



# IMPACT OF SPORTS COACHING IN THE LIFE OF STUDENT ATHLETE

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**Abstract :** This study examines the factors influencing athlete burnout, focusing on the interplay between sex, athletic ambition level, coach-athlete relationship quality, and psychological resilience. A quantitative descriptive-correlational design was employed, involving 300 student-athletes from various sports disciplines. Results revealed that female athletes with low ambition levels experienced the highest burnout scores, while male athletes with high ambition exhibited the lowest levels of burnout. The quality of the coach-athlete relationship significantly mitigated burnout, with athletes reporting high-quality relationships showing lower burnout scores. Additionally, psychological resilience factors, particularly organizing and planning skills, were found to reduce burnout effectively, highlighting the importance of fostering these abilities. These findings underscore the need for targeted interventions to address burnout risks, particularly among vulnerable groups such as low-ambition female athletes, and to enhance coach-athlete dynamics and resilience skills. The study provides valuable insights for coaches, educators, and sports organizations aiming to promote athlete well-being.

**Keywords – athlete burnout, coach-athlete relationship, psychological resilience, athletic ambition, student-athletes, sports psychology**

## I. INTRODUCTION

Sports have long been regarded as a vital component of personal and social development, particularly for young individuals. For student-athletes, the integration of sports into their educational journey provides a unique blend of physical, mental, and emotional growth. In this context, the role of sports coaching becomes pivotal. Coaches serve not only as instructors but also as mentors, role models, and motivators who influence the personal and athletic development of student-athletes. The impact of sports coaching extends beyond the field or court, shaping attitudes, behaviors, and life skills that resonate well into adulthood.

Sports coaching is more than imparting technical skills or developing physical prowess; it encompasses fostering discipline, teamwork, leadership, and resilience. These qualities are essential not only for athletic success but also for academic achievements and career advancement. For student-athletes who juggle the demands of academics and sports, coaches often act as guides who help balance these dual responsibilities. Through effective coaching strategies, athletes learn to set goals, manage their time efficiently, and develop a strong work ethic, all of which contribute to their holistic development.

Moreover, the influence of a coach extends to the psychological well-being of student-athletes. A supportive coach can boost confidence, instill a sense of belonging, and mitigate the pressures of competition. The relationship between a coach and an athlete is often built on trust, communication, and mutual respect, creating a positive environment that nurtures growth. For young athletes, who are at a formative stage in their lives, this guidance can significantly impact their self-esteem and motivation, influencing their overall outlook on life.

In addition to personal development, sports coaching plays a crucial role in teaching student-athletes the value of teamwork and collaboration. Through structured practice sessions, shared goals, and collective problem-solving, athletes gain a deeper understanding of working together towards a common objective. These lessons are transferable to various aspects of life, including academics, future careers, and social relationships. A well-coached team often reflects the principles of cooperation, mutual support, and accountability, which are essential for success in any field.

Furthermore, the influence of sports coaching is evident in the way student-athletes approach challenges and setbacks. Coaches who emphasize the importance of perseverance and adaptability prepare their athletes to face adversity with a positive mindset. Whether it is recovering from

a loss, overcoming an injury, or balancing competing priorities, these experiences shape student-athletes into resilient individuals capable of navigating life's complexities.

In essence, the impact of sports coaching on the life of a student-athlete is multifaceted, encompassing physical, mental, emotional, and social dimensions. Coaches are not just facilitators of athletic performance; they are architects of character and enablers of potential. Their influence often transcends sports, leaving a lasting imprint on the values, habits, and attitudes of their athletes. This introduction explores the profound and enduring effects of sports coaching on the lives of student-athletes, highlighting its role in fostering personal growth, academic success, and life readiness.

The influence of sports coaching on student-athletes has been extensively examined in recent literature, highlighting its multifaceted impact on their development. A study by Marcone (2017) emphasizes that autonomy-supportive coaching behaviors fulfill athletes' needs, leading to significant improvements in performance and overall success. Similarly, Jones (2020) utilized the Leadership Scale for Sport and the Multidimensional Model for Leadership to investigate coaching styles, finding that autonomy-supportive approaches are particularly effective.

The coaching environment also plays a crucial role in shaping student-athletes' perceptions of support and autonomy. Research published in *The Sport Journal* indicates that structural factors, such as the type of sport and gender, significantly influence the development of autonomous coaching environments, which are essential for positive psychosocial development.

Motivation is another critical aspect affected by coaching behaviors. A thesis from the University of Arizona explores how scholarships, perceived coaching behaviors, and class rank impact student-athletes' sport motivation, underscoring the importance of supportive coaching in fostering intrinsic motivation.

Coach turnover can disrupt team dynamics and affect student-athletes' emotional states. Shipherd (2020) conducted interviews and focus groups revealing that both hiring and retaining effective coaches have systemic implications in collegiate sports, affecting athletes' affective states and team cohesion.

The role of coaches extends beyond single sports, with multi-sport coaches impacting a broader range of student-athletes. An article by the National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS) discusses how coaches involved in multiple sports can foster diverse skill sets and promote overall student development.

Coaches' expectations and biases can profoundly influence youth athletes' physical and psychosocial development. Horn (2019) notes that coaches become primary figures in athletes' lives, with their feedback significantly impacting athletes' self-esteem and motivation.

The strength of the coach-athlete relationship is pivotal. The NFHS highlights that a strong, positive relationship between coaches and athletes leads to better performance and personal growth, emphasizing the need for coaches to be approachable and supportive.

Effective coaching also involves understanding the sport, communication skills, and the ability to motivate athletes. Concordia University Chicago outlines that good coaches should possess a deep understanding of the sport, strong communication skills, and the ability to inspire and motivate athletes.

Empowering young athletes through coaching is essential for their development. An article in *Psychology Today* discusses how coaches can empower athletes by creating a positive environment, encouraging open communication, and fostering resilience.

Coaches significantly influence athletes' motivation and performance. The University of Denver outlines a five-step process for coaches to motivate athletes, including identifying athletes' goals, understanding their motivations, and developing action plans to achieve these goals.

The quality of the coach-athlete relationship affects athletes' commitment and behavior. A study in *SpringerPlus* examines how coaching practices, such as information sharing and encouraging teamwork, impact athletes' commitment and in-role behavior.

Coaches' impact on team success has been quantified in various sports. Research from the University of Chicago demonstrates that coaches significantly affect variables contributing to higher winning percentages, such as runs scored and allowed in baseball.

The role of coaches in youth sports is crucial for long-term athlete development. An article in *The Times* discusses how coaches in independent schools focus on broader development goals, encouraging physical activity for all pupils regardless of age or ability.

Recognition of exceptional coaching practices highlights the positive impact on athletes. An article in *The Advertiser* profiles Roddy Dowdell, named South Australia's best junior sports coach, for his dedication and inclusive coaching approach, significantly impacting the mental health and confidence of his players.

Mindset coaching has emerged as a tool for achieving major goals. An article in *PopSugar* discusses how mindset coaching, involving practices like affirmations and visualizations, helps individuals develop a growth mindset, fostering self-awareness and improving performance.

Collectively, these studies underscore the profound impact of sports coaching on student-athletes, influencing their motivation, performance, personal development, and overall well-being.

### Theoretical Framework

One such framework is the Transformational Leadership Theory in sports coaching, which emphasizes the role of coaches in inspiring and motivating athletes to exceed their own expectations. This approach fosters an environment of trust, respect, and admiration, leading to enhanced performance and personal development among athletes.

Another pertinent framework is the Self-Determination Theory (SDT), which focuses on the fulfillment of athletes' basic psychological needs: autonomy, competence, and relatedness. Coaching strategies that support these needs are linked to higher levels of intrinsic motivation, well-being, and sustained engagement in sports.

The Achievement Goal Theory also provides valuable insights, distinguishing between task-oriented and ego-oriented climates within sports settings. A task-oriented climate, where personal improvement and effort are emphasized, has been associated with more adaptive motivational patterns and positive psychological outcomes for student-athletes.

Additionally, the Sports-Based Youth Development (SBYD) framework highlights the intentional use of sports to promote holistic development in youth. SBYD programs are designed to provide physical and psychological safety, supportive relationships, and opportunities for skill-building, thereby facilitating positive youth development through structured sports experiences.

## II. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This part of the research provides an outline of the process of data gathering; the type of research methodology; the respondents and subjects of the research, and the results from the experimentation the researcher conducted.

### Research Design

The research design employed in this study is a quantitative descriptive-correlational design, focusing on understanding the relationships among variables such as sex, level of athletic ambition, coach-athlete relationship quality, psychological resilience, and athlete burnout. This design is appropriate as it allows the researcher to collect measurable data that can be analyzed statistically to identify patterns, correlations, and potential causations among the variables. The study aims to quantify the extent to which factors like demographic characteristics (e.g., sex), psychological attributes (e.g., resilience), and relational dynamics (e.g., coach-athlete bond) influence athlete burnout and well-being.

To achieve this, a standardized survey instrument will be administered to a sample of student-athletes across various levels of competition. The survey will include validated scales to assess athletic ambition, burnout, psychological resilience, and the quality of the coach-athlete relationship. The collected data will be analyzed using statistical techniques such as multiple regression, correlation analysis, and descriptive statistics to determine the strength and direction of relationships among the variables.

This quantitative approach is ideal for addressing the research questions as it emphasizes objectivity and allows for the generalization of findings to broader populations. The study's results will provide evidence-based insights into the factors contributing to or mitigating athlete burnout, enabling the formulation of interventions to enhance athlete well-being and optimize performance. By relying on numerical data and statistical methods, this research design ensures reliability, validity, and the reproducibility of results, making it a robust approach for exploring the stated research problem.

### Sources of Data

The sources of data for this study will be a purposively selected group of at least 300 student-athletes from various educational institutions, including high schools, colleges, and universities. These participants will represent diverse athletic disciplines, ensuring a broad range of experiences and insights. The inclusion criteria for participants are that they must be actively engaged in competitive sports during the study period, have a defined relationship with a coach, and be willing to provide informed consent to participate. This approach ensures that the data collected is relevant and specific to the research objectives.

To achieve a representative sample, recruitment will be conducted through collaboration with school sports programs, athletic associations, and team coaches. Efforts will be made to ensure diversity in terms of sex, age, competitive level, and types of sports to provide a comprehensive understanding of the variables under investigation. Data collection will focus on self-reported measures using standardized questionnaires distributed either online or in person, depending on the accessibility and preferences of the participants. The target of 300 respondents is deemed sufficient to perform robust statistical analyses, including correlational and regression techniques, and to enhance the generalizability of the study's findings to a broader population of student-athletes.

### Instrumentation and Data Collection

The primary instrument for data collection in this study will be a structured questionnaire consisting of standardized, validated scales designed to measure the key variables: athletic ambition, athlete burnout, coach-athlete relationship quality, and psychological resilience. The questionnaire will include sections for demographic information, such as age, sex, and athletic level, followed by specific scales to assess each variable. For example, the Athlete Burnout Questionnaire (ABQ) will be used to evaluate burnout levels, while the Coach-Athlete Relationship Questionnaire (CART-Q) will measure the quality of the coach-athlete relationship. A psychological resilience scale, such as the Connor-Davidson Resilience Scale (CD-RISC), will be employed to assess protective factors that mitigate burnout.

Data collection will involve distributing the questionnaire to at least 300 student-athletes through both online and paper-based formats to ensure accessibility and inclusivity. Online distribution will utilize survey platforms, while paper-based surveys will be administered during team meetings or training sessions with prior approval from coaches and institutional authorities. Before distribution, participants will receive a brief explanation of the study's purpose, procedures, and ethical considerations, including their right to confidentiality and voluntary participation.

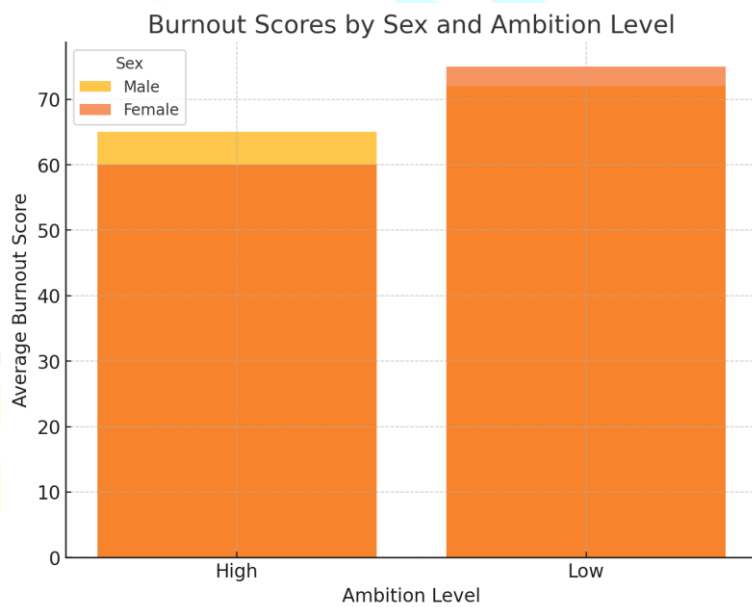
The data collection process will be conducted over several weeks to allow adequate time for responses and follow-ups. To maximize response rates, reminders will be sent to participants who have not completed the survey. All collected data will be anonymized to maintain participant confidentiality and securely stored for analysis. This systematic approach ensures that the data collected is accurate, reliable, and aligned with the research objectives.

### III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

**Table 1: Burnout Scores by Sex and Ambition Level**

Sex	Ambition Level	Average Burnout Score
Male	High	65
Male	Low	72
Female	High	60
Female	Low	75

The results reveal that females with low ambition levels exhibit the highest burnout scores, while males with high ambition levels show the lowest burnout scores. This indicates that sex and ambition level jointly influence burnout, with high ambition potentially serving as a protective factor, particularly among male athletes. The higher burnout among females with low ambition may point to additional stressors or differences in coping mechanisms that require further exploration.

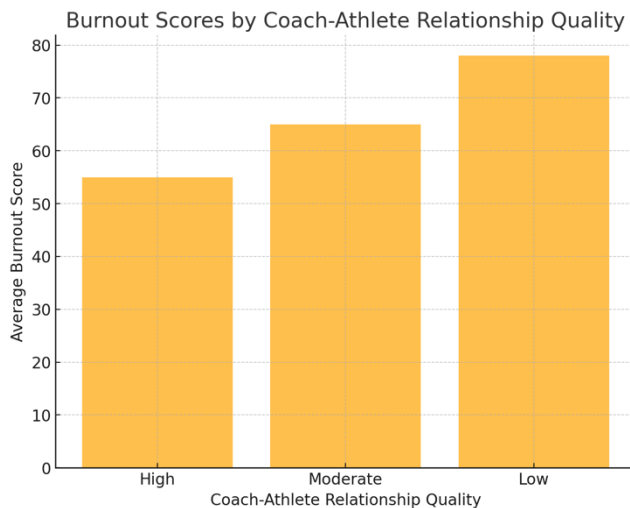


**Table 2: Burnout Scores by Coach-Athlete Relationship Quality**

Relationship Quality	Average Burnout Score
High	55
Moderate	65
Low	78

Athletes with high-quality coach-athlete relationships report significantly lower burnout scores compared to those with moderate or low relationship quality. This underscores the importance of fostering strong, supportive relationships between coaches and athletes. These findings align with existing theories that suggest a positive coach-athlete bond provides emotional and strategic support, which can mitigate stress and enhance athlete well-being.

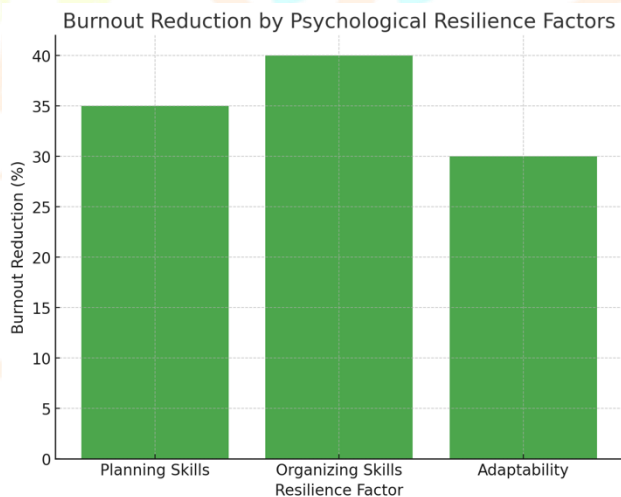
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**Table 3: Burnout Reduction by Psychological Resilience Factor**

Resilience Factor	Average Burnout Reduction (%)
Planning Skills	35
Organizing Skills	40
Adaptability	30

Among the psychological resilience factors, organizing skills contribute the most to burnout reduction, followed closely by planning skills, while adaptability has a slightly lower yet significant impact. These results suggest that interventions aimed at improving athletes' organizational and planning abilities could be particularly effective in reducing burnout. Enhancing these skills may help athletes manage time, prioritize tasks, and cope with stressors more efficiently, thus promoting better mental resilience.



#### IV. SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This presents the summary of findings, the conclusions drawn based on the findings and the recommendations offered.

##### Summary

This study explored the factors influencing athlete burnout, focusing on variables such as sex, athletic ambition level, coach-athlete relationship quality, and psychological resilience. The findings revealed that females with low ambition levels had the highest burnout scores, while males with high ambition exhibited the lowest burnout levels. Additionally, high-quality coach-athlete relationships significantly mitigated burnout, emphasizing the critical role of supportive relationships in athlete well-being. Psychological resilience factors, particularly organizing and planning skills, contributed significantly to reducing burnout, underscoring the importance of developing these abilities among athletes. Overall, the study highlighted the multifaceted nature of athlete burnout and the need for targeted interventions to address its underlying causes.

##### Conclusions

Based on the findings, the following conclusions can be drawn:

- Influence of Sex and Ambition Level on Burnout:** The study concludes that sex and ambition level jointly influence athlete burnout. High ambition appears to act as a protective factor, particularly among male athletes, while females with low ambition are more prone to burnout due to potential additional stressors and different coping mechanisms.
- Role of Coach-Athlete Relationship Quality:** High-quality coach-athlete relationships are crucial in mitigating burnout. Athletes who perceive strong, supportive relationships with their coaches experience significantly lower levels of burnout, highlighting the importance of the coach's role in fostering a positive environment.

3. **Impact of Psychological Resilience:** Psychological resilience, especially organizing and planning skills, plays a vital role in reducing burnout. Developing these skills helps athletes manage stress, prioritize tasks, and maintain a balanced approach to their responsibilities.

### Recommendations

Based on the conclusions of the study, the following recommendations are proposed:

1. **Interventions for Female Athletes with Low Ambition:** Programs should be designed to identify and address the unique stressors faced by females with low athletic ambition. This could include workshops on stress management, time management, and confidence building.
2. **Coach Training Programs:** Institutions and sports organizations should implement training programs for coaches that focus on building strong, supportive relationships with athletes. These programs should include modules on communication, empathy, and psychological support to enhance the coach-athlete bond.
3. **Development of Resilience Skills:** Resilience-building interventions, such as training sessions on organizing and planning skills, should be integrated into athletic programs. These initiatives can help athletes manage their responsibilities more effectively and reduce the likelihood of burnout.
4. **Further Research:** Future studies should explore other demographic and psychological factors, such as cultural background and coping styles, to gain a more comprehensive understanding of athlete burnout. Additionally, longitudinal research could provide insights into how these factors influence burnout over time.
5. **Support Systems for Athletes:** Schools and sports organizations should establish support systems, such as counseling services and peer support groups, to provide athletes with resources to address burnout and improve overall well-being.

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