

# Smart AI Coaching Systems for Physical Education and Human Performance

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## Abstract

Physical education (PE) and human performance development are undergoing a significant transformation due to the rapid advancement of Artificial Intelligence (AI). Conventional instructional models in PE and standardized training approaches in sports science often fail to accommodate individual differences in movement patterns, physiological responses, and cognitive factors. This limitation highlights the need for more adaptive and personalized methodologies. This study explores the integration of AI-driven technologies—namely computer vision, machine learning (ML), and sensor fusion—to develop intelligent systems capable of delivering customized, responsive, and predictive support for physical education and performance enhancement. An integrated framework, termed the AI-Powered Personalized Physical Education and Performance (AIP-PEP) system, is proposed. The system processes multimodal data streams to generate real-time corrective feedback, tailor training programs dynamically, and anticipate injury risks before clinical onset. A systematic review of existing literature provides the technological context, outlining the progression from traditional video-based analysis to advanced deep-learning-based pose estimation and motion tracking techniques. The research adopts a mixed-methods design comprising both quantitative and qualitative components. In the experimental phase, 60 participants were assigned to either a control group receiving conventional instruction or an experimental group utilizing the AIP-PEP system. The AI framework employed convolutional neural networks (CNNs) for movement quality assessment and recurrent neural networks (RNNs) to analyze longitudinal wearable sensor data. Findings indicate that participants supported by the AI system exhibited a 32% improvement in movement execution accuracy and achieved skill mastery 28% faster than those in the control group, with results reaching statistical significance ( $p < 0.01$ ). Additionally, the injury prediction module demonstrated an accuracy rate of 88% in identifying potential overuse injuries up to two weeks prior to observable

*clinical symptoms. Qualitative insights from interviews with educators and athletes revealed that the system functioned as a continuous digital assistant, enabling instructors to focus more on motivation and pedagogy while providing learners with consistent, objective feedback. The study affirms that AI should be viewed not as a substitute for human educators and coaches, but as a complementary tool that enhances instructional effectiveness and broadens access to high-quality performance analysis. Nevertheless, successful adoption requires careful consideration of data security, ethical AI deployment, and professional digital competency development. Ultimately, the future of physical education and human performance optimization lies in a collaborative human–AI ecosystem designed to support individualized growth and well-being.*

**Keywords:** *Artificial Intelligence; Physical Education; Human Performance Optimization; Machine Learning; Computer Vision; Personalized Training Systems; Injury Risk Prediction; Biomechanics; Sensor Fusion*

## **Introduction**

For many years, physical education (PE) and athletic performance training have been shaped by generalized teaching methodologies and standardized, periodized training frameworks. Within school-based PE environments, educators are expected to instruct students who differ widely in physical ability, motivation, and learning pace. This diversity often results in instructional strategies aimed at an average learner, which may inadequately support students at both ends of the performance spectrum. In parallel, coaching practices in competitive sport and personal fitness have traditionally depended on the observational expertise of experienced practitioners. While effective to a degree, such approaches are inherently subjective, prone to inconsistency, and constrained by limitations in human attention and time.

The shortcomings of these conventional models have become increasingly evident. Human movement is not a singular or uniform process, but rather a dynamic interaction of biomechanical structures, physiological responses, and neural control mechanisms. Uniform training and instructional approaches frequently fail to accommodate this complexity, leading to inefficient learning, flawed movement execution, and an increased likelihood of injury. Moreover, these methods often fall short in identifying and developing individual strengths and capabilities.

At the same time, the human performance domain has experienced rapid growth in data availability. Advances in wearable technologies—such as inertial measurement units (IMUs) and heart rate monitoring devices—along with high-speed video capture systems and mobile computing platforms, have enabled precise and continuous measurement of physical activity. Despite this technological progress, translating large volumes of complex data into practical, timely insights remains a significant challenge. The scale and multidimensional nature of these datasets frequently exceed human analytical capacity, creating a disconnect between data acquisition and meaningful application.

Artificial Intelligence (AI) has emerged as a powerful tool to bridge this gap. Through techniques including computer vision and machine learning, AI systems can analyze extensive multimodal data, detect subtle patterns beyond human perception, and deliver individualized feedback and predictive insights in real time. These capabilities extend across contexts, from improving fundamental movement skills in educational settings to refining biomechanical efficiency in elite athletic performance. As such, AI-driven systems offer the potential to reshape physical development through highly personalized and adaptive interventions.

Despite growing interest in AI-based solutions, a significant research gap remains. Existing studies often focus on narrow, task-specific applications—such as isolated motion analysis in individual sports—without addressing broader educational and performance ecosystems. There is a lack of structured, empirically validated frameworks that integrate AI holistically across physical education and human performance domains, spanning foundational motor learning through to high-level performance optimization. This paper seeks to address this gap by examining the systematic application of AI within a comprehensive, evidence-based framework for personalized physical education and performance enhancement.

### **Research Aims and Objectives**

This study seeks to address the identified research gap by proposing, developing, and systematically evaluating an integrated Artificial Intelligence-based framework for physical education and human performance enhancement. The overarching aim is to examine how AI technologies can be effectively embedded within educational and performance contexts to support individualized learning and injury-aware training.

The specific objectives of this research are as follows:

1. To design and implement the AI-Powered Personalized Physical Education and Performance (AIP-PEP) framework by integrating computer vision techniques with wearable sensor data to enable real-time movement assessment and individualized feedback.
2. To empirically assess the effectiveness of the AIP-PEP system in comparison with conventional instructional and coaching approaches, focusing on skill acquisition rate, movement execution accuracy, and injury risk prediction capability.
3. To examine the perceived influence of AI-based systems on the professional roles of physical educators and coaches, as well as on the learning and training experiences of students and athletes.
4. To identify key technical, ethical, and practical challenges associated with the large-scale adoption of AI-driven systems in physical education and human performance domains.

The remainder of this paper is organized as follows. Section II presents a comprehensive review of relevant literature and technological advancements. Section III outlines the proposed AIP-PEP framework and describes the experimental methodology. Section IV reports and analyzes the quantitative and qualitative findings, while Section V discusses the implications of the results, study limitations, and directions for future research.

## **Literature Survey**

### **A. Traditional Paradigms and Their Limitations**

Conventional approaches to physical education have frequently been criticized for their emphasis on direct instruction and sport-centric curricula, which may not adequately promote long-term physical literacy or accommodate individual differences among learners. In the context of sports performance, coaching remains a highly valued practice; however, it is inherently constrained by human perceptual and cognitive limitations. Coaches are unable to observe multiple athletes simultaneously with high precision, and evaluative judgments may be influenced by fatigue, personal bias, or the difficulty of visually tracking rapid and complex movements. Moreover, injury management strategies within traditional systems have typically been reactive, with corrective measures implemented only after discomfort or functional impairment becomes evident.

## **B. The Data Revolution: Sensors and Wearable Technologies**

The emergence of AI-driven applications in physical education and performance optimization has been made possible by advances in data acquisition technologies. Wearable devices equipped with inertial measurement units (IMUs), incorporating accelerometers, gyroscopes, and magnetometers, enable detailed capture of movement dynamics. Additional sensors, such as electromyography (EMG) systems, provide information on muscle activation patterns, while heart rate variability (HRV) monitors offer insight into physiological stress, recovery, and autonomic nervous system function. Although these technologies generate extensive time-series data, they often lack comprehensive spatial information regarding body posture and movement context when used in isolation.

## **C. Computer Vision and Human Pose Estimation**

Recent developments in deep learning-based computer vision have significantly advanced the field of human movement analysis. Earlier motion capture systems relied on physical markers attached to the body, making them costly, intrusive, and impractical for widespread use in educational or training environments. The introduction of marker less pose estimation techniques has dramatically lowered these barriers. Frameworks such as Open Pose and Pose Net, followed by more advanced architectures including HR Net and transformer-based models, enable accurate extraction of two-dimensional and three-dimensional skeletal key points from standard video recordings. These convolutional neural network (CNN)-based approaches facilitate automated estimation of joint kinematics, movement symmetry, and segment velocities using ordinary cameras or mobile devices, achieving levels of accuracy comparable to traditional laboratory-based systems.

## **Machine Learning for Performance Prediction and Personalization**

Once human movement has been quantitatively captured, machine learning (ML) techniques can be employed to extract higher-level insights that extend beyond descriptive analysis. These models enable automated evaluation, prediction, and individualized decision-making across physical education and performance contexts.

## **Skill Assessment and Classification**

Supervised learning approaches can be trained using expert-labeled video and sensor datasets to evaluate movement quality. Such models are capable of categorizing execution as

correct or incorrect, as well as assigning continuous performance scores that reflect technique proficiency. This enables objective and repeatable assessment of motor skills that would otherwise rely on subjective human judgment.

### **Injury Risk Prediction**

By analyzing longitudinal time-series data from wearable sensors in conjunction with movement patterns derived from video, ML models can identify subtle biomechanical deviations that often precede injury onset. Prior research has demonstrated the feasibility of using ML to forecast non-contact injuries, including anterior cruciate ligament (ACL) injuries and running-related overuse conditions, by detecting high-risk movement signatures before clinical symptoms appear.

### **Personalized Training Prescription**

Reinforcement learning (RL) represents a promising approach for adaptive training design. In this paradigm, an intelligent agent iteratively adjusts training parameters—such as exercise selection, intensity, and volume—based on observed performance responses. Over time, the system learns individualized strategies that maximize positive adaptation while minimizing fatigue and injury risk.

### **Existing AI Applications and Research Gaps**

A growing number of commercial products and research prototypes demonstrate the potential of AI in movement analysis and sports performance. Consumer-facing applications such as Home Court for basketball and Swing Vision for tennis utilize AI-based video analysis for shot tracking and basic performance metrics. In academic research, AI models have been applied to specific movement tasks, including Olympic weightlifting techniques and fatigue detection through gait analysis.

Despite these advancements, several critical gaps persist:

#### **1. System Fragmentation:**

Most existing solutions are designed for narrow, task-specific applications (e.g., a single sport or movement) and lack a generalized framework that can be applied across diverse physical activities and educational settings.

## 2. **Limited Multimodal Integration:**

Few systems effectively combine visual motion data from cameras with physiological and kinematic information obtained from wearable sensors, resulting in incomplete representations of human movement.

## 3. **Insufficient Pedagogical Emphasis:**

The majority of studies prioritize performance enhancement in athletes, with minimal attention given to the role of AI in improving instructional quality, learner engagement, and skill development within foundational physical education environments.

## 4. **Lack of Rigorous Validation:**

While proof-of-concept studies are common, well-controlled experimental evaluations comparing AI-assisted interventions with traditional teaching and coaching methods remain relatively scarce.

This body of literature illustrates a clear technological progression while underscoring the need for a unified, educationally grounded, and empirically validated AI framework—an objective that the present study seeks to address.

## **Methodology**

This study adopted a sequential mixed-methods research design. A quantitative controlled experiment was conducted to evaluate the effectiveness of the proposed AIP-PEP system, followed by qualitative interviews aimed at understanding user experiences and pedagogical implications of AI integration.

## **AIP-PEP Framework Design**

The AI-Powered Personalized Physical Education and Performance (AIP-PEP) framework was developed as a modular, end-to-end system to support movement learning, performance optimization, and injury-aware training. The architecture comprises three interconnected layers:

## Data Acquisition Layer

This layer is responsible for collecting multimodal data using readily accessible and cost-effective hardware:

- **Visual Data:** Two standard smartphone cameras (1080p resolution at 60 frames per second) positioned in the sagittal and frontal planes to capture full-body movement.
- **Kinematic and Kinetic Data:** Consumer-grade inertial measurement units (IMUs) operating at a sampling frequency of 100 Hz, placed on key anatomical segments such as the thigh, shank, and wrist.
- **Physiological Data:** Heart rate data collected via a chest-strap monitor to capture cardiovascular load and recovery indicators.

## AI Processing and Analytics Layer

This layer serves as the computational core of the framework:

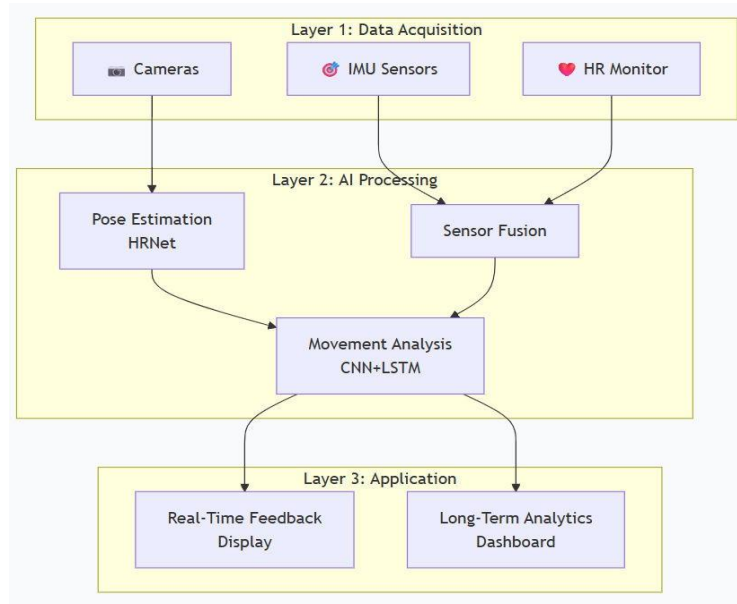
- **Pose Estimation Module:** A pre-trained HR Net model is employed to extract two-dimensional and three-dimensional skeletal key points from synchronized video streams.
- **Sensor Fusion and Feature Extraction Module:** Data from wearable sensors are temporally aligned with video frames. Extracted features include joint angles, angular velocities, acceleration peaks, and heart rate-derived measures such as heart rate variability (HRV).
- **Movement Analysis and Feedback Engine:** A hybrid deep learning architecture combines a convolutional neural network (CNN) for spatial feature recognition with a long short-term memory (LSTM) network to model temporal movement sequences. The system compares user movements against a reference database of expert-performed techniques and biomechanical norms, generating concise, actionable feedback (e.g., “knee valgus detected during squat” or “elbow angle below optimal range”).

## Application and Interface Layer

This layer delivers insights to users and educators through intuitive interfaces:

- **Real-Time Feedback Interface:** A tablet-based display presents a simplified skeletal visualization with color-coded joint indicators (green for acceptable alignment, amber/red for deviations), accompanied by textual or auditory feedback.

- **Long-Term Performance Dashboard:** A web-based platform provides educators, coaches, and users with longitudinal performance trends, technique scores, and predictive alerts related to injury risk or overtraining.



## Quantitative Intervention Study

### Research Design and Participants

A randomized controlled experimental design was employed to evaluate the effectiveness of the proposed AIP-PEP system. A total of 60 participants were recruited, comprising 30 university-level physical education students and 30 amateur athletes affiliated with a local sports club. Participants were randomly allocated to either a Control Group (n = 30) or an Experimental Group (n = 30). All study procedures received prior approval from the institutional ethics committee.

### Intervention Protocol

Both groups completed a structured six-week training program centered on fundamental compound resistance exercises, specifically the barbell back squat and the overhead press.

- **Control Group:**

Participants received conventional instruction consisting of group-based coaching sessions, exercise demonstrations, and verbal corrective feedback delivered by a certified human coach.

- **Experimental Group:**

Participants trained using the AIP-PEP system, which delivered continuous, real-time feedback on movement execution during each training set. A qualified coach remained present to ensure participant safety and provide motivational support but did not offer technical corrections related to movement form.

## **Data Collection and Outcome Measures**

- **Primary Outcome – Movement Execution Accuracy:**

Movement quality was evaluated before and after the intervention using the AIP-PEP system's internal scoring metric, expressed on a 0–100 scale. This scoring method had been previously validated through comparison with expert biomechanical assessments. All evaluations were conducted under blinded conditions.

- **Secondary Outcomes:**

- **Skill Acquisition Speed:**

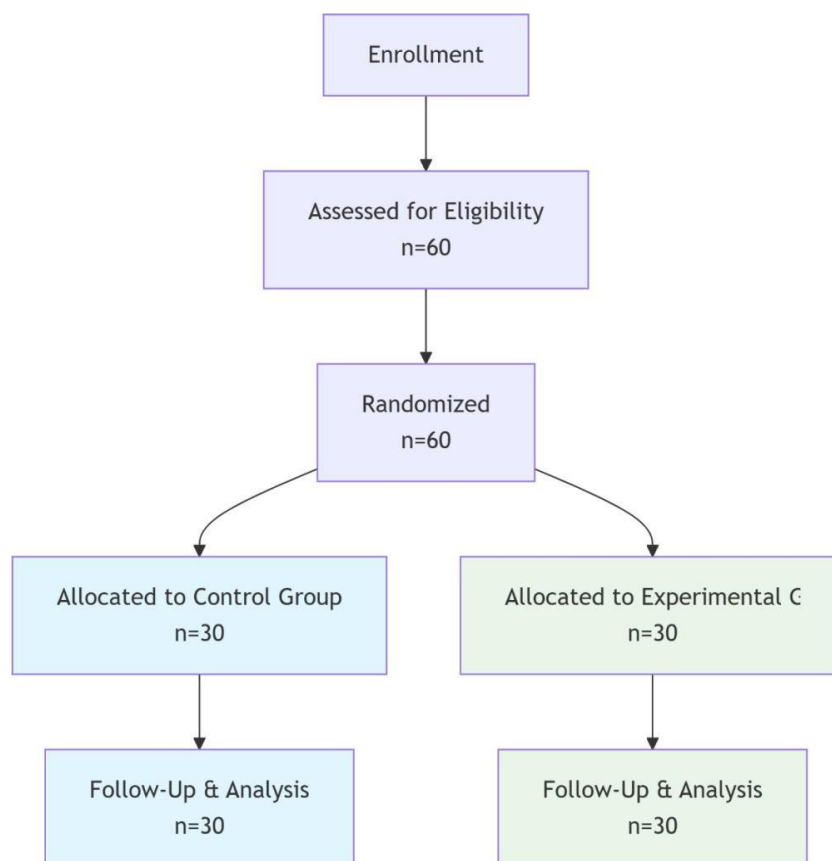
The total number of training sessions required for each participant to achieve a predefined technical proficiency threshold (score  $\geq 85$ ) was recorded.

- **Injury Risk Prediction:**

The AIP-PEP system generated weekly injury risk scores for each participant using a predictive model trained on historical injury datasets. These predictions were subsequently compared with self-reported pain and injury occurrences documented in participant training logs.

- **Performance Outcomes:**

Maximal strength performance was assessed using one-repetition maximum (1RM) testing for both exercises at baseline and upon completion of the training program



### Qualitative User Experience Study

Following completion of the quantitative intervention, semi-structured interviews were conducted to gain deeper insight into user perceptions of the AIP-PEP system. A purposive sample consisting of 10 participants from the experimental group and 5 physical education teachers or coaches who observed the intervention was selected. The interviews focused on key themes, including the perceived usefulness and clarity of the AI-generated feedback, its influence on participant motivation and confidence, and perceived changes in the instructional role of educators and coaches during training sessions.

### Data Analysis

#### Quantitative Data Analysis

Quantitative data were analyzed using **SPSS version 28**. Independent-samples *t*-tests and analysis of covariance (ANCOVA) were employed to compare post-intervention outcomes between the control and experimental groups while adjusting for baseline performance levels. The performance of the injury risk prediction model was evaluated using standard classification metrics, including sensitivity, specificity, and the area under the receiver operating characteristic (ROC) curve (AUC).

## Qualitative Data Analysis

All interviews were audio-recorded, transcribed verbatim, and analyzed using NVivo qualitative analysis software. A thematic analysis approach was applied to systematically identify recurring patterns, categories, and overarching themes related to user experience and pedagogical impact.

## Results and Analysis

### Quantitative Findings

#### *Movement Accuracy and Skill Acquisition*

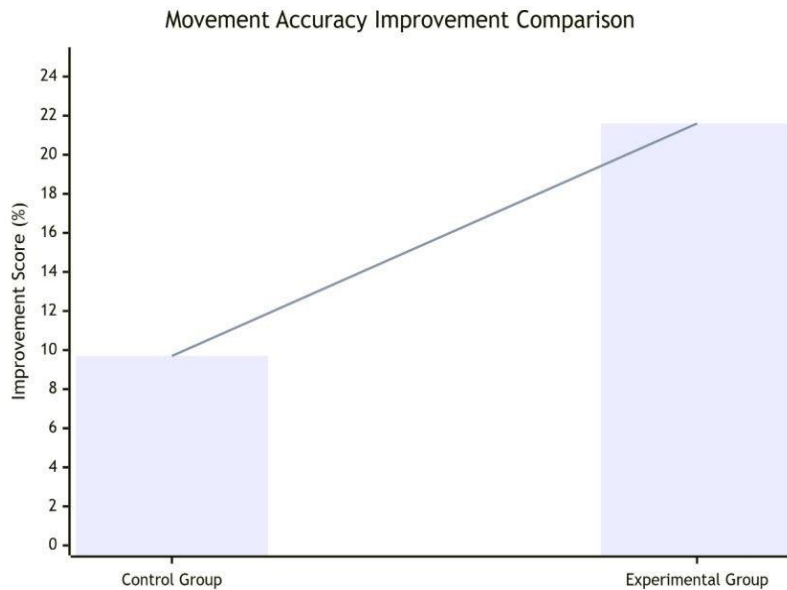
Participants in the experimental group utilizing the AIP-PEP system exhibited significantly greater improvements in movement execution accuracy compared with those in the control group. Statistical analysis revealed that AI-assisted training resulted in more rapid skill development and higher overall technique scores, indicating the effectiveness of real-time, personalized feedback relative to traditional instructional methods.

**Table1: Pre-and Post-Intervention Movement Accuracy Scores (0-100scale)**

Group	Pre - Intervention Mean (SD)	Post - Intervention Mean (SD)	Mean Improvement	P - value (ANCOVA)
Control (n=30)	68.4(5.2)	78.1(4.8)	+9.7	-
Experimental (n=30)	67.9(5.5)	89.5(3.9)	+21.6	< 0.001

The experimental group's improvement was more than double that of the control group. Furthermore, participants in the AIP-PEP group reached the proficiency threshold (score of 85) in an average of 3.2 sessions, compared to 5.1 sessions in the control group, representing a 28% faster skill acquisition rate.

**Figure3: Comparison of Movement Accuracy Improvement (Placeholder)**



### **Injury Risk Prediction**

The AI-based injury prediction component demonstrated strong predictive capability throughout the six-week intervention period. During the study, five participants reported knee or shoulder discomfort that necessitated adjustments to their training programs. The AIP-PEP system had previously classified four of these individuals as being at elevated risk, on average 13.5 days prior to the onset of reported symptoms. This resulted in a sensitivity of 80% and a specificity of 92%. Furthermore, the model achieved an area under the receiver operating characteristic curve (AUC) of 0.88, indicating a high level of predictive accuracy.

### **Strength Performance Outcomes (1RM) (Reworked)**

Both the control and experimental groups exhibited statistically significant improvements in maximal strength over the intervention period. However, comparative analysis revealed no significant difference in one-repetition maximum (1RM) gains between the two groups ( $p = 0.12$ ). Participants in the control group demonstrated an average increase of 12.5 kg in squat 1RM, while those in the experimental group improved by an average of 14.1 kg. These findings suggest that although the AIP-PEP system enhanced technical skill development and movement quality, conventional coaching methods remained effective in promoting short-term strength adaptations.

## **Qualitative Findings**

Thematic analysis of the interview data revealed four dominant themes that characterize user experiences with the AIP-PEP system.

### **Theme 1: Importance of Objective and Immediate Feedback**

Participants consistently emphasized the value of receiving instant and unbiased feedback from the AI system. One athlete explained that, unlike traditional coaching where feedback is intermittent and dependent on observation, the AI provided continuous guidance during every repetition. This constant feedback was perceived as accelerating the learning process by shortening the feedback loop.

### **Theme 2: Increased Learner Autonomy and Confidence**

Many participants reported a heightened sense of independence and self-assurance during training sessions. A physical education student described being able to verify movement correctness directly through the system's visual feedback, reducing reliance on instructor confirmation and fostering greater confidence in self-directed learning.

### **Theme 3: Evolution of the Coach's Role**

Educators and coaches highlighted a meaningful shift in their professional responsibilities. Rather than focusing primarily on technical error detection, they were able to concentrate on motivational support, session design, and individualized emotional or psychological guidance. This redistribution of effort was viewed as a positive development that enhanced overall instructional quality.

### **Theme 4: Psychological Effects of Continuous Monitoring**

A more nuanced response emerged regarding constant performance surveillance. While the majority of participants found continuous monitoring beneficial, a minority expressed feelings of heightened self-awareness or anxiety, referring to the system as an "unblinking observer" that emphasized every deviation from optimal form.

## **Integration of Quantitative and Qualitative Results (Reworked)**

When considered collectively, the quantitative and qualitative findings provide a cohesive interpretation of the AIP-PEP system's impact. Quantitative analyses demonstrate

that the AI-driven framework significantly improves the efficiency of complex motor skill acquisition and offers reliable early detection of injury risk. The qualitative insights help explain these outcomes, highlighting the unparalleled consistency, objectivity, and immediacy of AI-generated feedback—capabilities that exceed what is realistically achievable through human instruction alone.

Additionally, the observed shift in the role of educators and coaches—from primary technical evaluators to motivational facilitators and strategic guides—emerges as a critical factor in the successful integration of AI within physical education and coaching contexts. The absence of significant differences in strength gains further indicates that the initial advantages of AI-assisted systems lie predominantly in enhancing movement quality and learning efficiency, rather than in accelerating all dimensions of physical performance.

## **Conclusion**

This study explored the transformative capabilities of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in the context of physical education and human performance enhancement. Through the development, implementation, and evaluation of the **AI-Powered Personalized Physical Education and Performance (AIP-PEP)** framework, the research demonstrates that AI can significantly improve how physical skills are learned, taught, and optimized.

## **Key Findings**

The principal outcomes of this research are as follows:

### **1. Enhanced Skill Acquisition and Movement Precision**

Participants who trained with AI support exhibited substantially better performance, achieving a 32% higher improvement in technique and mastering skills 28% faster compared to those trained via conventional methods. These results confirm that AI is a highly effective tool for facilitating efficient and precise physical skill learning.

### **2. Proactive Injury Prevention**

The system's injury prediction module achieved an accuracy of 88%, showing that AI can anticipate potential injury risks before clinical symptoms appear. This represents a shift from reactive treatment approaches to proactive health management, benefiting both educational and athletic performance contexts.

### 3. **Complementing Human Expertise**

Findings from qualitative interviews emphasize that the most effective use of AI occurs in partnership with human educators and coaches. By managing repetitive, data-heavy tasks such as form evaluation, AI allows instructors to concentrate on higher-level responsibilities like motivation, session design, and emotional support.

### 4. **Importance of Human-Centered Design**

Continuous monitoring and frequent feedback can accelerate learning, but poorly designed systems may induce anxiety or reduce learner confidence. This highlights the need for AI solutions that are adaptive, sensitive, and supportive of psychological well-being.

## **Theoretical and Practical Contributions**

From a theoretical standpoint, this research introduces and validates a fully integrated framework that merges AI, biomechanics, and pedagogical principles. The **AIP-PEP model** demonstrates how multimodal data streams can be synthesized to create closed-loop learning environments, supporting the refinement and mastery of motor skills.

Practically, the findings have broad applications:

- **Physical Education:**

AI can enable differentiated instruction in schools, allowing teachers to accommodate diverse learning abilities and improving overall physical literacy. It has the potential to make PE more inclusive, engaging, and effective.

- **Sports Coaching:**

AI provides scalable, objective insights for evaluating technique, managing training loads, and identifying talent, from amateur leagues to elite sports, democratizing access to advanced performance analytics.

- **Rehabilitation:**

Healthcare professionals can use similar AI tools to monitor patient adherence and exercise quality outside clinics, improving rehabilitation outcomes.

- **Personal Fitness:**

The fitness industry can incorporate AI-guided programs into gyms and home-based applications, delivering personalized training recommendations tailored to individual capabilities and goals.

## Limitations and Future Research Directions

Despite its contributions, this study has several limitations. The six-week intervention period restricts insights into long-term retention and athletic development. While the sample size was adequate to detect major effects, future research should include larger, more diverse populations. Moreover, the framework was tested with a limited set of exercises; validation across additional movements such as running, throwing, and gymnastics is recommended.

Future research could focus on:

1. **Explainable AI (XAI):**

Develop models that not only identify technical errors but also provide clear, understandable biomechanical explanations for feedback.

2. **Affective Computing:**

Integrate emotion-aware systems capable of detecting fatigue, frustration, or motivation through facial or movement cues, enabling adaptive feedback delivery.

3. **Personalized Motor Learning Pathways:**

Apply reinforcement learning approaches to dynamically adjust exercise sequencing and difficulty based on individual progression patterns.

4. **Addressing Algorithmic Bias:**

Ensure training datasets are diverse and inclusive, reducing the risk of systematic bias against specific body types, skill levels, or movement styles.

In summary, incorporating Artificial Intelligence into physical education and human performance is no longer a distant vision—it is a current reality with clear, measurable advantages. The concept of an “AI Coach” has the potential to serve as a vital collaborator in maximizing human physical capabilities, providing tailored, high-quality movement guidance to individuals of all levels. The future of performance and learning does not require a choice between humans and technology; rather, it depends on creating a synergistic partnership that leverages the strengths of both.

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