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Scientific Strategies for Selecting and Directing Gifted Pupils in Primary Schools

Perspectives of Physical Education and Sport Teachers

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Abstract:

This study aimed to identify the contemporary scientific strategies used to select gifted pupils in primary schools within the context of school sports and to direct them toward sport specialisations that match their physical and cognitive capacities from the perspective of physical education and sport teachers. To achieve this aim, a descriptive research design was employed because of its suitability for the study's nature. A questionnaire was administered to a randomly selected sample of 42 teachers. Following statistical processing via the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS, Version 23), the findings indicated that most physical education and sport teachers consider the selection and direction of gifted pupils to be necessary and highly important for the development of Algerian sports. The majority of teachers relied primarily on observation, and most also relied on personal, subjective experience during the selection and direction process. In addition, most teachers held scientific qualifications that enabled them to select and direct gifted pupils. However, the majority did not rely on contemporary scientific methods in selecting and directing gifted pupils.

Keywords: selection and direction, gifted pupils, school sport.

Introduction: The remarkable scientific and technological developments witnessed in the present era have

had a tangible impact on the sports field, broadening its scope in both concept and significance. This is attributable to the growing participation and considerable interest shown by individuals across various sport specialisations, supported by contemporary scientific research and experimental studies that strongly influence athletic performance and competitive outcomes, to the extent that sport has entered the domains of professionalism and global competition. There is no doubt that achieving record performance is directly contingent on the quality of selection, as in other sectors, where the quality of the final product is linked to the quality of the raw material.

The selection of gifted pupils in primary schools is also essential for developing their abilities and skills and directing them toward sport specialisations that correspond to their physical and cognitive capacities. No structure can endure for a long time unless its foundation is solid and strong; likewise, in the sports domain, attention should be devoted to pupils with abilities and talents, and efforts should be made to increase their level to achieve the best sporting results. In this context, Mohamed Lotfi Taha argues that sport selection is a process of testing to identify the most suitable individuals among athletes who possess particular predispositions and capacities consistent with the requirements and nature of the sporting activity, namely, testing those who meet the criteria and for whom

superiority in that activity can be predicted (Mohamed Lotfi, 2002, p.13).

It has become evident that a high level of performance cannot be attained without developing the fundamental conditions required for any sport from childhood. The process of selecting and directing gifted pupils towards the type of skill that suits them is an economic process that saves effort and time, secures optimal outcomes, and yields the best sporting elements in physical, technical, psychological, and educational terms. This accelerates learning and ensures better conditions for the progress of educational work. Conversely, incorrect selection, or selection dominated by subjectivity, adversely affects performance and overall sporting level (Fenouche & Nacir, 2003–2004, p.11).

The primary school constitutes a fertile environment in which investment can be made to develop Algerian sport, advance it, keep pace with global sport development, and honour the Algerian national flag in international arenas through the early identification of sporting talent and its direction towards sport specialisation through school sport. This has prompted the Algerian state to relaunch school sports in primary schools by issuing a presidential decision providing for the recruitment of 12,000 specialised graduate teachers to supervise school sports and the establishment of a General Directorate of School Sports within the National Education sector. This step reveals the Algerian state's intention to prepare a genuine foundational plan for school sports, opening new horizons for the younger generation as a reservoir of sporting elites.

School sports provide significant opportunities to reveal pupils' talents and capacities through the participation of primary school teams in sporting competitions across different disciplines and categories. In this context, Bradaï Abdelhamid and colleagues maintain that school sports include both team and individual competitions and that the Algerian Federation of

School Sports Organises competitions or qualifying rounds to select individual champions or teams to organise a reduced-scale national championship. Accordingly, school sports, like other forms of sports, organise competitions to select young talent and to inject new impetus into the sports movement (Bradaï et al., 2021, p. 66). School sport concerns athletically outstanding individuals within educational institutions; it is therefore a competitive activity whose programme is established through the guidance of physical education and sport within federations and educational administrations, as well as an annual programme prepared by the physical education and sport teacher within the institution, which involves the organisation of several official matches. School sports are considered the primary base of sports movement and the reservoir from which local clubs and teams draw energy, which undoubtedly benefits not only the institution but also the city as a whole. The school has played an important role in educating young people and increasing their awareness of the importance of practising sports appropriately, as well as their physical and health benefits (Charbi, 2019, pp. 81–92).

Sporting talent represents a set of high-level competencies and skills, whether natural or acquired, in a given activity and by a given individual. These capacities are observable in young athletes at an early age, which makes it possible to predict, with a high probability, the attainment of a high level of achievement in the shortest possible time, provided that sufficient willpower is present in the individual's psychology, alongside the availability of appropriate conditions for training and work (Cazola, 1993, p.141).

The selection and direction process constitutes one of the most significant problems faced by physical education and sport teachers. Selection is often based on subjective criteria that may adversely affect future results. Incorrect selection does not serve sports; it also has adverse effects on future outcomes and on the pupil who practises it, such as discontinuing

participation or failing to engage seriously. For this reason, sound selection grounded in tests and scientific methods is regarded as one of the most important factors for success in school sports, given its potential to foster future success and excellence within a particular specialisation.

Accordingly, physical education teachers must prioritise the identification and nurturing of talent using contemporary scientific methods to enable pupils to reach the highest levels. From this perspective, the present study problem emerges, seeking to answer the following question:

Do the processes of selecting and directing gifted pupils in primary schools rely on scientific strategies?

Subquestions:

- Do physical education and sport teachers rely on physical, skill-based, and psychological tests in the process of selecting and directing gifted pupils in primary schools?
- Do physical education and sport teachers rely on personal experience in the process of selecting and directing gifted pupils in primary schools?

Study Hypotheses

To answer the main question and the preceding subquestions, two hypotheses were formulated as provisional solutions as follows:

- Physical education and sport teachers rely on physical, skill-based, and psychological tests in selecting and directing gifted pupils in primary schools.
- Physical education and sport teachers rely on personal experience in selecting and directing gifted pupils in primary schools.

Study Objectives

This study aims to:

- The importance of using contemporary scientific methods in selecting and directing gifted pupils in primary schools should be highlighted.
- Seek to shed light on school sports in primary schools through the relaunch of school sports in primary schools, which will open new horizons for the younger generation as a reservoir of sporting elites.
- Raise physical education and sport teachers' awareness of the necessity and importance of the selection and direction process for gifted pupils and of identifying their cognitive and motor capacities and capabilities.
- Emphasise the role of physical education and sport teachers in selecting and directing sporting talent in primary schools.

Significance of the Study:

The significance of this study lies in its endeavour to identify the most important contemporary scientific methods for selecting and directing gifted pupils and for benefiting from the energies and talents with which primary schools abound. It also relies on valuing the President of the Republic's decision to relaunch school sports through the recruitment of 12,000 teachers from graduates of the Institutes of Sciences and techniques of physical and sport activities, which confirms the importance of the role played by physical education and sport teachers in primary schools in selecting and directing gifted pupils. This, in turn, enables their contribution to strengthening sporting elites across different specialisations and to advancing and developing Algerian sports. Furthermore, the significance of this study lies in drawing the attention of physical education and sport teachers to the value and importance of contemporary scientific methods for selecting and directing gifted pupils in primary schools,

caring for them, and investing in these talents in ways that serve elite sports.

First: Theoretical Background and Previous Studies

1.Theoretical Background

1.1. Sport Selection

Sport selection is a dynamic, continuous, long-term process that aims to predict an individual's future and the results they may achieve; its purpose is to optimise the selection of the individual (Zaki, 2006, p. 232).

Operational definition: This is the process of choosing pupils who possess predispositions and capacities that distinguish them from others in accordance with the requirements of the type of activity practised and the age stage, on the basis of scientific principles and criteria, and for whom superiority and success can be predicted.

1.2. Sport Direction

Sport direction is an educational process that involves assisting individuals in knowing themselves and recognising their personal capacities, thereby enabling them to choose a sport specialisation in which they can excel (Mohamed Lotfi, 2002, p. 37).

Operational definition: Operational definition assists pupils in determining their appropriate sporting pathway; understanding their capacities, inclinations, and innate predispositions; and using these to overcome the problems they face to achieve their goal.

1.3. Sporting Talent

A gifted child outperforms their peers. This is affirmed by Nashi, who states that the gifted child can excel in the future if they are provided with care, guidance, and due attention (Fenouche, 2011, p. 123).

Operational definition: The pupil attains a high level of sporting performance with less effort than peers do; in other words, they possess innate predispositions and high capacities that enable them to acquire sporting skills with ease.

1.4. School Sport

School sports is one of the most important pillars of the national sports movement, as it concerns gifted elite pupils in the sporting domain. At the national level, it is supported by the Algerian Federation of School Sport, and at the wilaya level, there are wilaya-based leagues of school sport. The latter oversee the scheduling, organisation, and supervision of sporting competitions among different schools, in which the best pupils participate (Fenouche & Nacir, 2003–2004, p. 48).

Operational definition: School sport refers to the practice of various sporting activities outside school hours, conducted as competitions among primary schools and organised at local, regional, wilaya-level, and international levels, to select pupils and direct them appropriately towards elite sport.

2. Previous studies:

2.1. Study by Abbas Lakhdar and Harouache Lamine (2019), entitled “Methods and Approaches to Selection and Direction in the Sporting Domain for Adolescents Within the Framework of Forming School Teams (12–15 Years)”.

This study aimed to highlight the importance of sport selection for adolescents in building school teams and forming strong teams that reflect each young athlete's individual differences. The study also sought to present selection methods appropriate to each individual, on the basis of their capacities, and to direct them towards the sport that corresponds to their physical and cognitive abilities, as well as to clarify how teams can be classified according to individual differences, as perceived by guidance

counsellors and teachers supervising school teams. This process is considered highly important for team formation, given that selection and direction are essential for identifying gifted beginners and providing them with early opportunities to demonstrate their interests, capacities, and effort, ultimately enabling them to reach the highest levels. To achieve this aim and in accordance with the study's requirements, the researchers employed a descriptive approach, given its suitability for the study's nature. A questionnaire was administered to a randomly selected sample of 80 participants (58 teachers and 22 managers). The study yielded the following results:

- Most teachers rely on observation as a basis for the selection and direction of adolescents.
- A large proportion of teachers consider friendly matches to play an effective role in selecting and directing adolescents to school teams.
- All the teachers confirmed that the teacher's experience plays a prominent role in the selection of adolescents.

In light of these findings, the researchers recommended the following:

- Ensuring the involvement of all pupils in a comprehensive assessment process and selecting the best for school sport.
- Standardising tests and measures to assess performance and to classify pupils for the selection of school teams.
- Conducting training courses for teachers to develop expertise in the field of forming school teams.

2.2. Study by Fenouche Nacir (2003–2004), entitled “Sport Selection and Direction of Gifted Pupils Within the Framework of School Sport (12–15 Years): A Study for the Award of a Master's Degree”

This research aimed to shed light on school sport as a domain concerning elite pupils who possess abilities and talents in the sporting field and to identify the most effective means of selecting and directing gifted pupils, thereby advancing school sport toward elite practice. To achieve this aim and in accordance with the study's requirements, the researcher employed a descriptive approach, as it was deemed suitable for the study's nature. A questionnaire was administered to a randomly selected sample of 58 lower secondary education teachers from the Directorate of Education of Algiers Province. The study revealed the following results:

- Poor management and limited financial support.
- An absence of adherence to scientific principles in selection by teachers and administrators, with the latter being characterised more by subjectivity and spontaneity.
- The organisation of school sporting competitions has a substantial effect on the process of selecting and directing gifted pupils, as it provides an opportunity for the pupils to express their capacities and latent talents.
- The sport direction of gifted pupils contributes to continuity in practising the appropriate sport.

In light of these findings, the researcher recommended the following:

- Encouraging and motivating physical education and sport teachers and all administrators to pay attention to younger age groups of pupils (12–15 years), especially gifted pupils, to benefit from their capacities in building sports teams and various representative selections.
- The necessity of reconsidering physical education and sport programmes, which constitute an injustice to primary-stage pupils; that is, this subject should be introduced in the

first and second cycles on a regular, compulsory basis and under the supervision of a specialised teacher.

- To establish principles and criteria for all sport selections to facilitate the selection and direction of gifted pupils in accordance with these criteria.
- Relying on experienced and well-informed teachers and educators in selecting and directing gifted pupils.

Second: Procedures of the Field Study

1. Pilot Study

At this stage, information was collected, and prior research and studies related to the topic were reviewed, despite their limited number, to provide sufficient data and develop a comprehensive understanding of the topic from all perspectives, thereby establishing foundations and a theoretical background for this subject. Prior to administering the questionnaire and distributing the research forms, a pilot study was conducted with the research sample to examine field practices within several educational institutions affiliated with the Directorate of Education of Algiers West and to contact institution directors to collect the most significant possible amount of information through which the problem under study could be addressed and the study population better understood. The opportunity was also taken to distribute the preliminary questionnaire to a group of physical education and sport teachers to identify gaps and shortcomings before its final distribution. The purpose of conducting the pilot study was as follows:

- To identify the sample and the feasibility of conducting this study.
- Extraneous variables that may affect the study results were controlled.

- To verify the suitability of the conditions before and during the administration of the questionnaire.

- To verify the appropriateness of the instrument and teachers' understanding of its items and terminology.

2. Study Method

The method is essential in any scientific research, as it constitutes the pathway the researcher follows to obtain scientific results when studying a specific topic. Boudawoud and Ataallah defined it as a set of organised steps, cognitive operations, general principles, and practical procedures used by the researcher to understand the phenomenon under study (Boudawoud & Ataallah, 2009, p. 111). Accordingly, the researchers employed the descriptive-analytical method owing to its suitability for the nature of the study and because it is the most appropriate approach for studies that aim to describe aspects of a phenomenon, diagnose it, and examine it in depth by collecting data and facts while attempting to interpret them adequately.

3. Study population

The study population is defined as a finite or infinite set of prespecified elements upon which observations are based (Maurice, 2006, p. 298). Thus, the study population comprised all physical education and sport teachers affiliated with the Directorate of Education of Algiers West, totaling 264 male and female teachers.

4. Study Sample

The sample is a part of the study population from which field data are collected. It is considered a part of the whole; that is, a group of individuals is selected from the population such that it is representative of the research population. The sample, therefore, constitutes a specific part or a specific proportion of the original population, after which the study results are generalised to

the population as a whole (Zrouati, 2007, p. 334). The sample was expanded as much as

possible, and 42 male and female teachers were selected randomly.

4.1. Characteristics of the Study Sample

Table (1): *Study the sample and its clubs.*

No.	Club	Sample Size
01	Tessala El Merja	09
02	Bir Touta	06
03	Douira	08
04	Ouled Mendil	04
05	Ouled Chebel	03
06	Baba Hassen	05
07	Ouled Fayet	07
Total		42

5. Study Scope

5.1. Temporal scope: This study was conducted from 5 November 2024 to 25 November 2024.

5.2. Spatial scope: This study was conducted on a sample of physical education and sport teachers affiliated with the Directorate of Education of Algiers West.

6. Instrument Used

In this research, a questionnaire was used as an appropriate tool for obtaining organised information, data, and facts about a given reality. The questionnaire is presented as a series of questions to be answered by individuals concerned with the questionnaire topic (Obeidat et al., 1988, p. 266). The researchers prepared a set of questions in an initial questionnaire, drawing on essential considerations, including their review of available theoretical studies related to the research topic. The researchers also

drew on the theoretical component of the study when formulating the questionnaire items. The questionnaire items underwent numerous revisions to test their validity and reliability. In its final form, the questionnaire comprised two main sections. The first section included personal information about the respondent (age, educational level, living standard, housing type, and marital status). The second section consists of two dimensions corresponding to the formulated hypotheses to verify their validity. It is a closed-ended questionnaire in which respondents select an answer from two options or from multiple options. Each dimension contained eight different questions. Forty-two teachers completed the questionnaire, and the data were entered into SPSS for statistical analysis.

7. Psychometric Properties of the Study Instrument

7.1. Validity: Validity is among the most important psychometric properties of data collection instruments, as it verifies that the instrument measures what it was designed to measure. There are numerous methods for establishing instrument validity. In this research, the following types of validity were addressed:

7.1.1. Judges' validity: To establish the validity of the questionnaire, it was presented to several teachers and researchers from the Institute of Sciences and Techniques of Physical and Sport Activities to verify the instrument's alignment with the intended dimension and the correctness

of the statements. The questionnaire was modified and supplemented in accordance with the expert judges' suggestions, thereby establishing its validity.

7.1.2. Extreme-group validity: The scale was administered to a pilot sample of 17 physical education and sport teachers affiliated with the Directorate of Education of Algiers West to assess validity via the extreme-group method by testing the significance of differences between the upper and lower extreme groups. The results are presented in Table 2

Table (2): Extreme-Groups Validity between the Upper and Lower Groups.

Group	M	SD	df	T	P	Statistical significance
Upper group	67.80	5.38	8	41.89	< .001	Significant
Lower group	44.57	7.90				

Source: Table prepared by the researchers on the basis of SPSS output.

As shown in Table 2, the mean of the upper group was 67.80, whereas the mean of the lower group was 44.57. The standard deviation for the upper group was 5.38, and for the lower group, it was 7.90. The degrees of freedom were 8. The *t* value used to determine differences between the two groups was 41.89. Therefore, there were differences between the upper and lower groups at the 0.01 level of significance because the probability value was 0.000, which is less than 0.01. Accordingly, the questionnaire has a high degree of validity.

7.2. Reliability

Test reliability refers to the extent to which the test yields the same results if it is readministered to the same members of the sample under the same conditions. Researchers have calculated

reliability via two different methods: the split-half method and the internal consistency coefficient (Cronbach's alpha).

7.2.1. Reliability coefficient via the split-half method

The scale was divided into two equivalent halves after being administered to the pilot sample. The division was performed by separating odd- and even-numbered items. Following this division, Pearson's correlation coefficient was calculated between the two halves of the test.

7.2.2. Reliability coefficient via Cronbach's alpha

Cronbach's alpha is among the most important measures of internal consistency for tests, as it

links test reliability to the reliability of its dimensions. The reliability coefficients for the

scale dimensions were calculated in SPSS, and the results are presented in the following table.

Table (3): Questionnaire Reliability Results

Questionnaire dimensions	Number of items	Split-half reliability	Cronbach's alpha
Dimension 1	8	0.84	0.86
Dimension 2	8	0.80	0.82
Study instrument (all dimensions)	16	0.82	0.84

Source: Table prepared by the researchers on the basis of SPSS output.

Table 3 shows that the split-half reliability for Dimension 1 was 0.84, and Cronbach's alpha was 0.86. For Dimension 2, the split-half reliability was 0.80, and the Cronbach's alpha was 0.82. This indicates that the study instrument (questionnaire) demonstrates a high degree of reliability that can be relied upon in the field application of the study.

8. Statistical procedures

The following statistical procedures were used:

8.1. Frequencies and percentages: To identify and analyse the responses of the sample members.

8.2. Arithmetic mean: to determine the average responses of the sample members.

8.3. Pearson's correlation coefficient was used to establish instrument reliability.

8.4. Split-half reliability coefficient and Cronbach's alpha: These values were used to verify the validity and reliability of the research measures.

8.5. The chi-square (χ^2) test, or relative fit, is used when comparing observed results or results obtained, and it also allows comparisons among various results obtained through the questionnaire administered to the sample by comparing observed frequencies with expected frequencies (Kamel & Al-Shayeb, 2012, p. 13).

Third: Presentation and Analysis of Results

Analysis of the Items of the First Dimension: Physical education and sport teachers rely on physical, skill-based, and psychological tests to select and direct gifted pupils in primary schools

Table (4): Analysis of the Items of the First Dimension

No.	Statements	Responses	Frequencies	%	χ^2
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01	Do you use measurements and tests during the selection process?	Yes	30	71.5	0.83
		No	12	28.5	
02	Which aspect do you consider during selection?	Physical and skill-based	34	81	2.80
		Psychological	8	19	
03	Which approach do you adopt during selection and direction?	Scientific observation	27	64.5	1.42
		Physical, skill-based, and psychological tests	15	35.5	
04	Do tests and measurements play an important role in selecting and developing talent?	Yes	40	95	9.95
		No	2	5	
05	Which physical tests are suitable for the age group (06–12)?	Speed and strength	18	43	0.55
		Agility and flexibility	24	57	
06	Does a pupil's success in physical, skill-based, and psychological tests mean that the pupil is distinguished?	Yes	36	85.5	8.99
		No	6	14.5	
07	Do you know contemporary scientific methods for selecting and directing talent?	Yes	28	66.5	1.47
		No	14	33.5	
08	In your opinion, what is the appropriate age for selecting talents in primary schools?	(06–08) years	11	26	5.54
		(09–12) years	31	74	

χ^2 (tabulated) at the .05 level of significance = 3.81.

In the first dimension, “The physical education and sport teacher relies on physical, skill-based, and psychological tests in selecting and directing gifted pupils in primary schools,” the researchers found that the first hypothesis was not partially supported. With respect to the computed χ^2 values for items 07, 05, 03, 02, and 01, these values were lower than the tabulated value, that is, not statistically significant, whereas items 08, 06, and 04 had computed χ^2 values greater than the tabulated value, that is, statistically significant.

The results indicate that physical education and sport teachers do not rely primarily on physical and skill-based tests but rather on observations grounded in scientific principles. When teachers' responses are examined, in the process of selecting and directing talent, they rely on classical means, which renders the process characterised by randomness. This is attributed to the ease of these means and their suitability for the resources available in educational institutions. Moreover, most teachers are not familiar with contemporary scientific methods, whereas a small group relies on tests and

measures to select gifted pupils. This is consistent with a study that found that tests carried out by coaches are insufficient for the success of the selection process if they are not grounded in scientific principles that have demonstrated effectiveness in achieving planned objectives. The present study is also consistent with Fenouche Nacir's (2011) study, which asserts that there is incomplete adherence to scientific methods in teacher and administrator selection and that the latter is dominated by subjectivity and spontaneity. However, the present study differs from the study by Mohamed Temchbach and Youssef Nakhla (2020), who argue that the processes of selecting and directing pupils within educational institutions for the formation of school sports teams across various activities to strengthen elite teams are based on scientific foundations and programs to the fullest extent, according to the available specialised material and human resources.

Mufti wrote that selecting through scientific methods helps ensure that young athletes have access to the best services available, which motivates them to deliver their best performance and reach higher levels (Mufti, 1966, p. 112).

In the same vein, Abdelhay Ibrahim Abkar argues that attention should be devoted to applying scientific methods in the selection of young athletes and to identifying the most important selection principles for choosing the best young individuals, as well as overcoming the factors that drive them towards higher levels. He further maintains that it is necessary to benefit from scientific development and to apply the outcomes of research and studies to select the best young athletes via clearly defined scientific methods to enable them to attain high sporting levels (Abdelhay Ibrahim, 2010, pp. 35–36).

Analysis of the Items of the Second Dimension:
Physical education and sport teachers rely on personal experience in selecting and directing gifted pupils in primary schools

Table (5): Analysis of the Items of the Second Dimension

No.	Statements	Responses	Frequencies	%	χ^2
01	Do you hold an additional qualification in the sporting field?	Yes	30	71.05	4.53
		No	12	28.05	
02	How many years have you worked teaching physical education and sport?	Less than 10 years	11	74	5.54
		More than 10 years	31	26	
03	Do you supervise the training of sports clubs outside educational institutions?	Yes	37	88	7.55
		No	5	12	

04	Do you rely on the idea of selection when choosing gifted pupils?	Yes	38	90.05	8.60
		No	4	09.05	
05	Have you received specialised training in selecting young talent?	Yes	7	16	7.10
		No	35	84	
06	Are you invited to seminars or training sessions specifically focused on selecting gifted pupils?	Yes	34	81	2.80
		No	8	19	
07	In your opinion, on what basis does the selection of gifted pupils in educational institutions rely?	Observation	22	52	1.44
		Field tests	20	48	
08	Do you adhere to the school sports league programme in selecting and directing gifted pupils?	Yes	32	76	4.76
		No	10	24	

χ^2 (tabulated) at the .05 level of significance = 3.81.

On the basis of the results presented in the table above, the researchers concluded that in the second dimension, "The physical education and sport teacher relies on personal experience in selecting and directing gifted pupils in primary schools" and that the second hypothesis was supported. This conclusion is based on the computed χ^2 values for most items (08, 05, 04, 03, 02, 01), which were greater than the tabulated value and therefore statistically significant. In contrast, the remaining two items (07, 06) were lower than the tabulated value and therefore not statistically significant.

Accordingly, with respect to the findings, it may be that teachers rely on their personal and subjective experience, as well as on field experience acquired outside educational institutions. According to their responses, the majority of teachers held coaching qualifications

through which they trained sports clubs and possessed more than 10 years of field experience. Most of them also rely on programs overseen by the School Sport League. This aligns with what Abu Al-Makarim Obeid and Waseela Mohamed reported in their study regarding the importance, emphasised by the Canadian coaches McWilliam and Landry, of a standardised programme through which early identification of sporting talent can be achieved. They also noted the absence of scientific criteria or levels on which to base early identification of athletically outstanding individuals. The results of the present study are consistent with those of Rached Hamia et al. (2011) and Abbas Lakhdar and Harouache Lamine (2019), which indicate that the teacher's experience plays a positive role in the selection process. Experience is considered a fundamental factor that helps the teacher identify and select the best individuals

and enables them to reach the highest levels. The present study is also consistent with Daoud Ali's (2015) study, which revealed that most coaches responsible for preparing and selecting athletes lack scientific and even professional competence and that most do not rely on standardised scientific foundations but rather operate on the basis of subjectivity and randomness. This, in turn, negatively affects the development level of Algerian handball.

In contrast, the present study contradicts Mufti Ibrahim Hammad's (2001) claim that among the guiding principles for selecting gifted young athletes is the necessity of rules and criteria fully linked to heredity, in addition to taking into account the sport-specific requirements of the targeted sport. He also emphasised that the means of implementing programmes for selecting gifted individuals should include tests, measures, and model standards for measurements, as well as biological, psychological, and general and sport-specific motor-skill determinants (Mufti Ibrahim, 2001). The present study also differs from the study by Delmi Mohamed (2014), who, after presenting and analysing the results of his field study, concluded that there is a shortcoming in coaches' professional preparation, which consequently does not ensure the development, identification, and preparation of young athletes. He further indicated that there is a weakness in coaches' cultural and cognitive levels, which does not ensure the success of a scientifically based selection process.

According to a study conducted on a sample of physical education teachers, the questions posed to them through a questionnaire, and the results obtained, most teachers rely on self-based and personal experience in selecting and directing gifted pupils. This is attributed, according to them, to the limited availability of essential resources and facilities, time constraints, and adherence to the School Sports League programme. This has led them not to use contemporary scientific methods, instead limiting their practice to observation and

personal experience, despite their good training and the information they possess regarding the processes of selection and direction.

Conclusion:

The identification and nurturing of talent are of considerable importance for physical education and sport teachers, as they enable the recognition of gifted pupils' capacities and skills and the work of directing and developing them in ways that correspond to their talents. This constitutes the fundamental base and infrastructure through which sporting achievements and remarkable progress can be attained. Accordingly, school sports, particularly in primary schools, are the primary source for identifying and developing sporting talent. Therefore, physical education and sport teachers must adhere to and commit to contemporary scientific methods in the selection and direction of gifted pupils by employing all available scientific means, abandoning randomness in selection, and avoiding purely subjective approaches. Scientific methodology remains the only means to overcome the profound shortfall in sporting achievements that has persisted for a long time. While the teacher's experience in selecting and directing talent is not denied and is indeed an important and practical approach, it must be accompanied by sound training, keeping pace with developments in the sporting field, and the application of scientific methods in the selection and direction of gifted pupils.

In light of the findings obtained, the following conclusions were reached:

- Most physical education and sport teachers consider the selection and direction of gifted pupils to be necessary and very important for the development of Algerian sports.
- Most physical education and sport teachers rely on observation.

- Most physical education and sport teachers rely on personal and subjective experience during the selection and direction process.
- Most teachers possess academic qualifications that enable them to manage the process of selecting and directing gifted pupils.
- Most teachers do not rely on contemporary scientific methods in the process of selecting and directing gifted pupils.

Suggestions and recommendations:

In accordance with the results obtained, the researcher recommends the following:

- Not relying solely on observation and personal judgement during the selection and direction process.
- Relying on contemporary scientific methods in selecting and directing gifted pupils.
- Intensifying seminars and conferences to train teachers and raising their awareness of the necessity of selection and direction via contemporary scientific methods.
- Paying attention to younger age groups (the primary education stage) is the golden stage for selecting sporting talent.
- Providing essential resources and facilities to ensure that work is conducted under the best possible conditions.
- Conducting thorough medical examinations during the pupil selection process.
- Allocating sufficient time for the teacher to be able to manage the process of selecting and directing gifted pupils effectively.
- Ensuring the guidance and support of gifted pupils to enable them to reach higher levels.

- Technicians and test batteries should be provided to assess the level of physical fitness and the skill-related and psychological capacities of primary school pupils.

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