

The Nordic coach
- a cooperative project within the
Nordic coaching network

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Aarhus is a growing city. With more than 300,000 inhabitants, it is Denmark's second-largest city and without question its youngest city in terms of the average age of its citizens. Aarhus has 40,000 students at fourteen educational and research institutions. Aarhus is also a city which dates all the way back to the Viking Age – 750 A.D.



Jens B. Christensen

Associate Professor, Department of Sport Science - University of Aarhus

- 2000 – 1.1.2008
Head of Department, Department of Sport Science
University of Aarhus
- 1987 – 2007: National Coach in Track and Field, Combined Events
- Personal coach for Danish record holders in decathlon & heptathlon, javelin men & woman
- 1997 – 2004 Chairman of The Committee of Representatives in the elite sport organization Team Danmark
- 1997 – 2004 Chairman of The Committee of coaches and athletes in the elite sport organization Team Danmark

Disposition

- The history by the project
- The Nordic coaching stereotype
- Nordic research on coaching
- The Nordic Coach Project – some results
- Questions - discussion

Nordplus – coaching network

Meeting in Gothenburg 2006 / (EC in Track and Field)

- Discussion and identifying.
- Challenges facing the future of Coaching and Coach Education
- Coaching Competencies
- Theory to Practice
 - **Istvan Balyi, Ph.D.:** ***“To have a Ph.D. is to know everything about nothing, to be a coach is to know something about everything!”*** Colorado Springs USA 2003
- Recognition of the important role of the coach

Cooperative research project:

- ENSSEE: Long term coach development – within the Bologna Declaration and the **E**uropean **C**redit **T**ransfer **S**ystem (**ECTS**)

Ethical guidelines

- For athletes
- For spectators
- For coaches
- For parents
- For officials
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Ethical guidelines – to coaching of children



**Aldersrelateret
træning**

- Målerbet og forsvarlig træning
af børn og unge



Nordic research on coaching

Eriksson (1989 – 1998)

- Research on Swedish national team coaches
 - Own (elite) sport background
 - Extensive (in sport) education

Fahlström (2001-2007)

- Research on coaches in ice hockey and football
 - Recruitment strategies
 - Player background
 - Successful players become coaches
 - Reproduction - Closed system - Conformity - Creativity!?

Annerstedt (2006)

- "*Successful*" Swedish elite coaches
 - Background
 - Swedish sport leadership
 - Coach philosophy

Høigaard & Jørgensen (2007)

...common understanding that it is important to include and involve the athletes in analysing, planning and evaluating training and competitions

The significance of expert coaching

(Carlsson, 1992, Ericsson, 1994; Enoksen 2002; Isberg, 2005)



The coach should be:

1. An expert in communication
2. An enhancer of performance
3. A positive role model
4. A master in teaching – planning of training
5. A stimulating motivator
6. An enthusiastic environment maker
7. An informative leader
8. A human being

Nordic coach project: 1

- Aim: Study leadership style among Nordic coaches on top level
- **Methods**
 - LSS (Leaderships Scale for Sports)-questionnaire:
 - 40 statements that describes five categories of coach behaviour
 - TI: Training and Instruction behaviour
 - DB: Democratic behaviour
 - AB: Autocratic behaviour
 - SS: Social supporting behaviour
 - PF: Positive feedback behaviour
 - + 22 demographic background questions
- **Demographic data:**
 - Gender, age, family, income
 - Present coaching position
 - Education: Civil - sports
 - Coaching sessions – coaching practice
 - Former sports career – end of career
 - Motive to be a coach, leader

Nordic coach project

Participants

- 149 elite coaches
 - Denmark (n=50), Norway (n=50) , Sweden (n=49)
- Coaches on national top and/or international level
- 134 male (90%)
 - Mean age: 38,3 years; SD 9,8 years
- 15 female (10%)
 - Mean age: 39,1 years; SD 8,4 years
- Marital status: 77 % married/common-law spouse
- Children: 1,4

Nordic coach project

Income from coaching

Income from coaching	Frequence %
No income	18
- 6.000 €	19
6.000 - 12.000 €	13
12.000 - 24.000 €	12
24.000 - 48.000 €	29
48.000 - 62.000 €	6
62.000 € -	3
Total	100

Nordic coach project

Present position

Level	Frequence %
National team coach	42
Coach for athletes on international level	10
Coach for athletes on high national level	29
Coach for adults 20 years <	7
Junior coach 17-18 years	7
Coach for athletes 17 years >	5
Total	100

Group/Gender	Frequence %
Male athletes	27
Female athletes	12
Male and female athletes	61
Total	100

Nordic coach project

Education

Education level	Frequence %
Compulsory school (1-9 years)	5
Upper secondary/High school (10-12 years)	20
University Bachelor	45
University 4 years -	30
Total	100

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Academic Sport education	Frequence %
- 1 year	47
Bachelor 3 years	42
Master 5 years	10
Ph D	1
Total	100

Nordic coach project

Coaching sessions

Training sessions per week	Frequence %
1 session	11
2 sessions	7
3 sessions	18
4 sessions	16
5-7 sessions	27
8-10 sessions	21
Total	100

A bracket on the right side of the table groups the rows for 4, 5-7, and 8-10 sessions, with a red '64' next to it, indicating the total frequency percentage for these categories.

Nordic coach project

Coaching practice

Number of years as coach	Frequence %
1 year	8
2-4 years	15
5-10 years	23
10-15 years	24
15 years	30
Total	100

A bracket on the right side of the table groups the frequency values for 5-10 years (23), 10-15 years (24), and 15 years (30), with a red '54' next to it, indicating a subtotal for these three categories.

Nordic coach project

Former sports career

Own level as athlete	Frequence %
National team/international	44
National top level	21
National level	20
Regional level	10
Local level/club	5
Total	100

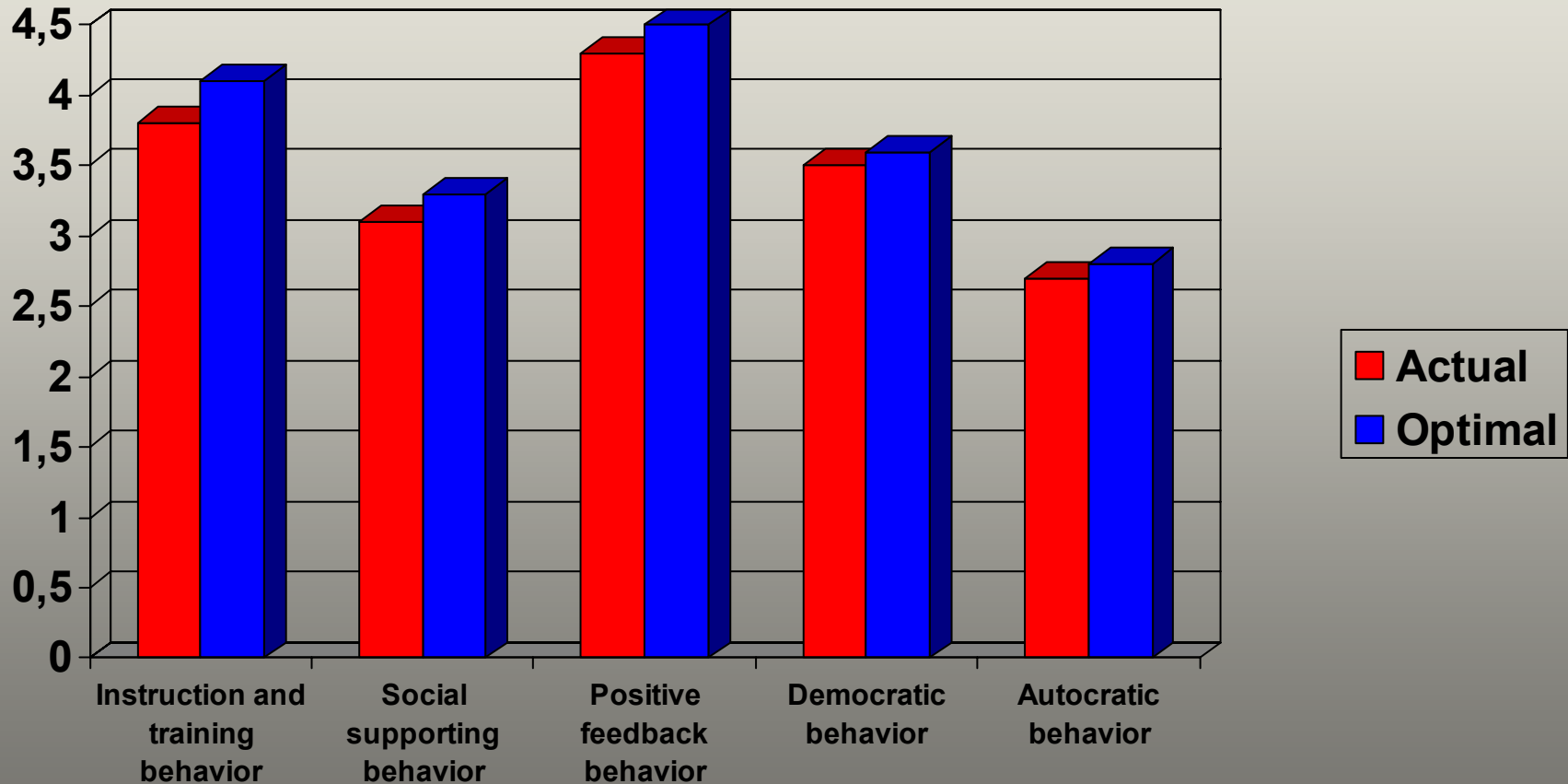
65

Number of years at "that level"	Frequence %
1 year	1
2-4 years	24
5-10 years	40
10-15 years	22
15 years -	13
Total	100

75

Nordic coach project

Actual versus optimal behaviour



Significant differences ($p < .001$) between actual and optimal for all variables. Also the same pattern for all countries.

Results and conclusions

- 54 % of the coaches had more than 10 years of coaching experiences
- 75 % had 3 years or more of university education
- 52 % had either a university bachelor or master degree in sport science
- 50 % had less than 12.000 Euro income per year
- They use a lot of time on the "track."
- They had an extensive sport education through the Sport Federations:
 - Democratic / cultural influence
 - Voluntary tradition
- Coaches who are educated in sport use more positive feedback
- Coaches with more than 10 years experiences in coaching use significantly more training and instruction and social support than coaches with less experiences

Nordic coach project: 2-3

- Nordic coach in the eyes of the athletes (2)
 - Study on 150 Nordic athletes
 - Preference and actual behaviour study - LSS
 - + demographic background questions
 - Correlate to coach study (1)
- Qualitative coach project (3)
 - Interviews with coaches
 - Coach philosophy
 - ...

Closing

Making it to the top is a long and difficult journey, but the view is worth it



When you've made it, when you're sitting on top of the world....you need prodding...to ensure you don't fall off your perch (Percy Cerutti)

