

Impact of Coach Behavior Upon Motivation of Cricket Players towards Cricket: A Case Study of District Mirpur Ajk

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Received: 13-02-2026

Revised: 26-02-2026

Accepted: 14-03-2026

Published: 27-03-2026

ABSTRACT

Mirpur, Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK). Based on Self-Determination Theory (SDT), the study examined how perceived The study examines the effect of coaching behavior on cricket player's motivation in District coaching behavior affects athletes' intrinsic and extrinsic motivation. Quantitative, cross-sectional survey design was used, with simple random sampling to draw a sample of 285 cricket players from a population size of 1,100. Two standardized instruments, Coaching Behavior and sports Motivation were employed. Both measures had highly internal consistency with Cronbach's alpha above 0.9. Data were analyzed using SPSS (v25), applying descriptive statistics and linear regression analysis. The findings revealed that coaching behavior significantly predicted athlete motivation, explaining 45% of variance ($R^2 = 0.450$, Adjusted $R^2 = 0.448$). Unstandardized regression weight ($B = 0.715$) and standardized Beta ($\beta = 0.671$) both were statistically significant ($t = 15.225$, $p < 0.001$), reflecting strong and positive impact of coaching behavior on player motivation. These findings support the important role of effective and supportive coaching in developing athlete's motivation. The research emphasizes the significance of athletic-coach communication, feedback behavior, and emotional connection in achieving psychological well-being and performance development among cricket players.

Keywords: Coaching behavior, sports, motivation, and cricket's players.

INTRODUCTION

The skill of coaching is helping someone learn and grow in their performance. The coach listens intently and provides insightful questions. A coach facilitates the removal of internal obstacles, fosters self-awareness and belief, and is development-focused. Most people believe that excellent character, friendliness, maturity, or common sense come naturally. However, coaching behavior is defined as these attributes. It is possible to build behavioral skills at any moment, but they need continual practice. Coaching is not a technique, it is a reflective, relationship-based, and skills-focused process that is designed to assist individuals in achieving their potential. A coach does not tell people what to do but instead helps people find answers within themselves through active listening, asking effective questions, and creating an environment of safety for discovery. This process creates self-awareness, value clarification, and confidence to perform (Mukherjee, LaCross, & Khalsa, 2024).

The coaching relationship is centered on the unlocking of an individual's potential and promoting intentional growth over passive direction. Coaching is central to this process, as it is designed to enable people to examine their behaviors, recognize constraint-producing beliefs, and substitute them for more constructive habits of thinking and acting. The thesis develops what it means by consistent participation in coaching behaviors and how it leads to long-term personal change and enhanced performance (Askey, 2020).

The technique of stimulating a player to take action in order to achieve desired objectives is known as motivation. Motivation is not just an attribute but an ongoing state that may be crafted by internal wants and external incentives (Urhahne & Wijnia, 2023). In this research, motivation is analyzed as the process by which people and groups maintain energy, commitment, and concentration towards goals. It includes plenty of intrinsic motivation. Motivated by personal satisfaction and purpose along with extrinsic motivation assisted by rewards, recognition, or external validation. Motivation inspires people to work towards responsibilities, be loyal to team principles, and play a lively role in group collaboration. This is particularly crucial in group settings where interdependence and shared goal are necessary for achievement. The research also examines how motivation is developed, sustained, and potentially destroyed, and how coaching interventions can have a positive effect on motivational states. This study is rooted in behavioral, cognitive, and organizational theories that account for the impact of psychological and interpersonal processes on learning, development, and performance.

Coaching behaviour plays a pivotal role in shaping the athletic performance and motivation of players, serving as a cornerstone for the development of both individual athletes and teams. In sports contexts, coaching is not merely the instruction of skills but also the management of psychological, social, and cultural dimensions to enhance performance and engagement. Scholars have extensively explored coaching behaviour, highlighting its multifaceted nature and influence on athletic outcomes (Barrios-Fleitas et al., 2026).

A study investigated the perspectives of athletes on coaching behavioural patterns, emphasizing the significance of understanding how coaches interact with players in both individual and team sports. Their analysis underscores that effective coaching behaviours are tailored to meet the unique demands of each sport and the individual needs of athletes. This adaptability is central to creating an environment conducive to learning and motivation (Devi & Chandel, 2018).

The role of transformational leadership within coaching has been examined by Smith et al. (2017), who highlighted behaviours such as individualized consideration, inspirational motivation, and intellectual stimulation as critical components in elite sports like cricket. These leadership qualities enable coaches to foster trust, confidence, and commitment among players, which are essential for achieving high performance in demanding sporting environments.

Furthermore, Hodgson, Butt, and Maynard (2017) explored the psychological attributes underpinning elite sports coaching, identifying attributes like emotional intelligence and resilience as foundational to effective coaching practices. These attributes allow coaches to respond dynamically to the diverse challenges they face, including managing team dynamics, providing constructive feedback, and maintaining motivation among players.

A broader exploration of coaching styles has been conducted by Sari & Bayazit (2017), who examined the relationship between perceived coaching behaviours, motivation, and self-efficacy in athletes. Their findings indicate that positive and supportive coaching behaviours significantly enhance players' belief in their abilities and their intrinsic motivation to excel. This aligns with the theoretical perspective that coaching behaviour is not only about instruction but also about building a psychological connection with players.

Townsend and Cushion (2017) analysed elite cricket coach education, providing insights into how social and cultural factors inform coaching practices. Similarly, Noor Bhai and Noakes (2018)

evaluated specific coaching methods in cricket, such as the batting back lift technique, demonstrating how technical coaching behaviours directly impact player performance. Connor, Renshaw, and Farrow (2020) defined cricket batting expertise from the perspective of elite coaches, emphasizing the role of nuanced and individualized coaching strategies. These strategies reflect the necessity of balancing technical instruction with fostering players' cognitive and emotional skills, further illustrating the complexity of coaching behaviours in sports. The research aims to investigate the interplay between coaching and motivation namely, how coaching intervention can build on motivation, and conversely, how motivation can leverage the effectiveness of coaching. Utilizing a mix of qualitative and quantitative approaches, the study aims to shed light on how these elements co-create development results in people and teams.

Objective of the Study

1. To analyze the impact of coaching behavior on the motivation of cricket players.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Understanding coaching behaviour necessitates examining its theoretical foundations. This exploration enables a nuanced comprehension of how coaches influence athletes' motivation, performance, and psychological well-being. Two prominent frameworks often cited in the literature are Self-Determination Theory (SDT) and the Multidimensional Model of Leadership (MML). These theories provide complementary perspectives on the interplay between coaching practices and athlete outcomes.

Self-Determination Theory and Coaching Behaviour

Self-Determination emphasizes the importance of fulfilling three basic psychological needs: autonomy, competence, and relatedness for optimal motivation and performance. Coaches who adopt autonomy-supportive behaviours are more likely to foster intrinsic motivation among athletes, as they encourage self-expression and decision-making (Deci & Ryan, 2000). Nicholls (2021) highlighted that autonomy-supportive coaching fosters resilience and sustained motivation, especially in sports like cricket, where psychological demands are high.

Empirical studies substantiate the role of autonomy support in shaping motivation. Hodgson, Butt and Maynard (2017) discuss how elite coaches strategically cultivate environments that fulfil athletes' psychological needs. Their work suggests that the promotion of competence through constructive feedback and the fostering of relatedness via team cohesion are critical elements in coaching. These findings align with Smith, Young, Figgins, and Arthur (2017), who observed that transformational leadership behaviours in cricket are often rooted in the principles of SDT.

Coaching practices that neglect athletes' psychological needs can lead to maladaptive outcomes such as burnout or diminished performance. Ahmad and Safdar (2020), investigated motivation in domestic cricket players, underscore the risks of controlling coaching behaviours that undermine autonomy. Their findings resonate with Dhiman (2023), who emphasizes the need for coaches at the district level to balance structure with flexibility, thereby nurturing players' intrinsic motivation.

Multidimensional Model of Leadership in Coaching

Multidimensional Model of Leadership, provides another lens to examine coaching behaviour. This model posits that effective leadership emerges from the congruence between three dimensions: required behaviour (contextual demands), preferred behaviour (athletes' expectations), and actual behaviour (coaches' actions) (Mohamed Shapie et al., 2016). Sari and Bayazit (2017) discussed the interplay between these dimensions, illustrating how perceived coaching behaviours can significantly influence athletes' motivation and self-efficacy. In the context of cricket, the application of MML is

particularly relevant given the diverse roles a coach must play. Connor, Renshaw, and Farrow (2020) explore how elite cricket coaches define expertise, emphasizing the importance of adaptability. Their findings suggest that the alignment between a coach's actual and required behaviours is critical for fostering a supportive environment.

The dynamic nature of cricket, characterized by varying formats and team compositions, necessitates a flexible leadership approach. Le Roux (2007), in a study of South African sports coaches, identifies motivational strategies that align with the MML's principles. These include personalized communication, goal setting, and adaptive leadership styles to meet athletes' needs. This is echoed by Devi and chandel (2018), who analyze state-level players' perspectives, finding that preferred coaching behaviours often differ across individual and team sports.

METHOD & MATERIAL

Research Design

According to the nature of the variables included in the study, the researcher employed a quantitative research method. This approach is also suitable for making inferences about a population based on data collected from a representative sample (Neuman, 2014). Specifically, a descriptive research design was adopted. It is widely used in social sciences to systematically describe characteristics, patterns, and relationships within a population or phenomenon (Rubaeah, & Gaffar, 2023). In this study, the goal was to determine cause effect relationship between coach behavior and cricket's player's motivation. Furthermore, a cross-sectional survey design

Population and Sampling

In the present study, the population includes all cricket players of aged (16 – 30 years) from 33 cricket clubs in the district Mirpur. According to the nature of data, the researcher has used random sampling method. The sample size for the present study was made on the basis of standard sampling table (Kerjicie & Morgan, 1970). It is widely used for calculating an appropriate sample size based on a given population. According to this formula, the required sample size was 285 of the total 1100 population.

Research Instrument

In this study, the researcher has used two different research questionnaires for the purpose of data collection from the participant. Coaching behavior scale was utilized to assess the coaching behavior of cricket's coaches in District Mirpur, Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK), the Coaching Behavior Scale for Sport (CBS-S) developed by Jean Cote (1999) was employed. It consists of 47 items, which are categorized into six (6) key behavioral dimensions. Each item is rated on a 7-point Likert scale ranging from 1 = Never to 7 = Always, allowing players to report the frequency with which they perceive their coach to exhibit specific behaviors. 2nd, the Sports motivation scale was used to analyze the motivation levels of cricket players in District Mirpur, Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK) (Pelletier et al., 1995). This scale consists of (28) items to evaluate different types of motivational regulation. Responses are rated on a 7-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 = "Does not correspond at all" to 7 = "Corresponds exactly".

Validity and Reliability

To ensure the accuracy and appropriateness of the research instruments, the questionnaire on coach behavior and sports motivation were subjected to a process of validity checking. Content validity was established by consulting a panel of experts in the fields of sports sciences, physical education, and psychology, who reviewed the items to confirm their relevance, clarity, and alignment with the research objectives. Face validity was also considered, as the instruments were pre-tested with a small

group of cricket players to ensure that the items were easily understandable and contextually appropriate. For reliability of the instruments, a pilot study was conducted with a small sample of cricket players from local clubs in Mirpur, Azad Kashmir, who were not included in the final data collection. The responses were analyzed using Cronbach's Alpha to test internal consistency of both research scales. The cronbach's alpha values for coach behavior and sports motivation scales are 0.962 and 0.958, respectively.

DATA ANALYSIS

For data analysis, the researcher has used Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) version-25. In the current study, the researcher has used descriptive statistic (frequency, mean, percentage & standard deviation) to describe item-wise analysis of the participants. While, in inferential statistics, linear regression was used to assess the effect of coach behavior on sports motivation of cricket's players.

Descriptive Results

Table 1. Descriptive Detail

Age	Frequency	Percent
16-20	181	63.5%
21-25	79	27.7%
26-30	25	8.8%
Total	285	100%

The table above shows that the age of 27.7% of the respondents ranges between 21-25, while 8.8% of the respondents have age between 26-30. While a noticeable majority (63.5% of the respondents) have age ranges between 16-20.

Testing of Hypothesis

H_A : Coaching behavior has significant positive impact upon motivation of cricket's players.

Table 2. Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.671a	.450	.448	.77932
a. Predictors: (Constant), Coach Behaviour				
b. Dependent Variable: Motivation				

The Model Summary table provides insights into the relationship between Coach Behavior (independent variable) and Motivation (dependent variable). The R value of 0.671 indicates a strong positive correlation between coach behavior and motivation, suggesting that as perceptions of coach behavior improve, motivation levels also tend to increase. The R Square value of 0.450 reveals that approximately 45% of the variance in motivation can be explained by coach behavior, highlighting its significant influence. The Adjusted R Square value of 0.448 adjusts for the number of predictors in the model and confirms the robustness of this relationship. The Standard Error of the Estimate (0.77932) indicates the average distance between the observed motivation scores and the scores predicted by the regression model, suggesting that the model provides a reasonably good fit to the data. Overall, these results underscore the importance of positive coach behaviour in enhancing athlete motivation.

Table 3. ANOVA

Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	140.787	1	140.787	231.808	.000b
	Residual	171.879	283	.607		
	Total	312.666	284			
a. Dependent Variable: Motivation						
b. Predictors: (Constant), Coach Behavior						

The ANOVA table assesses the overall significance of the regression model examining the relationship between Coach Behavior (independent variable) and Motivation (dependent variable). The Regression Sum of Squares (140.787) represents the variance in motivation explained by coach behavior, while the Residual Sum of Squares (171.879) represents the unexplained variance. The Total Sum of Squares (312.666) reflects the total variance in motivation. The F-value of 231.808 is highly significant ($p < 0.001$), indicating that the regression model is statistically significant and that coach behavior is a strong predictor of motivation. This suggests that the relationship between coach behavior and motivation is not due to random chance, and the model effectively explains a significant portion of the variance in motivation. These results reinforce the importance of positive coach behavior in fostering athlete motivation.

Table 4. Coefficient

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	1.254	.232		5.392	.000
	Coach Behavior	.715	.047	.671	15.225	.000
a. Dependent Variable: Motivation						

The Coefficients table provides information about the contribution of Coach Behavior (independent variable) to predicting Motivation (dependent variable). The Unstandardized Coefficient (B) for Coach Behavior is 0.715, indicating that for every one-unit increase in coach behavior, motivation increases by 0.715 units, holding all other factors constant. The Standard Error (0.047) for this coefficient is small, suggesting precision in the estimate. The Standardized Coefficient (Beta) of 0.671 confirms a strong positive relationship between coach behavior and motivation. The t-value of 15.225 and the associated p-value of 0.000 indicate that this relationship is statistically significant. Additionally, the Constant (1.254) represents the predicted motivation score when coach behavior is zero, which is also statistically significant ($t = 5.392$, $p < 0.001$). These results highlight the significant and positive impact of coach behavior on athlete motivation.

CONCLUSION OF THE STUDY

The study concludes that coaching behavior plays a pivotal role in shaping the motivation and overall experience of stakeholders, particularly athletes. The results of linear regression found that there was a significant positive correlation between coaching behavior and athlete motivation. The correlation coefficient (R) was 0.671, and this shows a high level of association. Additionally, the coefficient of determination (R^2) was 0.450, and this shows that 45% of the variation in the motivation of athletes is explained by perceived coaching behavior. This high percentage is indicative of the practical significance that coaching quality can contribute to the mindset and motivation of an athlete. The overall importance of the regression model was confirmed by ANOVA output ($F = 231.808$, $p < 0.001$), and the unstandardized regression coefficient ($B = 0.715$) showed that an increase in one unit of coaching behavior results in a 0.715-unit rise in athlete motivation. These findings lend empirical evidence to the assertion that coaches have a critical role not just in physical training but also in

psychological empowerment. Athletes who perceive their coaches as supportive, motivating, and emotionally intelligent are more likely to exhibit greater motivation and better performance outcomes.

DISCUSSION

The current research explored the correlation between coaching behavior and player motivation among Mirpur AJK cricket players. Findings reveal that participants perceive their coaches in a predominantly positive manner. With an average score of 4.8541 on a 7-point Likert scale far above the midpoint, participants consider their coaches to be supporting, effective, and encouraging. The statistical significance of this finding, verified with a strong t-value and a tight confidence interval, indicates that this positive perception is not only significant but also uniform across the sample. This concurs with the more general knowledge in coaching literature that athletes' perceptions of their coaches are essential to the success of coaching interventions. Such finding is similar to the study of Sarı & Bayazıt (2017), who examined the relationship between perceived coaching behaviours, motivation, and self-efficacy in athletes. Their findings indicate that positive and supportive coaching behaviours significantly enhance players' belief in their abilities and their intrinsic motivation to excel. This aligns with the theoretical perspective that coaching behaviour is not only about instruction but also about building a psychological connection with players.

Furthermore, the regression analysis yielded strong support for the hypothesis that coaching behavior has a significant effect on motivation. The R value of 0.671 depicts a strong positive relationship, whereas the R square value of 0.450 shows that 45% of motivational variation among players is explained by coaching behavior only. The Adjusted R square validates this relationship's credibility even after considering the complexity of the model. In addition, the regression coefficient of 0.715 indicates a significant improvement in motivation with every unit rise in positive coaching behavior. The fact that the result is statistically significant, as evidenced by a t-value of 15.225 and a p-value considerably less than 0.001, assures that the association is not coincidental. The residual statistics provide evidence for the predictive accuracy of the model. The predicted mean of the motivation values was close to the observed actual mean, and the residuals' distribution seemed random with no significant outliers or indication of a systematic error. The residuals' standard deviation was quite small, showing that the model made precise predictions for the majority of participants. These findings are in line with the fact that the regression model fits well, and coach behavior is a good predictor of player motivation in this situation. Similarly, a study found that coach behavior significantly impacts athletes, not only in terms of physical performance but also in psychological well-being and cultural adaptation. From a psychological perspective, a coach's behavior influences an athlete's motivation, confidence, and mental resilience. Positive reinforcement, emotional support, and effective communication can enhance an athlete's self-efficacy and overall mental health, while negative behaviors such as excessive criticism, neglect, or abusive coaching can lead to anxiety, stress, and burnout (Smith & Smoll, 2011).

The findings have theoretical and practical implications. Theoretically, they add to the increasing literature that highlights the psychological and behavioral aspects of successful coaching. In practical terms, the findings imply that communicative, supportive, and constructive behaviors from coaches can dramatically boost athletes' motivation. This has implications for coach development and education programs, which should place heavy emphasis on behavioral instruction as a core aspect. It also underlines the necessity for sports institutions and clubs to monitor and evaluate coaching behaviors as a way of promoting athlete performance and development. Within the socio-cultural environment of Mirpur, AJK, where cricket is very popular and socially significant, the relationship between coach and athlete weighs even more heavily. Coaches tend to serve as mentors and models, and their impact goes beyond technical teaching to emotional and motivational assistance. This cultural setting enhances the importance of the findings and places a special emphasis on ensuring and strengthening positive coaching practices within sports settings.

RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE STUDY

1. Coaches should be encouraged to adopt supportive, autonomy-driven behaviors such as active listening, constructive feedback, and goal collaboration. Avoid overly controlling tactics, as they may diminish intrinsic motivation.
2. Regular coach development workshops should be organized to train coaches on communication skills, emotional intelligence, motivational strategies aligned with self-determination Theory.
3. District and club cricket authorities should implement coaching assessment tools, like the Coaching Behavior Scale (CBS), to monitor and evaluate coaching practices regularly. Periodic reviews can help identify strengths and areas for improvement in coaching styles.
4. The Sports Motivation Scale (SMS) should be incorporated into athlete profiling systems to understand players' motivational status, track changes over time, design targeted interventions for those with low motivation or signs of burnout.
5. Establish anonymous feedback mechanisms where players can report on their perceptions of coaching behavior. This can promote accountability and help coaches adjust their approaches based on team needs.
6. The Azad Jammu and Kashmir cricket clubs should formulate policies that emphasize coach-athlete relationship development.
7. Longitudinal studies should be conducted to assess how coaching behavior impacts motivation over time. Further research can explore moderating variables, such as gender, playing level, or socio-economic background, to enhance the generalizability of findings. Mixed-method approaches can provide deeper insights into players' lived experiences with coaching.

Conflict of Interest

The researcher has no conflict of interest.

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