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Global coach development in a knowledge society: Critical issues

John Lyle & Miguel Crespo

John Lyle PhD EdD

Professor of Sport Coaching

Centre for Sport Coaching

Carnegie School of Sport

Leeds Beckett University

Headingley Campus

Leeds LS6 3QS

United Kingdom

j.w.lyle@leedsbeckett.ac.uk

ORCHID: 0000-0002-3256-2337

Miguel Crespo PhD JD

Head, Participation and Coaching (integrity & Development)

International Tennis Federation

Bank Lane

Roehampton

London SW15 5XZ

United Kingdom

Miguel.crespo@itftennis.com

ORCHID: 0000-0001-7952-7603

Global Coach Development in a Knowledge Society: Critical Issues

John Lyle & Miguel Crespo

Abstract

Sport coaching is a universal practice that supports athletes and athlete performance at all levels and in all domains. This chapter explores the notion that coach development has a global dimension, using the concept of a knowledge society as a foundational device. Having examined the meaning, characteristics and implications of globalisation and a knowledge society, the chapter evaluates the contribution of a number of prominent organisations and agencies with a coach development remit for their global reach. The contribution of these agencies is explored in relation to a loose framework comprising production of coaching knowledge, mechanisms of dissemination, expertise, credentialism and education. There is an absence of any regulatory mechanisms for post-experience coach development. Nevertheless, the conclusions drawn reinforce the assumption of a global dimension to coach development, mitigated by historical, cultural and political identity and strongly influenced by a North American-Eurocentric academic community.

Introduction

The purpose of the chapter is to explore the global dimension of coach development in sport. This means that we are interested in the creation and dissemination of coach development knowledge and practice across cultures and sporting systems. We operate within an assumption that a global network of knowledge and practice would enhance the sport coaching capital available to facilitate sport participation and performance but recognise that there are issues that require a critical examination. The vehicle we will employ to structure our chapter is the concept of a knowledge society. We will argue that, although coach development is not a new phenomenon or practice, there are elements of modern coach development, such as credentialism, mid-career enhancement, focus on practice, and individualisation, that need to be examined in the context of a global knowledge society. In many countries, sport coaching has become increasingly 'occupationalised'; opportunities exist for sport coaches to exercise their skills in full- and part-time roles, across coaching domains, and in public, voluntary, commercial and professional sport sectors. This is in addition to the many, often intensely committed, sport coaches who remain volunteer coaches supporting participants' initiation and ongoing involvement in a variety of sport settings. Nevertheless, we acknowledge that there are significant cultural differences in the way that sporting systems across the globe structure and deliver sporting opportunities.

A knowledge society is increasingly characterised by and benefits from information and knowledge-based work, innovation and cultural activity (Hornidge, 2011; UNESCO, 2005). This places an emphasis on continuous education and training, specialisation and transmission of knowledge. Globalisation, in the age of the internet and digital communication, has increased the interdependence of knowledge across cultures. We will argue that the emergence of a knowledge society, along with a continuing interest in the professionalisation of sport coaching, has focused attention on tangible matters such as qualifications, recruitment, expertise and advancement in addition to less-tangible issues such as esteem, contribution, and accountability. The outcome is increased attention to coach education and development, both formal qualifications and early and mid-career enhancement. In the context of a global knowledge society, matters of relevant and consensual knowledge, balance of content and values, and mechanisms for the dissemination of knowledge become significant. Our interest lies in

the resultant phenomenon, coach development, in terms of organisations, personnel, conceptions of coaching, and curriculum.

Coach Development

Clearly, we cannot hope to attend in detail to every aspect of coach development, nor have we the space fully to problematise the scope and meaning attached to the term. We recognise that there are differences in concept, purpose and practice between education, development and training. Perhaps the most significant differentiating factor in focusing attention is the distinction between systems and delivery structures and the learning or change process itself. Similarly, the interpretation of which roles in sport can be described as coaching is also problematic. Our pragmatic approach is to assume an all-embracing and inclusive understanding of coach development as relating to all forms of certificated and semi/non-formal development activity/programmes that have learning or the furthering of coaching expertise as their intention. We also note that there is an interdependence between development, recruitment, qualification and occupational advancement, and that the ultimate goal is the enhanced quality of 'service' to athletes and players. Although it may have been more appropriate to refer always to 'coach education and development' (and we do so on many occasions), the term 'coach education' is here reserved for certificated qualifications and we will retain the umbrella term coach development and invite the reader to accept all that this entails.

Nevertheless, it is important to acknowledge the breadth and range of developmental activities and their categorisation into formal, non-formal and informal delivery (Cushion et al, 2010; Walker et al., 2018). There is no doubt that there is a commonality of purpose in the endeavours that we generally term coach education and coach development. The literature has a tendency to conflate education and development and to treat development and learning as synonymous (Campbell & Waller, 2019; Stodter & Cushion, 2019). Evans et al. (2015) use the term coach development in an all-embracing way to capture learning activities, but with some attempt to acknowledge diversified content and structures (Lefebvre et al., 2016). Such inclusive conceptualisations (Callary & Gearity, 2020; International Council for Coaching Excellence, ICCE, 2012), with a focus on learning, have a conceptual nicety but are less helpful when differentiating between and within the range and variety of developmental and experiential activities embraced by the term. This may appear to be a redundant comparison, as it is both accurate and desirable to foreground learning as the essential characteristic of coach development. However, in the context of this chapter, we may reasonably ask which development activities are likely to have a global dimension, one that assumes a process of diffusion and assimilation. It may be more appropriate to accept that there is a family of activities, the purpose of which is to further a coach's role-appropriate expertise and/or relevant personal qualities. Within this, purpose, context, specificity and engagement differ in relation to activities such as formal coaching qualifications, Higher Education courses, mediated experience, continuing professional development, extension programmes, mentoring support and career progression programmes.

Reluctant as we are to begin with any negative perceptions about the scope of the chapter, it will be obvious that we cannot hope to do justice to the myriad coaching systems around the world. Rather, our purpose is to identify critical issues for coach development as part of, and a contributor to, both a knowledge society and the quality of sport coaching practice around the world. In doing so, we offer several illustrations of cross-societal coach development practice. Therefore, the chapter has a future orientation and is characterised by posing as many questions as it answers. We conclude that there is a global dimension to coach development. Does it transcend the gravitation pull of individual nation's sporting environments – perhaps not fully, but moving in that direction.

Globalisation

Our consideration of coach development is framed within an assumption of sport as a globalised phenomenon (Giulianotti, 2015; Houlihan, 2015; O'Brien et al., 2020; Sage, 2016). The term itself is not unproblematic but we adopt a pragmatic understanding that implies a process of increasing standardisation, interdependence, uniformity or similarity of practice, and sharing of knowledge. Globalisation also implies some integration of systems and organisations responsible for economic and cultural activity. However, although it is often used as an umbrella term, it may be better conceptualised as multiple processes of varying scale and pervasiveness (Chernilo, 2021). There are also factors such as religion, politics, culture and economic resources that constrain the impact of globalisation. Sport has become accepted as a cultural and economic domain that exhibits strong features of globalisation (Maguire, 2015). The effect of major sporting events such as the Olympic Games and the soccer World Cup, the diffusion and regulation of practice by umbrella agencies and governing bodies of sport (e.g., FIFA, IAAF, R&A, FINA), and the access to sport provided by worldwide media coverage have undoubtedly created a global phenomenon, perhaps most clearly evidenced in the insinuation of soccer into nations and cultures worldwide (Connell, 2018; Giulianotti & Robertson, 2009).

There is a strong argument that the impact of globalisation is both led by and manifest in elite, high-performance sport, in particular, media-popular professional sport (Dickson & Malaia Santos, 2017). In relation to our consideration of the global aspects of sport coaching, it may be relevant to observe a distinction between the omnipresence of media-led sport performance/events and the possible globalisation of those features of sport performance that underscore its conduct. Migration of performers and coaches and the availability of knowledge about training methods, technical and tactical preparation and high-performance environments, when allied to nations' political, financial and popular investment in (relative) success have resulted in interdependent sporting competitions and a similarity of practice. This is despite being resource-constrained and subject to an assumption of a degree of secretiveness about technical developments. To some extent, this uniformity may also be evident in systems for talent identification and development, although the balance of priorities between state intervention, collegiate and university sport, commercial sports schools, professional sport academies and national governing body development squad structures suggest variety within a global presence. Our experience is that post-experience coach development is evident to the greatest extent in performance sport, and we reflect this emphasis throughout the paper. Nevertheless, it seems likely that the practices evident in high-performance sport will find their way into participation domains, but the effects of globalisation are likely to be mitigated by more localised community sports practice, attitudes to sport in education, and cultural values.

Global dimensions of sport are led by successful sporting systems and emulated by others. There is also an evident commercial aspect to the 'capturing' of worldwide audiences for major sporting events, television coverage and merchandising. Critical theorists argue that, for the most part, the diffusion of ideas, personnel and practices reinforces a largely Western hegemony of economic power and political and cultural practices to the detriment of more-localised culture and autonomy (Maguire, 2015), although there can also be elements of resistance (Zheng, Tan & Bairner, 2019). The visibility and reach of global sport also present opportunities for political statements (Dart & Wagg, 2016).

In this chapter we are concerned with the extent to which there is a global dimension to one of the key drivers of sport performance at all levels – sport coaching - and, in particular, coach development. At a simplistic level, the global reach of sport implies that coaching, in its myriad forms of leadership, will also be recognised as an associated role and process. It is for others to explore the level of similarity of provision and practice. This will involve consideration of the professionalisation of the role (CoachForce21, 2021) and employment and deployment practices across state, voluntary, commercial and professional sport domains. In seeking to characterise and explain the potential

globalisation of coach development, we have used the concept of a knowledge society as a perspective through which to foreground the interplay between forms of knowledge, the role of knowledge in coaches' practice and the dissemination and transmission of knowledge in creating the potential for an enhanced global effect in coach development. We turn, therefore, to a further examination of a knowledge society.

Knowledge Society

The knowledge society is a description of a post-industrial world in which work, leisure, innovation and social life have become increasingly dependent on various forms of information and knowledge (Hornidge, 2011; UNESCO, 2005). Although a good deal of the academic literature is focused on a knowledge economy and its role in economic growth and welfare, the knowledge society permeates all facets of our lives. Karpov (2017) identifies knowledge workers, for example, as engineers, computer experts, teachers, medical personnel, and technicians; in simple terms those 'thinking with knowledge in the process of work' (p. 806). There is a presumption that there are an increasing number of non-routine, information-accessing, problem-solving occupational roles, although the concept of knowledge worker is ill-defined and not without challenge (Švarc, 2016). More broadly, it would include occupational roles such as physicians, architects, lawyers, scientists and academics. In the context of this chapter, we consider the sport coach to be a knowledge worker.

Those working 'with knowledge' cannot take that knowledge for granted. There is an underlying political and philosophical dimension to information and knowledge creation, access and dissemination. Institutions and individuals in powerful, dominant positions and roles exert considerable influence over the creation and diffusion of knowledge (Warczok & Beyer, 2021; Zehntner & McMahon, 2019), a situation that foregrounds the influence of advanced Western nations. As a result and in the context of our examination of the global dimension of coach development, the issues of access to knowledge, the values attached to various forms of knowledge, engagement in knowledge creation, and the influence of regulatory bodies assume greater significance.

There is no doubt that advances in internet technology and the World Wide Web, accompanied by globalisation, have contributed to an explosion of information within the knowledge society. However, a distinction can be drawn between information and knowledge. The latter involves an internal process rather than simply a representation of the external (Karpov, 2017). Rather than attempt to synthesise the miasma of competing definitions, we adopt a pragmatic view that information is data, albeit with some contextual meaning, and knowledge involves working with information through learning, experience, insight and reflection. This creates a level of understanding and produces usable knowledge, which may be expressed explicitly or held tacitly. The emphasis that this view of knowledge places on experience and learning processes points us to important issues about the development of sport coaches. We also note, however, that the explosion of information available throughout the digital world brings with it the challenge of distinguishing high-quality and useful information from that which is less so.

The increasing dependence on knowledge highlights the role and significance of learning and education, and the recognition of qualifications as markers of access to and familiarity with specialised knowledge (Brown & Bills, 2011; Zajda, 2007). The knowledge society is therefore a useful framework, within which to consider the education and development of sport coaches. There is an emphasis on continuing/lifelong learning to adapt to and accommodate new knowledge. This attention to a knowledge-rich environment that changes over time permits a more expansive concept of expertise or talent. Tobon and Luna-Nemecio (2021) suggest a concept of talent based on an individual's complex interaction with society – solving contextual problems - not simply through specific competences but application, complex thought, informed decision-making, collaboration and

continuous improvement. This is a learning agenda that is familiar to sport coaching academics. One particularly relevant concept is that of an epistemic culture (Knorr Cetina, 2009). The emphasis here is on the arrangements and mechanisms within which knowledge is produced rather than the content itself; a greater diversity of 'sites of production' values knowledge-in-action, not simply the contribution of academic institutions (Knorr Cetina, 2009; Säfvenbom & Stjernvang, 2020). Later we will consider the extent to which the 'triple helix' of university-industry-government (Ranga & Etzkowitz, 2013) is an appropriate source of sport coaching knowledge, in particular the role of universities. For now, however, suffice to say that the processes through which knowledge is created and legitimised is relevant to our consideration of coach development.

The academic literature in our field has generally assumed the reality of a knowledge society and moved from there to propose how education and training should address the needs of coaches (e.g., Cassidy, 2010; Trudel et al., 2013). Attention has been paid to knowledge domains (Côté & Gilbert, 2009) and sources of knowledge (He et al., 2018) but less so to the generation of knowledge (Jones et al., 2003). In the context of coaches' recourse to types of knowledge, Cerroni's (2018) distinction between intellectual, practical and objectified may be helpful. We now consider the forms of knowledge that are evident in coaches' expertise and subsequently, coach education and development.

Forms of Knowledge

Knowledge underpins the development process. Professional knowledge (Gilbert & Cote, 2013) is commonly divided into discipline-derived declarative knowledge and procedural knowledge, that is, 'knowing how to' (Nash & Collins, 2006). This 'how to' element of coaches' knowledge and the more technical component is captured by Cerroni's (2018) typology of knowledge into intellectual, practical and objectified. More pertinently, her categorisation of access to knowledge (direct personal knowing, indirect social acquaintance, externally recognised) points to the primacy of knowledge 'held' by the individual but perhaps suggests that its development is less open to transmission. However, when considering the operationalisation of knowledge and how this might be 'packaged' for use in practice, coaches work with 'applied knowledge', pragmatic applications of discipline-derived knowledge to common coaching issues. In the context of our consideration of the global dimension of coach development, the question is whether or not there is something characteristic of coaches' knowledge and expertise that make it more or less susceptible to diffusion. We have already described how the knowledge society has created a level of specialisation and a reliance on 'technical knowledge'. Nevertheless, the context- and athlete-specific nature of coaches' practice in high-performance sport may make the sharing of development practices and mechanisms more problematic. On the other hand, we can also argue that coaching in high-performance sport is highly technical, that is, dependent on sport sciences and sophisticated means of performance analysis and adaptation. This form of knowledge is acknowledged to be sport-specific and exhibit a degree of secrecy. However, when allied to coach mobility, knowledge sharing and academic documentation, it creates a corpus of knowledge-based expertise that can be harnessed for coach development.

We could argue, therefore, that coach development in high-performance sport has a global dimension, largely through coaching exchanges, coach mobility, sports science diffusion and technical literature. However, we temper this with the caveat that the situation is quite complex. Our experience is that high-performance coach development, while recently more allied to university education and the higher levels of formal qualifications, is also characterised more by informal exchanges, workshops and development programmes. The declarative/technical aspect of knowledge has a global dimension but the 'how to', applied and often tacit element of coaches' knowledge and expertise point to a context specificity that may be less easily shared or subsequently applied. We speculate that a global dimension to coach development may therefore apply more to systems and

principles than to non-technical content. In this context, 'systems and principles' implies that the approach to development has some structural or processual commonality. This refers to features such as needs analysis, analysis of personal practice, in situ development, online delivery, mentoring and so on (Lyle 2021).

It is less likely that practice-based knowledge will form the basis of global sharing. However, we note the broader definition of a knowledge society, one that embraces insights, values and tacit understandings. On an entirely speculative basis, we conjecture that there is some potential for a shared professionalism that is founded on approach rather than substance. However, we ourselves tend to the view that the esteem in which coaching is held should rely on 'higher-order' expertise, and the practical, often tacit, practice of coaches should not deter us from creating a knowledge-based profession. The balance of coach development knowledge and experience has obvious implications for the expertise required of coach developers (McCleery et al., 2021). We juxtapose this with personal experience that prior achievement in performance and coaching enhances developers' credibility.

We might conclude that a global dimension based on 'coaching craft' is less likely than the sharing and diffusion of sport-specific and technical information on which craft is based. However, we need to consider non-high-performance sport. We speculate that community and school-based sport, constituting a different domain, is commonly facilitated by coaches with less experience and with entry-level or 'early' stages of coaching qualifications. Coach education and coach development in this domain are more synonymous and the coach's expertise is less internalised. We suggest that this means that formal coach education in its initial stages is more susceptible to cross-national sharing and potentially has a global dimension.

Prominent Agencies with a Global Remit

Having more thoroughly considered the knowledge bases upon which globalised sharing may occur in the context of a knowledge society in sport coaching, we can now turn to a selection of prominent organisations and agencies whose purpose includes the diffusion of coaching practice and formal and informal development in a global context. [Note that each of the institutions and organisations identified in subsequent sections has an informative website. To prevent too untidy a presentation, we invite the reader to access these sources for further details.]

Our brief overview of globalisation and knowledge society frameworks has identified a number of issues around which we have structured the remainder of the chapter. These include evidence of a commonality of practice in legitimising standards of expertise and coaching practice; the sites of engagement of the coaching community in the production of coaching knowledge (local communities, professional associations, global networks); the nature of expertise in sport coaching and the types of knowledge that are valued, with implications for professionalisation; the issue of access to the knowledge frameworks underpinning coach education and the role of universities and international agencies; the role of coach developers as intermediaries in knowledge transfer and learning; and the extent to which credentialism has impacted coach development. The approach we have adopted is to diffuse attention to these issues through a review of a range of agencies with responsibility for global coach development. We begin with those agencies that might be said to be 'umbrella' organisations and move subsequently to those with 'professional development' remits.

Olympic Solidarity

In 1960 the International Olympic Committee (IOC) set up an assistance programme for National Olympic Committees (NOCs), with a particular focus on supporting less-established NOCs, and a broad remit to develop sport and Olympic ideals (Olympic Solidarity, 2021). This is an example of an

organisation with a global reach that has facilitated sites of engagement for exchange and development. Since its inception, Olympic Solidarity (OS) has been implementing programmes related to coach education and development, often with the cooperation of International Federations of sport. With funds derived from broadcasting rights, OS allocated \$33M to worldwide programmes for coaches between 2017 and 2020 (Olympic Solidarity, 2017). These programmes encourage and permit NOCs to incorporate coach education and development into their strategic plans, including, largely in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, online training. The principal goals of the OS coaches' programme are to promote continuing education, to encourage long-term development, to strengthen the participation of women, and to raise awareness of Olympic ideals. OS worldwide programmes related to coaching include Technical Courses for Coaches, Olympic Scholarships for Coaches, and the Development of National Sports Systems.

Technical courses for coaches

The courses are intended to provide training at various levels and are delivered in a number of formats by coach developers from the International Federations. The aim is to standardise the training that coaches receive around the world and to contribute to the strength of the coaching network of each nation. The OS programme is a significant element of the coach education work that International Federations are undertaking in coach recruitment and development. The courses tend to be directed at nations with a strong coaching infrastructure and to emphasise entry-level qualifications.

Olympic Scholarships for Coaches

The Olympic Scholarships for Coaches programme is designed to assist active coaches within National Federations of sport to benefit from access to activities, programmes and experiences that will enhance their expertise. This may be related to sport sciences, training practices, or certification courses. The programme is targeted at those coaches around the world who would not normally have access to these opportunities. It is therefore crucial to the implementation of the development strategies of International Federations. In tennis, for example, the International Federation (ITF) makes use of the scholarship programme to further its development objectives around the world. The programme assisted the ITF in developing its Online Coaching Scholarships for 2020 in a year affected by COVID-19 and has been instrumental in ensuring the provision of top-quality tennis coach education to the scholarship coaches. Other examples include, for instance, those of United World Wrestling, which is one of the International Federations that are working together with the IOC's Olympic Solidarity program to offer coaching scholarships. This is also the case with World Rowing, which uses this programme to provide coaches with the benefit of continuous high-level education and training.

Development of National Sports Systems

This part of OS's assistance to NOCs with less-developed sports infrastructure focuses on strengthening their sports system, including coaching. Over a period of three to six months, and following a thorough needs analysis, a medium to long-term action plan is devised. Coaches are acknowledged to be an essential element in achieving an effective sports system. Once again, the programme involves interaction between International Federations and local practitioners. The programme is relevant to achieving a more equitable global spread of opportunities, offering pathways for coaches, umpires, and technical officials through educational initiatives.

International Federations

The International Federations (IFs) are the global governing bodies of their respective sports. As such, they have several key roles, which include, among others, the governance of the sport globally, the organisation of world competitions in different modes of participation (e.g., professional, amateur and disability sport), the promulgation of the rules and regulations of the sport and its events, the commercialisation and marketing of the sports and its disciplines, the implementation of development and participation programmes, the education and certification for coaches, officials, players, administrators and those involved in the delivery of the sport, the relationships with other IFs, the IOC and other international organisations, and the provision of initiatives for the sustainability and legacy of the sport they represent.

The IFs of specific sports are a prime example of organisations with a global dimension to their coach development remit. In particular, the provision of coach education assistance to their member nations is one of the responsibilities that IFs have as part of their overall development objectives. This brief overview describes some of the projects that IFs are implementing as part of their coaching development. This includes coach education, global coaching qualifications or certifications, networking, and cooperation with universities or other institutions.

Coach education programmes

Recognising that the expertise and resources required to develop a comprehensive education programme may be beyond the capabilities of an individual nation, many IFs provide 'ready-made' courses and qualifications. For example, World Athletics operates a Coaches Education and Certification System (CECS), which is available as a service to its member federations. In the case of the ITF, its goal is to assist nations to become self-sufficient in coach education by gradually allowing them to create, implement and conduct their own programmes.

IF coach education programmes commonly have a number of levels, with a standard syllabus, which in many cases is competency based. The IFs provide accredited tutors, lecturers, or deliverers, and the necessary resources and learning support materials for programmes to run in member federation countries. Financial resources for the implementation of the programmes can also be offered to nations depending on their circumstances, which may involve, among other factors, their level of overall sports development, the availability of facilities, the opportunity to provide coaching, access to adequate equipment, the number and quality of meaningful competitions, and so on. Many of these programmes are co-ordinated by the regional or continental associations or federations and are directly delivered in conjunction with the national associations, under the guidance of the IF's education, coaching or development department. Many coach education programmes offer a training and education portfolio which includes digital and/or physical resources; several IFs in sports such as handball, tennis, rugby union, athletics, judo, basketball, and others, have launched globally-accessible coach education platforms.

IFs also provide a range of support resources ranging from information, education, certification, and continuous professional development to online learning, community forums, technical content resources, and video libraries. In order to assist with dissemination, IFs on the Olympic programme work closely with Olympic Solidarity to develop and provide world programmes, particularly aimed at supporting those nations with the greatest need (i.e., do not have capacity or expertise to develop their own programmes). An example of such coach development is provided by FIFA, which has an objective of developing more qualified female coaches (FIFA, 2021). To do so, it has launched a programme for its member

associations in which eligible individuals, including talented coaches and players who are looking to gain further coaching qualifications can apply for Coach Education Scholarships. This includes the cost of coach education courses, resources and mentoring.

Global coaching certification

Perhaps more importantly in terms of global coherence, IFs such as the ITF and World Rugby have responded to requests for comparability of coaching qualifications delivered across the globe by providing guidance on equivalence across certification systems. This is intended to aid coach mobility and provide a reference point for further development. The ITF's Programme of Recognition of Coach Education Systems of National Associations (ITF, 2021) ensures that the coach education being delivered in member nations meets minimum standards based on criteria that are agreed, endorsed, and approved by the appropriate Commissions and Boards.

Other organisations such as the International Handball Federation or Europe's governing body for soccer (UEFA) have signed coaching conventions with the aims of maintaining and raising standards of coaching across the continent. More specifically, this approach has involved a push for the standardisation of qualifications and delivery mechanisms. The intended outcome is to harmonise awards within a single framework and to facilitate the free movement of qualified coaches (UEFA, 2021).

Examples of collaborations

Before offering specific examples, we acknowledge the role that institutions can play in purposefully fostering the development and dissemination of sport coaches. While the involvement of institutions in globalised coach development efforts might have political or commercial dimensions, such programmes typically complement the internationalisation objectives of the respective institutions. For example, there are historical examples, in which institutions in Moscow and Leipzig delivered coach education courses from the 1960s and 70s to international student coaches from 'developing countries'. The ITK (International Coaching Course) from the University of Leipzig remains active today and is funded by the Foreign Office of the Federal Republic of Germany. To date, more 5,000 coaches from 150 countries have attended the programme.

There are a number of examples of institutions, IFs, national federations, and Olympic Solidarity working together to offer coach education and development opportunities, with the express purpose of disseminating good practice within international cohorts of coaches. Olympic Solidarity supports a group of such agencies: Centro de Alto Rendimiento (CAR, Barcelona), Programme d'Appui International au Sport African et Caraïbes (PAISAC, Montreal), Semmelweis University (Budapest), Cycle International du Sport d'élite (CISéL, Lausanne) and the International Coaching Enrichment Program (ICECP, Delaware). The ICECP at the University of Delaware is one such example. It is delivered in partnership with the United States Olympic and Paralympic Committee (USOPC) and Olympic Solidarity. The programme is directed to national coaches across the Olympic and Paralympic worlds and covers coaching leadership, sport sciences, talent identification, athlete development, coaching education, grassroots sport development and ethical aspects of coaching at all levels of competition and across multiple sports. There is also an emphasis on the participants as prospective coach educators in their respective countries, thus contributing to a sustainability objective. Since its inception in 2008, the programme has been attended by over 300 coaches from 115

countries. The International Coaching Course (ICC) at Semmelweis University, Budapest is another example. This programme, under the aegis of the University of Physical Education and Sports Sciences, has reached 2,000 coaches from almost 100 countries. Another interesting example is the World Athletics (WA) Academy, which has been established to provide education and share best practice by combining WA education with an accredited academic institution. The concept is a global university campus (World Athletics, 2021). Other IFs such as FIFA and the ITF have joined forces with universities to conduct courses or research projects related to coaching development.

In nations with less-developed and resource-constrained coach education systems, IFs play an important role, particularly in 'early'/entry stages of coach education and development. This might be described as a form of 'deficit reduction', which, when aligned with some regulation of coach education provision results in an increasing degree of standardisation. The reach of IFs differs greatly with respect to their power and influence. This is a reflection of their resources and 'gatekeeping' role in relation to major global events. As a result, well-resourced national federations will tend to act independently of poorly-resourced IFs. We are unable to quantify this feature of global development but we are in no doubt that it contributes to a global network and is a significant feature of global coach education and development.

Association of Sport Performance Centres

It is also common for nations to establish high-performance/elite sport specialist training and development centres. These offer an opportunity for coaches, specialist support staff and athletes to come together in an appropriate environment. The Association of Sport Performance Centres (ASPC) is an umbrella organisation of such centres, with almost 100 centres in membership. This is an opportunity for dissemination of expertise and experience within nations, but also for international collaboration and sharing. Not surprisingly, coaches and coach development features significantly in these centres' mission and practice, both for home nation coaches and international participants. An example of this is the High Performance Centre in Sant Cugat del Vallès (CAR) and at the National Institute of Physical Education of Catalonia (INEFC, Barcelona, Spain), at which a course in applied sports science is available to international coaches.

Once again, we are unable to say with any certainty that the outcome of these, often interacting, networks of organisations and opportunities is effective coach development through the global pooling and sharing of knowledge and experience. However, it does seem likely that the opportunity afforded by coach migration, technical panels, conferences, workshops - and, in particular, interaction between individual coaches - has created, at least in the elite sport domain, a loose network of practice with a global dimension. Development in these circumstances may owe more to awareness and diffusion of knowledge, rather than formal exchange.

The International Council for Coaching Excellence (ICCE)

We make particular mention of this organisation because of its avowedly global role and its engagement across coaching domains and coach developer training. Established in 1997, the ICCE's aspiration is to create a global community through international collaboration and exchange. The ICCE now represents 130 agencies and stakeholder organisations across 50 countries. The work of the ICCE is most evident in its Global and Regional Coaching Conferences, in collaborative development projects and the production of guidance documents on coaching education, development and systems. These documents provide a reference point for developers rather than a regulatory mechanism and contribute to the goal of standardising practice. Examples are the Bachelor degree

standards (Lara-Bercial, 2016), the ICCE Quality in Coaching Model, the European Sport Coaching Framework (Lara-Bercial et al, 2017) and the International Coach Developer Framework (ICCE, 2014), launched in 2014. The work of the ICCE both reflects and contributes to a knowledge society.

The ICCE's energy and reach across stakeholders in systems development, IFs and Higher Education is considerable, although a consultation process expressed some concern about its strategic direction, being Euro-centric, and dominated by English speaking academics (North et al., 2021), a concern already expressed above about the control of the knowledge society. Of immediate interest with respect to this chapter is the ICCE's partnership with the Nippon Sports Science Academy in Japan. Its jointly-offered Coach Developer Diploma course has been attended, over 7 cohorts, by more than 100 participants from 45 countries.

The ICCE has created a network of coach education and development stakeholders with considerable global reach. Although we cannot draw on any aggregated evidence of overall impact, its guidance documents have created a reference point for systems development, particularly in Europe, and a values framework for coach education policy and practice, largely in participation coaching. A specific interest in the professionalisation agenda may subsequently bear fruit. Certainly, an influential community of coaching science academics has emerged. However, we do speculate that there is a danger of this becoming a 'closed' network of interested Higher Education parties with more internal exchange than diffusion of knowledge to practitioners. Nevertheless, the ICCE has a genuine claim to be actively and effectively moving a considerable swathe of coaching stakeholders toward a global concept of coach education and development.

Universities

We introduce this final section by touching briefly on the issue of credentialism, as a facet of the knowledge society. This may be understood as placing a high value on formal qualifications as markers of esteem, expertise and readiness for deployment/employment (Zajda, 2007), and is closely linked to access to professions (Tholen, 2020). We acknowledge the range of issues that credentialism brings to sport coaching: cultural differences in the role of university education, occupationalisation and validation of expertise, licensing, and an element of anti-intellectualism arising from role boundary protection (Cushion et al., 2019; Hall et al., 2019; Platts & Smith, 2018). To some extent there is an additional issue in that much of the academic literature on formal coach education programmes identifies limitations in content and delivery (Cushion, Armour & Jones, 2003; Hertting, 2019; Stodter & Cushion, 2019).

Nevertheless, there is no doubt that certification has a very significant role in coach education and development across the globe. Formal coach education systems are in place in nations with developed sport systems, and those with more limited resources are supported by IFs. In addition to their role as markers of a common need for a trained workforce, their ubiquitousness invites a potential for standardisation and accreditation across nations. There is some evidence of this by agencies such as the IFs, the European Commission, the ICCE, and university exchange. There is, however, an absence of international regulatory mechanisms by which standardisation (even if desirable) might be established. At this stage, we can only speculate as to whether any uniformity is the result of the influence of transnational agencies or an understandably common response to coach education and development in the context of the more global availability of knowledge and practice.

The more-advanced levels of coaching qualifications and the desire for mid-career enhancement (Lyle, 2021) have resulted in a greater degree of integration and cooperation between universities and governing bodies of sport (Ković et al, 2020). This may also have been an outcome from a gradual process of 'academicising' sport coaching. There are some tensions, however, in the nature of the

relationship between institutions of higher education and governing bodies of sport and their programmes (Araya et al., 2015; Ković et al., 2020). From our experience, much of this centres on the recognition given to an issue we raised earlier - the 'weight' given to particular forms of knowledge, i.e., 'practical knowledge', and the integration and translation of discipline-based knowledge into coaching expertise. Eastern European universities had a history of sports science-based coaching programmes and there remains some distinction between postgraduate programmes that might more appropriately be termed 'coaching studies' and those with a clear emphasis on professional practice. Not all high-performance coaching programmes confer higher education 'credits' or access to further study (Callary et al., 2014). This may add to a perceived separation between the value attached to 'practical' and 'academic' knowledge (Cushion et al., 2019; Frunzaru et al., 2018). We do, however, recognise an element of credentialism in the proliferation of programmes in tertiary education.

We would expect universities to play a significant role in generating and disseminating knowledge; this would be evident in research, postgraduate study and collaboration with national sporting authorities and governing bodies of sports. This is certainly the case in the USA, Canada, Australia and the UK. We identify these countries simply because of our own connections and their contribution to relevant publications in the English language. However, this pattern of provision is evident in across Europe and more widely. In relation to the focus of this chapter, we do not have answers to all of the questions we might ask about the global dimension of the link between coach development and higher education. In particular, we suspect that the interchange of academic knowledge (with some caveats about language) and some commonality in the approach to high-performance sport will produce similar programmes. On the other hand, we would need to learn more about the infusion of reality-based practice and the relationship to sport-specific technical knowledge and conceptions of professional practice to evaluate the extent of a common worldwide endeavour.

Final Thoughts

How would we address the question, 'is there a global dimension to coach development?' While acknowledging that there is a significant element of interpretation in our response, we offer the following very tentative conclusions. Having examined globalisation and the features of a knowledge society, and acknowledging the roles of those organisations with a global reach and purpose, we recognise that the conclusions we offer may be somewhat over-simplified but we offer them nonetheless as a starting point for further investigation.

First, we are confident that the case has been made for coach education and development as a global phenomenon; this is a straightforward consequence of the ubiquity of sport provision and practice across the globe. However, the differentiated resources available to nations, when combined with cultural particularity and placed in the context of the significance afforded to sport as a result of economic, political and social conditions, result in quite distinctive provision and practice. The developmental environment occasioned by conditions of literacy, education and economic stability is exacerbated by the relative importance and organisational structures associated with the various sporting domains. The more relevant question is whether or not this evident presence displays any characteristics of common practice, coherence and/or purposeful diffusion.

Second, in the context of the ease of communication, knowledge exchange and coach mobility associated with globalisation, we detect a tension between the affordance of a global dimension arising from digital exchange and access to knowledge and the strength of nation's historical, cultural and political identity. Nevertheless, there is a strong argument that coach development, particularly within high-performance sport, demonstrates a more global pattern of practice. The intensity of international sporting exchanges, coach mobility, the influence of sports science, commonality of purpose, the diffusion of technical knowledge, and the greater interaction with higher education

facilitates a more recognisably common practice. There is a corresponding benefit from the increasing role of higher education institutions in coach development as a specialist network of academics permeate provision. While we cannot say with certainty that there exists a truly global community associated with coach development, international organisations, universities, international governing bodies of sports, and a relatively mobile population of high-performance coaches have created intersecting global networks.

Third, we also point out a number of stronger critiques of a global dimension to coach development. Knowledge diffusion via the academic community is largely dominated by Euro-North American academics. In the context of longstanding concerns about practitioner access and adoption, there is a danger of communication within rather than on behalf of the academic community. The network of coach developers is also separate from the network of sport scientists who engage in more technical knowledge creation. In relation to the work of IFs and other international organisations, we detect two types of contribution. First, there is the ‘levelling up’ of coaching capital in nations whose resources and systems are limited. This might be described as paternal but is also a function of attempts to further the spread of relative power and influence between sports. The second contribution comes from agencies, ICCE being a good example, that attempt to harmonise provision, very largely through guidance and advice rather than regulation.

Fourth, we had earlier pointed to the potential impact of ‘practical knowledge’ on shared development practice. It might reasonably be argued that often-tacit experiential knowledge developed through occupational socialisation, when allied to varied levels of professionalisation and the esoteric practice of professional sport, render coaching knowledge less easily shared. The absence of consensus on appropriate intervention programmes may also contribute to this. However, we might contrast this with some agreement within coach developer programmes on andragogical approaches such as problem-based learning, experiential learning, athlete-centred values, and less ‘classroom’-based delivery.

After what we initially thought to be a simple remit, we find that we have barely scratched the surface of a set of questions that deserve more considered attention. We need to explore the tensions inherent in the intersection of individual sports’ technical fiefdoms, sport for the purpose of social and economic development, the creation of sports science-derived knowledge, and the andragogical/coaching practice of coach developer programmes. The relationship between coach education and post-experience coach development programmes also deserves attention. One of the critical issues is that there are few regulatory mechanisms within countries across the globe to hold local practice accountable for adherence to more globally recognised best practice. From our own experience we detect a welcome move towards individualised, context-specific, practice-based development. This perhaps helps to explain the attention given, particularly by the academic community, to the means of diffusion and dissemination leading to learning, rather than the breadth of coaches’ expertise covered by coach development programmes.

There is an extensive population of coaches across the globe who are engaged in all forms of formal and informal education and development. There are IFs, education institutions, and umbrella organisations that adopt a global perspective. There is an academic community that embraces a globalised knowledge exchange. To this extent we conclude that there is a global dimension to coach development. Does it transcend the gravitation pull of individual nation’s sporting environments – perhaps not fully, but moving in that direction.

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