

## ORIGINAL ARTICLE

# Coaches' Requirements in Athletic Model: A Qualitative Approach

Kassim.M<sup>1</sup>, Mat A. R<sup>2</sup> & Fadhlina Che Ros<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Department of High Performance Sports, Defence Fitness Academy, , Universiti Pertahanan Nasional Malaysia, 57000 Sg. Besi Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.

<sup>2</sup> Defence Fitness Academy, Universiti Pertahanan Nasional Malaysia, 57000 Sg. Besi Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.

<sup>3</sup> Physic Department, Centre for Fundamental Science, Universiti Pertahanan Nasional Malaysia, 57000 Sg. Besi Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia

## ABSTRACT

**Introduction:** The performance of Malaysia especially athletics nowadays was highly questionable by most of the Malaysian if make the comparison with the performance in the 70s and 80s era, which is the athletics in Malaysia have seen the significant decline gradually. Athletics is the basis of all sports, known as the mother movement. Track and field is one of the oldest sports. Running, jumping, and throwing are basic sports skills that provide the foundation for most other sports, but these basic skills are the focus of athletics or track and field. **Methods:** This study involved (n=8) respondents consisting of head coaches, trainers, and team managers. Qualitative method has been chosen in collecting the data, which is through a semi-structured interview session. **Results:** This study found that coaches' requirements in athletics are affecting several factors such as athletes' consideration, cognitive stimulation that have a big influence on team and athletes' performance and motivational factor. In conclusion, this study produced a positive impact on the training, knowledge and education of athletics at various level. **Conclusion:** The present study showed how the influence by a coach can affect three main components, which are athletes' consideration, motivational factor and cognitive stimulation. The researcher also emphasizes that significant experience, recognition, qualification and education is the main thing that every coach needs to learn and to have significant experience in particular sports

*Malaysian Journal of Medicine and Health Sciences* (2025) 21(SUPP11): 1-6.doi:10.47836/mjms.21.s11.1

**Keywords:** Coaches model, Athletics, Qualitative, Competency, Coaches.

## Corresponding Author:

Mohar Kassim, Ph.D

Email : mohar@upnm.edu.my

Tel : +60196516229

## INTRODUCTION

Athletics is the basis of all sports, known as the mother movement. Track and field are one of the oldest sports. According to Gambetta (8) and Baker et.al. (1), performance development in elite youth sports requires increasingly heavy training, early specialization, careful planning, and the ability to deal with tough competition. Running, jumping, and throwing are basic sports skills that provide the foundation for most other sports, but these basic skills are the focus of athletics or track and field. Running events vary in distance from short sprints (50, 60, and 100 m) to race distances (1,500, 5,000, and 10,000 m), as well as races involving hurdles (110 m hurdles, 400 m hurdles, and steeplechase). Field events consist of throwing events (shot put, discus throw, javelin

throw, and hammer throw), horizontal jump (long jump and triple jump), and vertical jump (high jump and pole vault) Zemper (28).

To ensure that Malaysia can compete with foreign countries in athletics, the Chief Technical Coordinator of the 2022 Higher Education Institutions (HEI) Athletics Championship, Muhamad Malik Ahmad Tobias stated the performance of athletes in higher education institutions need to make evaluation consistently through athletics tournaments at the HEI level Kawi (17). This is because previous studies performed by Ballard et. al. (3) has shown that the performance of Malaysian athletes has a large negative gap compared to other countries who participate in international athletic events, with a difference between 5.3%–71.0%. This percentage shows that the level of athletic achievement is not at a satisfactory level.

Nowadays, most studies focus on coaching, for example Kassim.M & Ali (16) have developed a coaching model

on the effectiveness of coaching, especially in football. The development model is also done by Ismail et.al. (12) about the interpersonal support system. This model focused on all teachers, which are also act as athletic coaches in school, to understand how to become capable and qualified coaches. Сфтї and Gilbert (7) said that the model development on coaching competency should consider the reason listed by giving insight into the main key that should be aligned within the coaching competency components that consist of i) the coaches' knowledge, ii) athletes' performance, and iii) the coaching syllabus. They also stated that it is crucial that the coaches should consistently utilize their knowledge so that the enhancement of psychological confidence, better players connection and the development of character positively of their athletes can occur.

There were literature reviews that related to the coaching requirements. For example, the study conducted by Ismail et.al. (13) shows that there is a solution to help coaches with a better understanding of the coaching task and the need regarding the development of coaching path. Sucipto et. al. (25) also conducted the study on the elements (athlete performance, behavior, psychology, and emotion) that lead to positive impact on coaching competency. There is another study conducted by Santos et. al. (24) examined how important coaching experiences influenced coaches' perceptions. Kassim.M. (17) stated that a coach that lacks knowledge in sports science and poor behaviour in the coaching process are the main reasons why national team, especially in athletics, has low quality athletes and this situation leads to poor performance in any competition. According to Keatloetswe and Maletle (19), a coach becomes an important point in determining the rise or fall of his team. While studies above mainly focus on the physical aspects of sports, it should be noted that some sports produced a model that can be used as a reference to this research. To the best of our knowledge, only two studies have produced a model Kassim.M and Ali.(16) and Ismail et.al (13). Among them, no study conducts research and the findings on coaches' requirements, especially in athletics, are not produced yet.

Therefore, this research aims to analyze what are the elements required by the coaches, especially in athletics. This research is important because athletics is one of the most popular sports in Malaysia, but the achievements in the last five years has been disappointing. In addition, this research will form a model consisting of the coaches' requirements that affect athletics achievement and can be used as a reference from grassroots until to the highest level of athletics.

## **METHODS**

### **Study design and participants**

This research applied a qualitative method to produce a coaches' requirements model at national level. A total

of (n=8) respondents participated in this research. The participants consist of (n=8) athletics coaches.

## **Procedures**

### **Interview session**

The researcher used interview as a main tool to get the data. This interview session is conducted individually, and semi-structured interviews have been applied in this study. The selection of the participants are the ones that have experience of coaching the national team based on purposive sampling, Idriss et al. (11). However, guidelines and basics of conducting interviews in order and draft interview questions are also provided as guidelines. After finishing the interview session, the data from the recorded interview then be transcribed into text so that the researcher can translate the data and the coaching staff are able to make confirmation about the findings of the study and the results of the interview. The researcher can watch as individuals act and speak, thus collecting data firsthand (Kassim.M, (16). The interview sessions have been conducted based on their suggestion for the place and time. The duration for each interview session is about one to three hours with the frequency of meetings being one to two times. The researcher takes seven months to finish all the interview sessions for each participant, beginning from March until October 2023. Then, the researcher continued with the interview sessions until the researcher got enough data to answer the research questions.

### **Data Analysis**

The researcher started by examining all the tran scripts of conversations from voice recorder. From here, the researcher can produce a tentative coding system from which categories of phenomena were derived. When the researcher obtains the main category criteria, then the researcher searches for trends and differences, thus begins inductively processing explanations and phenomena. Constantly need to check all the explanation to get accuracy, understanding and changed to support latest information Braun and Clarke (6). The researcher refers to Tenenbaum and Eklund (27) and Baker et al. (2) as the guidelines to conduct the pilot study. The guidelines included organization and interpretation unstructured qualitative data, and this is called 'generate tags', followed by generating 'label keys' and 'categories'.

First, the researcher begins the process of generating tags by making separation and cutting text from the interview transcripts into details of information. This is important for me to clarify the research-related issues. The content of each interview stands out and gives meaning; it is isolated as a text that stands out from the material that surrounds it. The researcher marks all the tags with temporary names that describe the topic of the text segment. Its aim is to separate the same data segments from the research context by carrying out tag detailing due to a process called breaking and dividing

information Saldana (22). Then, the researcher read all the interview transcripts and analyzed them repeatedly, from one line to another line.

Second, create the label keys. The researcher regrouped and arranged the same tags into certain categories called perspectives Brown (6). Next, the researcher continuously analyzed and changed the data until the researcher could identify the consensus of all perceptions. In the context of this study, for example, the tag "Winning the gold medal" is combined back with similar units of meaning into a larger perspective named "Recognition". Because the perspective is developed from the data, there are changes and improvements for data findings until they are compatible with the research system formed Lester et.al. (20).

Third, the researcher produces the concept categories. This procedure involves the same analytical process as "perspective making" except that there is a comparison for perspectives in this analysis instead of tags, resulting in more particular categories. Content from each perspective to find "similarity in content" and "uniqueness in content" Saldana (22). For each perspective, the researcher able to provide a dimension, which is the specialization and continuity of each detail of the data obtained from the interview results throughout the research Javid et al, (14). Bouncken et al. (4) also emphasized that when all levels of analysis are carried out and categorized at the highest level that describes the knowledge and behavior of the coaching line is achieved, the researcher had to be consistent in comparing, differentiating, and analyzing the data findings of all categories to ensure that the researcher able to analyze precisely all the details collected from interview sessions.

Roberts et al. (21) stated in this study, because the raw data of the interviews are based on the questions provided, each interview was transcribed verbatim from an Apple iPhone 12 Pro Max brand mobile phone to be analyzed on the researcher's personal laptop after completing each interview. Before transcription was carried out, the researcher listened three to four times for each interview session conducted. After that, the researcher separates the interview text into several texts that consist of information themes that can provide unique information, Hussey et.al.(10). After the researcher finishes analyzing the transcription for each interview, the researcher reads all the analyzed transcript repeatedly to get more

understanding and master the information from the data so that it becomes more relevant. Hussey et.al. (10) emphasized that this process can help the researcher to be more understand and sensitive for every word from each respondent during interview session, always check the credibility and reliability of the interview process, and finally, facilitate the content analysis phase of the findings research data that has been conducted.

To increase the reliability and validity of the interview question, the researcher conducted pilot study by interviewing two district coaches in Kuala Lumpur regarding the requirements needed by the coaches to achieve excellence in athletics performance. The problems and deficiencies that have been identified in the interview questions have been corrected and modified by the researcher based on the opinion of the pilot study. The researcher made a discussion with my supervisor to improve the validity of the interview questions according to the research purpose. It can help me identify the level of understanding and the feasibility of the study to be carried out to get the best results.

### Research design

In this research, the provide the flowchart of this research. It shows the process on how to collect data until the development of model. The flowchart is shown as in Figure 1 below:

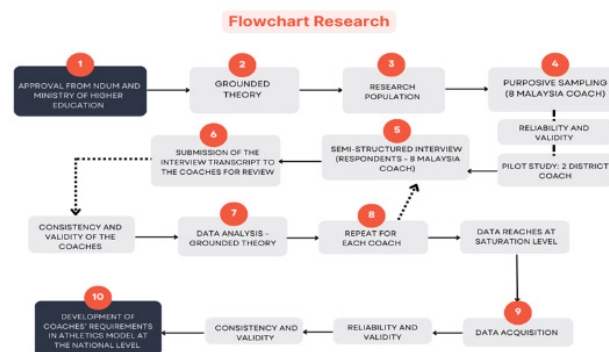


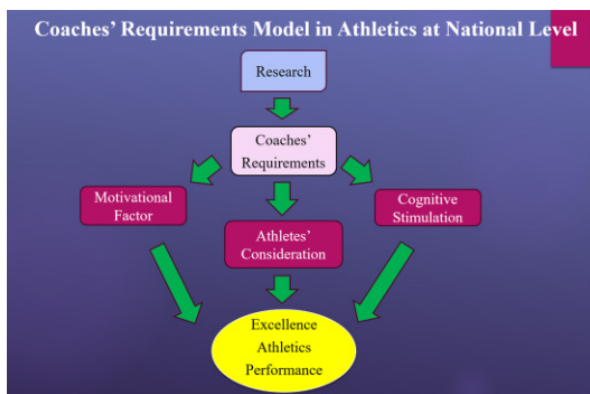
Figure 1: Flowchart Research

### ETHICAL CLEARANCE

This study was approved by Research Ethics Committee Centre of Research Development and Innovation, UPNM with reference UPNM(TNCPI) 01.05/02 Jilid 7 (15)

## RESULTS

Coaches' requirements in athletics model at the national level. In this research, the coaches' requirements affect three factors in ensuring excellent team performance at national level. These factors have been shown through the development of the national athletics coaches' requirements model in Figure 2.



**Figure 2 : Coaches' Requirements Model in Athletics at National Level**

### Athletes' Consideration

Based on these findings, the coaches' requirements affect three components, which are i) athlete consideration, ii) motivational factor and iii) cognitive stimulation. This research believes that coaches play a crucial role in determining the athletes' performance. This finding is like Kassim, M. (16) that emphasize that knowledge and experience are the main elements that every coach needs to possess so that they can plan the training according to their expertise. If they are training well, the researcher believes that their potential can be unleashed, and this is the key that leads to improvement of performance. Henriksen et.al (9) illustrates that high-performance coaches play a critical role as architects of their athletes' considerations and thus contributes to the understanding of the complexity of modern coaching, highlighting a need for ongoing professional development for coaches to enhance their coaching competencies in high-performance settings.

### Motivational Factor

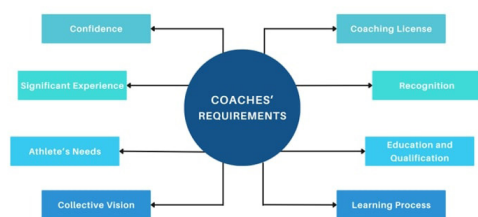
The key determinant of behaviour is motivation in sports (Sheehan et al.(23)). The researcher finds that motivation is one of the elements that determines what a coach need. For example, when a coach wants to win a gold medal, he will do everything he can to make sure that his athlete is completely ready and trained. Motivation toward sports practice is a fundamental factor for continuity and adherence. Kassim, M. (17) also states that

coaches' behavior is one of the important components in improving athletes' performance. The coaches show a positive attitude to the athletes whether they performed good or vice versa in the competition or post-competition. This finding shows that behavior is the main key for the coach to make athlete-coach relationship. Whether the athletes do well or vice versa, the coach must motivate them so that their mental state is in good condition and has desire to win more in the future. By designing and maintaining high-performance contexts, coaches strive not only to enhance athletic performance but also to stimulate the personal development and well-being and ultimately shaping the future of their athletes, Henriksen et.al (9).

### Cognitive Stimulation

To become a great coach, the components that are related to coaching sports, which are motivation, teaching techniques, and character building are important for a coach to understand (Idriss et al.(11)). Jones (14) also states that it is a priority for the coaches who want to develop their potential by improving their knowledge, skills, and continuous professional development. The researcher believes that if the coaches have significant experience and knowledge, then the athletes can train very well, thus enhancing better performance from them. According to Idriss et al. (12), to move the sports coaching program forward, a coaching philosophy is needed which clarifies on how dynamic communication within the athletes learning process combines with the experience knowledge, coaching implementation on the field and creates information that suits the high-performance mentality with the national coaching behaviours.

The figure 3 shows the coaches' requirements in figure 3, shows the importance of coaches' requirements before and during becoming a coach, especially in athletics. An athletic trainer needs to have the maturity of attitude and sufficient level of knowledge to train athletic athletes. The level of knowledge can be obtained through significant experience, learning process, academic qualification, coaching license, education and qualification, recognition, confidence. At the same time, an athletic coach needs to have a vision and understand the needs and wants of athletes. This is because athletic sports have many disciplines that need to be adhered to. Therefore, in the context of athletics, it is necessary to have a head coach in addition to coaches and assistant coaches in various disciplines such as sprinting, medium distance running, long distance running, javelin throwing, discus throwing, shot put, high jump, long jump, pole vault and triple jump.



**Figure 3 : Coaches' Requirements**

## CONCLUSIONS

These findings show how big role and influence by a coach can affect three main components, which are athletes' consideration, motivational factor and cognitive stimulation. The researcher also emphasizes that significant experience, recognition, qualification and education are the main things that every coach needs to learn and to have significant experience. Finally, these findings can be used as reference to the coaches, sports managers, and players to improve character development continuously and their performance at various levels, especially in athletics. Youth athlete development currently consists of several theoretical models, each with their own strengths and weaknesses, that can guide the training of young athletes to maximize their performance. Hence, Varghese et.al (26) stated that those involved in this process, which involves physicians, athletic trainers, coaches, physical educators, and parents should understand these various models and trial their various features to see what works best for their individual athlete with consideration given to factors such as their stage of development.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

This research has been sponsored by Center for Research and Innovation Management UPNM through grant research (Grant: FRGS/1/2020/SS0/UPNM/01/1)

## REFERENCES

- Baker, J., Cobley, S., & Schorer, J. (2013). Talent Identification and Development in Sport. *Talent Identification and Development in Sport*, 7(1), 177–180. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9780203850312>
- Baker, J., Young, B. W., Tedesqui, R. A., & McCardle, L. (2020). New perspectives on deliberate practice and the development of sport expertise. *Handbook of sport psychology*, 556-577.
- Ballard, R., Washif, J., & Richards, A. (2016). Statistical Assessment of Performance of Malaysian Track and Field Athletes. *Malaysian Journal of Movement, Health & Exercise*, 5(1), 1. <https://doi.org/10.4103/2600-9404.323118>
- Bouncken, R. B., Qiu, Y., Sinkovics, N., & K̄rsten, W. (2021). Qualitative research: extending the range with flexible pattern matching. *Review of Managerial Science*, 15(2), 251-273.
- Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2021). Can I use TA? Should I use TA? Should I not use TA? Comparing reflexive thematic analysis and other pattern-based qualitative analytic approaches. *Counselling and Psychotherapy Research*, 21(1), 37-47.
- Brown, I. J. (2021). Traits Learned from High School Athletic Participation Among African American Males: A Qualitative Case Study. Doctoral dissertation, University of Phoenix
- C̄pt̄i, J. and W. Gilbert, (2009). An integrative definition of coaching effectiveness and expertise. *International Journal of Sports Science & Coaching*, 4(3): p. 307-323.
- Gambetta, V. (1989). *The Athletics Congress's track and field coaching manual*. Leisure press.
- Henriksen.K; Dideriksen.S; Kuettel.A; Schlawe.A & Storm.L.K. (2025). The coach as an architect of Danish high- performance sport environments. *Psychology of Sport and Exercise*, volume 80, 102877.
- Hussey, J., Weinberg, R., & Assar, A. (2020). Mindfulness in sport: An intervention for a choking-susceptible athlete. *Case Studies in Sport and Exercise Psychology*, 4(1), 1-10.
- Idriss, A. F. A., Kassim, M., Razak, A. E. A., Malek, N. F. A., & Adnan, M. A. (2023). Malaysian Rugby Coaching Competency among High Performance National Coaches. *International Journal of Human Movement and Sports Sciences*, 11(4), 838–849. <https://doi.org/10.13189/saj.2023.110418>
- Idriss, A.F.A., Kassim, M., & Razak, A.E.A. (2024). Malaysian rugby union coach: Qualitative systematic review. *AIP Conference Proceedings*. <https://doi.org/10.1063/5.0198569>
- Ismail, F. H., Abd Karim, Z., & Ghazali, N. (2020). Kompetensi guru sebagai jurulatih bola sepak dan kesannya terhadap prestasi pemain bola sepak Pusat Latihan Daerah Kuala Lumpur. *Jurnal Sains Sukan & Pendidikan Jasmani*, 9(1), 47-61. <https://doi.org/10.37134/jsspj.vol9.1.6.2020>
- Javid, M., Bagheri, G., Moghadamzadeh, A., Assadi, H., & Almasi, H. (2021). Determining Effective Indicators on Seasonal Pattern of Sport Tourism Destinations Case Study, Ardabil Province. *Journal of Sport Management*, 13(2), 539-546.
- Jones, R. (2019). *Studies in Sports Coaching*. Cambridge Scholars.
- Kassim, M. (2014). Towards the reflective football coach from qualitative analysis. *Journal of Human Sport and Exercise*, 9(1). <https://doi.org/10.14198/jhse.2014.9.proc1.06>
- Kassim, M., & Ali, N. C. R. (2015). An effective coaching through "coaching model". *Journal of Scientific Research & Development*, 2(9), 1115-7569.
- Kawi, M.R. (2022). *Kejohanan Olahraga IPT platform*

- nilai prestasi atlet berterusan. <https://www.bharian.com.my/sukan/olahraga/2022/10/1012684/kejohanan-olahraga-ipt-platform-nilai-prestasi-atlet-berterusan>
19. Keatleholetswe, L., & Maletle, L. (2019). Coaching Efficacy, Player Perceptions of Coaches' Leadership Styles, and Team Performance in Premier League Soccer. *Research Quarterly for Exercise and Sport*, 90(1), 71–79. <https://doi.org/10.1080/02701367.2018.1563277>
  20. Lester, J. N., Cho, Y., & Lochmiller, C. R. (2020). Learning to do qualitative data analysis: A starting point. *Human Resource Development Review*, 19(1), 94-106.
  21. Roberts, G. A., Arnold, R., Gillison, F., Colclough, M., & Bilzon, J. (2020). Military veteran athletes' experiences of competing at the 2016 Invictus Games: A qualitative study. *Disability and rehabilitation*, 1-10.
  22. Saldaca, J. (2021). *The coding manual for qualitative researchers*. Sage Publications Limited.
  23. Sheehan, R. B., Herring, M. P., & Campbell, M. J. (2018). Associations Between Motivation and Mental Health in Sport: A Test of the Hierarchical Model of Intrinsic and Extrinsic Motivation. *Frontiers in Psychology*, 9. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2018.00707>
  24. Santos L., Gonzalez V., Iscar M., Brime J. I., Fernandez-Rio J., Egocheaga J. (2010). A new individual and specific test to determine the aerobic-anaerobic transition zone (Santos Test) in competitive judokas .J. *Strength Cond. Res.*, 24, 2419–2428.
  25. Sucipto, A., Mutohir, T.C. & Sudijandoko, A. (2017). Development Of Coach Competency Evaluation Instrument Of Football School. *International Journal Of Physical Education, Sports And Health* ,4(2), 106–110.
  26. Varghese.M; Ruparell.S & Cynthia LaBella.C. (2021). Youth Athlete Development Models: A Narrative Review. *Sport Health*. Nov 10;14(1):20–29. doi: 10.1177/1941738121105539.
  27. Tenenbaum, G., & Eklund, R. C. (2020). *Handbook of sport psychology*. John Wiley & Sons.
  28. Zemper, E. D. (2005). Track and field injuries. *Medicine and Sport Science*, 48, 138–151. <https://doi.org/10.1159/000084287>