



Coaching Instruction in Field Training: Athletes' Perceptions of Clarity, Motivation, and Harshness

Rahmat^{1*}, Fadillah Kurniawan²

¹Department of Sports Coaching Education, IKIP PGRI East Kalimantan, Samarinda, Indonesia

²Department of Sports Coaching Education, Universitas Negeri Yogyakarta, Yogyakarta, Indonesia

Article Info

Article history:

Received Dec 13, 2025

Accepted Mar 21, 2026

Published Online Mar 28, 2026

Keywords:

Athlete perception

Coaching instruction

Field training

Motivational

Physical education

ABSTRACT

Coaching instruction is a crucial yet under-theorized part of field training because coaches' verbal and nonverbal cues influence how athletes perceive tasks, manage effort, and stay motivated during practice. This study investigated athletes' perceptions regarding the significance of coaching instruction during field training, emphasizing instructional clarity, motivational influences, and the effects of a severe instructional tone on comprehension. The research used a quantitative descriptive approach. Data were gathered from 146 athletes across different sports using a validated 15-item questionnaire distributed via Google Forms. The instrument was divided into three areas—clarity and delivery of instruction, athlete understanding and response, and motivational impact—and showed high internal consistency (Cronbach's alpha = .87). Descriptive statistics were used to analyze frequencies, percentages, and weighted mean scores. The results revealed a largely positive trend. About 93.8% of participants agreed or strongly agreed that coaches communicated training goals clearly, and the same percentage reported that coaching increased motivation and discipline. The weighted mean scores for these items were both 4.19 out of 5.00. In contrast, perceptions of harsh instruction were mixed, with a weighted mean of 3.06, indicating that athletes did not respond uniformly to forceful or emotionally intense delivery. These findings suggest that coaching instruction is highly valued when it is clear, specific, and motivating, but its effectiveness can diminish when tone is perceived as harsh. The study concludes that effective coaching instruction should be viewed not only as technical communication but also as a multidimensional pedagogical process that includes cognitive guidance, motivational support, and context-appropriate communication. The research adds empirical and conceptual insights to sports pedagogy by illustrating how instructional communication can enhance athlete learning and engagement during everyday field training contexts.

This is an open access under the [CC-BY-SA](#) license.



Corresponding author:

Rahmat

Email: rahmat@ikippgrikaltim.ac.id

I. INTRODUCTION

Coaching is no longer viewed simply as the transmission of technical drills or tactical commands. In modern sport science, effective coaching is better described as the consistent application of professional, interpersonal, and intrapersonal knowledge to enhance athletes' competence, confidence, connection, and character within specific coaching contexts (Côté & Gilbert, 2009). Within this broader framework, instruction plays a crucial role because it is the practical means through which coaches turn knowledge into athlete action. Jowett (2017) argued that coaching effectiveness is closely linked to the quality of the coach–athlete relationship, while Davis et al. (2019) showed that communication strategies such as support, motivation, and conflict management act as the relational “fuel” that maintains satisfaction and cooperation in sport. More recently, a scoping review of athlete engagement confirmed that motivational variables and the coach–athlete relationship are among the most frequent factors influencing sustained engagement in sport participation and performance settings (De Francisco et al., 2026). These perspectives collectively imply that instruction should not be seen as a momentary command; instead, it should be regarded as a pedagogical act that shapes how athletes learn, interpret, and perform during training.

Recent research further supports the idea that high-quality instruction is connected to a wider environment of motivation, well-being, and performance. In a systematic review and meta-analysis, Mossman et al. (2022) demonstrated that autonomy-supportive coaching settings are consistently associated with increased athlete well-being, stronger autonomous motivation, and reduced distress across diverse cultures and sports. Likewise, Şenel et al. (2024) found that supportive coaching behaviors and positive coach–athlete relationships predict psychological safety, a social climate that allows athletes to ask questions, admit mistakes, and take learning risks without fear of humiliation. Regarding athlete outcomes, Longakit et al. (2024) reported that the quality of coach–athlete relationships significantly mediates the relationship between motivation and sport engagement, indicating that the quality of communication influences athletes' emotional and cognitive commitment to the sport. In youth settings, Hogue (2024) also found that caring, task-focused coaching environments are linked to healthier motivational responses and improved well-being. Overall, these studies show that instruction is important not just because it explains what athletes should do but also because it affects how safe, valued, and motivated they feel while performing it.

Despite the growing recognition of communication in coaching, an important problem remains unresolved in everyday field training: instructional delivery is often treated as intuitive, routine, and self-evident rather than as a pedagogically designed process. Field training occurs

under conditions of time pressure, noise, physical fatigue, rapid task transitions, and uneven athlete readiness, all of which increase the likelihood that messages will be misheard, misunderstood, or emotionally misinterpreted. Sagar and Jowett (2012) demonstrated that athletes interpret coaches' communicative acts during mistakes and losses in both constructive and harmful ways, with consequences for motivation, affect, and learning. Likewise, Kim and Park (2020) showed that athletes can perceive coaching messages as helpful or detrimental depending on their timing, tone, and situational fit. The general solution to this problem is therefore not simply "more instruction," but better instruction: communication that is clear, timely, cognitively manageable, and emotionally calibrated to the athlete and the training context.

The literature points to several more specific solutions for improving instructional effectiveness. Davis et al. (2019) found that motivational, supportive, and conflict-management communication strategies are not peripheral relational niceties, but central mechanisms linking relationship quality with athlete satisfaction. McGuire et al. (2025) further showed that trust in sport is built intentionally through reciprocal processes of giving, earning, and maintaining confidence, indicating that instruction becomes more effective when embedded in relational credibility. From a skill-learning perspective, Hjortborg et al. (2025) argued that coaching interaction in real-world performance settings involves a sequence of diagnosis, strategy, implementation, affirmation, and consolidation rather than a simple one-way transfer of rules. Relatedly, Liu et al. (2025) reported that training guidance, social support, and positive feedback influence performance through the coach–athlete relationship and reduce psychological fatigue. These studies imply that effective instruction is simultaneously cognitive, relational, and situational: athletes benefit most when coaches combine technical direction with feedback sensitivity, motivational support, and contextual adaptation.

Even with these advances, the literature still exhibits several gaps that justify the present study. First, much of the evidence on coaching communication comes from elite sport, youth high-performance environments, or single-sport case studies, such as top-level youth soccer, Olympic archery, or professionalized team systems (Partington & Cushion, 2013; Kim & Park, 2020). Second, many studies privilege coach behaviour as observed by researchers rather than instruction as interpreted by athletes themselves. Yet communication is effective only when the receiver understands, accepts, and uses it. Third, the coach–athlete relationship is increasingly understood as part of a more complex network of experts and power relations, which means instructional effectiveness cannot be assumed to operate uniformly across contexts (Jowett, 2024). Consterdine and Taylor (2025) further argued that power in coach–athlete relations

remains insufficiently theorized, especially when directive authority and athlete autonomy must coexist. These gaps are particularly relevant in non-elite or mixed-discipline field-training settings, where instructional practices are less standardized, and cultural expectations may shape whether strictness is interpreted as guidance, care, pressure, or control. Moreover, evidence from community and university sport remains fragmented, even though these environments often contain the widest variation in coach education, resource availability, and athlete readiness. In such settings, instruction is frequently delivered to heterogeneous groups, making it especially important to understand whether athletes experience guidance as comprehensible, motivating, and fair. Because developmental and semi-structured training contexts are where most athletes spend the majority of their learning time, the absence of perception-based evidence from these settings limits the external relevance of existing communication models. This unresolved issue underscores the need for context-sensitive evidence of everyday instructional practice rather than communication models derived solely from elite, highly resourced systems.

In this context, the present study seeks to underscore the significance of coaches' guidance during on-field training by examining athletes' perceptions of instructional clarity, tone, and motivational influence. Specifically, it evaluates whether athletes perceive coach guidance as facilitating understanding, discipline, and engagement, and whether a stern instructional tone is interpreted uniformly or varies among individuals. The originality of this research resides in its reconceptualization of instruction as a multidimensional pedagogical process within routine field environments, rather than solely as a technical action observed in elite sports. By prioritizing athlete perceptions, the study offers a receiver-centered perspective to coaching literature and provides evidence to inform coach education, particularly in relation to clarity of communication, motivational tone, and the cultivation of relational coaching skills.

II. METHODS

This study employed a quantitative descriptive design to examine athletes' perceptions of the importance of coaches' instruction during field training. A descriptive design was selected because the study's objective was to document and interpret patterns in athletes' responses rather than to test causal hypotheses or manipulate training conditions. Such a design is appropriate when a study seeks to map the prevalence, intensity, and profile of perceptions in natural settings (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). In the context of coaching research, descriptive survey designs are especially useful for capturing how communicative practices are experienced by athletes across routine training environments, where instructional events occur

in real time and are shaped by interpersonal and situational factors. The study, therefore, treated field training as an authentic pedagogical setting in which instruction can be examined as both a behavioral and relational phenomenon

The participants were 146 athletes from multiple sport disciplines who were actively involved in a structured field training program. Based on the original dataset, the respondents were distributed across three age groups, namely 12–14 years, 15–17 years, and 18–20 years, with the largest proportion in the 18–20-year group. The sample also included both male and female athletes, with males comprising the majority of respondents. A total sampling strategy was used, meaning that all accessible athletes who met the inclusion criteria were invited to participate, which is appropriate for relatively bounded populations where each member can provide relevant information about the phenomenon under study (Etikan & Bala, 2017). To improve contextual consistency, participants were required to be actively involved in recurring field-training sessions and to have sufficient experience with coaching instruction to form meaningful judgments about its clarity, tone, and practical influence. All returned responses were screened for completeness, and only complete responses were retained for descriptive analysis.

Data were collected using a structured questionnaire distributed through Google Forms. The instrument contained 15 Likert-type items and an optional short comment box that allowed participants to add brief explanatory remarks about instructional experiences they considered especially helpful or problematic. The items were organized into three conceptual dimensions derived from the coaching and sport communication literature: clarity and delivery of instruction, athlete understanding and response, and motivational impact. The use of a structured questionnaire made it possible to obtain standardized responses across participants while preserving enough variation to identify areas of strong agreement and contested interpretation. Instrument development followed standard scale-construction principles, including domain specification, item review, content validation, and pilot reliability testing (Boateng et al., 2018). Three experts in sports pedagogy and coaching science reviewed the questionnaire for clarity, representativeness, and alignment with the study aims. A pilot test with 20 athletes produced a Cronbach's alpha coefficient of .87, indicating high internal consistency according to conventional psychometric thresholds (Nunnally & Bernstein, 1994).

The questionnaire used a five-point response scale ranging from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (5). This format was selected because it offers a sufficiently sensitive yet interpretable way to capture attitudes and perceptions in behavioural research. Data collection took place over a four-week period. Before completing the questionnaire, participants were

informed about the purpose of the research, the voluntary nature of participation, the confidentiality of responses, and their right to withdraw without penalty. The study followed standard ethical principles governing anonymity, informed consent, and secure data handling. Because the focus was on athletes' perceptions of ordinary training communication rather than on any intervention, the research posed minimal risk, but ethical safeguards remained important due to the unequal power relations that can characterize coach–athlete settings.

Data were processed using descriptive statistical procedures in SPSS version 25.0. Frequencies, percentages, and weighted mean scores were calculated to profile the direction and strength of athlete perceptions, following the logic that descriptive statistics are appropriate when the goal is to portray and interpret a pattern of responses rather than test inferential claims (Field, 2018). The weighted mean for each focal item was calculated on a five-point scale to summarize the overall response tendency. In addition, demographic information such as age group and gender was tabulated descriptively to provide context for the respondent profile. The optional written comments were not analyzed as a separate qualitative dataset; instead, they were used only as limited descriptive support for interpreting the questionnaire trends. Figure 1 illustrates the overall study process, including how participants were selected, the instrument used, and the descriptive analysis used to interpret the results.

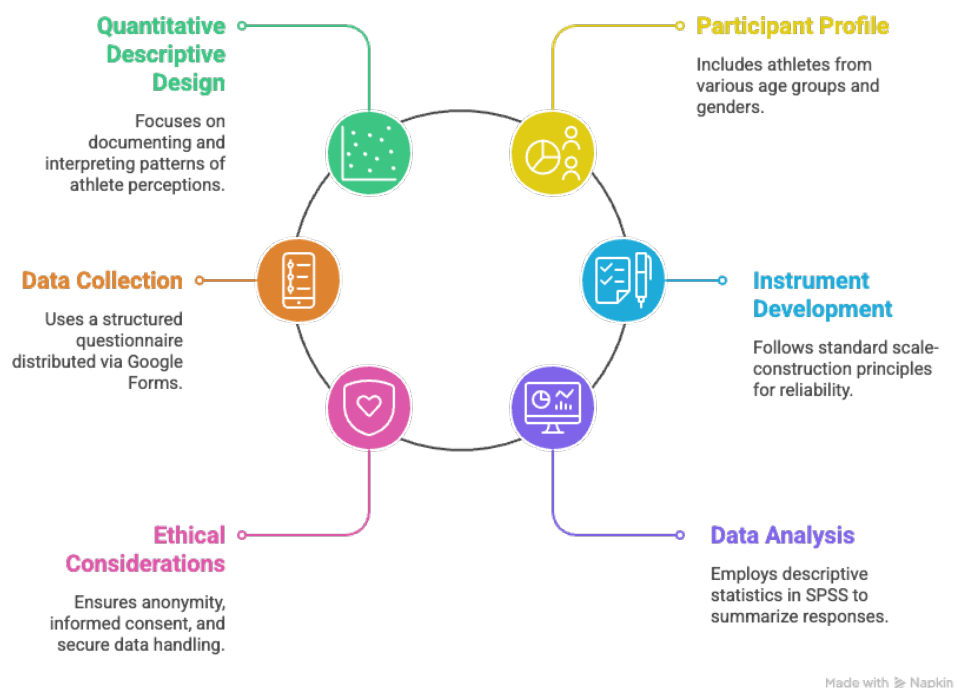


Figure 1. Overview of the study design and data analysis procedure

III.RESULTS

The purpose of this study was to describe athletes' perceptions of the importance and effectiveness of coaching instruction during field training. Consistent with that objective, the findings are presented descriptively, focusing on respondents' characteristics and the dominant response pattern regarding instructional clarity, understanding, and motivational impact. The descriptive profile shows that the largest proportion of respondents was in the 18–20 age group, followed by the 12–14 and 15–17 age groups. The sample was also dominated by male athletes, who accounted for 75% of respondents, while female athletes accounted for 25%. These characteristics indicate that the dataset primarily reflects the perceptions of adolescent and young adult athletes who were actively involved in organized field training contexts.

As shown in Table 1, 62.5% of respondents agreed, and 31.3% strongly agreed that coaches clearly communicated training objectives. Only 6.3% disagreed, and none selected neutral or strongly disagree. The weighted mean for this item was 4.19 on a five-point scale, indicating a distinctly positive evaluation. This pattern suggests that the athletes in this study largely experienced their coaches' instructions as understandable, explicit, and functionally useful during practice. The absence of neutral responses is also noteworthy because it indicates that respondents tended to take a definite position on the clarity of coaching communication rather than respond ambivalently.

Table 1. Athletes' responses to coaching instruction effectiveness

Statement	Strongly disagree (%)	Disagree (%)	Neutral (%)	Agree (%)	Strongly agree (%)
Coaches clearly communicate training objectives.	0	6.3	0	62.5	31.3
Coach instructions increase motivation and discipline.	0	6.3	0	62.5	31.3
Harsh instruction negatively affects understanding.	6.3	43.8	0	37.5	12.5

A nearly identical pattern emerged for the item concerning motivation and discipline. Again, 62.5% of respondents agreed, and 31.3% strongly agreed that coach instructions increased motivation and discipline, while only 6.3% disagreed. The weighted mean for this item was also 4.19, matching the clarity item and indicating that instruction was valued not only as an informational resource but also as a motivational mechanism. In practical terms, this means that athletes did not interpret coaches' messages as mere procedural directions; rather,

they associated them with heightened effort, focus, and behavioural regulation during training. This result strengthens the view that instruction functions simultaneously as guidance and encouragement within everyday field practice.

The athlete's understanding was also reflected in the optional written remarks attached to the questionnaire. Although these comments were brief and were not treated as a separate qualitative dataset, they consistently indicated that athletes found demonstration-based explanations, immediate correction, and concise verbal cues especially helpful. These remarks support the broader descriptive trend captured in Table 1, namely that instruction was experienced as facilitating comprehension when it was concrete, timely, and directly linked to the task being performed. In descriptive terms, the comments reinforce the interpretation that athletes valued instruction most when it reduced uncertainty and made the purpose of an exercise immediately actionable.

The most differentiated finding concerns the item “harsh instruction negatively affects understanding.” Here, the pattern became markedly more divided. A total of 43.8% disagreed, and 6.3% strongly disagreed with the statement, whereas 37.5% agreed and 12.5% strongly agreed. The weighted mean for this item was 3.06, which is much closer to the midpoint than the other two items. This indicates that athletes did not respond uniformly to harsher tones of instruction. For some, firmness or intensity may have been interpreted as a normal part of disciplined sport communication, whereas for others the same tone appeared to interfere with understanding. The absence of neutral responses again suggests that athletes held definite views on this issue, but unlike the first two items, those views were split rather than convergent.

Figure 2 further clarifies the contrast among the three focal items. The bars for clarity and motivational impact are heavily concentrated in the agree and strongly agree categories, whereas the bar for harsh instruction is visibly more fragmented across positive and negative responses. This visual pattern supports a two-level reading of the findings. First, coaching instruction was overwhelmingly perceived as beneficial and necessary in field training. Second, athletes distinguished between the presence of instruction and the manner in which it was delivered. In descriptive terms, therefore, the dataset portrays instructional effectiveness as generally high, but not uniform across communication styles

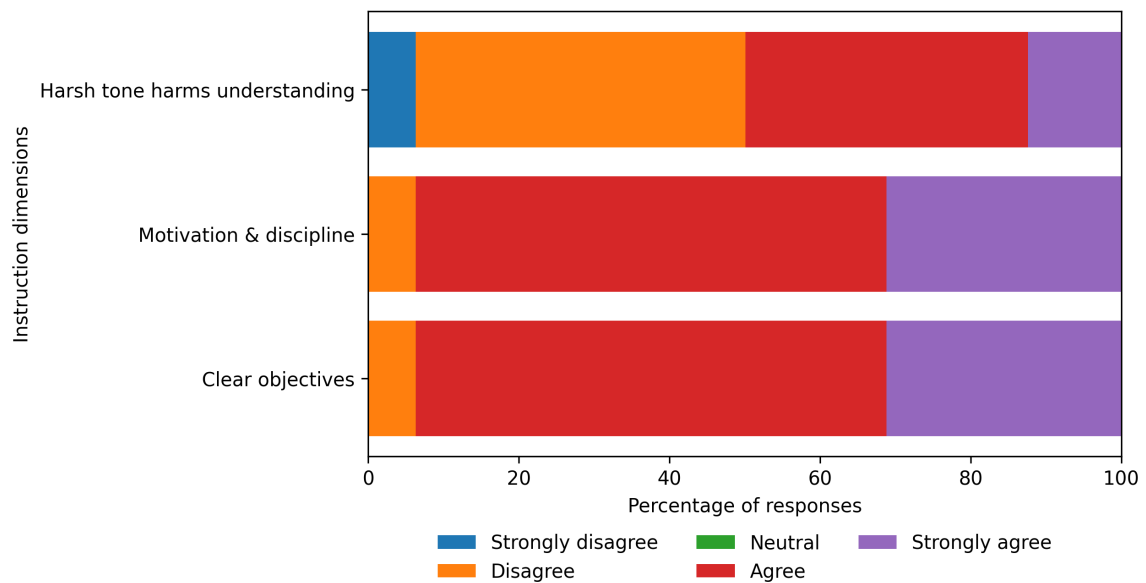


Figure 2. Athletes' perceptions of coach instruction during field training

A final descriptive observation is the numerical gap between the supportive instructional items and the harshness item. The difference between the weighted mean for clarity (4.19) and the weighted mean for harshness (3.06) was 1.13 scale points, and the same gap appeared between the motivation item (4.19) and the harshness item. This difference indicates that athletes were considerably more unified in evaluating supportive instructional functions than in judging the impact of a strict tone. Overall, the results show that athletes tended to value clear and motivating coaching messages, while the perceived effect of harsh delivery remained contingent and divided.

IV. DISCUSSION

This study set out to examine how athletes perceive the importance of coaches' instruction during field training. The findings indicate that athletes regard instruction as a central part of the training process, not only because it communicates what should be done, but also because it shapes the emotional and motivational climate in which training occurs. The near-identical positive response profiles for instructional clarity and motivational impact suggest that athletes do not separate technical guidance from relational encouragement as sharply as coaching models sometimes imply. Instead, they appear to understand effective instruction as communication that simultaneously informs, regulates, and energizes action. In this sense, the results are consistent with broader conceptions of effective coaching as the integration of knowledge, relationships, and context rather than the mere delivery of sport-specific expertise (Côté & Gilbert, 2009; Jowett, 2017).

The first major implication of the findings concerns instructional clarity as a pedagogical resource. Athletes' very strong endorsement of clear communication indicates that instruction plays a foundational role in reducing ambiguity during training. In practical field settings, where athletes must often translate verbal cues into immediate motor responses, clarity helps create shared understanding around goals, priorities, and standards of execution. This interpretation aligns with Davis et al. (2019), who found that communicative strategies underpin relationship quality and athlete satisfaction, and with Hjortborg et al. (2025), whose microethnographic work showed that real-time coach–athlete interaction supports skill learning through a sequence of diagnosis, strategy, implementation, affirmation, and consolidation. The present study adds to this literature by showing that athletes themselves recognize clarity as a condition of usable instruction. What matters is not only whether a coach speaks, but whether the message is delivered in a way that can be converted into timely action.

The second major implication relates to motivation. The data show that instruction was interpreted as a source of discipline and motivational reinforcement almost as strongly as it was interpreted as a source of information. This finding resonates with the motivational model of the coach–athlete relationship advanced by Mageau and Vallerand (2003), which emphasizes that coaching behaviours can either support or undermine athletes' psychological needs. It also accords with Mossman et al.'s (2022) meta-analytic evidence that autonomy-supportive coaching environments are associated with stronger autonomous motivation and athlete well-being. Importantly, the present results suggest that instruction can have a motivational function even in routine field training, not only in competition or emotionally heightened moments. Athletes may experience a well-timed instruction as confirmation that the coach is attentive, invested, and capable of directing effort toward meaningful goals. From this perspective, instruction is motivational because it provides structure, communicates standards, and frames effort as purposeful rather than arbitrary.

At the same time, the divided responses to harsh instruction reveal that tone remains a critical and unresolved element of coaching communication. Unlike the other two items, the harshness item did not generate consensus; instead, athletes were almost evenly split over whether such instruction damages understanding. This polarization is theoretically significant because it suggests that directive intensity does not carry a stable meaning across athletes or situations. Kim and Park (2020) observed a similar complexity among Olympic archers, where athletes' perceptions of coaches' messages changed according to moment, context, and personal need. Şenel et al. (2024) also showed that supportive versus controlling coach behaviours matter because they influence relationship quality and psychological safety. Read together with the

present findings, these studies suggest that harshness is not simply a stronger version of clarity. A forceful tone may sometimes be experienced as urgency, seriousness, or accountability, but it may also be interpreted as threat, disrespect, or relational distance. The difference likely depends on trust, prior relational history, training culture, and the athlete's own regulatory needs.

This point becomes even more important when examined through the lens of power. Consterdine and Taylor (2025) argued that power in coach–athlete relationships has often been under-theorized, particularly when researchers discuss authority, compliance, and autonomy as if they were transparent categories. The current findings support that critique. The split responses to harsh instruction imply that athletes do not encounter directive communication in a vacuum; rather, they interpret it through the power relations embedded in training. For some athletes, firm instruction may be legitimate because it is backed by trust, competence, and shared goals. For others, the same style may reduce openness, narrow attentional focus, and compromise understanding. This interpretation is also consistent with research on trust building in sport, which shows that coaches must actively cultivate reciprocal confidence if they want their messages to be received as credible and constructive (McGuire et al., 2025). Therefore, the effectiveness of directive coaching cannot be judged solely by intent or by the coach's preference. It must be assessed in relation to how athletes actually receive it.

A further contribution of the study is its emphasis on athletes' perceptions rather than on coach behaviour alone. Much influential coaching research has relied on observational designs, coding systems, or coach-centered accounts of practice (Partington & Cushion, 2013). Such work has been indispensable for identifying what coaches do, but it does not always tell us how athletes interpret their actions. The present findings show that this distinction matters. Identical or near-identical instructional acts may be processed differently depending on whether athletes experience them as clarifying, motivating, dismissive, or coercive. This perception-based focus complements recent work showing that relationship quality mediates the effect of coaching on behavioural outcomes. For example, Zhang and Rhim (2024) found that coach–athlete relationship quality influences motor behaviour through psychological need satisfaction, and Longakit et al. (2024) showed that the coach–athlete relationship mediates the link between motivation and athlete engagement. The present study extends these insights by suggesting that instruction is one of the everyday communicative mechanisms through which such relational processes are enacted.

The field-training context also deserves emphasis. Instruction in field settings is delivered under movement, fatigue, time pressure, and environmental distraction. These conditions make

communication unusually demanding because athletes often must interpret brief verbal or gestural cues while remaining physically engaged in the task. Hjortborg et al. (2025) highlighted that real-world coaching involves dense, multimodal, and context-sensitive interventions rather than simple verbal transmission. Similarly, Liu et al. (2025) showed that training guidance, social support, and positive feedback influence performance through relational and psychological mechanisms. In the present study, athletes' optional comments about the usefulness of demonstrations and immediate corrections reinforce this ecological view. They suggest that athletes value instruction most when it is anchored in the immediate performance problem and supported by multimodal explanation. Consequently, coach education should not treat communication as a generic soft skill; it should be taught as a field-specific pedagogical competence that involves timing, wording, demonstration, and emotional regulation.

The findings also hold practical implications for coach education and professional development. First, coaches should be trained to distinguish between being clear and being harsh. Clarity refers to the intelligibility, specificity, and timing of a message; harshness refers to its emotional charge and interpersonal force. The two may coexist, but they are not equivalent. Second, coaches should develop feedback loops that allow them to check whether instruction has been understood rather than assuming comprehension from obedience alone. Third, communication training should integrate motivational principles from self-determination theory, especially the provision of structure without humiliating control (Mageau & Vallerand, 2003; Mossman et al., 2022). Fourth, coaches need relational skills that help them build trust and psychological safety, because athletes appear more receptive to instruction when they perceive the relationship as respectful and cooperative (Şenel et al., 2024; McGuire et al., 2025). These implications are particularly relevant to coach education frameworks that aim to move beyond the delivery of technique toward more holistic athlete development.

From a theoretical standpoint, the study supports an understanding of coaching instruction as a multidimensional pedagogical process. Instruction is not merely an operational tool for organizing drills; it is also a mechanism for shaping attention, motivation, emotional tone, and relationship quality. This view is consistent with Jowett's (2024) conceptual argument that the coach–athlete relationship must now be understood within broader, more complex systems of expertise and interaction. Yet the present study shows that even in ordinary field settings, away from highly specialized expert teams, instruction already performs several overlapping functions: it structures the task, legitimizes authority, communicates care or urgency, and influences athlete engagement. In this respect, the novelty of the study lies in showing that

athlete perceptions can illuminate how these functions converge in practice. The data do not portray instruction as a neutral technical instrument, but as a pedagogical act whose value depends on communicative clarity, motivational usefulness, and relational fit.

V. CONCLUSION

This study examined athletes' perceptions of the importance of coaches' instruction during field training and found that instructional communication is widely seen as a core part of effective practice. Athletes mostly viewed clear instructions as helpful for understanding training goals, and they linked coaches' messages with increased motivation and discipline. At the same time, responses to harsh instruction varied, suggesting that a directive tone is interpreted through relational and situational factors rather than as a universally effective approach. Overall, the results show that coaching instruction should be understood as more than just the delivery of technical commands. It serves as a teaching process that integrates cognitive clarification, emotional regulation, motivational support, and interpersonal influence throughout the training.

Several limitations should be acknowledged. The study relied on self-reported perceptions from a single cross-sectional dataset and therefore cannot establish causal relationships or track how athletes' interpretations of instruction evolve over time. Additionally, the descriptive design does not allow for stronger inferential claims about subgroup differences or behavioral outcomes, and the optional written comments were too brief for formal qualitative analysis. Future research would benefit from mixed-method, observational, or longitudinal designs that link perceived instruction with actual performance indicators, learning retention, and changes in the coach–athlete relationship over a season. Comparative studies across sports and cultural contexts would also help clarify when firmness is experienced as supportive structure versus when it becomes counterproductive control. Despite these limitations, the study contributes to the literature by highlighting athletes' perceptions of instruction in everyday field settings and emphasizing that effective coaching depends as much on how guidance is communicated as on what guidance is given.

REFERENCES

- Boateng, G. O., Neilands, T. B., Frongillo, E. A., Melgar-Quinonez, H. R., & Young, S. L. (2018). Best practices for developing and validating scales for health, social, and behavioral research: A primer. *Frontiers in Public Health*, 6, Article 149. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpubh.2018.00149>
- Consterdine, A., & Taylor, W. G. (2025). Reappraising theorisations of power in the coach–athlete relationship: Future directions for sports coaching research. *Sports Coaching*

- Review. Advance online publication. <https://doi.org/10.1080/21640629.2025.2569943>
- Côté, J., & Gilbert, W. (2009). An integrative definition of coaching effectiveness and expertise. *International Journal of Sports Science & Coaching*, 4(3), 307–323. <https://doi.org/10.1260/174795409789623892>
- Creswell, J. W., & Creswell, J. D. (2018). *Research design: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches* (5th ed.). SAGE.
- Davis, L., Jowett, S., & Tafvelin, S. (2019). Communication strategies: The fuel for quality coach–athlete relationships and athlete satisfaction. *Frontiers in Psychology*, 10, Article 2156. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2019.02156>
- De Francisco, C., Scurtu, M. C., & Vilchez, M. P. (2026). What is known about athlete engagement: A scoping review. *Sports Medicine - Open*, 12(1), Article 6. <https://doi.org/10.1186/s40798-026-00975-5>
- Etikan, I., & Bala, K. (2017). Sampling and sampling methods. *Biometrics & Biostatistics International Journal*, 5(6), 215–217. <https://doi.org/10.15406/bbij.2017.05.00149>
- Field, A. (2018). *Discovering statistics using IBM SPSS statistics* (5th ed.). SAGE.
- Hjortborg, S. K., Downey, G., & Sutton, J. (2025). Coach–athlete interaction in Muay Thai: A microethnographic analysis of skill learning in a real-world combat sport. *Journal of Sports Sciences*. Advance online publication. <https://doi.org/10.1080/02640414.2025.2542588>
- Hogue, C. M. (2024). Caring coaching climates emerge as key factor in promoting high school athletes' well-being and motivation, complemented by a task-involving climate. *International Journal of Sport and Exercise Psychology*. Advance online publication. <https://doi.org/10.1080/1612197X.2024.2437481>
- Jowett, S. (2017). Coaching effectiveness: The coach–athlete relationship at its heart. *Current Opinion in Psychology*, 16, 154–158. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.copsyc.2017.05.006>
- Jowett, S. (2024). The coach–athlete relationship within a cross-boundary team of experts: A conceptual analysis. *International Review of Sport and Exercise Psychology*. Advance online publication. <https://doi.org/10.1080/1750984X.2024.2416968>
- Kim, Y., & Park, I. (2020). “Coach really knew what I needed and understood me well as a person”: Effective communication acts in coach–athlete interactions among Korean Olympic archers. *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*, 17(9), Article 3101. <https://doi.org/10.3390/ijerph17093101>
- Liu, R., Wang, S., & Li, J. (2025). How coach leadership behavior influences athletes' performance: The chain-mediated role of the coach–athlete relationship and psychological fatigue. *Frontiers in Psychology*, 15, Article 1500867. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2024.1500867>
- Longakit, J., Toring-Aque, L., Aque, F., Jr., Sayson, M., & Lobo, J. (2024). The role of coach–athlete relationship on motivation and sports engagement. *Physical Education of Students*, 28(5), 268–278. <https://doi.org/10.15561/20755279.2024.0503>
- Mageau, G. A., & Vallerand, R. J. (2003). The coach–athlete relationship: A motivational model. *Journal of Sports Sciences*, 21(11), 883–904. <https://doi.org/10.1080/0264041031000140374>

- McGuire, C. S., Caron, J. G., & Martin, L. J. (2025). Understanding coaches' perspectives on building trust in sport: A narrative inquiry approach. *Qualitative Research in Sport, Exercise and Health*, 17(2), 139–154. <https://doi.org/10.1080/2159676X.2024.2428246>
- Mossman, L. H., Slemp, G. R., Lewis, K. J., Colla, R. H., & O'Halloran, P. (2022). Autonomy support in sport and exercise settings: A systematic review and meta-analysis. *International Review of Sport and Exercise Psychology*. Advance online publication. <https://doi.org/10.1080/1750984X.2022.2031252>
- Nunnally, J. C., & Bernstein, I. H. (1994). *Psychometric theory* (3rd ed.). McGraw-Hill.
- Partington, M., & Cushion, C. (2013). An investigation of the practice activities and coaching behaviours of professional top-level youth soccer coaches. *Scandinavian Journal of Medicine & Science in Sports*, 23(3), 374–382. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1600-0838.2011.01383.x>
- Sagar, S. S., & Jowett, S. (2012). Communicative acts in coach–athlete interactions: When losing competitions and when making mistakes in training. *Western Journal of Communication*, 76(2), 148–174. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10570314.2011.651256>
- Şenel, E., Jowett, S., Adiloğulları, İ., & Kerr-Cumbo, R. (2024). Investigating the impact of coach behaviours and coach–athlete relationships on psychological safety. *International Journal of Sport and Exercise Psychology*. Advance online publication. <https://doi.org/10.1080/1612197X.2024.2369717>
- Zhang, R., & Rhim, Y.-T. (2024). The effect of coach–athlete relationships on motor behaviour in college athletes—Mediating effects of psychological needs. *Behavioral Sciences*, 14(7), Article 579. <https://doi.org/10.3390/bs14070579>