

Influence of Coaches' Emotional Intelligence on Need Satisfaction of University Athletes in Lagos State

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ABSTRACT

This study investigated the influence of coaches' emotional intelligence on the need satisfaction of university athletes in Lagos State. The descriptive survey research design was adopted for the study. The population comprised university athletes in Lagos State, while a sample size of one hundred (100) respondents was purposively selected from the University of Lagos (50) and Lagos State University (50). A self-developed instrument titled "Coaches' Emotional Intelligence and Leadership Questionnaire (CEILQ)" was used for data collection. The instrument was validated by experts in sports management psychology, while the reliability coefficient of 0.78 was obtained using the test-retest method and Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient (PPMCC). Data collected were analyzed using descriptive statistics, Chi-square (χ^2), and Univariate Analysis of Variance (UNIANOVA) at 0.05 level of significance. The findings revealed that a significant difference existed in the emotional intelligence of university coaches in Lagos State, with the majority of coaches exhibiting moderate emotional intelligence levels. The study also revealed a significant difference in university athletes' need satisfaction, with most athletes reporting moderate levels of need satisfaction. Furthermore, the findings established that coaches' emotional intelligence significantly influenced university athletes' need satisfaction, as athletes under coaches with higher emotional intelligence recorded higher levels of need satisfaction. The study concluded that emotionally intelligent coaching plays a significant role in enhancing athletes' psychological well-being and satisfaction in university sports settings. The study therefore recommended that university sports administrators should organize regular emotional intelligence training and psychological development programs for coaches in order to improve athlete motivation, satisfaction and overall sports performance.

Keywords: *Emotional intelligence, coaches, need satisfaction, university athletes, Lagos State.*

INTRODUCTION

University sports have increasingly become a vital component of higher education, serving not only as platforms for physical development and competition but also as environments that promote psychological growth, social interaction and personal development among students. In recent years, the competitive nature of university sports has intensified, thereby increasing the expectations placed on athletes and coaches alike. Coaches are no longer perceived merely as providers of technical and tactical instruction; rather, they are regarded as influential leaders, mentors, motivators and emotional guides who shape athletes' experiences and behaviors both within and outside sporting environments. As university athletes attempt to balance academic demands with rigorous training schedules and competitive pressures, the emotional and psychological support provided by coaches has become increasingly essential in promoting athlete well-being and performance (Laborde et al., 2021; Madigan et al., 2022). This changing landscape has drawn scholarly attention to the importance of emotional competencies in sports coaching and athlete management.

Emotional intelligence, commonly defined as the ability to perceive, understand, regulate, and appropriately express emotions, has emerged as a significant construct in sports psychology and leadership studies. Within the coaching context, emotional intelligence influences how coaches communicate, respond to challenges, motivate athletes and manage interpersonal relationships within teams. Coaches with high emotional intelligence are often more capable of creating supportive and encouraging environments that positively influence athletes' psychological states and sporting experiences (Kopp & Jekauc, 2022). Such coaches are better able to identify athletes' emotional needs, respond empathetically during stressful situations, and provide constructive feedback that enhances confidence and motivation. Consequently, emotionally intelligent coaching behaviors have been associated with increased athlete satisfaction, stronger team cohesion and improved psychological adjustment among athletes (Nicholls et al., 2021).

In contrast, coaches who lack emotional awareness or emotional regulation skills may unintentionally create hostile, controlling or emotionally unsupportive environments that negatively affect athletes' mental well-being and motivation. Emotionally insensitive coaching behaviors such as excessive criticism, poor communication and lack of empathy may contribute to frustration, anxiety, emotional exhaustion and reduced sporting engagement among athletes (Campo et al., 2023). Research has further shown that athletes' perceptions of their coaches' emotional behaviors significantly influence their levels of commitment, resilience and satisfaction within sports settings (Curran et al., 2022). Since coaches

interact closely with athletes on a regular basis, their emotional competencies can substantially shape the quality of coach-athlete relationships and the overall psychological climate within sports teams.

The relevance of emotional intelligence in sports becomes even more significant when considered alongside the concept of psychological need satisfaction. Rooted in Self-Determination Theory, need satisfaction refers to the fulfillment of three fundamental psychological needs: autonomy, competence, and relatedness (Ryan & Deci, 2022). Autonomy reflects athletes' sense of independence and involvement in decision-making processes; competence refers to feelings of effectiveness and capability in sporting activities; while relatedness involves feelings of social connection, acceptance and belonging within a team environment. According to Self-Determination Theory, the fulfillment of these psychological needs is essential for promoting intrinsic motivation, emotional well-being, optimal functioning, and long-term commitment to sports participation.

Coaches play a central role in either supporting or frustrating these psychological needs through their leadership styles, communication patterns and emotional interactions with athletes. Supportive coaching behaviors that encourage athlete participation, provide positive reinforcement and foster mutual respect have been found to enhance athletes' autonomy and competence satisfaction (González et al., 2021; Pelletier et al., 2023). Similarly, emotionally supportive coach-athlete relationships contribute significantly to relatedness satisfaction by creating feelings of trust, acceptance, and emotional security among athletes (Davis & Jowett, 2021). Athletes who experience high levels of need satisfaction are more likely to demonstrate intrinsic motivation, confidence, resilience, psychological well-being and sustained engagement in sports activities (Rodrigues et al., 2022). Conversely, the frustration of these needs may result in emotional distress, low motivation, disengagement and poor athletic outcomes.

University athletes often encounter various psychological and emotional stressors that may threaten their well-being and performance. These stressors include academic workload, financial challenges, social expectations, fear of failure, injuries and intense competition. In many cases, the pressure to excel academically while simultaneously meeting sporting expectations can negatively affect athletes' mental health and emotional stability. Under such conditions, emotionally intelligent coaches become particularly important because they can provide emotional reassurance, psychological encouragement and adaptive coping strategies that can help athletes navigate stressful situations effectively (Isoard-Gautheur et al., 2021). Coaches who effectively regulate emotions are also more likely to encourage persistence during

setbacks and failures rather than criticism or punitive responses, thereby promoting resilience and emotional stability among athletes (Castro-Sánchez et al., 2022).

Furthermore, emotionally intelligent coaches are more capable of fostering positive team climates characterized by empathy, cooperation, mutual respect and effective communication. Such team environments not only enhance athletes' emotional experiences but also strengthen interpersonal relationships and team cohesion. Studies have shown that athletes who perceive their coaches as emotionally supportive often exhibit higher levels of dedication, satisfaction and engagement in training and competitions (Appleton et al., 2021). In addition, emotionally supportive coaching environments may reduce the likelihood of burnout, emotional exhaustion and withdrawal tendencies among athletes, particularly in highly competitive sports settings (Warburton et al., 2022). This highlights the importance of emotional intelligence as a critical leadership quality in contemporary sports coaching.

In many universities across the world, sports participation has become increasingly institutionalized as part of educational and talent development programs. Nigerian universities, particularly those in Lagos State, have continued to witness increased participation in intercollegiate sporting competitions and talent development initiatives. Lagos State is widely recognized for its active sporting culture, diverse tertiary institutions and competitive university sports programs. As a result, coaches within these institutions are expected not only to improve athletic performance but also to support the emotional and psychological development of athletes (Adewale & Musa, 2023). Despite these expectations, coaching practices within some university sports settings may still prioritize physical performance and competitive success over athletes' emotional and psychological needs.

Although emotional intelligence has received increasing attention in organizational leadership and sports psychology literature, limited empirical studies have specifically examined its influence on the psychological need satisfaction of university athletes within the Nigerian context. Existing studies have largely focused on athletic performance, motivation or coaching effectiveness without adequately exploring the emotional dimensions of coaching and their implications for athletes' psychological well-being (Akinyemi & Bello, 2023). This gap in literature creates the need for further investigation into how coaches' emotional intelligence contributes to athletes' autonomy, competence and relatedness satisfaction, particularly among university athletes in Lagos State.

In view of the growing recognition of psychological well-being as a vital component of athletic success, the role of emotionally intelligent coaching has become increasingly indispensable in university sports.

Coaches who effectively understand and manage emotions create supportive environments that enhance athletes' autonomy, competence and sense of belonging. Despite the significance of these variables, limited empirical attention has been given to the relationship between coaches' emotional intelligence and athletes' need satisfaction within Nigerian universities, particularly in Lagos State. Therefore, this study seeks to bridge this gap by examining how coaches' emotional intelligence influences the psychological need satisfaction of university athletes in Lagos State. This study was carried out to investigate coaches' emotional intelligence and university athletes need satisfaction in Lagos State. The under listed hypotheses were postulated to guide the study:

1. There is no significant difference in emotional intelligence of university coaches in Lagos State.
2. There is no significant difference in university athletes need satisfaction in Lagos State.
3. There is no significant influence of coaches' emotional intelligence on university athletes need satisfaction in Lagos State.

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

This study adopted the descriptive survey research design. The descriptive survey design is considered appropriate for studies that seek to obtain information from a specific population regarding existing conditions, opinions, attitudes, behaviors, and relationships among variables without manipulating them. The choice of this design was informed by the nature of the study, which aimed to investigate the influence of coaches' emotional intelligence on the need satisfaction of university athletes in Lagos State. Since the study involved gathering opinions and responses from student-athletes on sports coaches' emotional intelligence and athletes psychological need satisfaction, the descriptive survey design provided an effective framework for collecting large amounts of data within a relatively short period. The design was therefore suitable because it enabled the researcher to describe and examine the existing relationship between coaches' emotional intelligence and athletes' need satisfaction without altering the study environment.

Population and Sampling Technique

The population for this study comprised university athletes in Lagos State. These participants were considered appropriate because they are directly involved in university sporting activities and possess relevant experiences relating to coaching behaviors, emotional interactions and athletes' psychological experiences. A sample size of one hundred (100) respondents was selected for the study. The sample consisted of athletes drawn from University of Lagos, Akoka (50) and Lagos State University, Ojo (50).

The participants were selected using the purposive sampling technique. Purposive sampling was considered suitable because it enabled the researcher to intentionally select respondents who possessed adequate knowledge and experience relevant to the objectives of the study. The selection process focused specifically on student-athletes actively involved in sports competitions and representing their respective universities in intercollegiate sports competitions. This ensured that only respondents with direct exposure to coaching practices and coach-athlete experiences participated in the study, thereby enhancing the relevance and quality of the information collected.

Research Instrument

The instrument used for data collection in this study was a self-developed questionnaire titled “*Coaches’ Emotional Intelligence and Leadership Questionnaire (CEILQ)*.” The questionnaire was designed by the researcher based on the objectives of the study and relevant literature reviewed on coaches’ emotional intelligence and athletes’ psychological need satisfaction. The questionnaire was divided into two major sections. Section A focused on the demographic characteristics of the respondents, such as gender, age, faculty, years of sporting experience and type of sport participated in. This section helped the researcher to obtain background information about the respondents. Section B consisted of items designed to measure the variables of the study, coaches’ emotional intelligence and athletes’ need satisfaction. The items were structured using a 4-point Likert-type rating scale of Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Disagree (D) and Strongly Disagree (SD). The section contained statements relating to emotional awareness, emotional regulation, motivation, autonomy support, competence support, and relatedness satisfaction among athletes.

Validity and Reliability of the Research Instrument

To ensure the validity of the instrument, the questionnaire was submitted to three experts in sports management psychology for proper scrutiny and assessment. Their observations, suggestions and corrections were used to determine the construct and content validities of the instrument. The reliability of the instrument was established using the test-retest reliability method. In carrying out the reliability test, twenty (20) copies of the questionnaire were administered to respondents who possessed similar characteristics to the actual study participants but were not included in the main study. After an interval of two weeks, the same questionnaire was re-administered to the same respondents. The responses obtained from the two administrations were analyzed using the Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient (PPMCC) to determine the consistency of the instrument over time. An r-value of 0.78 was obtained and considered acceptable for adoption of *CEILQ* for data collection in the study.

Data Collection Procedure

The researcher, with the assistance of two trained research assistants, personally conducted the data collection process. Prior to the administration of the questionnaire, official permission was sought from the relevant university authorities and sports units to enable access to the respondents. The researcher also explained the purpose and importance of the study to the participants and assured them that all information provided would be treated with confidentiality and used strictly for academic purposes. The questionnaires were administered directly to selected student-athletes after training sessions and sporting activities within the university environment. The researcher encouraged the respondents to provide honest and objective responses to ensure the accuracy and credibility of the study findings. The questionnaires were collected immediately after completion to ensure a high retrieval rate and minimize the risk of loss or incomplete responses. This method of administration enabled the researcher to achieve a 100% retrieval rate of the administered questionnaires.

Method of Data Analysis

The data collected from the respondents were carefully coded, organized and analyzed using appropriate statistical methods. Descriptive statistics such as frequency counts, percentages and means were used in presenting the demographic characteristics of the respondents. Inferential statistics of Chi-square (χ^2) analysis and Univariate Analysis of Variance (UNIANOVA) were used to analyze the relationship and differences among the study variables. Chi-square (χ^2) analysis was used to determine the association between categorical variables, while UNIANOVA was employed to examine the influence of coaches' emotional intelligence on athletes' need satisfaction. All hypotheses were tested at a 0.05 level of significance. The choice of these statistical tools was based on their suitability for analyzing survey data and determining relationships among variables in behavioral and social science research.

RESULTS

Table 1: Distribution of respondents by sex, level, age and sports type.

Variables		Distribution of Respondents	
Sex	Male	Female	
	71 (71%)	29 (29%)	

Level	100 Level	200 Level	300 Level	400 Level	500 Level
	11 (11%)	25 (25%)	38 (38%)	20 (20%)	6 (6%)
Age	Below 18 years	18-25 years	Above 25 years		
	18 (18%)	57 (57%)	25 (25%)		
Sport Type	Ball Games	Racquet Games	Athletics	Others	
	35 (35%)	9 (9%)	7 (7%)	49 (49%)	

From table 1 above, it could be observed that 71% of the total respondents were males, while the remaining 29% were females. The table also showed that 11 (11%) of the respondents were 100 level students, 25 (25%) of the respondents were 200 level students, 38 (38%) of the respondents were 300 level students, 20 (20%) of the respondents were 400 level students, while 6 (6%) of the respondents were 500 level students. In addition, it could be observed from the above table that 18 (18%) of the respondents were below the age of 18 years, 57 (57%) of the respondents were between the ages of 18-25 years, while 25 (25%) of the remaining respondents were 25 years and above. Furthermore, the table revealed that 35 (35%) of the respondents played ball games, 9 (9%) of the respondents were racquet games players, 7 (7%) of the respondents were into athletics (track and field events), while the remaining 49 (49%) of the respondents were into other sports.

Hypothesis One

Hypothesis one stated that there is no significant difference in emotional intelligence of university coaches in Lagos State. The stated hypothesis was tested using the Chi-square statistical tool at 0.05 level of significance. The result is presented on the table below.

Table 2: Chi-square result on the difference in emotional intelligence of university coaches

Emotional Intelligence	Observed	Expected	X ² -value	Sig.
Low	1	33.3	80.180	0.002*
Moderate	73	33.3		

High	26	33.3
Total	100	

From table 5 above, it could be observed that a significant X^2 -value ($X^2=80.180$; $P<0.05$) was obtained at 0.05 level of significance. Therefore, hypothesis one as stated is hereby rejected. This implies that a significant difference was recorded in emotional intelligence of university coaches in Lagos State. The observed values on the table showed that majority of the university coaches were of moderate emotional intelligence.

Hypothesis Two

Hypothesis two stated that there is no significant difference in university athletes need satisfaction in Lagos State. The stated hypothesis was tested using the Chi-square statistical tool at 0.05 level of significance. The result is presented on the table below.

Table 3: Chi-square result on the difference in university athletes needs satisfaction

Need Satisfaction	Observed	Expected	X^2 -value	Sig.
Low	1	33.3	114.380	0.004*
Moderate	80	33.3		
High	19	33.3		
Total	100			

From table 6 above, it could be observed that a significant X^2 -value ($X^2=114.380$; $P<0.05$) was obtained at 0.05 level of significance. Therefore, hypothesis two as stated is hereby rejected. This implies that a significant difference was recorded in university athletes need satisfaction in Lagos State. The observed values on the table showed that majority of the university athletes were of moderate need satisfaction.

Hypothesis Three

Hypothesis three stated that there is no significant influence of coaches' emotional intelligence on university athletes need satisfaction in Lagos State. The stated hypothesis was tested using the Univariate

Analysis of Variance (UNIANOVA) statistical tool at 0.05 level of significance. The result is presented on the table below.

Table 4: UNIANOVA result on the influence of emotional intelligence on university athletes' needs satisfaction

Coaches Emotional Intelligence	Low	Moderate	High		
Athletes Need Satisfaction	Mean = 27	Mean = 53.37	Mean = 56.04		
Source	Type III SS	df	MS	F	Sig.
Corrected Model	1.879 ^a	2	.940	6.124	0.003
Intercept	28.317	1	28.317	184.581	0.000
Coaches Emotional Intelligence	1.879	2	0.940	6.124	0.003*
Error	14.881	97	0.153		
Total	492.000	100			
Corrected Total	16.760	99			

a. R Squared = 0.112 (Adjusted R Squared = .094) b. Dependent Variable: Athletes Needs Satisfaction

From table 4 above, it could be observed that a significant F-value was obtained at 0.05 level of significance ($F=6.124$; $P<0.003$), therefore, hypothesis three as sated is hereby rejected. This implies that coaches' emotional intelligence had a significant influence on university athletes need satisfaction in Lagos State. It could be further established from the mean values under the descriptive statistics on table 4 above that higher athletes need satisfaction was recorded under coaches with high emotional intelligence (Mean=56.04).

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

While testing hypothesis one, a significant χ^2 -value was obtained at 0.05 level of significance. Therefore, hypothesis one as stated was rejected. This implies that a significant difference existed in the emotional intelligence of university coaches in Lagos State. The observed values further revealed that the majority of the university coaches possessed moderate emotional intelligence. This finding aligns with several recent studies which established that emotional intelligence varies among coaches depending on coaching experience, interpersonal skills, leadership orientation and exposure to psychological training. Liu et al. (2026) observed that emotionally intelligent coaches demonstrated stronger coach-athlete relationships

and improved athlete satisfaction. Ferstle (2024) also reported that coaches with moderate to high emotional intelligence were more capable of supporting athletes' emotional well-being. Ding and Nash (2026) emphasized that emotional intelligence is increasingly becoming a vital component of effective coaching practice, particularly in maintaining positive athlete interactions. Similarly, Petiot et al. (2026) found that emotional regulation and emotional labor significantly influence coaching effectiveness in sports settings.

Furthermore, Kang and Lee (2025) reported that psychologically competent coaches tend to exhibit stronger emotional awareness and empathy toward athletes. Chen et al. (2026) equally established that coaches' communication competence and emotional intelligence positively affect athletes' emotional experiences and resilience. Özdemir and Çakır (2026) highlighted that emotional intelligence improves communication effectiveness and leadership performance within sports organizations. Sanz-Junoy et al. (2023) further found that emotional intelligence contributes significantly to life satisfaction and resilience among sports professionals. Aulya and Setyawati (2026) reported that athletes and coaches with higher emotional intelligence demonstrate better adaptation to competitive sporting environments. In addition, Shams and ShahramAroufzad (2025) established that emotionally intelligent coaching behaviors reduce burnout and improve psychological outcomes among athletes. These studies therefore support the present finding that differences exist in the emotional intelligence levels of university coaches, with many operating at moderate levels of emotional competence.

In testing hypothesis two, a significant χ^2 -value was obtained at 0.05 level of significance. Therefore, hypothesis two as stated was rejected. This implies that a significant difference existed in university athletes' need satisfaction in Lagos State. The observed values further showed that the majority of university athletes experienced moderate levels of need satisfaction. This finding supports the propositions of Self-Determination Theory, which emphasizes that athletes' satisfaction of autonomy, competence, and relatedness needs differs based on environmental and interpersonal conditions within sports settings. Braz et al. (2026) found that basic psychological need satisfaction significantly contributes to athletes' life satisfaction and sporting passion. Likewise, Rodrigues et al. (2022) reported that athletes who experience higher levels of need satisfaction demonstrate stronger motivation, persistence, and emotional well-being. Similarly, González et al. (2021) established that autonomy-supportive coaching behaviors positively influence athletes' psychological need satisfaction and intrinsic motivation. Pelletier et al. (2023) also found that constructive coaching feedback enhances athletes' competence satisfaction and confidence in

sports participation. Vella et al. (2022) observed that emotionally supportive coaching environments improve athletes' relatedness satisfaction and sense of belonging within teams. Luo et al. (2025) further reported that quality coach-athlete relationships significantly predict training engagement and sports satisfaction among athletes. Hu et al. (2026) equally established that positive coach-athlete relationships mediate athlete well-being and performance satisfaction.

In addition, Sapinsley et al. (2026) emphasized that the satisfaction of psychological needs among coaches and athletes contributes to effective coping and emotional adjustment in sports environments. Okorie (2026) observed that psychological support systems within sports programs significantly enhance athletes' motivation and need fulfillment. Campo et al. (2023) also reported that emotionally supportive coaching behaviors positively influence athletes' emotional stability and satisfaction in sports settings. Furthermore, Warburton et al. (2022) established that frustration of athletes' psychological needs is associated with emotional exhaustion, low motivation, and withdrawal tendencies. These findings collectively support the present study's result that university athletes in Lagos State experienced varying levels of need satisfaction, with the majority demonstrating moderate satisfaction levels.

While testing hypothesis three, a significant F-value was obtained at 0.05 level of significance; therefore, hypothesis three as stated was rejected. This implies that coaches' emotional intelligence had a significant influence on university athletes' need satisfaction in Lagos State. The descriptive statistics further revealed that higher levels of athletes' need satisfaction were recorded under coaches with high emotional intelligence. This finding suggests that emotionally intelligent coaches are more likely to create psychologically supportive environments that enhance athletes' autonomy, competence, and relatedness satisfaction. The finding is consistent with previous empirical studies that established positive relationships between emotional intelligence, coaching effectiveness, and athlete well-being.

Liu et al. (2026) found that coaches with higher emotional intelligence positively influenced athlete satisfaction and team identification through supportive interpersonal behaviors. Ding and Nash (2026) similarly concluded that emotional intelligence enhances the quality of coach-athlete interactions and contributes significantly to athletes' psychological experiences. Ferstle (2024) also reported that emotionally intelligent coaching practices improve athletes' emotional well-being and coping abilities in collegiate sports settings. Chen et al. (2026) established that coaches' communication competence and emotional intelligence significantly influence athletes' passion, resilience, and psychological adjustment.

Likewise, Kang and Lee (2025) emphasized that emotionally supportive coaches contribute positively to athletes' motivation and psychological satisfaction.

Furthermore, Luo et al. (2025) found that positive coach-athlete relationships significantly predict athletes' engagement, skill development, and sports satisfaction. Hu et al. (2026) equally observed that supportive leadership behaviors and emotionally healthy coach-athlete relationships enhance athletes' performance satisfaction and well-being. Rodrigues et al. (2022) established that athletes who experience psychological need satisfaction demonstrate greater intrinsic motivation and emotional well-being. Ryan and Deci (2022) further emphasized that supportive social environments are essential for fulfilling athletes' autonomy, competence, and relatedness needs. Similarly, Jowett et al. (2023) found that emotionally supportive communication patterns between coaches and athletes strengthen athletes' self-esteem, confidence, and psychological adjustment in sports environments. These studies therefore validate the present finding that coaches' emotional intelligence significantly influences university athletes' need satisfaction in Lagos State.

CONCLUSION

Based on the findings of this study, it was concluded that coaches' emotional intelligence is an important psychological and leadership factor influencing the need satisfaction of university athletes in Lagos State. The study established that significant differences existed in the emotional intelligence levels of university coaches, with most coaches demonstrating moderate emotional intelligence. This suggests that while coaches possess some level of emotional competence, there is still room for improvement in areas such as emotional awareness, emotional regulation, empathy, and interpersonal communication within university sports settings. The study also concluded that university athletes experienced varying levels of psychological need satisfaction, particularly in relation to autonomy, competence, and relatedness needs. The majority of athletes demonstrated moderate levels of need satisfaction, indicating that the sporting environment provided some degree of psychological support, although not at an optimal level. Since psychological need satisfaction is closely linked to athletes' motivation, emotional well-being, and sporting engagement, there is the need for continuous improvement in coaching practices and athlete support systems within universities. Most importantly, the study concluded that coaches' emotional intelligence significantly influences university athletes' need satisfaction. Athletes under coaches with higher emotional intelligence reported greater levels of psychological need satisfaction compared to those under coaches with lower emotional intelligence. This finding highlights the importance of emotionally intelligent coaching behaviors in promoting athletes' psychological well-being and sporting experiences.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings and conclusions of this study, the following recommendations were made:

1. University sports administrators should organize regular workshops, seminars, and training programs on emotional intelligence for sports coaches in order to improve their interpersonal and psychological management skills.
2. Coaches should be encouraged to adopt emotionally supportive coaching behaviors such as empathy, effective communication, encouragement, and positive feedback to enhance athletes' psychological well-being and motivation.
3. Universities should integrate sports psychology and emotional intelligence development programs into their sports management and coaching structures to improve coaching effectiveness.
4. Sports coaches should create athlete-centered environments that promote autonomy, competence, and relatedness satisfaction among university athletes.
5. University management should employ qualified sports psychologists to provide psychological support services for both athletes and coaches within tertiary institutions.
6. Coaches should be trained on effective emotional regulation strategies to enable them manage stress, conflicts, and pressure situations constructively during training and competitions.
7. University sports units should establish policies that emphasize athletes' psychological well-being alongside athletic performance and competitive success.
8. Athletes should be encouraged to maintain open and healthy communication with their coaches in order to strengthen coach-athlete relationships and improve team cohesion.

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