

IAAF COACH EDUCATION PROGRAMME: CURRENT CHALLENGES AND FUTURE DIRECTIONS

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Abstract

The research article is a follow up of the previous article, which has been published in the *New Studies in Athletics* journal (24 (2): 55-61/2009). The study focuses on the education of coaches. While highlighting the major perspective of coach education the research is providing the knowledge related to the field. **The** alternative directions have been provided which are built in the critical review of coach education studies and field observation. In this research secondary method and interviews are used. It focuses on the discussion of development and importance of coach education programs. This article criticizes the current IAAF Coaches education and Certification System and it.

Keywords: Athletic, Education, Perspective, Directions, Coaches, System.

1. INTRODUCTION:

The successful coaches are those who learned new skill and implement them, the who brought flexibility and remove old ways and brought revolution in the field, those who have potential to accept criticism and the one who can decisively appraise themselves (Martens, 2004). According to coach education studies, the content provided to the coaches is substantial and instructive knowledge base. Through the improvements in these programs, it helps to ensure that those who are certified are competent and effective (Bryan et al., 2005; Wright et al., 2007).

The standards of the programs related to coaching education and certification needs to be ensured that they are providing qualified and equipped sports coaches at all levels of sport systems. (Misener and Danylchuk, 2009) To ensure on-going training and education, successful coaches must spend time on formal coach education that includes accreditation programmes. (Young *et al.*, 2009)

Review of Literature

The coach education programs should be designed in such a way that it develops inclusive, ethical and effective coaches and this should be the aim of the program. (Bale 2007) The plan of coach education program should provide learning modes and equipment to the coaches' along with competencies. Further, the programs should be designed in such a way that the coaches assist the athletes and encourages the sportsperson to achieve their desire goals. While keeping in mind the potential role of the coach and effective work of the coach the context of the programs should be designed.

Moving to the content of coach education activities, Trudel and Gilbert (2006) argue that generally most of the coach education programmes include three components: (a) coaching theory; (b) sport-specific techniques and tactics and (c) coaching practice. A multilevel system designed around a novice-expert coaching continuum, usually comprising three, four or five levels. The studies are conducted to create a framework to understand the multiple knowledge related to this field by using qualitative theories. (Walsh 2007)

In this study, Walsh outlined the application knowledge for expert coaches: sport discipline knowledge, pedagogy knowledge, personal knowledge and contextual knowledge. He also compared the knowledge structures provided in old and new version of coach education. While old coach education only provide sport discipline and pedagogy knowledge, new coach education provides all four types of knowledge. Cassidy *et al.* (2004) suggest another kind of content knowledge that coaches need to be aware of if they are to become quality coaches.

The framework is deliberately designed, it is not only specific for sports and coaching but it also covers generics. Therefore, it can be applied to a vast range of sports and activities. It is clear from the above arguments that a coach's content knowledge is multifaceted. (Campbell, 1992; Cassidy *et al.*, 2004; Zhong, 2009) Coach education activities (as a part of a coach education system) provide wide range of skills to the coaches. Coach education program should consider those coaches who fulfill their roles. A framework should be designed in which real-life coaching problems and their needs should be structured. The programs should be designed in such a way that it

provides learning opportunities to the coaches, where they can share their knowledge and create context. They should design more like cooperative courses instead of less like knowledge transfer courses. (Trudel and Gillbert, 2006)

Coach education program should be viewed as a part of vibrant collection of an education program, which can develop skills, knowledge, and value, which is associated with the effective coaching of athletes. The preparation of the coaches should be ensured and the enjoyment, safety and skill development of all the athletes should be guaranteed. (NCACE, 2009)

Coach education programmes should be structured the lines related to competencies (Lyle, 2002; Jones, 2006; Trudel and Gilbert, 2006). In addition, coaching education schemes should be designed with number of considerations in mind. For example (according to Campbell, 1992):

- The amount of time and resources available for the coaches working on a voluntary and professional basis.
- The various sports needs.
- The different levels of coaching expertise and experience needed to service sport in the community and at an international level.
- The type of delivery best suited to the geographical spread of the population.
- The quality control mechanism needed to ensure that standards are maintained across the country.
- The need for the accreditation of individual coaches to ensure that there is equality between sports and a career pathway for coaches.

2. METHODS

The first source of data in this study are+ the analysis of various documents collected, which is a technique that relies heavily on written materials as sources of information (Yoddumnern-Attig, *et al.*, 1993; Yin, 2003). In this study, the data collected is the information about coach education systems such as history, policies and strategies, the system's objectives,

support of coaches, codes of ethics for coaches describing expectations, obligations and rights, accreditation systems, training courses, training in educational institutions, who are responsible for the system, modes of delivery and coaches' problems. (Krishna, 2012)

In addition, the research journal is one of the most important tools, which are used in this study. It was used to record observations, events, interpersonal exchanges, developments, setbacks and reflections throughout the course of the study. It helped me to gather data by watching behavior or events, or noting physical characteristics in their natural setting. (CDC, 2008) the researcher decided to use the research journal to accompany other methods in this study because the researcher planned to evaluate coach education activities and it is the best and most valuable method of collecting data about teaching programmes. (Taylor and Steele, 1996)

The research journal does not rely only on people's willingness or ability to provide information. It allowed everyone to see directly what people do and record it, rather than relying totally on what people says. (CDC, 2008) To deepen the understanding of the realities in the case study situation, researcher took advantage of opportunities, which would take the researcher inside coach education situations, courses, coaching sessions and meetings. The researcher recorded notes in different situations during the field research journeys. The researcher attended coach education activities during the case studies, which were provided by sports national federations and other sports organizations. As part of the researcher persuasion of international insights into coach education, the researcher also kept Field Journal Notes (FJN) of related activities.

Interviews are also an important source of data. Interviews were conducted with the people who are responsible for coach education as well as sports coaches.

IAAF Coach Education Programme

The effective trainings conducted by the several programs are an important part in providing quality coaching to the participants. The sports organization should improve the quality and reliability of coach education and it should meet the global standards. The sports organizations are responsible for ensuring the high quality. Many countries have developed their own coach education programs and systems. For instance, the international sports federations have provided the information to the coach education programs in order to improve the knowledge of the coaches. Further, the education related to coaching is provided in one continent, as the coaching qualification system is in Europe. (Duffy, 2009) The five levels of coaching training in the European Structure were produced in 1999, a framework that recognizes the qualifications for the requirement for the free movement of labors in European countries. (Bale, 2007) A framework for the coach education is still being developed for the Africa. (SCSA, 2010) Moreover, sometime coach education system is provided in a single country for the local coaches. Some of the countries do not have structured coach education program and an undersized countries adopted the foreign coach education programme in improve the current condition of their coaches.

These programs follow various endorsements to structure levels. The programs providers are constantly upgrading the structures according to the demands of the coaches and their sports.

Some international federations who were following the 3-level structured have changed their pattern to a 5-level structure. The 5-level structure is advantageous as it provide maximize opportunities to the qualified coaches at all levels of programs related to sports. The levels are extended from the kids' level to elite level.

IAAF operates coaches' education and certification system. First, it had had 3-level structured but from 2007, CECS featured five levels in seven languages. For every level, a standard syllabus, IAAF provides necessary learning material and qualified lectures. The translations of all material into the languages of CECS are available in English, Arabic, Russian, Chinese, Spanish, French and Portuguese. IAAF and the areas associated with it financially support the system at higher level. The process of CECS is coordinated by the members of IAAf and RDCs. (IAAF, 2013; RDC Cairo, 2013)

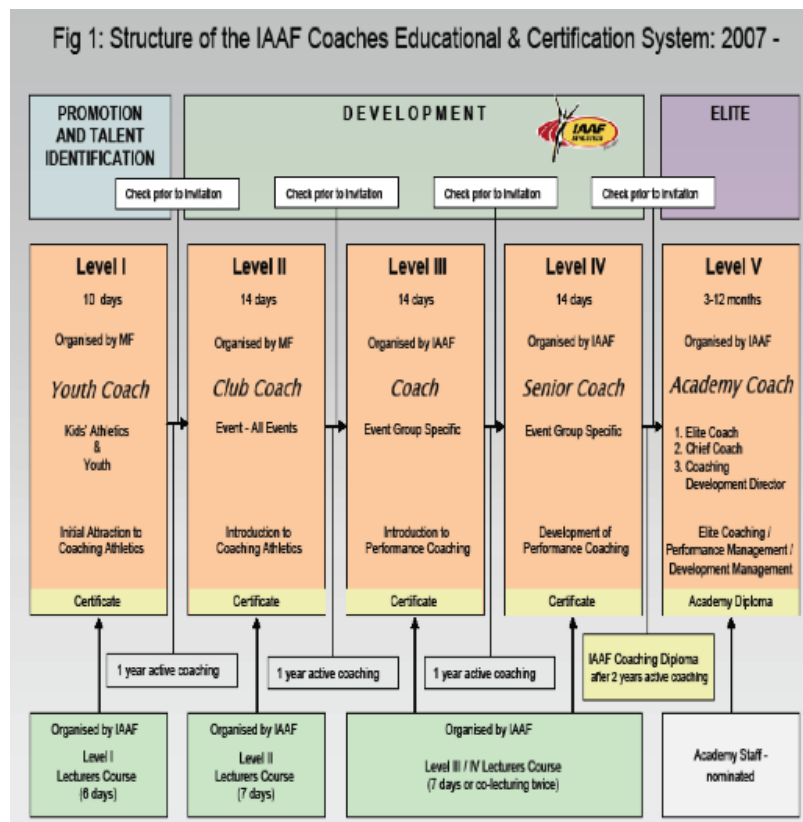


Figure 1: Structure of the International Association of Athletics Federations (IAAF) for Coaches Educational and Certification System

Source: Adapted from IAAF (2013)

System like these has the higher level of impact on the development of sports, through the coaches around the world. This is beneficial where they are provided with an opportunity to increase their access regarding courses and continue their education. However, these international programs are considered as one of the great example of global attention towards the

coach education. One of the biggest advantages of such programs is that they brought numerous coaches belonging from different nations on one platform. This helps them to share ideas with each other. This is the reason that they perpetuate the globalization and centralization of theories and practices related to coaching. It is very difficult for the coaches of developing countries regarding the updating of the knowledge about the programs that they are perfect in exchanging the ideas.

In terms of critical evaluation, there is the need of consideration to be taken, especially when the international education programs regarding coaches are developed. For instance, if the coaches are prepared with the new educational system they can stand and work according to different cultures and countries. Further, same curriculum level is not helping them to enhance their education background.

In fact, cultural diversity is some of the dispute of such condition. In spite of spending so much on these courses, unfortunately no process of estimating the learning they have made during this course when they return to their home countries.

Through facts, we can see that there are numbers of efforts made in order to develop the framework effective for the global qualification or it is very helpful in developing the standards. As this has now become very common and nearly all organizations have developed their programs regarding coaches education. It has been observed that there is the strong need to increase the negotiation and cooperation in order to reduce the redundancy within the accreditation of overlapping programmes. Such as recognition and coordination is required in order to qualify for the roles regarding the national and international level. On the national level, the recognition and coordination regarding the university and non-university roles are highly encouraged. Furthermore, in order to provide the institution, federation and countries, there is the need to introduce the educational programs (Bale, 2007).

3. DISCUSSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

A Coach Education Framework Proposal for IAAF

After reviewing the IAAF coach programme, the proposal for a coach education framework for IAAF is discussed in this section. An updated coach education framework is needed to raise standards, improve quality and increase the status of coach education and coaching in IAAF. It is obvious that there are issues related to coach education and coaching which should be addressed in order to enhance the quality of a future strategy. Any coach education framework should be closely aligned to the objectives based on the requirements of all athletes/participants and aligned with their differentiated needs and stages of development. The future of IAAF coach education framework should be closely aligned to the objective number 8 of IAAF 2013-2016 strategic plan that indicated that: provide all people, especially the young, with opportunities to participate in Athletics according to their aspirations, from leisure to elite, from track and field to road (IAAF 2013-2016 Strategic Plan, 2013).

In order to be credible and internationally recognized, the future vision of an IAAF coaching education system needs a number of underpinning fundamental principles. The first principle is to commit to the provision of high quality, active, trained and accredited coaches to ensure that participants, performers, and competitors involved in sport have access to the best coaching at each stage of their development. This requires a sound accreditation system, with clear career pathways and benchmarks for coaches, including those who choose to commit to recreational/community level coaching or aspire to train international elite athletes. The second principle is to ensure dynamic and on-going access to the best knowledge, resources and facilities at progressive stages of continuing professional development (CPD), or long-term

coach development (LTCD), opportunities for coaches. This requires a curriculum model that is at the forefront of current thinking in global trends for coach education, while ensuring sensitivity to context. The third principle is that the management of any coach education framework is cognizant of current structures and contributors in IAAF. In managing the development and implementation of a full coach education plan developed from this framework, the strengths and limitations of current provision need to be recognized and future progress in the field needs to be built through co-operation and shared ownership. In turn, these principles will lead to increased high-quality participation opportunities for health, enjoyment, performance or competition.

The education framework proposal starts with a matrix coach accreditation system, in matrix needed to address two aspects. Firstly, the need for a progressive accreditation system in IAAF to give a career pathway for coaches. It also provides greater understanding of expectations of their knowledge, experience and capability at specific levels or stages of development. Secondly, recognition of multiple coaching sites and differences in motivations/aspirations of participants from local/community participants to people engaged in competition at various levels. With such a structure, the employability of coaches will be more easily definable. A sound matrix system will give coaches aspirations for long-term self-improvement through courses and qualifications that are part of a national coach education accreditation system. The number of accredited sports coaches will be increased and better-qualified coaches will lead to more motivated and inspired participants. The proposal is that the future accreditation model follows a 5 x 4 structure (Table 1).

Table 1: Proposed Accreditation System for IAAF (5 x 4 Structure)

	Local (grass roots/ recreational)	Regional (Competition)	National (Performance)	International (Coaching Diploma) (Elite performance)	Coach role
Level 5	√	√	√	√	Plans, implements, analyzes and revises multi-annual coaching programmes and demonstrates advanced coaching competence, innovation, leadership and coach training.
Requirements for progression to Level 5 = Two years active coaching					
Level 4	√	√	√	NOT APPLICABLE	Plans, implements and reviews annual coaching sessions and demonstrates advanced coaching competence (mentors and trains coaches at lower levels)
Requirements for progression to Level 4 = One year active coaching					
Level 3	√	√	NOT APPLICABLE		Plans, delivers and reviews coaching sessions for a sustained period, demonstrating basic coaching competence. Mentors Level 1 and 2 coaches
Requirements for progression to Level 3 = One year active coaching					
Level 2	√	√	NOT APPLICABLE		Prepares for, delivers and reviews coaching sessions and demonstrates basic coaching competence. Mentors level 1 and foundation coaches)
Requirements for progression to Level 2 = One year active coaching					
Level 1	√	NOT APPLICABLE			Delivers aspects of coaching sessions under direction/supervision of a more qualified coach
Requirements for progression to Level 1 = 6 months active coaching					
Foundation (Pre-award)	√	NOT APPLICABLE			Assists in schools, clubs and community, sports clubs and events, working alongside a more qualified coach

Requirements for the entry program =**Minimum of 18 years of age and interest in coaching**

The suggested IAAF coach education model is split into five levels of accreditation, framing progressive responsibilities, competencies and capabilities from foundation to level 5. The 5-level structure addresses the weakness of the old 3-level structures that are criticized for minimizing the opportunities for providing qualified coaches at different levels of sports programs. The matrix is completed with four 'sites' at which coaches could be involved in participation, performance or competitive sport: local, regional, national or international. One of the great advantages of this new structure is that, in addition to provision for elite coach development for international competition, it provides the opportunity for coaches to qualify at level 5 and remain working at grass roots level whilst gaining higher level qualifications, allowing them to use their increasingly complex skills and knowledge at a local level. The matrix structure addresses criticisms of the pyramid style models that are viewed as elitist and lacking in vision regarding the need for sophisticated skill sets to work in community/participation sites.

4. CONCLUSION

This structure is one of the most valuable outcomes of the current study and addresses the first principle, to commit to the provision of high quality active, trained and accredited coaches to ensure that participants, performers, and competitors involved in sport have access to the best coaching at each stage of their development. When there is a well-justified framework, then more detailed development can be undertaken in collaboration with stakeholders as will be discussed later.

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