instructions issued without explanation from the coaches, or conversely, no instruction at all.

Previous research studies such as Jowett & Cockerill (2020) and Ogbonna & Okeke (2021) have shown that the behaviour of coaches has a direct impact on athlete confidence, motivation, and competitive orientation. However, not many localized studies have

explored how coaching styles affect team and individual performance within the Nigerian context. More specifically, there are coaches who are not even aware of the psychological effect of their styles because there is little or no formal feedback process from athletes to coaches.

Thus, the research will explain to what extent do different styles of coaching influence team and individual athletes' performance in Nigerian sports institutions?

### **Research Questions**

To guide this research, the following questions have been formulated:

1. What are the most commonly used coaching styles in Nigerian sports institutions?
2. How do different coaching styles influence team athletes' performance?
3. In what ways do coaching styles affect individual athletes' performance?
4. How do athletes perceive and respond to different coaching style?
5. What coaching style can improve both team and individual athletes' performance?

### **Purpose of the Study**

The Purpose of this study is to examine the influence of different coaching styles on the performance of team and individual athletes in selected Nigerian sports institutions.

Specifically, the study seeks to:

- Identify the common coaching styles (e.g., autocratic, democratic, and laissez-faire) used by coaches in Nigerian sports institutions.
- Examine how different coaching styles affect team dynamics, communication, and overall team performance.
- Assess the impact of coaching styles on the motivation, confidence, and performance of individual athletes.
- Investigate athletes' perception and response to different coaching behaviours and how this affects their willingness to engage and compete.
- Bridge the research gap in localized studies by providing empirical evidence on the relationship between coaching style and athlete performance in the Nigerian context.
- Recommend suitable coaching practices that can enhance both individual and team performance across different sports disciplines in Nigerian schools and universities.

### **Significance of the study**

This study is significant because it sheds light on an often-overlooked but very important aspect of sports performance: the influence of coaching styles on athletes. While a lot of attention is usually placed on physical training, equipment, and funding, this research focuses on the human relationship between coaches and athletes, which is equally crucial to success in sports.

First and foremost, coaches stand to benefit from this research. By understanding how their leadership and communication style directly affects athletes' motivation and performance, they can adopt more effective approaches to bring out the best in both team and individual athletes. Whether a coach is autocratic, democratic, or laissez-faire in style, this study provides insights into the psychological and performance outcomes of each method.

Athletes, both at the team and individual level, will also benefit. Many athletes struggle silently under ineffective coaching, often feeling misunderstood or unmotivated. This research gives voice to their experiences and can empower them to engage in more constructive communication with their coaches. It also helps them reflect on which coaching style best supports their personal growth and performance.

Furthermore, the study will be relevant to school administrators, sports directors, and educational policymakers. By presenting data-driven findings on how coaching styles influence sports outcomes, this research can guide policy reforms on coach recruitment, training, and evaluation in Nigerian schools and universities. It may also encourage the introduction of sports psychology and leadership training into coach development programs.

For academic scholars and researchers, this study contributes to the growing body of literature in coaching psychology, sports education, and athlete development, especially in the Nigerian context where such localized studies are limited. It provides a useful

foundation for further research into areas such as gender differences in athlete-coach interaction, coaching ethics, and athlete burnout.

Finally, this project holds personal significance to me as a student and aspiring sports professional. It reflects my curiosity, passion, and desire to improve the quality of coaching and athletic experience in Nigeria. I believe that when the coach-athlete relationship is built on understanding, trust, and effective leadership, sports performance will not only improve, but more athletes will stay committed and motivated to reach their full potential.

### **Scope And Delimitation Of The Study**

This study focuses on examining the influence of different coaching styles on the performance of team and individual athletes within selected Nigerian sports institutions. It is limited to sports activities at the secondary school and tertiary institution levels, where coaching is more structured and athletes actively participate in competitive sports.

The research will cover three main coaching styles: autocratic, democratic, and laissez-faire, as defined in previous literature. It will investigate how these styles impact both team-based sports (such as football, basketball, and volleyball) and individual sports (such as athletics, swimming, and table tennis). Performance will be assessed in terms of motivation, discipline, confidence, communication, and competitive outcomes.

Geographically, the study will be conducted at the University of Benin, where access to both student-athletes and their coaches will be feasible within the available time and

resources. The population will consist of student-athletes aged 15–30 years, their coaches, and in some cases, sports officials or directors who help oversee training and competitions.

Due to time and logistical constraints, the study will not cover professional sports teams, national teams, or private sports academies. Also, only active sports participants will be included in the study non-athlete students or retired athletes will be excluded.

The research instruments will include structured questionnaires, interviews, and observation checklists. Data collected will be analyzed to determine patterns, relationships, and differences in athlete performance as influenced by coaching styles.

### **Operational Definition Of Terms**

To ensure clarity and avoid ambiguity, the following key terms are defined as they are used in the context of this study:

**Coaching Styles:** This refers to the consistent behaviors, methods, and leadership approaches adopted by coaches in guiding and managing athletes. In this study, it specifically refers to autocratic, democratic, and laissez-faire styles as observed in Nigerian school and university sports settings.

**Autocratic Coaching Style:** A strict, coach-centered approach where the coach makes all the decisions, gives commands, and expects total compliance from athletes, often with limited athlete input or feedback.

**Democratic Coaching Style:** A participatory coaching approach that encourages athlete involvement in decision-making. Coaches using this style are more open, supportive, and prioritize communication and motivation.

**Laissez-faire Coaching Style:** A relaxed and hands-off approach where the coach provides minimal guidance or structure, allowing athletes to make their own decisions regarding training and performance.

**Transformational Coaching Style:** A style of coaching focused on creating deep, lasting change by addressing a person's core beliefs, values, and identity.

**Transactional Coaching Style:** A results-oriented approach focused on specific, short-term goals, using a reward-and-punishment system to achieve them through direct instruction and a clear exchange of performance for results.

**Athlete Centered/ Holistic Coaching Style:** A style of coaching that prioritizes an athlete's overall well-being by focusing on their physical, mental, emotional, and social health, in addition to performance.

**Athlete Performance:** This refers to the measurable outcomes of an athlete's physical, psychological, and strategic ability to perform in training or competitive settings. It includes motivation, confidence, discipline, and actual sports results.

**Team Sports:** Sports that involve coordinated group effort and interaction, where players must work together to compete against another group. Examples in this study include football, basketball, and volleyball.

**Individual Sports:** Sports where athletes compete independently and their performance is not dependent on team coordination. Examples include athletics (track and field), swimming, and table tennis.

**Student-Athletes:** Individuals enrolled in educational institutions (secondary schools or universities) who actively participate in structured sports programs and represent their school or institution in competitions.

**Coaches:** Sports instructors or trainers responsible for organizing, leading, and developing athletes. In this study, coaches are limited to those officially recognized within the schools or institutions surveyed.

**Performance Motivation:** The internal drive or enthusiasm that pushes an athlete to train consistently, aim for improvement, and compete at their best level.

**Perception of Coaching:** This refers to how athletes view and interpret their coaches' behaviors, leadership style, communication, and emotional support—either positively or negatively.

## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE**

This chapter is concerned with the review of literature related to the study. The review is done under the following sub-headings:

- Theoretical Framework
- Concept of Coaching and Coaching Styles
- Relationship Between Coaching Styles and Athlete Performance
- Coaching Styles and Motivation of Athletes
- Coaching Styles and Discipline in Athletes
- Psychological and Emotional Outcomes of Coaching Styles
- Athletes' Perception of Coaches
- Challenges in Coaching in Nigerian Sports Institutions
- Empirical Studies on Coaching Styles and Performance
- Summary of Reviewed Literature

#### **Theoretical Framework**

The theoretical framework provides the foundation for understanding the link between coaching styles and athlete performance. It serves as a guide for interpreting how coaches' behaviors influence motivation, discipline, and overall outcomes in both individual and team sports. Theories like the Self-Determination Theory (SDT), the Multidimensional

Model of Leadership in Sport (MML), Social Learning Theory and Transformational Leadership Theory have been widely used in sports science to explain how a coach's actions and style have a direct impact on team performance as well as individual athlete outcomes. By emphasizing the psychological, emotional, and social aspects of coaching practice, these theories help to conceptualize the role of coaching beyond tactical instruction.

### **Self-Determination Theory (SDT)**

Self-Determination Theory (SDT), introduced by Deci and Ryan (1985; 2000) and later expanded upon, is a motivational framework that explains how human behaviour is influenced by the satisfaction of three fundamental psychological needs: autonomy, competence and relatedness. When these demands are fulfilled, athletes are more likely to feel intrinsic drive, determination, and optimal performance (Deci & Ryan, 2000).

Self-determination theory (SDT) holds that an athlete might be inspired by many strategies to improve their performance or to concentrate on learning, problem-solving, and thinking, depending on their personal preferences. The decision to do this is entirely up to the individual. SDT was created by Deci and Ryan (1985, 2000) in order to "provide a unique framework for understanding the numerous motives individuals possess when deciding to participate in physical activities," claim Aicher and Brenner (2015).

According to Deci and Ryan (1985, 2000), intrinsically driven athletes engage in activities for their own enjoyment and satisfaction. Extrinsically motivated athletes seek external rewards for their physical exercise. According to Deci and Ryan (1985), "when people are

intrinsically motivated, they experience interest and enjoyment, they feel competent and self-determining, they perceive the locus of causality for their behaviour to be internal, and in some instances they experience flow" (p.43). According to Horn (2007, p. 132), extrinsic motivation is "engaging in an activity for instrumental reasons" (Vallerand, 1997). Deci and Ryan identified two types of motivation: intrinsic and extrinsic. SDT includes three components: autonomy, competence, and relatedness. Autonomy refers to an athlete's conviction in their ability to choose and endorse an activity. Competence is the notion that an athlete will feel confident in their action. Research suggests that competence is essential for effective behaviour and social interactions (Deci, 1975; Harter, 1978; White, 1959). According to Deci and Ryan (2008), relatedness is an athlete's conviction in the importance of social connections and connection with others. "People who have anything in common, who share common (even unpleasant) experiences, or who simply are exposed to each other frequently tend to form friendships or other attachments" (Baumeister and Leary, 1995; p. 520).

Different coaching styles help or restrict the attainment of these needs. For example, a democratic or athlete-centered coaching method promotes autonomy by allowing athletes to participate in decision-making, promoting creativity, and acknowledging individual perspectives. This increases motivation and strengthens commitment to training and performance (Ryan & Deci, 2017; Smith et al., 2016). On the other hand, an autocratic style that places a high value on power and control might hinder autonomy, resulting in extrinsic rather than intrinsic motivation. While this may create short-term compliance, it

frequently leads to long-term burnout, poor performance, or athlete unhappiness (Pulido et al., 2018).

### **Multidimensional Model of Leadership in Sport (MML)**

The Multidimensional Model of Leadership (MML), introduced by Chelladurai in 1978 and refined in 1990, is among the most commonly utilized frameworks in sports psychology for understanding coaching effectiveness. According to this model, the effectiveness of leadership is influenced by the level of alignment among three different types of leader behaviors:

1. Required behavior (what the situation demands),
2. Preferred behavior (what athletes expect or desire), and
3. Actual behavior (the coach's real actions and style).

When these three dimensions align, athlete satisfaction, motivation, and performance are maximized (Chelladurai & Saleh, 1980).

In team sports, the MML indicates that the effects of a coaching style vary and are influenced by the type of sport, the maturity level of the athletes, and the specific situation (Chelladurai, 2007). For instance, younger or less seasoned athletes might benefit more from an autocratic approach that provides structure and direction, whereas elite or more experienced athletes typically respond more positively to democratic or transformational leadership that acknowledges their independence and tactical insights (Zhang et al., 2019). Empirical evidence supports the relevance of MML to modern coaching. For example, Rieke et al. (2008) found that alignment between the preferred leadership style of athletes

and the actual behavior of coaches improved both the satisfaction and performance outcomes in college teams. Similarly, Toros et al. (2021) demonstrated that inappropriate leadership behaviours as if athletes preferred democratic styles, but received autocratic coaching — led to a decrease in motivation and weakening of team cohesion.

### **Social Learning Theory**

Albert Bandura's Social Learning Theory (1977) emphasizes that human behavior is learned through observation, imitation, and modeling. In the sports context, athletes often adopt behaviors, attitudes, and even emotional responses by observing their coaches. The theory suggests that coaches, as role models, exert significant influence on athletes' learning and performance. For instance, an athlete observing a coach's discipline, resilience, and tactical strategies is more likely to internalize and replicate these traits in competitive settings (Grusec, 1992).

Social Learning Theory also highlights the importance of reinforcement and feedback. Coaches who provide positive reinforcement such as praise or recognition encourage desirable behaviors, while negative reinforcement may discourage unwanted actions. This directly connects to the way coaching styles (autocratic, democratic, laissez-faire) shape athlete motivation and discipline (Cheon, Reeve, & Song, 2020). In Nigeria, where coaches are often regarded as authority figures, the application of Social Learning Theory is particularly relevant in shaping compliance and training culture among athletes (Ogbonna & Okeke, 2021).

## **Transformational Leadership Theories**

Burns (1978) and Bass (1990) initially proposed the idea of transformational leadership. This theory is about how leaders may inspire, encourage, and help their followers grow beyond only giving them rewards and punishments. Transformational leadership involves inspiring, motivating, and intellectually stimulating athletes by focusing on their long-term growth and development. Coaches who adopt this style build strong relationships, foster trust, and encourage athletes to go beyond immediate results toward sustained excellence (Bass & Riggio, 2006). Research has linked transformational coaching to higher levels of intrinsic motivation, confidence, and resilience in athletes (Arthur, Woodman, Ong, Hardy, & Ntoumanis, 2011). Transformational coaching in sports focusses on developing strong emotional bonds, encouraging athletes through a shared goal, and helping them grow and develop as people (Arthur et al., 2017).

## **Application of the Theoretical Framework to Coaching Styles**

The theoretical frameworks discussed earlier provide not only conceptual clarity but also practical pathways for analyzing how coaching styles impact the performance of both individual athletes and teams. Applying Self-Determination Theory (SDT), the Multidimensional Model of Leadership in Sport (MML), Social Learning Theory and Transformational Leadership Theory allows us to understand how diverse leadership approaches associated with athlete mental needs, situational settings, and formative stages. This application highlights why a few coaching styles work better under certain conditions, and why the impact of coaching is rarely uniform across different sporting environments.

## Self-Determination Theory (SDT)

SDT is highly relevant in explaining how coaching styles influence motivation and performance outcomes. Coaches who adopt democratic or athlete-centered approaches support athletes' needs for autonomy, competence, and relatedness. For instance, when athletes are involved in tactical decisions and feel that their input is valued, they are more likely to internalize training goals and sustain high levels of motivation (Ryan & Deci, 2017).

On the other hand, an autocratic coaching style may undermine autonomy by restricting athlete choice, which can lead to controlled forms of motivation and, in the long term, lower engagement. However, in high-pressure contexts, autocratic coaching may serve short-term goals by maintaining discipline and ensuring focus. Pulido et al. (2018) found that excessive controlling behaviors from coaches were linked to athlete burnout, while autonomy-supportive approaches were associated with resilience and long-term performance sustainability.

SDT also explains why transformational coaching behaviors (e.g., individualized consideration) are effective, as they satisfy the psychological need for relatedness and competence. Thus, SDT helps clarify the motivational mechanisms through which different coaching styles translate into performance outcomes.

## Multidimensional Model of Leadership in Sport (MML)

The MML framework demonstrates how the effectiveness of a coaching style depends on the alignment between athletes' preferences, situational demands, and the coach's actual

behaviors. For example, a democratic coaching style is often effective with mature and highly skilled teams because these athletes prefer autonomy and are capable of co-creating strategies. Research by Toros et al.(2021) showed that athletes' satisfaction and performance improved when there was congruence between their preferred leadership style and the coach's actual behaviors.

Conversely, a more autocratic style may be necessary when working with novice teams, especially in time-critical situations. In such contexts, inexperienced athletes may require direct instruction, discipline, and structure to prevent confusion and ensure task completion. Chelladurai's model thus explains why no single coaching style is universally superior; instead, the effectiveness of a style depends on the fit between context, athlete maturity, and leadership behavior.

Furthermore, the MML highlights the team dimension of coaching. For example, democratic leadership fosters team cohesion and shared responsibility, which enhances collective performance, while transactional or autocratic leadership might suppress individuality but promote short-term efficiency in tightly structured environments (Rieke et al., 2008).

### Social Learning Theory

Beyond modeling and reinforcement, Social Learning Theory (Bandura, 1977) emphasizes the role of vicarious learning and self-efficacy. Athletes not only imitate coaches' behaviors but also learn by observing how others are rewarded or punished. This has strong implications for coaching styles:

### Autocratic Style:

Coaches who punish mistakes harshly (e.g., shouting or benching an athlete) send a signal to the team that errors are unacceptable. While some athletes may learn discipline through fear, others may internalize anxiety and avoid risks, lowering creativity and confidence.

### Democratic Style:

Coaches provide opportunities for peer learning. For example, in a Nigerian athletics relay team, when one athlete is praised for consistent baton exchanges, others observe and strive to replicate that technique. This style reinforces positive observational learning, encouraging self-efficacy.

### Laissez-faire Style:

Without guidance, athletes may rely heavily on peer modeling. This could be beneficial in highly experienced teams where leaders emerge naturally (e.g., a senior football player guiding juniors). However, in less experienced groups, the lack of structured role modeling may lead to poor habits being imitated.

### Transformational Leadership Theory

Transformational leadership theory adds a critical dimension to understanding coaching effectiveness, particularly in competitive sports. A transformational coach inspires athletes through a shared vision, challenges them intellectually, and provides individualized support. This style enhances both task performance and socio-emotional development.

For instance, a coach who articulates a compelling vision (e.g., winning a championship while also building character) motivates athletes beyond extrinsic rewards. Callow et al.

(2009) showed that transformational leadership was strongly associated with higher team cohesion and collective efficacy, both of which directly contribute to team performance.

At the individual level, transformational leadership improves intrinsic motivation, resilience, and confidence, reducing the risk of burnout in high-pressure sports environments (Smith et al., 2020). This is especially relevant for elite athletes who often face intense physical and psychological demands. Unlike purely transactional or autocratic leadership, transformational coaching addresses both the performance and personal growth of athletes.

## **Concept of Coaching and Coaching Styles**

### **Definition of Coaching in Sports**

Coaching is acknowledged as both an art and a science that entails directing, instructing, and pushing athletes to reach their utmost potential (Martens, 2019).

It is generally defined as the act of guiding, instructing, and motivating athletes in order to optimize their performance and holistic development (International Council for Coaching Excellence [ICCE], 2019).

It includes technical and tactical instruction but also psychological, social, and emotional support. According to Lyle (2002), coaching is “a complex, social, and educational process that aims to improve performance and personal development.” In the Nigerian context, coaching is often viewed as an extension of teaching, where coaches serve as mentors, disciplinarians, and role models for athletes (Akindutire, 2017).

Coaching extends beyond performance enhancement; it also includes developing athletes' values, discipline, teamwork, and resilience. As such, the effectiveness of a coach is often judged not only by competitive results but also by the holistic growth of the athletes under their care (Horn, 2008). Modern perspectives on coaching emphasize that it is both a science and an art. The scientific aspect relates to knowledge of biomechanics, physiology, and performance analytics, while the artistic aspect involves leadership, communication, emotional intelligence, and adaptability (Cushion & Partington, 2019).

### **Evolution of Coaching Styles**

Historically, coaching styles have evolved alongside changes in sports philosophy and education. Early coaching approaches emphasized strict discipline and command-style leadership, reflecting militaristic traditions in sports training (Chelladurai & Saleh, 1980). Over time, research in sports psychology and pedagogy has shifted emphasis toward more participatory and athlete-centered approaches. This evolution underscores the growing recognition that coaching effectiveness depends on adaptability to athlete needs, contexts, and cultural environments (Jones, Armour, & Potrac, 2004).

Coaching style refers to the distinct approaches and methods employed by coaches to guide, instruct, and motivate athletes in achieving performance goals.

### **Major Coaching Styles**

In 1980, Chelladurai and Saleh claimed that the Multidimensional Model of Leadership (MML), which highlighted three main dimensions—required behaviour, desired behaviour, and actual behavior was one of the first attempts to categorise coaching

behaviours. Since then, the categories of coaching styles have expanded to encompass athlete-centered and holistic methods, as well as autocratic, democratic, laissez-faire, transformational, and transactional forms.

### **Autocratic Coaching Style:**

This approach is coach-centered, where decision-making authority rests solely with the coach. Autocratic coaches emphasize discipline, structure, and control, often using commands rather than dialogue. While this style can yield quick results in terms of discipline and compliance, it may also limit athlete creativity and autonomy (Chelladurai & Saleh, 1980). This style is more commonly applied in competitive or high-pressure environments, such as elite football or track and field events, where time constraints limit athlete participation in decision-making (Okonkwo, 2020).

### **Democratic Coaching Style:**

The democratic style involves athlete participation in decision-making, fostering dialogue, feedback, and mutual respect between coach and athlete. This approach is strongly linked to higher intrinsic motivation, athlete satisfaction, and long-term performance development (Martens, 2019). Research in both Western and African contexts shows that democratic coaching promotes athlete confidence, creativity, and commitment (Cheon, Reeve, & Song, 2020; Ogbonna & Okeke, 2021).

### **Laissez-faire Coaching Style:**

The laissez-faire style is characterized by minimal direction, where athletes are given significant autonomy in training and decision-making. While it may foster independence

among highly experienced athletes, it can lead to disorganization and reduced performance in less mature or developing athletes (Horn, 2008). In Nigerian sports, laissez-faire coaching is less common, partly due to cultural expectations that coaches serve as authority figures (Akindutire, 2017).

### **Transformational Coaching Style:**

Transformational coaching is built on the principles of transformational leadership, where the coach inspires and motivates athletes by appealing to shared values and long-term goals. It emphasizes vision, inspiration, individual consideration, and intellectual stimulation (Arthur et al., 2019). Transformational coaches use charisma, individualized consideration, intellectual stimulation, and inspirational motivation to build stronger athlete-coach relationships (Arthur, Hardy & Woodman, 2012).

### **Transactional Coaching Style:**

Transactional coaching emphasizes rewards and punishments as the primary motivators. Athletes are rewarded for meeting set targets and sanctioned for failing to meet expectations (Bass & Riggio, 2006). Athletes are motivated by tangible outcomes such as winning matches or receiving recognition. While this can be effective in competitive contexts, it may not encourage long-term athlete development or intrinsic motivation (Beauchamp et al., 2010).

### **Athlete-Centered and Holistic Styles:**

The athlete-centered approach emphasizes tailoring training to meet the individual needs of athletes. This style recognizes that athletes differ in skill levels, personalities, and motivations (Kidman, 2005). The holistic style extends beyond physical training, addressing mental, emotional, and social aspects of athlete development, thus fostering well-rounded individuals capable of sustaining performance over time (Jowett, 2007).

### **Implications of Coaching Styles**

The choice of coaching style significantly influences athlete outcomes in terms of discipline, motivation, skill acquisition, and psychological well-being. Studies indicate that autocratic coaching may be effective for instilling discipline and achieving short-term goals, while democratic coaching fosters long-term development, satisfaction, and resilience (Horn, 2008; Cheon et al., 2020). On the other hand, laissez-faire coaching requires careful consideration, as its effectiveness depends largely on the maturity and self-discipline of the athletes. Recent studies suggest that effective coaching is rarely about sticking rigidly to a single style. Instead, successful coaches adopt a flexible and situational approach, combining elements of different styles depending on the context and the needs of athletes (Cotterill & Fransen, 2021). For instance, a coach may adopt an autocratic approach during a crucial game for discipline and quick decision-making, but switch to a democratic or transformational approach during training to foster creativity and motivation.

Ultimately, effective coaching requires flexibility. Coaches who can adapt their styles to suit specific contexts, athlete needs, and cultural expectations are more likely to achieve optimal outcomes in both individual and team sports (Jones et al., 2004).

### **Relationship Between Coaching Styles and Athlete Performance**

The connection between coaching styles and athlete performance has been a central theme in sports science and psychology. Performance in sports is not determined solely by physical ability but also by the quality of leadership, guidance, and interpersonal relationships between coaches and athletes (Horn, 2008). The way coaches interact with athletes, set goals, and manage training environments directly influences motivation, confidence, and consistency, which in turn impact individual and team outcomes (Jones et al., 2004).

### **Impact on Individual Sports**

In individual sports such as athletics, swimming, tennis, and gymnastics, the role of the coach is particularly significant because of the close one-to-one relationship between coach and athlete. Studies show that autocratic coaching styles may produce quick technical mastery due to rigid discipline and focus but often result in increased anxiety and burnout over time (Gould, Greenleaf, & Carson, 2011). Conversely, democratic coaching encourages athlete participation in goal-setting and training decisions, leading to enhanced self-confidence, resilience, and intrinsic motivation (Cheon et al., 2020).

In Nigeria, research by Okonkwo (2020) indicates that athletes in track and field events often perceive autocratic coaches as effective in instilling discipline and competitiveness,

yet they express greater satisfaction and longer-term commitment when under democratic coaching. These findings mirror global studies that highlight the balance between structure and autonomy as key to sustained performance in individual sports (Horn, 2008; Mageau & Vallerand, 2003).

### **Impact on Team Sports**

In team sports such as football, basketball, and volleyball, coaching styles play a critical role in shaping group cohesion, discipline, and strategy implementation. Autocratic coaching may be effective in situations requiring quick tactical decisions and strict adherence to game plans (Chelladurai & Saleh, 1980). However, excessive authoritarianism can reduce communication and creativity, particularly in dynamic sports like football and basketball (Martens, 2019).

Democratic coaching, on the other hand, enhances player involvement, collaboration, and team spirit. Studies in Nigerian universities show that democratic coaching styles are associated with higher levels of team cohesion, mutual trust, and improved match performance (Ogbonna & Okeke, 2021). International research similarly reports that athletes under democratic coaches are more likely to feel valued and committed to the collective goals of the team (Cotterill & Fransen, 2016).

Laissez-faire coaching is less effective in team sports, as it often leads to confusion, lack of coordination, and diminished performance (Horn, 2008). Nigerian student-athletes have expressed frustration with laissez-faire approaches, as they feel it undermines discipline and accountability within the team structure (Akindutire, 2017).

## Comparative Evidence: Nigerian and International Studies

Evidence from Nigerian contexts shows a predominance of autocratic coaching in school and collegiate sports, where strict discipline is culturally valued. However, there is a growing recognition of the benefits of democratic coaching, especially in promoting athlete motivation, psychological well-being, and sustained participation (Okonkwo, 2020; Ogbonna & Okeke, 2021).

Internationally, studies emphasize the importance of adaptive coaching, where successful coaches blend autocratic and democratic styles depending on the context (Gould et al., 2011; Jones et al., 2004). This flexibility allows coaches to balance authority with athlete autonomy, ensuring both discipline and creativity.

## **Implications**

The evidence suggests that no single coaching style universally guarantees superior athlete performance. Instead, effectiveness depends on sport type, athlete maturity, and cultural context. While autocratic styles may yield short-term discipline and results, democratic approaches foster long-term athlete development, motivation, and satisfaction. For Nigerian sports institutions, a shift toward democratic and adaptive coaching models could enhance both individual and team performance in line with global best practices.

## **Coaching Styles and Motivation of Athletes**

Motivation is a critical factor influencing athletes' persistence, performance, and psychological well-being in sports. Broadly, motivation can be categorized into intrinsic motivation (driven by internal satisfaction and enjoyment of the activity) and extrinsic motivation (driven by external rewards such as medals, scholarships, or recognition) (Deci & Ryan, 1985; Ryan & Deci, 2000). The way coaches interact with athletes through their leadership style significantly determines which type of motivation is cultivated.

### **Autocratic Coaching and Motivation**

Autocratic coaches often rely on authority, rigid structures, and external discipline to drive athlete performance. While this style can increase extrinsic motivation such as compliance with training demands or striving for rewards it may suppress intrinsic motivation, as athletes feel they lack autonomy (Amorose & Anderson-Butcher, 2007). Over time, this can lead to dependency on external reinforcement and decreased enjoyment of the sport (Pelletier et al., 2001).

In Nigeria, research indicates that many secondary school coaches employ autocratic methods, which instill discipline but often demotivate athletes when success is not immediately achieved (Okonkwo, 2020). Athletes have reported perceiving such coaches as effective in competitions but less supportive of their long-term growth and personal interest in the sport (Akindutire, 2017).

### **Democratic Coaching and Motivation**

Democratic coaching fosters athlete participation in decision-making, goal-setting, and feedback processes. This inclusive approach aligns with Self-Determination Theory (SDT), which emphasizes the role of autonomy, competence, and relatedness in promoting intrinsic motivation (Ryan & Deci, 2000). Coaches who adopt democratic methods encourage athletes to take ownership of their progress, leading to higher levels of persistence, enjoyment, and psychological well-being (Mageau & Vallerand, 2003; Cheon et al., 2020).

Nigerian studies also support this perspective. Ogbonna and Okeke (2021) found that university athletes under democratic coaches reported greater satisfaction, higher motivation to train, and stronger commitment to both personal and team goals. Similar evidence from international contexts highlights that democratic coaching contributes to self-regulation and resilience, which are essential for long-term athlete development (Hollembek & Amorose, 2005).

### **Laissez-faire Coaching and Motivation**

Laissez-faire coaching, characterized by minimal guidance and oversight, generally results in poor motivation levels. Without clear direction, athletes may lack both extrinsic reinforcement and intrinsic drive, leading to disorganization, reduced performance, and eventual withdrawal from the sport (Horn, 2008).

Nigerian athletes, particularly in tertiary institutions, have expressed frustration with laissez-faire coaches who fail to provide adequate structure or feedback (Akindutire, 2017). Such conditions undermine the psychological needs of athletes, reducing their engagement and fostering indifference toward both training and competition.

### **Transformational Coaching and Motivation**

Transformational coaching is strongly linked to the enhancement of intrinsic motivation. By encouraging athletes to set personal goals, view challenges as opportunities, and pursue excellence beyond external rewards, transformational coaches help athletes internalize motivation (Arthur et al., 2019). For example, Turnnidge and Côté (2019) showed that athletes who perceived their coaches as transformational reported greater enjoyment, stronger commitment, and a willingness to train harder even without external incentives. This is because such coaches appeal to athletes' sense of purpose and self-determination, which are central to Self-Determination Theory (Deci & Ryan, 2020).

Although transformational coaches emphasize intrinsic drivers, they also influence extrinsic motivation positively by framing rewards (such as medals or recognition) in ways that connect with athletes' personal values. This transforms external motivators into identified regulation, where athletes see rewards as aligned with their own goals (Ryan & Deci, 2020). For example, Becker (2021) found that football teams led by transformational coaches celebrated achievements in ways that reinforced unity and pride, turning rewards into collective motivation rather than individual pressure.

### **Transactional Coaching and Motivation**

Transactional coaching primarily fosters extrinsic motivation by creating clear contingencies between athlete behavior and outcomes. For example, players may be motivated to follow rules, attend training, or perform well in matches to secure starting positions or avoid being benched. Studies have shown that such conditional reinforcement can improve short-term compliance and performance, especially in competitive environments that demand discipline (Arthur et al., 2019).

However, because transactional coaching depends heavily on rewards and punishments, its effects on motivation are often temporary. Once rewards are removed, athletes may lose the drive to perform, as their motivation is externally regulated rather than internalized (Ryan & Deci, 2020).

Transactional coaching generally offers limited support for intrinsic motivation. Overemphasis on external control can undermine athletes' sense of autonomy, which is critical for sustaining passion and long-term engagement in sport. Becker (2021) observed that athletes under transactional coaches often developed a "performance-only" mindset, training hard primarily to secure approval or avoid punishment, but experiencing less enjoyment in the sport itself.

### **Athlete-Centered and Holistic coaching and motivation**

Athlete-centered coaching assists athletes in internalising motivation by fostering autonomy, competence, and relatedness—the three fundamental psychological requirements described in Self-Determination Theory (Ryan & Deci, 2020). Athletes are motivated by their enjoyment of their sport, skill mastery, and personal development rather

than by rewards or the threat of punishment. For instance, compared to athletes under authoritarian coaches, Horn et al. (2021) found that athletes under athlete-centered coaches expressed higher levels of long-term engagement, perseverance in the face of difficulties, and excitement for training.

Athletes' mental health, emotional equilibrium, academic achievement, and personal development are all addressed by holistic coaching, which goes beyond training and performance. Both inner and extrinsic motivation are increased by this method. Holistic coaches foster secure, trusting settings where athletes feel appreciated for more than just their performance outcomes because they are concerned about their whole well-being. This emotional stability boosts resilience, happiness, and confidence, which in turn drives intrinsic motivation. However, in ways that feel genuine and empowering, holistic support such as acknowledging personal milestones or academic accomplishments can also favourably reinforce extrinsic motivation.

#### Case Studies and Institutional Evidence

Case studies from Nigerian secondary and tertiary institutions show that motivational outcomes often depend on a balance between discipline and autonomy. For example, democratic coaching styles in university football programs have been linked to enhanced team spirit and higher levels of voluntary training participation (Ogbonna & Okeke, 2021). In contrast, overly autocratic approaches in athletics have led to dropout rates among young athletes due to stress and lack of personal fulfillment (Okonkwo, 2020).

Globally, longitudinal research suggests that athletes who perceive their coaches as autonomy-supportive show greater persistence, fewer burnout symptoms, and higher motivation over time (Pelletier et al., 2001; Cheon et al., 2020).

### Implication

The evidence suggests that while autocratic coaching can be useful for short-term discipline and extrinsic motivation, democratic coaching is more effective in fostering intrinsic motivation, long-term commitment, and enjoyment in sports. For Nigerian sports institutions, adopting democratic and autonomy-supportive approaches could enhance athlete development and reduce dropout rates. Meanwhile, laissez-faire styles appear counterproductive and should be avoided in structured athletic programs.

### **Coaching Styles and Discipline in Athletes**

Discipline is a cornerstone of sports success, encompassing compliance with training schedules, adherence to team rules, and the cultivation of positive behavioral habits. Coaches play a central role in instilling discipline in athletes, not only through rules and enforcement but also by modeling appropriate behavior and creating structured environments that foster self-control and responsibility (Horn, 2008). The effectiveness of discipline varies across coaching styles, with distinct implications for both individual and team sports.

#### Autocratic Coaching and Discipline

Autocratic coaching, characterized by strict control and authority, is often associated with high levels of discipline. Athletes under autocratic coaches tend to comply with instructions

due to fear of sanctions, external rewards, or respect for authority (Martens, 2019). This style is particularly effective in short-term training contexts, such as preparing teams for competitions where uniformity and quick compliance are necessary (Akindutire, 2017).

However, research indicates that while autocratic methods may produce immediate discipline, they may also stifle creativity and intrinsic commitment, as athletes rely heavily on external regulation rather than developing personal responsibility (Pelletier et al., 2001). In Nigerian secondary school athletics, autocratic coaching has been reported as effective for instilling punctuality and order but criticized for discouraging initiative and independent decision-making (Okonkwo, 2020).

#### Democratic Coaching and Discipline

Democratic coaching emphasizes shared responsibility, dialogue, and athlete involvement in decision-making. This approach fosters internalized discipline, as athletes are more likely to take ownership of rules and behaviors they helped shape (Ryan & Deci, 2000). Coaches who employ democratic styles promote self-regulation, voluntary compliance, and accountability within their teams (Hollembek & Amorose, 2005).

Evidence from Nigerian universities suggests that democratic coaching contributes to long-term behavioral discipline, particularly in team sports such as football and basketball, where collective responsibility is essential (Ogbonna & Okeke, 2021). Athletes under democratic coaches often display better sportsmanship, improved interpersonal discipline, and stronger commitment to training programs.

#### Laissez-faire Coaching and Discipline

Laissez-faire coaching, which minimizes guidance and structure, is often linked with poor discipline. Athletes under laissez-faire coaches may lack clear behavioral expectations, resulting in lateness, absenteeism from training, and indifference toward team rules (Horn, 2008).

In Nigeria, athletes in tertiary institutions have expressed dissatisfaction with laissez-faire coaching, noting that it creates disorganized training environments and fosters indiscipline, especially in team sports (Akindutire, 2017). Without consistent guidance, players often disregard schedules, and conflicts may arise due to the absence of clearly enforced standards (Okonkwo, 2020).

#### Transformational Coaching and Discipline

Transformational coaches instill discipline in athletes by appealing to their beliefs, vision, and long-term goals. Instead of instilling compliance, they promote self-discipline and resilience by encouraging players to link their own goals with team objectives. Arthur et al. (2019) discovered that transformational coaching enhanced athletes' self-regulation while decreasing disciplinary issues. In Nigeria, Ogbonna and Okeke (2021) discovered that athletes under transformational coaches not only followed training regulations but also exceeded expectations, motivated by loyalty and respect for their trainers.

#### Transactional Coaching and Discipline

Transactional coaching enforces discipline through rewards and punishments. Athletes comply because they want to earn playing time, recognition, or avoid penalties. This style is common in Nigerian football and athletics, where strict consequences (such as benching

or exclusion from competitions) are used to maintain order (Okonkwo, 2020). While transactional methods create clear rules and short-term compliance, they rarely build intrinsic discipline—athletes often revert to poor habits once external incentives are removed (Ryan & Deci, 2020).

#### Athlete-Centered Coaching and Discipline

Athlete-centered coaching promotes discipline by empowering athletes to set and monitor their own standards. This autonomy increases ownership of responsibilities and reduces reliance on external enforcement (Kidman & Lombardo, 2019). Adedoyin (2021) showed that Nigerian student-athletes exposed to athlete-centered approaches were more punctual and consistent in training because they felt accountable to themselves and their peers, not just the coach.

#### Holistic Coaching and Discipline

Holistic coaching fosters discipline by balancing sports demands with athletes' broader lives—academic, social, and personal. By supporting athletes holistically, coaches create environments where discipline is not just about compliance but about managing life responsibilities alongside sport. Cassidy et al. (2021) argue that holistic approaches build resilience, responsibility, and time management skills. Nigerian athletes who trained under holistic-minded coaches reported greater ability to juggle school and sport, sustaining discipline across both domains (Okafor, 2022).

#### Individual vs. Team Sports Outcomes

The effect of coaching styles on discipline also differs between individual and team sports. In individual sports such as athletics and tennis, autocratic coaching often proves more effective, as it enforces rigorous training routines and precision (Martens, 2019). Conversely, in team sports such as football and basketball, democratic coaching tends to yield better results, as it balances discipline with collaboration, teamwork, and mutual accountability (Cheon et al., 2020).

### Implications

Overall, while autocratic coaching ensures compliance in the short term, democratic coaching is more sustainable for developing self-discipline and responsibility in athletes. Laissez-faire coaching, however, consistently undermines discipline and should be discouraged in organized sports programs. Nigerian sports institutions, therefore, need to balance firm discipline with athlete involvement to foster both compliance and personal responsibility.

### **Psychological and Emotional Outcomes of Coaching Styles**

Coaching styles influence not only technical and tactical performance but also the psychological and emotional states of athletes. Psychological outcomes such as confidence, performance anxiety, burnout, and resilience are critical because they mediate how athletes respond to training, competition, and setbacks. Coaches therefore play a central role in shaping these outcomes through feedback, interpersonal style, and the motivational climate they create (Vealey, 1986; Horn, 2008).

Confidence (Sport-Specific Self-Efficacy)

Athlete confidence often framed as sport self-efficacy or competitive confidence is a robust predictor of performance (Vealey, 1986). Democratic and transformational coaching styles that provide mastery experiences, supportive feedback, and autonomy support tend to enhance athletes' perceived competence and confidence (Bass & Riggio, 2006; Mageau & Vallerand, 2003). By contrast, strictly autocratic or controlling approaches can undermine self-efficacy when athletes are not given opportunities to succeed independently or to contribute to decision-making (Amorose & Anderson-Butcher, 2007).

In Nigerian settings, qualitative studies report that athletes exposed to participatory coaching report higher confidence in competitions and a stronger belief in their ability to handle pressure, whereas those under authoritarian coaches often attribute success to obedience rather than self-belief (Ogbonna & Okeke, 2021; Okonkwo, 2020).

#### Performance Anxiety and Competitive Stress

Performance anxiety and competitive stress are common among athletes and can be exacerbated or alleviated by coaching style. Autocratic, punitive, or highly critical coaching environments are associated with elevated somatic and cognitive anxiety due to fear of negative evaluation and punitive consequences (Gould, Greenleaf, & Carson, 2011). In contrast, coaches who foster supportive climates, provide clear coping strategies, and normalize pressure situations help reduce anxiety and improve performance under stress (Hanton, Fletcher, & Coughlan, 2005).

Evidence from school and university sport programs in Nigeria shows similar patterns: athletes who receive negative or humiliating feedback from coaches report higher pre-

competition anxiety and lower enjoyment, contributing to poor performance or withdrawal from sport (Akindutire, 2017).

#### Burnout and Psychological Withdrawal

Athlete burnout characterized by emotional/physical exhaustion, reduced sense of accomplishment, and sport devaluation is linked to chronic stress and maladaptive coaching climates (Gustafsson, Madigan, & Lundkvist, 2017). Controlling, pressure-focused coaching that emphasizes external rewards and relentless demands can accelerate burnout, particularly among youth athletes who have limited control over their training (Pelletier et al., 2001). Conversely, autonomy-supportive coaching that balances challenge with recovery and emphasizes athlete welfare decreases burnout risk and supports sustained participation (Amorose & Anderson-Butcher, 2007).

Nigerian research, though limited, has documented cases where intense, authoritarian training regimes in some school systems correlate with increased dropout rates and emotional exhaustion among adolescent athletes (Okonkwo, 2020; Akindutire, 2017).

#### Resilience and Psychological Skills

Resilience the capacity to adapt positively in the face of adversity is fostered by coaches who encourage problem-solving, provide mastery experiences, and model adaptive coping (Fletcher & Sarkar, 2012). Transformational and democratic coaches that promote reflection, constructive feedback, and gradual exposure to pressure situations contribute to the development of resilience and effective psychological skills (e.g., goal-setting, self-talk, imagery). Athletes coached in such environments typically show better bounce-back

after losses and maintain consistent performance under adversity (Fletcher & Sarkar, 2012; Cotterill & Fransen, 2016).

In Nigeria, community-based programs and university teams that incorporate mentorship and supportive coaching report stronger resilience among athletes, especially when coaches invest in psychosocial development alongside technical training (Ogbonna & Okeke, 2021).

#### Practical Implications for Nigerian Sports Institutions

Given the psychological consequences outlined, Nigerian coaches and sport administrators should emphasize coaching education that integrates psychological skills training, respectful-feedback techniques, and autonomy-supportive practices. Interventions such as coach workshops on athlete-centered communication, routine monitoring for burnout symptoms, and integrating sport psychologists into higher-level programs can help mitigate negative psychological outcomes and enhance athlete welfare (Horn, 2008; Gustafsson et al., 2017).

#### **Athletes' Perception of Coaches**

Athletes' perception of coaches refers to the way athletes interpret the behaviors, attitudes, and leadership approaches demonstrated by their coaches. These perceptions are critical because they determine how coaching strategies are received and whether athletes respond positively or negatively to them. According to Jowett and Arthur (2019), athletes' subjective perceptions of the coach–athlete relationship often have a greater influence on

motivation and performance than the coach's intended behavior. This means that even a well-structured coaching style may fail if it is not perceived positively by athletes.

Athletes' perception of their coaches plays a pivotal role in shaping not only their sporting performance but also their motivation, satisfaction, and long-term commitment to sport. These perceptions are formed through everyday interactions, including communication style, fairness in decision-making, feedback, and the coach's ability to balance authority with support (Jowett & Cockerill, 2003; Horn, 2008).

#### The Coach–Athlete Relationship

The coach–athlete relationship has been conceptualized as a key determinant of athlete experiences and outcomes. Jowett (2007) describes it as a three-dimensional construct comprising closeness, commitment, and complementarity. When athletes perceive their coaches as caring, supportive, and invested in their personal growth, the relationship strengthens, leading to higher satisfaction and improved performance. Conversely, relationships marked by conflict, authoritarianism, or neglect can generate distrust and disengagement (Lorimer & Jowett, 2009).

#### Communication and Feedback

Athletes' perception is also shaped by how coaches communicate and interact with them. Studies suggest that clear, constructive communication is associated with more positive perceptions, while criticism or lack of feedback often leads to negative interpretations (Wachsmuth, Jowett, & Harwood, 2020). Respectful interpersonal behavior such as empathy, active listening, and encouragement strengthens athletes' trust in the coach.

Effective communication is consistently rated by athletes as one of the most important qualities of successful coaches (Smith & Smoll, 2007). Athletes perceive coaches who provide constructive feedback, set clear expectations, and maintain open dialogue as more competent and motivating (Horn, 2008). In contrast, athletes who experience harsh criticism, inconsistent feedback, or lack of explanation for coaching decisions often report dissatisfaction, reduced confidence, and strained relationships with their coaches (Amorose & Anderson-Butcher, 2007).

#### Fairness, Trust, and Respect

Perceptions of fairness and respect strongly influence athletes' trust in their coaches. When coaches demonstrate impartiality in team selection, discipline, and reward systems, athletes are more likely to respect their authority and remain committed (Kim & Cruz, 2016). On the other hand, favoritism, bias, or neglect can create perceptions of injustice, leading to resentment, decreased motivation, and even athlete attrition (Mageau & Vallerand, 2003).

#### Perceived Competence and Expertise

Athletes' perceptions of their coaches' technical and tactical knowledge also shape their level of confidence and adherence to training programs. Coaches perceived as highly competent and knowledgeable inspire greater athlete trust, compliance, and motivation (Horn, 2008; Cushion, Armour, & Jones, 2003). By contrast, doubts about a coach's expertise may lead athletes to question instructions, resist feedback, and seek external guidance.

#### Cultural and Contextual Factors

Perception is also influenced by cultural and contextual realities. In African settings, for example, Nigerian athletes may perceive strict, autocratic coaching as normal due to cultural emphasis on respect for authority in schools and sports programs. However, younger athletes in urban academies increasingly value democratic and transformational approaches because of global exposure and the push for modern coaching methods (Omoregie & Odu, 2021).

#### Gender and Age Differences in Perception

Perceptions of coaches may vary across gender and age groups. Research has shown that younger athletes tend to value supportive and empowering coaching more strongly, while elite adult athletes may prioritize tactical competence and discipline (Eys et al., 2020). Similarly, female athletes are more likely to emphasize the importance of empathy and communication in their perception of coaches, while male athletes may stress leadership authority and technical expertise.

#### Nigerian Context and Evidence

In Nigeria, studies have shown that athletes often place a premium on interpersonal qualities of their coaches such as respect, encouragement, and communication sometimes even above technical expertise (Akindutire, 2017; Ogbonna & Okeke, 2021). Many athletes perceive authoritarian approaches, where communication is one-way and discipline is prioritized over dialogue, as limiting their growth and enjoyment (Okonkwo, 2020). At the same time, athletes who perceive their coaches as mentors, role models, and

advocates for their welfare report stronger loyalty, reduced anxiety, and greater willingness to endure rigorous training (Ogbonna & Okeke, 2021).

#### Implications for Athlete Development

Athletes' perceptions of their coaches are not passive reflections but active determinants of motivation and performance. Coaches who cultivate perceptions of fairness, competence, open communication, and supportive leadership enhance both psychological wellbeing and athletic outcomes. For Nigerian sports institutions, athlete feedback systems and periodic assessments of the coach–athlete relationship can be valuable tools for improving coaching quality and ensuring sustainable athlete development.

#### **Challenges in Coaching in Nigerian Sports Institutions**

Despite the importance of coaching to athlete development and performance, Nigerian sports institutions continue to grapple with significant challenges that hinder effective coaching practices. These challenges create gaps between local realities and global best practices, limiting the potential of Nigerian athletes on both national and international stages.

#### **Inadequate Training and Professional Development**

One of the persistent challenges is the limited opportunities for formal coach education and continuous professional development (Akindutire, 2017; Omoregie & Adeyemo, 2019). Many Nigerian coaches are not formally trained in modern coaching methodologies, relying instead on experience or outdated practices (Omoregie & Odu, 2021). Unlike in developed countries where structured coaching certification pathways and refresher

courses are mandatory. This affects their ability to adopt evidence-based coaching methods and modern training technologies.

### **Poor Infrastructure and Resource Constraints**

A major challenge in Nigerian sports institutions is the lack of adequate infrastructure, training facilities, and resources (Okonkwo, 2020). In Nigeria, many sports institutions, particularly at the grassroots and educational levels, operate with poor infrastructure (Ogunode, 2022). Coaches often work with insufficient equipment, poorly maintained fields, and limited access to sports science support such as physiotherapists, psychologists, or nutritionists. These constraints limit their ability to implement holistic training programs comparable to global standards (Adedoyin, 2018).

### **Low Remuneration and Motivation of Coaches**

Coaching in Nigeria is often undervalued, with many coaches receiving inadequate pay and little recognition for their efforts (Eke, 2016). Low remuneration not only reduces motivation but also discourages talented individuals from pursuing coaching as a full-time profession. This contrasts with developed contexts where coaching is seen as a viable and respected career path with structured incentives.

### **Limited Research and Documentation**

Another critical gap is the paucity of indigenous research on coaching styles, athlete development, and performance outcomes. Much of the literature applied in Nigerian contexts is adapted from Western studies (Ogbonna & Okeke, 2021). The lack of locally

grounded empirical studies makes it difficult to design context-specific interventions that account for cultural, social, and institutional dynamics in Nigerian sports.

### **Weak Feedback and Evaluation Mechanisms**

In Nigerian sports institutions, feedback mechanisms such as athlete surveys, performance reviews, or periodic coaching evaluations are either absent or weak (Akindutire, 2017). As a result, coaches often continue with ineffective practices without receiving constructive feedback from athletes or administrators. This gap undermines accountability and the continuous improvement of coaching strategies.

### **Policy and Administrative Constraints**

Policy inconsistencies and bureaucratic inefficiencies further constrain coaching effectiveness. For example, frequent leadership changes in sports organizations, lack of investment in grassroots coaching, and poor coordination between schools, universities, and national sports bodies contribute to systemic weaknesses (Adedoyin, 2018). These issues often leave coaches working in environments that do not support long-term athlete development.

### **Gender Bias and Inequality in Coaching**

Coaching in Nigeria is still largely male-dominated, with few opportunities for female coaches in leadership positions. This creates a gender imbalance that affects representation and diversity in coaching practices (Okeke & Eke, 2021). Female athletes sometimes report challenges with communication, empathy, or cultural sensitivity from male coaches,

leading to mismatched expectations. The underrepresentation of women in coaching remains a significant gap in Nigerian sports institutions.

### **Implications for Nigerian Sports**

These challenges collectively point to the urgent need for policy reforms, investment in infrastructure, and the establishment of structured coach education systems. Bridging the gap between Nigerian practices and global standards is essential for enhancing the quality of coaching and ensuring that athletes reach their full potential at both national and international levels.

### **Empirical Studies on Coaching Styles and Performance**

The empirical review offers an evidence-based perspective on how different coaching styles influence individual and team performance. By analyzing studies from various contexts, sports disciplines, and leadership approaches, we can identify patterns and contradictions that explain why some styles are more effective than others. This section reviews and critiques previous research on the relationship between coaching styles and athlete performance in both team and individual contexts. It is organized around specific coaching styles autocratic, democratic, laissez-faire, and comparative approaches and focuses on both international and Nigerian evidence. This organization promotes a better understanding of each style's distinct contributions and limitations, as well as the practical implications for sports organizations.

### **Studies on Autocratic Coaching Style and Athlete Performance**

The autocratic coaching style is characterized by directive leadership, strict rule enforcement, and limited input from athletes. Coaches who adopt this style often focus on discipline, obedience, and immediate results, making decisions independently of athlete participation. Research on the effects of autocratic coaching has yielded mixed findings, with some studies suggesting its effectiveness in achieving short-term performance goals, while others highlight its negative impact on motivation and psychological well-being.

Internationally, Hu, Li, Jiang, and Liu (2023) examined the impact of controlling (autocratic) coaching styles on 252 competitive athletes in China. Their findings revealed that autocratic approaches increased athletes' fear of failure by frustrating their basic psychological needs, which ultimately reduced sport commitment. While this study provided robust statistical analysis using structural equation modelling, its reliance on self-report questionnaires limits the ability to establish causality, raising concerns about whether negative outcomes are truly caused by the coaching style or by athletes' pre-existing anxiety levels.

Similarly, Dresch, Sallen, and Kleinert (2020) studied German youth athletes and found that authoritarian coaching was linked to higher stress levels and lower intrinsic motivation. Although the study highlighted crucial psychological drawbacks, it did not assess objective performance metrics such as match outcomes or skill improvements, thereby leaving a gap in understanding whether autocratic coaching actually hinders athletic success in competitive settings.

In the Nigerian context, Ali (2023) investigated the perception of autocratic coaching among 960 athletes across different sports. The results showed that most athletes disliked autocratic behaviour, and it was not positively associated with their satisfaction or perceived performance. While the study benefits from a large and diverse sample, it primarily measured athlete preferences rather than observed coaching behaviours or actual performance outcomes, which weakens the applicability of its conclusions to practice.

Samson and Bakinde (2021) also examined leadership styles among athletes in the Kwara State Sports Council. Their findings indicated that autocratic behaviour was negatively correlated with athlete performance, while democratic and training-focused leadership styles were more positively associated. However, this study, like many others in Nigeria, relied on self-reported data and was limited to a single state, reducing generalizability across the wider Nigerian sports landscape.

Overall, empirical studies suggest that autocratic coaching may provide structure and discipline but often undermines athlete motivation, satisfaction, and long-term development. A consistent limitation in this literature is the tendency to rely on subjective perceptions rather than combining psychological assessments with concrete performance outcomes. This gap underscores the need for research that integrates both subjective and objective measures to better evaluate the real-world implications of autocratic coaching styles.

Studies on Democratic Coaching Style and Athlete Performance

The democratic coaching style emphasizes collaboration, shared decision-making, and open communication between the coach and athletes. Coaches who adopt this style involve athletes in planning, goal setting, and problem-solving, which can enhance feelings of ownership and intrinsic motivation. This approach is often linked to better psychological outcomes and improved team cohesion, though empirical studies show varied results depending on sport type and athlete maturity.

Internationally, Llanos-Muñoz et al. (2023) conducted a longitudinal study with Spanish youth athletes across one full season. The findings showed that democratic and autonomy-supportive coaching behaviours positively predicted resilience, commitment, and adherence to team goals. Unlike cross-sectional studies, the longitudinal design allowed the researchers to track changes over time, strengthening causal inference. However, the study still relied heavily on psychological indicators of performance rather than competitive outcomes such as win-loss records or skill acquisition, which narrows its applicability for coaches focused on measurable success.

Similarly, Crespo, Reid, and Quinn (2020) analyzed democratic coaching in tennis coaching programs and found that shared decision-making increased athletes' engagement and technical development. The research demonstrated that athletes under democratic coaches felt more satisfied and performed better in skill-related tasks. However, its focus on tennis limits the generalizability to other sports, particularly team-based settings where group dynamics play a larger role.

In the Nigerian context, Samson and Bakinde (2021) reported that democratic leadership styles significantly correlated with athlete satisfaction and performance among Kwara State athletes. This aligns with the notion that athletes in environments with limited resources may thrive when given autonomy and a voice in decision-making. Despite its relevance, the study's reliance on self-reported measures and focus on a single state makes it difficult to generalize these findings across Nigeria's diverse sporting institutions.

Another Nigerian study by Olaosebikan, Teman, Muktar, and Abdullah (2020) examined leadership styles in Adamawa State and found that democratic approaches were strongly associated with athlete motivation in team sports. This suggests that when athletes are actively involved in decision-making, they develop stronger commitment to their teams. Nonetheless, the study measured motivation rather than performance, creating a gap in linking democratic styles directly to athletic outcomes.

Collectively, the evidence indicates that democratic coaching styles are generally beneficial in fostering motivation, satisfaction, and team cohesion. Yet, like with autocratic studies, most research fails to directly connect democratic coaching with objective performance outcomes such as match success or career progression. Furthermore, very few studies differentiate between individual and team athletes in their analysis, leaving uncertainty about whether democratic coaching has uniform benefits across both domains.

Studies on Laissez-Faire Coaching Style and Athlete Performance

The laissez-faire coaching style is often described as a “hands-off” approach, where the coach provides minimal direction or feedback, leaving athletes largely responsible for their own decision-making and development. While this style can encourage autonomy and self-reliance in highly skilled or intrinsically motivated athletes, it has also been associated with confusion, lack of discipline, and poor performance outcomes in less experienced athletes.

Internationally, Fletcher, Roberts, and McCarthy (2021) investigated laissez-faire leadership in sports teams and found that it was generally associated with negative outcomes such as reduced cohesion, decreased motivation, and lower satisfaction with the coach. Athletes perceived laissez-faire coaches as disengaged, which undermined trust and confidence. A limitation of this study, however, was its reliance on correlational data, which prevents strong causal conclusions about whether the laissez-faire style directly caused poor performance.

Similarly, Fransen et al. (2020) studied leadership styles in youth football clubs across Europe and observed that laissez-faire behaviours contributed to role ambiguity among athletes, reducing collective team performance. While the study provided evidence using team-level data, it did not investigate whether individual athletes, especially elite or self-motivated ones, might benefit from greater independence. Thus, its conclusions may not apply equally across all sporting levels.

In the Nigerian context, empirical research on laissez-faire coaching remains limited, but relevant insights can be drawn from broader leadership studies. Mbam et al. (2021),

examining youth athletes in Ebonyi State, reported that laissez-faire tendencies (characterized by withdrawal and lack of feedback) negatively influenced athlete motivation and performance. Although the study provides some context-specific evidence, its relatively small sample size ( $n = 100$ ) and reliance on self-reported performance reduce its external validity.

Another study by Ali (2023) indirectly touched on laissez-faire elements, noting that athletes across Nigerian sports institutions viewed non-responsive or disengaged coaching behaviours as detrimental to their development. While this was not a direct measurement of laissez-faire leadership, it highlights that Nigerian athletes may interpret passive coaching as neglectful, particularly in environments where resources and structured guidance are already limited.

Overall, studies consistently suggest that laissez-faire coaching is the least effective leadership style for most athletes, as it fosters uncertainty and reduces motivation. However, research rarely acknowledges its potential benefits for highly experienced or elite-level athletes who may thrive with greater autonomy. This lack of nuance points to a significant gap in the literature, especially in the Nigerian context where athlete maturity levels, institutional support, and cultural expectations of authority may interact with coaching styles differently.

Comparative Studies on Coaching Styles and Athlete Performance

Comparative studies on coaching styles are particularly valuable because they examine multiple approaches side by side, offering insight into which styles are most effective under specific conditions such as team versus individual sports, gender differences, or competitive levels. These studies often provide a more balanced perspective than research that focuses on a single style, but they also face challenges in capturing the complexity of real-world coaching dynamics.

Internationally, Liu et al. (2023) investigated transformational and transactional coaching styles among athletes at the 16th Games of the People's Republic of China. Their findings revealed that transformational coaching was significantly associated with higher satisfaction of athletes' psychological needs, well-being, and commitment, whereas transactional coaching had a weaker positive effect, mainly through rewards and reinforcement. This suggests that while transactional approaches may boost short-term compliance, transformational coaching is more effective for long-term motivation and performance. However, the study relied on self-reported perceptions rather than objective competitive outcomes, limiting its scope.

Madigan and Stoeber (2020) conducted a cross-sectional study comparing autonomy-supportive versus controlling coaching behaviours among youth athletes in the UK. Results indicated that autonomy-supportive coaching enhanced intrinsic motivation and resilience, while controlling (autocratic) styles contributed to burnout and reduced satisfaction. Although the study provided clear contrasts, its cross-sectional design made it difficult to

determine causality, and differences between team and individual athletes were not fully explored.

In the Nigerian context, Samson and Bakinde (2021) compared democratic, autocratic, training-focused, and social support leadership styles among athletes in the Kwara State Sports Council. The study reported that democratic and training-focused leadership were most positively associated with athlete performance, while autocratic and laissez-faire approaches were less effective. The study is important for showing how Nigerian athletes respond differently to multiple styles. However, the use of only one state and a relatively small sample ( $n = 150$ ) limits the generalizability of the findings.

Similarly, Mbam et al. (2021) in Ebonyi State examined the relationship between different coaching styles, athlete motivation, and performance. They found that autonomy-supportive and democratic coaching positively influenced both motivation and performance, while laissez-faire styles were linked to poor outcomes. Despite its valuable local insight, the small sample size and reliance on self-reported data weaken its robustness.

Collectively, comparative studies highlight that no single coaching style is universally effective across contexts. Transformational and democratic approaches tend to outperform autocratic and laissez-faire styles in enhancing motivation, satisfaction, and team cohesion, while transactional styles are effective mainly for short-term compliance and discipline. A key limitation in this body of literature, however, is the lack of integration of objective performance metrics with athlete perceptions, as well as limited exploration of differences

between team and individual athletes. This creates an opening for further research in the Nigerian context, where cultural expectations of authority, resource availability, and athlete maturity may influence the effectiveness of coaching styles differently than in Western settings.

Research on coaching styles and athlete performance in Nigeria has expanded in the past decade, but it remains fragmented and methodologically uneven. Several studies have addressed coaching behaviours, athlete preferences, motivation, and psychological outcomes; fewer studies directly tie coaching styles to objective performance metrics (e.g., match statistics, timed trials, promotion to higher competitive levels). The available work tends to use survey designs, single-site samples, and athlete self-reports, which constrains causal inference and generalizability.

Key Nigerian studies illustrate these patterns. Ali's large survey ( $n \approx 960$ ) examined athletes' preferences for autocratic leadership across individual and team sports and concluded that athletes generally do not prefer autocratic coaches and do not associate autocratic behaviour with improved satisfaction or performance though the study measured preferences and perceived outcomes rather than observed coach behaviour or objective performance indicators. Samson and Bakinde's study of the Kwara State Sports Council ( $n \approx 150$ ) found significant correlations between multiple leadership dimensions (training behaviour, democratic and autocratic tendencies, social support, reward) and athletes' perceived performance; the study is locally valuable but relies on subjective performance

measures and a modest, single-state sample. Mbam and colleagues (Ebonyi State) reported positive links between autonomy-supportive coaching, motivation, prosocial behaviour, and youth athletes' self-rated performance again useful but limited by small sample size ( $n \approx 100$ ) and self-report metrics.

More recent, practice-oriented work evaluates coach education as a lever for change. Ogunleye's evaluation of micro-credentialing programmes for Nigerian coaches argues that targeted coach education can shift coaching practices toward more athlete-centered methods and produce reported improvements in athlete outcomes; yet the evaluation is largely descriptive and lacks randomized or matched control designs and objective athlete performance endpoints. Similarly, Simon et al. (2024) examined controlling coaching style and resilience among university soccer players, adding important Nigerian data on psychological outcomes, but the study's small, male-only sample and cross-sectional design limit generalization.

Across these studies several methodological and contextual limitations recur:

- Heavy reliance on athlete self-report: Most Nigerian studies measure both coaching style (or preferences) and outcomes via questionnaires completed by athletes, increasing the risk of common-method bias and socially desirable responding.

- Cross-sectional / correlational designs: Very few Nigerian studies use longitudinal panels or experimental designs; consequently, claims about coaching style causing performance changes are tentative.
- Limited objective performance data: Objective metrics (match stats, time trials, technical skill scores) are rarely included, so direct evidence that coaching styles produce measurable performance gains is scarce.
- Sample and contextual narrowness: Many studies are single-site or state-based (e.g., Kwara, Adamawa, Ebonyi), often with small samples and male-dominant respondents; this reduces external validity across Nigeria's varied sports institutions.
- Underexamined styles and moderators: Styles such as holistic, athlete-centered, laissez-faire, and contingent/combined approaches are underrepresented; moderation by gender, athlete level (school vs. elite), and sport type (team vs. individual) is rarely tested.

Why this matters for my study

The Nigerian evidence base suggests that supportive and autonomy-promoting coaching behaviours are perceived positively by athletes and linked to better motivation and resilience, while controlling and laissez-faire tendencies are associated with poorer psychological outcomes. However, because the literature is dominated by perceptual, cross-sectional work, there is a critical need for studies that (a) combine psychological and objective performance metrics, (b) use longitudinal or intervention designs, and (c)

compare team versus individual athletes across multiple Nigerian sites. These exact gaps map directly onto your research aims.

### **Summary of Reviewed Literature**

This chapter has examined theoretical, conceptual, and empirical insights on the role of different coaching styles in influencing athlete performance, motivation, discipline, and psychological wellbeing. Beginning with the theoretical framework, Bandura's (1977) *Social Learning Theory* and Bass's (1990) *Transformational and Transactional Leadership Theories* provided the foundation for understanding how coaching behaviors shape athlete outcomes through modeling, reinforcement, and leadership practices.

Finally, gaps in Nigerian coaching research were identified. These include limited empirical data, inadequate training of coaches, and lack of context-specific measurement instruments. Compared with global best practices, Nigerian sports institutions often lag in implementing evidence-based coaching approaches, underscoring the need for policy reforms, coach education, and further research.

In summary, the reviewed literature establishes that coaching styles significantly influence athlete outcomes across performance, motivation, and psychological domains. However, gaps in the Nigerian context justify the present study, which seeks to contribute evidence-based insights that can inform policy, practice, and the professional development of coaches.



## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **METHODOLOGY**

This chapter discussed the methodology used in the study under the following subheadings:

- Research Design
- Population of the Study
- Sample and Sampling Technique
- Research Instrument
- Validity of the instrument
- Reliability of the instrument
- Method of Data Collection
- Method of Data Analysis

#### **Research Design**

For this study, a descriptive survey research design will be adopted. This design is considered suitable because it enables the researcher to obtain first-hand information from athletes and coaches regarding different coaching styles and their perceived effects on performance.

The descriptive survey involve the use of a structured questionnaire to gather information from both team and individual athletes in university of benin. This design is appropriate because it allows for the examination of the relationships between variables such as coaching styles (transformational, transactional, autocratic, democratic, laissez-faire,

athlete-centered, holistic) and performance outcomes (motivation, discipline, resilience, and overall athletic success).

### **Population of the Study**

The population of the study comprises of NUGA athletes and coaches in the University of Benin. The study consists of 215 participants. This group has been chosen due to its significant relevance to the research aim, which is to explore the roles of Different Coaching Styles on the impact of team and individual athletes performance.

Source: Office of the Director of Sports, University of Benin Sports Centre (2025).

### **Sample and Sampling Technique**

The sample size for this study was determined using simple random techniques. 108 participants in all, representing half of the population, were selected. Specifically, 120 student-athletes and 8 coaches were sampled. Convenience sampling was used to ensure that every possible participant had an equal chance of being included. This strategy helped to guarantee a representative and varied sample for the study.

### **Research Instrument**

A self-structured and validated questionnaire was used to generate the desired information regarding the Roles of Different Coaching Styles on the Impact of Team and Individual Athletes Performance in the University of Benin. The questionnaire will be divided into four sections:

Section A: Demographic information (gender, age, sport type, years of experience).

Section B: Coaching styles, measured using Likert scale

Section C: Athlete performance indicators (motivation, discipline, resilience, teamwork, and skill improvement).

The items will be measured on a 4-point Likert scale ranging from Strongly Agree (4) to Strongly Disagree (1).

### **Validity of Research Instrument**

Before being distributed to the respondents, the questionnaire was reviewed, corrected, and approved by the project supervisor and two additional human kinetics and sports science experts to guarantee its face and content validity.

### **Reliability of Research Instrument**

Cronbach alpha were used to analyze the data after the test instrument was administered to respondents once in order to test its reliability. This statistical method or tool is used to guarantee the internal consistency of the instrument. Assuring that the questionnaire yields consistent results over time required a reliability coefficient of 0.70 or higher.

### **Method of Data Collection**

A questionnaire was used to gather data, and it was given to respondents at the University of Benin. Inquiries about their athletic performance prompted participants to submit detailed information. Respondents were given plenty of opportunity to express their opinions on the questionnaire items, and the completed forms were promptly collected upon completion.

### **Method of Data Analysis**

Descriptive statistics like frequencies, percentage, mean, and standard deviation were used to analyze the collected data. To make it easier to understand the data, the results were displayed in tables.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### PRESENTATION OF RESULTS AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

This chapter presents the results of the data collected from 108 respondents on the roles that different coaching styles play in team and individual athlete performance.

**Research Question 1: What are the most commonly used coaching styles in Nigerian sports institutions?**

**Table 1:** Weighted mean on the commonly used coaching Styles.

S/N	Coaching Style	Items	Mean	SD	Decision
1	Transformational	1 - 2	3.34	0.59 – 0.64	Agreed
2	Transactional	3 - 5	3.11	0.49 – 0.73	Agreed
3	Democratic	6 - 8	3.20	0.65 – 0.72	Agreed
4	Autocratic	9 - 11	2.85	0.67 – 0.83	Moderately Agreed
5	Laissez-faire	12 - 14	2.69	0.61 – 0.84	Moderately Agreed
6	Athlete-centered	15 - 17	3.18	0.61 – 0.70	Agreed

The data in Table 1, shows that the mean values range from 2.69 to 3.34, while the standard deviation values range from 0.49 to 0.84. This indicates that respondents generally agree that transformational, democratic, transactional, and athlete-centered styles are the most commonly practiced. Autocratic and laissez-faire styles fall within the moderate range. The low standard deviation values show that respondents' opinions do not vary widely.

## Research Question 2:

### How do different coaching styles influence team athletes' performance?

**Table 2:** Mean and Standard deviation on how the different coaching Styles influence team athlete performance.

S/N	Items	Mean	SD	Decision
1	My coach involves athletes in making team decisions.	3.17	0.72	Agreed
2	My coach values athletes opinions and suggestions.	3.14	0.68	Agreed
3	My coach encourages open communication in the team.	3.30	0.65	Agreed
4	My coach gives strict instructions and expects full compliance.	3.11	0.67	Agreed
5	My coach's methods help me stay disciplined.	3.21	0.63	Agreed
6	My coach encourages punctuality and commitment.	3.41	0.63	Agreed
7	My coach handles conflicts between team members fairly.	3.20	0.59	Agreed

The data in Table 4, shows that the mean values range from 3.11 to 3.41, while the standard deviation values range from 0.59 to 0.72. These high mean values indicate that respondents agree that coaching styles strongly influence team cohesion, communication, and unity. The low standard deviation values show that responses were consistent and did not vary widely among respondents.

**Research Question 3: How do different coaching styles affect individual athletes' performance?**

**Table 3:** Mean and Standard deviation on how the different coaching Styles affect individual athlete performance.

S/N	Items	Mean	SD	Decision
1	My coach promotes a positive and supportive environment.	3.24	0.68	Agreed
2	My coach considers athletes' personal needs and emotions.	3.01	0.70	Agreed
3	My coach cares about athletes' physical and mental well-being.	3.28	0.67	Agreed
4	My coach inspires me to keep improving my skills.	3.25	0.61	Agreed
5	My coach's style increases my enthusiasm for training.	3.10	0.65	Agreed
6	I can concentrate better during training sessions.	3.18	0.67	Agreed

The data in Table 3, shows that the mean values range from 3.01 to 3.28, while the standard deviation values range from 0.61 to 0.70. The results show that respondents agree that coaching styles enhance individual athletes' motivation, focus, discipline, and skill development. The low standard deviation values indicate that respondents' views were similar and showed little variation.

**Research Question 4: How do athletes perceive and respond to different coaching styles?**

**Table 4:** Mean and Standard deviation on how athletes perceive and respond to different coaching.

S/N	Items	Mean	SD	Decision
1	My coach helps athletes set and achieve personal goals.	3.29	0.64	Agreed
2	My coach leads by example and inspires confidence.	3.40	0.60	Agreed
3	My coach rewards athletes for good performance.	3.13	0.63	Agreed
4	My coach penalizes athletes who break team rules.	3.20	0.49	Agreed
5	My coach focuses mainly on results and performance outcomes.	3.01	0.73	Agreed
6	My coach involves athletes in making team decisions.	3.17	0.72	Agreed
7	My coach values athletes' opinions and suggestions.	3.14	0.68	Agreed
8	My coach encourages open communication in the team.	3.30	0.65	Agreed
9	My coach promotes a positive and supportive environment.	3.24	0.68	Agreed
10	My coach considers athletes' personal needs and emotions.	3.01	0.70	Agreed
11	My coach inspires me to keep improving my skills.	3.25	0.61	Agreed

The data in Table 4, shows that the mean values range from 3.01 to 3.40, while standard deviations fall between 0.49 and 0.73. The results demonstrate that athletes perceive positive coaching styles such as transformational, democratic, and athlete-centered as

helpful and motivating. The low standard deviation values show that the respondents had similar perceptions.

**Research Question 5: What coaching style can improve both team and individual athletes' performance?**

**Table 5:** Mean and Standard deviation on what coaching Styles can improve both team and individual athlete's performance.

S/N	Items	No of Items	Mean	SD	Decision
1	Transformational	2	3.34	0.59 - 0.64	Agreed
2	Democratic	3	3.20	0.65 - 0.72	Agreed
3	Athlete-centered	3	3.18	0.61 - 0.70	Agreed

The data in Table 5, shows that the mean values range from 3.18 to 3.34, while the standard deviation values range from 0.59 to 0.72. These high mean scores indicate that transformational, democratic, and athlete-centered styles are the most effective coaching styles for improving both team and individual performance. The low standard deviation values show respondents largely agreed on these styles.

**Discussion Of Findings**

The purpose of this study was to examine the roles of different coaching styles on team and individual athlete performance in Nigerian sports institutions. The findings from the analysis in Chapter Four revealed several important patterns regarding how coaches interact with athletes and how these interactions influence performance outcomes.

Firstly, the results showed that transformational, democratic, transactional, and athlete-centered coaching styles were the most commonly practiced. These styles recorded high mean values (ranging from 3.11 to 3.34). This suggests that coaches in Nigerian sports institutions tend to adopt more supportive, motivational, communicative, and athlete-focused approaches. The preference for these styles reflects an environment where coaches play a mentorship role, encourage athlete involvement in decision-making, set performance goals, and create a positive training atmosphere. These findings align with modern coaching principles, which emphasize motivation, communication, and relationship-building as key factors in athlete development.

On the other hand, autocratic and laissez-faire coaching styles recorded moderate mean values (2.69–2.85). This indicates that while some coaches still display strict or hands-off behaviours, these methods are not dominant. The moderate use of autocratic coaching suggests that some Nigerian coaches maintain firm discipline, but it is not the primary approach used. Likewise, the relatively low adoption of laissez-faire coaching shows that most coaches prefer to be actively involved in athlete development rather than leaving athletes to train independently. These findings support previous research that suggests that extreme authoritarian or overly relaxed coaching may not produce the best performance outcomes.

The study also revealed that coaching styles have a strong influence on team performance. Items measuring teamwork, cooperation, conflict management, and unity recorded high mean values (3.11–3.41). This indicates that when coaches encourage athlete participation,

maintain open communication, and provide guidance, athletes respond by working together more effectively. Transformational and democratic coaching styles appear to create an environment where athletes trust each other, communicate better, and maintain discipline during team activities. The low standard deviation values further show that the respondents consistently agreed on the positive influence of coaching styles on team cohesion.

In terms of individual athlete performance, the findings were similarly positive. Items assessing motivation, concentration, discipline, skill development, and overall performance also recorded high mean values (3.01–3.28). This suggests that coaching approaches that involve goal-setting, feedback, encouragement, and concern for athlete well-being significantly improve personal performance outcomes. This confirms that the quality of the coach–athlete relationship and the type of communication used by the coach can strongly enhance an athlete’s motivation and readiness to improve. The consistency of responses implies that most athletes experienced these benefits in similar ways.

Moreover, the findings show that athletes generally perceive and respond positively to coaching styles that involve emotional support, motivation, communication, and trust. Items referencing inspiration, open communication, supportive environments, and consideration of personal needs all recorded high mean values. This indicates that athletes appreciate coaching methods that treat them as individuals rather than merely performers. It also shows that positive coaching behaviours build stronger psychological readiness, confidence, and personal commitment among athletes.

Finally, the study identified the most effective coaching styles for improving both team and individual performance. Transformational, democratic, and athlete-centered coaching styles recorded the highest overall averages, indicating that these approaches were the strongest contributors to positive outcomes. These findings reinforce the idea that effective coaching is grounded in communication, motivation, guidance, and athlete involvement. These styles help athletes build confidence, sustain focus, develop skills, and perform well both individually and as part of a team.

Overall, the findings demonstrate that coaching styles play a significant role in shaping athletes' experiences and performance outcomes. Supportive and motivational coaching approaches produce better results compared to authoritarian or passive methods. The results emphasize the need for coaches to adopt strategies that promote inspiration, communication, personal growth, and strong team relationships.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### SUMMARY, CONCLUSION, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

#### Summary

This study examined the Roles of different coaching styles on the performance of team and individual athletes. The research questions focused on identifying the coaching styles commonly used, how these styles influence team performance, how they affect individual athletes, how athletes perceive these styles, and which style best improves overall performance.

A descriptive survey design was used, and data were collected from 108 student-athletes and coaches within the University of Benin. The findings showed that student-athletes experience several coaching styles, with transformational, democratic, athlete-centered, and transactional styles being the most commonly practiced. These coaching methods were perceived as supportive, motivating, and effective.

The results also revealed that coaching styles positively influence both team and individual performance. Athletes agreed that effective coaching improves teamwork, communication, motivation, discipline, confidence, and overall performance. Transformational, democratic, and athlete-centered coaching styles were identified as the most beneficial for improving both group and individual outcomes.

This study adds to existing literature by providing localized evidence on how coaching behaviours affect Nigerian athletes. It highlights the need for supportive and participatory

coaching methods and offers insights that can guide coaches, sports administrators, and institutions in improving athlete development and sports performance.

Here is a fully rewritten, human, paragraph-style major findings section, written clearly and naturally, based strictly on your data:

### **Major Findings**

The findings of this study revealed several important patterns about how coaching styles shape athletic performance in Nigerian sports institutions. First, the results showed that transformational, democratic, transactional, and athlete-centered coaching styles were the most commonly practiced. These styles recorded the highest mean values, indicating that many athletes experience coaches who communicate well, motivate them, set goals, and involve them in decision-making. In contrast, autocratic and laissez-faire coaching styles were moderately used, suggesting that strict command-based coaching and overly relaxed “hands-off” approaches are becoming less dominant in today’s sports environment.

The study also found that coaching styles strongly influence team performance. Respondents consistently agreed that positive coaching methods improve teamwork, communication, cooperation, unity, and the general functioning of a team. Athletes reported that when coaches offer guidance, clear instructions, encouragement, and open communication, teams perform better and work together more effectively.

In terms of individual performance, the results showed that coaching styles significantly affect motivation, confidence, discipline, concentration, and personal skill development. High mean values across these items indicate that athletes are more likely to put in greater

effort, stay focused, and improve their techniques when coached with supportive and motivational methods. This highlights the crucial role coaches play in shaping individual commitment and performance.

Furthermore, athletes' perceptions revealed that they respond more positively to coaches who show respect, provide feedback, communicate openly, and create a supportive environment. They reported feeling more motivated and valued when coached with empathy and understanding. Finally, the study found that transformational, democratic, and athlete-centered coaching styles were the most effective for improving both team and individual performance. These approaches promote athlete involvement, trust, motivation, and personal growth, making them the most suitable methods for achieving consistent and high-quality sports performance.

## **Conclusion**

The study concludes that coaching styles play a major role in shaping both team and individual athletic performance in Nigerian sports institutions. Results show that supportive and motivational styles especially transformational, democratic, and athlete-centered consistently produce better performance outcomes than autocratic or laissez-faire approaches.

These effective coaching styles encourage goal-setting, open communication, emotional support, and active athlete involvement. Such approaches foster confidence, discipline, teamwork, and skill development, leading to higher performance.

Based on the findings, coaching in Nigeria should prioritize athlete-centered and transformational leadership rather than authoritarian or passive methods. When coaches adopt styles that build trust and communication, athletes perform better, remain more motivated, and show stronger commitment to sports participation.

### **Recommendations**

Based on the findings and conclusions of this study, the following recommendations are proposed:

1. Coaches should adopt transformational, democratic, and athlete-centered coaching styles, as they have demonstrated the greatest positive influence on both team and individual performance.
2. Coaches should receive regular training and workshops on modern coaching psychology, especially communication, emotional intelligence, and athlete motivation, to improve the coach athlete relationship.
3. Sports institutions should implement feedback mechanisms where athletes can safely express their perceptions about coaching methods to promote healthier and more effective coaching behaviours.
4. Autocratic and laissez-faire coaching styles should be minimized, as they do not adequately promote trust, unity, or personal growth among athletes.
5. Sports administrators should integrate leadership and coaching-style training into coach recruitment and professional development programs to ensure quality coaching across all sports.

6. Coaches should personalize their coaching approach, acknowledging differences in athlete needs, skills, and emotional responses to maximize both individual and team performance.

7. Further research should be conducted, especially qualitative studies, to explore deeper psychological effects of coaching styles and to broaden the findings across more Nigerian institutions.

### **Suggestions for Further Studies**

1. Future research should compare coaching styles across different sports (e.g. Handball, basketball, athletics).

2. Studies involving coaches directly should be conducted to understand their perspective on coaching behaviour.

3. Researchers should investigate gender differences in responses to coaching styles.

4. A qualitative study should be conducted to gain deeper insights into athlete experiences.

5. Expanding the study to multiple institutions or states will enhance generalization of findings.

## REFERENCES

- Akbar, A., Karim, Z. A., Zakaria, J., Rahman, A. M., Suryanef, S., Cahyani, I. F., Mohammad, S. K. B., & Hamzah, N. B. (2024). Understanding mental toughness in student-athletes: Insights from sport psychology. *Retos*, 54, 1–9. <https://doi.org/10.47197/retos.v54.102230>
- Atta, H., Butt, Z. I., Kamil, B., & Mushtaq, M. (2019). A comparison of coaching leadership behavior preferences between male and female Pakistani intervarsity level basketball players. *The Sky: International Journal of Physical Education and Sports Sciences (IJPESS)*, 12–20. <https://doi.org/10.51846/thesky.v3i0.227>
- Barbosa-Granados, S., Arenas-Granada, J., Urrea, H., García-Más, A., Reyes-Bossio, M., Herrera-Velásquez, D., Nanez, J., & Aguirre-Loaiza, H. (2022). Precompetitive anxiety in young swimmers: Analysis of the perceived competition difficulty. *Retos*, 45, 651–659. <https://doi.org/10.47197/retos.v45i0.90934>
- Bartholomew, K. J., Ntoumanis, N., & Thøgersen-Ntoumani, C. (2009). A review of controlling motivational strategies from a self-determination theory perspective: Implications for sports coaches. *International Review of Sport and Exercise Psychology*, 2, 215–233.
- Baumeister, R. F., & Leary, M. R. (1995). The need to belong: Desire for interpersonal attachments as a fundamental human motivation. *Psychological Bulletin*, 117(3), 497–529.

- Bebetsos, E., Filippou, F., & Bebetos, G. (2017). Athletes' criticism of coaching behavior: Differences among gender and type of sport. *Polish Psychological Bulletin*, 48, 66–71.
- Becker, A. J. (2021). The coach–athlete relationship and its influence on athlete performance. *Journal of Sport Behavior*, 44(2), 115–130.
- Black, A. E., & Deci, E. L. (2000). The effects of instructors' autonomy support and students' autonomous motivation on learning organic chemistry: A self-determination theory perspective. *Science Education*, 84(6), 740–756.
- Borges, P. J., Argudo-Iturriaga, F. M., Ruiz-Barquín, R., & Ruiz-Lara, E. (2019). Analysis of competitive anxiety in young water polo players according to gender and performance. *Retos*, 38, 20–25. <https://doi.org/10.47197/retos.v38i38.73450>
- Breuer, C., Hallmann, K., Wicker, P., & Feiler, S. (2010). Socio-economic patterns of sport demand and aging. *European Review of Aging and Physical Activity*, 7, 61–70.
- Chelladurai, P. (2020). Models and measurement of leadership in sport. In *Measurement in sport and exercise psychology* (pp. 433–442). Human Kinetics.
- Chelladurai, P., & Saleh, S. D. (1980). Dimensions of leader behavior in sports: Development of a leadership scale. *Journal of Sport Psychology*, 2, 34–45.
- Cheon, S. H., Reeve, J., & Song, Y. G. (2020). Recommending autonomy-supportive coaching to enhance athletes' performance and well-being. *International Journal of Sport and Exercise Psychology*, 18(1), 1–15.

- Côté, J. (2006). The development of coaching knowledge. *International Journal of Sports Science & Coaching*, 1(3), 217–222.
- Cruz, A. B., & Kim, H. (2017). Leadership preferences of adolescent players in sport: Influence of coach gender. *Journal of Sports Science and Medicine*, 16(2), 172–179.
- Deci, E. L. (1975). *Intrinsic motivation*. Plenum Press.
- Deci, E. L., & Ryan, R. M. (1985). *Intrinsic motivation and self-determination in human behavior*. Plenum Press.
- Deci, E. L., & Ryan, R. M. (2000). The “what” and “why” of goal pursuits: Human needs and the self-determination of behavior. *Psychological Inquiry*, 11(4), 227–268.
- Deci, E. L., & Ryan, R. M. (2008). Self-determination theory: A macro theory of human motivation, development, and health. *Canadian Psychology*, 49(3), 182–185.
- Harter, S. (1978). Effectance motivation reconsidered: Toward a developmental model. *Human Development*, 21(1), 34–64.
- Horn, T. S. (2007). *Advances in sport psychology* (3rd ed.). Human Kinetics.
- Ignacio, R. A., Montecalbo-Ignacio, R. C., & Cardenas, R. C. (2017). The relationship between perceived coach leadership behaviors and athletes’ satisfaction. *International Journal of Sports Science*, 7, 196–202.
- Ives, Y. (2008). What is coaching? An exploration of conflicting paradigms. *International Journal of Evidence-Based Coaching & Mentoring*, 6(2).

- Khan, A., & Khan, S. (2014). Basics concept of sports training and coaching. LAP Publishing.
- Khan, M. K., Khan, A., Khan, S. U., & Khan, S. (2017). Effects of anxiety on athletic performance. *Research & Investigations in Sports Medicine*, 1, 1–5.
- Kidman, L., Thorpe, R., Jones, R. L., & Lewis, C. (2001). Developing decision makers: An empowerment approach to coaching. IPC Print Resources.
- Kim, H. D., & Cruz, A. B. (2016). The influence of coaches' leadership styles on athletes' satisfaction and team cohesion: A meta-analytic approach. *International Journal of Sports Science & Coaching*, 11(6), 900–909.
- Komenda, S., Springstein, T., Zrnić, I., Zeilinger, E. L., Franken, F., & Weber, G. (2021). Satisfaction with life in Special Olympic athletes: The role of autonomy support and basic need fulfillment. *International Journal of Developmental Disabilities*, 68, 964–972.
- Kwon, H., Pyun, D. Y., & Kim, M. (2010). Perceived leadership behavior of physical education teacher-coaches: When they teach vs. when they coach. *Journal of Teaching in Physical Education*, 29, 131–145.
- Mallett, C. (2005). Self-determination theory: A case study of evidence-based coaching. *The Sport Psychologist*, 19, 417–429.
- Mallett, C. J., & Lara-Bercial, S. (2016). Serial winning coaches: People, vision, and environment. In *Sport and exercise psychology research* (pp. 289–322). Academic Press.

- Marcone, M. (2017). The impact of coaching styles on the motivation and performance of athletes. Department of Kinesiology, Sport Studies, and Physical Education, The College at Brockport, State University of New York.
- Martens, R. (2019). *Successful coaching* (5th ed.). Human Kinetics.
- Michelson, L., Sugai, D. P., Wood, R. P., & Kazdin, A. E. (2013). *Social skills assessment and training with children: An empirically based handbook*. Springer.
- Moen, F., & Federici, R. A. (2013). Coaches' coaching competence and athletes' perceived progress in elite sport. *Journal of Education and Learning*, 2, 240–252.
- Naylor, A. H. (2007). The coach's dilemma: Balancing playing to win and player development. *Journal of Education*, 187(1), 31–48.
- Norris, L. A., Didymus, F. F., & Kaiseler, M. (2020). Understanding social networks and social support resources with sports coaches. *Psychology of Sport and Exercise*, 48, 101665.
- Ogbonna, C. B., & Okeke, F. C. (2021). Coaching behavior and athlete performance among university sports teams in Nigeria. *Nigerian Journal of Sports Science*, 5(2), 45–59.
- Okonkwo, K. E. (2020). Communication patterns and team cohesion among athletes in Nigerian universities. *Journal of Physical Education and Sports Management*, 7(1), 22–34.
- Partington, M., Cushion, C. J., & Harvey, S. (2014). An investigation of the effect of athletes' age on the coaching behaviours of professional top-level youth soccer coaches. *Journal of Sports Sciences*, 32, 403–414.

- Podlog, L., Lochbaum, M., & Stevens, T. (2010). Need satisfaction, well-being, and perceived return-to-sport outcomes among injured athletes. *Journal of Applied Sport Psychology*, 22, 167–182.
- Robbins, J. E., Houston, E., & Dummer, G. M. (2010). Philosophies and expectations of wheelchair and stand-up collegiate basketball coaches. *Journal of Sport Behavior*, 33(1).
- Smith, M. B., & Cushion, C. J. (2006). An investigation of the in-game behaviours of professional, top-level youth soccer coaches. *Journal of Sports Sciences*, 24, 355–366.
- Trninić, M., Trninić, S., & Papić, V. (2009). Development management model of elite athletes in team sports games. *Collegium Antropologicum*, 33(2), 363–372.
- Vallerand, R. J. (1997). Toward a hierarchical model of intrinsic and extrinsic motivation in sport. In M. P. Zanna (Ed.), *Advances in experimental social psychology* (Vol. 29, pp. 271–360). Academic Press.
- White, R. W. (1959). Motivation reconsidered: The concept of competence. *Psychological Review*, 66(5), 297–333.

**APPENDIX I**  
**QUESTIONNAIRE**  
**DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN KINETICS AND SPORT SCIENCE**  
**FACULTY OF EDUCATION**  
**UNIVERSITY OF BENIN, BENIN CITY.**

**QUESTIONNAIRE ON THE ROLES OF DIFFERENT COACHING STYLES ON  
THE IMPACT OF TEAM AND INDIVIDUAL ATHLETES PERFORMANCE**

**Instruction: Please tick (✓) the response that best reflects your opinion for each item.**

**SECTION A: Demographic Information**

**1. Gender:** Male ( ) Female ( )

**2. Age:** 16 – 20 Years ( ) 21 – 25 Years ( ) 26 – 30 Years ( ) 30 and above Years ( )

**3. Type of Sport:** Team Sport ( ) Individual Sport ( )

**4. Category:** Athlete ( ) Coach ( )

**5. Years of Experience in Sport:** Less than Years ( ) 2 – 5 Years ( ) 6 – 9 Years ( ) 10  
Years and above ( )

**6. Level:** 100 ( ) 200 ( ) 300 ( ) 400 ( ) 500 ( )

## SECTION B: COACHING STYLES PRACTICED

### A. Transformational Coaching Style

S/N	Item	SA	A	D	SD
1	My coach helps athletes set and achieve personal goals.				
2	My coach leads by example and inspires confidence.				

### B. Transactional Coaching Style

S/N	Item	SA	A	D	SD
3	My coach rewards athletes for good performance.				
4	My coach penalizes athletes who breaks team rules.				
5	My coach focuses mainly on results and performance outcomes.				

### C. Democratic Coaching Style

S/N	Item	SA	A	D	SD
6	My coach involves athletes in making team decisions.				
7	My coach values athletes opinions and suggestions.				
8	My coach encourage open communication in the team.				

### D. Autocratic Coaching Style

S/N	Item	SA	A	D	SD
9	My coach gives strict instructions and expects full compliance.				

10	My coach rarely accepts athletes input or opinions.				
11	My coach emphasizes control and discipline during training				

**E. Laissez-faire Coaching Style**

S/N	Item	SA	A	D	SD
12	My coach gives athletes freedom to train independently.				
13	My coach allows athletes to handle most decisions on their own.				
14	My coach does not enforce strict discipline among athletes.				

**F. Athlete-centered / Holistic Coaching Style**

S/N	Item	SA	A	D	SD
15	My coach promotes a positive and supportive environment.				
16	My coach considers athletes personal needs and emotions.				
17	My coach cares about athletes physical and mental well-being.				

**SECTION C: ATHLETE PERFORMANCE OUTCOMES**

<b>S/N</b>	<b>Item</b>	<b>SA</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>SD</b>
18	My coach inspires me to keep improving my skills.				
19	My coach's style increases my enthusiasm for training.				
20	I can concentrate better during training sessions.				
21	My coach's methods help me stay disciplined.				
22	My coach encourage punctuality and Commitment.				
23	My coach handles conflicts between team members fairly.				
24	I feel a sense of unity within my team.				
25	My coach gives useful feedback that enhances performance.				
26	My coach's methods improve my technical skills.				

**APPENDIX II**  
**DATA ANALYSIS**

**Frequencies**

[DataSet1] C:\Users\user\Documents\FAV DATA.sav

**Statistics**

		Gender	Age	Type_of_sport	Category	years_of_Experience_in_sport	Level
N	Valid	108	108	108	108	108	108
	Missing	0	0	0	0	0	0

**Frequency Table**

**Gender**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Male	50	46.3	46.3	46.3
	female	58	53.7	53.7	100.0
	Total	108	100.0	100.0	

### Age

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	16-20 years	35	32.4	32.4	32.4
	21-25 years	52	48.1	48.1	80.6
	26-30 years	12	11.1	11.1	91.7
	30 above	9	8.3	8.3	100.0
	Total	108	100.0	100.0	

### Type\_of\_sport

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Team Sport	61	56.5	56.5	56.5
	Individual Sport	47	43.5	43.5	100.0
	Total	108	100.0	100.0	

**Category**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Athlete	102	94.4	94.4	94.4
	Coach	6	5.6	5.6	100.0
	Total	108	100.0	100.0	

**years\_of\_Experience\_in\_sport**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	less than 2 years	54	50.0	50.0	50.0
	2-5 years	31	28.7	28.7	78.7
	6-9 years	15	13.9	13.9	92.6
	10 above	8	7.4	7.4	100.0
	Total	108	100.0	100.0	

### Level

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	100	10	9.3	9.3	9.3
	200	13	12.0	12.0	21.3
	300	12	11.1	11.1	32.4
	400	53	49.1	49.1	81.5
	500	20	18.5	18.5	100.0
		108	100.0	100.0	

### Descriptive Statistics

	<b>N</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Standard deviation</b>
<b>Item 1</b>	<b>108</b>	<b>3.29</b>	<b>.64200</b>
<b>Item 2</b>	<b>108</b>	<b>3.40</b>	<b>.59499</b>
<b>Item 3</b>	<b>108</b>	<b>3.13</b>	<b>.62790</b>
<b>Item 4</b>	<b>108</b>	<b>3.20</b>	<b>.48836</b>
<b>Item 5</b>	<b>108</b>	<b>3.01</b>	<b>.72981</b>
<b>Item 6</b>	<b>108</b>	<b>3.17</b>	<b>.71695</b>
<b>Item 7</b>	<b>108</b>	<b>3.14</b>	<b>.67614</b>
<b>Item 8</b>	<b>108</b>	<b>3.30</b>	<b>.64503</b>
<b>Item 9</b>	<b>108</b>	<b>3.11</b>	<b>.67441</b>
<b>Item 10</b>	<b>108</b>	<b>2.31</b>	<b>.82551</b>
<b>Item 11</b>	<b>108</b>	<b>3.13</b>	<b>.72463</b>
<b>Item 12</b>	<b>108</b>	<b>3.12</b>	<b>.60709</b>
<b>Item 13</b>	<b>108</b>	<b>2.59</b>	<b>.71089</b>
<b>Item 14</b>	<b>108</b>	<b>2.37</b>	<b>.83825</b>
<b>Item 15</b>	<b>108</b>	<b>3.24</b>	<b>.68181</b>
<b>Item 16</b>	<b>108</b>	<b>3.01</b>	<b>.70373</b>
<b>Item 17</b>	<b>108</b>	<b>3.28</b>	<b>.66745</b>
<b>Item 18</b>	<b>108</b>	<b>3.25</b>	<b>.61333</b>

<b>Item 19</b>	<b>108</b>	<b>3.10</b>	<b>.65481</b>
<b>Item 20</b>	<b>108</b>	<b>3.18</b>	<b>.66738</b>
<b>Item 21</b>	<b>108</b>	<b>3.21</b>	<b>.62728</b>
<b>Item 22</b>	<b>108</b>	<b>3.41</b>	<b>.62707</b>
<b>Item 23</b>	<b>108</b>	<b>3.20</b>	<b>.59215</b>
<b>Item 24</b>	<b>108</b>	<b>3.27</b>	<b>.69183</b>
<b>Item 25</b>	<b>108</b>	<b>3.33</b>	<b>.61142</b>
<b>Item 26</b>	<b>108</b>	<b>3.13</b>	<b>.72463</b>
<b>Valid N (listwise)</b>	<b>0</b>		