

Fraile Aranda, A.; de Diego Vallejo, R. y Boada i Grau, J. (2011). El perfil de los técnicos del deporte escolar en un contexto europeo / The Profile of School Sport Coaches in a European Context. Revista Internacional de Medicina y Ciencias de la Actividad Física y el Deporte vol. 11 (42) pp. 278-297. [Http://cdeporte.rediris.es/revista/revista42/artperfil205.htm](http://cdeporte.rediris.es/revista/revista42/artperfil205.htm)

## ORIGINAL

### THE PROFILE OF SCHOOL SPORTS COACHES IN A EUROPEAN CONTEXT

### EI PERFIL DE LOS TÉCNICOS DEL DEPORTE ESCOLAR EN UN CONTEXTO EUROPEO

Fraile Aranda, A.<sup>1</sup>; de Diego Vallejo, R.<sup>2</sup> & Boada i Grau, J.<sup>3</sup>

1 Universidad de Valladolid. Departamento de Didáctica Expresión Corporal. Facultad de Educación y Trabajo social. E-mail: [afraile@mpc.uva.es](mailto:afraile@mpc.uva.es)

2 Universidad de Valladolid. Departamento de Psicología. Facultad de Educación y Trabajo social. E-mail: [campas@correo.cop.es](mailto:campas@correo.cop.es)

3 Universitat Rovira i Virgili. Departamento de Psicología. Campus Sescelades. E-mail: [Joan.boada@urv.cat](mailto:Joan.boada@urv.cat)

**Spanish-Eslish translator:** Dr. Robert J. Brustad, University of Northern Colorado (USA) [bob.brustad@unco.edu](mailto:bob.brustad@unco.edu)

**Código UNESCO / UNESCO Code:** 5899 Otras especialidades pedagógicas (Educación Física y Deporte) / Other specialties pedagogical (Physical Education and Sport).

**Clasificación Consejo de Europa / Council of Europe classification:** 4. Educación Física y deporte comparado / Physical Education and sport compared.

Fuente de Financiación: Consejo Superior de Deportes. (MEC)(BOE, 25/6/2005).

**Recibido** 13 de octubre de 2009 **Received** October 13, 2009

**Aceptado** 27 de marzo de 2010 **Accepted** March 27, 2010

#### ABSTRACT

The present cross-national study was conducted with the objective of assessing the profiles of school sport educators in Portugal, France, Italy and Spain. With this purpose, a focus was upon understanding the teaching profile of these coaches of school sport in relation to the following models: traditional, technological, innovative, collaborative, communicative and critical. A quantitative methodological design was used with a sample of 345 subjects who completed a questionnaire that had been previously validated by Ibáñez (1996) and Feu (2006) with coaches of basketball and handball, respectively. Among the noteworthy

results was that the communicative coach profile was most highly valued by the participants followed by the critical and innovative profiles. Meanwhile the collaborative, traditional, and technological profiles were less valued.

**KEY WORDS:** School sports. Technical profile sports. European context study. Dialogue profile sports coach

## RESUMEN

El presente estudio trasnacional tiene como objetivo analizar los perfiles de los técnicos del deporte escolar de: Portugal, Francia, Italia y España. Para ello nos planteamos: conocer el perfil docente de estos técnicos de la actividad deportiva escolar en dicho espacio, a partir de los modelos: tradicional, tecnológico, innovador, colaborativo, dialogador y crítico. A partir de un diseño metodológico cuantitativo con una muestra de 345 sujetos, a los que se aplica una encuesta validada por Ibáñez (1996) y Feu (2006) para entrenadores de baloncesto y balonmano. Entre los resultados destacan que el perfil técnico deportivo dialogador es el más valorado por todos, seguido del crítico y del innovador. Mientras que son menos relevantes el colaborativo, el tradicional y, por último, el tecnológico.

**PALABRAS CLAVE:** Deporte escolar. Perfil técnico deportivo. Estudio contexto europeo. Perfil dialogador del técnico deportivo.

## 1. Introduction

School sport constitutes a medium to facilitate the whole education of the child through the promotion of participation, respect for the coaches and fellow participants and for the norms of the group (Cruz, 1987, 1997). The school sport coach needs to contribute to the intellectual capacity, the motoric capacity, sociomoral development of the individual and to provide equal opportunity, health and other positive outcomes in accordance with the differences that exist relative to age, gender, ability and interest among individuals within this context.

This study was grounded in the need to assess the limited preparation of school sport coaches and was motivated in particular by the limited pedagogical training that these individuals tend to receive. In a previous study (Martínez del Castillo, Puig, Fraile, & Boixeda, 1991) it was found that 36.7% of the sport coaches lacked the appropriate qualifications. Similarly, findings from other studies have indicated that other European countries also encounter the same lack of certified professionals (Liukkonen et al, 1996; Fraile et al., 2004). At the present time, there has been little change in this professional situation. It is common for this work to be performed by ex-athletes and by parents and coaches who lack the preparation and who may work without specific contracts which can have negative repercussions within the educational system.

In response to Law 10/1990 of Sport, the Spanish government committed to regulating the educational training of school sport coaches at the different educational levels. More recently, through the Organic Law 2/2006 of Education, the educational qualifications of school sport coaches were established with the purpose of adapting to the working demands of this environment.

In various studies conducted in the European context, Antonelli and Salvini (1978), Graça, Chivite (1997) and Fraile (2004) found that school sport coaches assume various responsibilities and diverse roles such as educator, manager, organizer, motivator, and leader. In this regard, Davies (1991), Di Lorenzo and Saibene (1996), Ibáñez and Medina (1999) and Ortúzar (2004) have concluded that their principal task should be that of a teacher which addresses the pedagogical role of the school sport instructor. Nonetheless, in the educational training of school sport coaches there is not sufficient attention devoted to the training of competency in the development of teaching skills (Martens et al., 1989; Ibáñez, 1996; Moreno Contreras, 1997; Giménez, 2000; Moreno, 2001). At the same time, it is necessary for sport instructors and for those responsible for teaching technical aspects to be attentive to affective, emotional and social development of students (Castañar et al., 2006).

In relation to these educational and professional considerations with regard to school sport coaches, the end goal of this study was to understand, as a consequence of diverse systems of education, the background of school sport coaches in the European context. The study addresses various profiles (traditional, technological, innovative, collaborative, consultative and critical) to determine which is most valued. In this way, there can be better understanding of the teaching strategies most applied to practice. Finally, a purpose of this study was to offer suggestions for the best pedagogical and didactic training of these school sport coaches.

With the objective of identifying different profiles we can refer to previous authors who have provided classifications (Tausch, 1977; Chelladurai & Haggerty, 1978; Martens, 1989; Ibáñez, 1997). In addition there are various classifications and styles of training linked to the roles and competencies that coaches develop (traditional, technological, innovative, collaborative, consultative and critical). Furthermore, in this assessment we can also consider profiles of various coaches as suggested by Tutko and Richards (1984), Saura (1996), Moreno and Del Villar (2004), Fraile (2005), and Feu (2006). In reference to each of these we can define the characteristics and profiles.

1.1. Traditional profile. In this profile, the traditional coach is considered to be a specialist whose formation is tied directly to their expertise in the sport and especially in the technical aspects of skill acquired early in their training. This background directs the coach toward a program of training that reproduces the goals, contents, activities, methodologies and means of evaluation that the same

coach received without consideration for the context, the characteristics and the interests of the students (Moreno & Del Villar, 2004).

The educational concept that these coaches tend to adhere to is that the greater the theoretical knowledge the better they can teach with the understanding that the teaching revolves around adhering to a model in which the application of technical knowledge is foremost. For example, in the design of the program involving the technical objectives, tactics, physical training and the like there is a logical sequence and epistemology that is followed without consideration for the variations that happen in practice and the previous knowledge of the students.

For the traditional coach, knowledge is related more to the accumulation of strategies, content, and activities than in the search for a greater understanding on behalf of the students in their learning. What is presented is directed toward the planning and training relative to recognized methods with the pursuit of perfection in the search for results. Finally, in relation to the students the priority is to those students who dedicate the greatest discipline and loyalty to the instructions (Ibáñez, 1996; Feu, 2006).

1.2. Technological profile. The technologically-based coach searches for efficacious programs in such a way that they make the priority the study and control of those parameters that are quantifiable and objectively related to the sport, such as in the identification of goals. From the technical reasoning approach is it determined that the sport activity represents an instrumental process that establishes routines to obtain the identified results (Pieron, 1999).

With the efficacy objective, technically-oriented coaches design, apply and evaluate the program in relation to the development of automatic decision-making processes and routines. The educational formation of the coach distinguishes theory and practice. That is to say that there is a distinction in how research and practice are carried out. From this perspective, it is considered that sport activity can be analytic and have instrumental processes without considering the type of practice that uncertainty in situations can stimulate or in which unique situations can create. Finally, the technical coach is distinguished through their planning, application and evaluation of the methods and skills gained from a scientific foundation (Del Villar & Fuentes, 1999).

1.3. Critical profile. The critical sport coach gives priority to a series of reflexive strategies in the students that allow them to analyze how they act. It is consistent with a complex reality in which responses to unpredictable circumstances are developed through the learning activity (Schon, 1992).

The critical view demands that the coaches observe, note and reflect about what occurs during practices. At the same time, they analyze how to relate technical knowledge and practice with the application of strategies and routines. From the reflexive perspective they will be able to extend these different realities within

practice and review the values and interests of the participants. Finally, these coaches need to commit themselves to meeting ethical principals that allow coherence with moral values (Pascual, 2000; Sicilia, 2005). As such, the critical coach needs to be a person who continually questions their own actions such that the students apply the same to their practice. As such, the critical coach searches through various possible lenses the optimal means and strategies to achieve this result (Fraile, 2008).

1.4. Collaborative profile. The collaborative coach shares their training with the team and assistants. This approach demands that individualism is diminished in that the traditional coach is accustomed to identifying problems and solutions for the participants. As such, the students need to work collectively with the coach in this model to make decisions. From the democratic and participative process, group cohesion is strengthened as the participants are more responsible and autonomous in their actions and not solely responsive to the imposition of an adult (Johnson, 1997).

Collaborative learning demands negotiation to reach agreement and consensus and is more effective in situations in which learning is shared. The efficacy of the program depends upon the capacity of the coach to develop collaborative actions and for the participants to share knowledge and experiences.

Johnson, Johnson and Holubec (1999) refer to collaboration as a strategy of working together and accomplishing common objectives that involves practices in which the participants need to make efforts to extend their own knowledge and the knowledge of their colleagues. Yague (1999) through a seminar approach to understanding and action in football believes that the professional development of coaches is improved through the collaborative process. As such, the collaborative coach ought to coordinate with their helpers to design tasks in relation to the planning, the practical application and the evaluation of results. This approach favors an atmosphere of mutual respect and group action the implies the active and shared development of goals.

1.5 Innovative and creative profile. The innovative coach search in his athletes techniques and strategies that are less common and acquired through the testing and examination of different modes of action to obtain better results (Moreno & Del Villar, 2004). In the educational environment, the creative student likes to encounter the positive and the different given that this variability creates an environment of learning that is enjoyable, different and fun (Gardner, 1995). The creative educator ought to create possibilities that something new and of value can result through the interaction with students (Alsina et al., 2009).

In this regard, the technical learning and tactics are developed through an active methodology (guided discovery and problem resolution that allows the students to take initiative in the process (Mosston, 1978; Mosston & Ashworth, 1993). At the same time, practices are conducted in an open and flexible way with the objective

being that the participants can make their own suggestions and explain their interests and needs through a process based on negotiation and consensus (Fraile, 2005).

Creativity is linked to the motor capacity in students using this capacity as a stimulus for the imagination, for reducing inhibitions, for stimulating initiative and for enjoyment of movement. At the same time, the game ought to represent a basic tool that contributes to creativity in the sport environment in all of these circumstances in which there are opportunities for “brainstorming”, meaning those opportunities which provide great opportunity for open and diverse actions (Lamour, 1991). As such, the innovative and creative coach ought to propose in their program new alternatives, utilizing means and creative resources and also to evaluate the process in a different way using the triangulation of results through various instruments.

1.6. Communicative profile. The communicative and interactive coach has the intent of opening ground for discussion that favors interaction and communication among the students and the coach in accordance with a desirable affective and emotional environment (Salmela, 1994). This goal also requires the sharing and communication among all in an open way that is consistent throughout practices.

According to Moreno and Del Villar (2005), the communicative coach ought to ascribe great importance to dialogue and interpersonal relationships. As such, this coach needs to value feedback as the means for communication from the coach to express greater knowledge. The communicative coach ought to favor the well-being of their athletes and to inspire respect without fostering an authoritative posture. This type of coach utilizes sport as a socialization environment and strengthens interpersonal relations. The use of accessible and understandable language helps improve the personal relationship with the athletes through interpersonal competencies (Vaello, 2009). As such, the communicative coach regards communication as the key to creating a desirable climate for the students. At the same time, this good communication facilitates relationships with assistants, administrators and parents.

In closing this section, each of the coaching profiles has been reviewed and we have considered that while each is relatively simple to define, in practice, it is sometimes more difficult to completely distinguish among each of these styles.

## **2. Method**

Correlational methods are preferred when it is not possible to manipulate variables. The methodology for this study follows an “ex post facto” approach and, as a consequence, there is a collection of independent variables and criteria that are based on the measurement of the correct independent variables.

2.1. Objectives of the study. The principal objective of this study was to understand which model is most highly valued by school sport coaches in the European context through Spanish, French, Italian and Portuguese samples. As such, it is necessary to identify which of these profiles (traditional, technological, innovative, collaborative, communicative or critical) are most highly valued by the sport coaches who participated in the study. The intention was to identify which teaching approach was most emphasized in these profiles. Finally, the hypothesis that guided this study was that the communicative style ought to facilitate the greatest interaction among participants.

2.2. Participants. 345 total participants were included in the study. The distribution of participants by country was as follows: Spain (85 = 24.6%), Portugal (110 = 31.9%), Italy (80 = 23.2%), France (70 = 20.3%). Other characteristics of this sample are that the majority were male, aged 21-30 years, with a certification in Physical Education and who held a critical orientation. The French coaches were typically males older than 40 years with a graduate or doctoral education who also had a critical perspective.

2.3. Instruments. To assess the coaches' profiles a questionnaire utilized by Ibáñez (1996) and Feu (2006) was used. The instrument has been previously used with coaches of basketball and handball, respectively, and validated in a study by Ibáñez and Feu (2000). The questionnaire consists of 47 items that address the traditional profile (9 items), technological profile (8 items), innovative profile (8 items), collaborative profile (8 items), communicative profile (6 items) and critical profile (8 items). The questions that were responded to followed a Likert format that ask the respondent to answer the stem of the question along a one to five scale in which one is considered the most important characteristic. This format is similar to other scales used in similar contexts. Descriptive data was also obtained included country, age, level of education, degree obtained in sport, educational institution of their training and sport in which they coached.

2.4. Procedure. For the purpose of conducting face to face interviews we counted on the assistance of fellow faculty members from the universities of Rome, Porto, and Tarbes (France) who have conducted similar investigations. The questionnaires were translated from the original Spanish language into the other languages (Italian, Portuguese, and French). The questionnaire responses were examined in our center of investigations where the analysis was conducted through SPSS version 9.0. The statistical analysis consisted of the comparison of mean values given that the non normative and nonsymmetrical nature of the distribution of the data did not allow for ANOVA analyses. Upon completion of the study, a summary report was provided to the respective institutions.

### 3. RESULTS

Following the presentation of the introduction and the methodology we advance to the results obtained in the study and a summary of the various profile employed: traditional, technological, innovative, collaborative, communicative, and critical. We will only discuss the most meaningful findings relative to each of the educational profiles as identified in this study.

3.1. Communicative profile. With regard to the communicative profile we found a strong overall orientation toward this profile (mean = 1.81). The two questions that were most strongly favored in the overall sample pertained to the importance of interaction and communication with the athletes with the purpose of facilitating a quality group climate in training (mean = 1.55) and for stimulating a good climate within training sessions by means of conversation and dialogue (mean = 1.56).

**Table 1.**

Items Related to the Communicative Profile	(Overall mean = 1.81)	Mean
Dialogue with athletes to promote a quality group climate in training		1.55
Stimulate in the athletes an adequate climate through conversation and dialogue		1.56
Utilize discussion as a means of directing the training session		1.58
Utilize dialogue as an informational means for evaluating the training session		1.80
Convince my assistants through dialogue about the process of training that is to follow		2.15
Speak with and convince the athletes about the planning of the practice session		2.23

Almost all (94.8%) of the respondents were in agreement in valuing dialogue among the athletes such that that the training session would proceed in the best way. The male coaches (mean = 1.52) and those with doctoral studies (1.44) were those who most strongly agreed with the value of using this communicative strategy with the athletes.

3.2 Critical profile. The second most highly valued profile for the school sport coaches was the critical approach (mean = 1.82). Among the aspects of greatest relative importance within this approach were the perceived need to stimulate a reflexive climate and analysis (mean = 1.57). In addition, the capacity to strengthen the athletes' capacity to analyze their effort and attitudes was highly valued (mean = 1.72).



**Table 2.**

Items Related to the Critical Profile	(Overall mean = 1.82)	Mean
1. Stimulate a climate of reflection and analysis about the training session		1.57
2. Have athletes with a critical perspective who analyze their work and attitudes		1.72
3. Have assistants who analyze and reflect about training process		1.80
4. Utilize the evaluation to conduct a critical analysis of the training session		1.84
5. Analyze until the final detail to do a critical analysis of the training session		1.87
6. Search for means and resources that improve the training session and eliminate those of less worth		1.94
7. Question training approaches and search for perfect methods		1.98
8. Critically question the upcoming process of planning		2.10

Similarly, the majority (93.3%) of the respondents were in agreement that it is essential to create a reflexive climate that is linked with practice of the sport and to analyze their practice with reference to improvement. Among all of the participating coaches, women (mean = 1.55) and those between 31-40 years were those who most highly valued the necessity of creating a reflexive and analytic orientation.

3.3. Innovative profile. Another of the highly valued profiles by the coaches was the innovative and creative style (mean = 2.0).

**Table 3.**

Items Related to the Innovative Profile	(Overall mean = 2.00)	Mean
1. Innovate and search for novel and alternative approaches in the process of training		1.81
2. Have athletes who collaborate in the continual novel alternatives that are proposed		1.83
3. Allow my assistants to propose novel things in the training process		1.85
4. Innovate and search for methods and techniques that are not customary in sport		1.88
5. Involve the athlete in a climate that is receptive to the new alternatives that have been proposed		1.99
6. Innovate and experiment in the planning of the training session		2.12
7. Search for and utilize new methods and resources to structure the training		2.23
8. Utilize alternative methods and novel approaches in the evaluation of the training process		2.30

In accordance with the innovative style, the most highly relevant dimension involved the possibility of innovation and the search of novel approaches and alternatives in the training process (mean = 1.81) as well as having athletes willing to be involved in the development of novel alternatives (mean = 1.83). In addition, allowing assistants to suggest their own training proposals (mean = 1.85) was perceived as important. In this regard, a large majority (86.7%) of the coaches demonstrated that they were in agreement with the necessity to innovate and to search for alternative approaches within school sport programs. Among all of the participants, the males (mean = 1.83), those younger than 20 years of age and with undergraduate studies (mean = 1.65) were those who most strongly endorsed the innovative orientation.

3.4. Collaborative profile. In Table 4, it can be observed how the collaborative profile is relatively poorly valued by the participants in the study (mean = 2.32).

**Table 4.**

Items Related to the Collaborative Profile (Overall mean = 2.23)	Mean
1. Coordinate with my assistants about the way that we will work together in the training sessions	1.89
2. Delegate roles and responsibilities to my assistants	1.89
3. Coordinate with my assistants, if I have them, in the selection and utilization of methods and resources	1.93
4. Delegate roles to my assistants, if I have them, and coordinate their work	2.03
5. Evaluate the training utilizing strategies that have been coordinated with the assistants and specials that collaborate in the direction of the team	2.30
6. Plan the coordination and contributions of the entire coaching staff	2.39
7. Channel through my assistants, if I have them, my relationship with the athletes	2.54
8. Create a climate in which the athletes communicate initially through my assistants	2.90

In relation to the profile of the collaborative coach, the aspect that was most highly valued by the participants was the coordination of assistants in the training process (mean = 1.89) and the delegation of roles and responsibilities to assistants (mean = 1.89). Despite the fact that this profile was not as highly valued, 83.5% of the participants were in agreement that there was good coordination among them and their assistants.

3.5. Traditional profile. The traditional profile was one of the less valued profiles (mean = 2.30). This profile is developed through an academic emphasis in which coaches are mere transmitters of technical knowledge.

**Table 5.**

Items Related to the Traditional Profile (Overall mean = 2.30)	Mean
1. Create a climate in which everyone knows what they need to do	1.65
2. Utilize the means and resources that have been demonstrated to be effective with my athletes	1.89
3. Have athletes who remain loyal to my instructions	2.10
4. Personally direct all aspects of the training	2.25
5. Have assistants that remain loyal to my instructions	2.42
6. Demonstrate to my assistants exactly what I expect of them so that they follow my instructions	2.44
7. Apply only methods and techniques of training that have been proven to be efficacious	2.57
8. Design entirely by myself the planning and process of training	2.74
9. Evaluate only through recognized tests with the purpose of controlling the quality of the performance of the team	2.77

Within the traditional profile, coaches highlighted the need to develop a climate in which everyone knew what they were expected to do (mean = 1.65) and to utilize the means and resources that have been demonstrated to be effective (mean = 1.89). Those that most highly evaluated the traditional profile were male coaches and those with a professional training background (mean = 1.59).

### 3.6 Technological profile

**Table 6.**

Items Related to the Technological profile (Overall mean = 2.54)	Mean
1. Utilize technological means and material resources	2.30
2. Create in the athletes a favorable environment for the utilization of technology in training	2.32
3. Have athletes that collaborate with the work that we do with instruments and technological apparatus	2.46
4. Employ technologies for the planning, control and evaluation of training	2.47
5. Have special assistants who employ the instruments that advance the technologies that we facilitate	2.50
6. Evaluate the process of training with the help of technological tools	2.65
7. Plan the training sessions with the help of technology	2.80
8. Utilize methods and techniques of training with the help of technology	2.83

Among the elements that were most strongly endorsed were utilizing technological means and material resources (mean = 2.30) and creating in the athletes a favorable environment for the utilization of technology in training (mean = 2.32).

Meanwhile, the least favorably evaluated item was to utilize methods and techniques with the help of technology (mean = 2.83). The profile of the sport coaches who were more likely to endorse the technological profile were males between 21-30 years old with a license or diploma in Physical Education and with a background in football or soccer at the regional level and who participate annually in ongoing education.

Some differences among countries in coaching profiles were also found. Spanish sport school coaches tended to be males, between the ages of 21-30 years with a Physical Education degree who valued the communicative profile. The Portuguese coaches were also males between 21-30 years with a degree in Physical Education but who valued the critical orientation. The Italian coaches tended to be males between 31-40 years with a degree in Physical Education who preferred the critical orientation. Finally, the French coaches were largely males greater than 40 years old with a postgraduate or doctoral degree and with a critical profile.

#### **4. DISCUSSION**

With the presentation of the results of this study, we will discuss the findings most relevant to the objectives of the study and to identify the most important conclusions. We begin with a discussion of those profiles most, and least important to this sample.

4.1. The communicative profile. The coaches highly valued the capacity to dialogue and communicate as the most important orientation in their professional profile. The importance of dialogue was regarded as a means of facilitating a good environment and training climate. It was considered that through the sharing of ideas, thoughts theories and important considerations with the athletes that favorable positive relationships (assertiveness, respect, empathy, negotiation, conflict resolution, etc.) were likely to ensue. The male coaches and those with the best academic training were those who most emphasized this competency. In line with these findings, Zaldivar (2001) considered that communication, as a complex action and form of interchange of verbal and nonverbal interaction, contributes to both rational and emotional contact with, and among, the athletes.

In the same line, Garcia Ucha (1996) found in his study that between 50% and 70% of the work of the coach with the athletes involves communication which must address the objectives, messages to maintain effort and motivation, and regulation and modification of physical responses. Nonetheless, this communicative competency is always extended to everyone in the group. Gutierrez (2003) alluded to the study by Hendry and Welsh of communication by Physical Education teachers with their students, highlighting the fact that teachers tend to provide most help to those more competent students. At the same time, Fraile and De Diego (2006) upon asking athletes who participate in school sport about the communication of the coach expressed the idea that coaches do not interact

similarly with all given that the priority is for a better outcome which results in the less capable receiving less attention.

As such, and in accordance with Cruz (1997) we consider that the educational background of the coaches ought to be considered as a program of development that favors communication (active listening) with the athletes considering the importance of not discriminating against anyone. Thanks to dialogue we can do a better job of connecting better with the needs of each one of the athletes and to generate processes of personal self-knowledge in coaches. In addition, assisting the relationship between the coaches and the less talented athletes forms part of the process of equalizing opportunities.

4.2. The critical profile. The model of the critical coach was the second most valued by the sport coaches (mean = 1.82). Especially emphasized was the necessity of stimulating a climate of reflection and analysis about the training. This focus is possible when athletes are accustomed to a critical view which is habitual through their work and attitudes. For Fernandez-Balboa (2001) it is important that the practice of sport and physical activity surpass the technical model of efficiency such that the coach reviews in a critical way the design, the development and the evaluation of the training program in terms of outcomes.

The changing reality of sport practice requires that the coach learn to act differently according to the situation. There are few studies about coaches and Physical Education teachers and the processes by which they learn to reflect about their actions. As such, to improve the capacity to act in a critical way we highlight diverse studies of action-investigation in which the group of coaches and Physical Education teachers attempt to realize the following objectives. Questions include "What are the goals of my educational program?" "What values and ideologies define my work?" "What improvements can I make in my practice?" "What level of interaction do I establish with my students?" From a formatively-based model in critical pedagogy, the coaches and teachers of Physical Education learn to question everything that happens in their practice and adapt, as such, an attitude of continual improvement (Yague, 1999; Fraile, 2002).

The training of the coach ought to stimulate reflexive and critical thought that permits them to understand themselves better and to search for greater coherence between their practice and their beliefs. As such, being able to introduce a critical examination about their practice and making coaches more sensitive to the search for solutions and to be responsible for their actions with the idea that errors form part of learning is essential.

4.3. The innovative profile. The third of the most accepted profiles was linked to the innovative capacity (mean = 2.00). From the capacity to innovate coaches learn to search for novel and alternative approaches to training which implicates the athletes in the time of participation in an active manner in their

responses to practice. It is also perceived as valuable when athletes are available to collaborate with the alternatives that are proposed.

Creativity, as a human potential, is united with the constructive capacity for thought. In this way, the educator advances their educational purposes in accordance with the capacity to respond to in a comprehensive way. This process is not immediately developed but occurs over time through processes that are increasingly structured and articulated (Pozo, 1994).

The development of a comprehensive model for the learning of individual tactics and techniques, as well as collective techniques, is one of the examples of innovation in sport. This activity, of a cognitive character, represents one of the keys to active learning (Bunker & Thorpe, 1982). In relation to the comprehensive development of the sport activity we can review a study relative to learning in sport through modified games in which an active methodology by the students necessitated cognitive demands (Davis, 1994). This study deals with how participants elaborate the basic strategies of the games while leaving them with the initiative to make the decisions that they will subsequently evaluate with the teacher (Thorpe, 1992; Graça, 1994; Contreras et al, 2001). As such, there needs to be an initial impulse toward the innovative spirit of the coaches that will allow them to act in a more active and creative way in their daily practice.

4.4. The collaborative profile. One of the models that was moderately favored by the coaches was the collaborative approach (mean = 2.20). This approach highlights the need for the coach to coordinate the training plan with their collaborators (assistants and collaborators). In many cases, collaboration is understood as a way of organizing oneself through a division of labor in which is produced the sharing and distribution of the tasks and roles that are essential with different levels of responsibility (Sancho & Ferrer, 1997).

From the perspective of Yague, Fraile and Rodriguez (2004), coaches are not typically accustomed to sharing and negotiating their plans of action with the group. In Yague's doctoral dissertation (1999), it was proposed that an ongoing investigative-action seminar can fill these needs. When the group of football coaches learn to design programs, to observe themselves in action in their practices and to share the search for solutions to the demands of their training they will be effectively engaging in a collaborative approach.

In summary, coaches ought to have an initial educational program in which they learn to reflect over their collaborative practice and in which they generate shared knowledge. In this way, the greater the communication the greater also will be the repertoire of shared communication. At the same time, following the formal education process, coaches become accustomed to sharing their didactic approaches, experiences, problems, possible solutions and the like in collaborative communities (Fraile, 2008).

4.5. The traditional profile. The traditional profile was not highly valued by the coaches (mean = 2.30) despite the fact that it is the method most widely applied in school settings and training centers for sport coaches. The characteristic that is valued by those adhering to the traditional profile is the necessity of strengthening a climate in training where athletes know specifically what they need to do. As such, it is common to observe coaches relying heavily upon traditional teaching approaches, such as the command style of instruction, in which coaches depend upon methods and resources of demonstrated value.

From the perspective of the diverse teaching strategies identified in physical activity and sport by Mosston (1978), Delgado Noguera (1991), Mosston and Ashworth (1993), Rink (1993) and Fraile (2005), the most typical and traditional style of teaching is direct instruction which contains the following characteristics: 1) the teacher is the only one responsible for establishing the goals, the contents, the means and the resources to organize, apply and evaluate the training; 2) the learning activities are structured and oriented according to various concrete objectives and totally defined without the participation of the athlete; 3) the athlete is dependent upon the coach and converts themselves into a mere imitator of what is requested; 4) there is immediate feedback and an evaluation of the results that is determined with little attention dedicated to the process.

In different studies it has been found that the majority of sport coaches utilize the traditional teaching method with command style instruction. Isberg (1993) found that the behaviors most common for the coach depended upon direct instruction. On the other hand, Romero Cerezo (1997) conducted a critical analysis of the traditional model indicating that the methods of this approach are mechanistic and stereotypical and result in monotony and rigidity in training above analytical instruction which has as a priority the use and deployment of perceptual aspects. As such, it will be an effort to introduce strategies of teaching-learning that favor a change toward active styles by the coaches.

4.6. The technological profile. The profile least valued by the school sport coaches was the technological orientation (mean = 2.50). This orientation highlights the use of the methods and material resources of a technological nature and it is thus important to create an environment in which young athletes are willing to use these technologies. The coach has as their priority the search for efficacy in practice through technological means and scientific knowledge as applying these to the behavior and performance of school sport athletes (Gimeno Sacristán & Pérez Gómez, 1992).

The teaching of physical/sport activities habitually depends upon detailed planning and minute control of practices and finally by the assessment of learning through tests related to the realization of objectives (López Pastor, 2009). The use of technological tools is relatively infrequent for the evaluation of objectives. As such, in educational systems it is necessary to apply technological tools to physical education and sport (Sicilia, 1998).

To conclude, we understand that this profile related to the application of technology is not highly regarded by the school sport coaches as a consequence of their educational shortcomings. Furthermore, some coaches prefer the play and recreational elements that are distant from the performance orientation of sport (Fraile et al, 2001).

## **5. CONCLUSIONS**

In the first place, to describe the importance to the coaches about each of the coaching profiles: the communicative profile was most highly valued by the coaches followed by the critical and innovative profiles. Meanwhile the least relevant were perceived to be the collaborative, the traditional, and finally, the technological.

Second, the communicative profile stands out in relation to certain student activities most notably the establishment of a good climate, in relationships with the athletes and in the utilization of the methods and resources available as well as through evaluation processes. Third, the critical profile also has great influence in student activities involving the methods and techniques of training, the styles of training and in relationships with the athletes. Fourth, the innovative profile stands out through its emphasis on the planning of the training sessions. Finally, the capacity to engage in dialogue and communication among athletes and coaches for the purpose of generating a better climate of training is the orientation most highly valued by these participants, particularly the Spaniards and the Italians.



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