

The Degree of Practicing Strategic Intelligence among Swimming Coaches in Jordan

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Abstract:

The study aimed to investigate the extent of strategic intelligence practices among swimming coaches in Jordan and explore potential differences based on gender. The study randomly selected a sample of (45) swimming coaches, comprising (32) males and (13) females. The researchers employed a descriptive approach, deemed suitable for the study's nature and objectives. To collect data, a questionnaire was designed with two parts: the first gathering demographic information from swimming coaches, and the second comprising (35) items focused on elements of strategic intelligence (Prospective, Future Vision, Partnership, Motivation, and Organized Thinking). The researchers ensured reliability and validity coefficients. The results indicated that swimming coaches generally exhibited an average degree of strategic intelligence practice. Furthermore, the study found no statistically significant differences in strategic intelligence practice between male and female coaches. Consequently, the researchers recommended conducting courses and workshops tailored for swimming coaches, aimed at enhancing their strategic intelligence.

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Key Words: Strategic Intelligence, Coaches, Jordan, Swimming.

Introduction:

The rapid changes and transformations witnessed in recent years across various societal sectors (economic, scientific, technological, social, cultural, and sports) have introduced numerous challenges to the processes of planning and future prediction. Researchers and scholars in organizational and strategic management have therefore sought means and methods to adapt and cope with these evolving variables, aligning them with internal and external environments (Oliver & Johan, 2005).

Tuwaiqat (2007) asserted that different sectors require leaders capable of envisioning the future strategically, developing future visions through creativity and excellence, and enhancing the knowledge, experiences, and skills of society members. This includes improving the efficiency of trainers and educators in scientific education to positively guide them toward increased productivity, efficiency, and goal achievement.

Thus, the significance of strategic intelligence in leadership emerges as a crucial administrative tool for navigating the future and anticipating changes that impact organizational success (Xu, 2007). Successful leadership intelligence is fundamental to directing institutions towards achieving strategic goals and ensuring continuity and survival.

Mckenna and Rooney (2005) highlight qualities of successful leaders characterized by wisdom and strategic intelligence—cooperation, productivity, cautious action, long-term goal orientation, effective interpersonal skills, trust-building, experience evaluation, and openness to new ideas. Al-Nuaimi (2008) argues that leadership intelligence transcends mere intellect; it demands the strategic application of mental abilities to uncover future opportunities that set leaders and their organizations apart, making them difficult for others to emulate.

According to Bierly et al. (2000), strategic intelligence involves "the ability to anticipate, interpret broadly, and make informed decisions based on evaluating current information and selecting appropriate future goals." Gonzales and Zaina (2008) contend that strategic intelligence provides comprehensive analytical insights for senior management, essential for the efficiency and effectiveness required by future organizations. Lehance (2011) underscores the pivotal role of strategic intelligence across organizational departments and management areas, particularly in future-oriented decisions.

Researchers emphasize that the sports sector, particularly in coaching, such as swimming coaches, has been significantly impacted by societal changes, necessitating strategic engagement with players, clubs, and society at large to thrive at local, regional, and international levels.

Strategic intelligence in sports encompasses the cognitive abilities of coaches to analyze, plan, develop programs, solve problems, draw conclusions, and act swiftly in emergencies. It also includes their capacity to synthesize and coordinate ideas, accelerate learning, empathize, display emotions, and understand others.

The challenges confronting trainers today underscore the imperative of enhancing their efficiency and achieving desired goals. This requires identifying factors that enhance the productivity and effectiveness of coaches who employ strategic intelligence skills, influencing player behavior and optimizing interaction with training programs to achieve high efficiency and goal attainment.

Statement of Problem:

Strategic intelligence is a practical tool for gathering data that equips coaches across different clubs with the knowledge needed to make informed decisions. It involves studying the environment, understanding its requirements and needs, and analyzing available information. This process supports accurate prediction and effective planning for the training process.

Strategic intelligence forms the cornerstone of a successful coach's work, serving as an essential element that enables leaders to make sound and logical decisions shaping the team's future. Strategic intelligence empowers coaches to foresee the team's trajectory, engage in organized thinking, develop future visions, motivate players, and make timely decisions to ensure high-efficiency training program execution. This, in turn, enhances the team's prospects for achieving better results. Therefore, the study focuses on assessing the extent to which swimming coaches practice strategic intelligence.

Significance of Study:

1. This research, to the best of the researcher's knowledge, is one of the few studies linking strategic intelligence to swimming coaches.
2. This research can contribute a theoretical aspect to the sports literature.
3. Generalizing the results of this research can encourage swimming coaches to incorporate strategic intelligence into their training programs.

The current study aims to answer the following questions:

1. What is the extent of strategic intelligence practiced by swimming coaches in Jordan?
2. Are there statistically significant differences, at the significance level ($\alpha \leq 0.050$), in the average practice of strategic intelligence among swimming coaches based on gender?

Method and procedures:

Methodology: The researchers employed a descriptive approach due to its suitability for the nature and objectives of the study.

Participants: Forty-five swimming coaches (32 male and 13 female) were randomly selected from those working in swimming training across clubs, private schools, and academies during the period from January 15, 2024, to February 25, 2024, as shown in Table 1.

Table 1. Distribution of Participants

Participant	Variable	Number	%
Gender	Male	32	71 %
	Female	13	29 %
Total		45	100 %

Study Tool: The researchers utilized a questionnaire to assess the extent of strategic intelligence practiced by swimming coaches, consisting of 35 items. The researchers developed the questionnaire's paragraphs to align with the study's nature and objectives, encompassing five subscales that represent components of strategic intelligence: Prospective (7 paragraphs), Organized Thinking (7 paragraphs), Future Vision (6 paragraphs), Motivation (9 paragraphs), and Partnership (6 paragraphs).

Validity of the Questionnaire: The researchers presented the questionnaire to a panel of experts to validate its content. Adjustments were made based on their recommendations to enhance the questionnaire's validity. Following expert validation, the final version included (35) items distributed across the five domains of strategic intelligence. The responses from the study participants were rated on a five-point scale: strongly agree (5), agree (4), neutral (3), disagree (2), and strongly disagree (1).

Reliability of the Questionnaire: To assess the reliability of the questionnaire, the researchers evaluated its internal reliability using Cronbach's alpha coefficient, as Table 2. Shows the results.

Table 2. Cronbach Alpha Internal reliability Coefficients.

Strategic Intelligence	No	Cronbach Alpha
Prospective	7	0.75
Organized thinking	7	0.76
Partnership	6	0.80
Future Vision	6	0.81
Motivation	9	0.79
Strategic Intelligence	35	0.91

As indicated in Table 2, the statistical values for both domains and the questionnaire are sufficiently high and acceptable for the study's purposes, affirming the questionnaire's reliability.

Procedures for Correcting the Study Questionnaire:

The degree of strategic intelligence was categorized into three levels (high, medium, low) based on arithmetic means as follows:

The questionnaire offered a range from 1 (minimum) to 5 (maximum). By subtracting the minimum from the maximum, we get 4. Dividing this difference by three levels results in the following equation: $4 \div 3$ levels (High, Medium, Low) = 1.33 Thus, the thresholds are determined as: Low: 2.33 or less. Medium: 2.34 - 3.66. High: 3.67 and above.

Statistical Analysis:

The study employed arithmetic means and standard deviation, along with the T-test.

Results and Discussions:

Results pertaining to the first question: What is the extent of strategic intelligence practiced by swimming coaches?

Table 3. Means and Standard Deviations of the level to Which Swimming Coaches Practice Strategic Intelligence

Variable	Mean	Standard Deviation	Strategic Intelligence level	Rank
Organized thinking	3.66	0.65	Medium	1
Motivation	3.53	0.64	Medium	2
Prospective	3.57	0.61	Medium	3
Future Vision	3.24	0.87	Medium	4
Partnership	2.20	1.01	Low	5
Strategic Intelligence	3.26	0.58	Medium	

The results related to the first question showed that the degree of strategic intelligence practiced by swimming coaches was medium, with an arithmetic average of 3.26 and a standard deviation of 0.58. This can be attributed to the fact that the appointment of swimming coaches is often determined by club management decisions, resulting in frequent replacements. This reduces the opportunity for coaches to gain sufficient experience in practicing strategic intelligence within their teams. This may explain why most dimensions of strategic intelligence were found to be mediocre, except for the partnership dimension, which was low. The result of this study differs from Al-Azzawi's (2008) study, which showed that the level of strategic intelligence among decision-makers was low.

The arithmetic means and standard deviations of the paragraphs of each dimension of strategic intelligence were also calculated as follows.

First: Prospective

Table 4. Means and Standard Deviations to the level of Practice of Swimming Coaches' Strategic Intelligence for Prospective Items

No	Items	Mean	Standard Deviation	Strategic Intelligence level
1	The coach relies on his personal experiences to analyze the future directions of the team.	4.27	1.02	High
2	The coach is satisfied with theoretical indicators in building his attitude towards events related to the team.	3.96	1.11	High
3	The coach makes suggestions that will avoid problems in the team.	3.47	0.92	Medium
4	The coach follows the changes in the surrounding environment and their implications for the future of the team.	3.37	0.92	Medium
5	The coach anticipates future complications.	3.30	1.02	Medium
6	The coach could see and deal with the invisible.	3.26	1.12	Medium
7	The coach is constantly sensing strategic issues that have an impact on the future of the team.	2.87	1.32	Medium
Total		3.57	0.61	Medium

Regarding the prospective dimension, it was rated as medium. This can be attributed to the coach's experiences to analyze the future directions of the team, as well as the coach ability to build his attitude towards events related to the team.

Second: Organized thinking

Table 5. Means and Standard Deviations of the level of Strategic Intelligence for Organized Thinking Items

No	Items	Mean	Standard Deviation	Strategic Intelligence level
1	The coach organizes and schedules the information before presenting it to the players.	3.75	0.79	High
2	The coach relies on multiple sources to obtain information used to build a perception of events taking place within the team.	3.73	0.84	High
3	The coach closely follows up on the collection of detailed data on the players' problems.	3.63	0.82	Medium
4	The coach conducts a careful and thorough study of all aspects related to the team.	3.62	0.77	Medium
5	The coach relies on a clear methodology in classifying information, which facilitates its assimilation and handling.	3.61	0.83	Medium
6	The coach studies the new ideas together instead of studying them individually.	3.55	0.84	Medium
7	The coach envisions the team in a coherent and harmonious system of parts.	3.38	0.98	Medium
Total		3.66	0.65	Medium

The results also indicated that the arithmetic mean of the dimension of organized thinking came in first place with a mean of (3.66) and a standard deviation of (0.65). The results indicated that the statement "the swimming coach organizes information and schedules it before presenting it to the team" received the highest arithmetic means. The researchers attribute this to the fact that the ability to organize and tabulate information is a skill that can be acquired through specialized courses, as noted by Abdali (2010) and Maccoby et al. (2004).

The researchers attribute this result to the fact that organized thinking may be the most applicable area, requiring special abilities that are likely present in most trainers and can be acquired and developed, as indicated by Abdali (2010). Reigel (2008) and Xu (2007) also mentioned that strategic intelligence involves organizing data by collecting, interpreting, and converting it into useful information to make the right decisions. Additionally, Haines (2007), and Tubke et al (2003) pointed out that strategic intelligence is the ability to think systematically and reasonably to reach goals. This explains why organized thinking ranks highest among the dimensions of strategic intelligence.

Third: Partnership

Table 6. Means and Standard Deviations of the Degree of Strategic Intelligence for Partnership Items

No	Items	Mean	Standard Deviation	Strategic Intelligence level
1	The coach seeks to continue the strategic partnership with other teams.	2.45	1.02	Medium
2	The coach believes that partnering with coaches is a good solution to get out of the crises he faces.	2.31	1.05	Low
3	The coach encourages the exchange of experiences with other clubs.	2.21	1.05	Low
4	The coach is informed about the experiences in other clubs to benefit from them as much as possible.	2.14	1.17	Low
5	The coach seeks to establish partnerships with clubs to benefit from the material and intellectual resources in them.	2.12	1.12	Low
6	The coach consults experts and specialists to solve issues and make decisions in the team.	2.08	1.11	Low
Total		2.20	1.01	Low

The results related to the partnership dimension indicated that this dimension was rated low. The researchers attribute this to the policies and laws followed in the clubs, which may limit the possibility of

partnerships in general and restrict the coach's ability to practice them. the researchers suggest that the partnership dimension ranked lowest due to club policies that may limit coaches' powers in establishing partnerships with other clubs to gain support and reach common goals.

Fourth: Future vision

Table 7. Means and Standard Deviations of the level of Strategic Intelligence for Future Vision Items

No	Items	Mean	Standard Deviation	Strategic Intelligence level
1	The coach derives his vision for the future of the team through the vision of the Union.	3.95	1.05	High
2	The coach tends to use new ways in achieving the team's future vision.	3.45	0.91	Medium
3	The trainer could turn a vision into a practical reality.	2.29	1.08	Low
4	The coach tries to build a comprehensive perception of the facts and events in the team.	3.33	1.15	Medium
5	The coach has a vision of holistic dimensions through which he determines the way the team works.	2.88	1.14	Medium
6	The future coach settles down to develop team strategies.	2.92	1.12	Medium
	Total	3.24	0.87	Medium

The results related to the future vision dimension indicated that it was rated medium. The researchers attribute this to the need for possibilities, experiences, and a rational study of the team's current reality and future. Additionally, future vision involves understanding, perception, and analysis, as mentioned by Al-Ghalbi and Idris (2007). The researchers believe that these abilities and qualities may be medium, innate characteristics that many coaches might not possess.

Fifth: Motivation

Table 8. Means and standard deviations of the degree of strategic intelligence for motivation Items

No	Items	Mean	Standard Deviation	Strategic Intelligence level
1	The coach communicates with the team members constantly.	3.91	0.88	High
2	The coach could convince players to carry out the tasks required of them efficiently.	3.80	0.87	High
3	The coach could motivate the players.	3.72	0.85	High
4	The coach provokes positive rivalry between team members.	3.55	0.91	Medium
5	The coach encourages interaction between team members and the formation of teams between them.	3.55	0.87	Medium
6	The coach adopts and supports new ideas.	3.49	0.88	Medium
7	The coach provides a positive atmosphere for the participation of team members in decision-making.	3.49	0.91	Medium
8	The coach encourages team members who have new ideas for the advancement of the team.	3.41	0.87	Medium
9	The coach rewards creative team members and offers moral incentives.	2.77	0.88	Medium
	Total	3.53	0.64	Medium

As for the results related to the dimension of motivation, the researchers indicated that this dimension was rated as medium. This may be attributed, from the researchers' point of view to the phrases that obtained the high means in the strategic intelligence measurement questionnaire related to the dimension of motivating players, like the coach communicates with the team, and convincing players to carry out the tasks required of them efficiently, also the coach's ability to motivate the players

Results related to the second question:

The results of the study indicated that there are no statistically significant differences at the level of significance ($\alpha \leq 0.05$) in the degree of practice of strategic intelligence by swimming coaches attributed to the gender variable. The researchers believe that this result is logical, as the strategic intelligence of swimming coaches encompasses various skills needed by coaches regardless of gender. Both male and female coaches have a perspective on the future, possess a future vision for the swimming coaching profession, motivate players, think systematically, and establish partnerships with coaches in other clubs.

Are there statistically significant differences at the level of significance ($\alpha \leq 0.05$) between the average degrees of practice of swimming coaches of strategic intelligence attributed to the variable (gender)?

Table 9. Means, Standard Deviations, and Results of the T Test for the Degree of Strategic Intelligence According to the Gender Variable

Variable	Gender	No	Mean	Standard Deviation	T Value	Sig
Foresight	Male	32	3.63	0.57	3.35	0.12
	Female	13	3.33	0.61		
Organized thinking	Male	32	3.69	0.67	3.87	0.70
	Female	13	3.51	0.61		
Partnership	Male	32	2.45	1.05	3.77	0.22
	Female	13	1.92	0.84		
Future Vision	Male	32	3.44	0.87	3.56	0.14
	Female	13	3.01	0.82		
Motivation	Male	32	3.95	0.66	3.62	0.10
	Female	13	3.43	0.60		
Strategic Intelligence	Male	32	3.40	0.59	3.62	0.78
	Female	13	3.09	0.54		

Recommendations:

1. The need for swimming coaches to participate in courses and workshops specialized in the development of strategic intelligence.
2. The need to inform swimming coaches about the mechanisms of strategic decision-making.
3. Setting criteria for selecting and appointing swimming coaches based on specific factors to assess their ability to practice the dimensions of strategic intelligence.
4. Evaluating the performance level of swimming coaches based on clear criteria, avoiding favoritism and undue influence from others' opinions.

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درجة ممارسة الذكاء الإستراتيجي لدى مدربي السباحة في الأردن

الملخص :

هدفت الدراسة إلى تقصي درجة ممارسة الذكاء الإستراتيجي لدى مدربي السباحة في الاردن، كما هدفت إلى تقصي ما إذا كان هناك فروق في ممارسة الذكاء الاستراتيجي لمدربي السباحة تبعاً لمتغير النوع الاجتماعي. تكونت عينة الدراسة من (45) مدرباً للسباحة منهم (32) مدرباً و(13) مدربة تم اختيارهم عشوائياً ممن يعملون في مهنة تدريب السباحة، إستخدم الباحثون المنهج الوصفي لمناسبته لطبيعة الدراسة واهدافها، ولتحقيق اهداف الدراسة تم إعداد استبانة لجمع البيانات من عينة الدراسة حيث تكونت الاستبانة من جزئين: الجزء الاول معلومات ديموغرافية لمدربي السباحة، والجزء الثاني تكون من (35) فقرة موزعة على عناصر الذكاء الاستراتيجي التالية (الاستشراف، الرؤية المستقبلية، الشراكة، التحفيز، التفكير المنظم). بعد ان قام الباحثون بالتحقق من معاملات الصدق والثبات. وبعد تحليل البيانات توصلت الدراسة الى أن درجة ممارسة مدربي السباحة للذكاء الاستراتيجي جاءت بدرجة متوسطة، كما أشارت الدراسة إلى عدم وجود فروق ذات دلالة إحصائية في متوسط ممارسة مدربي السباحة للذكاء الإستراتيجي تعزى لمتغير (النوع الاجتماعي). وفي ضوء نتائج الدراسة، يوصي الباحثون بمشاركة المدربين في دورات وورش عمل لتنمية درجة الذكاء الإستراتيجي لديهم.

الكلمات الدالة: الذكاء الاستراتيجي، المدربين، الاردن، السباحة.