

---

## **Psychological Readiness of Coaches in Managing Adolescent Athletes: An Interdisciplinary Literature Review**

**M. Rachmat Kasmad**

Universitas Negeri Makassar, Sulawesi Selatan, Indonesia

[m.rachmat.k@unm.ac.id](mailto:m.rachmat.k@unm.ac.id)

### **Authors' contribution:**

**A.** Conception and design of the study; **B.** Acquisition of data;  
**C.** Analysis and interpretation of data; **D.** Manuscript preparation; **E.** Obtaining funding

---

**Received:** 2025-11-28

**Accepted:** 2025-12-03

**Published:** 2025-12-21

---

### **ABSTRACT**

The increasing psychological demands experienced by adolescent athletes have highlighted the importance of coaches' psychological readiness in promoting both athletic performance and psychosocial development. However, coaching effectiveness in youth sports is often examined from technical and tactical perspectives, while psychological readiness remains insufficiently explored. This study aimed to analyze and synthesize interdisciplinary evidence regarding coaches' psychological readiness in managing adolescent athletes. The study employed an interdisciplinary literature review design by examining peer-reviewed articles published between 2015 and 2025 from Scopus, Web of Science, PubMed, ScienceDirect, ERIC, Google Scholar, SINTA, and Garuda databases. A total of 312 records were identified, of which 25 studies met the inclusion criteria and were included in the final synthesis. The findings revealed six dominant dimensions of psychological readiness: emotional intelligence (88%), communication competence (84%), coach-athlete relationship quality (80%), transformational leadership (72%), mental health literacy (64%), and stress management and resilience (60%). Furthermore, psychologically prepared coaches were consistently associated with positive athlete outcomes, including increased motivation (84%), enhanced self-confidence (76%), improved psychological well-being (72%), greater sport commitment (72%), reduced competitive anxiety (68%), and lower burnout risk (60%). The review also confirmed the relevance of Self-Determination Theory, Emotional Intelligence Theory, Coach-Athlete Relationship Theory, Positive Youth Development Theory, Transformational Leadership Theory, and Mental Health Literacy Theory in explaining coaching effectiveness. In conclusion, psychological readiness represents a multidimensional competency that is essential for managing adolescent athletes and should be integrated into coach education and professional development programs.

---

**Keywords** : Psychological Readiness; Youth Sport Coaching; Adolescent Athletes; Emotional Intelligence; Coach-Athlete Relationship.

---

## **INTRODUCTION**

Adolescence is a critical developmental stage characterized by substantial physical, cognitive, emotional, and social changes that influence athletic participation and performance. According to the Developmental Systems Theory, adolescent development is shaped by continuous interactions between individual characteristics and environmental contexts, including coaches, parents, and peers (Lerner et al., 2018). Therefore, coaches



play a central role in facilitating both athletic achievement and psychosocial development among adolescent athletes.

Young athletes frequently encounter psychological challenges such as competitive anxiety, fear of failure, emotional instability, identity conflicts, and performance pressure. The Cognitive Appraisal Theory of Stress suggests that stress occurs when individuals perceive environmental demands as exceeding their coping resources (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984). In competitive sport settings, adolescent athletes often appraise competition-related demands as stressful, making psychological support from coaches increasingly important (Nicholls et al., 2017). The increasing intensity of youth sports participation has also contributed to concerns regarding athlete burnout. According to the Athlete Burnout Model, prolonged exposure to physical and psychological demands without adequate recovery may result in emotional exhaustion, reduced sense of accomplishment, and sport devaluation (Raedeke & Smith, 2001). Recent studies have reported that adolescent athletes experiencing excessive training loads and competitive pressure are more vulnerable to burnout symptoms and psychological distress (Isoard-Gautheur et al., 2019; Madigan et al., 2021). Furthermore, Self-Determination Theory (SDT) posits that optimal motivation and psychological well-being emerge when the needs for autonomy, competence, and relatedness are fulfilled (Deci & Ryan, 2000; Ryan & Deci, 2020). Coaches who demonstrate psychological readiness are more likely to create supportive environments that satisfy these needs, thereby fostering intrinsic motivation, engagement, and long-term participation among adolescent athletes (Appleton et al., 2016; Curran et al., 2021).

Consequently, coaching effectiveness in youth sports can no longer be understood solely through technical and tactical competencies. Psychological readiness has become a fundamental prerequisite for coaches seeking to promote both athletic performance and athlete well-being. Recent coaching research has increasingly shifted from performance-centered approaches toward athlete-centered and holistic developmental perspectives. Contemporary coaching frameworks emphasize the importance of psychological competencies, interpersonal effectiveness, and emotional regulation in fostering athlete development (Côté & Gilbert, 2009; Cushion et al., 2019). One of the most influential theoretical perspectives in this area is Emotional Intelligence Theory. Goleman (1995) proposed that emotionally intelligent individuals possess self-awareness, self-regulation, empathy, motivation, and social competence. Within coaching contexts, emotional intelligence has been associated with effective communication, conflict management, athlete satisfaction, and positive team environments (Laborde et al., 2016; Wagstaff, 2017).

Similarly, the Coach–Athlete Relationship Model developed by Jowett (2007) highlights the importance of closeness, commitment, complementarity, and co-orientation in successful coaching relationships. Empirical evidence indicates that strong coach–athlete relationships positively influence athlete confidence, motivation, psychological resilience, and performance outcomes (Jowett & Shanmugam, 2016; Davis et al., 2019).

The Positive Youth Development (PYD) framework further reinforces the developmental role of coaches. According to Lerner et al. (2018), positive developmental outcomes emerge when young people are provided with supportive relationships and opportunities for growth. Within sports settings, coaches serve as critical developmental assets who facilitate competence, confidence, connection, character, and caring among adolescent athletes (Holt et al., 2017; Turnnidge et al., 2019).

Another important theoretical perspective is Transformational Leadership Theory. Transformational leaders inspire followers through idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration (Bass & Riggio, 2006).



Research has consistently demonstrated that transformational coaching behaviors contribute to enhanced athlete motivation, satisfaction, psychological well-being, and team cohesion (Callow et al., 2009; Vella et al., 2013; Turnnidge & Côté, 2018).

Moreover, increasing awareness of mental health issues in youth sports has highlighted the relevance of Mental Health Literacy Theory. Mental health literacy refers to knowledge and beliefs that facilitate the recognition, management, and prevention of mental health disorders (Jorm, 2012). Coaches with higher levels of mental health literacy are better equipped to identify symptoms of anxiety, depression, and emotional distress among athletes and provide appropriate support or referrals (Mazzer & Rickwood, 2015; Breslin et al., 2022). Collectively, these theoretical and empirical developments indicate that psychological readiness has become an essential component of effective coaching practice in adolescent sport settings.

Despite increasing scholarly attention to athlete mental health and psychosocial development, significant gaps remain in the literature. First, most studies have primarily focused on athletes' psychological characteristics, including motivation, self-confidence, resilience, anxiety, and burnout (Madigan et al., 2021; Rice et al., 2016). Comparatively less attention has been devoted to examining coaches' psychological readiness as a multidimensional construct. Second, existing research tends to investigate isolated psychological variables, such as emotional intelligence, leadership behavior, communication skills, or mental health literacy, without integrating these dimensions into a comprehensive conceptual framework (Turnnidge & Côté, 2018; Breslin et al., 2022). Third, Ecological Systems Theory suggests that athlete development is influenced by multiple interconnected environmental systems, including family, school, sport organizations, and broader sociocultural contexts (Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 2006). However, many coaching studies continue to emphasize individual-level factors while overlooking ecological influences affecting coaches' psychological preparedness and effectiveness. Fourth, the Holistic Athletic Career Model emphasizes that athlete development involves simultaneous psychological, athletic, educational, and social transitions throughout the lifespan (Stambulova & Wylleman, 2019). Nevertheless, coaching education programs often prioritize technical competencies over psychological competencies, creating a mismatch between contemporary athlete needs and coach preparation. Therefore, a comprehensive interdisciplinary synthesis is needed to integrate findings from sport psychology, developmental psychology, educational psychology, leadership studies, and mental health research into a unified understanding of coaches' psychological readiness.

This interdisciplinary literature review aims to synthesize current evidence regarding coaches' psychological readiness in managing adolescent athletes. Specifically, the review seeks to identify the dimensions, determinants, and outcomes associated with psychological readiness through the perspectives of Self-Determination Theory (Ryan & Deci, 2020), Emotional Intelligence Theory (Goleman, 1995), Coach–Athlete Relationship Theory (Jowett, 2007), Positive Youth Development Theory (Lerner et al., 2018), Transformational Leadership Theory (Bass & Riggio, 2006), Mental Health Literacy Theory (Jorm, 2012), Ecological Systems Theory (Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 2006), and the Holistic Athletic Career Model (Stambulova & Wylleman, 2019).

The novelty of this review lies in its interdisciplinary integration of multiple theoretical perspectives to develop a comprehensive framework explaining how coaches' psychological readiness influences athlete motivation, well-being, resilience, mental health, and long-term development. Unlike previous studies that examined these variables independently, this

review proposes a multidimensional conceptual model that positions psychological readiness as a core competency of effective youth sport coaching.

## METHODS

This study employed an interdisciplinary literature review design to synthesize and critically analyze contemporary evidence regarding coaches' psychological readiness in managing adolescent athletes. An interdisciplinary review approach was selected because psychological readiness is a multidimensional construct situated at the intersection of sport psychology, developmental psychology, educational psychology, leadership studies, and mental health sciences. According to the interdisciplinary research framework proposed by Repko and Szostak (2021), complex social phenomena require the integration of multiple theoretical perspectives to generate comprehensive explanations. In the context of youth sports, coaches' psychological readiness cannot be adequately understood through a single disciplinary lens because coaching effectiveness is influenced by cognitive, emotional, behavioral, relational, and environmental factors. The review process followed the principles of systematic literature synthesis recommended by Snyder (2019) and Page et al. (2021) to ensure transparency, rigor, and replicability. Literature searches were conducted across several reputable databases, including Scopus, Web of Science, PubMed, ScienceDirect, Taylor & Francis Online, SpringerLink, ERIC, Google Scholar, SINTA, and Garuda. The search strategy utilized combinations of keywords such as psychological readiness, coach readiness, youth sport coaching, adolescent athletes, coach-athlete relationship, emotional intelligence, mental health literacy, transformational leadership, positive youth development, and sport psychology. Only peer-reviewed journal articles published between 2015 and 2025 were included to ensure the relevance and currency of the evidence.

The theoretical framework guiding this review was derived from several complementary perspectives. First, Self-Determination Theory (SDT) posits that effective coaching environments support athletes' needs for autonomy, competence, and relatedness, thereby fostering intrinsic motivation and psychological well-being (Ryan & Deci, 2020). Second, Emotional Intelligence Theory emphasizes coaches' abilities to recognize, regulate, and manage emotions in themselves and others, which contributes to effective interpersonal interactions and leadership (Laborde et al., 2016). Third, the Coach–Athlete Relationship Model highlights the importance of closeness, commitment, complementarity, and co-orientation in fostering athlete development and performance (Jowett, 2017). Furthermore, the review incorporated the Positive Youth Development (PYD) Framework, which conceptualizes sport as a developmental context that promotes competence, confidence, connection, character, and caring among young athletes (Holt et al., 2017). Transformational Leadership Theory was also integrated because coaches who exhibit inspirational motivation, individualized consideration, intellectual stimulation, and idealized influence are more likely to promote positive psychological outcomes among athletes (Turnnidge & Côté, 2018). Additionally, Mental Health Literacy Theory suggests that coaches require adequate knowledge and awareness of mental health issues to identify and support athletes experiencing psychological distress (Breslin et al., 2022). Finally, Ecological Systems Theory provides a broader perspective by recognizing that coaching effectiveness is shaped by interactions among athletes, families, schools, sport organizations, and sociocultural environments (Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 2006).

The inclusion criteria consisted of: (1) empirical studies or review articles focusing on coaches, adolescent athletes, or youth sport environments; (2) studies examining

psychological readiness, emotional competence, leadership, mental health support, motivation, or coach-athlete relationships; (3) articles published in English or Indonesian; and (4) publications indexed in Scopus, Web of Science, SINTA, or other reputable academic databases. Studies unrelated to youth sports, non-peer-reviewed documents, conference abstracts, and duplicate records were excluded.

Data extraction involved identifying study characteristics, theoretical foundations, research methodologies, psychological readiness dimensions, and key findings. Subsequently, a thematic synthesis approach was employed to categorize evidence into major themes, including emotional competence, motivational support, leadership effectiveness, mental health literacy, relationship quality, and developmental coaching practices. Through this process, the review generated an integrated conceptual understanding of coaches' psychological readiness and its implications for the management and development of adolescent athletes.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### Result

#### Study Selection and Characteristics

The literature search identified 312 articles from Scopus, Web of Science, PubMed, ScienceDirect, ERIC, Google Scholar, SINTA, and Garuda databases. After removing duplicates ( $n = 74$ ), 238 records remained for screening. Following title and abstract screening, 167 articles were excluded because they did not focus on coaches, adolescent athletes, or psychological readiness. Subsequently, 71 full-text articles were assessed for eligibility. After applying the inclusion and exclusion criteria, 25 studies published between 2015 and 2025 were included in the final synthesis.

**Table 1.**

Characteristics of Included Studies ( $n = 25$ )

Variable	Category	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
Research Design	Quantitative	12	48.0
	Qualitative	6	24.0
	Mixed Methods	4	16.0
	Literature Review	3	12.0
Study Context	Youth Sport	15	60.0
	School Sport	6	24.0
	Elite Junior Athletes	4	16.0
Geographic Region	Europe	10	40.0
	North America	7	28.0
	Asia	5	20.0
	Australia	3	12.0

The findings indicate that research on coaches' psychological readiness has expanded considerably over the past decade, particularly within youth sport environments. Most studies adopted quantitative approaches focusing on psychological competence, leadership behavior, emotional intelligence, and athlete well-being.

#### Dimensions of Coaches' Psychological Readiness

The thematic analysis identified six dominant dimensions of psychological readiness among coaches managing adolescent athletes.

**Table 2.**  
Main Dimensions of Psychological Readiness Identified in the Literature

Dimension	Frequency (Studies)	Percentage (%)
Emotional Intelligence	22	88
Communication Skills	21	84
Coach–Athlete Relationship Quality	20	80
Transformational Leadership	18	72
Mental Health Literacy	16	64
Stress Management & Resilience	15	60

The results demonstrate that emotional intelligence emerged as the most frequently reported dimension (88%), followed by communication competence (84%) and coach–athlete relationship quality (80%). These findings suggest that interpersonal and emotional competencies are considered fundamental indicators of psychological readiness.

**Distribution of Psychological Readiness Components**

The synthesis revealed the relative contribution of each psychological readiness component identified across the reviewed studies.

**Tabel 3.**  
Psychological readiness components in youth sport coaching

Component	Percentage
Emotional Intelligence	88
Communication Skills	84
Coach-Athlete Relationship	80
Transformational Leadership	72
Mental Health Literacy	64
Stress Management	60

The chart shows that emotional intelligence and communication skills were the most dominant indicators of coaches' readiness, reflecting the growing importance of psychosocial competencies in youth sport coaching.

**Psychological Readiness and Athlete Outcomes**

A consistent finding across the literature was the positive association between coaches' psychological readiness and athlete developmental outcomes.

**Table 4.**  
Effects of Coaches' Psychological Readiness on Adolescent Athletes

Outcome Variable	Number of Supporting Studies	Percentage (%)
Increased Motivation	21	84
Enhanced Self-Confidence	19	76
Improved Psychological Well-being	18	72
Reduced Competitive Anxiety	17	68
Greater Athlete Satisfaction	20	80
Lower Burnout Risk	15	60
Improved Sport Commitment	18	72

Across the reviewed studies, psychologically prepared coaches consistently contributed to higher athlete motivation, satisfaction, confidence, and psychological well-being. Moreover, several studies reported that supportive coaching environments were associated with reduced anxiety and lower risks of athlete burnout.

**Theoretical Frameworks Supporting Psychological Readiness**

Eight major theoretical perspectives were identified as foundations for understanding coaches' psychological readiness.

**Table 5.**  
Dominant Theories Used in Previous Studies

Theory	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Self-Determination Theory	20	80
Coach–Athlete Relationship Theory	18	72
Emotional Intelligence Theory	17	68
Positive Youth Development Theory	16	64
Transformational Leadership Theory	15	60
Mental Health Literacy Theory	12	48
Ecological Systems Theory	10	40
Stress Appraisal Theory	8	32

Self-Determination Theory was the most frequently applied theoretical framework, emphasizing the importance of supporting athletes’ needs for autonomy, competence, and relatedness. Coach–Athlete Relationship Theory and Emotional Intelligence Theory also appeared prominently in studies examining coaching effectiveness.

**Integrated Conceptual Findings**

The synthesis of empirical and conceptual evidence led to the development of an interdisciplinary framework of psychological readiness in youth sport coaching.

**Table 6.**  
Integrated Framework of Coaches’ Psychological Readiness

Psychological Readiness Component	Immediate Effect	Athlete Outcome
Emotional Intelligence	Better emotional regulation	Higher confidence
Communication Competence	Effective interaction	Greater satisfaction
Transformational Leadership	Inspirational climate	Stronger motivation
Mental Health Literacy	Early identification of distress	Better well-being
Relationship Quality	Trust and support	Stronger commitment
Resilience and Stress Management	Adaptive coping strategies	Lower burnout

The findings indicate that coaches’ psychological readiness operates through multiple interconnected pathways. Emotional intelligence, communication competence, transformational leadership, and mental health literacy collectively contribute to creating supportive sport environments that foster motivation, resilience, psychological well-being, and long-term athlete development.

Overall, the review of 25 studies demonstrates that psychological readiness is a multidimensional construct encompassing emotional intelligence, communication skills, transformational leadership, relationship quality, mental health literacy, and resilience. Empirical evidence consistently indicates that psychologically prepared coaches positively influence adolescent athletes’ motivation, confidence, psychological well-being, satisfaction, and sport commitment while reducing anxiety and burnout risk. These findings support the view that psychological readiness should be regarded as a core competency of modern youth sport coaching alongside technical, tactical, and physical expertise.

**Discussion**

The findings of this interdisciplinary literature review demonstrate that coaches’ psychological readiness is a multidimensional construct that plays a fundamental role in managing adolescent athletes. The review identified six dominant dimensions of psychological readiness, namely emotional intelligence, communication competence, coach–athlete relationship quality, transformational leadership, mental health literacy, and stress

management. Among these dimensions, emotional intelligence emerged as the most frequently reported component (88%), followed by communication competence (84%) and coach–athlete relationship quality (80%). These findings indicate that effective coaching in youth sports extends beyond technical and tactical expertise and increasingly requires psychological competencies that support athletes' holistic development.

From a theoretical perspective, the dominance of emotional intelligence aligns with the Emotional Intelligence Theory proposed by Goleman (1995), which emphasizes self-awareness, self-regulation, motivation, empathy, and social skills as key determinants of effective leadership. Coaches who possess high emotional intelligence are more capable of understanding athletes' emotional states, regulating their own reactions during stressful situations, and maintaining positive interpersonal relationships. Recent studies have shown that emotionally intelligent coaches contribute significantly to athlete satisfaction, resilience, and psychological well-being (Laborde et al., 2016; Wagstaff, 2017). The present findings reinforce these conclusions by demonstrating that emotional intelligence consistently appears as a central element of psychological readiness in youth sport contexts.

The strong presence of communication competence among the reviewed studies further highlights the importance of interpersonal effectiveness in coaching adolescent athletes. Communication is not merely a medium for delivering instructions but also a mechanism for building trust, motivation, and emotional support. According to the Coach–Athlete Relationship Model developed by Jowett (2007), successful coaching relationships are characterized by closeness, commitment, complementarity, and co-orientation. These relational dimensions are largely facilitated through effective communication. Empirical evidence suggests that athletes who perceive communication from coaches as supportive and respectful exhibit greater motivation, confidence, and commitment to sport participation (Jowett & Shanmugam, 2016; Davis et al., 2019). Therefore, communication competence serves as a bridge between coaches' psychological readiness and athletes' developmental outcomes.

Another important finding concerns the significance of coach–athlete relationship quality. The review revealed that 80% of the included studies identified relationship quality as a crucial component of coaching effectiveness. This finding supports Attachment Theory and relational perspectives in sport psychology, which emphasize the role of supportive interpersonal relationships in fostering psychological security and personal growth. Adolescent athletes often experience developmental challenges related to identity formation, self-esteem, and emotional regulation. Within this context, coaches frequently become influential adult figures who provide guidance, encouragement, and psychosocial support. Studies conducted over the past decade consistently demonstrate that positive coach–athlete relationships enhance athlete confidence, emotional stability, and long-term sport engagement (Knight et al., 2018; Appleton et al., 2021). Consequently, psychological readiness should include the capacity to establish and maintain meaningful relationships with athletes.

The findings also indicate that transformational leadership is a critical element of psychological readiness. Approximately 72% of the reviewed studies reported transformational leadership behaviors as predictors of positive athlete outcomes. Transformational Leadership Theory developed by Burns (1978) and further refined by Bass and Riggio (2006) proposes that effective leaders inspire followers through idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration. In sport settings, transformational coaches encourage athletes to pursue personal excellence, develop autonomy, and overcome challenges. Recent empirical studies have shown that transformational leadership is associated with enhanced athlete motivation, self-confidence, and team cohesion (Turnnidge & Côté, 2018; Vella et al., 2022). The current review supports these findings by demonstrating that



transformational leadership contributes significantly to coaches' ability to create psychologically supportive environments for adolescent athletes.

An important contribution of this review is the identification of mental health literacy as an emerging dimension of psychological readiness. The increasing prevalence of mental health concerns among young athletes has led researchers to recognize the importance of coaches' knowledge and awareness regarding psychological disorders. According to Mental Health Literacy Theory (Jorm, 2012), individuals require adequate understanding of mental health issues to recognize symptoms, provide support, and facilitate access to professional assistance. The review found that 64% of studies emphasized mental health literacy as a necessary coaching competency. This finding is particularly relevant given recent evidence showing increasing rates of anxiety, depression, emotional distress, and burnout among adolescent athletes (Breslin et al., 2022; Walton et al., 2023). Coaches who possess mental health literacy are better positioned to identify early warning signs and create supportive environments that promote psychological well-being.

The findings regarding stress management and resilience further support the multidimensional nature of psychological readiness. Coaching adolescent athletes often involves exposure to performance pressures, parental expectations, organizational demands, and interpersonal conflicts. According to the Cognitive Appraisal Theory of Stress proposed by Lazarus and Folkman (1984), individuals experience stress when perceived demands exceed available coping resources. Coaches with strong resilience and adaptive coping skills are more capable of managing these challenges effectively. Recent research indicates that resilient coaches exhibit greater emotional stability, decision-making effectiveness, and leadership performance during stressful situations (Fletcher & Sarkar, 2016; Sarkar & Page, 2022). Therefore, resilience should be regarded as a critical component of psychological readiness.

The positive relationship between coaches' psychological readiness and athlete outcomes observed in this review is consistent with Self-Determination Theory (SDT) proposed by Deci and Ryan (2000). SDT suggests that individuals achieve optimal motivation and psychological well-being when their needs for autonomy, competence, and relatedness are fulfilled. Psychologically prepared coaches are more likely to create environments that satisfy these needs through supportive communication, individualized feedback, and athlete-centered coaching practices. The findings indicate that psychologically ready coaches contribute to increased athlete motivation (84%), enhanced self-confidence (76%), improved psychological well-being (72%), and greater sport commitment (72%). These outcomes are consistent with previous studies demonstrating the positive influence of need-supportive coaching on athlete motivation and mental health (Ryan & Deci, 2020; Curran et al., 2021).

The review also supports the Positive Youth Development (PYD) framework, which conceptualizes sport as a context for fostering competence, confidence, connection, character, and caring among young people (Lerner et al., 2018). The findings reveal that coaches who demonstrate psychological readiness contribute not only to athletic performance but also to broader developmental outcomes. Through emotionally supportive and athlete-centered coaching practices, coaches facilitate personal growth, social competence, resilience, and psychological well-being. These findings reinforce previous research suggesting that effective coaching should prioritize holistic athlete development rather than exclusively focusing on competitive success (Holt et al., 2017; Turnnidge et al., 2019).

Furthermore, the interdisciplinary perspective adopted in this review aligns with Ecological Systems Theory (Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 2006), which emphasizes the interconnected influence of family, school, sport organizations, and sociocultural environments on athlete development. Psychological readiness enables coaches to navigate these complex ecological



systems and effectively collaborate with parents, educators, sport administrators, and healthcare professionals. Such collaboration is particularly important during adolescence, a developmental period characterized by multiple transitions and psychosocial challenges.

Overall, the findings demonstrate that coaches' psychological readiness constitutes a fundamental competency in contemporary youth sport environments. Emotional intelligence, communication competence, coach-athlete relationship quality, transformational leadership, mental health literacy, and resilience collectively contribute to effective athlete management and positive developmental outcomes. These findings suggest that coach education programs should expand beyond technical and tactical training to incorporate psychological competencies, leadership development, emotional regulation, and mental health awareness. By doing so, coaches will be better equipped to address the complex developmental needs of adolescent athletes and foster environments that support both performance excellence and psychological well-being.

## CONCLUSION

This interdisciplinary literature review demonstrates that psychological readiness is a fundamental competency for coaches in managing adolescent athletes, extending beyond technical, tactical, and physical expertise. Based on the synthesis of 25 peer-reviewed studies published between 2015 and 2025, six primary dimensions of psychological readiness were identified: emotional intelligence (88%), communication competence (84%), coach-athlete relationship quality (80%), transformational leadership (72%), mental health literacy (64%), and stress management and resilience (60%). These findings indicate that psychologically prepared coaches are better equipped to address the complex developmental, emotional, and social needs of adolescent athletes. From a conceptual perspective, the findings are strongly supported by Self-Determination Theory, Emotional Intelligence Theory, Coach-Athlete Relationship Theory, Positive Youth Development Theory, Transformational Leadership Theory, Mental Health Literacy Theory, and Ecological Systems Theory. Collectively, these theories explain how coaches' psychological competencies contribute to creating supportive, motivating, and developmentally appropriate sporting environments.

Empirically, the review revealed that coaches' psychological readiness is consistently associated with positive athlete outcomes, including increased motivation (84%), enhanced self-confidence (76%), improved psychological well-being (72%), greater sport commitment (72%), reduced competitive anxiety (68%), and lower burnout risk (60%). These results suggest that psychological readiness directly influences both athletic performance and holistic youth development. Therefore, psychological readiness should be recognized as a core component of coach education and professional development programs. Future coaching preparation should integrate psychological skills training, emotional intelligence development, leadership education, mental health literacy, and relationship-building competencies to ensure that coaches can effectively support adolescent athletes in achieving both sporting excellence and long-term psychological well-being.

## REFERENCES

Appleton, P. R., Ntoumanis, N., Quested, E., Viladrich, C., & Duda, J. L. (2016). Initial validation of the coach-created empowering and disempowering motivational climate

questionnaire (EDMCQ-C). *Psychology of Sport and Exercise*, 22, 53–65.  
<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.psychsport.2015.05.008>

Bass, B. M., & Riggio, R. E. (2006). *Transformational leadership* (2nd ed.). Lawrence Erlbaum Associates. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781410617095>

Breslin, G., Shannon, S., Haughey, T., Donnelly, P., & Leavey, G. (2022). A systematic review of interventions to increase awareness of mental health and well-being in athletes, coaches and officials. *Systematic Reviews*, 11(1), 1–20.  
<https://doi.org/10.1186/s13643-022-01932-3>

Bronfenbrenner, U., & Morris, P. A. (2006). The bioecological model of human development. In W. Damon & R. M. Lerner (Eds.), *Handbook of Child Psychology* (6th ed., pp. 793–828). Wiley. <https://doi.org/10.1002/9780470147658.chpsy0114>

Callow, N., Smith, M. J., Hardy, L., Arthur, C. A., & Hardy, J. (2009). Measurement of transformational leadership and its relationship with team cohesion and performance level. *Journal of Applied Sport Psychology*, 21(4), 395–412.  
<https://doi.org/10.1080/10413200903204754>

Curran, T., Hill, A. P., Hall, H. K., & Jowett, G. E. (2021). Relationships between the coach-created motivational climate and athlete burnout: A systematic review and meta-analysis. *Journal of Sport and Exercise Psychology*, 43(3), 173–189.  
<https://doi.org/10.1123/jsep.2020-0235>

Davis, L., Appleby, R., Davis, P., Wetherell, M., & Gustafsson, H. (2019). The role of coach-athlete relationship quality in team sport athletes' psychophysiological exhaustion. *Journal of Sports Sciences*, 37(17), 1987–1995.  
<https://doi.org/10.1080/02640414.2019.1594562>

Deci, E. L., & Ryan, R. M. (2000). The “what” and “why” of goal pursuits: Human needs and the self-determination of behavior. *Psychological Inquiry*, 11(4), 227–268.  
[https://doi.org/10.1207/S15327965PLI1104\\_01](https://doi.org/10.1207/S15327965PLI1104_01)

Fletcher, D., & Sarkar, M. (2016). Mental fortitude training: An evidence-based approach to developing psychological resilience for sustained success. *Journal of Sport Psychology in Action*, 7(3), 135–157. <https://doi.org/10.1080/21520704.2016.1255496>

Goleman, D. (1995). *Emotional intelligence: Why it can matter more than IQ*. Bantam Books.  
<https://books.google.com/books?id=xNYP42gRjJUC>

Holt, N. L., Neely, K. C., Slater, L. G., Camiré, M., Côté, J., Fraser-Thomas, J., MacDonald, D., Strachan, L., & Tamminen, K. A. (2017). A grounded theory of positive youth development through sport. *International Review of Sport and Exercise Psychology*, 10(1), 1–49. <https://doi.org/10.1080/1750984X.2016.1180704>

Isoard-Gauthier, S., Guillet-Descas, E., & Gustafsson, H. (2019). Athlete burnout and the risk of dropout among young elite athletes. *The Sport Psychologist*, 33(3), 1–11.  
<https://doi.org/10.1123/tsp.2018-0113>

Jorm, A. F. (2012). Mental health literacy: Empowering the community to take action for better mental health. *American Psychologist*, 67(3), 231–243.  
<https://doi.org/10.1037/a0025957>

- Jowett, S. (2007). Interdependence analysis and the 3+1Cs in the coach-athlete relationship. In S. Jowett & D. Lavallee (Eds.), *Social Psychology in Sport* (pp. 15–27). Human Kinetics. <https://us.humankinetics.com>
- Jowett, S., & Shanmugam, V. (2016). Relational coaching in sport: Its psychological underpinnings and practical effectiveness. In R. Schinke, K. McGannon, & B. Smith (Eds.), *Routledge International Handbook of Sport Psychology* (pp. 471–484). Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315777054>
- Knight, C. J., Harwood, C. G., & Gould, D. (2018). Sport psychology for young athletes. In D. Hackfort & R. Schinke (Eds.), *The Routledge International Encyclopedia of Sport and Exercise Psychology* (pp. 426–438). Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315187259>
- Laborde, S., Guillén, F., & Watson, M. (2016). Trait emotional intelligence and athlete performance: A meta-analysis. *Psychology of Sport and Exercise*, 26, 37–47. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.psychsport.2016.05.010>
- Lerner, R. M., Lerner, J. V., Bowers, E. P., & Geldhof, G. J. (2018). Positive youth development and relational-developmental-systems. In W. Damon & R. Lerner (Eds.), *Handbook of Child Psychology and Developmental Science*. Wiley. <https://doi.org/10.1002/9781119171492.wecad254>
- Madigan, D. J., Gustafsson, H., Smith, A., Raedeke, T., & Hill, A. P. (2021). Traditional and Bayesian meta-analysis of athlete burnout research. *Psychology of Sport and Exercise*, 52, 101817. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.psychsport.2020.101817>
- Mazzer, K. R., & Rickwood, D. J. (2015). Teachers' role breadth and perceived efficacy in supporting student mental health. *Advances in School Mental Health Promotion*, 8(1), 29–41. <https://doi.org/10.1080/1754730X.2014.978119>
- Nicholls, A. R., Levy, A. R., Carson, F., Thompson, M. A., & Perry, J. L. (2017). The applicability of self-regulation theories in sport. *Psychology of Sport and Exercise*, 31, 1–15. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.psychsport.2017.03.005>
- Page, M. J., McKenzie, J. E., Bossuyt, P. M., Boutron, I., Hoffmann, T. C., Mulrow, C. D., et al. (2021). The PRISMA 2020 statement: An updated guideline for reporting systematic reviews. *BMJ*, 372, n71. <https://doi.org/10.1136/bmj.n71>
- Ryan, R. M., & Deci, E. L. (2020). Intrinsic and extrinsic motivation from a self-determination theory perspective: Definitions, theory, practices, and future directions. *Contemporary Educational Psychology*, 61, 101860. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.cedpsych.2020.101860>
- Sarkar, M., & Page, A. E. (2022). Developing resilience in high-performance sport: A contemporary review. *International Review of Sport and Exercise Psychology*, 15(1), 1–29. <https://doi.org/10.1080/1750984X.2020.1838667>
- Stambulova, N., & Wylleman, P. (2019). Psychology of athletes' dual careers: A state-of-the-art critical review. *Psychology of Sport and Exercise*, 42, 74–88. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.psychsport.2018.11.013>
- Turnnidge, J., & Côté, J. (2018). Applying transformational leadership theory to coaching research in youth sport. *International Journal of Sport and Exercise Psychology*, 16(3), 327–342. <https://doi.org/10.1080/1612197X.2016.1189948>



- Turnnidge, J., Evans, B., Vierimaa, M., Allan, V., & Côté, J. (2019). Coaching for positive youth development in sport: A systematic review. *Sport, Exercise, and Performance Psychology*, 8(1), 36–51. <https://doi.org/10.1037/spy0000137>
- Vella, S. A., Oades, L. G., & Crowe, T. P. (2013). The relationship between coach leadership, athlete well-being, and developmental outcomes. *Journal of Applied Sport Psychology*, 25(4), 549–564. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10413200.2012.745703>
- Wagstaff, C. R. D. (2017). *The organizational psychology of sport: Key issues and practical applications*. Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315768199>
- Walton, C. C., Rice, S., Gwyther, K., & Purcell, R. (2023). Mental health in youth athletes: Current evidence and future directions. *Sports Medicine*, 53(4), 721–736. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s40279-022-01805-2>