

DEVELOPING CRITERIA FOR SELECTING FREESTYLE WRESTLING COACHES AT INTERNATIONAL LEVELS

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Abstract. *Purpose:* The objective of this research was to design and develop criteria for selecting freestyle wrestling coaches at international levels and determining the degree of these criteria importance with respect to coaches and wrestlers' point of view. *Material:* The research method was of descriptive-survey type. The sample population of this study included 79 freestyle wrestlers and 87 freestyle wrestling coaches selected from 381 participants at wrestling world championship competition in 2013 by classified random sample technique. The measuring instrument was researcher-made questionnaire with 56 variables, evaluated by Delphi method ($\alpha = 0.879$); internal validity of the questionnaire was assessed by a number of experts who have a long term coaching experience at high levels in wrestling. Statistical methods, used for analysis of data, were descriptive and inferential statistics (Friedman Test, Kruskal-Wallis Test and One Sample Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test). *Results:* The results of this study indicated that there was no significant difference among coaches and wrestlers on significance level of 8 main criteria for selecting national freestyle wrestling coaches ($P > 0.05$), but they had some differences in the order of dimensions' significance. *Conclusion:* Psychological skills such as Personality traits and characteristics of motivational as well as scientific knowledge and Management Skills have been considered as a very important criterion, so Wrestling Federations should pay considerable attention to these dimensions.

Key words: Freestyle wrestling, coaches, criteria, National team, wrestlers.

Introduction

One of the most significant elements in sport teams' success relates to role of team coach. Anyone who has practiced sports knows what an impact a coach can have, well or bad. Coaching wrestling is a special profession [7]. In most resources coaching is considered an intensive job and a coach is described as a person who should implement a set of communicative-managerial skills within a wide range of coaching roles [24, 23]. In this regard, the selection of people for the post of coach, mainly at national level and based on the use of job-specific criteria has been particularly problematic for federations.

One of federations' responsibilities is selecting efficient coaches for national teams. Fair and consistent selection of national coaches by sport federation is hard and argumentative task as the concerned managers should select the most qualified coach from a large number of candidates as a head coach, inside and even outside the country. Unfortunately, few studies have been done till now and it is not clear what parameters and features should be considered in selection of national coaches. Due to the lack of such criteria and importance of these characteristics in identifying and selecting qualified and competent coaches to hold national team coach, it is necessary to determine the national coaches' selection criteria, in order to identify the best person as well as evaluate and analyze the coach performance in each period.

When critically evaluating the review of the relevant literature, including studies conducted by the various researchers, the researcher found out that very few studies so far have been devoted to developing criteria for selecting freestyle wrestling coaches at international level. It shows that this topic has not been paid attention to by a lot of researchers. However, some of the studies mentioned in the reviewed literature tried to identify characteristics of coaches, the summary of which is as follows: in a study entitled "Springfield High meeting outlines 10 characteristics and traits for new Wildcats boys' hoops coach" along with a group of 30 people gathered at Springfield High School, to discuss the characteristics and traits they want to see in the Wildcats' next boys' basketball coach. After two brainstorming sessions 10 traits were agreed including passion for academics as well as athletics, great communication skills with stakeholders and networks (includes parents, kids and fans). coaching experience and life coach who mentors and develops kids, become an active and visible part of the community, understands diversity, ability to motivate, personal integrity and ethics and honesty, disciplinarian and fair to all and respect (for others), develops and hires a strong staff [27].

Monazzami (2009) has conducted a research with the title of "the codification of criteria for selecting national Volleyball coaches". Results revealed that there is no significant difference between managers, coaches, experts and athletes in the case of four criteria (technical, managerial, social, personality) for selection of national coaches. Also, there is significant difference between all subjects in the case of coach selection criteria. Eventually, from the viewpoint of all responders, respectively, technical criteria, managerial, personality and social had the most

importance in selecting national coach in volleyball [19]. Frost J.L. (2012) Examined “characteristics contributing to the success of a sports coach” and founded identifying particular characteristics (qualities and abilities) of successful sports coaches such as quality of practice, communicating with athletes, motivating athletes, developing athletes’ sports skills, and possessing knowledge of the sport could offer other coaches help in improving their performance [6]. Mackenzie (2012) determined “some Coaching Roles” such as: advisor, assessor, counselor, demonstrator, friend, facilitator, fact finder, fountain of knowledge, instructor, mentor, motivator, organizer and planner, role model, supporter. He also believed that coaches initially need to develop the skills of organizing, safety, building rapport, providing instruction and explanation, demonstrating, observing, analyzing, questioning and providing feedback [16]. Tajik (2010) undertook a study titled “planning and compilation assessment indicators of Iran’s Taekwondo coaches”. After final analyses the results were as below: There was significant differences among the views of coaches, athletes, and managers about the social characteristics, human relations, individual characteristics, ethical characteristics, sport experiences and managerial skills; whilst no significant differences was observed in four other aspects (educational, personality, coaching, and planning). All the three groups had chosen the criteria for choosing Taekwondo coaches by the below priority as: personality (8.20), ethical characteristics (7.85), coaching characteristics (7.70), educational characteristics (6.81), managerial skills and leadership (6.72), planning and programming (6.62), social characteristics (5.64), human relations (5.44), sport experiences (5.43), and individual characteristics (4.39) Afsane purak S. A., et al. (2012) undertook a study with the title of “Development of Indicators of the National Judo Coaches Selection: Athletes and Coaches’ Perspectives”. These indicators included communicational, psychological, motivational, personality-moral, supportive-feedback, goal setting, experimental-technique, efficacy, leadership and management and performance assessment indicators. Data analysis results showed that there were no significant differences among statistical samples regarding Coaches’ Selection indicators ($p > 0.05$). Also there were different priorities about Coaches’ Selection indicators in samples ($p < 0.05$) [29].

It is pertinent to note that the above reviews have also brought to the notice of the researcher about the importance of each criterion which has been selected by him in the present study. Hence, the reviews which the researcher has come across are not only justifying the appropriateness of the research problem under taken but also provided necessary further directions in completing study. Thus, considering the literature review, the researcher decided to do the study with the following research problem “Developing Criteria for Selecting Free Style Wrestling coaches at International Level”.

Materials and Methods

The purpose of this study was to identify characteristics for selecting free style wrestling coaches at international level. The research method is of descriptive-survey type. In the present study, wrestling coach is major characteristics or interest of the researcher for that purpose. According to Krejcie & Morgan table 79 free style wrestlers, 87 free style wrestling coaches from 310 participants of wrestling world championship competition in 2013 were selected by classified random sample technique.

Data gathering tool was the researcher-made questionnaire. Its content validity was evaluated by the opinion of some experts, who have strong background in coaching field. Also, its reliability was evaluated using Cronbach’s alpha coefficient adjusted at the level of 0.86. Eventually, the final questionnaire which contained the features and criteria for selection of the coach of wrestling national team was designed by considering 8 aspects including motivational characteristics, sport characteristics, personality characteristics, management skills, scientific characteristics, communication skills, coaching experience and individual characteristics. The significance level of each criterion is determined using Likert measurement scale. Delphi method was used in selecting factors of national coaches. For distributing questionnaire, researcher went personally to Istanbul (Turkey) and gave all necessary explanations before distributing the questionnaires. The questionnaires were gathered by researcher two days later.

To extract the results of data, descriptive statistics methods including frequency, percentage, standard deviation, mean, descriptive index and central tendency were used for each factor in the demographic section of the survey. In section 2 and in research statistical hypothesis test Friedman Test and Kruskal-Wallis Tests were used. The mentioned tests were applied to determine the priorities of 8 major criteria and compare the differences among coaches and wrestlers’ viewpoints on the level of the importance of criteria for selecting wrestling national freestyle coaches. One Sample Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test was used to indicate normality of data distribution. The Statistical Package for Social Sciences 18 (SPSS) was used to conduct the statistical analysis. An alpha level of 0.05 was used for statistical significance ($p \leq 0.05$).

Results

The findings of this study are as follows:

Table 1. Distribution and frequency rate of demographic variables

Demographic Variables		Frequency	Percent
Statistical population	Coaches	79	47.6
	Wrestlers	87	52.4
Coaching degree	Level 1	11	13.9
	Level 2	8	10.1
	Level 3	12	15.2
	International	48	60.8
	Total	79	100
Experience in coaching	Under 2	65	82.3
	2 to 5	5	6.3
	6 to 10	2	2.5
	11 to 15	5	6.3
	Over 15	2	2.5
Total		79	100

From the table 1 it is clear that the population consisted of 79 coaches (47.6%) and 87 wrestlers (52.4%). Regarding coaching Degree among coaches, 11 persons of coaches have level 3, 8 persons have level 2 (lowest frequency), 12 persons have level 1 and 48 persons have International degree in coaching (highest frequency). Maximum experience of coaching in national team annually was related to less than 2 years (82.3%) while minimum experience was more than 15 years (2.5%).

In diagram 1, with regard to the frequency distribution of Educational Qualification among statistical population, 4.8% were the holders of under diploma, 29.5% Diploma, 14.5% had associate's degree, 31.4% bachelor's degree, 15% master's degree and 4.8% had PhD. In diagram 2, regarding Educational Field, among the 166 subjects, 77% had education in the field of Physical Education while 89% had education in Other Fields.

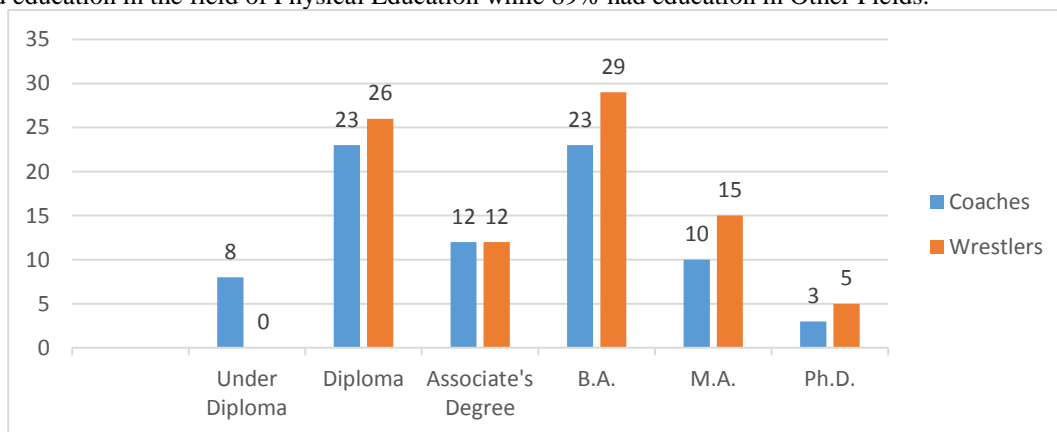


Diagram 1. The frequency of subjects' educational qualification

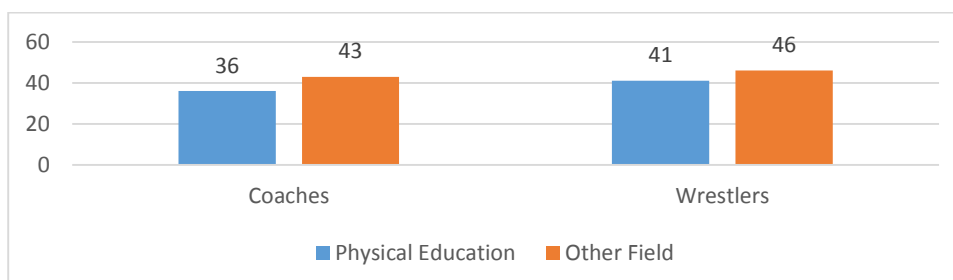


Diagram 2. The frequency of subjects' educational field

According to Table 2 and the results of Friedman test to determine the priorities of 8 major criteria from the viewpoints of the coaches ($\chi^2= 100.5$, $df=7$, $P<0.05$), they considered motivational characteristics (5.85) as the most important criteria and the lowest index was given to individual characteristics (2.92). While, regarding Friedman test ($\chi^2= 84.5$, $df=7$, $P<0.05$), wrestlers considered personality characteristics (5.95) as the most prioritized factor and the least prioritized factor was individual characteristics (3.18).

Table 2. Priority of coaching dimensions by Coaches, and Wrestlers

Subjects	Coaches					Wrestlers					Total	
	Priority	MR	x ²	df	sig	Priority	MR	x ²	df	sig	Priority	MR
Domain of Coaching												
Personality Characteristics	2	5.55				1	5.95				1	5.75
Management Skills	4	4.55				2	5.43				4	4.99
Individual Characteristics	8	2.92				8	3.18				8	3.05
Scientific Characteristics	3	5.14	100.5	7	0	4	5	84.5	7	0	3	5.07
Communication Skills	7	3.49				7	3.44				7	3.46
Motivational Characteristics	1	5.85				3	5.25				2	5.55
Sport Characteristics	5	4.4				5	4.09				5	4.24
Coaching Experience	6	4.12				6	3.66				6	3.89

In diagram 3, the results of Friedman test indicate that all subjects ranked respectively to the following items as selection criteria for wrestling national freestyle coaches: personality characteristics (5.75), motivational characteristics (5.55), scientific characteristics (5.07), management skills (4.99), sport characteristics (4.24), coaching experience (3.89), communication skills (3.46) and individual characteristics (3.05).

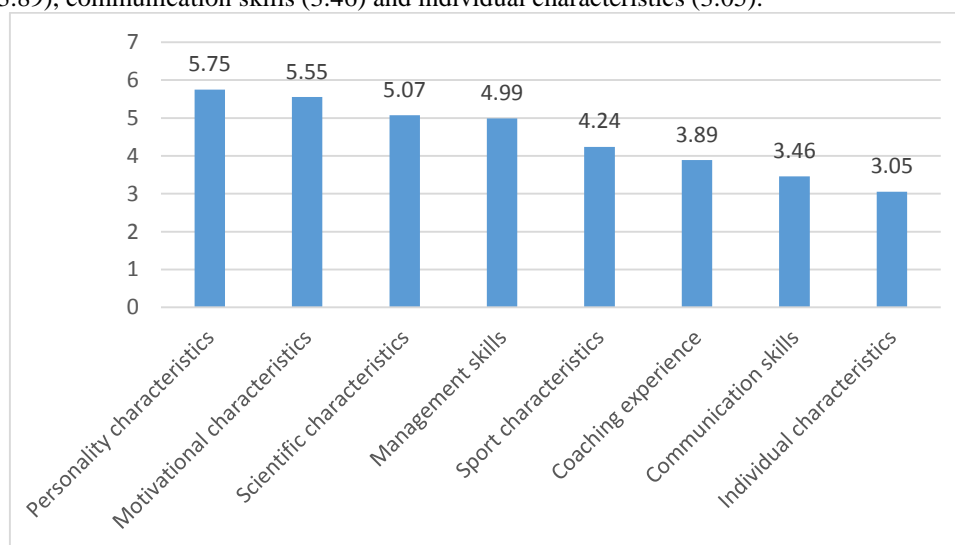


Diagram 3. The priority of coaching dimensions from all samples' viewpoints

As it is seen in Table3, there was no significant difference among coaches and wrestlers on significance level of 8 main criteria for selecting wrestling national freestyle coaches (df=4, P>0.05). In other words, all samples agreed on the level of importance of each criterion.

Table 3. Results from statistical tests to prioritize coaching selection criteria

Statistical Indicator	Descriptive Data			Kruskal-Wallis		
	Groups	n	Mean Rank	Chi-Square	df	Sig
Personality Characteristics	wrestlers	87	103.57	1.868	4	0.76
	coaches	79	101.44			
Management Skills	wrestlers	87	101.69	3.205	4	0.524
	coaches	79	102.3			
Individual Characteristics	wrestlers	87	99.93	3.926	4	0.416
	coaches	79	109.11			
Scientific Characteristics	wrestlers	87	98.89	3.233	4	0.52
	coaches	79	107.68			
Communication Skills	wrestlers	87	99.18	2.81	4	0.59
	coaches	79	104.39			
Motivational Characteristics	wrestlers	87	99.29	2.597	4	0.627
	coaches	79	105.47			
Sport Characteristics	wrestlers	87	99.16	3.535	4	0.473
	coaches	79	105.27			
Coaching Experience	wrestlers	87	101.9	7.797	4	0.099
	coaches	79	101.34			

Discussion

As it was observed coaches and wrestlers consider the following items as the criteria for selection of the coach of wrestling national team including: 1) Personality characteristics, 2) Motivational Characteristics, 3) Scientific Characteristics, 4) Management skills, 5) Sport Characteristics, 6) Coaching Experience, 7) Communication Skills, 8) Individual characteristics. Moreover, with regards to Friedman test results, there is significant difference among coaches and wrestlers' viewpoints to determine the priorities of eight major criteria for selecting wrestling national freestyle coaches. In general, all samples had similar beliefs about the criteria importance for selecting wrestling national freestyle coaches, but they had some differences in the order of importance of the dimensions. The most prioritized factor in choosing a coach was "Personality characteristics". It was considered as a very important criterion, so wrestling federations should pay a considerable attention to this dimension. Some of researchers believe that personality characteristics are significant aspect required for hiring coaches [4, 12, 25, 15, 27, 21, 3, 18, 30]. The result of the current study is in line with the results of research by Plasters Writer S. (2009) & Naisri K. (2009), but contradicted results from studies by [13, 2, 19, 29] indicated significant difference among coaches, experts, athletes and managers in the case of the level of importance of personality characteristics [13, 2, 19, 29].

The least prioritized factor was "Individual characteristics". Thus, it plays little role in selection process of national coaches according to all subjects' viewpoints so it can be ignored. Such a finding correlates with the results of studies by [13, 26, 20, 29]. "Motivational characteristics" was considered as important criteria. As noted by [9], psychology in coaching plays an effective role in the coach's success and the athlete's functional development as well as motivational and communicational skills. All samples showed a strong similarity in "Scientific characteristics". They believed that this criterion was important. More coaching courses should be offered and publicized to current coaches so they can obtain updated information and professional knowledge to perform their coaching duties. "Management skills" was considered as relatively important criterion. The results of the current study are also quite similar to the findings of Dahalkvist A. and Svensson M (2001) which found type of leadership and appropriate behavior are more important in coaching process. "Sport characteristics" and "Coaching experience" were other criteria which were considered as relatively important factors. This criterion was also considered by FIFA (2012) and AFC (2011) in their coaching books and noted that a coach should be equipped with technical and tactical skills [11]. "Communication skill" was put in seventh priority. In other words, it was considered as a less important factor. Some of researchers referred to this criterion [9, 14, 28, 24 and 17]. These criteria and their subthemes each represent the thoughts of many of the finest coaches and wrestlers in freestyle wrestling, so developing strengths within each of these areas will assist a coach greatly in becoming an effective coach now and in the future.

Conclusion

With respect to the present study results it seems that international level wrestling coaches should have multi-dimensional skills such as psychological skills, unique personality, management skills as well as scientific adequacy that render determining effect on sport performance; thus sport authorities specially Wrestling Federation should have specific attention to these important issues in selection international level coaches.

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Cite this article as: Hossein Rangraz, S.S. Deshpande, Hossein Soltani.
Developing criteria for selecting freestyle wrestling coaches at international
levels. *Pedagogics, psychology, medical-biological problems of physical
training and sports*, 2016;6:47–52. doi:10.15561/18189172.2016.0607

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Received: 23.10.2016

Accepted: 01.11.2016; Published: 30.11.2016