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Whistles, Words, and Willpower: How Coach Etiquette Relates to Intrinsic and Extrinsic Sport Motivation among Collegiate Softball and Baseball Athletes

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ABSTRACT

Background & objective: This study examined whether perceived coach etiquette predicts intrinsic and extrinsic sport motivation among collegiate softball and baseball athletes in a selected Philippine university.

Materials & Methods: A quantitative, descriptive, cross-sectional (non-experimental) design was employed. Forty-five varsity athletes (softball n=23; baseball n=22; female n=23; male n=22) completed a survey packet consisting of (a) a modified Perceived Coach Attitudes and Behaviors Scale (PCABS; 28 items; 4-point response format) to capture coach etiquette-related behaviors and (b) the Sport Motivation Scale-II construct coverage (23 items; 4-point response format) to capture athletes' motivational regulations. Descriptive statistics summarized perceived etiquette and motivation. Linear regression tested the hypothesized predictive effect of coach etiquette on intrinsic and extrinsic motivation ($\alpha=0.05$).

Results: Athletes perceived coaches' etiquette as a moderate degree of respect (overall $M=3.03$). Athletes reported strong sport motivation (overall $M=3.69$). Regression analyses indicated that coach etiquette did not significantly predict intrinsic motivation ($t=0.846$, $p=0.4023$) or extrinsic motivation ($t=1.33$, $p=0.2636$).

Conclusions: Coach etiquette was positively perceived but did not significantly explain intrinsic or extrinsic motivation in this cohort. Future work should include autonomy-supportive coaching, motivational climate, and psychological need satisfaction as potential mediators/moderators.

Keywords

coach etiquette; coach-athlete relationship; intrinsic motivation; extrinsic motivation; softball; baseball; collegiate athletes; self-determination theory.

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INTRODUCTION

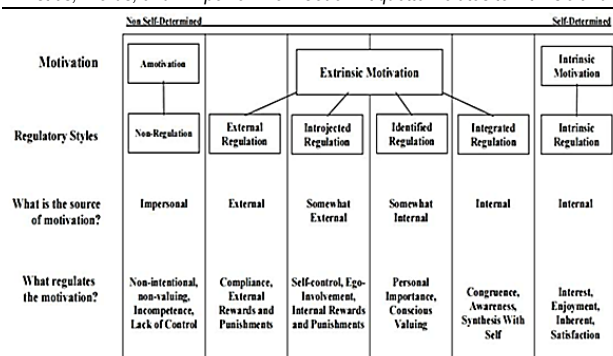
Global and Theoretical Context

Coaches play a central role in shaping athletes' sporting experiences through interpersonal communication, leadership practices, ethical conduct, and the motivational environments they establish. In competitive sport, the quality of coach-athlete interactions is relevant to athletes' psychological well-being, engagement, satisfaction, and continued participation. Daily interactions involving respect, fairness, responsiveness, and professional conduct may influence how athletes perceive their coaches and experience their involvement in sport (Berki et al., 2020; Raabe & Zakrajsek, 2017). These issues are particularly relevant in collegiate sport, where athletes must balance competitive expectations, intensive training, academic responsibilities, and team relationships (Choi & Smith, 2024; McGee & DeFreeze, 2018).

Previous research has associated positive coach-athlete relationships and effective communication with athlete satisfaction, relationship quality, and favorable psychological outcomes Davis et al., (2019); Longakit et al., (2024). Coaches' interpersonal behaviors may also contribute to athletes' psychological need satisfaction and motivation Raabe & Zakrajsek, (2017); Shannon et al., 2021). Nevertheless,

respectful conduct should not automatically be equated with motivational effectiveness. Although professionalism and appropriate communication may establish favorable interpersonal conditions, athletes' motivation may also depend on whether coaching practices support autonomy, competence, and relatedness.

Self-Determination Theory (SDT) provides a theoretical framework for understanding these relationships. Ryan & Deci, (2000) distinguish intrinsic motivation, which involves engaging in an activity for its inherent interest and satisfaction, from extrinsic motivation, which involves participation for separable outcomes or reasons. Extrinsic motivation encompasses different forms of regulation that vary in the degree to which individuals personally endorse their behavior. SDT proposes that social environments supporting autonomy, competence, and relatedness facilitate more self-determined forms of motivation. In sport, these psychological needs concern athletes' experiences of volition, effectiveness, and meaningful social connection.



Note. The figure should illustrate the distinction between intrinsic motivation and the different forms of extrinsic regulation, together with the basic psychological needs of autonomy, competence, and relatedness. It should be based on the theoretical framework described by Ryan & Deci (2000). The figure represents theoretical concepts rather than variables necessarily measured in the present study.

Figure 1. Self-Determination Theory and the regulation of sport motivation.

Within this framework, coaches may influence motivation through their interpersonal style and everyday decisions. Respectful communication may support relatedness, fair treatment may strengthen trust, and constructive feedback may enhance perceived competence. However, motivational benefits may depend on whether coaches also acknowledge athletes' perspectives, provide meaningful opportunities for participation in decisions, and avoid unnecessarily controlling practices. Research on athletes' psychological needs and coaching behaviors supports the importance of these broader interpersonal mechanisms (Bartholomew et al., 2010; Mossman et al., 2022).

Transformational Leadership Theory offers a complementary perspective. It emphasizes idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration as leadership components that may encourage commitment, development, and collective effort (Burns 1978). Research has examined transformational leadership in relation to athlete characteristics and coach-athlete relationships (Erikstad et al., 2021; Görgülü, 2019; Liu et al., 2023).



Figure 2. Four components of Transformational Leadership Theory.

Although transformational leadership and Self-Determination Theory (SDT) offer complementary explanations of coaching-related motivation, neither is synonymous with coach etiquette. In this study, coach etiquette refers to athletes' perceptions of coaching behaviors characterized by respect, fairness, appropriate communication, and professionalism. Such conduct may foster positive coach-athlete interactions but does not necessarily provide the autonomy support, competence-enhancing feedback, or motivational structure needed to influence athletes' motivation. Examining coach etiquette as a distinct predictor may therefore clarify its relationship with athletes' intrinsic and extrinsic motivation.

Critical Review of Existing Evidence

Existing research highlights the role of coaching relationships, communication, and interpersonal behaviors in athletes' psychological experiences and motivation. Davis et al.,

(2019) examined communication strategies in relation to coach-athlete relationship quality and satisfaction, McGee & DeFreese, (2018) discussed coaching dynamics and psychological outcomes, and Raabe & Zakrajsek, (2017) investigated psychological need satisfaction among collegiate athletes. Other studies have explored transformational leadership, individualized consideration, empowering motivational climates, and autonomy support across different sporting contexts (Erikstad et al., 2021; Görgülü, 2019; Gutiérrez-García et al., 2019; Buning, 2019; Hodge et al., 2023; Valenzuela et al., 2019; Mossman et al., 2022). Collectively, this literature indicates that coaching practices may relate to athletes' motivational experiences through different interpersonal and psychological pathways. However, these constructs and outcomes provide complementary rather than direct evidence of whether coach etiquette independently predicts intrinsic and extrinsic sport motivation. Comparisons across existing studies are further limited by differences in sporting populations, research designs, measurement instruments, and outcome variables. Choi & Smith, (2024) examined team communication and aggression among collegiate athletes, while Hebard et al. (2021) investigated transformational coaching in high school sports. Research on exercise motivation and academic-athletic experiences offers broader context but does not directly resolve the relationship between coach etiquette and sport motivation (Tuck et al., 2025; Zhao et al., 2023). Similarly, findings on emotional well-being among physical education students may not generalize to collegiate softball and baseball athletes (Khoiri et al., 2025). These differences highlight the need for studies that directly examine coach etiquette as a distinct predictor, using validated measures and appropriate statistical analyses. Comparisons should also consider sample characteristics, study design, and effect-size estimates to determine whether the relationship is consistent across populations and contexts.

Research Gap, Novelty, and International Contribution

practices with favorable athlete outcomes. However, whether perceived coach etiquette independently predicts intrinsic and extrinsic sport motivation among collegiate softball and baseball athletes in the Philippines remains unclear. Existing studies have primarily focused on broader coaching styles, leadership behaviors, motivational climates, and relationship quality, leaving etiquette-oriented behaviors less examined as a distinct predictor (Buning, 2019; Castillo et al., 2018; Gutiérrez-García et al., 2019; Tait et al., 2020). This study addresses this gap by examining both motivational outcomes separately and applying Self-Determination Theory (SDT) to an etiquette-focused coaching context. Its novelty is contextual and construct-focused rather than a claim to be the first international investigation of coaching behavior and motivation.

The study contributes context-specific evidence on whether perceived coach etiquette statistically predicts athletes' intrinsic and extrinsic motivation within a single institutional setting. However, the nonsignificant findings do not establish that no relationship exists, and the cross-sectional design does not support causal conclusions. The limited sample and single-university context also restrict generalizability. Nevertheless, the findings provide a basis for future multisite and longitudinal research examining coach etiquette alongside autonomy-supportive coaching, motivational climate, and psychological need satisfaction to clarify how different coaching behaviors relate to athletes' motivation.

Objectives and Hypotheses

The primary objective of this study was to examine whether

perceived coach etiquette statistically predicts intrinsic and extrinsic sport motivation among collegiate softball and baseball athletes at a university in the Philippines, while describing their perceptions of coaching etiquette and sport motivation. Guided by Self-Determination Theory (SDT), the study proposed two hypotheses: H1: Higher perceived coach etiquette is positively associated with intrinsic sport motivation; and H2: Higher

perceived coach etiquette is positively associated with extrinsic sport motivation. Separate linear regression models were used to examine each motivational outcome, with perceived coach etiquette as the predictor. Given the cross-sectional, non-experimental design, the analyses assessed statistical prediction rather than causal effects.

MATERIALS METHODS

Participants

Participants were 45 collegiate varsity athletes from a selected Philippine university (softball $n=23$; baseball $n=22$). The gender distribution was nearly equal (female $n=23$; male $n=22$). Athletes were included based on current varsity roster membership and availability during the survey administration period. Demographic information collected included age, gender, academic year, and duration under the current coach.

Study Organization

Design and setting: The study used a quantitative, descriptive, cross-sectional, non-experimental design to examine naturally occurring perceptions and self-reported motivation without manipulation of variables. Procedural algorithm (research protocol): (1) participant recruitment and roster verification; (2) informed consent and briefing on voluntary participation, confidentiality, and withdrawal rights; (3) standardized administration of the questionnaire packet; (4) data screening and coding; (5) statistical analysis; and (6) reporting of findings aligned with the study objectives.

Test and Measurement Procedure

Coach etiquette: A modified Perceived Coach Attitudes and Behaviors Scale (PCABS) was used to assess etiquette-related coach behaviors across 28 items rated from 1 (Never) to 4 (Always). Item content captured respect, communication, fairness, and professionalism-oriented behaviors. The PCABS has been reported as valid and reliable in prior validation research.

Sport motivation: Athlete motivation was assessed using a Sport Motivation Scale-based instrument aligned with SDT, containing 23 items rated from 1 (Never) to 4 (Always). Items were interpreted in terms of intrinsic and extrinsic motivation indicators consistent with SDT-informed measurement traditions. For future replications, the Sport Motivation Scale-II (SMS-II) is recommended given its established factorial validity in athlete samples

Statistical Analysis

Descriptive statistics (frequencies, means, and standard deviations) summarized participant characteristics and scale responses. Linear regression tested whether perceived coach etiquette predicted intrinsic and extrinsic motivation at $\alpha=0.05$. The regression results are reported with t-statistics, degrees of freedom, p-values, and hypothesis decisions.

Ethical Considerations

The study received ethical approval from the Institute of Physical Education and Athletics, University of Santo Tomas, Manila, Philippines (Approval No. USTM/R/5516-25-5). Participation was voluntary, and informed consent was obtained before data collection. Participants were informed of the study's purpose and procedures, the confidentiality of their responses, and their right to withdraw without penalty. Measures were taken to protect privacy, maintain confidentiality, and minimize potential coercion, particularly given that some participants were teammates of the researchers.

RESULTS

Athletes' Perceptions of Coach Etiquette

Table 1 presents the descriptive results for collegiate softball and baseball athletes' perceptions of their coaches' etiquette. The instrument comprised 28 items addressing respect, communication, fairness, professionalism, responsibility, and ethical conduct. The overall mean score was 3.03, which was classified in the original manuscript as a moderate degree of respect. The item-level mean scores ranged from 2.58 to 3.40. The highest mean scores were reported for coaches' willingness to take strategic risks during games to help the team succeed ($M = 3.40$, Item 14) and their use of fair and legal methods to achieve team objectives ($M = 3.40$, Item 22). Other relatively high-rated behaviors included providing clear tactical instructions during competition ($M = 3.33$, Item 5), valuing teamwork and internal communication ($M = 3.33$, Item 6), not requiring athletes to act illegally or irresponsibly ($M = 3.30$, Item 27), and demonstrating

honesty before, during, and after training or games ($M = 3.26$, Item 26). The lowest mean score was observed for avoiding tasks or expectations that exceeded athletes' current abilities ($M = 2.58$, Item 11). Following the established training plan received a mean score of 2.74 (Item 17). Respectful communication and coach approachability each received a mean score of 2.77 (Items 8 and 10), while openness to athlete feedback and the use of non-intimidating motivational practices each received a mean score of 2.79 (Items 16 and 25). These descriptive findings indicate variation in athletes' perceptions across the 28 etiquette-related behaviors. Strategic decision-making and fair practices received the highest mean scores, whereas the management of training expectations in relation to athletes' current abilities received the lowest. The overall mean summarizes the responses across the instrument but does not imply that all individual coaching behaviors received the same level of evaluation.

Table 1. Descriptive results for collegiate softball and baseball athletes' perceptions of their coaches' etiquette

Item	Coach etiquette behavior	Mean	Reported interpretation
1	Does not blame athletes when the team loses or fails.	2.86	Moderate degree of respect
2	Respects athletes' personal choices.	2.84	Moderate degree of respect
3	Treats athletes with understanding regardless of demographic characteristics.	3.12	Moderate degree of respect
4	Listens respectfully to athletes' concerns and opinions.	2.86	Moderate degree of respect
5	Provides clear tactical instructions needed during competition.	3.33	Moderate degree of respect
6	Values teamwork and internal communication.	3.33	Moderate degree of respect
7	Avoids profanity or inappropriate language when communicating with the team.	2.88	Moderate degree of respect

8	Communicates with the team using respectful and appropriate language.	2.77	Moderate degree of respect
9	Is strict without creating fear.	2.95	Moderate degree of respect
10	Is approachable at any time.	2.77	Moderate degree of respect
11	Avoids assigning tasks or setting expectations beyond athletes' current abilities.	2.58	Moderate degree of respect
12	Pays attention to athletes and shows genuine interest in them.	3.09	Moderate degree of respect
13	Effectively addresses tactical challenges during games.	3.05	Moderate degree of respect
14	Willingly takes strategic risks during games to help the team succeed.	3.40	Requires reclassification
15	Keeps up with innovations in the field.	3.00	Moderate degree of respect
16	Is open to feedback and questions from athletes.	2.79	Moderate degree of respect
17	Follows the established training plan.	2.74	Moderate degree of respect
18	Acts responsibly, including arriving on time and following team rules.	3.12	Moderate degree of respect
19	Demonstrates consistency in attitude and performance.	3.09	Moderate degree of respect
20	Maintains ethical standards in coaching practices.	3.21	Moderate degree of respect
21	Values all athletes regardless of their performance.	3.19	Moderate degree of respect
22	Uses only fair and legal methods to help the team succeed.	3.40	Requires reclassification
23	Maintains integrity and does not use the coaching position for personal gain.	2.91	Moderate degree of respect
24	Supports athletes' personal development as athletes and individuals.	3.12	Moderate degree of respect
25	Motivates athletes without using intimidation.	2.79	Moderate degree of respect
26	Demonstrates honesty before, during, and after training or games.	3.26	Requires reclassification
27	Does not require athletes to act illegally or irresponsibly.	3.30	Moderate degree of respect
28	Does not resort to violence when unable to manage a situation.	3.23	Moderate degree of respect
	Overall mean	3.03	Moderate degree of respect

Note. Item means and the overall mean are reproduced from the original manuscript. The original scoring scheme defines 2.50–3.34 as a moderate degree of respect and 3.25–4.00 as a high degree of respect. Because these intervals overlap, the classification of individual items should be finalized after the authors establish mutually exclusive scoring thresholds. The mean scores are retained as reported.

Athletes' Reported Sport Motivation

Table 2 presents the descriptive results for athletes' reported sport motivation. The questionnaire comprised 23 items, numbered 29–51 in the original manuscript. The reported overall mean was 3.69, interpreted as “strongly motivated” under the original scoring scheme. Item-level mean scores ranged from 3.40 to 3.84. The highest mean scores were reported for the perception that sport contributes to the development of personal qualities, including discipline, teamwork, resilience, and time management ($M = 3.84$, Item 41), and the perception that sport helps athletes earn respect and admiration from friends, family, and others in the community ($M = 3.84$, Item 48). The item concerning physical fitness and overall health received a mean score of 3.81 (Item 44). Enjoying the discovery of new performance strategies and exciting competitive experiences each received a mean score of 3.79 (Items 32 and 36). Several additional items received mean scores of 3.77, including discovering and applying new training techniques (Item 30), improving weaknesses and complex techniques (Item 34), and learning skills that could be useful in other areas of life (Item 42). Maintaining good relationships with friends through sport, supporting personal well-being, gaining recognition as an athlete,

and showcasing sporting skills each received a mean score of 3.74 (Items 43, 45, 49, and 51). Other item means included 3.70 for experiencing strong emotions while playing a favored sport (Item 38), 3.67 for learning unfamiliar techniques, mastering complex techniques, and executing complex movements with control and confidence (Items 31, 33, and 35), 3.63 for learning more about the sport (Item 29), and 3.58 for feeling energized during active participation (Item 37). The importance of regular sport participation received a mean score of 3.53 (Item 47). The lowest item-level mean was 3.40 for the statement concerning disappointment when unable to set aside time for exercise programs (Item 46). The item concerning the perceived importance of being physically fit to people around the athlete received a mean score of 3.47 (Item 50), while becoming completely immersed in a sporting activity received a mean score of 3.49 (Item 39). Despite these differences, all 23 item means fell within the original manuscript's reported “strongly motivated” category. Overall, the descriptive findings indicate that participants reported high sport motivation, with comparatively high ratings for personal development, social recognition, health, learning, and competitive experiences. These descriptive results do not, by themselves, establish that coach etiquette predicts or causes athletes' motivation.

Table 2. Descriptive results for collegiate softball and baseball athletes' reported sport motivation

Item	Sport motivation statement	Mean	Reported interpretation
29	It pleases me to know more about the sport I practice.	3.63	Strongly motivated
30	I enjoy discovering and applying new training techniques.	3.77	Strongly motivated
31	It pleases me to feel while learning training techniques I have never tried before.	3.67	Strongly motivated
32	I enjoy discovering new performance strategies.	3.79	Strongly motivated
33	I feel personal satisfaction while mastering specific, complex training techniques.	3.67	Strongly motivated
34	I enjoy improving my weak points and complex training techniques.	3.77	Strongly motivated
35	I take pleasure in executing precise and complex movements with control and confidence.	3.67	Strongly motivated
36	I enjoy exciting experiences, such as competing in a close championship match.	3.79	Strongly motivated
37	I feel energized and excited when actively involved in an activity.	3.58	Strongly motivated
38	I experience powerful emotions when playing a sport I love.	3.70	Strongly motivated
39	I enjoy becoming completely immersed in a sporting activity.	3.49	Strongly motivated
40	The sport I participate in is one of the best ways to meet people.	3.72	Strongly motivated
41	My sport helps develop personal qualities such as discipline, teamwork, resilience, and time management.	3.84	Strongly motivated
42	My sport is a good way to learn things that are useful in other areas of life.	3.77	Strongly motivated
43	Participating in my sport helps me maintain good relationships with friends.	3.74	Strongly motivated
44	Engaging in sports is essential for maintaining physical fitness and overall health.	3.81	Strongly motivated
45	Participating in sports is essential for my well-being and positive self-perception.	3.74	Strongly motivated
46	I would feel disappointed if I did not regularly set aside time for exercise programs.	3.40	Strongly motivated
47	I must participate in sports regularly.	3.53	Strongly motivated
48	My sport helps me earn respect and admiration from friends, family, and others in my community.	3.84	Strongly motivated
49	Being involved in sports gives me the prestige of being recognized as an athlete.	3.74	Strongly motivated
50	People around me think it is essential to be in shape.	3.47	Strongly motivated
51	I enjoy showcasing my skills in my sport.	3.74	Strongly motivated

Overall mean reported in the original manuscript

3.69

Strongly motivated

Note. Item-level means and the overall mean are reproduced from the original manuscript. Some item statements have been shortened for readability; the original questionnaire should be consulted for exact wording. The original motivation scoring intervals overlap between 3.25 and 3.34 and should be corrected before publication. The overall mean has not been recalculated from rounded item means.

Regression Analysis of Coach Etiquette and Intrinsic Motivation

Linear regression was used to examine whether perceived coach etiquette statistically predicted intrinsic motivation among collegiate softball and baseball athletes. The reported result, $t(42) = 0.846$, $p = .4023$, was not statistically significant at the .05 level; therefore, Hypothesis 1 was not supported. This finding does not establish that the true relationship is zero or that coach etiquette is irrelevant to athletes' motivation. The regression table also reported a coach-etiquette mean of 3.05 (SD = 0.44), which differs from the overall descriptive mean of 3.03 in Table 1. This discrepancy should be verified against the original dataset and statistical output before publication.

Table 3. Reported regression result for coach etiquette and intrinsic motivation

Statistic	Reported result
Outcome variable	Intrinsic motivation
Predictor	Perceived coach etiquette
Predictor mean reported in regression table	3.05
Predictor standard deviation reported in regression table	0.44
t statistic	0.846
Degrees of freedom	42
p value	.4023
Significance threshold	.05
Statistical conclusion	Not statistically significant
Hypothesis conclusion	Hypothesis 1 was not supported

Note. The statistics shown are those reported in the original manuscript. Regression coefficients, standard errors, 95% confidence intervals, (R^2), and overall model statistics were not available in the reported table and must be obtained from the original analysis output.

Regression Analysis of Coach Etiquette and Extrinsic Motivation

A separate regression analysis was reported to examine whether perceived coach etiquette statistically predicted extrinsic

motivation. The original manuscript reported $t(42) = 1.33$ and $p = .2636$. The reported p value is greater than .05 and therefore does not meet the conventional criterion for statistical significance. Based on the reported p value, the analysis does not provide sufficient statistical evidence to support Hypothesis 2, which proposed a positive association between perceived coach etiquette and extrinsic sport motivation. The result should be described as not statistically significant rather than as proof that coach etiquette has no relationship with extrinsic motivation. However, the reported test statistic, degrees of freedom, and p value appear inconsistent under a conventional two-sided t test. A t statistic of 1.33 with 42 degrees of freedom would ordinarily correspond to a p value of approximately .19. The authors must verify the result against the original statistical output and should not substitute a recalculated value without confirming which analysis was conducted.

Table 4. Reported regression result for coach etiquette and extrinsic motivation

Statistic	Reported result
Outcome variable	Extrinsic motivation
Predictor	Perceived coach etiquette
Predictor mean reported in regression table	3.05
Predictor standard deviation reported in regression table	0.44
t statistic	1.33
Degrees of freedom	42
p value reported in the manuscript	.2636
Significance threshold	.05
Statistical conclusion based on the reported p value	Not statistically significant
Hypothesis conclusion	Hypothesis 2 was not supported; verify the original output

Note. The reported t statistic and p value require verification. Regression coefficients, standard errors, 95% confidence intervals, (R^2), and overall model statistics should be added after they have been confirmed from the original analysis output.

DISCUSSION

Principal Findings

This study examined whether perceived coach etiquette predicted intrinsic and extrinsic sport motivation among 45 collegiate softball and baseball athletes at a university in the Philippines. Athletes reported moderately favorable perceptions of coach etiquette ($M = 3.03$) and high overall sport motivation ($M = 3.69$), but the regression analysis found no statistically significant relationship with intrinsic motivation ($t = 0.846$, $df = 42$, $p = 0.4023$); the extrinsic motivation result also requires verification because its reported p -value appears inconsistent with the reported t -statistic and degrees of freedom. Thus, neither hypothesis received statistical support based on the reported results. These findings do not establish that coach etiquette is unimportant or that no relationship exists; rather, the small sample and incomplete regression statistics limit conclusions about effect magnitude, precision, and practical significance.

Comparison with International Evidence

International research provides a broader context for understanding the relationship between coaching behaviors and athlete motivation. Davis et al. (2019), McGee & DeFreese, (2018), and Longakit et al., (2024) examined coach-athlete relationships, communication, and psychological outcomes, while

Erikstad et al., (2021) and Görgülü, (2019) investigated transformational leadership and individualized consideration. Although these studies highlight the importance of interpersonal coaching practices, their constructs differ from coach etiquette. Therefore, evidence concerning relationship quality or leadership cannot automatically establish that etiquette independently predicts intrinsic or extrinsic motivation.

Research on baseball and Self-Determination Theory (SDT) offers further insights. Gutiérrez-García et al. (2019) examined empowering motivational climate and enjoyment among baseball pitchers, while Ryan & Deci, (2000), Bartholomew et al. (2010), Shannon et al. (2021), and Mossman et al. (2022) addressed psychological needs, controlling coaching behaviors, and autonomy support. This literature suggests that respectful conduct may contribute to positive coach-athlete interactions, but autonomy-supportive communication and competence-enhancing feedback may represent additional motivational processes. Because the present study did not directly measure psychological needs or mediation pathways, these explanations remain plausible interpretations rather than tested mechanisms.

Differences in populations, contexts, and measurement also limit direct comparisons. The present study involved 45 athletes

from two teams at one Philippine university, whereas the cited research covered diverse sports and competitive levels. Moreover, the modified 28-item PCABS and 23-item Sport Motivation Scale-based questionnaire require clearer evidence of reliability, validity, and scoring properties to support comparisons with studies using other instruments. As the study was cross-sectional and non-experimental, it could not assess intervention effects, implementation fidelity, or changes over time. Overall, the findings support distinguishing coach etiquette from relationship quality, transformational leadership, autonomy support, and motivational climate, as these related but distinct constructs require separate measurement and appropriately designed analyses.

Theoretical, Methodological, and Practical Implications

Theoretically, this study contributes to the application of Self-Determination Theory (SDT), which proposes that motivation is shaped partly by social environments supporting autonomy, competence, and relatedness [Ryan & Deci, \(2000\)](#). However, the findings do not establish that coach etiquette independently predicts intrinsic or extrinsic motivation. Future research could examine whether this relationship operates through coach-athlete relationship quality and psychological need satisfaction, while considering autonomy-supportive coaching and motivational climate. Methodologically, larger samples, validated instruments, and comprehensive reporting of regression coefficients, standard errors, 95% confidence intervals, and model statistics are needed to assess the magnitude and precision of these relationships.

Practically, the nonsignificant findings do not diminish the importance of respectful and ethical coaching. Athletic departments should continue to promote fair treatment, appropriate communication, professional conduct, and adherence to sporting rules, alongside athlete-centered practices that encourage input and provide constructive feedback. These recommendations align with research on controlling coaching styles, psychological need satisfaction, and autonomy support [\(Bartholomew et al., 2010; Mossman et al., 2022; Raabe & Zakrajsek, \(2017\)\)](#). However, because this study did not evaluate

a coach-development intervention, its effectiveness cannot be inferred. Future programs could combine structured coach education with confidential athlete feedback and evaluate outcomes across a competitive season.

Strengths and Limitations

A key strength of this study is its focus on etiquette-oriented coaching behaviors among collegiate softball and baseball athletes, with intrinsic and extrinsic motivation examined separately. However, the cross-sectional design and small sample of 45 athletes from one university limit causal inference, statistical precision, and generalizability. Self-reported data may introduce social desirability and common-method bias, while the modified PCABS and 23-item motivation questionnaire require clearer evidence of validity and reliability. Potential confounders and regression diagnostics were also insufficiently documented, and the reported results lack verified coefficients, standard errors, confidence intervals, and explained variance. The extrinsic-motivation p-value additionally requires verification against the original statistical output. Therefore, the findings should be interpreted cautiously, particularly the regression results. Future research should use larger, multisite samples, validated instruments, longitudinal or controlled designs, and comprehensive statistical reporting to improve the reliability and generalizability of the evidence.

Future Research

Future research should use larger, multisite samples and longitudinal or controlled intervention designs to examine the relationship between coach etiquette and sport motivation across different sports and cultural contexts. Studies should employ validated instruments, investigate psychological need satisfaction, coach-athlete relationship quality, and motivational climate as potential mediators or moderators, and report comprehensive statistical results, including effect sizes and 95% confidence intervals. Preregistered hypotheses, independent replication, and implementation and cost-effectiveness evaluations of coach education programs are also needed to strengthen the reliability, practical relevance, and generalizability of the evidence.

CONCLUSION

This study examined whether perceived coach etiquette statistically predicted intrinsic and extrinsic sport motivation among collegiate softball and baseball athletes at a university in the Philippines. Although athletes reported relatively favorable perceptions of coach etiquette and high sport motivation, neither hypothesized relationship was statistically significant, and the independent predictive contribution of coach etiquette was not established. These findings do not demonstrate the absence of a relationship but highlight the need to distinguish respectful

coaching conduct from specific motivational processes, including autonomy support, psychological need satisfaction, and motivational climate. Given the small sample and cross-sectional, single-institution design, causal inference and generalizability remain limited. Future multisite and longitudinal studies using validated instruments and comprehensive statistical reporting are needed to clarify the relationship between coach etiquette and athletes' motivation.

DECLARATIONS

Ethical Approval

Ethical approval for this study was obtained from the Institute of Physical Education and Athletics, University of Santo Tomas, Manila, Philippines (Approval No. USTM/R/5516-25-5). The study was conducted in accordance with ethical principles for research involving human participants, with appropriate measures to protect participants' rights, privacy, and confidentiality.

Consent for to Participate

Informed consent was obtained from all participants before data collection. Participants were informed about the purpose and procedures of the study, the voluntary nature of their participation, the confidentiality

of their responses, and their right to withdraw without penalty.

Consent for Publication

The study reports aggregated questionnaire data and does not intend to disclose personally identifiable information about individual participants. Therefore, consent for publication of identifiable personal information or images was not applicable.

Author Contributions (CRediT)

Olivia Dimatulac: Conceptualization, Methodology, Investigation, Data Curation, Original Draft. Ronald Librando: Conceptualization, Methodology, Investigation, Data Curation, Review & Editing. Jojielyn Lim, Jasper Obanon, and Lloyd Neo Oalog: Investigation, Data Curation,

Review & Editing. Rhea Mae Oblima: Supervision, Methodology, Validation, Review & Editing.

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Conflict of Interest

The authors declare no conflicts of interest related to the conduct of this study, the interpretation of its findings, or the preparation and publication of this manuscript. The original manuscript reports no conflict of interest involving the researchers, participants, athletic department, or university.

Data Availability

The data supporting the findings of this study consist of questionnaire responses collected from 45 collegiate softball and baseball athletes at a university in the Philippines. The original manuscript does not identify a public repository or provide a data-sharing link. Subject to confirmation

by the authors and applicable institutional requirements, de-identified data may be made available by the corresponding author upon reasonable request. Any sharing of data must protect participant confidentiality and comply with the consent provided by participants and applicable ethics requirements.

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Generative AI Disclosure

Generative AI assistance was used during the manuscript-revision process to support language editing, academic phrasing, organization of manuscript sections, and improvement of clarity and consistency.

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