Steps Towards Establishing A Coach Communication Evaluation Criteria For Cricket In Japan: A Scoping Review

Shizuka Miyaji[1], Naoki Alex Miyaji[2], Randeep Rakwal [3], *

ABSTRACT

This scoping review provides a comprehensive overview of existing research on coach communication in sport, with particular focus on leadership, coach–athlete relationships, player well-being, cricket coaching contexts, and the coach's role as a communicator. With this, the study systematically maps key evidence and conceptual trends from interdisciplinary research in coaching, communication, and education. The analysis identifies several recurring themes: the importance of relational leadership in fostering trust and motivation, the influence of coaches' communicative competence on athlete well-being and performance, the need for context-sensitive coach education programs, and the growing necessity for standardized behavioral criteria in cricket coaching, particularly in developing contexts such as Japan. The findings highlight that culturally appropriate evaluation frameworks, player-centered coaching practices, and continuous professional development are essential for enhancing coaching quality and supporting athlete development. In the context of Japanese cricket, practical recommendations include establishing a player-centered coaching culture, implementing communication training tailored to the local cultural context, defining clear behavioral criteria with structured feedback systems, and promoting ongoing coach education in collaboration with local communities. These strategies can strengthen athlete motivation, retention, and overall development while providing a framework for the sustainable growth of cricket in Japan and other countries where foreign coaches play a central role.

Keywords: Coach-Communication; Behavior; Communication Skills and Training; Education.

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this scoping review is to provide an overview of the existing research related to coach role as a communicator and the effect of coaches' communication on player retention. It also provides a synopsis of existing research

[1] Graduate School of Comprehensive Human Sciences, University of Tsukuba, Tsukuba, Japan; email: shizuka1104@gmail.com
[2] Japan Cricket Association, Tochigi, Japan; email: na2miyaji@gmail.com
[3] Institute of Health and Sport Sciences, Tsukuba International Academy for Sport Studies (TIAS2.0), University of Tsukuba, Tsukuba, Japan; email: plantproteomics@gmail.com
* Correspondence: plantproteomics@gmail.com; shizuka1104@gmail.com Tel.: (+81) 090-1853- 7875

into what kind of coach education and communication trainings are available, what communication skills are required of coaches, and what criteria are available for evaluating coaching behavior. The role of the coach in sports is changing from simply teaching skills to a multidimensional role, and existing research indicates that the coach is particularly recognized as having an important role as a communicator. By analyzing key studies, this review will identify research trends, highlight gaps, and explore the role of the coach as a communicator and as it is assumed to be deeply involved in player retention, coach education and criteria for coach behavior. To better understand of the role of the coach as a communicator in sport, this review is structured into 9 categories: 1) Coach-Athlete relationship; 2) Player well-being; 3) Background on cricket coaching; 4) Coach's role as a communicator; 5) Coach education; 6) Criteria for coach behavior; 7) Coach communication skills; 8) Communication training and 9) Other coach's role in sport. Each section synthesizes findings from the reviewed studies, highlighting both consensus and gaps in the literature.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

This review aimed to provide a comprehensive overview of existing research on coach communication in sport. To systematically identify relevant studies, a literature search was conducted using multiple electronic databases, including Google Scholar, Academia, and Scopus. The search strategy combined keywords and Boolean operators related to coach communication in sport, including: "coach communication", "coach–athlete relationship", "leadership in sport", "player well-being", "cricket coaching", "coach education", "coach role in sports", and "coach evaluation criteria". Synonyms and related terms were also included to ensure comprehensive coverage of relevant studies. The inclusion criteria were as follows: (1) studies published in English or Japanese, (2) research focusing on coach communication, coach–athlete relationships, or leadership in sport, (3) empirical or theoretical studies addressing coaching in cricket or comparable team sports, and (4) publications in peer-reviewed journals. Exclusion criteria were: (1) research not related to communication or leadership, (2) conference abstracts or non-peer-reviewed sources, and (3) studies with no access to full text. No specific publication period was applied in regards to the timeframe of the literature considered, as the number of existing studies on coach communication in cricket and related sports is expected to be limited. All relevant studies were therefore included to ensure a comprehensive review of the topic. Based on the idea that a coach has a multidimensional role, the author searched for references that could support this idea. As a result, the author found 12 references that stated that the role of a coach is as a communicator and also found references that stated that there is a need for programs to educate coaches. There were a small number of references regarding to criteria for coach behavior that could serve as necessary information for the author's ultimate goal of creating evaluation criteria for coach communication skills. Some references on coaches'

communication skills and how they can lead to player satisfaction and improved performances. And, we were unable to find many references written about the communication training required for coaches or the influence that coaches have on player retention in sports.

A conceptual framework illustrates how coaches' communication (coaches' communication skills (CCS), communication training (CT), and their role as communicators (CRC) influences player retention through coach–athlete relationship (CAR), athletes' well-being, and coach education (Figure 1).

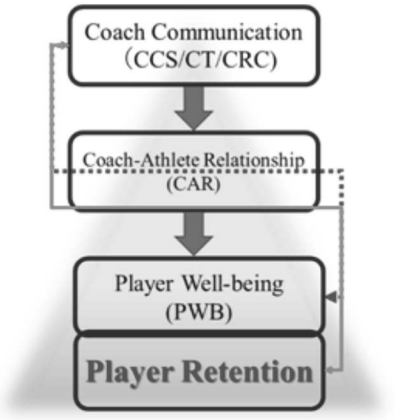

Figure 1. The Impact of Coach Communication on Athlete Retention via Relationships, Well-Being, and Coach Education.

RESULTS

A representative of the articles reviewed are presented in (Table 1).

Table 1. The List of Key topics, Themes, Study Design, Sample, Key Outcomes and Limitation, Findings of the Reviewed Articles.

Key Topic	Themes	Study Design	Sample	Key Outcomes - Limitation	Key Findings
Coach-Athlete Relationship=CAR	Coach-athlete relation impact on player motivation and performance	Quantitative	Cricket, UK, 53 professional cricketers consisting of 25 males and 28 females	The study found that better coach-athlete relationships enhance elite cricket performance, though results are limited by sample, self-report measures, and potential cultural specificity.	In elite cricket, a strong coach-athlete relationship (CAR) positively influences batting performance, mental well-being, and athlete motivation. Key elements communication, commitment, and complementarity help athletes perform consistently and develop effectively.

Key Topic	Themes	Study Design	Sample	Key Outcomes - Limitation	Key Findings
Player Well-Being=PWB	Coach and athlete relationship effect on player's satisfaction, well-being	Quantitative	NCAA, USA, 153 (female = 115; male = 38) student-athletes	Positive coach–athlete relationships and strong social support are linked to better sport-related psychological well-being, but the cross-sectional, self-reported study is limited to NCAA Division I athletes.	Athletes who feel close to their coaches tend to feel more competent and skilled. Coaching behaviors that support autonomy can enhance athletes' need satisfaction. However, the CAR can also be a source of stress, with poor-quality relationships linked to negative outcomes like burnout and reduced well-being.
Background on Cricket Coaching=BCC	The influence of background on cricket coaching	Quantitative	Cricket, UK, 11 coaches	Elite cricket coach education is shaped by formal programs, social networks, and cultural capital, highlighting the role of power and relationships, but the qualitative, context-specific study limits generalizability and may include subjective interpretation.	Coaches are strongly influenced by their personal experiences and cultural backgrounds. Those who were successful players often rely on their own methods and may resist adopting new coaching knowledge or techniques. Effective coach education is essential to help coaches provide high-quality sporting experiences.
Coach's Role as a Communicator= CRC	Coach role as teacher, mentor	Quantitative	NCAA, USA, 380 coaches	Coaches' personality traits influence their leadership behaviors, which shape coach–athlete relationships, but the study is correlational, self-reported, university-specific, and may not capture interaction dynamics.	Coaches should integrate positive leadership behaviors—such as skill development, democratic decision-making, social support, and positive feedback—into their coaching. These behaviors foster a strong CAR characterized by closeness and commitment. Effective coach leadership enhances athlete outcomes,

Key Topic	Themes	Study Design	Sample	Key Outcomes - Limitation	Key Findings
					including team cohesion, satisfaction, psychological safety, and well-being.
	Coach role as communicator	Quantitative	Cricket, Rugby, Australia, 6 coaches and 25 players	Trust-based coach–athlete relationships in Australian professional teams enhance communication, motivation, and cohesion, but the qualitative, context-specific study limits generalizability and may include subjective bias.	Effective coaches foster approachability, honesty, trust, respect, and regular communication while showing genuine interest in athletes' development both on and off field. Coaching success measured not only by wins but also by quality of relationships built.
	Coach role in player motivation	Combines qualitative and quantitative approaches	N/A	A robust methodological framework for analyzing interpersonal communication in sport through a QUAL-QUAN-QUAL mixed-methods approach, illustrating data integration, rigor with flexibility, and applicability to various observational sources, however is limited in its generalizability.	Athletes are more motivated through two-way communication, especially when coaches provide support and consider their input.
	Coach role in player motivation	Qualitative	Archery, Korea, 3 coaches and 6 players	Effective communication involving empathy, personalized understanding, and emotional support strengthened trust and performance among Korean Olympic archers, though the small qualitative sample limits broader applicability.	Coaches must tailor their feedback and communication to each athlete, as positive words can have different effects depending on the individual. Effective communication can influence an athlete's self-awareness, confidence, anxiety, autonomy, and motivation.

Key Topic	Themes	Study Design	Sample	Key Outcomes - Limitation	Key Findings
	Coach role in player motivation	Conceptual review	N/A	Autonomy-supportive coaching enhances athletes' basic psychological needs and intrinsic motivation, but the model is theoretical and has not been empirically tested.	Coaches who adapt their behaviors to meet athletes' needs for autonomy, competence, and relatedness can enhance motivation and performance. Autonomy-supportive coaching also helps reduce athlete dropout rates.
	Coach role as communicator	Quantitative	Cricket, UK, 9 players	High performance expectations, individualized support, trust, and captain's bridging role enhanced transformational leadership among nine professional cricket players. However, the small, self-reported UK sample limits generalizability, and further research is needed on interactions with other leadership styles and variable outcomes.	Effective coaches understand individual players and provide tailored support when needed. Their communication skills, honesty, approachability, and ability to maintain appropriate boundaries greatly influence players' perceptions of their effectiveness. Coaches help build confidence by guiding players to find their own solutions rather than giving direct answers.
Coach Education = CE	Coach training on player satisfaction	Quantitative	A wide range of sports, USA, 1,706 coaches	Coaches who completed formal training were more likely to promote athletes' life skills such as teamwork and responsibility, showing the value of structured coach education; however, as the data were cross-sectional and self-reported, causal links cannot be confirmed.	Coaches who receive training in life skills and cognitive behavioral strategies report higher satisfaction and positively impact athlete development. Such training improves coach effectiveness, promotes better relationships, enhances athlete enjoyment and self-esteem, and reduces dropout rates. Prioritizing coach education benefits both coaches and

Key Topic	Themes	Study Design	Sample	Key Outcomes - Limitation	Key Findings
					athletes, leading to positive sport experiences.
	Coach education	Quantitative	Ireland, 10 coaches	Ireland's coach education provides a solid national framework, but high-performance coaching needs more continuous professional development and stronger links with sport organizations; however, study's observational, qualitative design and small sample limit causal conclusions.	Coaches value formal education programs but also emphasize the need for communities of practice where they can apply and share knowledge in real-world settings.
	Coach education	Quantitative	UK, 621 coaches from different sports	Coaches valued their education programs but saw limited impact on coaching; sport-specific content was strong, while areas like sports psychology were lacking, and interactive elements were seen as beneficial. Questionnaire-based study may not capture all perspectives or contextual details.	Coach education often lacks regular follow-up and ongoing communication about further learning opportunities. Coaching expertise is multidimensional, but many courses focus too much on sport science and not enough on pedagogy. Coaches also need support and guidance from supervisors.
	Coach education	Quantitative	Cricket, NZ, 6 coaches	Coaches valued educational theories and athlete-centered approaches but struggled with practical application; critical reflection could enhance the program. Study involved six New Zealand Cricket high-performance coaches and was limited to short-term evaluation.	The coaching role is evolving from simply teaching skills to embracing a broader educational perspective. Coaches are seen as educators and facilitators who contribute to athletes' personal growth both in sport and in life.

Key Topic	Themes	Study Design	Sample	Key Outcomes - Limitation	Key Findings
	Coach education	Quantitative	Japan, 140 players (male=68, female=72) from different sports	Five core characteristics of effective coaches were identified—athlete-centered coaching, humanity, knowledge and skills, precise action, and trust-building—with humanity being most fundamental. Continuous self-development is expected, but qualitative, context-specific, and cross-sectional design limits generalizability/depth.	Coaches should continuously update their skills, accurately read the sport environment, and build strong, athlete-centered relationships. Ongoing personal and professional development, mutual respect, trust, and open communication between coaches and athletes are essential for shared growth and success.
Criteria for Coach Behavior = CCB	Criteria for coach behavior	Quantitative	Hong Kong, UK, Australia, 274 players from different sports	Coaches' behaviors influence athlete–coach relationship quality and stress appraisal, with closeness promoting challenge appraisal and high commitment linked to threat appraisal and disengagement coping, but the study's focus, mechanisms, performance links, and generalizability across cultures and sports are limited.	Coach behaviors significantly affect the CAR, athlete stress, well-being, and self-concept. Positive and supportive coaching reduces aggression and anxiety, while unsupportive behavior can have harmful effects on athletes. Coaches should be mindful of their impact.
	Communica-tion strategy	Quantitative	Sweden, 350 players from different sports	Communication strategies mediate the effect of coach–athlete relationship quality on athlete satisfaction and psychological needs, with key strategies reinforcing relationships over time, but reliance on self-report data and unclear effects of some strategies remain as limitations.	Communication strategies like support, motivation, and conflict management play a key role in building high-quality CAR. These strategies enhance athletes' satisfaction and encourage ongoing, rewarding participation in sport.

Key Topic	Themes	Study Design	Sample	Key Outcomes - Limitation	Key Findings
	Criteria for coach behavior	Scale development study	Canada	The CBS-S measures seven dimensions of coaching behavior, including mental preparation and competitive strategy, providing a comprehensive assessment, but its exploratory, context-specific design, reliance on self-report, and lack of causal testing are limitations.	The Coaching Behavior Scale for Sport (CBS-S) is a tool with 37 items across six factors that helps coaches, researchers, and administrators assess key coaching behaviors. It can be used alongside observations and interviews to provide a comprehensive understanding of coaching effectiveness.
Coach Communication Skills = CCS	Communication skills by a coach	Quantitative	Japan, 328 University students playing different sports	Ideal coaches, as perceived by female physical education students, are those who elicit potential through communication, engage equally, and respect individuality, guiding autonomy, but study's limited sample, reliance on surveys, and unclear real-world applicability are limitations.	Building effective coaching skills requires not only deciding what kind of coach to be but also focusing on the type of relationship to build with athletes. Communication skills are essential for developing these relationships, as recognized by many students studying coaching.
Communication Training=CT	Communication training	Quantitative	India, Cricket, 223 players	Internal communication, including peer and coach interactions, communication training, and internal PR, positively relates to athletes' sports commitment, with training and PR being particularly influential, but the study's cross-sectional, self-reported data, limited sample, and short-term snapshot are key limitations.	Coach communication is vital for boosting player morale, fostering transparency, and reducing dropout rates. Negative communication can drive players away, while communication skills training—combining information, practice, and feedback—helps create a positive team environment.

Key Topic	Themes	Study Design	Sample	Key Outcomes - Limitation	Key Findings
Other Coach Role=OCR	Coach role in player retention	Qualitative	Australia, 9 coaches from youth sports	In youth sports, coaches are the most critical factor influencing athletes' continued participation, playing a holistic role in fostering positive experiences and relationships, though the study is limited by its focus on youth, lack of attention to coach development, and insufficient examination of specific coaching strategies.	Athlete-centred coaching focuses on developing players both as athletes and individuals. More research is needed on strategies that promote inclusivity and enjoyment. The coach plays a key role in influencing player enjoyment, retention, and dropout, with the coach-player relationship being critical to keeping players engaged in the sport.
	Coach role as creative	Qualitative	12 coaches (male = 7, female = 5) from different sports	Professional sports coaches view creativity as a multifaceted process linked to athlete ability, efficiency, trust, and freedom, requiring coaches to design creative learning environments and involve the entire team, though it is constrained by safety, the balance of novelty and appropriateness, and various cultural, educational, and social factors.	Creativity in sports is multidimensional and influenced by the quality of interpersonal relationships. Coaches and players mutually enhance each other's creativity through trust and allowing space for independent action. Coaches remain guides but should adopt creative approaches in their relationships to improve their coaching.

DISCUSSION

FINDINGS FROM THE LITERATURE

Coach-Athlete Relationship (CAR)

When playing sports, it is unthinkable for there to be no communication between coaches including support staff like physiotherapist and players.

Coach-athlete relation impact on player motivation and performance

Within elite cricket, the CAR as significant in influencing athletes' mental health. Communication affecting overall relationship quality. The CARs have been described as the essence of coaching. The quality of the CAR is impacting athletes' sources of motivation (Kieran et al., 2023).

Communication between coach and athlete

The CAR is the essence of the entire

coaching job. The quality of the CAR is related to athlete performance and satisfaction with their relationship, athlete motivation, team cohesion, collective efficiency, indicators of well-being. A connection between a bad CAR and conflict between them, antisocial behavior of athletes and athlete burnout (Zubic, 2024).

Player Well-being

There is no denying that the relationship with the coach and his/her words and behaviors increase the player's happiness, leading to improved motivation, performance and retention in their sports.

Coach and athlete relationship effect on player's satisfaction, well-being

The CAR is an organizational stressor which may impact a student-athletes' well-being. A poor-quality coach athlete relationship is associated with negative indicators of well-being such as athlete burnout (Simons and Bird, 2022).

Coach's behavior influences on player well-being

Coaches occupy a central role in sport, fulfilling instructional, organizational, strategic, and social relationship functions. Athletes' skill acquisition, success, enjoyment, continued participation, and physical and psychological well-being are all strongly influenced by coaching behaviors (Smith and Smoll, 2017).

Background on Cricket Coaching

The influence of background on cricket coaching

There seems to be a perception in cricket that good coaches are those who were both famous and good players. What the role of a cricket coach is and what the problems they face are. Coaches are powerful figures in creating, developing and shaping the sporting experience. Coach education, in turn, is a crucial component in the delivery of high-quality sporting experiences. Although coaches who are former professional players have experience and a wealth of technical knowledge, their success has led them to stick to their own ideas and make it difficult for them to accept new knowledge or coaching methods (Robert and Christopher, 2015).

Coach Role as Communicator

The coach's role as a communicator in sport is multidimensional.

Coach Role as Communicator

The professional coaching role increasingly requires attention to personal development in conjunction with the technical, tactical and physical training of their athletes. Interpersonal skills are essential for the coach, particularly in order to develop the athlete on and off the field. Coach's role increasingly requires attention to athletes' personal development (Andrew and Donna, 2012). It is crucial for coaches and college sports team administrators to thoroughly understand the ways in which different coaching styles may increase the quality of connections with players and affect their behaviors. Coaches, as leaders, should regularly and effectively seek to understand athletes' emotional and psychological changes to evaluate their status and interpersonal relationships (Jin et al., 2022). Fueled by communication (verbal and/or non-verbal), the quality of the coach–athlete relationship can be a

powerful vehicle for both coaches and athletes' long-term development, personal growth and transformation (Jowett, 2017). The way a coach communicates has an impact on players. The role of the coach is varied, but a key part is to provide individual support when a player lacks confidence and to help them find solutions rather than presenting them with the answers so they can solve their own problems. Required characteristics of a coach are approachability, honesty and good communication skills (Matthew et al., 2017).

Coach Role as Teacher and Mentor

At the center of leadership in sport is the role of the coach. Coach leadership influences many athlete outcomes that increase individual and team effectiveness (e.g., cohesion, satisfaction, psychological safety, and well-being). Leader behaviors predict the coach–athlete relationship (Anderson et al., 2023).

Coach Role in Player motivation

Athletes are motivated by two-way communication, which is sometimes informal, and the results obtained show that their motivation is greater when the coaches give them support and take them into account (Izquierdo and Anguera, 2021). Depending on the communicative actions, a coach may positively or negatively impact an athlete's self-awareness, self-confidence, anxiety, autonomy, and motivation. Coaches play an important role in increasing an athletes' confidence level and motivation (Kim and Park, 2020). Autonomy-supportive behaviors from the coaches show to facilitate athlete's motivation and decrease dropout rate of the sport (Mageau and Vallerand, 2003).

Coach Role for Player's Mental Health

Recent research emphasizes the critical role of sport psychology in optimizing performance and well-being, as athletes increasingly benefit from the guidance of sports psychologists, coaches, and mental performance experts to cultivate mental skills, cope with pressure, and maintain emotional balance (Galily et al., 2024).

Coach Education

Being a coach in sports is not just about getting a qualification, it is the beginning of their coaching career and they need to constantly update their knowledge/experience. Therefore, continuous coach education is required.

Coach Education

All coaches recognize the need for coach education. However, they believe that education should not only provide knowledge, but also provide a place where the knowledge can be put into practice (Bertz and Purdy, 2011). Coaching expertise is multidimensional. A lot of coach education courses focus on sport science and not enough on pedagogy. Coaches need their supervisors (Christine and Sproule, 2012). The idea of coach education is shifting from simply teaching skills to viewing coaches as educators who should have a broader perspective. A coach is not only someone who teaches skills but also someone who teaches a person about life. The coach is also a facilitator (Hugh et al., 2012). Coaching expertise cannot be created within formal educational courses alone but requires coaches to engage mentally with their own practice to learn and develop. Effective coach education

should focus on developing the coach's capacity to learn from and understand, his or her own experiences and need structured support programs (Knowles et al., 2005). Sports coaches' professional development comprises a continuous process that is extended throughout the career. Coaches need constant reflection, evaluation and revision of their own behaviors and also need support from professionals, evaluation from their athletes (Milistetd et al., 2017). Create a training package. The coach analyzes his/her own actions and behavior. The coach's supervisor and the players also evaluate their actions and behavior. Regularly perform self-analysis. Players who play under trained coaches are highly satisfied (Smith et al., 1979). Coaches should face challenges and continue to learn. It is also important that athletes and coaches respect and trust each other, actively communicate with each other, and strive to improve together (山田快 (Yamada) et al., 2022).

Coach Training on Player Satisfaction

Coaches who participated in a brief training on cognitive behavioral coaching strategies focused on supportiveness and quality instruction were more impactful in promoting relationships, fun, better teammate interactions, and increased self-esteem among players as compared to those not receiving, they training. Athletes who played for coaches trained in sport skill instruction, techniques for encouragement and avoiding punishment, and other positive coaching strategies were more satisfied with their sport experiences and had lower attrition rates than athletes working with untrained coaches (Anderson-Butcher et al., 2024).

Criteria for Coach Behavior

Coaches in sports need to have good relationships with their players and constantly reflect on their own behaviors in order to achieve their goals. Criteria for evaluating coaches are necessary.

Criteria for Coach Behavior

How a coach behaves can influence aggressive behaviors, thoughts and anxiety among his or her athletes. It is therefore important that coaches behave in a way that athletes perceive as being positive or supportive. Coaches should consider the impact of their behavior and the detrimental consequences of such unsupportive behavior (Adam et al., 2016). The role of a coach is multidimensional. Coaches' behavior influences players' motivation. Each sport needs its own criteria for measuring coaches' behavior (Chelladurai and Saleh, 1980).

Communication Strategy

Communication strategies (support, motivation, and conflict management) can help transfer the effects of quality CARs onto athletes' satisfaction with their sporting experiences. Communication is a significant factor not only for the development of high-quality CAR but also for continuous sport participation that is both rewarding and satisfying (Davis et al., 2019).

Coach Communication Skills

Communication skills by a coach

Most students expect an ideal coaching style has many factors which require for developing coaching skills. And realized the needs for communication skills by a coach (野老稔 (Tokoro) and 坂井和明(Sakai), 2005).

Communication Training

Communication is a key element to a successful team. Negative communication from coaches can lead players to drop out of sports. Communication training is a viable method for creating a positive environment. Effective communication training involves information, practice, and feedback (Mishra et al., 2015). **コミュニケーションの重要性。コミュニケーショントレーニングの必要性。** (importance of communication and necessary of communication training) (大坊郁夫(Daibo), 2006).

Other Coach's Role

Coach Role in Player Retention

The coach maintains a pivotal role in influencing enjoyment and contributing to player retention and attrition and also the coach is the most important factor in player retention and attrition. The coach-player relationship is critical in the retention of players (Agnew and Pill, 2022).

Coach Role as Creative

Players and coaches can reciprocally affect each other's potential for creativity by trusting in each other and leaving mutual space for action. This in no way implies that coaches lose their roles as guides, as one coach commented. Coaches should be creative in how they relate to their players in order to become better coaches (Roberta et al, 2023).

TOWARDS DEVELOPING COACH EVALUATION CRITERIA: THE GAP

There is still limited research on how to educate coaches or provide communication training for their role as communicators. While foundational communication competencies are generally similar across sports, differences may emerge depending on the type of sport. This inability to generalize coaching practices across all sports highlights the paucity of existing research, and the fact that the multidimensional role of the coach has only recently begun to be recognized further underscores this gap. When considering the context of cricket coaching in Japan, it is important to note that most of the existing studies have been conducted in Western cricket environments, where cultural norms, coaching infrastructure, and player expectations differ substantially. Western-based studies often employ longitudinal designs, tracking coach–athlete relationships and communication practices over extended periods, which allows researchers to observe the development of trust, leadership effectiveness, and long-term athlete motivation. In contrast, in Japan and other emerging cricket contexts in Asia, cross-sectional studies are more common, providing only snapshots of coaching practices at a single point in time. This limits the understanding of how coach behavior and communication influence athlete development over the long term. Cultural differences also affect coaching dynamics. In Western-style cricket, autonomy-supportive and democratic leadership is emphasized, fostering individual decision-making and open communication. In the Japanese context, however, respect for hierarchy and collectivist values shapes coach–athlete interactions, influencing how feedback is given, motivation is

fostered, and relationships are developed. Recognizing these cultural factors is essential for designing evaluation criteria and communication strategies that are appropriate for Japan, rather than directly importing Western models. By comparing longitudinal and cross-sectional evidence and integrating cultural considerations, this analysis underscores the need for context-sensitive coaching frameworks and highlights research gaps specific to cricket in Japan.

CONCLUSIONS

The role of coaches in sport has expanded beyond technical instruction to encompass multiple responsibilities, particularly as communicators (Anderson et al., 2023). In elite sports such as cricket, the quality of the coach–athlete relationship (CAR) is a critical factor influencing athlete motivation, performance, mental well-being, and continued participation (Kieran et al., 2023). Coaches must act not only as technical and tactical instructors but also as leaders, mentors, and communicators. Autonomy-supportive and democratic coaching styles can enhance athlete satisfaction, team cohesion, psychological safety, and intrinsic motivation, fostering sustained engagement in sport, whereas poor-quality CARs are associated with burnout and dropout (Smith & Smoll, 2017). Communication quality is central to building trust and psychological safety, especially for young athletes, whose decisions to continue in sport are highly influenced by their coach's words and behavior (Agnew & Pill, 2023). Cricket in Japan remains a developing sport with limited participation, and foreign coaches are frequently employed to provide technical and tactical expertise. This reliance on foreign coaches presents unique cultural and communication challenges, particularly in women's cricket, where programs are still emerging and team sizes are small. Existing development initiatives, such as youth and community programs and school leagues, are limited in scope compared to established cricket nations, making the quality of coaching and player engagement critical for the sport's growth. In this context, adopting player-centered coaching that respects athletes' perspectives and promotes autonomy is essential. Additionally, communication training tailored to the Japanese cultural context can help mitigate misunderstandings between foreign coaches and Japanese players. Furthermore, continuous coach education and collaboration with local communities can foster both coach development and athlete growth (Knowles et al., 2005).

Acknowledgments

S.M. extends her sincere appreciation to Professor Randeep Rakwal for the numerous guidance opportunities that have been instrumental in shaping and refining her research ideas.

REFERENCE

Adam, R.N.; Andrew, R.L.; Leigh, J.; Rudi, M.; Jon, N.R. & John, L.P. (2016). Committed relationships and enhanced threat levels: Perceptions of coach behavior, the coach–athlete relationship, stress appraisals, and coping among athletes.

International Journal of Sports Science & Coaching, 11(1), 16-26.

Agnew, D. & Pill, S. (2022). The Role of the Coach in Player Retention and Attrition. In M. Toms & R. Jeanes (Eds.) Routledge Handbook of Coaching Children in Sport (1st ed.) (Chapter 10, pp. 102-110). New York: Routledge. https://doi.org/10.4324/9781003199359

Anderson-Butcher, D.; Bates, S. & Lo, M. (2024). Coach Training Participation and Athlete Life Skill Development: Findings from The US National Coach Survey. ***Quest***, 1-19. DOI: 10.1080/00336297.2024.2407140

Anderson, S.N.; Harenberg, S.; Nieto, M. & Vosloo, J. (2024). Exploring the Multidimensional Model of Leadership Through the Lens of Coaches: An Examination of the Relationship Between Personality, Leader Behaviors, and the Coach–Athlete Relationship. International Sport Coaching Journal, 11(3), 1-11. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1123/iscj.2023-0034

Andrew, B. & Donna, O.C. (2012). Coach-athlete Relationships: A Qualitative Study of Professional Sport Teams in Australia. International Journal of Sport and Health Science, 10, 58-64.

Bertz, S. & Purdy, L. (2011). Coach Education in Ireland: Observation and Considerations for High Performance. Journal of Coaching Education, 4(3), 29-43.

Chelladurai, P. & Saleh, S.D. (1980). Dimensions of Leader Behavior in Sports: Development of a Leadership Scale. Journal of Sport Psychology, 2, 34-45.

Christine, N. & Sproule, J. (2012). Coaches perceptions of their coach education experiences. International Journal of Sports Science & Coaching, 43, 33-52.

Davis, L.; Jowett, S. & Tafvelin, S. (2019). Communication Strategies: The Fuel for Quality Coach-Athlete Relationships and Athlete Satisfaction. Frontiers in Psychology, 10, 1-12. DOI: https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2019.02156

Galily, Y.; Samuel, R.D. & Tenenbaum, G. (2024). An overview of the psychological complexities in sports performance. Asian Journal of Sport and Exercise Psychology, 4, 73-74.

Hugh, G.; Glenn, F. & Ian, C. (2012). High-performance cricket coaches' perceptions of an educationally informed coach education programme. Asia-Pacific Journal of Health, Sport and Physical Education, 3(2), 123-140.

Izquierdo, C. & Anguera, T. (2021). The Analysis of Interpersonal Communication in Sport From Mixed Methods Strategy: The Integration of Qualitative-Quantitative Elements Using Systematic Observation. Frontiers in Psychology, 12, 637304. DOI: 10.3389/fpsyg.2021.637304

Jean, C.; John, Y.; John, K.; Whitney, S. & Joe, B. (1999). An exploratory examination of the Coaching Behavior Scale for Sport. Avante, 5(2), 82-92.

Jin, H.; Kim, S.; Love, A.; Jin, Y. & Zhao, J. (2022). Effects of leadership style on coach-athlete relationship, athletes' motivations, and athlete satisfaction. Frontiers in Psychology, 13, 1012953. DOI: 10.3389/fpsyg.2022.1012953

Jowett, S. (2017). Coaching effectiveness: the coach–athlete relationship at its heart. Current Opinion in Psychology, 16, 154-158.

Kieran, P.; Sophia, J.; Aleksandra, K. & Dniel, R. (2023). The quality of the coach-athlete relationship predicts objective performance in elite cricket. Sports Psychology, 54, 32-47.

Kim, Y. & Park, I. (2020). Coach Really Knew What I Needed and Understood Me Well as a Person: Effective Communication Acts in Coach-Athlete Interactions among Korean Olympic Archers. Public Health, 17(9), 3101. DOI: 10.3390/ijerph17093101

Knowls, Z.; Borrie, A. & Hamish, T. (2005). Towards the reflective sports coach: issues of context, education and application. Ergonomics, 48(11-14), 1711-1720.

Mageau, G.A. & Vallerand, R.J. (2003). The coach–athlete relationship: a motivational model. Journal of Sports Sciences, 21, 883-904.

Matthew, J.S.; David, J.Y.; Sean, G.F. & Calum, A.A. (2017). Transformational Leadership in Elite Sport: A Qualitative Analysis of Effective Leadership Behaviors in Cricket. The Sport Psychologist, 31, 1-15.

Milistetd, M.; Galatti, L.; Collet, C.; Tozetto, A. & Vieira, J. (2017). Sports Coach Education: Education Guidelines for the Systematization of Pedagogical Practices in Bachelor Program in Physical Education. Journal of Physical Education, 28, e2849 DOI: 10.4025/jphyseduc.v28i1.2849

Mishra, N.; Sharma, N. & Kamalanabhan, T.J. (2015). Is Internal Communication Important for Sport Commitment: Survey of Indian Cricket Players. Communication & Sport, 4(2), 212-239.

Roberta, A.P.; Michele, B.; Dylan, vdS. & Andrea, S. (2023). Challenges and understandings of creative practice in professional sport training. PLoS ONE, 18(2), e0279702. https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0279702

Robert, C.T. & Christopher, C. (2015). Elite cricket coach education: a Bourdieusian analysis. Sport, Education and Society, 22(4), 528-546. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1080/13573322.2015.1040753

Simons, E.E. & Bird, M.D. (2022). Coach-athlete relationship, social support, and sport-related psychological well-being in National Collegiate Athletic Association Division I student-athletes. Journal for the Study of Sports and Athletes in Education, 17(3), 191-210.

Smith, R.E.; Smoll, F.L. & Curtis, B. (1979). Coach Effectiveness Training: A Cognitive-Behavioral Approach to Enhancing Relationship Skills in Youth Sport Coaches. Journal of Sport Psychology, 1, 59-75.

Smith, R.E. & Smoll, F.L. (2017). Coaching Behavior and Effectiveness in Sport and Exercise Psychology. Oxford Research Encyclopedia of Psychology. Retrieved 20 Nov. 2024, from https://oxfordre.com/psychology/view/10.1093/acrefore/9780190236557.001.0001/acrefore-9780190236557-e-188.

Zubic, I. (2024). Communication between Coach and Athlete. Sport Media and Business, 10(1), 45-60.

大坊郁夫(Daibo, I.) (2006). コミュニケーションスキルの重要性. 日本労働研究雑誌 546, 13-22. (Retrieved Dec 8, 2024) (In English: Ikuo Daibo (2006)

Importance of Communication Skills. Japanese Journal of Labor Studies, 546, 13-12).

野老稔，坂井和明 (Tokoro, M. & Sakai, K.) (2005). コーチングスキル構築のための基礎的研究：体育系女子学生が描く理想的なコーチ像を手がかりに. スポーツ方法学研究 18(1), 11-22 (Retrieved Oct 24, 2024) (In English: Minoru Tokoro and Kazuaki Sakai (2005) Basic study to develop coaching skill based on an ideal coach female college students imagine. The Japanese Journal of Sport Methodology, 18(1), 11-22).

山田快，堀本菜美，長谷川賢典 (Yamada, K.; Horimoto, N. & Hasegawa, K.) (2022). アスリートにとって優れたコーチの特徴．スポーツ心理学研究 49(2), 157-168 (Retrieved Oct 24, 2024) (In English: Kai Yamada, Nami Horimoto and Kensuke Hasegawa (2022) Characteristics of a Good Coach for Athletes. Sports Psychology Research, 49(2), 157-168).