



Coaches' perspective on athletes' personality characteristics in the context of effective coaching

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Abstract

The objectives of this study were: (a) to explore the coaches' ideas about effective coaching and their perspective on athletes' personalities as a part of it, (b) to examine how the coaches learn about athletes' personality and how they use this knowledge in their work, and (c) to examine the coaches' knowledge about perfectionism and what strategies they use working with perfectionistic athletes. Ten Swedish coaches working in individual sports (n=5) and team sports (n=5) took part in semistructured in-depth interviews. The interview guide reflected the objectives of the study, and further 'effective coaching', 'athletes' personality', and 'perfectionism' served as major categories for the data analysis. The results can be briefly summarized as follows: (a) coaches did not have a clear picture of what effective coaching is major keywords they used to describe it were: balance, focus, communication, good planning and structure, (b) they found athletes' personality characteristics important to learn about and to use in their work, and (c) coaches' knowledge about perfectionism is poor, and they had a difficulty to reflect about their strategies in relation to perfectionistic athletes. The results are discussed in relation to the theoretical frameworks and previous research.

Keywords: Athletes' personality, Coaches' effectiveness, Perfectionism, Personality knowledge

Kello, E. (2011). *Tränares uppfattning av idrottarens personlighets karaktär i kontexten av effektivt ledarskap*. (Magisteruppsats i psykologi inriktning idrott, 91-120 hp) Sektionen för Hälsa och Samhäll. Högskolan i Halmstad

Sammanfattning

Studiens huvudsyfte var (a) att undersöka tränares uppfattning och idé kring effektiv träning samt deras uppfattning kring idrottarens personlighet som en del av denna, (b) att undersöka hur tränaren får förståelse kring idrottarens personlighet och hur de sedan använder sig utav den kunskapen i deras arbete, och (c) att undersöka tränarens kännedom om perfektionism samt vilken strategi de använder ifall idrottaren har perfektionistiska tendenser. Tio svenska tränare intervjuades baserade på individuell tränare (n=5) samt lagtränare (n=5). Tränarna medverkade i en semistrukturerad djupintervju. Intervjuguiden bygger på studiens syfte 'effektiv träning', 'idrottarens personlighet', och 'perfektionism' vilket också fungerade som huvud kategorier vid data analysen. Resultatet visar att: (a) tränarna har ingen klar bild av vad effektiv träning är och de stora nyckelord som användes var; balans, fokus, kommunikation, bra planering och struktur, (b) de ansåg att idrottarens personlighets karaktär är viktigt att förstå och använda i arbetet, och (c) tränarnas kunskap kring perfektionism är låg samt att de fann det svårt att reflektera kring vilken strategi de använder kring idrottarens perfektionistiska tendenser. Resultatet sammanfattas i relation till teoretiska referensramar samt tidigare forskning.

Nyckelord: Effektiv träning, Idrottarens personlighet, Perfektionism, Personlighets kännedom

Introduction

Coaches' role in developing athletes is well known to strengthen the athletes' physical as well as their psychological skills (Lorimer & Jowett, 2010). Coaches' main tasks are to influence the athletes and to give them directions as well as knowledge, experience, expertise, physical, technical and psychological preparation (Cassidy, Jones, & Potrac, 2004; ref in Lorimer & Jowett, 2010). Hardy, Jones, and Gould (2007) noticed that because of all the demands that an elite athlete has both the athlete as well as coaches need to keep high motivation to be able to continue. Wood (2007) explained that coaching is difficult to describe and evaluate because there is a big difference between one situation to the next. Wood (2007) defined a coach as a big part of the sport helping athletes to enjoy their experiences and achieve their best performance. In other words, coaches are leaders of people engaged in sport participation. What a coach is or what a coach should be is a lot to describe, it also varies a lot depending on the situation. In the end a coach significantly affects the experiences of both athletes and spectators no matter what level of competition (ibid.). This study were particularly interested in Swedish coaching's perception on effective coaching, the athletes' personality and if the coaches' have any knowledge around perfectionism as in a personality characteristic.

Key terms

Coach/coaching

Coaching has been defined as *'the art of facilitating the performance, learning and development of another'* (Downey, 2003, p. 21). In early years leader was another word for coach and the two definitions of coaching/leadership was not separated. When the terms coaches or coaching were used previously researchers often talked about leadership, and vice versa. In research of today, it is essential to separate and approach these two separately (Vealey, 2005). The definition of coaching or coaches is based on a more coach/athlete relationship grounded perspective. Leadership is associated with a leader that makes all the decisions and in this perspective the athletes just follow. Coaches are more viewed as individuals that help, motivate and support the athletes (Horn, 2002, 2008). According to Peters and Austin (1985), coaching is not only about techniques or devising the perfect game plan it is about really paying attention to people and helping them to develop. Coaches need to really believe in the athletes, care about them and involve them in the decisions. Bennis and Nanus (1985) stressed that it is a dynamic relationship, both the coach and the athletes should be inspired by one another.

Effective coaching

Horn's latest definition of an effective coaching is coaching *"which results in either successful performance outcomes (measured in terms of either win-loss percentages or degree of self-perceived performance abilities) or positive psychological responses on the part of the athletes (e.g., high perceived ability, high self-esteem, an intrinsic motivational orientation, high level of sport enjoyment and satisfactions)"* (Horn, 2008 p. 240). Horn's definition of coaching effectiveness is inspired by (among others) Bandura's (1977; Horn, 2002, 2008) *Self-efficacy theory* as well as Whites (1959; ref in Horn 2002, 2008) *Competence motivations theory*. Most of the research today is based on *Self-determination theory* by Deci & Ryan (SDT; 1985; Horn, 2002, 2008; Deci, Vallerand, Pelletier & Ryan, 1991). SDT is all about why individuals choose to perform (effort and persist) in any activity, their self-determination, motivation or amotivation (Amorosea & Anderson-Butcher, 2007). Even if research on coaching has increased in the last decades there are still not enough studies to provide a clear and broad picture of

coaches' effectiveness (Gilbert & Trudel, 2004; ref. in Hagemanna, Straussa & Büsch, 2008).

Personality characteristics

Defining personality is a challenge because in the end all theories agree that every person is unique. For that uniqueness a person needs to have different kinds of characteristics (Weinberg & Gould, 2007). Hollander (1967; Martens, 1975; ref. in Weinberg & Gould, 2007) suggested *a schematic view of personality structure*, which includes: psychological core, typical responses and role-related behavior, as three levels related to each other (Weinberg & Gould, 2007). The psychological core is the basic level of the personality and represents the deepest component of your inner self. The typical response is the way a person responds and adjusts to the environment and the role-related behavior is based on how a person act due to that persons perceive the social situation (ibid.).

Perfectionism

There have been different kinds of definitions concerning perfectionism. According to Hollander's (1978; ref. in Saboonchi, 2000) definition perfectionism is all about the demands a person has on themselves and gets from others. These demands lead the individual trying to always find the best performance, even more than the situation demand. The definition from Hamachecks (1978; ref. in Haase, Prapavessis, & Owen, 2002) can be seen in two different ways, as either normal perfectionism or neurotic perfectionism. Normal perfectionism relates to those who set high standards for themselves. Neurotic perfectionism, on the other hand, relates to those who set high standards and still never thinks the performance is good or good enough. Two of the most often used definitions are the definitions by Burn (1983; ref in Saboonchi, 2000) and Muller (1983; ref in Saboonchi, 2000). Burn's definition is that a person sets to high and unrealistic goals in relations to the performance. According to Muller (1983; ref in Saboonchi, 2000) perfectionism is when a person tries to achieve perfect performance.

Theoretical Framework

Effective coaching

Chelladurai (1978, 1990, 1993; ref. in Horn, 2002, 2008) developed a theory specific to sport and based it on the general leadership theories and models. Chelladurai (1978, 1990, 1993) incorporated characteristics of the group members (the athletes) in the theory as well as the situational factors to provide a framework for specifying or identifying effective leadership. Chelladurai (1978, 1990, 1993) proposed that the leadership effectiveness could be measured by performance outcomes and the athlete's satisfaction (ibid.). Another theory developed by Smoll and Smith (1989), agrees with Chelladurai (1978, 1990, 1993; ref. in Horn, 2002, 2008) and it also includes cognitive process. To summarize Chelladurai's (1978, 1990, 1993; ref in Horn, 2002, 2008) and Smoll and Smith's (1989) theories *the working model of coaching effectiveness* (WMCE) was developed by Horn (2002, 2008). See Figure 1

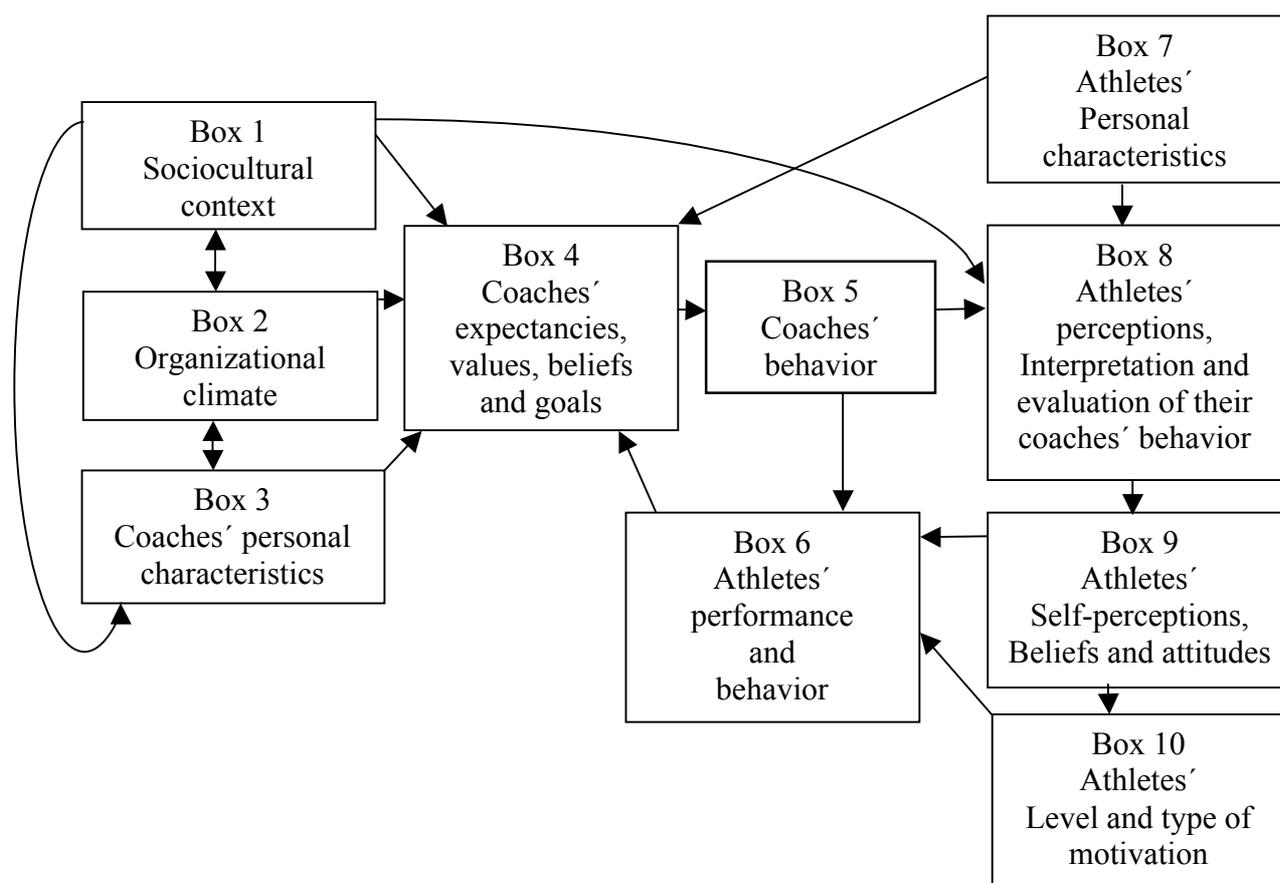


Figure 1

The working model of coaching effectiveness (WMCE; Horn, 2002, 2008).

The cornerstone of the working model is box 5, coaches' behavior. Since the coach influence both the athlete's performance and emotional well being, it can be either a positive or a negative effect. There are three major points in this model and the first major point is on the left side (box 1 – 3). On this side of the model there is an interaction between the coaches and the athletes and it is similar to Chelladurai's (1978, 1990, 1993, 2007; ref in Horn, 2002, 2008) and Smoll and Smith's (1989) models. It contains socio-cultural (box 1), organizational (box 2) and the coaches' own personal characteristics (box 3). These three factors can lead up to or explain what kind of behavior coaches exhibit in sport settings. A consideration is that the coach's own expectations, values, beliefs and his or her goals (box 4) are part of the outcome as well. Box 5, 7 – 10 on the right side of this model is the second major point in this model. The right side is consistent with Smoll and Smith's (1989) model and means that the coaches' and athletes' behavior are interacting with each other. It is not only the coach's behavior that has a direct effect on the athletes' performance and behavior, it also has an indirect effect on them. The athletes' characteristics (box 7) influence the athletes' perception, interpretation (box 8) as well as the coaches' expectancies, values, beliefs and his or her goals (box 4). The coaches' behavior will also influence the athletes' self-confidence, self-esteem, perception of competence, attributional beliefs (box 9) which in the end affects the athletes' motivation level (box 10), performance and behavior (box 6). Horn (2002, 2008) did notice that the model of effective coaching behavior

would not be effective for all athletes in all sport situations. It will depend on the athlete and the sport context.

Perfectionism

Because of the differences between the definitions of perfectionism Frost, Marten, Lahart, and Rosenblate (1990) found the perfectionism to have a multidimensional and complex structure. Frost et al.'s (1990) theory developed a model with the same name as the theory; *Multidimensional Perfectionism Scale* (MPS, Frost et al. 1990). Frost et al.'s (1990) theory focuses on negative perfectionism and involves six factors: *excessive concern of making mistakes, high personal standards, perception of high parental expectations, perception of high parental criticism, doubting the quality of one's own actions and a preference for order and organization*. According to Hewitt and Flett (1991) the perfectionist personality style with both personal and a social component were missing, and they believed that this was important. Hewitt and Flett (1991) added three new factors to the MPS; *self-orientated, other-orientated and socially prescribed perfectionism*. Figure 2 shows a compound model of Frost et al. (1990) and Hewitt and Flett (1991).

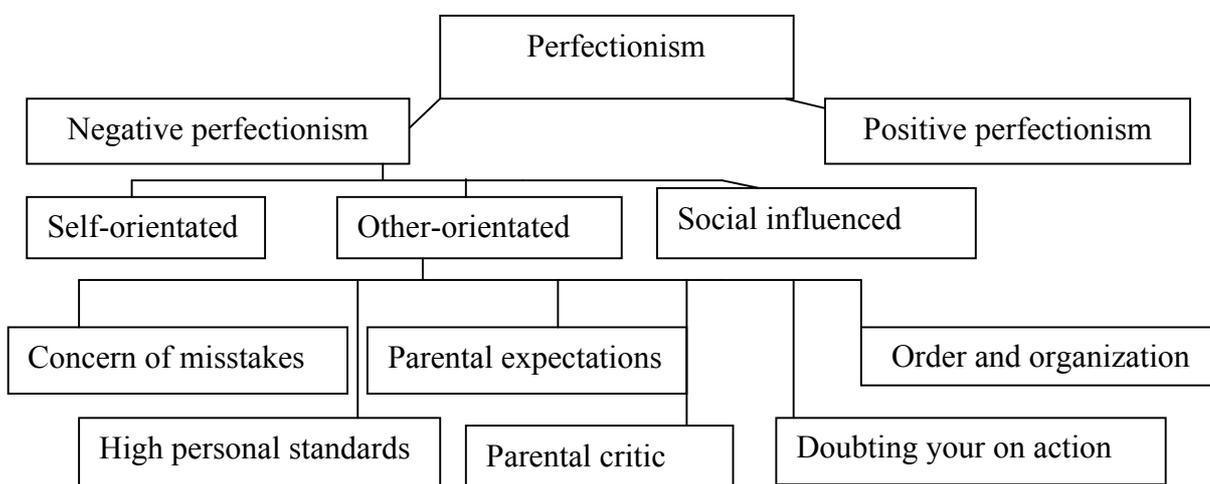


Figure 2. Multidimensional Perfectionism scale (MPS), free from Frost et al. (1990), Flett and Hewitt (1991)

Since the MPS theory only concentrates on the negative aspect of perfectionism, Terry-Short, Owens, Slade, and Dewey (1995) developed a measure of perfectionism that incorporated both positive and negative aspects. Terry-Short et al. (1995) also investigated the way different types of perfectionism varied across different populations. Perfectionism was no longer only seen as negative (unhealthy, neurotic) it was also seen as positive (healthy, normal). It became clear that it was essential to separate these two. The positive perfectionism was a good personal characteristic.

Previous research

Effective coaching

According to Horn (2002) previous research on effective coaching was based on coaches' characteristics, behaviors and leadership style. These three components were the main goal for an effective coach. However they were conducted in educational and industrial setting and not in a sport context. A discovery through previous research was

that the definition of “effective leadership factors” typically came from the coaches’ personality style. That personality style was concentrated on, trait or behavior (ibid.). Trait means that the coaches are using a specific style of behavior in general (Weinberg & Gould, 2007). In early 1970s the trait or behavior directions was only concentrating on the effective coaching and not on the non-effective coaching. This discovery gave the researches knowledge that it cannot generalize effective coaching anymore. Instead it is of importance to gain more insight into coaches’ situational and individual factors. A new direction of what effective coaching is was created and a number of different situation based theories were proposed after that (Horn, 2002). Even if Horn (2002, 2008) noticed the importance of investigating non-effective coaching in order to define effective coaching. Gearity and Murray (in press) noticed the limited research on non-effective coaching, the research is mostly conducted on effective coaching (Gould, Greenleaf, Dieffenbach, Lauer, Chang, Peterson, 2000; Stewart, 1993; Gearity & Murray, 2010).

In trying to uncover the individual’s skills that an effective coach has to have in effort to implement these findings (i.e., coaches’ characteristics, behaviors, leadership style) a coach needs different numbers of characteristics (Hagemanna, Straussa, & Büsch, 2008). Those characteristics depend on the situation and it includes coaches’ influence on athletes’ satisfaction and performance, self-esteem and trait anxiety according to Walsh and Morris (2002). Cross and Lyle (1999) noticed that sports literature ignores the process of coaching which can lead to difficulties and failure to define effective coaching. They found that successful coaching performance is about time and circumstances and a coach has to demonstrate effective coaching performance during a period of time (ibid.). Salmela (1996) has a similar approach, effectiveness from a coach measured first when a coach has been coaching in a longer period of time and been recognized as applied expertise. For the effectiveness of a coach research investigates coaches’ philosophy (Martens, 1987; Roos, 2005) and effectiveness (Horn, 2002, 2008). Most recently studies on coaches’ greatness (Becker, 2009) and coach passion (Lafrenière, Jowett, Vallerand & Carbonneau, in press) has been conducted. Even communication (Neenan, 2009) as well as the relationship between the coach and the athlete (Jowett & Cockerill, 2003; Jowett & Wylleman, 2006; Poczwadowski, Barott, & Jowett, 2006; Lafrenière et. al., in press) has been highlighted. All in all during the last three decades the research has particularly been concentrated on competitions, cognition, practice strategy and techniques, coaching characteristics, leadership style, or behavior patterns concerning what is most effective (Horn, 2008). New investigations also include that research nowadays shifted focus from behavior during practice to behavior during competitions (Smith & Cushion, 2006; Hagemanna, Straussa, & Büsch, 2008).

Coach/Coaching

According to Riemer and Chelladurai (1995) to analyze the sport of the players, the interaction and the dynamics of the group interdependency has to be taken into consideration. Nowadays the coaches’ leadership style has gone from an autocratic decision-making style to a more democratic decision-making style (Amorosea & Anderson-Butcher, 2007). According to researches the different leadership styles can be one aspect on effective coaching (Horn, 2002). Previous research shows that coaches who use a democratic style can allow the athlete to participate more in goal setting planning for the group, arranging team practices and plotting team tactics. The democratic way of coaching can foster significant growth, especially with younger

athletes (Woods, 2007). A risk the coach has to be aware of is that with a democratic style the coach allows the group to make certain decisions on his or her own, which can be both positive and negative. On the other hand, if a certain sport requires a great deal of independency by the athlete, this athlete will benefit a lot from the democratic leadership style (ibid.). Gillet, Vallerand, Amoura, and Baldes (2010) research supports that athletes become more motivated when the coach autonomy is supportive. According to Amorosea and Anderson-Butcher (2007) the athletes feel a lower level of autonomy and relatedness, and also report to be less motivated when the coaches are more autocratic. Regarding leadership behavior in sport, research has recognized that peer leaders have higher attributes concerning social support, positive feedback and democratic decision-making behaviors than the coaches (Loughead & Hardy, 2005; Eys, Loughead, & Hardy, 2007). This indicates that coaches' behavior is more autocratic (Loughead & Hardy, 2005; Eys, Loughead & Hardy, 2007) and the autocratic style, in general, still is preferred in team sports (Woods, 2007).

Leadership coaching is a new way to approach effective coaching according to Ely, Boyce, Nelson, Zaccaro, Hernez-Broome and Whymand (2010). Broadly stated, leadership coaching is defined as a relationship between a client and a coach (client in this case is an athlete) that facilitates the client to become a more effective leader (Douglas & Morley, 2000; Kilburg, 1996; Peterson & Hicks, 1999; Witherspoon & White, 1997; ref. in Ely et. al. 2010). For example, in one study it was found that if the coaches have bad relations with the athletes the athletes have a tendency to develop anxiety (Baker & Hawes, 2000). The understanding between the coach and the athlete has been of interest to sport psychologists during some time (Jowett & Cockerill, 2003; Jowett & Wylleman, 2006; Poczwadowski, Barott, & Jowett, 2006; Lafrenière et al. in press), starting with Walsh and Morris (2002) research on effective leadership in sport. Walsh and Morris (2002) examined three aspects of coaching: coaching history and influences, effective coaching behaviors, and coaches training and accreditation. A year later a theory by Mageau and Vallerand (2003) illustrated three factors: coaches' personality orientation, the coaching context and the coaches' perceptions of the athletes' behavior and motivation (Horn, 2008). Mageau and Vallerand's (2003) *Motivational model of the coach-athlete relationship* is incorporated with Vallerand's (2001), *Hierarchical perspective on intrinsic and extrinsic motivation* together with Deci and Ryan's (1985) theory on cognitive-evaluation (Horn, 2008). According to Locke (1996) sharing the same goals between coaches and athletes, can be very effect full if the coach can give the athlete good reasons for that goal. A good coaching ability can therefore strengthen the encouragement and commitment between them. In addition to having a good coach-athlete relation, it is very important to understand each other in order to be successful (Latham & Locke, 2006). Unfortunately in sport settings understanding and empathy is almost non-existent (Lorimer & Jowett, 2009). However, Poczwadowski, Barott, and Jowett (2006) acknowledge that the aim for the future is to have understanding between coaches and athletes, naturally it will depend on how it is used (method and creativity). Recent research have investigated the significance of the coach-athlete relationship, which showed that if they exist together in harmony it would be positively predicted in an autonomy-supportive behavior towards the athlete. It would also predict high quality behavior and in the end a general happiness among the athletes (Lafrenière et al., in press).

To understand the coach-athlete relationship we need to understand the interaction between two people. Vygotsky (1896 – 1934; ref in Bråten, 1998) noticed that

interaction is essential for the individual, for the knowledge and performance development and believed that it takes both an active teacher and an active student for development. Vygotsky had a strong opinion concerning that all guidance should be adapted for each individual and that is why the relationship and the dialog between the teacher and student is essential. To look for the positive things in each individual, develop and improve should always be a priority (Vygotsky, 1896 – 1934; *ibid.*). Giddens (1938; ref in Olesen & Pedersen, 2000) theory about individual development and the interaction between two people is *trust*. Giddens thinks that trust is the keyword for each individual to develop and all individual development is a process. For a good development it is important for all to learn about risk, your inner-self and trust yourself in that learning process (Olesen & Pedersen, 2000).

Good communication between the athlete and the coach is essential for understanding and for a democratic coaching style (Lorimer & Jowett, 2009) as well as the coach-athlete relationship (Poczwardowski, Barott, & Jowett, 2006). Through good athlete-coach communication they will have a better understanding between each other. Recent research found a new way of thinking concerning the coaches' ability to talk to the athletes. It is called the socratic questioning and it is a cornerstone of cognitive behavior therapy (CBT; Beck et al. 1993; Padesky & Greenberger, 1995; Neenan, 2009). Researchers in the area believe that coaching and CBT has the same aim when it comes to problem resolution, closing the performance gap in coaching and the amelioration of disturbed thoughts, feelings and behaviors (Grieger 2007; Neenan, 2009). CBT is focusing on our way of thinking which may lead to emotional and behavioral changes. According to Neenan (2009) good socratic questions refers to being concise, clear, open, purposeful, constructive, focused, tentative, and neutral. Neenan (2009) also believes that if coaches ask the right questions, they also encourage the athletes to reflect on their own way of thinking and act in a way that will help the athlete to develop new problem-solving perspectives, improve performance, achieve goals and take their lives in often unanticipated directions (*ibid.*).

Focus among many coaches is to create a better understanding of the athletes' strength and weaknesses and to create a strategy for each individual to improve the performance. Understanding the different personality characteristics of an athlete, gives the coach a better understanding of why individuals react the way they do. In the end it will be easier for the coach who has that knowledge to prepare the athlete mentally and strategically in the individual's best interest (Hassmén, Hassmén & Plate, 2003).

Perfectionism

Perfectionism is a personality characteristic, positive or negative (Hewitt & Flett, 1991). In the beginning of the 90s the research mainly focused on negative perfectionism and was associated with pathological or neurotic perfectionism (Terry-Short et al., 1995). In the later part of the 90s the focus changed when researchers observed positive perfectionism in a person's strength and how to do things right. The negative perfectionism was driven by fear and failure. The findings lay in line with Hamachek's (1978; ref in Saboonchi, 2000) observation regarding normal (positive) and neurotic (negative) perfectionism (Terry-Short et al., 1995; Haase, Prapavessis & Owen, 2002). Perfectionism is inspired by Skinner's (1968, 2006) behavioral theory. Terry-Short et al. (1995) acknowledged that when it came clear that perfectionism should be separated into negative (unhealthy, neurotic) and positive perfectionism (healthy, normal). Skinner (1968, 2006) used positive reinforcement and negative reinforcement instead.

The positive reinforcement is seen as the performance behavior and is perceived to be a free choice. The negative reinforcement is perceived as coerced (Terry-Short et al., 1995).

The reach for perfection can have multiple impacts, the mutual apprehension concerning perfectionism within the individuals depends on the personality, which depends on the persons way of handling the tendency of perfection and how they evaluate themselves critically (Flett & Hewitt, 2006; Gaudreau & Antl, 2008). Research on perfectionism started investigating the perfectionism in the pathological point of view such as eating disorder (Clough & Wilsson, 1993; Davis, 1992; Haase, Prapavessis & Owens, 1999; ref. in Haase & Prapavessis, 2004), problem in the performance especially under competition (Frost & Hendersson, 1991; Hall, Kerr & Matthews, 1998; Haase & Prapavessis, 2004) as well as trait anxiety and burnout (Frost & Henderson, 1991; Gould, Udry, Tuffey & Loehr, 1996; Haase & Prapavessis, 2004). Some researchers identify perfectionism in sport with high quality in performance (Stoll, Lau & Stoeber, 2008). Other researchers views perfectionism characteristics in an athlete more as processing high demands, which undermines the athlete's performance instead of helping the athlete to achieve better (ibid.). Perfectionistic tendencies in sports has been debated frequently due to high goal orientation, still the performance has been more successful among the athletes with positive perfectionism (Bradham, 2000; Stirling & Kerr, 2006). Even if there are results of perfectionism showing that it has influenced the athlete negatively, there are also results that support the opposite (Lundh, 2004; Slaney & Ashby, 1996; Stoeber & Otto, 2006). Research has showed that perfectionism has impacts of high self-efficacy, feelings of energy, enthusiasm and activity (Flett, Hewitt, Blankstein, & Koledin 1991; Hart, Gilner, Handal, & Gfeller, 1998; Kutlesa & Ather, 2008). Recent research in perfectionism is treatment interventions, it has been conducted successfully in two researches (Arpin-Cribbie, Irvine, Cribbie, Flett, & Hewitt, 2008; Kutlesa & Arthur, 2008). One intervention was web based (Arpin-Cribbie et. al. 2008) and the other was cognitive-behavior therapy and rational-emotive therapy techniques incorporated (Kutlesa & Arthur, 2008). The interventions were conducted with students who had high levels of negative perfectionism. It is clearly unique because it is the first in this area (Flett & Hewitt, 2008).

Summary

The work of an effective coach consists of many different characteristics, and the constant development process is clearly needed. The personality characteristics are dynamic, and the individuals' uniqueness can include a perfectionistic tendency that is very important to understand by the coaches. With a lack of research in effective coaching this study can contribute to a clearer picture. The importance to know the athletes' personality and knowledge on perfectionism will indeed help coaches to understand the work of an effective coach.

Objectives

1. To explore the coaches' ideas about effective coaching and their perspective on athletes' personalities as a part of it.
2. To examine how the coaches learn about athletes' personality and how they use this knowledge in their work.
3. To examine the coaches' knowledge about perfectionism and what strategies they use when an athlete has negative perfectionism.

Method

Participants

Participants in this study were five coaches from team sports and five coaches from individual sports ($n = 10$). They were nine male coaches and one female coach and they took part in semistructured in-depth interview. The participants were mostly from Halmstad or connected to Halmstad, there were also coaches from Östersund, Tibro and Ängelholm. Some coaches have professional status, and some others were volunteered. They have had different levels in coaching from junior to international coaching. Four of the coaches worked with Swedish national teams and two of the coaches were sport teachers in their own sports. All of the coaches were head-coaches for their own teams or individual athletes. The sports the coaches represented were: handball, ice hockey, floorball, biathlon, motocross, volleyball, sailing, table tennis, professional dancer and enduro. The participants ranged from 29 to 53 years of age ($M = 39,9$; $SD = 4,9$).

Participants' background

The coaches have only coached in their "own" sport, and they have had coaching experiences from one to eight years. They have participated in other sports when they were younger, quite early started they focusing on the sport they now are coaching in. Two of the coaches have been a playing-coaches as well. All of the coaches have had a career of their own in the sports they are coaching in, before they started coaching. Three coaches had international careers as athletes before they started coaching, some of them had a career up to the highest level in Sweden. One of the coaches started coaching before reaching a higher level in Sweden, this was due to a injured knee.

Five coaches have completed education in step one to three in their own sport. This step program is a guideline or recommendation in Sweden in order to coach in higher levels. Three of the coaches have universal education in sport teaching, two of them also has two years special education in their own sport. Three of the coaches received education outside Sweden, in Scandinavia and Germany. One of the coaches got a degree in leadership and had a work experience in the area. Two coaches have had international careers on a high level and are self-taught. One coach had national career on a high level and is also self-taught.

Interview guide

The interview guide is based on *Working model of coaching effectiveness* (Horn, 2002) and *Multidimensional Perfectionism scale* (Frost et al., 1990; Flett & Hewitt, 1991). The interview guide *Coaches' perspective on athletes' personality characteristics as a part of effective coaching* (Appendixes 1, 2) has six parts. There were also follow up questions for the researcher to go deeper in areas if the participants choose not to talk about these things.

Part one of the interview guide includes questions about the *Coach career* with follow up questions. The follow up questions were only used if the participant did not speak freely about how many years the participant had been coaching. Questions in this part were about; the participants background in other sports, their coaching in other sports, their athlete backgrounds, type of education they have had and level of the athlete they now coach, their current coaching situation and their satisfaction with their current situation. The last questions in part one is about what they have accomplished in coaching and what they want to accomplish.

Part two includes questions about *Effective coaching* and how coaches define effective coaching. The follow up questions are how they thought about their own work in effective terms and what is different from a less effective coach. What do they do to be an effective coach? The last question in part two is about how important they find learning about the athletes' personality to be an effective coach.

Part three is about *Coaches experiences in learning about athletes' personalities and using this knowledge* and includes questions like: What personality characteristic of your athletes do you find important to know? In this question the author used a flower metaphor as an example. The flower metaphor (Appendix 3) was showed as an example of how the participants can see their athlete. The stalk represents the athlete's background and the center of the flower is the team/athlete. Every petal represents an important characteristic of the athlete. The coaches were given the metaphor to think on how they as "gardeners" find what is the most important for an athlete to develop. The flower metaphor was free to use by the participants. The second question concerns how they learn about these characteristics of athletes and a follow up question was how the participant did learn about the athletes' characteristics, if they create the situation or just observe them in real situations. The last question in part three is how the participant uses this knowledge working with athletes.

Questions in part four covers *Coaches' perception of athletes' perfectionism*. These questions are about how much the participants know about perfectionism and if they use that knowledge. The first question is what they know about perfectionism as a personality characteristic and the follow up question is if they know anything about positive or negative perfectionism. If they had none or very little knowledge of perfectionism the author provided them with information about it. The participants were all asked if they had any experience with perfectionistic athletes and if they have special strategies to work with athletes that have negative perfectionism.

Part five *Implementation for Swedish coaches* includes general questions of how the coaches view sport in general, and the Swedish sport system in particular. The questions relate to how they think the Swedish sport system stimulates effective coaching, and what they can recommend in order to enhance Swedish coaching.

Part six was included to get the *Background information* on the participant's gender and age.

Procedure

When the instrument for the interviews was ready, the coaches were contacted through telephone to see if there was any interest to take part in the study. If they agreed to participate, the date and location were confirmed, the interviews were conducted. Mostly, the interviews were conducted at the participants' sport area (office), three were conducted in the home environment and one interview was conducted during a lunch break at the participant's work place. The interviews lasted approximately 40 minutes to two hours. Moreover, a dictaphone was applied in order to record the interview. In one interview the dictaphone stopped working, due to battery failure, after the second part of the questionnaire. That interview was conducted on paper after that.

Before starting the interview the participant received written information about the study (Appendix 4). The information included what the purpose of this study was and

also explained the ethical issues concerning the interview. Confidentiality in data treatment and presentation was explained. The information paper also informed the participants that they at any time could stop the interview if they wanted to. Before the interview started the author explained in short that the participants expected to talk from their own perspectives and share their thoughts sincerely. Each interview was transcribed to text and then proofread.

Analysis

After the interviews were done and transcripts developed, raw data units were identified and further organized into themes and categories (Appendix 5). The raw data units were translated from Swedish to English. In order to analyze the collected information around the participant perspectives the author started with the category from the interview guide *Coaches' perspective on athletes' personality characteristics as a part of effective coaching*. Since the objectives relate to *effective coaching, personality characteristics and perfectionism* these were the main categories to investigate and the raw data units were arranged around these three categories. Concerning the themes they were organized in the three main parts of the interview guide. To get a holistic picture of the coaches' perspectives on effective coaching the questions in parts one and two in the interview guide were taken in consideration as well as part five. Part five was also organized in to category due to the coaches' general perspective on the Swedish sport system.

For the first category *effective coaching* the themes were: a) how the coaches define effective coaching; b) how they work in order to be effective; and c) how important the coaches find the personality characteristics of their athletes in order for the coaches to be effective coaches.

The themes for the second category *athletes' personality characteristics* were: a) what type of characteristics they think is important to have in their sport in order for the athlete to develop; b) how do they learn about this personalities in their athletes; and c) how they use that knowledge.

The themes for the third category *perfectionism* were: a) what do they know about perfectionism as a personality characteristic; b) do they have knowledge of perfectionism is separated into positive and negative perfectionism; c) if they have any experiences in perfectionism; and d) if the coaches have worked with an athlete having strong perfectionism tendencies.

The fourth category in the interview guides fifth part is not directly related to the main purpose, still important as well, in order to gain knowledge and recommendation from a person that is in the system. The fourth category were: a) how coaches think around Swedish sport organization, b) what they can recommend for the future in that area.

Results

All the information from the interviews was organized into raw data units (Appendix 5). To provide a holistic picture the results are presented in four categories, parts of part one were presented in the beginning of the result as well.

Concerning the current situation in coaching as if they were satisfied with their situation (part one) the coaches responses were the following: three of the coaches were both

positive and negative and the explanation were that one coach was struggling with more paper work and less coaching time. Two of the coaches were struggling with too much work, one was coaching both internationally as well as managing the Swedish national team. The other coaches' team has reached a higher level this year. The coach who was negative with the current situation was disappointed at the organization and the lack of effort and structure in the team.

No, I'm not satisfied. I'm satisfied in one level but not satisfied with the organization. I know how it is to work in a well organized organization and also how it is to work in less functional organization. I know how I want the organization to work, and there is a lot to do around the structure.

If the coach have already accomplished everything he/she wanted for the coaching job or if they still want to accomplish more the response was that three coaches talk about goal setting as a major factor. As one coach expressed it, the interest mostly is in the athletes' own goal setting, what the athletes want to accomplish by themselves. It does not matter what that goals are as long they know their own goals and try to reach those goals, then the coach was satisfied as well.

That the athletes I work with have fun, and that they reach their goals no matter what that goal is. If they do so I'm satisfied with my work as well.

One coach was result oriented, this coach was only looking at the team's results, what the coach had accomplished and what the coach feels is very important. Three coaches were trying for further development as a factor. One of these coaches was discussing development as a coach as well as developing the team, the coach always strives to become better. The team's victories were more of a spinoff effect of that development.

The thing I always want to achieve with my leadership is development. I always want to improve the things I do better. I always want to develop the team as well as my leadership and the things I do. That's the moving spirit, winning is just a spinoff effect of that, I think.

Regarding future goals as a coach, one coach had already reached the highest level. This coach is now coaching in the best league in the world in that sport and works as a manager for the Swedish national team. This coach's future goal is to win more and to improve the team. One coach does not want to reach a higher level at this point due to the coach's family situation. Three coaches are still trying to develop into the future, one coach reflected that time for personal development was not enough; too much to do - too little time, but gave hope for the future, time-wise. One coach made a different career step, the coach went from senior to junior coaching. The coach believes it is an advantage because the coach knows what is expected from the juniors. If they want to succeed as a senior the coach can help them to make that step with the coach's knowledge.

Many coaches work from junior to senior, I did the opposite. I see that this could only benefit my coaching, because I know what is expected from the athlete in their future career.

I can really continue to develop that and find it very stimulating to work with people and see them develop. I have done it with success and have others to succeed as well is very satisfying.

First category

The results from *Effective coaching* (part two in the interview guide), concerning the coach definition of effective coaching were widely spread, they did not have a clear picture of what effective coaching is. The coaches defined their work as effective coaching and did not look at the holistic picture. One coach did not like the word at all, and compared it with life in general. The coach meant that the society in Sweden is striving to be so effective that people forget why we do things – what is the purpose?

Effective can often have a negative tone and I can really see the society collapse when everybody is trying to be so effective in everything they do. The glue that holds the society together is missing when people are striving to be more effective and we all are just missing the purpose.

Key words from the coaches' definitions of effective coaching were: balance, focus, communication, leadership style, good knowledge of own sport, mental preparation, good plan and good explanation for that plan. The work of a non-effective coach they summarized as a lack of confidence, clearness, adaptability and reliability. One coach also added the way a coach work by that the coach meant long term – short term goals. The coach pointed out that it is not always the coach goals that is preferred it can depends on what type of goals the organization is looking for.

The results from what less effective coaches do and what the participants do to be effective was that two of them feel that it is important to create confidence, honesty and emotional rootedness. Two coaches also felt that it was important to practice with quality. Four coaches were into shaping small details and give the athletes the right tools. For two coaches it was important to have long term goals. One of the coaches pointed out that the team needs at least two or three years before they can win the championship. Three coaches felt that it was also important to develop the team as well as yourself as a coach. One coach wanted to create balance and one coach talked about the line of argument through the work as a coach. One coach talked about the differences in culture. It was important to understand the culture the athlete brings in to the group in order to be effective.

Most important is to be clear in everything. Everybody should have their team role clear. Everybody should know what to do in the game. But to proceed into development I think it's very important for the team that the athletes are involved in that process because in the end they are the ones that are on the court playing the game.

The last question in part two was how important they find learning about the athlete's personality in order to be an effective coach. Eight of the coaches thought it was very important to know their athlete's personality, they found that the uniqueness of every athlete and the individual process was very important. Two coaches found that the athlete's perception was important in the communication. The coaches tried to have individual talks with the athletes in order to connect with the athlete, not all of them had

time to do so. One coach called it social competence instead, you need it to understand and sense the uniqueness in every athlete.

That's tremendously important, I will call that social competence, to understand the athlete you as a coach are working with. All individuals are unique, there are not two athletes that looks the same and that can take critique in the same way. Critique can be both positive and negative. You as coach have to have experience and knowing when to step in.

Yes, okay that's the key, totally the key. I think it's an advantage to know how the athlete reacts in different situations. I think that is how you as a coach develop.

Second category

Exploring coaches' experiences in learning about athletes' personalities and using this knowledge (part three in the interview guide) the author used a flower metaphor as an example for how the participants see their athlete and what they think is important in order to develop. The flower metaphor was free to use by the participants. Even if the flower helped the coaches to understand the question, few of them used the metaphor. Eight of the coaches talked first and most about high motivation, some coaches preferred the word energy or moving spirit instead of motivation. They all felt that this is the cornerstone that builds up the athlete. Without motivation the athlete does not have the energy to reach their full potential as an athlete. It takes too much effort and hard work to reach to the top and an athlete has to have a high motivation to continue.

Very important, if you are an athlete you need to have moving spirit, your own moving spirit and I don't want to call it winning instinct. You need moving spirit and joy to train hard. Then you have to have trust from the group, you can have trust from the coach but not from the group, if that's the case, the development is not going to happen and vice versa...

Seven of the coaches feel that a strong psychological mind was important to have as an athlete. Six of the coaches talk about the physiological strength as well as the talent and the knowledge of the sport. Two coaches highlighted the importance of nutrition and the environment around the athlete like family and friends. The coaches also talked about humility, communication, structure, feeling safe or secure, trust in the group, competitive, uniqueness in the individuals, curious, enjoy, right feeling, good knowledge and the importance of being a good listener.

In order to learn about athletes' characteristics the question was; do they create the situation or observe them in a real situation? The results show that three coaches believed they quite quickly saw if the athlete did not have the mental strength to perform. Another coach need to watch them under pressure to get the real identity. Four coaches need to have time with the athlete to really get to know them. One coach already knows the athlete's characteristics because they buy the players for that role in the team, the athlete is already very well analyzed before entering the group/team. The information from the coaches regarding how they learn about the athletes' characteristics can be summarized as: three coaches created the situation, two are observing them and three coaches do both.

It happens quite fast to get that knowledge, the athlete that give up when things go bad, those are the athletes that seek for shortcuts all the time and will not develop.

Of course I'll try them out, you have to get the feeling of what they can or can't handle. You try to do everything more and better, you raise the bars to get more feeling in to the game.

An interesting point of view from one of the coaches was that the coach reflected on the differences between older and younger athletes. The coach saw a new generation culture attitude that is hard to handle. The coach feels that the younger athletes need to benefit themselves in order to help the team/group.

I can see differences in generations, those who are born 60–70s, they are really loyal team people, but the youngster from the 80s are horrible to work with concerning loyal team feeling. They are individualist to the top. – "what's in it for me, if I don't get anything from it I won't do it..." Much more individualist, much more curling, coaching. You can see that different structure in many different sports.

The coaches were more concentrated on how they work to develop the athlete, they use their knowledge about that, and they had a clear picture of how they wanted to form the group or the athlete. Four coaches want the athletes to think and work out a good structure themselves but supervised by the coach. Four coaches work to develop the athlete, one coach works to develop the group and one coach tests the athlete in order to show the group if the athlete was up for the task. Another interesting observation in the interview was that one coach pointed out the differences between the genders. The coach have noticed that girls find it more difficult to help and support one another, the girls are more concentrated on what they don't do well while boys are more focused on the positive outcome.

I claim that it's a team all the way up to the start line, then we are all individualists until we reach the finish line, then we are back as a team again. That's because we as a team should brace one another. That's not that easy for the girls, it's a big difference between the boys and the girls in that area. Not only the physiological part but the mind sets from girls compared with the boys. If it takes ten equal parts to be a great athlete both girls and boys have nine of them but missing the tenth part. Then all the boys are thinking of the nine that's working but the girls are thinking of the tenth that is missing. That's the biggest challenge to coach the two genders.

Third category

Coaches' perception of athletes' perfectionism (part four in the interview guide) were conducted in order to gain knowledge about how much the participants know about perfectionism and if they use that knowledge. The result shows that there were three coaches that talked about their knowledge, they talked about structure and well-organized persons as a perfectionistic characteristic. Two coaches talked about controlling and the shaping of the small details in order to be perfect. Six of the coaches did not separate the perfectionism into positive or negative perfectionism, three of them were referring to negative perfectionism when they talked about it and only one coach divided perfectionism into positive and negative perfectionism. If they had very little or

no knowledge of perfectionism the author explained and provided them with that information. There was only one coach who already knew what perfectionism was.

I myself built my competitions on that I had to be as prepared as I could, that I know I have done everything I was supposed to do. Everybody did their best and we had a dialog and it is a huge relief to know that I have done my best even if we ended up in second place. To leave the competition and to know that I had done everything I possibly could was just so comfortable; that's what I call positive perfectionism. The negative is that you end up stressed out when you didn't do what you should have, would have, and could have done. Then it becomes too much "need to do", you stop focusing on your real goal. Then you can discover the negative perfectionism.

The coaches' experience with "perfectionistic athletes" showed the following result: five coaches had experienced athletes with negative perfectionism and two had only worked with athletes with positive perfectionism. The coaches used the following strategies in their work with athletes that had negative perfectionism: three coaches had personal conversations with the athlete, two had individual treatment, one coach tried to create balance in the group with free creativity, still with strict play roles. One coach had stopped one athlete from training due to suspicion of eating disorder, this coach took help outside with professionals in order to help the athlete.

Fourth category

Even if *Implementation for Swedish coaches* (part five in the interview guide) was not within the main objectives of this study, the general perspective from the coaches was interesting to learn. Part five was conducted in order for the participants to speak freely around the Swedish sport system such as if Swedish sport system stimulates effective coaching and what they can recommend in order to enhance Swedish coaching. When it came to stimulate effective coaching, three coaches felt that the focus is wrong in the sport system, focus is on the wrong things (i.e., too much focus on training hard too early and too little knowledge in nutrition and balancing hard training and resting your body). Two coaches were blaming the society and that the organization did not understand the hard work they always have to put in. One coach said that the organization did not use the opportunity during the sport peak years to get stronger and better. One coach thought that the system did not have a clear line of argument in the sport system. This coach means that there are many very good physiotherapists in the system but not always with knowledge in the specific sport. That coach also believed that when an athlete for example gets injured, there are not any clear organizations to lean back on, the athletes need to look for that information themselves with a lack of knowledge on what they really need.

The recommendation to the sport system according to the participants, three of the coaches recommend that they need to change the fundamental attitude in the organization as well as the politicians' view on sport in general. These coaches talked about the lack of sport in school, as well as the "new talent" program for the youth organized by the sport organization, Riksidrottsförbundet. One of the three coaches finds the talent program wrong and that there should be "free playing" for the youths, there should not be any organization at all among the kids. Two of the coaches want to have more education within the system and that the organization and the teams should work more and more closely together (help one another). One coach wants the

organization to adjust to a more international system among the elite players in Sweden, this coach means that in the end it will benefit the Swedish system to have players internationally prepared. Two coaches want a change of life among the population, they believed that sport is not only for the elite and to compete but also for health in general. The sport system should also highlight public health like they do in for example in Norway. One coach talked about that not everybody get the same opportunity and that depends on where in Sweden the athlete lives, it is important to give all the same chance in life. The athletes should have the same fundamental conditions. One coach is still looking for the line of argument and help from the sport organization. Two coaches did not have any recommendations to give.

The negative as I see it is the knowledge concerning the mental, nutrition and resting the body. The coaches don't seem to mediate the big picture.

I believe in the free playing, I believe that what we are doing is really dangerous. I'm convinced that it's absolutely the wrong way to start focusing too soon. It's all about public health, the population that has to decide. If we are a country with 8 – 9 million people then the population has to decide and in the end there will come someone with real focus. We are trying to copy other countries structures and we forget about our own society's structure that we live and breathe in. The Swedish way should never be forgotten with good foundation and hard work. We start pushing youngster to early way to early.

Discussion

This study is structured according to three objectives together with Horn's (2002, 2008) *Working model of coaching effectiveness*. The objectives are; (a) to explore the coaches' ideas about effective coaching and their perception about athletes' personalities as a part of it, (b) to examine how the coaches learn about athletes' personalities and how they use this knowledge in their work, and (c) to examine the coaches' knowledge around perfectionism and what strategy they use when an athlete has negative perfectionism. The model from Horn (2002, 2008) examines the coaches' behavior as influenced by the coach expectations, values, beliefs and goals depending on the coach perception on own social context, organization and characteristics. This together in context with the interaction between the coach and the athlete due to the athlete's characteristics, perception, motivation, performance, and behavior.

Previous studies have already explained that research of coaching is difficult to describe (Wood, 2007) as well as effective coaching (Gilbert & Trudel, 2004; ref in Hagemanna, Straussa & Büsch, 2008). How a coach works in order to be effective is also very unclearly defined. It has also been recognized the importance of separating coaching and leadership as two different concepts (Horn, 2002, 2008). The participants of this study also found it difficult to define effective coaching. Their definitions varied a lot among the participants. One explanation can be a difficulty to define effective coaching in order to satisfy all coaching situations (Cross & Lyle, 1999). All in all when the participants had to define effective coaching there were still some similarities with the results of previous research.

Effective coaching

Horn's (2002) early theory about effective coaching changed the perception of the old research on effective coaching. Horn (2002) meant that in order to examine effective

coaching, research had to examine non-effective coaching, and observe differences. The theory has developed in 2008 and Gearity and Murray (in press) had some reaction on that change. They did a study about ineffective coaching and they concerned that most studies on effective coaching were conducted on coaches with high winning percentages (Gearity & Murray, in press). This can, for example, be seen in Horn's (2008) latest definition. Gearity and Murray mean that all coaches have a different win or lose percentage throughout their careers. According to the participants in this study, they are more concentrated on their own work as a coach, they do not use any holistic picture on the process of an effective coach (i.e. non-effective coaching, more winning percentages ect.). Important characteristic a coach need in order to maintain effective coaching, the participants use words like balance, focus, leadership style, mental preparation, good knowledge in the sport, thought through training and a good explanation for that. Even if the participants uses good words to describe an effective coach there were a low contents between them (Appendix 5). The WMCE model by Horn (2002, 2008) uses organizational climate (box 2) and the coaches' own personal characteristics (box 3) instead as well as their own behavior (box 5). The participants did not talk about how well the athlete was doing nor did the participants use social culture (box 1) or their own expectations (box 4) neither. This confirms the issue raised by Gearity and Murray (in press), that the behavior seems to be more important than their win/loss percentage. The participants' discussion is more in line with other studies focusing on leadership style (Amorosea & Anderson-Butcher, 2007; Horn 2002, 2008; Woods, 2007), communication (Baker & Hawers, 2000; Lorimer & Jowett, 2009, Neenan, 2009), good reason to behave well (Locke, 1996), mental preparation as in balance and focus (Grieger, 2007; Neenan, 2009).

According to Vealey (2005), leadership and coaching should be separated and approached apart. The participants in this study never separated those parts nor did they separate coaching and effective coaching into different parts neither. A new study by Ely et al. (2010) combines the two concepts again into leadership coaching as the new way to approach effective coaching. This four components approach: client, coach, client-coach relationship and coaching process, is a way to understand the uniqueness of coaching, according to Ely and colleagues. Perhaps the participants in this study also approach it differently as the newest research do. The participants may deal with the word coaching using a more interacting approach, which could explain the discussion from the participants. The WMEC model from Horn (2002, 2008) agrees that the coaches' personal characteristics (box 3) influence the coaches' expectations, beliefs, values and goals (box 4) and that this will affect the way the athlete are, because the coach behavior (box 5) influence the athlete (box 7 -10). Coaching needs to be interactive in order to develop a good relationship between the coach and athlete. According to Horn (2002, 2008) good relations is built on how the coach behaves from the start. If the coach can mediate his/her coaching philosophy that will in the end have a spinoff effect on the coach-athlete relationship. Becker (2009) also found that the behavior of a coach is essential in order to build good relations between the coach and athlete, still the athlete must understand the coach's philosophy in order to build that relation (Becker, 2009). A coach philosophy according to Martens (1987) is that a coach needs to be able to mediate the thought and feeling and the respect for each other. Good communication is essential to mediate that (Neenan, 2009; Lorimer & Jowett, 2009). According to Walsh and Morris (2002) a sport coach needs to have certain characteristics that give effects on the athletes' satisfaction and performance, self-esteem and trait anxiety.

A recent study by Becker (2009) about the athletes' perceptions of great coaching showed that the behavior of a coach seems to be more important to the athlete than winning the game (Becker, 2009) as Gearity and Murray (in press) also found. Gearity and Murray (in press) mean that effective coaching has much more to do with the coaches' behavior than their win/loss percentage. One coach from the participants of this study had the same thought talking about developing the team as well as the coach. This coach strived after, and had high motivation to always do better, victories were just a spinoff effect that comes with the striving to do better. According to Horn (2002, 2008) coach's behavior in the group is more important than the win/loss percentage. This is confirmed from this coach, as the team is the best team in Sweden in their sport. Horn's (2002, 2008) WMEC model is in line with this since the right behavior (box 5) would have a positive effect on the athlete and the group (box 7 - 10). That particular participant also found the word "effective" problematic. This coach compared the word with life in general. The explanation was that the word effectiveness is associated with people of today when they are trying too much and in the end missing the point of what they first started to do. The coach meant that the glue that holds the society together is disappearing in this striving for effectiveness. Cross and Lyle (1999) has another interpretation of effectiveness and saw that the word effectiveness may not mean effective at all. Cross and Lyle (1999) meant that a better described term may be ineffective and that effective is more related to how the process is integrated and managed. It may refer to a minimum level of capacity the people accepts and not the product orientation that implies concerning the term effective.

The participants described non-effective coaching as a lack of confidence, clearness, adaptability and a bit reliability. This is in line with previous research on ineffective coaching. In the study of Becker (2009) the athletes found it very important to be clear, consistent and honest in order to be a great coach (Becker, 2009). Other studies, even if they are few, found that lack of knowledge, showing favoritism laziness (Stewart, 1993), lack of commitment, knowledge and intuition from the coach as well as inability to motivate the athletes, to have negative effect on coaching (Cross & Lyle, 1999). From the Olympic athletes in 1998 they meant that poor-; communication, -information, -decisions, -planning as well as problems with the equipment, tactical or strategic errors, lack of support and encouragement, enthusiasm and effort, unfair treatment, and negative attitude as definitions of a non-effective coach (Gould et al. 2000).

The coach effectiveness in paying attention to the athlete is powerful (Peters & Austin, 1985) as well as a dynamic relationship (Bennis & Nanus, 1985). The participants view on effective coaching and what the athletes personalities has for effect on that, almost every coach equally agreed that it is very important. They were talking about the athletes' uniqueness and the importance to work with the athlete in individual processes. Research has already noticed the uniqueness in an individual (Hollander, 1967; Martens, 1975; Weinberg & Gould, 2007) and well as the individual process (Peters & Austin, 1985). Both the coach and the athlete have to be in interaction and inspired by one another in order to be effective (Bennis & Nanus, 1985). Vygotsky theory in early 1900s underlined this as a central role. It takes both an active teacher as well as an active student to develop in life (ibid.). It was obvious in this study that the participants really felt that that personality is very important and that they understood that all individuals are unique. Horns (2002, 2008) WMEC model also informed the importance in the athletes own perception, the athletes own personality and the motivation the

athlete needs to have (box 7 -10) for good interacted relation between the coach and the athlete.

The participants of this study find the athletes' own perception to be important mainly when it comes to communications. Lorimer and Jowett (2009) and Neenan (2009) found in their studies that good communication is essential in order to understand each other and of course as the participants pointed out the athletes' perception has to be essential in that communication for understanding as well. Neenan (2009) highlighted the importance of how the communication is used. The coach needs to understand the athletes' personality in order to ask the right questions to get all the information the coach seeks because all questions are not equally useful (Neenan, 2009). In the study by Becker (2009) the athletes reflected on communication concerning; the situation, the coach and the receiver of the information (the athlete in this case) as important factors. It is also essential for the coach not to give mixed messages in order to be clear, consistent and honest. Trust is important to have in order to be a great coach and mixed messages do not give the athlete the truth (Becker, 2009). When Becker (2009) interviewed the athletes it was found that trust is a key characteristics for a coach and an athlete need it in order to reach the top (i.e., effective, greatness, passion coach). The participants in this study also think that trust is an important characteristic to have in order to have a good relationship. According to Lafrenière and colleagues (in press) a passionate coach comes from a person's own identity and the identity comes from a person's own true self. That is why it is important for a coach to help develop the athlete in a secure sense of self-worth. Giddens' (1938) theory about individual development and interaction between two people is also trust. Giddens (1938) believes in the importance of having your sense of inner-self and trust in yourself and he underlined this as a central role for each individual in the learning process in order to develop (Olesen & Pedersen, 2000).

The effect the athletes' personalities have on coaching

During the part about athletes' personality characteristics the author noticed a concerned look on several of the participants. It certainly felt as they never thought about the athletes in that perspective or it could be that they did not have a clear picture or understood the question. The participants were more into talking about how they develop the athlete instead of their characteristics. The response was more related to their own work, which will reflect on how well the athlete performs according to the participants. To sum up some of the coaches said that they want the athlete to have an own-inner-strength and motivation in their personality in order to be successful. That strength and motivation will create a great structure made by themselves in order to develop. The coach would of course supervise the athlete and give the athlete the right tools as well as help the athlete to look into the details. This way of thinking by the participants is a typical democratic leadership style. When a coach gives the athlete the tools to think for themselves in order to keep high motivation it gives the athlete a chance to develop in their own pace. This way of democratic leadership is developed through fostering the athletes to grow, especially when they are younger (Woods, 2007). This is in line in Horn's WMEC model (2002, 2008) for effective coaching. Even previous research found that the coaches' behavior is important in an athlete's motivation as well (Horn, 2002, 2008; Mageau & Vallerand, 2003; Gillet, Vallerand, Amoura & Baldes, 2010). Research shows that athletes become much more motivated through the democratic coaching style (Amorosea & Anderson-Butcher, 2007).

The democratic leadership style has been growing over the last decades and the autonomic leadership style is less represented according to Amorosea and Anderson-Butcher (2007). The democratic style helps the athlete to come more independent (Woods, 2007) and democratic coaching style elicit and allows the uniqueness personality in every athlete to grow as well. This allows the athletes to use their own psychological core, typical own response and role-related behavior and that is how they become unique when they have different characteristics (Hollander, 1967; Martens 1975; Weinberg & Gould, 2007). Knowledge of an athlete's personality characteristics gives the coach a better understanding concerning why the athletes react the way they do. This will lead the coach to prepare the right tools for the athlete (Hassemén, Hassemén & Plate, 2003) just what the participants discussed. In a democratic way of thinking it has been noticed that people often choose to work hard and participate when there are no rewards involved due to lower level of anxiety in performance. This helps the athlete to learn new skills due to higher motivation in self-determined (Vallerand & Losier, 1999; Vallerand & Ratelle, 2002; Weiss & Ferrer-Caja, 2002; Amorosea & Anderson-Butcher, 2007). These findings of a more self-determined athlete should be important skills to have in order to be an effective coach (Amorosea & Anderson-Butcher, 2007). According to Cross and Lyle (1999) it is easier to be an effective coach in individual sports than in team sports. This is because the individuals need to be approached individually and the team coaches have to do both (Cross & Lyle, 1999). This was also highlighted by the participants in this study. Their goal was to work in an individual processes with every athlete, the problem was that they ran out of time for various reasons.

To develop the athlete for higher performance the participants uses words like trust, confidence, line of argument, emotional, and balance. The mental preparation of an athlete seems to be important as well, the participants did not use the words psychological skills. Maybe those words are not psychological skills for the participants or perhaps they are not really sure what psychological skills are exactly. When the participants discussed the athlete's personality it came clear to the author that they had problems to answer this question. The flower metaphor (Appendix 3) helped the participants to respond to the question. The participants really started to think and put the personality question into subdivides which in the end was much easier for the participants to interpret. Even if they did not use the flower metaphor paper to write down the characteristics they used the metaphor for the metaphor purpose, picturing the growing athlete in their own mind (Hanin & Stambulova, 2002). Once again the motivation is the main thing an athlete needs in order to succeed according to the participants. Mental preparation is the second thing and in third place comes talent and physical skills. There were participants who talked about the importance of nutrition, resting your body and a good time management. The athlete has to plan the time well in order to eat, sleep and train at the right time.

The psychological skills are the two top most important characteristics according to the participants and the motivation is the main factor. Mental skills and coping are related in the sport psychology literature as motivation, self-efficacy, focus and concentration, team cohesion, stress and coping among others (Gearity & Murray, in press). In Becker's (2009) study, the athletes discussed the coaches' qualities. One of the characteristics that appear within the cognitive sphere is knowledge (Becker, 2009). According to the athlete knowledge is really important for the coach to have in order to coach in a good way. This is something the participants in this study also find

important. The joy, the good feeling and to be a bit curious is also good characteristics to have according to the participants. Be competitive, be unique and a good listener is also things that the participants talked about.

In Becker's (2009) study the athletes found that passion is a key characteristic in order to become a great coach. That includes words like inspirational and enthusiastic, in Becker (2009) emotional sphere. A passionate coach is particularly important when the athlete experience fatigue (Becker, 2009). A new study by Lafrenière and colleague (in press) defines a passionate coach as a coach who feels that the activity is important and that it is something he/she loves, has strong attitude toward a self-defining and have significant time and energy to invest in to the activity (Lafrenière et al. in press). Marten's (1987) theory on effective leadership finds that power (energy) is essential for the coach to gain effective leadership. Vealey (2005) uses transformer instead of energy. All in all they mean the same thing. Marten (1987) highlighted the respect the coach and athlete most show each other. Respect is something a person has to earn and it is not before they have mutual respect for one another that they can develop. Vealey (2005) noticed that a coach need to show the group or individual their intense energy and go beyond the regular schedule, otherwise the coach may loose credibility among the athletes (Vealey, 2005). The effective coach (Horn, 2002, 2008), the great coach (Becker, 2009) or the passionate coach (Lafrenière et al, in press), all researchers have different ways to approach good work which is essential in order to develop the athlete. The participants in this study were not that into what word they used, they were more interested in their work. The general feeling from the participants is that the energy they all put into their sport as a coach or as an athlete, is essential for building good relations on. That relation involves trust. It is equally important for both the coach and the athlete to understand the other's personality if they want to build good relations. To have the strength to continue the hard work they all need their energy and dedication. That is because not all receive money or praise for the hard work they do, as more coaches are volunteer coaches then professional coaches. Horn's (2002, 2008) WMEC model also highlighted this energy aspect as an important issue. The athletes' perception, interpretation and evaluation of their coaches behavior (box 8) interacts with the athletes' self-perception, beliefs and attitudes (box 9), the level of motivation (box 10) and in the end it will reflect on the athletes' performance and behavior (box 6).

Perfectionism

A perfectionistic tendency is a personality characteristic (Hewitt & Flett, 1991) that has effects on the athletes' performance. It is especially important and interesting since more and more research has been done over the decades on perfectionism in the sport area (Stoll, Lau, & Stoeber, 2008; Flett & Hewitt, 2006; Hart et al. 1998; Kutlesa & Ather, 2008; Lundh, 2004; Stoeber & Otto, 2006). In the late 90s the research found that perfectionism could be both positive and negative (Terry-Short et al. 1995). The level of perfectionism the person has depends on how the person handles the tendency and how they evaluate themselves critically (Flett & Hewitt, 2006; Gaudreau & Antl, 2008). The participants of this study showed that only one of the coaches have the correct knowledge about perfectionism. This coach divided perfectionism into positive and negative perfectionism. This coach has years of experience as an athlete in the sport and an international career as well. When the coach talked about perfectionism the own experiences fell through. This coach has positive perfectionism based on the way the coach talked about perfectionism and thinking about performances. The coach was well

aware of what negative perfectionism is and the effect it has on a person as well as the performance.

The other participants had some clue about perfectionism but associated perfectionism with “do everything perfect”. They used words like structure, and organization which is one of the six factors in the MPS theory (Frost et. al. 1990). They also used the words “small details” which compares with concern of mistakes (MPS; Frost et. al. 1990) and “persons with control needs” which is high personal standards (MPS; Frost at al. 1990). Even if some of the participants thought that they were thinking about perfectionism in a positive way they were all leaning towards the negative side of perfectionism. Some of the participants only saw perfectionism as a negative tendency. The separation and different levels of perfectionism came clear when the author told them about the positive and negative perfectionism and the participants could then associate that with their own experiences. A study from Kello (2008) showed the importance of understand perfectionism especially among coaches. If an athlete has a tendency of negative perfectionism there are good ways to help and develop the athlete into thinking in an adequate way and change that negative perfectionism into positive perfectionism (Arpin–Cribbie et. al. 2008; Kutlesa & Arthur, 2008; Flett & Hewitt, 2008). An athlete’s tendency is most often noticed by the coach when the athlete is under pressure based on how well the athlete performs during competition. The pressure will show during own influence, others influence or in social environments (Hewitt & Flett, 1991).

As the participants talked about their own experiences as coaches, most of them had experienced the tendency on negative perfectionism among their athletes. Only some had noticed positive perfectionism in their athletes. This came clear after the author explained the differences in perfectionism. Noticeable is that only one coach that has searched for professional help when the participant had noticed that one of the athletes had an eating disorder. Eating disorders are associated with negative perfectionism (Frost et al. 1990, Hewitt & Flett, 1991; Terry-Short et al. 1995). This means that the participants did not think of getting professional help if they spotted athlete with negative perfectionism. Instead they tried to help the athlete with negative perfectionism themselves. The participants talked about balance training, to get the athletes to think by themselves - still with a clear role in the team, individual process and dialog with the person. Based on these findings it is possible to draw the conclusion that the participants had little knowledge in the area as well as they had difficulties to observe an athlete with negative perfectionism which could explain why they did not seek professional help. It is therefore important to help the participants to understand that an athlete with negative perfectionism, as a personality characteristic, can be by a professional sport psychologist. There are no reason why an athlete have to do the full negative spin which can lead to eating disorders (Clough & Wilsson, 1993; Davis, 1992; Haase, Prapavessis, & Owens, 1999; ref. in Haase & Prapavessis, 2004), performance problems, especially during competition (Frost & Hendersson, 1991; Hall, Kerr & Matthews, 1998; Haase & Prapavessis, 2004), trait anxiety and burnout (Frost & Henderson, 1991; Gould, Udry, Tuffey & Loehr, 1996; Haase & Prapavessis, 2004) or drug abuse (Frost et al. 1990, Hewitt & Flett, 1991; Terry-Short et al. 1995). If the coaches can spot them in time, much of unnecessary work can be avoided as well as the detrimental effect on the wellbeing of the athlete. The latest research in the area has intervention successfully been done with athletes having negative perfectionism (Arpin-Cribbie et. al., 2008; Kutlesa & Arthur, 2008; Flett & Hewitt, 2008).

New findings

In the interviews with the participants, questions were developed so the participants could talk from their own perspective and share their own thoughts. During the interview there were new interesting perspectives that three of the coaches discussed: gender differences, socio-cultural differences, and differences in generation.

Gender differences

Gender differences was discussed when one of the coaches talked about athletes' personality characteristics and the use of that knowledge (part three). This coach is coaching in high school for the specific sport and worked with both boys and girls. The coach has noticed a big difference between the two genders. According to this coach girls find it much more difficult to praise each other and they think in a different way compared to the boys. The girls are much more competitive individuals. The difference in thinking is that the girls concentrate much more on the negative outcome compared to the boys who are concentrating on the positive outcome. If there are ten things all athletes needs to be good at and all of them have nine of those things the boys focus on the nine things they are good at (positive outcome) and the girls focus on the one thing they are missing (negative outcome). The coach felt that this was a big challenge when coaching athletes of both genders.

Women entered the world of sport in the early 1970s according to American history, before 70s the term of an athlete meant male athlete (Gill, 2002). Gender makes a difference and the behavior will show what kind of person you are depending on the situation. Notice that gender in sport is no different from gender in other domains. According to Gill (2002) a coach has to treat athletes differently depending on the gender otherwise it would be a disadvantage for both genders. Previous research shows that gender differences and gender roles has both expectation and value of the achievement over time to consider. This involves situation, stereotype expectation of others, sociocultural norms, individual experience and characteristics (ibid.). Horn's (2002, 2008) WMCE model, sociocultural context (box 1) also includes very little research in that area. Horn (2002, 2008) means that the coach's cultural beliefs and knowledge has to do with the coaches' own experiences. The coach who saw and worked differently between the genders certainly benefited from that in a way that they organized and used different approaches for the different genders. The coach is well aware of what to expect from the two genders even if the coach finds it difficult. In the end both the coach and the athlete will have a better communication and relationship that will help the both. This study did not have gender as a part of the interview guide and the area of gender differences is a huge area to study. Therefore leave this study the gender differences to future researches.

Sociocultural differences

One coach is coaching internationally as a professional coach and when the question on what they do to be an effective coach (part two) the coach reflected on the socio-cultural differences among athletes. Since the coach buys players for different roles in the team, this coach struggles with different socio-cultural norms. This coach is from Sweden and has all the Swedish culture/mentality experiences from that country. According to this coach the athletes' mentality or socio-cultural differs depending on where in the world players originally come from. Players from Scandinavia are nowadays used to be coached in a democratic leadership style which means that the players are used to having free thinking and clear roles in the team. Players from the Balkan area are used

to play for coaches with a more autocratic leadership style and find it more difficult adjusting to the democratic leadership style. According to this coach it takes some time for the Balkan players to really trust the coach and the team and understand the democratic style. The coach had to approach them differently in the beginning in order for the players to adjust to the new (according to them) way of coaching.

An international experienced coach already has much knowledge and own experiences about different cultures. A new trend in sport psychology is career assistance which focuses on helping athletes in and outside of their sport with various issues (Stambulova, 2010). A specific area that career assistance is looking in to is career transition, which will help the athlete to cope around new issues (junior to senior, from sport to post-sport, childhood to adolescence etc.) (Stambulova, 2010). The different styles in coaching can be parable as transitions adjustment (democratic to autocratic leadership style) as the coach explained that it took some time for the coach to gain trust within the Balkan athletes. If a coach can address the athlete in the best way and understand the issue that comes with adjustment, the coach would gain trust in the end, both with the athlete as well as within the team. Even if Horns (2002, 2008) research in the sociocultural context (box 1) has little research in the area, notice has been done that explains the danger within the context. The danger is if a coach with too much of the stereotype believes and no knowledge in the different areas can lead to a big gap between the athletes and the coach, which leads to stagnate in development (Horn, 2002, 2008).

Generation differences

One coach noticed the differences between generations when it comes to attitudes and beliefs. This discussion was during learning athletes' personality and using that knowledge (part three). The culture of the new generation is something this coach finds a bit challenging and had a hard time dealing with. This coach means that the new generation born in 1980 -90s are much more individualistic with more "me" thinking. The new generations have to benefit from what ever they do in order to do so. They are much more coaching, curling and cocky kids compared to the athletes born in the 1960 -70s. The older generation is much more loyal to the team according to the coach. This coach has noticed that not only the own team members have the same problem but in sport in general. This coach compared that culture attitude to the "Zlatan Ibrahimovic syndrome". What the coach meant by that is that Zlatan could live up to the attitude due to high performance skills but all the other millions of youngsters, could not. *You have to walk the walk if you gonna talk the talk...*

The author has been thinking of the generation differences and agrees with the coach about the shifting attitudes. If there is a new attitude among the youngster the question we have to ask is, how come? Could the attitude of the new generation be a part of a new way of thinking or is it a new way of upbringing by the parents and the society. In Horn's (2002, 2008) WMEC model, the coaches' values, beliefs and goal (box 4) is very much interacted with the organization climate (box 2). Perhaps the coaches' way of thinking is not in line with the new generation and maybe they need to have a different approach instead. An article by Lafrenière and colleagues (in press) about the coaches' passion noticed the importance of the relation between the coach and athlete in order to be an effective and successful sport coach (Lafrenière et. al. in press). The mutual respect, trust and communication have been found to be very important interpersonal factors (Gillet et al. 2010; Jowett & Cockerill, 2003; Lafrenière et al. in press). The way

of coaching by this coach is that the athlete has to prove why he or she should be in the first lineup. The athletes needed to prove themselves with hard work, high motivation and good physical and technical skills. The opposite of trust when it comes to good relations is mistrust, dominance and non-respect for each other and this is a big factor in non-effective coaching (Blanchard, Amiot, Perreault, Vallerand, & Provencher, 2009; Jowett, 2003; Lafrenière et al. in press). Previous research have noticed that ego-involved people is often more controlling in their behavior (Deci, Spiegel, Ryan, Koestner, & Kauffman, 1982; Grolnick & Apostoleris, 2002; Grolnick, Gurland, DeCoursey, & Jacob, 2002; Lafrenière et al. in press). This controlling behavior can lead the athletes to feel more pressured or not thinking of their own (Lafrenière et al. in press). The well being is important both for athlete as well as for the coach in order to have good relations (Smoll & Smith, 1989; Lafrenière et al. in press).

The new generation of today seems to need to know that he or she will be in the first lineup, in order to motivate themselves and to prove to the coach that he or she belongs there. Even if it is a relationship issue, communication problem, bad attitude or perhaps just a generation problem, more research needs to be done in the area. The author believes that the coach and the society of today have to catch up with the new attitude as soon as possible. If there is a change you have to change with it, you have to trust your inner-self in order to develop and develop is a part of effective coaching. A good relationship and communication is essential as well and if we teach the new generation to think for themselves we can not go back in time and say that they should not think at all.

Recommendations for the future

Questions in part five (interview guide), the author asks the participants for future advice in their sports area. The recommendations were that it seems that in Sweden there is a lot of knowledge and professionalism in sport. The thing is that not all has the same opportunity and gains from that. It seems like the higher level sports (international level) and how “popular” the sport is (in context from the media) plays a big roll in that opportunity. The holistic knowledge is missing as well as the line of argument among the expertise; in nutrition, anatomic, physiotherapist and psychological in their specific sport especially in the lower level or in the less “popular” sports.

Some of the coaches want the organization to become more international but some coaches were afraid that the organization becomes too international and are terrified that it affects the younger athletes in a negative way. One of the coach’s argues for free play up to the age of twelve and the focus should lay more on the public health instead of just the peak performances. This coach strongly believes that the peak performances athletes would ultimate be there anyway with the right motivation and attitude.

Methodological reflections

A qualitative method was used for this study to get deeper information from the participants. The participants were equally represented from individual sport and team sport. Unfortunately, there was only one female participant in the study. To generalize this study with only ten participants is difficult since they not represent the population. This can have an affect on the result. The interview was conducted in Swedish and then translated into English. This might affect the undertone from the participant’s answers. Even if the study does not represent the population, it represents widely: different sports, ages as well as experience among the coaches, which benefit this study. The

reflections concerning *implementation for Swedish coaches* was not within the main objectives of this study, their perspective on the subject is very interesting and can be well used in future studies.

Future research

This study was conducted using a qualitative method. Most of the research today is still using a quantitative methodology (e.g., questionnaires and observations) to acquire knowledge about the coaching process (Becker, 2009). The most commonly used questionnaire is *The Leadership Scale for Sports (LSS)* developed by Chelladuri and Saleh (1980; Horn, 2008) and is used to measure perceived coaching behavior. Another common questionnaire is *The Coach Evaluation Questionnaire (CEQ)* developed by Rushall and Wiznuk (1985; ref in Horn, 2008) this questionnaire also measures perceived coaching behavior but it is more sport relevant (Becker, 2009). A concern about these questionnaires has been that even if they give valuable information concerning leadership styles, feedback patterns, and expectancy effects they still do not provide insights into the athletes' experiences of being coached. Since athletes spend time with coaches on a daily basis, and hence, have a lot of knowledge and experience about their behavior, it would give a more holistic picture to observe and interview them around the coaching process as well (Becker, 2009). There are nowadays more and more research focusing on the coach-athlete relationship (Mageau & Vallerand, 2003; Ely et al., 2010; Lafrenière et al., in press) and the author thinks that good communication is an important part of the relationship between a coach and an athlete. It would be of interest to do both an interview with the coach, the athlete and in the end observe them together order to get the holistic picture of the situation. To investigate parents and sponsor effect on effecting coaching as well as the new findings on gender, socio-cultural and generation differences would also contribute to a new perspective in effective coaching.

Applications

The author believes that effective coaching is a dynamic concept and there is a big change in understanding it within new generation. It is essential that sport follows the flow and adjusts to the new generations' way of thinking and acting, as long as there are mutual respect and the cornerstone is a good moral. This study can be beneficial for coaches in their work to become effective coaches. The results show that even experienced coaches have difficulties to get a holistic picture on the athlete. The most interesting thing from a sport psychology consultant's point of view is that all coaches equally agreed that personality characteristic are very important to understand and the psychological factors are essential to keep in mind (i.e., motivation, mental skills etc.). This can be a basic for cooperation between coaches and sport psychology consultants.

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Coaches' perspective on athletes' personality characteristics as a part of effective coaching
An interview guide

Part. 1 Coaching career

1.1 Please, can you tell me about your background as a coach?

Follow up questions:

- a) How many years?
 - b) Other sports?
 - c) Other coaching?
 - d) Have you been a former athlete in the sport you coaching?
 - e) What is your education?
 - f) Level of the athletes you coaching?
- 1.2 How is your current situation in coaching?
- 1.3 Are you satisfied with your current situation in coaching?
- 1.4 What do you have accomplished in coaching and what do you want to accomplish?

Part 2. Effective coaching

2.1 How would you define an effective coaching?

Follow up questions:

- a. How effective coaches work?
 - b. What they differently from less effective coaches?
 - c. What do you do to be an effective coach?
- 2.2 How important do you find learning about the athletes' personality to be an effective coach?

Part 3 Coaches experiences in learning about athletes personalities and using this knowledge

- 3.1 What personality characteristic of your athletes do you find important to know?
- a. The flower metaphor * (se the paper below)
- 3.2 How do you learn about these characteristics of athletes?
- a. Do you create the situation or you just observe them in real situations?
- 3.3 How do you use this knowledge in work with athletes?

Part 4. Coaches perception of athletes perfectionism

- 4.1 What do you know about perfectionism as a personality characteristic?
- a. Do you know anything about positive and negative perfectionism?
- 4.2 Have you had any experience with perfectionist athletes? If yes please tell me about it.
- a. What kind of perfectionism did you meet in your athletes?
- 4.3 Do you have special strategies to work with athletes having negative perfectionism?

Part 5. Implementation for Swedish coaches'

- 5.1 Do you think that Swedish sport system stimulates effective coaching?
- 5.2 What can you recommend in order to enhance Swedish coaching?

Part 6. Background information

- 6.1 Can you please tell me your age? _____
- 6.2 Female Male

Coaches' perspective on athletes' personality characteristics as a part of effective coaching

Tränares intervjuguide

Part 1 Tränar karriär:

1.2 Kan du vara snäll och berätta om din tränarbakgrund?

Följd frågor:

- a. Hur många år har du tränat?
- b. Har du tränat andra sporter?
- c. Har du haft andra tränar uppdrag?
- d. Har du varit aktiv i den sporten du nu tränar?
- e. Vad har du för tränarutbildning?
- f. Vilken nivå är du tränare på nu?

1.3 Hur ser din nuvarande tränarsituation ut?

1.4 Är du nöjd i din nuvarande situation som tränare?

1.5 Vad har du uppnått och vad vill du uppnå gällande tränar uppdrag?

Part 2. Effektiv träning

2.1 Hur skulle du definiera effektiv träning/are.

Följd frågor:

- a. Hur arbeta en effektiv tränare?
- b. Vad är skillnaden mellan en mindre effektiv tränare?
- c. Vad gör du för att bli en effektiv tränare?

2.3 Hur viktigt tycker du att det är att förstå och lära sig en idrottares personlighet i syfte att bli en effektiv tränare?

Part 3 Tränarens erfarenhet i att lära om idrottares personlighet och använda den kunskapen

3.4 Vilken personlighet karaktär i din idrottare tycker du är viktig att veta/förstå?

- a. Blom metaforen

3.5 Hur lär du dig dessa karaktärer hos en idrottare?

- a. Försöker du skapa situationen eller observerar du utifrån olika situationer.

3.6 Hur använder du den kunskapen när du arbetar kring idrottaren?

Part 4. Tränares uppfattning kring idrottarens perfektionism

4.1 Vad känner du till om perfektionism som en personlighets karaktär?

- a. Vet du något om positiv och negativ perfektionism?

4.2 Har du haft någon erfarenhet kring en idrottares perfektionism? Om ja, berätta.

- a. Vilken typ av perfektionism har du mött?

4.3 Har du speciella strategier för att arbeta med idrottares negativa perfektionism?

Part 5. Genomförandet som Svensk tränare

5.1 Tycker du att det svenska idrotts tänkande stimulerar effektiv träning?

5.2 Vad kan du rekommendera för att förhöja den svenska tränarsituationen?

Part 6. Bakgrunds information

6.1 Hur gammal är du? _____

6.2 Kvinna Man

***The flower metaphor**

This is a flower that will grow and shine as/if you feed it.

The stalk represents the athlete's background and the center of the flower is the team/athlete. Every petal represents an important characteristic in the athlete. You as the coach will represent as gardener. How can you help the flower to grow and what is most important for the flower to develop as an athlete in your way of thinking. Please draw your own flower and explain why and how you think around this flower that represents your team/athlete.



"... trädgårdsmästaren inverkar på blommans växande genom att höja temperaturen, reglera fuktigheten, avlägsna växter intill, gallra och tillsätta jord och gödning. På samma sätt uppfosttrar pedagogen barnet genom att förändra miljön.."

Vygotskij, Lev; Lindqvist, Gunill, *Vygotskij och skolan : texter ur Lev Vygotskij's Pedagogisk psykologi kommenterade som historia och aktualitet*, Lund Studentlitteratur 1999:21

Information letter

Hello,

My name is Elli Kello and I'm a student at the University of Halmstad in the program for sport psychology. During the spring 2010 I will write a master essay in the subject Sport Psychology. The objective is to investigate the coach/coaches perception on effective training, how they perceive their athlete and how they understand the athletes own personality characteristics and the knowledge around perfectionism. The essay turns to coach/coaches in the individual sport and team sport. To get a holistic picture on the subject I want to set up a meeting for an interview to get your point of view on the subject. The interview takes approximately 45 minutes and will be recorded. In the end it will be printed on paper for analyzing together with my supervisor professor Natalia Stambulova at the University of Halmstad. Of course you participate in the study by your own free will and everything that is said during the interview will be handled strictly confidential and no one else will have access to the information of what has been said. The information will be attended strict.

Kind regards

Elli Kello
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Elenjo06@student.hh.se

Supervisor: Prof. Natalia Stambulova
Högskolan i Halmstad
301 85 HALMSTAD
Natalia.stambulova@hos.hh.se

I have been informed on the studies objects, how the information gathers, adapts and attends. I has also been given the opportunity to ask questions and got them answered. I'm also award that I attend on my own free will and can stop the interview in any time without telling the circumstances of why.

I approve of my contribution in the interview on the coaches perception of their athletes.

Place, date; _____

Signatur; _____

Signatur clarify; _____

Raw data units

Raw data units	Themes	Category
Balance (1), Focus (1), Good knowledge (1), Communication (1), leadership style (1), Culture knowledge (1), Dislikes the word (1), Mental preparation (1) Disciplined, organized and structure (2) Good plan (2) Explain the plan (2)	Definition of effective coaching (10)	Effective coaching (10)
No confidence (1) Lack of interest (2) Unclear (1) Insecure/lack of confidence (1) Inflexible (1)	Ineffective coaching (6)	
Create confidence, honesty (2), Line of argument (1) Affectional (2) Training quality (2), Right tool for the small details (4) Balance (1) Long term planning (2) Updating, development (3)	How to work as an effective coach (10)	
Individual development (8) Individual communication (2) Social competence (1)	Focus on individual development (10)	
Energy/drive force/motivation(8) Environment (2) Mental skills (7) Fysics (6) Nutrition (2) Skills/talent (6) Own influence (1), Competitive (1) Knowledge (1), Joy (1), Feeling (1) Communication (1),Trust (1), Structure (1) Security (1)	Important personality characteristic for the sport (10)	Personality characteristics (10)
Quick learning (3) Slow learning (4) Communication (4) Others do it for them (1) Be pressured (2) Create (3) Observe (2) Both (3)	How coaches learn about athletes' personality characteristic (10)	
Work together Coach/athlete (4) Developing the person (4) Work for the whole group (1) Create a situation (1)	Use of that knowledge (10)	

Structured, planned (3) Organized (3) Small details (2) Control issues (2)	What coaches know about perfectionism as a personality characteristic (9)	Perfectionism (10)
Negative (3) Devides positive and negative (1) Does not devide positive or negative (6)	Positive or negative perfectionism (10)	
Athletes with negative perfectionism (5) Athletes with positive perfectionism (2)	Experience in perfectionism (7)	
Balanced (1) Free with strict play roles (1) Training ban (1) Gets outside help (1) Individual- treatment (2) Personal conversations (3)	How to work with perfectionistic athletes (5)	
Society (2) Wrong focus (3) Not understanding the importance of opportunity (1) New generation thinking (1) Line of argument (1) Economic (1)	Swedish sport system stimulates effective coaching (9)	Implementation for Swedish coaches (10)
Public health (2) Political fundamental attitude (3) Organizations fundamental attitude (3) No recommendations (2) Education (2) Same conditions (1) Line of argument (1) Free play (1)	Recommendations to enhance Swedish coaching (10)	