



Educational Needs Assessment of Coaches for the Development of Sports Boards in Mazandaran Province

Seyed Hossein Alavi*

Associate Professor, Department of Physical Education, Technical and Vocational University (TVU), Tehran, Iran.

Farnaz Fakhri

Department of Sport Management, Faculty of Sport Sciences, Arak University, Arak, Iran.

Abolfazl Arij

PhD Candidate in Sport Management, Faculty of Physical Education and Sports Sciences, Guilan University, Rasht, Iran.

Abstract

Success in competitive arenas requires active learning, which is achieved through targeted practice, skill development, and fundamental education provided by coaches. Therefore, the purpose of the present study was to assess the educational needs of coaches for the development of sports boards in Mazandaran Province. The present study was conducted in the fall of 2025 with an applied objective and a qualitative phenomenological approach using Colaizzi's method. The participants were officials of the Training Committee of Mazandaran Province Sports Boards and education experts of the Sports and Youth Departments of the counties. Eighteen semi-structured interviews were conducted using purposive sampling until theoretical saturation was reached. The validity and reliability of the data collection tool were confirmed based on the criteria of Lincoln and Guba (1988), including credibility, dependability, and confirmability. According to the results of the research data analysis, ten main themes were identified, namely: coaching knowledge, general knowledge, knowledge of new technologies, knowledge production and exchange, evolution in sports management, talent identification and development, specialized infrastructure, knowledge of nutrition and exercise science, psychological knowledge, and knowledge of pathology and corrective exercises. These themes constituted the educational needs of coaches for the development of sports boards. Therefore, it is concluded that the coach education system has a staged and gradual structure. This structure allows coaches to gradually acquire basic and advanced skills and advance from the level of applied awareness to the professional level.

Introduction

Coach education is usually provided as a formal course or programme designed by national governing bodies (NGBs); coach education by sport governing bodies has the potential to form an important part of coaches' learning. It should be noted that the development of such competences is linked to terms such as personal development, management competences, learning networks, skill-focused mentoring and coaching, innovation and change, and the use of scientific research to improve practice (Bakkenbüll & Dilger, 2020).

In this regard, a comprehensive review of domestic and international research related to the educational needs of coaches shows that sports boards face a multitude of challenges and various

* Corresponding Author: shalavi@tvu.ac.ir

How to Cite: Alavi, S. H., Fakhri, F., & Arij, A. (2026). Educational needs assessment of coaches for the development of sports boards in Mazandaran Province. *Journal of Sustainable Development in Sport Management*, 7(16), 174–193. <https://doi.org/10.22054/qrsm.2026.90155.282>

issues surrounding the lack of human resources, specialized training, and necessary infrastructure. These obstacles significantly disrupt the operational efficiency of coaches and thwart the realization of their educational and competitive goals. Mazandaran Province, with its significant natural and cultural capacities in the field of sports, needs an efficient educational system for its coaches. Such a system can guarantee the quality of education, the updating of their specialized knowledge, and educational skills. From this perspective, assessing the educational needs of coaches for the development of sports in Mazandaran Province is a fundamental step toward identifying shortcomings, priorities, and scientific planning for the sustainable growth of sports in the region. Therefore, the question is: What is the coach education model for the development of sports boards in Mazandaran Province?

Methods and Materials

The present study was conducted in the fall of 2025 with an applied objective and a qualitative phenomenological approach using Colaizzi's method. The participants were officials of the Mazandaran Province Sports Boards Training Committee and education experts from the Sports and Youth Departments of the counties of Mazandaran Province. Theoretical saturation was achieved after 18 semi-structured interviews conducted using purposive sampling. The exclusion criteria were insufficient willingness or motivation to continue participating in the study and insufficient knowledge of the research topic.

After each interview, the interview was fully transcribed and coded using MAXQDA 2020 software. Four criteria—credibility, transferability, confirmability, and dependability—were examined and confirmed to establish the trustworthiness of the qualitative research.

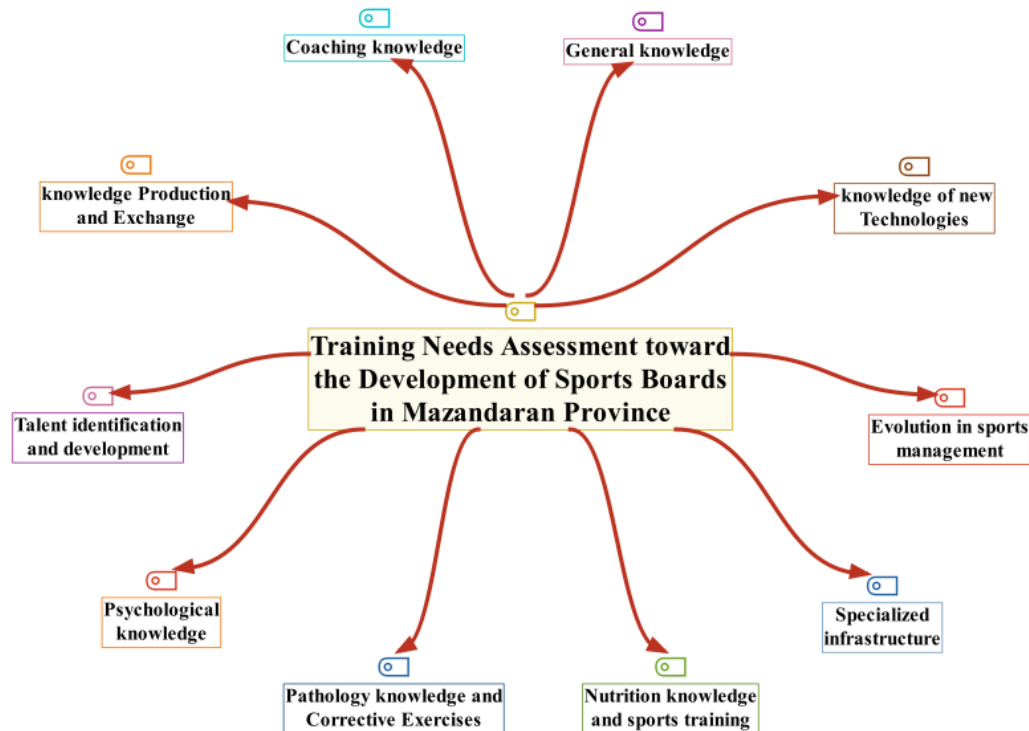
Results and Discussion

Of the 18 interviewees in this study, 7 were male and 11 were female. Most participants had a bachelor's degree (7) or a master's degree (6). In addition, regarding their history of participation in educational activities in sport in Mazandaran Province, 9 had participated for more than 20 years; 6 for 15 to 20 years, and 3 for 10 to 15 years.

Based on the results of coding the themes derived from the interviews, ten main themes were identified, namely: coaching knowledge, general knowledge, knowledge of new technologies, knowledge production and exchange, evolution in sports management, talent identification and development, specialized infrastructure, knowledge of nutrition and exercise science, psychological knowledge, and knowledge of pathology and corrective exercises in assessing the educational needs of coaches for the development of sports boards.

Coaches must be equipped with not only technical skills but also general knowledge; this knowledge enhances their ability to respond effectively and professionally in emergency situations. It should also be noted that the individual knowledge and skills of coaches can only flourish with an efficient, transparent, and merit-based management infrastructure. One of the most important educational needs at the sports-board level concerns specialized sports infrastructure, which must not only be physically safe but also meet technological and environmental standards to support specialized training and up-to-date equipment. In turn, this standardization not only increases safety but also accustoms athletes to professional and formal environments from an early age.

Figure 1. Model of Coaches' Educational Needs Assessment for the Development of Sports Boards in Mazandaran Province



Source: Results finding

Conclusion

The coach education system has a staged and gradual structure. This structure allows coaches to gradually acquire skills ranging from basic to advanced and progress from a level of applied awareness to a professional level.

Keywords: education, development, coaches, sports boards, needs assessment