

Building Confidence and Well-being: The Power of Coach Communication and Personal Connections in College Basketball

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ABSTRACT

The relationship between coaches and athletes plays a critical role in shaping athletes' confidence, performance, and overall well-being. Effective communication and strong interpersonal connections between coaches and athletes are often key determinants of success in sports, particularly for student athletes who are balancing academic and athletic responsibilities. This research aims to identify and analyze the influence of coach communication skills and personal closeness on self-confidence and well-being of student basketball athletes at Universitas Negeri Jakarta and Riau Islamic University. The research used mixed methods with purposive sampling techniques to select participants who met the criteria, namely athletes and coaches with relevant experience in basketball teams. Data were collected through quantitative questionnaires to measure coach communication quality, personal closeness, confidence, and athlete well-being; as well as in-depth interviews and observations of interactions in training and matches to obtain more in-depth contextual data. Quantitative analysis was conducted using regression techniques, while qualitative data were thematically analyzed to identify key themes and patterns. The results showed that clear, open, and emotionally supportive coach communication had a significant effect on athletes' confidence and well-being. Athletes who perceived emotional support and effective communication from coaches were more motivated and confident in their abilities, which had a positive impact on their performance on the field. In addition, the personal closeness between coaches and athletes also increased athletes' confidence and emotional satisfaction. The implication of this research is the importance of communication skills and interpersonal relationships in the training process.

Keywords: Athlete Confidence, Athlete Well-being, Coach Communication, Personal Closeness, Student Basketball.

INTRODUCTION

In sports, especially basketball at the college level, athletes' mental and physical well-being is a crucial factor influencing field performance (Pang et al., 2020). One important aspect that contributes to the well-being and self-confidence of athletes is the quality of communication

between coaches and athletes and the level of personal closeness between them (Kim & Park, 2020). A coach's communication skills serve as a tool to convey strategies and instructions and as a means to build relationships that support, motivate, and inspire athletes (Cranmer et al., 2020). Personal closeness between coaches and athletes is important in creating a positive and supportive environment where athletes feel valued, heard, and understood (Jowett & Slade, 2021). This close relationship can strengthen athletes' self-confidence, improving their performance and well-being. Therefore, this research focuses on the influence of coaches' communication skills and personal closeness on the self-confidence and well-being of student basketball athletes to provide deeper insight into the dynamics of the relationship between coaches and athletes and their impact on sports performance at the college level.

In college sports, especially on basketball teams, a problem often arises: low self-confidence and well-being among athletes. A lack of effective communication between coaches and athletes and a lack of supportive personal relationships between them often causes this. Data from multiple studies shows that poor communication between coaches and athletes can lead to increased stress, anxiety, and decreased motivation among athletes. A research by (Gunes & Yetim, 2023) found that poor interpersonal relationships between coaches and athletes were correlated with low self-confidence and high stress levels. Additionally, a report from the National Collegiate Athletic Association revealed that approximately 30% of college athletes experience symptoms of depression and anxiety, which is mainly due to pressure from coaches as well as their inability to build close, supportive relationships. This shows how important communication skills and personal closeness between coaches and athletes are in building optimal self-confidence and well-being, which can ultimately improve performance on the field.

Although previous research has highlighted the importance of coach communication and interpersonal relationships in supporting athlete well-being, well-being, and performance, there still needs to be a gap in understanding regarding how factors specifically influence basketball athletes' self-confidence and the well-being of netball athletes at the collegiate level. Many studies have examined aspects of coach communication in general. However, only some have deeply explored the interaction between coach communication and personal closeness in college basketball. In addition, existing research tends to focus on the impact of poor communication or conflict. In contrast, the positive effects of good communication and close personal relationships have yet to be widely discussed in the available literature. This gap indicates the need for further research to identify how coaches' practical communication skills and intense personal closeness can increase athletes' self-confidence and well-being, especially in the competitive environment of higher education. This research seeks to fill this gap by explicitly examining the relationship dynamics between coaches and athletes in student basketball teams and their impact on crucial psychological aspects such as self-confidence and well-being.

The urgency of this research lies in the urgent need to improve the psychological well-being and performance of college basketball athletes. In an increasingly competitive sports

environment, the pressure faced by student-athletes comes not only from academic demands but also from expectations to perform optimally on the field. Lack of attention to communication and interpersonal relationships between coaches and athletes can negatively impact mental and emotional well-being, hindering achieving maximum performance. By understanding and improving the quality of communication and personal closeness in the training context, coaches can play a more significant role in supporting the development of athletes' self-confidence and well-being. This research is urgently needed to provide practical guidance for coaches and higher education institutions in creating a more supportive environment for athletes so that it not only focuses on technical and physical aspects but also on the psychological balance that is very important for the long-term success of athletes in and off the field.

The novelty of this research lies in the holistic approach that integrates two main variables: coach communication skills and personal closeness in the context of student basketball and their impact on athletes' self-confidence and well-being. Although many studies address the communication aspect of the coach-athlete relationship or personal closeness separately, this research combines these two variables to provide a more comprehensive understanding of how the two interact and influence athletes' psychological outcomes. Additionally, this research focuses on college basketball teams. This area often needs more attention in the existing literature, focusing primarily on the professional or junior level. By applying research methods that are specific and relevant to the collegiate context, this research has the potential to uncover new findings that can provide practical insights for coaches and administrators of collegiate sports programs in designing more effective strategies to support athletes' self-confidence and well-being. The innovation in this research also identifies specific factors that can be optimized in the daily interactions between coaches and athletes to create a more positive and productive training environment.

Coach communication is crucial in sports coaching, especially building athlete confidence and well-being (Simpson et al., 2023). Effective communication between coaches and athletes can create a supportive environment where athletes feel heard, valued, and motivated to improve (Kimber et al., 2023). This good communication allows coaches to deliver clear instructions, provide constructive feedback, and build strong relationships with athletes, increasing their engagement in the training process (Gu et al., 2023). Clear and consistent coach communication helps athletes better understand tactics and technical skills and plays a vital role in building their confidence. Positive and constructive communication from coaches can influence athletes' self-perceptions, which in turn contribute to their performance and emotional well-being (Noh et al., 2024). Thus, coaches who can communicate effectively can create an environment that encourages mental and emotional growth in athletes, which is essential in sports.

The personal closeness between coaches and athletes plays a crucial role in shaping athletes' self-confidence and well-being (Muthuswamy & Chitramani, 2023). This close

relationship encompasses closeness, commitment, and understanding between the coach and athlete, which can create a strong emotional bond. This personal closeness builds trust and a sense of security for the athlete. It contributes to their intrinsic motivation, which is essential for achieving long-term goals in sports. In training and competition, a supportive relationship between coach and athlete creates a positive and conducive environment for personal and social growth (Henriksen & Stambulova, 2023). When athletes feel emotionally supported and have a strong relationship with their coach, they are more likely to develop high self-confidence (Gunes & Yetim, 2023). Additionally, the environment fostered by this personal closeness can enhance the psychological well-being of athletes, which is crucial for maintaining a balance between physical performance and mental health.

Self-confidence is a crucial psychological factor in sports that significantly influences an athlete's performance (Jekauc et al., 2023). It refers to an athlete's belief in achieving desired outcomes in specific situations. When athletes possess strong confidence in their abilities, they tend to perform better because they feel capable of handling the challenges and pressures that arise during competition (Thomas et al., 2023). This confidence drives them to take more significant risks, commit fully to their training, and maintain focus even under stressful conditions. In sports, confidence is often specific to particular skills or aspects of the game (Jekauc et al., 2023). Athletes with high self-confidence are more resilient when facing pressure, remain focused on their goals, and are less easily discouraged by temporary setbacks. They view failures as opportunities to learn rather than obstacles, allowing them to recover quickly and continue striving for success (Alvarado Valenzuela et al., 2023). This strong sense of self-belief ultimately enhances their overall performance and increases their chances of long-term achievement.

Well-being in sports involves maintaining a balance between physical health and mental well-being (Potts et al., 2023). It encompasses various dimensions, including self-acceptance, positive relationships with others, and personal growth. Athletes' well-being and well-being can be nurtured in the sports environment by addressing their psychological needs, such as autonomy, competence, and relatedness (Rodrigue et al., 2024). These elements are crucial in fostering a sense of satisfaction and fulfillment in athletes, enabling them to perform at their best while maintaining a healthy mental state. Additionally, athletes' well-being is closely linked to their ability to manage stress, maintain life balance, and receive strong social support, particularly from their coaches. Effective stress management and a balanced lifestyle help athletes sustain their physical and mental health over time (Martín-Rodríguez et al., 2024). The role of coaches is pivotal in this regard, as they provide the necessary emotional and psychological support, contributing to the athlete's overall well-being and resilience in the face of challenges.

Based on the above background, this research aims to identify and analyze how the communication skills and personal closeness of the coach affect the confidence and well-being of student basketball athletes and provide practical insights to improve the quality of the coach-athlete relationship at the tertiary level. So that the benefit in this research is to provide a deeper

understanding of the importance of effective communication and interpersonal relationships in the context of student sports. This research is also expected to be a reference for coaches in designing training programs that better support the development of athletes' self-confidence and well-being.

RESEARCH METHOD

This research uses sequential mixed methods to explore the influence of coach communication and personal closeness on the self-confidence and well-being of student basketball athletes in an in-depth and structured manner. This research focuses on two main groups of basketball athletes and coaches at Jakarta State University and Riau Islamic University. The selected athlete must be an active student enrolled at one of the two universities and actively involved in the basketball team. These criteria ensure that participants have direct experience in competitive contexts and college training. For coaches, selection criteria include those who have been involved in coaching a student basketball team for at least one year. This experience provided an in-depth perspective on coach communication and interpersonal relationships in the coaching context. Sampling was carried out using a purposive sampling technique, where athletes and coaches were selected based on criteria relevant to the research objectives. The procedure begins with identifying potential participants through coordination with basketball team administrators at each university. A list of athletes and coaches who meet the criteria is then compiled. After that, an invitation to participate in the research was sent to them, accompanied by an explanation of the purpose of the research, its benefits, and the process that would be undertaken. This explanation aims to ensure that all participants understand and agree to their involvement in the research.

Quantitative questionnaires were distributed to basketball athletes at Jakarta State University and Riau Islamic University during the data collection stage. This questionnaire is designed to measure main variables such as the quality of coach communication, personal closeness, self-confidence, and athlete well-being. In addition to the questionnaire, in-depth interviews were conducted with coaches and athletes to explore their experiences in more detail. Observations of interactions in training and matches were also carried out to obtain richer contextual data. This process ensures that quantitative and qualitative data are collected simultaneously, providing a comprehensive view of the phenomenon under research. After the data is collected, quantitative analysis is carried out to determine patterns and relationships between the variables studied, using statistical techniques such as regression or path analysis. The results of this analysis provide a general picture of the impact of coach communication and personal closeness on athletes' self-confidence and well-being. Qualitative data from interviews and observations were analyzed using thematic analysis techniques to identify deep themes and patterns. Integrating the results from these two approaches allows researchers to combine quantitative findings with qualitative insights, providing a more holistic understanding of the

influence of coach communication and personal closeness in the context of college basketball coaching.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Result

The results of this research generally show the main findings regarding the influence of coach communication and personal closeness on the self-confidence and well-being of student basketball athletes at Jakarta State University and Riau Islamic University. The following is a summary of the research results. The results showed that clear and open coach communication significantly impacted athletes' self-confidence, with athletes who received emotional support and positive feedback from coaches reporting increased well-being and well-being, including reduced stress and anxiety.

Table 1. Regression Results of Coach Communication on Self-Confidence, Well-being.

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.846a	,799	,178	7.18607

a. Predictors: (Constant), Well-being, Personal Closeness

Table 1 shows the regression analysis results for the model evaluating the influence of Well-being and Personal Closeness on Athletes' Self-Confidence. The R-value of 0.846 shows a strong relationship between the predictor and dependent variables. An R Square of 0.799 indicates that this model can explain 79.9% of the variation in athlete self-confidence. The Adjusted R Square of 0.178 indicates that after considering the number of variables in the model, the proportion of variation that can be explained remains significant. Std. The error of the Estimate of 7.18607 indicates the standard deviation of the model predictions, measuring the average prediction error in units of the dependent variable.

Personal closeness between coaches and athletes can increase their self-confidence and well-being, reduce stress symptoms, and increase social support.

Table 2. Regression Results of Personal Closeness on Self-Confidence, Well-being

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.712a	,675	,342	6.43030

a. Predictors: (Constant), Well-being, Personal Closeness

This table shows the regression analysis results with a model that evaluates the influence of the well-being and Personal Closeness variables on the dependent variable. The R-value of 0.712 indicates a strong linear relationship between the predictor and dependent variables. R Sq. The well-being and Personal Closeness variables can be explained as 0.675, which indicates that 67.5% of the variant Personal Closeness variables are. However, after adjusting for the number of predictor variables, the Adjusted R Square of 0.342 shows that the model can still explain 34.2% of the variation. Std. The error of the Estimate of 6.43030 shows the average

deviation between the predicted value and the actual value of the dependent variable, illustrating how well the model can predict the dependent variable.

Table 3. Experiences of Athletes and Coaches in Communication, Personal Closeness, and Its Impact on Athletes' Self-Confidence and Well-being

Aspect	Findings
Athlete Experience	Athletes feel more motivated and supported when they experience good communication and personal closeness with their coach.
	Positive interactions with coaches help athletes overcome challenges and improve performance on the field.
	Clear and open communication contributes to increasing athlete self-confidence.
Coach Experience	Coaches state that building strong relationships with athletes and providing constructive feedback feeds their self-confidence and well-being.
	Effective communication helps coaches better understand athletes' needs and concerns.
	Emotional support from coaches increases athlete motivation and well-being.

The research results show that good communication and personal closeness between coaches and student basketball athletes have a significant positive impact. Athletes feel more motivated and receive important support when they experience clear communication and a close relationship with their coach. Positive interactions help them overcome challenges and improve performance on the field. On the other hand, coaches emphasize that building strong relationships and providing constructive feedback is the key to increasing athletes' self-confidence and well-being. Effective communication coaches better understand athletes' needs and concerns and provide emotional support that increases their motivation and well-being. These findings undersell the importance of communication and personal closeness in training to support overall athlete development.

Discussion

The research results show that the quality of transparent and open coach communication significantly influences the self-confidence of student basketball athletes (Junli et al., 2021). Clear communication, which includes delivering structured, easy-to-understand instructions, helps athletes better understand expectations and their role on the team (McEwan & Crawford, 2022). This reduces confusion and increases athletes' confidence in their ability to meet the demands of training and competition. Additionally, open communication allows for constructive dialogue between coaches and athletes, where athletes can ask questions and obtain necessary clarifications (Kim & Park, 2020). This supports the development of self-confidence by providing a sense of control and a better understanding of the strategies and techniques applied. Emotional support provided through positive communication and recognition of athletes' efforts also play an important role in increasing their self-confidence (Cho et al., 2020). Athletes who feel valued and supported tend to have more confidence in their abilities, directly impacting their field

performance (Doorley et al., 2022). These findings were reinforced by regression analysis, which showed a significant positive relationship between the quality of coach communication and the athlete's level of self-confidence, confirming that any improvement in coach communication is associated with an increase in athlete self-confidence.

Emotional support is an important component of coach communication (Choi et al., 2020), contributing significantly to the athlete's self-confidence. Emotional support involves encouraging, recognition of efforts, and positive responses to achievements and challenges athletes face. Athletes who feel emotional support from coaches feel more motivated and confident because they feel the coach believes in their abilities and is ready to help them overcome difficulties (Norris et al., 2022). This supportive communication creates a positive training environment where athletes feel valued and encouraged to improve (Kim & Park, 2020). Research shows that emotional support from coaches strengthens athletes' self-confidence and increases their intrinsic motivation. Athletes who feel emotionally supported are more likely to face challenges with a more positive and confident attitude, ultimately impacting their field performance (Eke et al., 2020). Therefore, coaches who provide consistent and constructive emotional support can significantly increase their athletes' self-confidence.

Regression analysis in this research revealed a significant positive relationship between the quality of coach communication and athlete self-confidence. These findings suggest that improvements in the quality of communication provided by coaches, including clarity of instructions, constructive feedback, and emotional support, are directly related to increases in athlete self-confidence (Doorley et al., 2022). This significant positive relationship indicates that coaches who can communicate effectively can substantially increase their athletes' self-confidence. Effective communication provides a strong foundation for better understanding and managing expectations, strengthening the athlete's self-confidence (Kim & Park, 2020). This research confirms that the quality of coach communication is a key factor influencing athletes' self-confidence, supporting the theory that good coach interactions significantly positively impact athletes' psychological aspects. These findings reinforce the importance of coaches developing their communication skills as an integral part of training strategies to increase athlete self-confidence (Otte et al., 2020).

The findings of this research underscore the importance of developing good communication skills by coaches as an integral part of their training strategy. High-quality communication not only influences athletes' understanding of instructions and expectations but also plays a role in building positive and supportive relationships between coaches and athletes (Horne et al., 2022). Coaches must focus on providing clear, consistent, and positive feedback, facilitating better understanding and increasing athlete confidence (Mason et al., 2020). Additionally, creating open and responsive communication channels allows athletes to express their needs, concerns, and feedback directly (Hurley, 2021). Implementing a training program

that emphasizes these communication skills can strengthen the coach-athlete relationship and encourage a more collaborative and productive environment in the training process (Yuan, 2024).

Recognizing that coach communication has a significant impact on athlete self-confidence, it is important to design training programs that include elements that support effective communication (Cranmer et al., 2020). The program should include training coaches on constructive communication techniques, such as providing constructive feedback and regularly appreciating athletes' efforts (Ansell & Spencer, 2022). Coaches must be trained to recognize and respond to athletes' emotional needs to provide appropriate emotional support and build self-confidence (van Rens et al., 2021). This strategy also involves creating training sessions that facilitate open dialogue and the development of interpersonal communication skills. By focusing on developing self-confidence through effective communication, athletes can be better prepared to face competitive challenges and improve their overall performance.

The increased confidence resulting from effective coach communication impacts an athlete's performance and overall well-being (Fu et al., 2021). With high self-confidence, thanks to clear communication and emotional support from coaches, they tend to be better able to handle pressure and challenges in sports (Gunes & Yetim, 2023). This reduces the level of stress they experience and contributes to increased satisfaction with exercise. Effective communication helps create a positive and supportive training environment, which supports athletes' mental and emotional well-being (Purcell et al., 2022) well-being result, athletes who feel confident and emotionally supported are more likely to experience higher satisfaction and better well-being in their sporting

Coach communication significantly contributes to reducing athlete stress and anxiety. The emotional support provided by the coach, through positive encouragement and recognition of the athlete's efforts, helps create a supportive environment and reduces the pressure the athlete feels (Bissett & Tamminen, 2022). Athletes who feel emotionally supported by coaches tend to experience reduced anxiety and stress levels because they feel more appreciated and understood. Additionally, positive feedback from coaches is an additional source of motivation, helping athletes feel more confident in their abilities. Constructive feedback improves athletes' self-confidence and reduces the anxiety often accompanying competitive situations, reducing uncertainty and increasing their mental calm (Reigal et al., 2020).

Effective coach communication also increases athlete emotional satisfaction (Cipriano, 2024). When coaches practice open and supportive communication, athletes feel more connected and comfortable sharing their concerns and challenges (Bissett & Tamminen, 2022). This open and empathetic training environment helps increase athletes' sense of satisfaction and emotional balance, as they feel safe and supported in the training process (Vigário et al., 2020). This research revealed that athletes who experienced good communication with coaches reported better levels of well-being because they had the emotional stability necessary for optimal performance. The coach's support and response to the athlete's emotional needs

strengthen interpersonal relationships and provide greater satisfaction (Pulido et al., 2022), contributing to athletes' mental health and overall well-being.

Athletes who experience effective communication with coaches report higher levels of emotional satisfaction (Cranmer et al., 2020). Good communication creates a comfortable and supportive atmosphere, allowing athletes to feel free to share their concerns and challenges. When coaches communicate empathetically and are responsive, athletes feel more connected and supported, increasing their satisfaction and emotional balance (Heelis et al., 2020). This supportive training environment reduces feelings of uncertainty. It strengthens interpersonal relationships, making athletes feel valued and accepted on the team (Gu et al., 2023).

Coach involvement in listening to and responding to athletes' emotional needs significantly impacts their well-being (Simons & Bird, 2023) well-beingve communication improves interpersonal relationships and provides athletes with a crucial sense of emotional stability (Davis et al., 2022). By supporting athletes emotionally and providing constructive feedback, coaches help create a safer and more enjoyable training environment (Taylor et al., 2022). This research shows that athletes who experience good communication with coaches tend to have better well-being because they feel supported, which ultimately contributes to mental health and overall well-being.

Practical coaching well-being significantly impacts athlete well-being, especially in reducing well-being and anxiety and increasing emotional satisfaction (Hill et al., 2021). This research emphasizes the importance of coaches developing communication skills that focus not only on technical aspects, emotional support, and ongoing motivation. Coaches who communicate well can play a key role in supporting athletes' mental health and well-being (Lebrun et al., 2020) well-beingan improve their performance on the field. This confirms that the coach's communication skills are important in a practical training strategy, as they can influence the athlete's performance and emotional well-being.

The discussion of well-being in this research highlights the importance of personal closeness between coaches and athletes in increasing the self-confidence and well-being of student basketball well-being. The personal closeness between coaches and athletes significantly impacts athletes' self-confidence (Mohd Kassim et al., 2024). Athletes who feel they have a close, supportive relationship with their coach show increased self-confidence, which impacts their performance on the field. These strong relationships create an environment where athletes feel valued and understood (Pierce et al., 2020), strengthening their confidence in their abilities.

Personal closeness also increases athlete well-being (Cho et al., 2020). A well-beingho feels close to their coaches and reports greater satisfaction and emotional balance. The coach's perceived sense of social support reduces stress symptoms and provides emotional security. This suggests that personal closeness increases motivation and self-confidence and helps athletes manage stress and challenges, improving their overall quality of life. These findings underscore

the importance of building strong interpersonal relationships in sports training to support athletes' holistic development.

The experiences of athletes and coaches show the importance of effective communication and personal closeness in increasing the self-confidence and well-being of student basketball (Scott et al., 2021). Based on in-depth interviews, athletes reported feeling more motivated. They received significant support when they experienced positive communication and a close personal relationship with their coach. This good interaction helps athletes overcome various challenges faced during training and matches and improves their performance on the field. This shows that good coach communication can create a supportive environment, increasing athlete motivation and self-confidence.

On the other hand, the coach said that building strong relationships with athletes and providing constructive feedback is key to increasing athletes' self-confidence and well-being. Effective coaches understand and respond to athletes' needs and concerns through open communication and personal closeness (Heelis et al., 2020). This way, coaches can provide the emotional support necessary to overcome stress and improve the athlete's overall well-being. These findings confirm that positive interpersonal relationships between coaches and athletes support the development of self-confidence and play an important role in creating emotional balance that influences the athlete's overall performance and experience.

CONCLUSION

The conclusion in this research shows that the quality of coach communication and personal closeness have a significant impact on the confidence and well-being of student basketball athletes at Universitas Negeri Jakarta and Riau Islamic University. Clear and open communication, such as structured instructions, constructive feedback, and emotional support, positively contributed to athletes' increased confidence, motivation, and performance on the court. In addition, emotional support from coaches strengthened athletes' sense of worth and emotional well-being, helping to reduce stress while increasing emotional satisfaction. Personal closeness between coaches and athletes also strengthened interpersonal relationships, provided a sense of connectedness, and supported the development of athletes' confidence and overall well-being.

This research makes an important contribution in the context of student sport coaching by recommending the implementation of training programs that prioritize effective communication and interpersonal relationships between coaches and athletes. Such programs are expected to strengthen the coach-athlete bond, create a more supportive and productive training environment, and promote athletes' emotional well-being and performance on the field. The findings also provide a basis for future coaching strategies that are more inclusive, focusing on the balance between improving athletes' performance and their emotional well-being. This

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