

# Influence of Coaches' Leadership on Athlete Satisfaction in Ashanti Region of Ghana

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**How to cite this paper:** Abieraba, R. S. K., Apaak, D., & Akubah, C. (2025). Influence of Coaches' Leadership on Athlete Satisfaction in Ashanti Region of Ghana. *Open Journal of Leadership*, 14, 127-142.

<https://doi.org/10.4236/ojl.2025.141005>

**Received:** January 6, 2025

**Accepted:** March 1, 2025

**Published:** March 4, 2025

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## Abstract

The purpose of the study was to examine the perception SHS athletes had of coaches' leadership behaviour and how these perceptions influenced the athletes' satisfaction in the Ashanti Region of Ghana. A descriptive cross-sectional survey was used to conduct the research. One thousand and two respondents selected from a population of 2200 Senior High School (SHS) Athletes in the Ashanti Region who participated in organised interschool sports competitions in the 2019/2020 academic year were used for the study. Chelladurai and Saleh's Leadership Scale for Sports (LSS) and Chelladurai and Riemer's athletes' variety of goods were used as research instruments in the study and the researchers employed descriptive statistics (means and standard deviations) and multivariate multiple linear regression to analyse the data collected. Results revealed that 1) the most perceived coach leadership behaviour by the athletes were positive feedback ( $M = 4.53$ ;  $SD = .53$ ), training and instruction ( $M = 4.50$ ;  $SD = .51$ ) and social support ( $M = 4.17$ ;  $SD = .75$ ); 2) athletes were generally satisfied with the following: personal treatment from coaches ( $M = 4.49$ ,  $SD = .60$ ), strategy from their coaches ( $M = 4.32$ ,  $SD = .70$ ), their ability utilization ( $M = 4.29$ ,  $SD = .71$ ), their individual performance ( $M = 4.22$ ,  $SD = .78$ ) and team performance ( $M = 4.02$ ,  $SD = 1.04$ ); 3) the perceived use of any or the combination of positive response, education and social support leadership behaviours by coaches increase the probability of SHS athletes being satisfied with their ability utilisation, the strategy of their coaches, personal treatment from coaches and satisfaction with individual performance. Conclusions: Athletes were generally satisfied with personal treatment, strategy from coaches and their ability utilisation. Also, SHS athletes in the Ashanti Region of Ghana desired coaches who showed positive feedback, training and instruction and social support leadership behaviours.

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## Keywords

Coaching Behaviour, Leadership, Athletes' Satisfaction, Leadership Behaviour

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### 1. Introduction

Leadership is a cornerstone of individual and collective effectiveness, playing a critical role in human resource management and organisational success (Abieraba, 2024a). It enhances performance, motivates, and satisfies subordinates, making it indispensable for both organisational and group achievement (Sarpira, Khodayari, & Mohammadi, 2012). Leadership profoundly determines the trajectory of an organisation's success or failure (Ehsani, Amiri, & Norouzi, 2012), especially in the context of rapid societal and organisational changes, where effective leadership ensures adaptability, survival, and long-term growth (Ignacio III, Montecalbo-Ignacio, & Cardenas, 2017). Consequently, leadership research has expanded across various domains, including sports leadership. However, in developing countries such as Ghana, significant gaps in sports leadership literature persist, particularly concerning the coaching behaviors that influence athlete satisfaction and performance (Abieraba, 2024a).

Globally, the research underscores the interconnected nature of coaching behaviors and athlete outcomes, emphasising that leadership impacts extend beyond individual interactions to reflect broader sports cultures (Smith, 2010). Coaching behaviors, including positive feedback, social support, training and instruction, and democratic practices, have been consistently linked to fostering productive athletes (Ramzaniezhad & Keshtan, 2009; Sundi, 2013). Athletes systematically seek positive feedback not only for immediate validation but also as a guide for future performance enhancement (Kim & Cruz, 2016; Rhind, Jowett, & Yang, 2012). Additionally, the relationship between coaching behaviors and athlete satisfaction has been extensively documented. Athlete satisfaction and performance emerge as interconnected outcomes of coaching, influenced by physical preparation, tactical development, and psychological conditioning (Moen, Hoigaard, & Peters, 2014; Turman, 2008).

Interpersonal relationships between coaches and athletes are central to successful coaching, fostering improved satisfaction, motivation, and performance (Rees & Hardy, 2000). Social support helps athletes manage personal challenges, promoting satisfaction and stronger interpersonal dynamics (Cranmer & Sollitto, 2015). Research also highlights the importance of leadership behaviors aligned with Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 3: Good Health and Well-being, emphasising the role of positive leadership in nurturing athletes' psychological health, resilience, and holistic development. Such practices foster supportive environments that enable athletes to excel both on and off the field while advancing global efforts toward sustainable development.

Despite these insights, limited research has explored the influence of coaches'

leadership styles on athlete satisfaction and performance in Ghana, particularly in the Ashanti Region, which has consistently produced high-performing athletes in national competitions. Notably, factors such as team dynamics, cultural contexts, and the specific nature of sports influence satisfaction levels, with adolescent athletes often preferring socially supportive and autocratic behaviors, while experienced athletes prioritise positive feedback and task-oriented strategies (Jooste & Kubayi, 2018; Arif & Mehmood, 2011). Existing literature only examined differences in sex and types of sports in perceived coaches' leadership behaviour among Senior High School athletes (Abieraba, 2024b).

This study seeks to address these gaps by exploring the perceptions of senior high school athletes regarding their coaches' leadership behaviors and their impact on athlete satisfaction. Understanding this dynamic is crucial for developing coaching practices that align with athletes' needs and promote optimal performance outcomes. It will thereby contribute to the broader discourse on leadership in sports and its implications for athlete development and well-being.

## 2. Methods

### 2.1. Study Design

This research used a descriptive cross-sectional survey design. This design was selected because it generates a large number of reactions from a diverse group of people in one study, delivers an expressive image of events, and attempts to make people's viewpoints and actions clear through the data collected (Kuranchie, 2021).

### 2.2. Participants

The population for the research comprises all Senior High School Athletes (males and females) in the Ashanti Region of Ghana. There are 162 SHS in the Ashanti Region whose students participate in inter-school sports competitions. The choice of student-athletes is influenced by the reason that PE teachers/coaches train these athletes and may be satisfied with their leadership behaviour and performance or not. There are 2200 athletes (1100 males and 1100 females) who participate in the inter-school sports competition each year in both games and track and field. A sample size of 1002 respondents (501 males and 501 females) was selected from the Ashanti Regional inter-school sports competition held in the 2019/2020 academic year. Stratified sampling was employed for this purpose, and athletes were stratified by gender and type of sports they participated in to ensure representation across these key demographics.

### 2.3. Instrument

Chelladurai and Saleh's Leadership Scale for Sports (LSS) and Chelladurai and Riemer's athletes' variety of goods were used as research instruments in the study. The first component of the questionnaire was an adapted version of LSS (Chelladurai & Saleh, 1980), while the second section comprised of items from Athletes' Satisfaction Questionnaire (Chelladurai & Riemer, 1998). The instrument's face

and content authentication were determined by the researcher's administrator and other specialists at the University of Cape Coast's Department of Health, Physical Education, and Recreation in Cape Coast. They assessed measured quantity and coverage and found its suitability for measuring coaches' leadership behaviour on athletes' satisfaction. A reliable score of .823 was obtained for the LSS and ASQ instruments, which reflects the instruments' appropriateness in measuring the constructs of coaches' leadership behaviors and athlete satisfaction in this study.

#### **2.4. Data Collection Procedure**

The data collection procedure for this study was meticulously planned and executed to ensure the validity and reliability of the findings. Before data collection commenced, ethical approval was obtained from the Institutional Review Board (IRB) at the University of Cape Coast (IRB ID: UCCIRB/CES/2019/36). Permission was also sought and granted by the heads of the selected Senior High Schools (SHS) and the Regional Physical Education (PE) Coordinator for the Ashanti Region. This ensured compliance with institutional regulations and facilitated access to participants. The data collection process involved administering printed questionnaires to athletes before scheduled sports activities and training sessions. The researchers explained the purpose of the study and provided clear instructions to ensure the athletes understood the questions and could respond accurately. Participation was voluntary, and written informed consent was obtained from all participants. Confidentiality and anonymity were assured, as no identifying information was collected.

The completed questionnaires were collected on-site to prevent loss or tampering with responses. Data were subsequently coded and entered into the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 25 for analysis. The data collection process lasted approximately four weeks, ensuring adequate time for all selected athletes to participate. This systematic approach to data collection ensured that the study adhered to ethical standards, achieved a high response rate, and obtained reliable and representative data for analysis.

#### **2.5. Data Analysis**

Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 25 was used to evaluate the information. To evaluate the information, the researcher employed descriptive statistics (means and standard deviations) and multivariate multiple linear regression. Examining the perceived leadership behaviours used by coaches of SHS athletes in the Ashanti Region of Ghana, and the level of gratification of SHS athletes in Ghana's Ashanti Region were analysed using descriptive statistics (means and standard deviations). While multivariate multiple linear regression was carried out to examine whether perceived coaches' leadership behaviour will have a constructive influence on SHS athletes' gratification in the Ashanti Region of Ghana. The analysis was preceded by a number of assumptions which include multivari-

ate normality, autocorrelation, multivariate outliers, linearity, multicollinearity and singularity. Data met these assumptions.

### 3. Results

#### 3.1. Leadership Behaviours Exhibited by Coaches

On a five-point Likert scale, the student-athletes reported on the perceived leadership behaviours of their PE teacher/coaches. The data were evaluated using means and standard deviation. The mean was used to identify the most perceived coaches' leadership behaviour by student-athletes. Mean scores greater than 3.0 for a particular leadership behaviour showed that the leadership behaviour in question was perceived by the student athletes as largely used, whereas mean scores less than 3.0 demonstrated that the leadership behaviour of coaches was perceived by the students as not utilized. The degree to which coaches' leadership behaviour was perceived by the SHS athletes ranges from values between 3.0 to 5.0. The outcomes are presented in **Table 1**.

**Table 1.** Leadership behaviours exhibited by coaches.

Variable	Mean	SD	Rank
Positive feedback	4.53	.53	1 <sup>st</sup>
Training and directions	4.50	.51	2 <sup>nd</sup>
Social backing behaviour	4.17	.75	3 <sup>rd</sup>
Democratic behaviour	3.63	.84	4 <sup>th</sup>
Autocratic behaviour	2.77	.84	5 <sup>th</sup>
Average Means/SD	4.01	.45	-

Source: Field data, 2020.

The results in **Table 1** showed that SHS athletes held the perception that the coaches demonstrated a variety of leadership behaviours, such as positive feedback ( $M = 4.53$ ,  $SD = .53$ ), training and instruction ( $M = 4.50$ ,  $SD = .51$ ), social backing behaviours ( $M = 4.17$ ,  $SD = .75$ ), and democratic behaviours ( $M = 3.63$ ,  $SD = .84$ ), except for autocratic behaviours ( $M = 2.77$ ,  $SD = .85$ ). However, some of the perceived leadership behaviours of coaches were more dominant than others. For example, it was found that positive comments were the most perceived coaches' leadership behaviours by SHS athletes. This outcome was followed by training and instruction and social backing behaviour correspondingly. However, democratic leadership behaviour was the least perceived leadership characteristics by the coaches.

#### 3.2. Level of Satisfaction among Athletes

The participants responded to a number of items regarding their satisfaction on the following dimensions: utilisation ability, approach, personal conduct, individ-

ual performance, and team performance. The responses were given using a five-point scale ranging from not at all satisfied (with a value of 1) to extremely satisfied (with a value of 5); a high score indicates a high level of gratification and a low score representing otherwise. For the meaningful interpretation, the two extreme options on the scale were collapsed. That is, not at all satisfied and slightly gratified were merged as “not satisfied” and very satisfied and extremely gratified were collapsed and named “satisfied”. The moderately satisfied option was maintained. Accordingly, mean scores ranging from 1 to 2.4 depicted that the participants were not satisfied, mean scores from 2.5 to 3.4 showed moderate satisfaction of the respondents and values greater than 3.5 represented respondents who were satisfied. **Table 2** shows the data in greater detail.

**Table 2.** Satisfaction level of athletes.

Dimensions	Mean	SD	Rank	Remark	Dimensions
Personal treatment from coaches	4.4	.60	1 <sup>st</sup>	Satisfied	Personal treatment from coaches
Strategy of coaches	4.3	.70	2 <sup>nd</sup>	Satisfied	Strategy of coaches
Ability utilization	4.29	.71	3 <sup>rd</sup>	Satisfied	Ability utilization
Individual performance	4.22	.78	4 <sup>th</sup>	Satisfied	Individual performance
Team performance	4.02	1.4	5 <sup>th</sup>	Satisfied	Team performance
Overall Satisfaction	4.28	.63	-		Overall Satisfaction

Source: Field data, 2020.

The outcomes, as presented in **Table 2**, indicate that the SHS athletes were generally satisfied with the personal treatment from coaches ( $M = 4.49$ ,  $SD = .60$ ), strategy from their coaches ( $M = 4.32$ ,  $SD = .70$ ), their ability utilization ( $M = 4.29$ ,  $SD = .71$ ), their individual performance ( $M = 4.22$ ,  $SD = .78$ ) and team performance ( $M = 4.02$ ,  $SD = 1.04$ ). Although the athletes were satisfied with the various aspects of their roles, there were varying degrees of satisfaction. For instance, the SHS athletes showed a greater level of satisfaction with personal treatment from coaches than any other dimension. The next two dimensions that the athletes were satisfied with included the strategy of coaches and ability utilisation. The least satisfaction was with the individual performance and team performance.

### 3.3. Influence of Coaches' Leadership Behaviours on Athletes' Satisfaction

The multivariate multiple linear regression was carried out to examine this research question. Coaches' leadership was the predictor variable, which had five sub-dimensions: positive feedback, democratic behaviour, training and directions, autocratic behaviour, and social backing. Athletes' satisfaction with five sub-scales, including ability usage, strategy, personal treatment, individual performance, and team performance, was the criterion variable.

The outcomes presented in **Table 3** revealed that perceived social support ( $b = .288, t = 8.88, p < .001$ ), training and instruction ( $b = .248, t = 5.491, p < .001$ ), positive feedback leadership behaviours ( $b = .201, t = 4.213, p < .001$ ) positively and significantly influenced athletes' satisfaction, specifically on ability utilisation. However, perceived democratic and autocratic leadership behaviours did not significantly influence athletes' satisfaction with ability utilisation. Again, perceived social support ( $b = .351, t = 11.312, p < .001$ ), training and instruction ( $b = .280, t = 6.497, p < .001$ ) as well as positive feedback leadership behaviours ( $b = .128, t = 2.801, p = .005$ ) significantly and positively predicted athletes' satisfaction with coaches' strategy. The results further discovered that whereas perceived autocratic leadership behaviour of coaches negatively influenced athletes' satisfaction with personal treatment ( $b = -.048, t = -2.596, p = .010$ ), constructs such as perceived social support ( $b = .349, t = 13.985, p < .001$ ), training and instruction ( $b = .103, t = 2.970, p = .003$ ), and positive comment leadership behaviours ( $b = .215, t = 5.872, p < .001$ ) positively predicted athletes' satisfaction with personal treatment.

**Table 3.** Influence of coaches' leadership behaviour on athletes' satisfaction.

Dependent Variable	Parameter	B	Std. Error	t	Sig.
Ability Utilization	Intercept	1.241	.217	5.723	.000
	Helpful comment	.201	.048	4.213	.000*
	Democratic	-.061	.027	-2.279	.023
	Training and instruction	.248	.045	5.491	.000*
	Autocratic	.016	.024	.681	.496
	Social backing	.288	.032	8.885	.000*
Strategy	Intercept	1.118	.207	5.400	.000
	Helpful comment	.128	.046	2.804	.005*
	Democratic	-.038	.026	-1.475	.141
	Training and instruction	.280	.043	6.497	.000*
	Autocratic	.015	.023	.670	.503
	Social backing	.351	.031	11.312	.000*
Personal treatment	Intercept	1.832	.167	10.978	.000
	Positive feedback	.216	.037	5.872	.000*
	Democratic	-.029	.021	-1.404	.161
	Training and instruction	.103	.035	2.970	.003*
	Autocratic	-.048	.018	-2.596	.010*
	Social backing	.349	.025	13.985	.000*

## Continued

	Intercept	1.250	.247	5.054	.000
	Helpful comment	.196	.054	3.604	.000*
Individual Performance	Democratic	.008	.031	.267	.789
	Training and instruction	.284	.051	5.528	.000*
	Autocratic	-.010	.027	-.356	.722
	Social backing	.192	.037	5.193	.000*
	Intercept	1.327	.342	3.873	.000*
	Positive feedback	.100	.075	1.322	.187
Team performance	Democratic	-.041	.043	-.969	.333
	Training and instruction	.252	.071	3.531	.000*
	Autocratic	-.032	.038	-.840	.401
	Social backing	.325	.051	6.338	.000*

Source: Field data, 2020; \*significant at  $p \leq .010$ .

Moreover, perceived training and direction ( $b = .284$ ,  $t = 5.528$ ,  $p < .001$ ), social backing ( $b = .192$ ,  $t = 5.193$ ,  $p < .001$ ), and positive feedback leadership behaviours ( $b = .196$ ,  $t = 3.604$ ,  $p < .001$ ) were found as positive and significant predictors of the athletes' satisfaction of their individual performance. Only two of the sub-dimensions, perceived training and instruction ( $b = .252$ ,  $t = 3.531$ ,  $p < .001$ ) and perceived social support ( $b = .325$ ,  $t = 6.338$ ,  $p < .001$ ) positively influenced athletes' satisfaction with team performance.

#### 4. Discussions

The study revealed that positive comment, training and instruction and social backing were the top three perceived leadership behaviours by athletes. This trend of results sounds positive since SHS athletes are emerging and young athletes will need much support. Thus, providing constructive conditions and giving them the social support they need to help them thrive well is essential. Several more studies corroborate the finding that coaches who employed more positive feedback, social support, training and education as well as democratic behaviour, created more productive players (Ramzaniezhad & Keshtan, 2009; Sundi, 2013). In Ghana, societal norms often emphasise communal support and hierarchy, which may influence the athletes' preferences for certain leadership behaviors like social backing and positive feedback (Abieraba, 2024b).

It must be mentioned that no coach exhibits a single leadership behaviour; only one dominates at a time. This is because leadership is influenced by the sports culture in which it is produced and executed, rather than only the interplay between individuals in a context (Sarpira, Khodayari, & Mohammadi, 2012). For

instance, positive comments strengthen athletes by acknowledging and rewarding good performance (Hagan, Ansah, Pollmann, & Schack, 2017). This makes athletes feel valued, satisfied and build a stronger personality in themselves. No wonder positive feedback was revealed in the study to be the topmost perceived leadership behaviour of SHS athletes in the Ashanti Region. Athletes sought positive comments from their coaches after a good performance, but they also wanted anything to help them improve their performance in the future (Arif & Mehmood, 2011). This assertion means that when dealing with athletes, positive feedback such as expression of appreciation, compliment good recital, congratulating an athlete after a good play, encouraging an athlete after a mistake, recognising an individual contribution and giving credit when it is due are important characteristics not only to motivate them but to enhance their performance in the future competitions and create satisfaction. Furthermore, positive feedback generated by the unique interpersonal relationship between the coach and the athlete can develop positive emotions, attitudes, and behaviours that are mutually interconnected. This type of perceived bonding between athletes and coaches has been shown to significantly improve coaching process, athlete satisfaction and performance (Kim & Cruz, 2016; Arif & Mehmood, 2011).

Also, coaches' training and instruction which was the second most perceived leadership behaviour offers a gateway that has been cited for making a key difference in technical coaching towards unlocking athletes' capabilities, capacities, and potential in their careers through high levels of direct task-related behaviours (Jooste & Kubayi, 2018). The findings show that if coaches want their players to be more satisfied, they should focus on improving their recital through proper, systematic training of skills and techniques as well as regular measures and evaluations of these abilities to determine improvement (Sundi, 2013). Generally, athletes who perceive their coaches to highlight frequent training and instruction and show unfailing democratic behaviour exhibit enhanced feelings of independence and more perceived competence which consequently lead to high intrinsic motivation. Considering this, calculated attempts ought to be made always by coaches to develop specific characteristics and requirements that nurture interactions in an actual way that would evolve athletes' confidence, trust, and respect (Arif & Mehmood, 2011).

Ghana has an annual national sports competition that requires considerable preparation, both physically and psychologically, for which student-athletes significantly rely on their coaches through supportive behaviours and other social support. For SHS athletes, social support is such a significant behaviour that helps them to deal with personal problems and results in positive outcomes of prosocial coach communication (Sarpira, Khodayari, & Mohammadi, 2012). Furthermore, past research has found that perceived social backing is linked to performance gratification, with athletes in successful teams experiencing higher social backing than those in failing teams (Arif & Mehmood, 2011). The majority of SHS students are adolescents (aged 12 to 19) who are still evolving and hence lack the psycho-

logical and social abilities to deal with stressful situations (Sarpira, Khodayari, & Mohammadi, 2012). Adolescents could be more substantially influenced by emotional responses such as hurt, confusion, fear, anger, and embarrassment from coaches. It is therefore prudent to be mindful of the role social support play as it remains very sensitive in performance satisfaction of athletes.

To contradict this study, other studies found that athletes had a higher preference for monocratic and social backing leadership behaviour than other leadership behaviours such as positive feedback, training and instruction as well as democratic leadership behaviour (Ramzaniezhad & Keshtan, 2009; Sundi, 2013). Variations in the geographical locations where the student-athletes originate or coaches wanting to perform specific task without worrying about divergent views from student-athletes could account for these findings.

The results showed that athletes were generally gratified with the personal treatment and strategy from coaches and their ability utilisation. Although the athletes were satisfied with the various aspects of their roles, there were varying degrees of satisfaction. For instance, the SHS athletes showed a greater level of satisfaction with personal treatment from coaches than any other dimension. The next two dimensions that the athletes were satisfied with included the strategy of coaches and ability utilisation. The least satisfaction was with the individual performance and team performance. It appears that athletes in SHS normally have not chosen their career paths, so if their coaches show them loyalty, appreciation and recognition (personal treatment), they will be intrinsically motivated which would ignite their satisfaction (Moen, Hoigaard, & Peters, 2014). Personal treatment, strategy, and ability utilization are linked to a variety of social network characteristics, including communication with significant persons such as family (Rees & Hardy, 2000), friends, coaches, and peers as well as satisfaction and performance (Moen, Hoigaard, & Peters, 2014).

Personal treatment which comprises recognition, friendliness, appreciation, loyalty from coaches and the extent to which coaches are behind athletes were the dimensions that satisfied athletes most (Ignacio III, Montecalbo-Ignacio, & Cardenas, 2017). There is growing evidence in the literature that emphasises the importance of creating positive interpersonal environments between coaches and athletes (Hagan, Ansah, Pollmann, & Schack, 2017), which may reflect on a more respectful relationship, gratification, psychological well-being, and performance improvement for both sides (Ignacio III, Montecalbo-Ignacio, & Cardenas, 2017). The intimacy of British coaches and athletes leads to satisfaction, particularly in terms of formation, training and instruction, and personal treatment (Kim & Cruz, 2016). Recognising and appreciating (personal treatment) the environment in which athletes flourish, for example, might help to avoid bad performance effects due to discontent (Ehsani, Amiri, & Norouzi, 2012).

It is worth noting that athletes studied were satisfied with their coaches' strategy as the second topmost dimension. Coaches usually exhibit behaviours strategic with planning that physically, tactically and mentally prepare athletes in a logical

approach in sports as it allows a competitive edge over opponents including offering athletes a sense of conviction on performance-related tasks (Ignacio III, Montecalbo-Ignacio, & Cardenas, 2017). It is therefore not surprising that SHS athletes in the Ashanti region opted for strategy as the second topmost dimension that satisfies them. The tactics used by the coaches, their choice of strategies used during games, the adjustment they make during competition and how they combine available resources are all factors that enhance athletes' satisfaction and performance.

Ability utilisation is when athletes perceive their coaches to be exploring their talents, capabilities and capacities leading to satisfaction with their sports (Hagan, Ansah, Pollmann, & Schack, 2017). The behaviour of sport leaders has proved to play a determinant role in athletes' satisfaction (Akubah et al., 2024). Young developing athletes need a coach who will help them explore their talents, match their roles with their potential, and offer them time to play during competitions (Ehsani, Amiri, & Norouzi, 2012). For example, players at the SHS level come to school with multiple talents—playing football, handball, hockey, table tennis, and badminton through to track and field events. They need coaches who can explore them to unearth all hidden talents in order to bring out the best in them. Mostly, the talents unearthed by the coaches at that SHS level create satisfaction for the student-athletes. Young developing athletes, especially in the Ghanaian setting, need a coach who will help them explore their talents, match their roles with their potential, and offer them time to play during competitions (Akubah & Apaak, 2024).

This study also examined whether coaches' leadership behaviour has a positive influence on SHS athletes' satisfaction in the Ashanti Region of Ghana. The general impression from the results shows that the perceived adoption of any or the combination of encouraging comment, training and instruction, and social support leadership behaviours by coaches increase the probability of SHS athletes being satisfied with their ability utilization, the strategy of their coaches, personal treatment from coaches and satisfaction with individual performance. The training and instruction, and social support, however, explained the largest variability in athletes' satisfaction with team performance. Previous research (Kim & Cruz, 2016; Arif & Mehmood, 2011) revealed that a coach must be able to focus more attention on training and instruction, as well as social support, to improve the team's task, including social cohesiveness.

These relationship characteristics would help players enhance their performance while also allowing coaches to understand more about their athletes' strengths and shortcomings both within and outside of the training environment. As young developing athletes, coaches need to provide them with training contexts and emotional support to improve their satisfaction (Arif & Mehmood, 2011). Coaches perceived autocratic leadership behaviours as resulting in very low levels of satisfaction for the athletes with personal treatment. This gives the notion that the adoption of the autocratic leadership style by coaches interferes with how coaches

interact and handle the athletes (Kim & Cruz, 2016). This may be due to its top-down approach, which can stifle autonomy, reduce trust, and negatively impact the interpersonal dynamic between coach and athlete.

Positive feedback is vital because it affects all four sub-components of athlete satisfaction: ability usage, strategy, personal treatment, and individual performance. Positive feedback accounted for a considerable portion of the variation in athlete satisfaction. Athletes are more satisfied with their overall sports experience when coaches depend on reward and expert power or employ linguistic immediacy (Hagan, Ansah, Pollmann, & Schack, 2017). Coaches should be concerned with how to make the sporting experience joyful and satisfying (Arif & Mehmood, 2011). The sort of feedback offered by coaches in performance scenarios has a considerable impact on athletes' intrinsic motivation from the perspective of inner drive. It is not unexpected that young athletes are ecstatic about the type of feedback they receive from their coaches since at their age, being praised and supported throughout performance-related tasks is critical to their happiness and performance.

Training and instruction were found to predict players' happiness in all five sub-components: ability usage, strategy, personal treatment, individual and team performance. Athletes are satisfied with the total training and instruction procedures when they believe their coaches are matching their responsibilities to their potential, utilising their abilities and strategies during games, making adjustments throughout contests, and being loyal to them (Sundi, 2013). Coaches' teaching and supportive leader behaviour, for example, are linked to players' entire vitality and personal development, implying that training and instruction may have an impact on players' perceived degrees of mastery of their duties (Arif & Mehmood, 2011). The leadership choices of young athletes in sport and discovered that these athletes favoured training and teaching, followed by positive feedback, democratic behaviour, and social support from their coaches (Jooste & Kubayi, 2018). As a result, increased task-related satisfaction was associated with training and teaching (Sundi, 2013). At the SHS level, growing athletes necessitates a significant amount of training and instruction since they rely on their coaches to create goals, clarify training priorities, prescribe approaches, and clarify methods to them.

All five sub-components of athlete satisfaction showed evidence of social support. A linear combination of received social support predicted 69 percent of athletes' pleasure with coaches and 46 percent of athletes' contentment with sports experiences (Minoo, Nasser, & Misagh, 2014). Since youth athletes in their developmental stages require coaches who will encourage close relatives and other significant persons (e.g., technical staff, family members) to disclose their personal concerns and remain sensitive to their demands, the findings favour social support.

The combination of positive feedback, training and instruction, and social support leadership behaviours by coaches in the prediction of ability utilisation, strategy, personal treatment, and individual performance could be attributed to the

school's cultural environment (i.e., how Ghanaian students have been raised), where coaches are very sensitive to their athletes' needs (e.g., giving athletes pocket money), and care deeply about the athletes' personal problems (Sari, Soyer, & Yigiter, 2012). Coaches who are perceived to have evoked valuable criticism, vivid clear instructions, concrete proposals about their exercise training, laid down configuration for their training, give overt and mission, including socioeconomic instructions towards whatever they are doing, offer additional assistance in the face of overwhelming odds to generate satisfaction. Conversely, other studies (Minoo, Nasser, & Misagh, 2014) found that there is greater satisfaction from coaches' leadership behaviour in team sports when coaches are perceived to be using democratic, social backing and positive comments.

## 5. Conclusion

It is concluded with this research findings that coaches of SHS athletes in the Ashanti Region of Ghana showed positive feedback, training and instruction and social support leadership behaviours. This leadership pattern implies that a majority of the athletes perceive their coaches to express appreciation to them, congratulate them after a good play, and instruct every athlete individually in the skills, methods, and strategies of the sport. Again, coaches emphasise the mastery of greater skills during training, help athletes with personal problem, and adhere to the needs of the athletes.

Athletes were generally satisfied with personal treatment, strategy from coaches and their ability utilisation. An implication is that SHS athletes in the Ashanti Region were satisfied with coaches who explored their talents, gave them time to play in competitions, made adjustments during competitions, were loyal to them and showed friendship towards them.

The coaches' use of any or a variety of positive comments, training and teachings, and social support and supportive leadership boosted the athletes' satisfaction with their ability usage, strategy, and personal treatment from their coaches. An impression that athletes perceived their coaches to give credit when is due to athletes, compliment athletes for their performance in front of others, clarify to every athlete what they should and should not do, and give precise instructions to each athlete as to what they should do in every situation, help athletes with their personal difficulties and express affection they feel for their athletes.

## 6. Practical Implications

The findings of this study offer significant implications for stakeholders in sports education and coaching, particularly within Ghana and comparable developing regions. One critical implication lies in the necessity of integrating leadership behaviors such as positive feedback, training, and social support into formal coaching development programs. These behaviors are pivotal in enhancing the interpersonal and strategic competencies of coaches, ensuring they are better equipped to address the psychological and performance-related needs of athletes. By foster-

ing such competencies, coaches can create environments conducive to improved athlete satisfaction and performance.

Moreover, the results underscore the importance of athlete-centric coaching practices. Coaches who provide individualized feedback, tailor strategies to athletes' unique capabilities, and assist them in addressing personal challenges can significantly enhance both motivation and satisfaction levels. These findings suggest that educational institutions and sports organizations should prioritize leadership as a cornerstone of policy and curriculum design. Such measures would ensure that the holistic development of athletes remains central to sports education.

The study also highlights the role of community and parental engagement in promoting a supportive athletic environment. Schools and sports organizations could benefit from collaborative efforts involving parents and local communities to establish environments that address athletes' emotional and social needs. These efforts align with the objectives of Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 3, which emphasizes the promotion of physical and mental well-being. By adopting leadership behaviors that nurture athletes' psychological health and resilience, coaches contribute to broader global initiatives aimed at sustainable development.

## 7. Limitations

Despite its contributions, the study has several limitations that warrant consideration. First, its regional focus on the Ashanti Region of Ghana limits the generalizability of the findings to other regions or contexts with differing cultural and social dynamics. Future research should expand the geographical scope to ensure broader applicability.

Additionally, the use of a cross-sectional research design constrains the study's ability to establish causal relationships between coaching behaviors and athlete satisfaction. Longitudinal research is recommended to provide deeper insights into how leadership behaviors influence athlete satisfaction and performance over time.

The reliance on self-reported data introduces another limitation. While valuable, self-reported perceptions may be subject to response bias, as participants could overstate or understate their experiences. Future studies should incorporate additional methods, such as observational data or third-party evaluations, to triangulate findings and enhance validity.

Furthermore, the focus on senior high school athletes limits the applicability of the findings to other demographics, such as professional athletes or those in younger age categories. Future research could explore the experiences of a broader range of athletes to gain a more comprehensive understanding of leadership's impact across various levels of sports.

Finally, while the study examines key leadership dimensions, it does not account for emergent or nuanced leadership styles that may also influence athlete satisfaction. Variables such as gender, socio-economic background, and the spe-

cific type of sport could further shape the relationship between coaching behaviors and athlete satisfaction. Incorporating these factors into future research would enhance the depth and applicability of findings.

The limitations present opportunities for future research to refine and expand upon the current findings. By addressing these limitations, future studies can enhance the generalizability and applicability of research in this critical area of sports leadership.

## Acknowledgements

We thank all Senior High School athletes who participated in this study.

## Conflicts of Interest

The authors declare no conflict of interest.

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