

Talk It, Win It: Exploring the Link Between Coaches' Communication Skills and Athlete Satisfaction in KARISMA Sport Teams Athletes

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ABSTRACT

*Athletes who perceive their coaches as effective communicators tend to exhibit higher levels of motivation, engagement and satisfaction, especially during their training routines. The enhancement and engagement are also often attributed to the coach's ability to clearly convey messages, expectations and constructive feedback. In this study, a total of 100 questionnaires were distributed to the athletes of Sukan Mahasiswa (KARISMA) from Universiti Teknologi MARA (UiTM) Perlis Branch in examining the influence of perceived communication skills on athletes' satisfaction. The instruments employed included a modified version of the Interpersonal Communication Skills Inventory (ICSI; 10 items), and the Satisfaction Scale for Athlete (SSA; 14 items). Pearson Correlation was used in analyzing the relationship between communication skills and athletes' satisfaction. Result revealed a moderate positive correlation between perceived communication skills and athletes' satisfaction ($r=.619^{**}$, $p<0.05$). The finding underscores the importance of effective communication skills in enhancing athlete satisfaction and highlights the need for coaches to develop strong interpersonal communication competencies.*

Keywords: *athletes' satisfaction, communication skills, coaches*

INTRODUCTION

Communication is an essential component of human contact and plays an important role in our daily lives. It is the process by which individuals interact with information, ideas, thoughts, and feelings. Speaking, writing, body language, facial expressions, and gestures are all examples of effective communication methods. According to academicians Johnson and Johnson (2019), communication is more than just words; it also includes the ability to actively listen and grasp the perspectives of others. It is a two-way process in which messages must be sent and received. Individuals may communicate their needs, share knowledge, develop connections, resolve issues, and work efficiently through communication.

This communication has a subtopic called verbal and nonverbal communication (Oni, 2023). These two important kinds of human interaction are critical in expressing messages, thoughts, and emotions. Communication is an important part of human contact that allows individuals or groups to communicate information. Clarity in presenting ideas, active listening skills, and awareness of nonverbal signs are all required for effective communication.

For sports team athletes, effective communication is more than absorbing instruction, communication is a way of understanding and delivering the messages to the whole team. The main attributes of communication within a sports team include building trust, motivating fostering unity, enhancing mental readiness and adaptation to any situation during training and competition (Ergashevich, 2024). The athletes surely rely on communication to understand the tactical methods, receiving feedback, and stay aligned with the team goals. Likewise, the coaches must be skilled in communicating to inspire, guide and manage diverse personalities within team settings. Good communication between coaches and athletes will enhance in the learning capabilities, fostering psychological safety, and reduce the likelihood of misunderstanding or conflict (Jowett et.al, 2023). As sports continue to evolve in complexity and visibility, the importance of sports communication, especially between coach and athlete, has become more recognized than ever. Moreover, good communication skills may improve athletes' satisfaction. Athlete satisfaction is described as the total contentment and fulfilment that athletes feel because of their participation in sports (Francisco, 2020). It includes factors such as physical, psychological, and social well-being. Athlete happiness is critical for motivation, performance, and long-term participation in sports.

According to a study conducted by Smith et al. (2018), it found that various factors influence athlete satisfaction. For starters, it is strongly related to achieving personal goals and objectives in a sporting situation. Athletes report higher levels of pleasure when they believe they are making progress towards their goals, this is also supported with social support from the people around them. (Lautenbach et.al, 2021). The presence of encouraging teammates, coaches, and family members creates a good atmosphere that increases athletes' enjoyment and overall happiness (Gu et.al, 2023). Importance of perceived teammate support as a predictor of student-athletes' positive emotions and subjective well-being. Furthermore, the quality of coaching influences athlete satisfaction. According to Davis, Jowett and Tafvelin (2019) coaches that give clear instructions, helpful comments, and foster an inclusive team culture have happier athletes. Finally, athlete satisfaction involves several variables, including goal achievement, social support, coaching quality, and intrinsic motivation. Understanding these elements can assist coaches and sports organizations in creating an environment that supports athletes' well-being and, as a result, improves performance. Thus, this study is significant in understanding the association between communication, satisfaction and as well as coaches-athletes relationship by focusing on the sports team athletes that play for Karnival Sukan Mahasiswa (KARISMA).

LITERATURE REVIEW

Communication skills

Effective communication between players and coaches can improve performance and foster a pleasant team environment (Üzümlü, 2018). According to Burto and Ari (2018) communication skills in sports are essential for both athletes and coaches. Effective communication between players and coaches can improve performance and foster a pleasant team environment (Crawford, Arnold, McKay, & McEwan, 2024). Effective communication between players and coaches can improve performance and foster a pleasant team environment.

Nonverbal communication is more commonly used in sports club coaching than verbal communication, showing its relevance in communicating and confirming verbal messages (Chung & Jeong, 2023). Coaches must properly convey objectives, goals, standards, and feelings to their athletes, so good communication skills are essential (Purnomo et.al, 2024; Khan, Butt & Jamil, 2022). Numerous studies have shown that enhancing communication skills is critical for success in both business and sports. Noviyenty (2022) mentioned that communication strategy was known as a systematic effort by the learner to express intentions in the target language or language studied when learners are unable to correctly choose the rules of the target language. Additionally, Sani and Ismail (2021) highlighted that communication strategies are procedural skills that students utilize to compensate for a lack of vocabulary. It was proven that communication skills are very important in sports decision-making (Sharma, Tokas, Sharma, & Mishra, 2022). Individuals involved in negotiations can acquire mutual understanding and support transformative changes in behaviour, attitudes, and goals through efficient and skilled communication (Gerstein et.al, 2021; Scott, 2022).

Athlete satisfaction

Athlete satisfaction is an important part of the sporting experience that is influenced by numerous factors. It is characterized as a pleasant affective state caused by a sophisticated assessment of the structures, processes, and outcomes connected with the sports experience (Ruoxi, Albattat, & Tham, 2023). Athlete happiness can be measured using a variety of scales and questionnaires, including the Scale of Athlete happiness (SAS) and the Athletic Satisfaction Questionnaire (ASQ), which assesses personal performance, team performance, leadership, and overall satisfaction (Saks, 2022; Washington, 2021). Lewis (2022) stated that athlete happiness has been connected to objective achievement and approbation from social agents such as parents, coaches and teammates. Gu et.al, (2023) also add that athlete satisfaction has also been found to mediate the association between role dimensions and team commitment, showing its importance in athletes' overall experience and dedication to their teams (Chiu et.al, 2022).

Likewise, athlete satisfaction is heavily influenced by the fulfilment of basic psychological requirements, and it is critical in the coach-athlete interaction (Fan et.al, 2023; Felton, Jowett, Begg & Zhong, 2021). Additionally, athlete satisfaction has been proven to be a crucial factor of self-confidence, motivation, and goal setting (Junli, Tianyuan & Jinglan, 2021; Kim & Cruz, 2021). Hence, positive interactions with coaches and teammates have also been proven to improve athletes' overall satisfaction (Laishuang, Zhaoyin & Benxu, 2021). In another study by Beattie and Turner (2021) it was proven that the training environment has a substantial impact on athletes' satisfaction levels. This also aligns with a study by Baldwin et.al, (2024) which mentioned that establishing a supportive and inclusive environment has a favorable impact on athlete happiness. Athletes typically find fulfilment in completing performance-related goals. Thus it is crucial to highlight that an overemphasis on outcome-based indicators can lead to unhappiness if not balanced with other parts of the sports experience.

MATERIALS AND METHOD

Respondents and Research Design

This study used a quantitative research design to investigate the relationship between communication skills and athletes' satisfaction. The questionnaire consists of 3 sections which is the demographic profile, communication skills inventory and athletes' satisfaction. A total of 100 UiTM Perlis, KARISMA athletes participated in this study. According to Krejcie and Morgan (1970), the valid sample size for a population of 100 is 80 samples.

An additional 20% of the sample will be added to avoid an irretrievable rate or decrease (Suresh and Chandrashekara 2012). Therefore, the total sample will be 100 (80 + 20), from 5 selected KARISMA UiTM Perlis sports team athlete 2024.

Ethical Approval

The UiTM Research Ethics Committee had approved this study, and all participants were provided with written informed consent. (600-UiTMPs (PJIM&A/UPK-ERC 11/2024).

Instrumentations

The Interpersonal Communication Skills Inventory (ICSI) with Cronbach's Alpha ($\alpha=.882$) was used to assess the perceived competence in interpersonal communication. It is commonly used in educational, organizational, and as well as sports psychology. The scale was based on five-point Likert scale from strongly disagree until strongly agree. The number of items in this questionnaire is 10 items which the respondents are taking note that they will be rating how much they disagree and agree with each statement on the questionnaire.

Satisfaction Scale for Athlete (SSA) with Cronbach's Alpha ($\alpha=.889$) is a measurement tools to assess athletes' satisfaction with various aspects of their sports experience particularly focusing on their relationship with the coach, training environment and personal development. The scale was based on five-point Likert scale from strongly disagree until strongly agree. The number of items in this questionnaire is 14 items which the respondents are taking note that they will be rating how much they disagree and agree with each statement on the questionnaire.

Data Analysis

The data collected were analyzed using inferential analysis by Pearson Correlation in determining the relationship between perceived communication skills and athletes' satisfaction. Statistical Package for Social Science version 29 was used in analyzing all the data.

RESULTS

Table 5 portrays the range of mean interpretation to understand the level of mean. Table 6 shows the mean score for both Communication Skills ($M=3.92$) and Athlete Satisfaction ($M=4.15$) the results indicated that the level of Communication Skills and Athletes Satisfaction is relatively high.

Table 7 portrays the Guildford Rule of Thumb to interpret the relationship strength. Table 8 indicated that there is a significant relationship between Communication Skills and Athletes' Satisfaction. The Pearson correlation coefficient is $r.619^{**}$ which indicated a moderate positive correlation between communication skills and athletes' satisfaction, which was statistically significant $p < .01$.

Table 5: Level for Interpretation of Mean Score (Anuar & Amni 2017)

Mean score	Interpretation
4.30 to 5.00	Very high
3.50 to 4.29	High
2.70 to 3.49	Moderate
1.90 to 2.69	Low
1.00 to 1.89	Very low

Table 6: Descriptive between ISCI and SSA mean score among UiTM Perlis KARISMA athletes

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
ICSI	100	3.92	.485
SSA	100	4.15	.457

Table 7: Rules of Thumb for Size of a Correlation Coefficient (Guilford, 1973)

Size of Correlation (<i>R</i>)	Interpretation
.90 to 1.00 (-.90 to - 1.00)	Very high positive (negative) correlation
.70 to .90 (-.70 to -.90)	High positive (negative) correlation
.50 to .70 (-.50 to -.70)	Moderate positive (negative) correlation
.30 to .50 (-.30 to -.50)	Low positive (negative) correlation
.00 to .30 (.00 to -.30)	Little if any correlation

Table 8: Pearson Correlation Coefficient of the Communication Skills and Athletes Satisfaction

		Athletes Satisfaction
Communication Skills	Correlation Coefficient	.619**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000
	N	104

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

DISCUSSION

The findings of this study have important consequences for coaches, athletes, and sports organizations. From the result, it shows that, it is important to understand the importance of coach communication skills in increasing athlete satisfaction can help coaches enhance their practices and athletes' performance this aligned with a study conducted by Purnomo et.al, 2024, which mentioned that, coaches communication skills, had a significant impact on athletes' satisfaction whilst resulting in a better performance during training and competition. Additionally, a study by Sulistiyo et.al, 2024 and Martens et.al, 2024 also mentioned that coaches can use effective communication tactics to encourage a pleasant and supportive team atmosphere, resulting in enhanced athlete motivation and satisfaction. This was also aligned with the results from this study which shows that communication skills are associated positively with the athletes' satisfaction. Sports organizations can also use this information to create coach training programs that emphasize communication skills and athlete satisfaction. Likewise, the study's findings can help to shape rules and procedures that encourage good communication between coaches and athletes, resulting in better team dynamics and performance (Macquet & Stanton, 2021). Moreover, the study's findings can be utilized to educate athletes about the value of successful communication in their sporting careers, allowing them to make informed decisions regarding their own communication styles and interests (Kerr et.al, 2023). Overall, the study's implications can help to create a more supportive and effective athletic environment, resulting in higher athlete happiness and performance.

CONCLUSION

This study examined the relationship between coaches' communication skills and athlete satisfaction among KARISMA sport team athletes at UiTM Perlis, highlighting the critical role of effective communication within the coach–athlete dynamic. The findings underscore the significance of coaches' interpersonal communication abilities in shaping athlete satisfaction, motivation, and potential performance. These results emphasize the need for coaches to continuously develop their communication competencies and for sports organizations to invest in targeted training programs that enhance coach–athlete interactions. Ultimately, this study contributes to a deeper understanding of the nuanced relationship between coaching communication and athlete outcomes, providing a valuable foundation for future research and practical applications in the field of sport science and coaching education.

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AUTHORS' CONTRIBUTION

Mohd Aznan, E. A. conceptualized and designed the experiments. Abdul Hamid A. I. conducted the study, prepared the data, contributed to interpreting the results, and wrote the manuscript. All authors offered essential feedback, assisting in refining the research, analysis, and manuscript.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST DECLARATION

We certify that the article is the author's and co-author's original work. The article was not published before and is not being considered for publication elsewhere. This research/manuscript has not been submitted for publication, nor has it been published in its entirety or in part elsewhere. We attest that all authors made significant contributions to the work, validity, and legitimacy of the data, as well as its interpretation for submission to Jurnal Intelek.

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