

eman ta zabal zazu



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**STRATEGICAL THINKING OF ELITE SOCCER COACHES IN  
PALESTINE: IMPACT OF COMPETITIVE DIVISIONS,  
QUALIFICATION, AND EXPERIENCE**

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To the soul of my father and my mother

Who wished to see me as a doctor in Physical Education.



## ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to describe and explain the rationale of elite soccer coaches in Palestine when designing and selecting practice in the pre-season period of season 2019/2020. Coaching is a decision-making process of continuous modification of the internal logic of the institutionalized game. By looking into the internal logic of the activities proposed in their diaries coaching sessions, it has been possible describe the overall pre-season coaching strategy and try and find de diversions from this general strategy due to the coaches characteristics: qualification (*such as specialization in physical education and the level of their coaching certificate*), experience (*as a former player and as a coach*), and competition division (*professional, first and second*).

The participants in this study were 36 Palestinian coaches belonging to the 36 clubs in the top three divisions. We analyzed the internal logic of practice from, the perspective of the motor praxeology by describing the relationships between the players, relationships to space, relationships to time, and relationships to objects, of a total 2342 motor tasks with a time of 31 980 minutes distributed over 360 sessions.

The general strategy was only and slightly affected by the competition level, in a non-progressive way. Personal characteristics do not impact on the practice proposed to players and teams. Besides, the traits used to characterize Palestinian coaches do not match the competitive structures: no profile associated could be found.

Keywords: *Coaching theory; Soccer; FIFA; Palestine; Motor Praxeology.*



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## LIST OF TABLE

ABSTRACT-----	v
ACKNOWLEDGMENT -----	vii
LIST OF TABLE -----	ix
LIST OF TABLE -----	xxi
LIST OF FIGURE-----	xxi
<b>PREAMBLE -----</b>	<b>23</b>
<b>INTRODUCTION -----</b>	<b>27</b>
<b>PART I THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK</b>	
<b>SOCCER IN PALESTINE-----</b>	<b>33</b>
Early years-----	34
Palestinian Football Association -----	36
National team -----	40
The clubs -----	43
The referees -----	44
Match commissioners-----	44
Palestinian competitive pyramid -----	45
Palestinian professional football league-----	50
Palestinian amateur football league-----	51
Players in professional and amateur leagues -----	57
Training of soccer coaches in Palestine -----	59
Coaching course D -----	60
Coaching course C -----	60
Coaching course B -----	60
Coaching course A -----	61
Coaching course Pro -----	61
Summary-----	63
<b>SOCCER COACHING -----</b>	<b>65</b>
Training and coaching -----	66

Coaching Traits and function-----	67
Coaching goals and principles-----	69
The coaching process -----	73
Communicative process -----	74
The coaching strategies-----	78
Contents of practice-----	79
Where do the coaches' decisions come from?-----	90
Competitive divisions-----	93
Qualification of coach -----	94
Experience of coach-----	98
Summary-----	101

## **PART II OBJECTIVES, QUESTIONS, METHODOLOGY**

<b>OBJECTIVES AND RESEARCH QUESTIONS-----</b>	<b>105</b>
---	------------

<b>METHODOLOGICAL APPROACH-----</b>	<b>107</b>
-------------------------------------	------------

Participants -----	108
Study instrument-----	111
Identification variables -----	111
Analysis variables-----	112
Procedure -----	116
Data collection-----	116
Data registering-----	119
Data quality -----	120
Statistical procedures -----	121

## **PART III RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

<b>CHARACTERISTICS OF PALESTINIAN SOCCER COACHES -----</b>	<b>125</b>
--	------------

Qualification -----	126
Experience-----	129
Coaches' profile-----	134
Summary-----	139

<b>THE INTERNAL LOGIC OF PRACTICE STRATEGIES</b> -----	<b>141</b>
Relationship to others-----	141
Interaction domain -----	141
Quantitative dimension-----	143
Qualitative dimension -----	151
Extra roles -----	156
Profile-----	159
Relationship to time-----	161
General structure -----	161
Scoring system-----	162
Cycles -----	166
Profile-----	167
Relationship to space -----	169
Qualitative dimension -----	169
Offside regulation -----	176
Quantitative dimension-----	177
Profile-----	184
Relationship to objects-----	186
Objects -----	186
Profile-----	186
Summary-----	187
<b>SOCCER COACHING STRATEGIES</b> -----	<b>189</b>
Experience-----	191
Experience as former player -----	191
Experience as coach-----	195
Qualification -----	198
Coaching certification -----	198
PE specialization -----	202
Competitive divisions-----	207
Summary-----	215

**PART IV CONCLUSIONS AND PERSPECTIVES**

<b>CONCLUSIONS AND PERSPECTIVES</b> -----	<b>223</b>
---	------------

**PART V REFERENCES**

<b>REFERENCES</b> -----	<b>229</b>
-------------------------	------------

**APPENDICE**

<b>APPENDICES</b> -----	<b>251</b>
History of Palestine -----	251
Impact of occupation on Palestinian football-----	256

## LIST OF TABLE

Table 1 Palestine National Soccer Team Matches Until 2019 .....	41
Table 2 List of the Clubs that Won the First and Second Place Titles in the Premier League/ West Bank.....	46
Table 3 List of the clubs that won the first and second place titles in the Premier League/ Gaza .....	46
Table 4 Palestinian official stadiums .....	49
Table 5 Clubs that won the first and second place titles in the professional league/ West Bank .....	50
Table 6 Professional club in the West Bank in season 2019/2020 .....	51
Table 7 Clubs that won the first and second place titles in the First division league / West Bank .....	52
Table 8 First division clubs in the West Bank in season 2019/2020 .....	52
Table 9 Second division clubs / North Area in season 2019/2020 .....	53
Table 10 Second division clubs / Center Area in season 2019/2020.....	54
Table 11 Second division clubs / South Area in season 2019/2020 .....	54
Table 12 West Bank soccer clubs area by division in season 2019/2020.....	55
Table 13 Distribution of clubs in Gaza by areas and divisions in season 2019/2020.....	56
Table 14 Number of players by competitive divisions in season 2019/2020- 2020/2021 in West Bank.....	58
Table 15 Number of players by competitive divisions division in season 2019/2020- 2020/2021in Gaza .....	58
Table 16 Number of coaches, players, and clubs in season 2019/2020/ 2020/2021 in palestine .....	59

Table 17 Number of Coaches in Palestine by coaching certificate .....	63
Table 18 Number of times each club participated in the seasons from 2010 to 2019 .....	110
Table 19 Identification activities .....	112
Table 20 Descriptive variables in the relationship to others.....	112
Table 21 Descriptive variables of relationships to time.....	113
Table 22 Descriptive variables of relationship to space .....	115
Table 23 Descriptive variables of relationships to objects .....	116
Table 24 Coaches' data variables. ....	117
Table 25 The design of the formed record of the session for Palestinian soccer coaches.....	118
Table 26 Cohen's kappa coefficient ( $\kappa$ ) and measures of the strength of agreement for each item .....	120
Table 27 Coaches age description in terms of different competition divisions .....	125
Table 28 Coaches' age categories in terms of different competition divisions .....	126
Table 29 ANOVA Comparisons of Coaches age in terms of the competitive divisions.....	126
Table 30 Coaching certificates in terms of different competition divisions.....	127
Table 31 Chi-square test results of "A" coaching certificate in terms of different competition divisions .....	127
Table 32 PE specialization in terms of different competition divisions .....	128
Table 33 Chi-square test results of PE specialization in terms of different competition divisions .....	128
Table 34 Experience years as a former player in terms of different competition divisions ..	129
Table 35 Experience years category as a former player in terms of different competition divisions .....	129

Table 36 Chi-square test results of former players in terms of different competitive divisions .....	130
Table 37 ANOVA comparisons for coaches' experience years as former players in terms of different competitive divisions .....	131
Table 38 Experience years as a coach in terms of different competitive divisions .....	131
Table 39 Experience years category as a coach in terms of different competition divisions	132
Table 40 Chi-square test results of coaching experience in terms of different competition divisions .....	132
Table 41 ANOVA comparisons for coaches' experience years as a coach in terms of different competitive divisions .....	133
Table 42 Multinomial logistic regression results of the interaction between experience years as a former player and as a coach in different competitive divisions. ....	133
Table 43 Chi-square test results of all characteristics.....	134
Table 44 The results of multinomial logistic regression of the interaction between qualification vectors in terms of different competitive divisions .....	134
Table 45 Coaches' empirical profiles. ....	136
Table 46 Chi-square test results of the distribution of the members of the clusters .....	138
Table 47 Distribution of motor situations according to interaction domains .....	142
Table 48 Distribution of activities according to number of players .....	143
Table 49 Distribution of motor situations and number of players with different roles according to number of groups .....	144
Table 50 Distribution of motor situations and number of players with all interaction domains according to number of groups .....	145
Table 51 Distribution of motor situations with all interaction domains according to the number of players .....	146

Table 52 Quantitative symmetry and action domain .....	147
Table 53 Distribution of the motor situations with opposition according to quantitative symmetry.....	148
Table 54 Distribution of motor situations with opposition according to quantitative symmetry .....	148
Table 55 Distribution of motor situations with opposition according to the number of players and quantitative symmetry .....	149
Table 56 Distribution of motor situations with normative practice according to the number of players.....	151
Table 57 Distribution of motor situations without goalkeepers according to the number of players.....	152
Table 58 Distribution of motor situations without goalkeepers according to the number of players and quantitative symmetry .....	153
Table 59 Distribution of motor situations with goalkeeper on the defensive side according to the number of players.....	154
Table 60 Distribution of motor situations with goalkeeper on the defensive side according to the number of players and quantitative symmetry .....	154
Table 61 Distribution of motor situations according to goalkeeper side and quantitative symmetry.....	155
Table 62 Distribution of motor situations with alternative players on the defense side according to number of players.....	156
Table 63 Distribution of motor situations with alternative players on the offensive side according to number of players.....	157
Table 64 Distribution of motor situations according to different alternative player side and quantitative symmetry.....	158
Table 65 Distribution of motor situations according to time structure .....	162



Table 66 Distribution of motor situations with different roles according to score memory system .....	162
Table 67 Distribution of motor situations with opposition in score memory according to quantitative symmetry.....	163
Table 68 Distribution of motor situations with different roles according to scoring consequence .....	164
Table 69 Distribution of motor situations with different roles according to the target type .	165
Table 70 Distribution of motor situations with opposition according to the target type .....	165
Table 71 Number of cycles and opposition.....	166
Table 72 Distribution of number of players in opposition according to the interaction cycles .....	167
Table 73 Distribution of motor situations with all interaction domains according to space type.....	169
Table 74 Distribution of motor domains according to space type .....	170
Table 75 Opposition according to the presence of target .....	171
Table 76 Distribution of the motor situations with opposition according to target types.....	172
Table 77 Distribution of the motor situations with opposition according to target types and space.....	172
Table 78 Presence of goalkeepers according to target types .....	174
Table 79 Distribution of the motor situation with a goalkeeper on the defensive side according to target types .....	174
Table 80 Distribution of the motor situation with a goalkeeper on both sides according to target types.....	175
Table 81 Opposition according to target types without a goalkeeper on both sides.....	176

Table 82 Distribution of the motor situation with opposition according to offside regulation .....	177
Table 83 Distribution of motor situation with different roles according to the surface (m <sup>2</sup> )	178
Table 84 Distribution of motor situation with different roles according to the surface (m <sup>2</sup> ) by categories .....	179
Table 85 Quantitative variables of the space factor .....	180
Table 86 Distribution of motor situations in calculated space according to IIS .....	181
Table 87 Palestinian pitches space .....	182
Table 88 Distribution of motor situations according to IIS PAL .....	182
Table 89 Distribution of motor situations according to IIS PAL in quantitative symmetry..	183
Table 90 Distribution of the motor situation with different roles according to objects used	186
Table 91 The internal logic of football elite practice in Palestine .....	187
Table 92 Dependent variables of the regression models .....	189
Table 93 Independent variables of the regression models .....	190
Table 94 The results of multinomial logistic regression of former player .....	191
Table 95 Results of the Phi Coefficient Analysis: The Chi-Squared Result of Former player .....	194
Table 96 The results of multinomial logistic regression of coaching experience.....	195
Table 97 Results of the Phi Coefficient Analysis: The Chi-Squared Result of coaching experience as a coach.....	197
Table 98 The results of multinomial logistic regression of coaching certificate .....	198
Table 99 Results of the Phi Coefficient Analysis: The Chi-Squared Result of coaching certificate.....	201

Table 100 The results of multinomial logistic regression of PE specialization.....	202
Table 101 Results of the Phi Coefficient Analysis: The Chi-Squared Result of PE specialization.....	204
Table 102 The results of multinomial logistic regression of Competitive divisions .....	207
Table 103 Results of the Phi Coefficient Analysis: The Chi-Squared Result of competitive divisions .....	211



## LIST OF FIGURE

Figure 1 The Historical Periods of the Palestine National Team.....	41
Figure 2 Socio-didactic model of sports coaching (Martínez de Santos, 2007, p. 389). .....	76
Figure 3 Form of data collection application.....	119
Figure 4 Coaches combined characteristics.....	135
Figure 5 Two-step cluster analysis result of the coaches' characteristics.....	137
Figure 6 Randomness attached to the characteristics of coaches in terms of different competition divisions integrated. ....	138
Figure 7 Quantitative summary .....	150
Figure 8 Qualitative summary .....	160
Figure 9 General summary.....	168
Figure 10 Space summary.....	185
Figure 11 Peel commission partition plan 1937 .....	253
Figure 12 Palestinian loss of land - 1947 to present.....	255
Figure 13 Palestine stadium in Gaza after being bombed by the Israeli army .....	258
Figure 14 Red card against the occupation.....	263



## PREAMBLE

My first sports memories take me back to school and football in Nablus, one of the oldest cities in Palestine. Our passion for football led us to spend our time playing and stay away from our families. Spontaneity controlled us; fun and pleasure were our goals. No need to say that footballs of different qualities, colors, and shapes made me and my friends play never-ending games, pay attention to nothing more than the victories we chased so badly on the streets of a tragic homeland we would come to discover later on. At the age of 17, I was chosen to represent Palestine in the national youth soccer team participating in the Asian qualifiers in 2002/2003, as it was the first official participation of the youth team, which was in Yemen, after a closed training camp in Iraq.

Maybe because of that, I studied physical education at An-najah National University in Nablus and worked as a soccer coach for youth. As well, a player in the first team in the Ebal club and the university team until was injured in a meniscus tear in the right knee in one of the matches. Hence, I stopped playing as a Professional and completed my master's studies in physical education and movement sciences at Yarmouk University in Jordan. There was no master's faculty for physical education in Palestine. I graduated with the first rank in 2009.

It is impossible to me to separate my love to football, my devotion to physical education, and my devotion to Palestine, my homeland. We are all trying to build up and develop its institutions in all fields, to achieve our identity and preserve our culture and education, despite the brutal occupation on our land for 73 years until now. I was interested in the Palestinian soccer league and the work of Palestinian coaches. My master's dissertation in this field was entitled "The Impact of the Competition Period on the Physical and Skilled Abilities of Soccer Players in the West Bank". I got important results that contributed to dividing the agenda of the soccer season.

After returning from Jordan, I have been working as a lecturer at the Faculty of Physical Education at An-Najah National University in Palestine. I taught soccer, motor learning, and the philosophy of physical education. I have also worked as match commissioner in the Palestinian soccer league for all competitive divisions from 2011 to 2018. I was also elected to the soccer association to head the competitions committee in the northern branch in 2011. I stayed in local stadiums by virtue of my work in the association, watched coaching sessions for different clubs, and followed the league and national team matches. Moreover, I talked as an analyst for the Palestinian League and the National Team on Sports TV Shows.

I have always been convinced that we can develop and reach a good level in Palestinian sports and the soccer coaching process in particular through scientific research. Soccer is the most popular game in Palestine, played by many clubs and players distributed in the different competitive divisions. Through its organization and improvement, we believe that we can confirm our Palestinian identity, as Palestinian sports are one of the Messages of National Liberation from the Israeli occupation.

My wife and I decided to complete our Ph.D. studies in physical education, to help to improve the reality of sports and its essence by making a developmental contribution to soccer coaches and physical education teachers. Because they are the biggest base in operational Palestinian sports, after a series of readings, correspondence, and searching to find supervisors who would be a pioneer in new thinking and different ways from what is common. Finally, we found what we wanted, Dr. Raul Martínez de Santos and Dr. Joseba Etxebeste, at the University of the Basque Country.

So my wife, our daughters, and I moved to Vitoria in the Basque Country in Spain, and the decision was a big adventure because it was the first time we traveled to a Western country, their language, customs, traditions, religion, and society differ, in addition to the



very high costs of living such as food, drink, and housing, compared to our country Palestine. I know this is not a scientific topic, nor an issue, nor requirement, but it drives our lives in Palestine so dramatically that it needs to be explained somehow, as an appendix at least.

At the beginning and before traveling from Palestine to Vitoria, we heard many opinions of those who frustrated us, who were trying to reduce our motivation, and every time they were telling us, you will not be able to complete your studies because the logic of European researchers' thinking is different from the Arabs researchers; you will not be able to adapt to a society that is alien to you and very developed, you will not be able to afford the financial life costs, you will spend the money you have and come back empty-handed.

In addition, we knew that this step was the last thing we had, as it is like the common proverb: *The sea is behind you, and the enemy is in front of you. Either we win this battle, or we drown in the sea and die.* We challenged the present to shape the future, followed our passion and ambition, planned and drew a plan A and a plan B, and relied on God, and our journey began to study the PhD.



## INTRODUCTION

Many of the changes that Palestinian football has undergone since the establishment of the first Football Association (PFA) in 1928 and the subsequent series of political events in the region have negatively affected its work.

The wheel of development began to accelerate in the Palestinian football system since 2008, through re-rearranging the work of the Palestinian association, rehabilitating sports facilities and stadiums, arranging the league for all competing divisions, applying the professionalism system, qualifying coaches, referees, and match commissioners, and an improvement in the results of the national team appeared within the tournaments that participated in it, which led to the return of the fans to the stadiums and the interest of the sports media in the local leagues, after a repeated period of interruption due to the practices of the Israeli occupation and the successive intifadas and suspension of the league for more than one season, and in continuation of the series of improvements that occurred at the administrative and organizational level, this study comes to focus on who is the focus of the practice, which is the role of coaches in an attempt to investigate their work within Palestinian football clubs because it will affect the improvement of the ranking of the national team, which will contribute to confirming the Palestinian identity in the world, the coach is the core of the coaching process, and his decisions and strategically thinking are the secret point of the practices way “If we want to improve competition, we must improve practice; if we want to change practice, we must change the way coaches think”.

The coaches are trying to develop themselves through specialized qualification courses held by the PFA in cooperation with the Asian Football Confederation (AFC) at various levels (D, C, B, A, PRO), and their review of social media sites that are interested in soccer coaching models, and to benefit from as much as possible from their experience, especially if they are former players.

The focus of my interest was towards proposing strategies and coaching programs for soccer. In the first meeting with my supervisors, I was posed a simple question: "What does the ordinary Palestinian soccer coach do during practice sessions?" At first, I thought that the answer to this question was very simple, and I answered with confidence, "They coach soccer". The answer was not wrong but rather incomplete. They completed their question to me and said: "What are their decisions in choosing motor tasks? Is there a difference in their decisions? Which motor tasks do they choose?" I did not have an answer to these provocative questions at that time. They wanted to pass on an important idea to me: reality must be studied and analyzed with a new method of thinking to reach my goal. Several meetings took place with them until we agreed on a working procedure. They convinced me that the internal logic of the motor tasks that are practiced in the soccer coaching sessions in the Palestinian clubs had to be analyzed, as well as how they are affected by the external logic, in this study are "the characteristics of the coaches and the competitive divisions of the club".

They recommended reading Parlebas' work. I did not know anything about motor praxeology, as it is not common in the faculties of physical education in Arab universities or among Arab researchers; because of its importance in this study, it had to be studied, which took me two years to discover and understand it from scratch. The language of the references was not in English, which was an obstacle to me, so they helped me understand this kind of science in addition to their research in English. I also translated Parlebas' articles and created an interesting idea, so we developed the idea and refined my research project, then my supervisors' invited me to meet Dr. Parlebas while he was at the University of the Basque Country to give a seminar. We benefited from his wonderful guidance.

Therefore, we try in this research to understand the decisions of soccer coaches for elite clubs in Palestine in choosing the motor tasks that are practiced in coaching sessions, and whether the coaches' thinking and decisions are related to the different competitive

divisions, their experiences, and qualification, to reach the goal of improving soccer coaching with what exists without forcing the coach to change it. Through the development of deepening the thinking in the performance of activities and to have a reason for choosing it, in a way that will benefit the soccer coaching process in Palestine.

There was an extra effort in collecting and describing data about coaches, clubs, and the national team, and the reality of Palestinian football, whether historical or present, because I did not find records, and this was not taken into account when starting to write the thesis. Therefore, it was focused on the first and second chapters of the theoretical framework. The term football has been used in a general and institutional context and soccer in the scientific literature context.

This thesis was written according to *APA* style, 7 edition (October 2019), and consists of four parts. The first part about the theoretical framework is divided into two chapters: the first one is soccer in Palestine, including historical view, Palestinian Football Association, Palestinian Competitive pyramid, and training of soccer coaches in Palestine the second chapter is about soccer coaching, including training and coaching classic view, the Coaching process, and Coaches' decision sources.

The second part is about the objects and questions of the study, the methodological approach used a description of the participants, study instruments, and procedures used.

The third part, results, and discussion, is divided into three chapters: the first one about the characteristics of coaches, the second about the internal logic of motor tasks, and the third one about coaching strategies.

The fourth chapter is about the conclusions of the research work; the fifth chapter concerns the bibliographic references that were referenced and cited.

After reviewing the theoretical literature in the Arab world, I can say that this study can be considered the first of its kind in the Arab world.



## **PART I THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK**





## SOCCER IN PALESTINE

Soccer is the most popular game worldwide and is affected by different societies' cultural, political, educational, and other components. In Palestine, soccer is the first game for many clubs, players, and official coaches registered in the PFA records. The true development of Palestinian soccer started in 2008 after organizing the work of the PFA and the regularity and continuity of the general league for all divisions (professionals, first, second, third, fourth division) and different ages, and both genders. The professionalism system was established in the top division of the general league. The societal culture increased towards sports in general and soccer in particular, which led to the emergence of the Palestinian national team with much better participation in Arab and international spheres.

As part of its strategic plan, the PFA planned and prepared the game's elements, with equipment and human capabilities. They worked on building new stadiums, assisting clubs in maintaining their headquarters and pitches, and preparing coaches in different areas of soccer coaching through specialized courses in collaboration with the AFC. In addition, referees, media, match commissioners were also trained and organized.

Palestinian soccer is stable and ambitious. According to the Football International Federation Association (FIFA) *Global Competitive Balance Report 2020* p.15, the General League is characterized by high competition in the past 15 seasons, it was ranked on a competitive basis as the best in the Arab world, with eight clubs winning the title over a decade and a half, outperforming the United Arab Emirates and Oman leagues (FIFA, 2020).

Football in Palestine has gone through many changes, and what accompanied Palestine from the practices of the Israeli occupation, yet we can say that Palestinian football is a title for the challenge and ambition through which athletes are trying to confirm the Palestinian identity in institutionalizing work and keeping pace with the development-taking

place in the world. In this section, a presentation of the most important Palestinian football stations, the PFA, and the national team, with a historical narrative will be made.

### **Early years**

The history of Palestinian soccer goes back to the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. The first 38 years saw several positive developments in terms of laying the foundations of this sport. The first soccer team was formed in 1908 in Al-Rawda School, Jerusalem. Soccer then flourished in Palestine, mainly during the first half of the 20th century due to Palestine's British occupation (Khalidi, 2013). In 1934, Palestine (Mandate for Palestine) participated in the World Cup qualifiers but lost two matches to Egypt, in Cairo and Jerusalem. The world cup of 1934 was held in Italy. Palestine then participated again in the World Cup qualifiers of 1938. In light of that, the Palestinian national team became the first Arab team to participate in the Asian World Cup qualifying matches (Khalidi, 2013). During that period (1930-1940), Palestinian soccer witnessed notable advancements during official and friendly matches with neighboring countries like Syria, Lebanon, Egypt, and Jordan (Khalidi, 2014; Younes, 1989).

In 1948, the *Nakba* (Palestinian Catastrophe) happened. Israel declared its existence on Palestinian soil. The result of the Israeli sovereignty targeted the Palestinian people and led to their displacement (Khalidi, 2014). As a result, many prominent Palestinian soccer players were scattered in refugee camps in several neighboring countries and the Diaspora.

Nevertheless, Palestinian soccer soon recovered, and new clubs were formed in occupied Palestine and the Diaspora. The first post-Nakba, Palestinian national team composed of Gaza and Diaspora players took part in the First Arab Championship held in Alexandria in 1953 and then in consecutive Arab championships. The most prominent achievement of Palestinian soccer was the semi-finals attained in the 4<sup>th</sup> Arab Championship held in Cairo in 1964. During the 1960s, the Gaza strip saw significant advancements in holding regular formal national league championships. At the same time, Palestinian soccer

teams from the West Bank (*Cisjordania*) participated in the Jordanian national league championships (Khalidi, 2014).

The second recession in Palestinian soccer occurred in 1967 when the remaining 22% of Palestine (the West Bank and the Gaza Strip) became under Israeli occupation. Soccer activity in the occupied Palestinian territories remained inactive until 1973. However, Palestinian teams began to be formed in the Diaspora. They maintained participation in Arab championships such as those sponsored by the Supreme Council for Youth and Sports and a branch of Palestine Liberation Organization institutions.

Meanwhile, in the Occupied Palestinian Territories, the Sports Clubs Association, established in Gaza and the West Bank (*Cisjordania*), managed the sport movement under challenging circumstances imposed by the Israeli occupation measures. With the Palestinian National Authority's return to the West Bank and the Gaza Strip in 1994, Palestinian soccer witnessed a new restructuring era that permitted the PFA election and led to rejoining FIFA and AFC (Khalidi, 2013). In 1998, official competitions began to be held regularly. Palestinian soccer went back to Arab stadiums through Arab championships like the Arab Club championships and international and continental competitions. The Palestinian national team's first official participation was in the Arab Cup held in Lebanon in 1998.

The Palestinian national team also participated in the 9<sup>th</sup> Arab Championship held in Jordan in 1999. During that year, Palestine came very close to winning the bronze medal. The AFC chose the team as the best team in Asia for August 1999. The team also participated in the West Asia Championship First Cup (Hussein Cup), held in Jordan in 2000., after an absence of more than 66 years, Palestine participated again in the world cup qualifiers. The Palestine national team was chosen as the best team in Asia in March 2001. It also participated in the West Asia championship, which was held in Kuwait in 2002. Palestine's

participation in international tournaments continued despite the absence of a regular local league (Khalidi, 2013).

### **Palestinian Football Association**

In early 2008 the clubs pushed toward making a change within the PFA. As a result, the first real election was held at the national level in FIFA representatives' presence. The new leadership of PFA was elected. Elections were led by General Jibril Rajoub (Woroniecka, 2019), who tried relentlessly and succeeded in liberating Palestinian sports from the Israeli occupation and helped promote it at the local, national, regional, and international levels. General Rajoub worked persistently to avoid any collapse resulting from political divisions.

The Football Association was still young, but its achievements began to emerge on the ground. In 2012 General Rajoub was re-elected for a second term. From 2008 until the present, the association has organized seasonal official competitions and leagues of all divisions, age groups, and both genders. It established a national headquarters for the first time. As a result, national teams were selected; among them were the Palestinian professional league and the first division, with 12 teams in each division. Palestinian soccer achieved a revolutionary development in the technical and human cadres through the PFA and member clubs' institutionalization. Moreover, hundreds of referees and coaches became qualified at the international level. New laws about regulations were established and matched those on the international scene.

Realizing the potential for a brighter future in soccer, the infrastructure related to soccer coaching was mobilized by establishing academies such as the Joseph Blatter Academy for talented soccer players and a modern headquarter for the PFA. Forming national teams at all levels and for both genders, participating in the continental and international competitions with a spirited display of quality sports, Palestinian soccer began

to gain the continental and international respect and appreciation it deserved. In 2008 PFA acquired the prize of the best national developed association by FIFA. After winning the Challenge Cup title in the Maldives, the national team also occupied 85<sup>th</sup> international rank and 12<sup>th</sup> Asian and Arab positions in 2014. This achievement allowed the Palestinian national team to qualify for the first time in history for Australia's Asian Nations Cup finals in 2015. Palestine continued to participate in the World Cup qualifiers and Asian Cup qualifiers. It competed in many tournaments and friendly matches. The latest participation was in the Asian Nations Cup 2019 held in Qatar.

Women have been actively integrated with sports at all levels; Three women were selected as members of the PFA Board. The PFA - with all its efforts and involvements at comparable levels to FIFA and AFC- acquired full membership in the Arab Football Association. Also, Palestine hosted many featured sports championships, competitions, events and received many international dignitaries and delegations such as FIFA's President Joseph Blatter and several other leaders like IOC President Jacques Rogge and AFC President Salman Bin Ibrahim Al-Khalifa.

Now in Palestine, a football association operates institutionally and is headquartered in the outskirts of Jerusalem.

- i. *PFA's Vision*: To have a professional PFA capable of developing Palestinian soccer at the local, Arab, and international levels.
- ii. *PFA's Mission*: To adopt effective programs and policies that will make positive changes and provide input to Palestinian soccer to attain an improved performance at the level of professional soccer and administrative practices of Palestinian clubs. The concerned stakeholders shall lay the foundation for a comprehensive national strategy that can achieve remarkable advancements.

- iii. *PFA's Work Strategies*: Develop strategies without social or political influences on the soccer sport in Palestine; communicate with international and other Arab countries concerning the development of soccer coaching; employ all potential capabilities and expertise, including local, regional, or global powers, to achieve comprehensive soccer development. The PFA wants to abide by all laws and regulations to create a positive working relationship between Palestinian sports institutions and their counterparts worldwide. The PFA also seeks to remove itself from any personal or political agendas to shape the sport's national image that reflects collective interests within Palestinian society.
- iv. *PFA's Methodology*: The PFA holds regular workshops to transform theory and implement it into practice. It offers professional development soccer coaches, administrators, referees, media, and workshops to diagnose reality inputs. Qualifying courses for all soccer coaches, administrators, referees, and media outlets to prepare a climate for improved infrastructure, leading to actual projects.

The PFA works on adopting and applying exact mechanisms for an international league with various divisions. The PFA looks to put the public interest above all personal or individual interests to guarantee short-term and long-term planning consistency. The strategic objectives of the PFA:

- i. To enhance the performance, administrative and technical abilities of all professionals in various sports at all levels.
- ii. To create a positive change in the reality of Palestinian soccer
- iii. To build a bridging relationship with the Higher Council for Youth and Sports related to Palestinian soccer.

- iv. To institutionalize the PFA infrastructure and its resources.
- v. To create a solid foundation for the Ministry of Education's efforts and commitment to school sports.
- vi. To promote a national spirit that combines national identity with an affinity for the sport of soccer could be accomplished through national teams of all age groups and for both genders, team for military, soccer teams for women, and an Olympic team.
- vii. To assure a quality turnaround, Palestinian teams' results and performance in various sports and age groups, locally, regionally, and internationally.

The PFA aspires to create a sense of Palestinian nationalism through the promotion, development, regulatory management of soccer, sustainability of ethics related to unity, education and cultural foundations, and shared human values. Development programs for youth and adults will always promote social possibility, environmental awareness, and honest citizenship (PFA, 2010).

The PFA aims to organize all soccer competitions for both genders and follow the FIFA rules and regulations. It is done through the preparation of bylaws that regulate the game to ensure compliance. The PFA also monitors all soccer clubs' commitment to avoiding any violations of established rules set forth by FIFA, AFC, or PFA.

The PFA looks for ways and means to prevent policies or practices that may undermine the integrity of competitions, the PFA itself, or Palestinian soccer in any way, including substance abuse. The bottom line is to manage all forms of healthy sports relationships and communications relevant to soccer effectively and ethically. The PFA maintains the right to establish local sports leagues inside Palestine and the Diaspora through a system that promotes integrity and transparency.

### ***National team***

The first Palestinian national team was established in the era of the first Palestinian association in 1928. The national team players were British soldiers and Jews, and the national anthem was the same as the British royal anthem (*God Save the King*) (Younes, 1998).

A team composed of players from the Gaza Strip and the Diaspora was formed according to the political circumstances. To prepare a Palestinian team to participate in the Arab championships; As the West Bank was under Jordanian rule (Khalidi, 2013; Mishal, 1978).

In 1967, the June setback came, the sports movement stopped in Palestine, and in 1973 sports activities returned, and the Association of Clubs was formed in the West Bank and Gaza under the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO). And the situation remained the same until the Palestinian National Authority returned to the Palestinian territories in 1995, and the membership of the Palestinian Association in FIFA was activated in 1998 (Ilene, 2000; Duerr, 2012). So that the team returned and entered the first official competition, and it was the Arab Cup qualifiers, then the Arab tournament in Jordan in 1999.

The Palestinians association relied on the Palestinian diaspora players, especially in Chile, along with the local players, intending to return the Palestinian team to the regional and international football arena; the national team is no longer isolated after FIFA recognized it, and the first appearance of the Palestinian team was on the FIFA ranking list, in December of 1998 and the team ranked 184th in the world; This is due to their participation in the Arab Cup qualifiers.

The national team tried to persist on the FIFA ranking, and it is worth noting that the national team won the title of the best team in Asia for this month in March 2001; After its results in international tournaments and the team's participation in some Arab and



classification competitions (Table 1), its performance continued to fluctuate due to the lack of participation in official tournaments. For example, during 2007, the Palestinian national team played only three matches, and a fourth did not occur because the team could not leave Palestine, and the results of those four matches were negative; they lost all of them.

In 2008, the team was rearranged by organizing the Palestinian League, hiring Arab coaches from neighboring countries, setting up training camps, and involving Palestinian players from the diaspora in foreign countries. The performance improved, and their international ranking rose to 73rd in February 2018 after a series of successful participation, during the PFA in its new institutional form, and now it ranks 99th until September 2021 (FIFA, 2021).

**Table 1** *Palestine National Soccer Team Matches Until 2019*

Competitions	Matches	Wins	Draws	Loses	+	-	Wins%
Friendly	68	21	22	25	72	94	30.88
FIFA world cup	29	8	14	7	49	49	27.5
AFC Asian cup	6	0	2	4	1	14	0
AFC Asian Cup Qualification	29	11	5	13	58	36	37.93
Other Championship	90	18	15	57	104	172	20.0
Total	222	58	58	106	284	365	26.12

**Figure 1** *The Historical Periods of the Palestine National Team.*

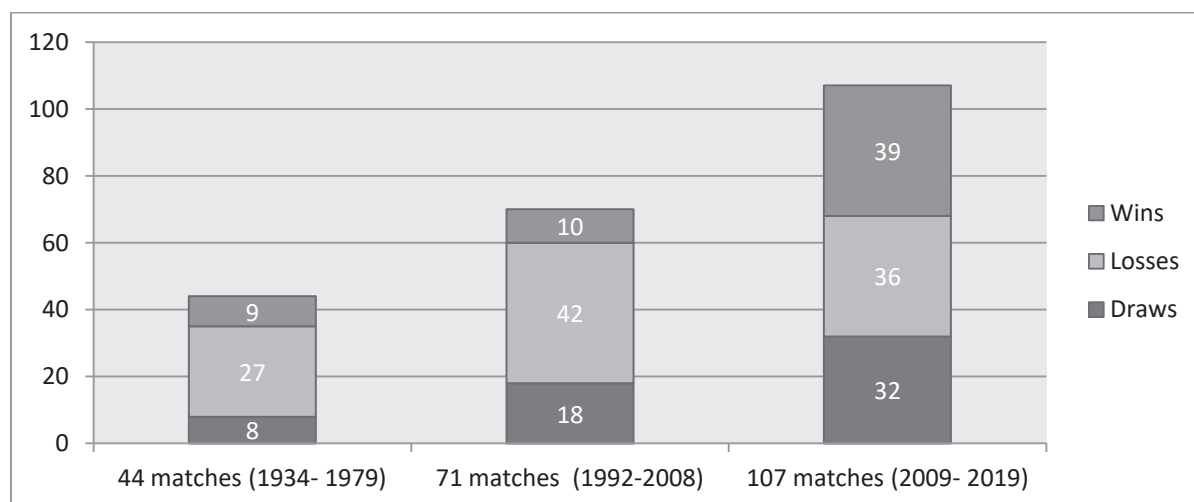


Figure (1) above represents the number of games played by Palestine since 1934 was 222; they won 58 matches, draw in 58 matches, and lost 106 matches. The team scored 284 goals and conceded 365 goals. The percentage of winning is 26.12%, the Percentage for a draw is 26.12%, and the percentage of losses is 47.75%.

The figure also shows that from 1934 to 1979, the team played 44 matches, won 9 matches, drew eight matches, and lost 27 matches. From 1992 to 2008, the team played 71 matches, won 10 matches, drew 18 matches, and lost 42 matches. From 2009 until this report date, the team played 107 matches, won 39 matches, drew 32 matches, and lost 36 matches.

The above data testifies the development of Palestinian soccer during various periods until the present. After numerous attempts and successes to improve sports facilities, infrastructure, and human resources, and after an increased awareness about soccer in Palestine, it remains equally important to continue this journey with further analysis and research. I hope that this study will accomplish this goal.

The Palestinian team went through three different phases. The first was from 1934 to 1979, a period during which there was little or no organization. Palestinian soccer was partially integrated with the Soccer League with Jordan. Those efforts have led the Association of Clubs in Palestine. The Israeli occupation presented a severe challenge to Palestine's sports activity, especially during the Palestinian uprising in the 80s and early 90s of the last century (Khalidi, 2013; Mishal, 1978).

The second period was from 1992 to 2008, with personal and community efforts to improve soccer quality, even without the necessary infrastructure or human resources. During this period, Palestine played 71 matches. The third and most critical and prominent in the history of Palestinians came with the arrival of the support that was received from Major General Jibril Rajoub and the Palestinian Authority's Central Committee when he became the PFA president. During his leadership, stadiums were built. Palestinian soccer made huge

strides toward further preparation in both infrastructures and professional/academic preparation for coaches. The chart above shows the improved performance of Palestinian sports since 2009 until now.

### *The clubs*

Soccer clubs in Palestine are the public body of the PFA, which have reached 250 clubs in 2019/2020, are considered a sports institution in a city, town, or refugee camp and is recognized by public authorities and by the PFA; usually, clubs follow it is named to the geographical area in which the club is located, and it participates in the Palestinian general league in the division in which the club is placed, and in the national championships organized by the PFA. Some of these clubs include teams of all ages group and participate in the local leagues, where one of the conditions for the continuation of the top-level clubs in the Palestinian League is having different age teams with compulsory participation in the different leagues: U 21, U19, U 17, and U 15 years old, for both genders.

These clubs suffer from weakness at the administrative and organizational level, as there is no financial return for the club, so their activity is limited to football only; therefore, the greatest burden falls on the club's president and board of directors, in the look for a financier for them to be able to pay the costs of headquarters fees, player transportation, and public services, so they maintain the continuity of the club's activity and the teams in it. It is noteworthy that border members in Palestinian sports clubs are less than professional, do not receive salaries, and are volunteers, and they aim in their work to contribute to the development of the youth's personality in an integrated manner in terms of Physically, socially and culturally, and discovering the talents of junior players, developing their talents and abilities, supporting social relations, and facilitating ways to fill leisure time.

### *The referees*

The development of the soccer referees comes on top of the priorities of the PFA, as it works to establish the first school for the soccer referee in Palestine, targeting the youth, in particular. Soccer development and progress depend on developing all the game elements and providing the best means for this purpose. From this standpoint today, the responsibility of the PFA is to develop the capabilities of soccer referees and improve their skills in a modern way that enables them to perform their role distinctively to be a title for a prosperous future for soccer Palestinian, where they are looking for a Palestinian referee to have a local, continental and international presence.

The intensification and holding of courses under the supervision of specialized lecturers at the Asian and international level will have a positive and beneficial impact, as in such courses there will be a review of laws and a detailed explanation of cases and positions and how to deal with them professionally, in addition to theoretical lectures and applied methods of modern techniques for promoting the Palestinian soccer reality.

From here, we find that the reality of soccer referees has transferred a qualitative leap in the professionalism and organization of their work through a special central committee and sub-committees that follow up the referees, as the number of qualified referees for the 2019/2020 season has reached nearly 120 referees, including 13 referees bearing the international badge.

### *Match commissioners*

Complement the PFA continuous effort to advance football in Palestine and elevate it to the highest levels, and based on the regulations and requirements standards of the FIFA and AFC issued by them aimed at organizing football matches in a professional manner, which requires the provision of staff qualified administrators and technicians in organizing the matches to ensure the spread of football game to the largest number of followers and fans,

as well as attracting a larger number of supporters and partners, so the PFA worked to establish training courses in cooperation with universities and physical education teachers in schools to qualify the match commissioner and train them on how to manage the match.

The PFA follows the work of the match commissioner and follows the protocols for organizing matches according to the instructions issued by the AFC through continuous workshops and courses. The number of match observers in the 2019/2020 season is 40, including one international match commissioner.

### **Palestinian competitive pyramid**

The Palestinian soccer league, for the top level, was known as the Premier League. It began on a complex journey in 1976/1977. It stopped more than once due to the security conditions and the repeated practices of the Israeli occupation and the Palestinian people's Intifada (vide appendix). It was the most paused period in the West Bank during the First Intifada 1987. The league and sporting activity were suspended for ten years. Moreover, the second intifada in 2000, where the league stopped for 12 years, then the Palestinian league was officially restarted after the formation of the new Palestinian association in 2008 after Palestine's security conditions returned to relative calm. It remained active until the present.

Since its inception, the league has had two separate formations, one for the West Bank and the other for Gaza. Moreover, the two areas form the ground of the first Palestinian Association. All divisions were reorganized, and work remained on this system, and it did not stop until this day.

The following table (2) and table (3) are a list of the names of the clubs that won the first and second places in the Palestinian Premier League for soccer that were organized in the West Bank and Gaza separately, and the periods of their suspension due to the security and political conditions and political conditions, the most important practices of the Israeli occupation from 1976 until 2010.

**Table 2** *List of the Clubs that Won the First and Second Place Titles in the Premier League/ West Bank*

Season	Winner	2 <sup>nd</sup>	Notes
1976/1977	Silwan	Al Arabi	
1981/1982	Shabab Al Khalil	Jamait Al Shuban	
1983/1984	Markaz Tulkarm	Hittin	
1985/1986	Shabab Al Khalil	Thaqafi Tulkarm	
1986/1987			interrupted due to intifada
1996/1997	Markaz Al Amari	Thaqafi Tulkarm	
1999/2000			interrupted due to intifada
2008/2009	Wad Al ness	Markaz Al Amari	
2009/2010	Jabl Al Mukber	Hilal Al Quds	

**Table 3** *List of the clubs that won the first and second place titles in the Premier League/ Gaza*

Season	winner	2 <sup>nd</sup>	Notes
1983/1984	Ahli Gaza		
1984/1985	Khadamt Al Shatea		
1986/1987	Khadamt Al Shatea		
1987/1988			not completed
1994/1995	Khadamat Rafah	Shabab Rafh	
1998/1999	Khadamat Rafah		
2005/2006	Khadamat Rafah	Ithad Al shugaya	
2008/2009	Shabab Rafah		
2009/2010			not implemented

After the election of the PFA in its serious format in 2008, it reorganized the soccer game through the arrangement of the Palestinian League, so it worked to create a new internal system, an official regulation for the management of tournaments, technical committees to develop the elements of the game from referees and coaches, committees for

the rehabilitation of stadiums, and media, medical, marketing, competitions, referee, and planning in other words, soccer has been professionally institutionalized.

The professionalism system was applied in the Palestinian clubs in the West Bank, and the league was renamed. The last league was called the “Premier League” in 2009/2010. The Palestinian Professional Soccer League was launched in its first season in 2010/2011, which is a league that brings together the best Local clubs based on the ranked league. Divisions of clubs have also been made, which will be explained later.

Due to the difficulty of moving between the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, the soccer league was separated, but it belongs to one administration. The professional law was not applied in Gaza, but this was limited to the West Bank clubs. Their number was based on the classification of 12 soccer clubs as the highest degree.

This study will focus on soccer in the West Bank for the following reasons:

- i. The West Bank is the largest part of the Palestinian territories.
- ii. The impossibility of movement between Gaza and the West Bank.
- iii. Separation of the Palestinian league from its inception between the West Bank and Gaza.
- iv. The professionalism system was applied in the West Bank only.
- v. The accumulated political reasons and the division of the Palestinian parties between Gaza and the West Bank have affected poor communication.
- vi. Infrastructure, sports facilities, and a culture of professional athletes are more in the West Bank.
- vii. The Israeli occupation prevented residents of the West Bank and Gaza Strip from moving to each other.
- viii. The ongoing Israeli attacks on Gaza and the demolition of public and private facilities have negatively affected the regularity of the sport wheel in general.

According to the ranking league, soccer clubs in the West Bank are divided according to the divisions established by the PFA.

The clubs in each division participate in a league of their own: the professional division clubs constitute 12 clubs, and the first division also 12 clubs, and these two divisions are at the level of the whole West Bank. Their number is set in each season. The second division has 12 Clubs, the third division has 39 clubs, and the fourth division 88 has clubs during the 2019/2020 season.

Teams in third and fourth divisions are divided into three geographical regions: North, Center, and South, to alleviate the hardship of movement between governorates on the clubs, whether it is the Israeli occupation checkpoints between cities or the burden of financial transportation costs because these clubs are amateurs and there is no sufficient financial income or companies and institutions that sponsor them, as in professional or first-division clubs.

The complete league system (home and away) is applied in the professional league, the first and second divisions, and the semi-league in the third and fourth divisions. The two best-ranked teams will join the Professional Division at the end of each season, replacing the two under-ranked professional teams. The same concept applies to the second, third, and fourth division teams.

All league matches for all divisions are held on the stadiums of Palestinian cities in the West Bank, within the international protocol for all the components of the official match. Which contributed to the organization of clubs and their compliance with the legal requirements related to official matches such as attendance time, list of names, and the discipline of players conduct inside and outside matches, controlling the action of the fans, and trying to increase their sports culture.



The practice of soccer in Palestine was held on dirt pitches until 2009. Interest in sports, especially soccer, began at the level of the Palestinian government and municipalities, so the stadiums were rehabilitated, artificial grass was placed on them, new stands were rebuilt, and appropriate night lighting was provided. A change of direction (north, south) to conform to the legal measurements and directions. New stadiums with international specifications were created to be ready for use in official matches and the possibility of using them, from holding international matches there.

In total, there are 14 soccer stadiums with artificial grass in Palestine. Two of those stadiums have been deemed to meet international standards. The following table (4) shows the names of official stadiums, city location, and seating capacity. What is most interesting about these infrastructures is that stadiums are owned by the public authorities from whom clubs must hire, the cost for using these facilities for both training and competition is calculated on the hour.

**Table 4** *Palestinian official stadiums*

	Capacity	Venue
Faisal Hussein International Stadium	21000	Jerusalem
Arab American University International Stadium	10000	Jenin
Dura Stadium	18000	Hebron
Al Hussein Stadium	8000	Hebron
Al-Khader Stadium	6000	Bethlehem
Nablus Stadium	6000	Nablus
Qalqilya Stadium	3000	Qalqilya
Jericho	15000	Jericho
Majid Asaad Stadium	4000	Ramallah
Jamal Ghanem	3000	Tulkarm
Jenin stadium	3000	Jenin
Yarmouk Stadium	9,000	Gaza
Palestine Stadium	10,000	Gaza
Rafah	5,000	Gaza

***Palestinian professional football league***

In 2010, the Palestinian League began a new journey as a professional league in the West Bank. The Palestinian Professional Soccer League was launched in its first season 2010/2011, which is a league that brings together the best Local clubs based on the ranked league. It is the core of the Palestinian national team. It is the highest league in Palestine and is organized by the PFA. It includes 12 clubs in the West Bank. The club reaches on pro division, based on their positions in the general league standings. The conditions of the professional system are applied, and they are committed to fulfilling the contracts of players and coaches and paying their monthly salaries.

Their matches are played in the full league system (at home, away). At the end of the league, the winner participates in the AFC champions league, and the last two teams in the standings table are relegated to the first division. The following table (5) is a list of the clubs that won the first and second places in the Palestinian Professional League, organized in the West Bank only, starting from 2010/2011 until now, and the table (6) is a list of clubs that participate in the Pro League for the season 2019/2020.

**Table 5** *Clubs that won the first and second place titles in the professional league/ West Bank*

Season	Winner	2 <sup>nd</sup>
2010/2011	Shabab Alamari	Hilal AlQuds
2011/2012	Hilal AlQuds	Shabab Al Khalil
2012/2013	Shabab Al Dharia	Hilal AlQuds
2013/2014	Taraji Wad Alness	Shabab Al Dharia
2014/2015	Shabab Al Dharia	Markez Balata
2015/2016	Shabab Al Khalil	Shabab Alkhader
2016/2017	Hilal AlQuds	Thaqafi Tulkarm
2017/2018	Hilal AlQuds	Ahli Al Khalil
2018/2019	Hilal AlQuds	Shabab Al Khalil
2019/2020	Markez Balata	Shabab Alamari

**Table 6** *Professional club in the West Bank in season 2019/2020*

Club	City
Markez Balata	Nablus
Shabab Alamari	Ramallah
Ahli Al Khalil	Hebron
Shabab Al Khalil	Hebron
Hilal AlQuds	Jerusalem
Mosaset Al Bireh	Al Bireh
Shabab Alsamou	Bethlehem
Jabal Mukaber	Jerusalem
Taraji Wad Alness	Bethlehem
Thaqafi Tulkarm	Tulkarem
Ahli Qalqilya	Qalqilya
Al Quwwat Al Falistinia	Ramallah

### ***Palestinian amateur football league***

This league is divided into four different and independent divisions for amateur players. The top one is the first competitive division, and the lowest is the fourth competitive division.

#### **The First division**

It is the top league in Palestine amateur football league, starting in 2011/2012. It is organized by the PFA and includes 12 clubs in the West Bank. It is also called the semi-professional league because part of the professionalism system is applied, especially in the commitment of clubs to pay the monthly salaries of players and coaches. Players are chosen from it to represent the Palestinian national team.

Their matches are held in the full league system (home and away). At the end of the league, the clubs rise in first and second places to the professional division. The last three clubs in the ranking table are relegated to the second division.

The following table (7) is a list of the clubs that won the first and second places in the first division league, organized in the West Bank only, from 2011/2012 until now and the table (8) is a list of clubs that participate in the first division league for the season 2019/2020.

**Table 7** *Clubs that won the first and second place titles in the First division league / West Bank*

Season	Winner	2 <sup>nd</sup>
2011/2012	Ahli Al Khalil	Islami Qalqilya
2012/2013	Thaqafi Tulkarm	Shabab Alkhader
2013/2014	Shabab Yatta	Shabab Dora
2014/2015	Silwan	Shabab Alsamou
2015/2016	Markez Tulkarm	Shabab Yatta
2016/2017	Mosaset Al Bireh	Jabal Mukaber
2017/2018	Shabab Alamari	Markez Tulkarm
2018/2019	Al Quwwat Al Falistinia	Ahli Qalqilya
2019/2020	Shabab Al Dharia	Tubas

**Table 8** *First division clubs in the West Bank in season 2019/2020*

Club	City
Shabab Al Dharia	Hebron
Tubas	Tubas
Alkarmel	Hebron
Silwan	Jerusalem
Markez Askar	Nablus
Shabab Al Ubeidiya	Bethlehem
Islami Qalqilya	Qalqilya
Alarabi Beit Safafa	Jerusalem
Markez Tulkarm	Tulkarem
Jenin	Jenin
Abna Alquds	Jerusalem
Isawiya	Jerusalem

### The second division

The second degree for amateur clubs is divided into three regions. According to the administrative division of the West Bank territories (south, central, south), it consists of a varying number of clubs because it is made up of the three clubs descending from the first division regardless of the club's region. Three clubs from the three areas in the third division ascend to it. In the season 2019/2020, the number of second division clubs seven clubs in the north, (Table 9), nine clubs in the center (Table 10), and 11 clubs in the south (Table 11), their matches are held in the full league system (home and away). However, each region plays its clubs among themselves, and the PFA follows this method. They attempt to reduce the financial costs of moving between cities, especially with the presence of Israeli checkpoints between cities. At the end of the league, the first-ranked club from each region rises to the first division. The last one or two clubs (according to the number of clubs in each area) will be relegated to the third division.

**Table 9** *Second division clubs / North Area in season 2019/2020*

Club	City
Markaz Jenin	Jenin
Markaz Raqm 1	Nablus
Markaz Noor Shams	Tulkarem
Silat Al Harithiya	Jenin
Shabab Nablus	Nablus
Tammon	Tubas
Osarin	Nablus

**Table 10** *Second division clubs / Center Area in season 2019/2020*

Club	City
Hilal Areeha	Jericho
Jabal Alzayton	Jerusalem
Beit Liqya	Ramallah
Almazra Alsharqiya	Ramallah
Al Sawahreh	Jerusalem
Al Mouwathfen	Jerusalem
Shabab Abu Dees	Jerusalem
Shuqba	Ramallah
Silwad	Jerusalem

**Table 11** *Second division clubs / South Area in season 2019/2020*

Club	City
Shabab Beit Fajjar	Bethlehem
Alshoban Almuslimin	Hebron
Shabab Alkhader	Bethlehem
Surif	Hebron
Islami Sour Baher	Jerusalem
Marah Rabah	Bethlehem
Shabab Dora	Hebron
Wad Fukin	Bethlehem
Shabab Yatta	Hebron
Joret Alshama	Bethlehem
Marah Mella	Bethlehem

### **The third division**

It is organized for club relegation from the second division and promotion from the fourth division and is held separately in three regions. According to the administrative division of the West Bank territories (south, central, south), it consists of a varying number of clubs because it consists of promotion clubs from the fourth division and relegation clubs

from second division clubs. In the 2019/2020 season, the number of third division clubs (9 clubs in the north, 18 clubs in the center, 12 clubs in the south), their matches are held in the groups or semi-league system, at the end of the league, the first and second-ranked club from each region promotion to the second division. The last club or two (depending on the number of clubs in each area) will be relegated to the fourth division.

### **The fourth division**

It is called the Regions League, is the least fortunate among the Palestinian soccer leagues because it includes the largest number of clubs (88 clubs), especially village clubs and small population centers, and is considered one of the most difficult leagues to climb from it to the promotion of the higher division because it is held in a small group and half system the league and the defeated one time. Thus, the club has very little opportunity to climb, so that one or two teams go up according to the number of clubs registered in the season.

**Table 12** *West Bank soccer clubs area by division in season 2019/2020*

	North Area	Center Area	South Area	Total
Second	7	9	11	27
Third	9	18	12	39
Forth	31	37	20	88
Total	47	64	43	154

### **Gaza league**

The different leagues in Gaza are also under the supervision of the PFA. Still, they are completely separate from the league in the West Bank. In recent years the FPA tried to compete with the league champion in Gaza with the league champion in the West Bank in two matches home and away. Still, the occupation hindered and refused to hold these matches under the pretext of preventing movement from the West Bank to Gaza or vice versa. With

all the living, economic, and very difficult challenges facing the Gaza Strip, in the narrowest demographic spot in the world, from the siege and practices of occupations and repeated wars against it, it has become today like a “big prison”. Nevertheless, the Palestinian Soccer League continued with limited capabilities. It threatened infrastructure in an attempt to breathe life through sport among the citizens of Gaza, and the following table (13) shows the number of clubs in each division for the 2019/2020 season.

**Table 13** *Distribution of clubs in Gaza by areas and divisions in season 2019/2020*

		North	Center	South	Total
Excellent	12				12
First	12				12
Second		7	4	5	16
Third		7	4	3	14
Total	24	14	8	8	54

### **Women's League**

The PFA encouraged Palestinian women to play soccer through training courses for coaches and to grant licenses to sports clubs that have women's soccer teams in light of societal rejection at the outset related to the customs and traditions prevailing in Palestinian society. Women's soccer league is a new case in the Palestinian arena that began to develop and prosper after the first women's soccer league was launched in 2008 with the participation of 8 women’s teams. In two forms, on an official stadium (11 players), and Futsal.

The Palestinian women could compete with men in the soccer game and impose herself strongly on the sports scene. She participated in soccer tournaments at the Arab and Asian levels. Despite the modest results, they are good beginnings towards the right of women to participate in sports. In the 2019/2020 season, the PFA organized a league on a full stadium with the participation of 9 clubs and a Futsal League with the participation of 9 clubs.



*Players in professional and amateur leagues*

The Palestinian players started their sports career in the streets and popular neighborhoods' by practicing popular football with their friends. Some of them showed their talent from childhood, joined football clubs, and were included in their age groups until they reached the level and age to play in the Palestinian League. After applying the professionalism system, the players became more interested in themselves through nutritional programs, sleep and rest, individually without follow-up from specialized parties in the clubs, because they realize that maintaining their fitness and health enables them to appear in a decent manner that invites other clubs to hire.

Realistically, the distinguished Palestinian players are explicitly known, and that the Palestinian club cannot contract with foreign players. Therefore, they move between clubs constantly because the contracts followed in the West Bank have a short duration of one or two seasons. This leads players to move towards the club, which offers them a better financial offer.

The public image has changed in Palestine. It used to be that they practiced soccer out of desire, hobby, and belonging to the club to achieve victory, especially in the West Bank. Still, now we see some players, the first thing they are looking for is a financial return, which is normal in the professional and first division clubs. Some clubs can pay salaries and gifts to the players in other divisions, and some are limited to providing transportation costs only.

Palestinian players have become the focus of attention of Arab clubs in neighboring countries, especially the players of the national team, so they have the desire to achieve individual achievement through external professionalism, and the ambition of Palestinian clubs to retain their players, so the battle for the professionalism of Palestinian players takes place in a field with two opposing directions according to the vision of many; the players desire, and the club's ambition to adhere to them. In recent years, many Palestinian players

from the Gaza Strip and the West Bank set out to play in Arab and European clubs on a journey looking for brilliance in a better environment.

The PFA registers the players after confirming their health check and is not registered with other clubs. A special card is issued to them before each sports season. According to the PFA records, the following table (14) and table (15) shows the number of players during season 2019/2020.

**Table 14** *Number of players by competitive divisions in season 2019/2020- 2020/2021 in West Bank*

	2019/2020	2020/2021
Professional Division	272	235
First Division	348	312
Second Division	692	587
Third Division	1112	1125
Fourth Division	2219	2158
Women Clubs	216	182
Total	4859	4599

**Table 15** *Number of players by competitive divisions division in season 2019/2020- 2020/2021 in Gaza*

	2019/2020	2020/2021
Excellent Division	302	195
First Division	315	301
Second Division	475	482
Third Division	419	440
Total	1511	1398

**Table 16** *Number of coaches, players, and clubs in season 2019/2020/ 2020/2021 in palestine*

	2019/2020	2020/2021
Number of coaches	775	879
Number of players	6370	5997
Number of the soccer club	250	250

### **Training of soccer coaches in Palestine**

The PFA has specific rules and regulations for registering soccer players, club administrators, and technical staff each season. The Association must also approve the qualifications of coaches and technical staff. Coaches and administrators go through professional development mandated by the Association by taking accredited courses offered by AFC with classification (D, C, B, A, and PRO). Additional courses in the fields of sports management, sports injuries can also be taken.

The PFA took a great interest in qualifying soccer coaches, as the coaches in Palestinian clubs previously worked without specialized certificate in soccer coaching. They relied on their previous experiences because they included former players or teachers of physical education. In 2013 the FPA began to qualify coaches through specialized courses under the supervision of the International Federation and in cooperation with the AFC; it approved Asian certificates, as it set conditions for the participation of clubs in the various leagues, that the coach of the team who completed the specialized courses in success and holds a certified soccer coaching license.

The method used in Palestine to prepare coaches is the specialized courses held by the PFA in cooperation with the AFC. It aims to prepare the personality of a soccer coach with his duties and functions, provided that they are able to develop the physical, skill, psychological and tactical aspects of the players and improve the different playing styles and

planning for the sports season and matches analysis, by specialized coaches with skill and experience in the field of training by providing them with practical and theoretical practices. It starts from a level D course. The coach progresses to reach the highest level, which is PRO, provided that he succeeds in practical and theoretical exams. At the end of each course and fulfilling the conditions for admission to them, these courses are:

### ***Coaching course D***

Which is intended for former soccer players and non-specialists in physical education and is considered an introductory course; its duration is 50 hours, which aims to:

1. Identify the names of soccer skills and method of teaching them.
2. Determine the age groups and their physical and psychological characteristics.
3. Identify the personality and duties of the coach before, during, and after the match.

### ***Coaching course C***

For the youth sector and different age groups, one of the conditions for enrollment is success in the coaching course D. The coach is a former elected player with ten international matches or a physical education certificate with a bachelor's degree, the duration is 90 hours, which aims to:

1. Study the basics of soccer skills and physical requirements.
2. A mechanism for teaching different skills.
3. Studies how to prepare training that contains different skills.
4. Build written coaching units in three parts: the warm-up, main, and closing.

### ***Coaching course B***

Which the coach must have passed since his coaching course (C) two years as a minimum, and worked in the field of soccer coaching, the duration is 200 hours, which aims to:

1. Identifying and connecting the position of players.
2. Analyzing, reading matches and Discovering tactical problems, and finding solutions.
3. Preparing physical and skill training programs that include all elements of physical fitness.
4. Preparing for competitions and enhancing tactics.

### ***Coaching course A***

Which the coach must have passed since his coaching course (B) two years as a minimum, and worked in the field of soccer coaching; its duration is 280 hours, which aims to:

1. Develop the analytical and tactical aspects.
2. Prepare coaching programs for the sports season with its divisions of preparing, competitions, and transitional.
3. Creating long-term coaching programs and action plans in the physical, skills, techniques, psychological and mental aspects.
4. Reading games, analyzing them, discovering problems, and exploring for solutions.

### ***Coaching course Pro***

Consider it is the highest level and is held outside Palestine in neighboring Arab countries, the last of which was in the State of Qatar. It is a course devoted to teaching the latest training sciences at the club and national team levels. The course aims to produce coaches and lecturers at the highest levels. It is an interconnected curriculum consisting of (5) stages. The total working hours in it is (380), during which theoretical and practical lessons are given to the participant who must be associated with a club or team in his country and have a complete record documenting the training sessions, results, analysis of matches, and

comments made during his career, in addition to submitting his thesis on a specific topic With a minimum of (5000) words, in addition to passing the final exam on the theoretical and practical aspects of soccer, as well as the oral exam. The course takes place in five-phase:

1. The first phase is based on the latest coaching methods and physical preparation methods within European specifications to accredit the European certificate.
2. The second phase focuses on the defensive tactical aspects, the latest modifications to the defensive aspects and their tactics, the methods of playing and dealing defensively with all modes of play, and how to use video technology to correct players mistakes.
3. The third phase is about the latest modifications and methods for the offensive cases of the team and how to deal with ways of offensive play and field visits to some clubs to follow up their training and analyze their matches. The course also includes a presentation of each coach's training philosophy and how to develop the sport in each country according to the best methods that soccer science has reached.
4. The fourth phase deals with modern playing methods and dealing with the player and professional teams with everything related to these aspects, from preparing myself and my plans and preparing the team and developing a tactical plan for a year that includes a specific strategy.
5. The fifth phase will summarize the four phases by presenting jobs assigned to each coach to implement and present them.

**Table 17** *Number of Coaches in Palestine by coaching certificate*

	Gaza		West Bank	
	2019/2020	2020/2021	2019/2020	2020/2021
Pro	1	2	1	3
A	21	33	50	65
B	46	64	100	121
C	179	209	264	296
D	48	48	65	86
<b>Total</b>	<b>295</b>	<b>356</b>	<b>480</b>	<b>571</b>

### Summary

Like anywhere else, Football in Palestine has gone through many changes since its inception. Palestinian football is also a ground for the challenge and ambition through which athletes are trying to confirm the Palestinian identity in institutionalizing work and keeping pace with the development-taking place in the world. It is the most popular sport in Palestine, but its true development started in 2008 after reorganizing the PFA and they planned and prepared the game's elements, with equipment and human capabilities, worked on building new stadiums, assisting clubs in maintaining their headquarters and pitches, and started to prepare coaches in different areas through specialized courses in collaboration with the AFC. The general league in its new form was organized for different divisions, as in season 2019/2020, in which 250 clubs participated, including 6370 players and 775 coaches.

In 2013 the FPA began to qualify coaches through specialized courses (Pro, A, B, C, D) under the supervision of the International Federation and in cooperation with the AFC. Asian certificates were approved, as this set the conditions for the participation of clubs in the various leagues: the coach of the team who completed the specialized courses in success held a certified soccer coaching license. The performance of the national team gradually improved, as a result of the regularity and continuity of the local league, and their

international ranking rose to 73rd in February 2018 after a series of successful participation, and now it ranks 99th until September 2021.



## **SOCCER COACHING**

Soccer, the game regulated by FIFA, is a duel between two teams of 11 players aside, symmetric in terms of sociomotor roles and quantity of players, time limited as far as its scoring support is concerned, and expected to be played on a totally stable physical milieu divided into subspaces (Martínez de Santos, 2007). The internal logic generated by the rational interpretation of its rules develops around the most important feature: opposition, what demands from the players decision, anticipation and preaction in order to tame social uncertainty (Parlebas, 1981). Besides the vast complexity of the contents in the context of the development of modern soccer, the limited rest time between competition and also the increasing requirements in the team game together concerning the player, progress has been made in coaching towards integration or global approach in which the player developed in a specific motor situation in the conditions of interaction collaboration- opposition.

Soccer is a complex sport because the playing field is more extensive than other team sports (approximately 100 x 60 m), the ball is controlled by feet and head, and there are continuous interactions between eleven partners and eleven opponents, almost all of whom play different roles in the game (Aguiar, Botelho, Lago, Maças, & Sampaio, 2012). The amount of space allows 22 players to spend much time running without the ball. So, performance in soccer depends on many factors, such as technical, tactical, strategic, physical, physiological, and psychological aspects (Stølen, Chamari, Castagna, & Wisløff, 2005). Soccer is played in the most diverse places and is conditioned by various forms of game organization (Barbosa & Carvalho, 2008; Williams, 2004).

Many of the knowledge generated by soccer are directed to the methodological aspect. They are related to different contexts (schools, clubs, academies), are formed as a topic of discussion, and are represented by different concepts (Casarin, Reverdito, Greboggy,

Afonso & Scaglia, 2011; Scaglia, Reverdito, Leonardo & Lizana, 2013; Bettega, Scaglia, Morato & Galatti, 2015; Scaglia, 2015).

The performance analysis in soccer is still an ongoing topic. It is difficult to analyze, understand, explain and predict the relationship between all the generated actions during the game (Castellano, 2000). Like all human practices, soccer develops in a context from which it gains meaning and value. The environment in which it is performed assumes features that direct its practice and modify its purpose. However, its sports essence remains the same. Soccer is one of the activities in which a group of players participate in different social roles and countless practices in various ways; players feelings, interests, needs, and decisions are alerted, affecting their performance (Martínez de Santos, 2007).

Sports performance is a collaborative venture between institutions (governments, federations, leagues, clubs, and alike) and individuals. Amongst these, the most important partnership is that of athletes and sportspersons, coaches and players in our case. In this section, we will try and understand what the structure and foundations of this relationship are in order to better understand how soccer coaching in Palestine can be improved by looking into the way coaches organize performance-oriented practice in Palestinian elite soccer.

### **Training and coaching**

Performance, both individual and collective, depends on the quality of coaches, on their ability to modify the internal logic of the game in order to produce the transformation of the players competences. Sports coaching is a planned, transformative process that must be based on sound scientific foundations that helps players reach high sports performance. It requires the coach to plan and organize the players physical, technical and mental capabilities and their moral, psychological qualities in a unified framework to reach them to a high level of athletic performance (Abdel-Fattah, 1997). Bastawisi (1992) points out that sports

coaching does not depend on one level without another and is not limited to the preparation of higher levels only, as each level has its own methods.

Sports coaching is a process of improvement, progress, and continuous development of the level of players in different sports fields; it is based on knowledge and scientific principles derived from many social and human sciences such as physiology, biomechanics, kinesiology, sports psychology, and other related to their applications in sports (Khouli, 2001; Obidi, 2009; Busati, 2015).

### ***Coaching Traits and function***

Many important traits distinguish sports coaching from others (Abdel Fattah, 2012; Mukhtar 1988), including:

- i. The main objective of sports coaching is to reach the individual to the highest possible level of sports in a certain type of sports activity.
- ii. Coaching depends on measurements and tests to reach the best sports results.
- iii. The necessity of coaching on scientific foundations and steps and depends on the scientific experience of the coach.
- iv. The coach's ability and independence at work are important to reach the coaching goal.
- v. Sports coaching is an educational process that takes into account individual differences in terms of level, gender, and age.
- vi. Sports coaching is a process characterized by continuity, and reaching a high level of performance requires continuous practice.

Sports coaching has a set of basic functions (Hammad, 2010; Allawi, 1991), namely:

- i. Inspiring a desire for sport at a younger age and making it an essential part of their daily life.

- ii. Advancing the players abilities and skills and discovering their talents that develop their motor abilities.
- iii. The players benefit from knowledge and skills that are based on sound scientific foundations concerning the technical aspects of motor performance, such as motor strength, speed, and flexibility.
- iv. Teaching the players the necessary motor skills to be fully prepared for sports competition at the highest levels.
- v. Develop self-confidence and motor abilities.
- vi. Teaching the players the tactical abilities necessary for satisfactory specialized competition.
- vii. Prevention of many diseases that affect humans, such as obesity, strokes, depression, etc., keeps the player away from physical weakness and lethargy and increases the body's ability to resist different diseases.
- viii. Raising the name of the homeland high by winning prizes in different international and regional competitions so that the player is an active and active individual in his community.

Coaching needs to be recognized as a cognitive activity, with coach education programs acknowledging this in terms of content, presentation, and assessment (Smith & Cushion, 2006; Lyle, 2002b). According to Lyle (2002a), sports coaching is defined in the direct sense (as the process of preparing an athlete physically, skillfully, strategically, mentally, psychologically, and morally through sports activities).

Although this concept includes multiple aspects of an individual's personality, it is limited to the preparation or physical load. Hence, I find the definition of sports coaching in a more general and comprehensive sense, as it is: "Procedures based on special scientific and educational foundations that lead to building the athlete in an integrated manner from all

physical, skill, planning, intellectual, psychological, ethical, and behavioral aspects, which lead and direct him towards continuously raising his level and athletic achievement in the specialized sport he practices, to reach the highest level”.

- i. It is a programmer and has clear goals.
- ii. Sports coaching looks forward to higher levels (championship level).
- iii. It depends on scientific foundations and does not depend on randomness.
- iv. The presence of a coach who leads and supervises the coaching.
- v. Continuity and non-interruption of coaching.
- vi. Sports coaching distinctly shape an individual's life.

### ***Coaching goals and principles***

The goal of sports coaching stems from the general objectives of education. It is closely related to them, considering that sport coaching is an educational process related to physical, mental, social, cultural, and behavioral education. Among its goals (Gould et al., 1990; Hammad, 1998; Ahmed, 2009):

- i. Pedagogical goals
  - Familiarity and knowledge of the rules, laws, and theories of the game practiced by the player.
  - Acquiring knowledge and information about physical education in general and its relationship to other sciences.
  - Teaching and mastering the skills and movements of the specialized game to reach the highest levels.
  - Comprehensive and balanced development in all aspects of life.
- ii. Educational goals
  - Developing the player's personality to acquire appropriate behavioral attitudes such as honesty, trustworthiness, tolerance.

- Nurturing and developing voluntary characteristics and traits include perseverance, self-control, courage, boldness, and determination.
- Development of social qualities such as cooperation and teamwork.

iii. Health goals

- Maintaining the health of the player.
- Know the methods of prevention and safety.
- Gain healthy habits.

To reach the process of sports coaching in the best way and within a framework based on scientific foundations, a set of coaching principles must be followed that ensure the continuity of practice and achieve its goal, which is to reach advanced levels (Bishtawi & Khawaja 2005; Rateb 97; Khouli 2001; Bastwisi 1992; Salamh, 2001; Mukhtar 1988; Busati, 1998; Bastawisi, 1992; Shaghati, 2014; Lamy, 2004; Rashid, 1997; Abdel Fattah, 1997, 2012; Abdel Khaleq, 1991).

1. *Individualization*

Everyone is different and responds differently to coaching. Some people can handle higher volumes of coaching, while others may respond better to higher intensities. This is based on a combination of factors like genetic ability, the predominance of muscle fiber types, other factors in your life, chronological or athletic age, and mental state.

The individual differences between players in a team and individual games must be taken into account when giving coaching programs, and focus must be on:

- Age: it is necessary to know the age groups in order to deal with them in a way that suits each of the stages in terms of physical, physiological, and psychological changes.
- The player's coaching status
- The health status and abilities of each player.

- External conditions for the player.
- The physical and nervous pattern of the player.
- The difference in the physical composition between boys and girls in terms of muscles, fats, and bones.

## *2. Progression*

When players are given specific exercises, the vital body systems are affected by these exercises so that a kind of response occurs with these exercises. They become repeated for an inappropriate time, forcing the coach to search for new exercises that match their advanced capabilities.

## *3. Continuity*

There are no time intervals between coaching, as these large intervals do not help the regularity of the effect of coaching, which loses its effect and goal in raising the player's level. That coaching includes a comprehensive, integrated preparation for the athlete that the player's preparation includes the various settings necessary to develop his level for the better and aspire to higher levels, in other words, that includes the preparation of the athlete (physical, skill, linear, psychological and theoretical preparation), and must achieve a balance between these settings.

## *4. Overload*

In other words, the coaching reaches the external limit of the player's ability. This means that the coaching affects the player's vital devices. It challenges his abilities and leads the player to fatigue, and without that, the necessary adaptation does not occur. This can be seen through pulse, pressure, and breathing, noting that the degree of fatigue and muscle fatigue has not been reached.

### 5. *Corrugation*

That is, the correct combination of the coaching load and the rest, that is, there should be breaks between it in the coaching that help the player to recover in order to resume coaching again, and this applies to coaching, whether within a single coaching unit or between coaching courses, a small, medium, and large coaching load.

### 6. *Periodization*

Organizing coaching load cycles in the form of load cycles “This means forming coaching starting from the daily coaching unit, passing through a small load cycle (weekly), then a (medium) load cycle, and then a major load cycle, which includes the entire sports season.

### 7. *Effective Participation*

This principle implies the player's participation in the coaching process, as the coach should, through his leadership and experience, encourage his players to progress independently but sincerely. They, in turn, must understand the coach's management to develop their skills, movement abilities, and psychological characteristics to overcome the difficulties they face in coaching. Effective and sincere participation in coaching is at its height (its best conditions) if the coach periodically and in coordination discusses the success of each player separately. Effective participation should not be limited to coaching sessions only, so the athlete must know how to behave during invisible coaching or time. In which he is not under the supervision and care of his coach. There is strong evidence that alcohol and smoking influence a person's achievement. Accordingly, the player should vigorously reject such temptations. During free time, the player can participate in social activities that provide contentment and relaxation. Still, he must ensure that he gets enough rest.



### 8. *Specificity*

Each sport has its own exercises; the specialized game needs movement coaching and exercises that serve this game. From this point of view, the long-distance player needs endurance. The short-distance player needs the strength element characterized by speed. The gymnast needs an element of Muscular strength, speed, and neuromuscular compatibility. Each game requires its own physical characteristic, so it is necessary to have specificity in the coaching process according to the type of specialized game.

### 9. *Adaptation*

Over time, the body gets used to exercising at a certain level. This adaptation results in improved efficiency, less effort, and less muscle breakdown at this level. This is why the first time a player has run a long distance; he will feel pain after. However, this activity will become just a warm-up for the main exercise after time. So, changing the motivation by increasing the intensity or for a longer duration of the improvements, the same applies to adapting to fewer amounts of exercise.

### 10. *Recovery*

The body cannot repair itself without rest and time to recover. Short periods such as hours between multiple sessions per day and longer periods such as days or weeks to recover from a long season ensure that the body does not suffer from overwork or overuse injuries. Enthusiastic athletes often neglect this. At a basic level, the more a person exercises the more rest the body needs.

## **The coaching process**

We see from the above that the theoretical literature regarding the concept of sports coaching, written by many authors in the western and eastern world similarly and traditionally, is what is taught in the curricula of physical education faculties in Palestinian universities and training courses for coaches. I focus my reflection on how to understand

sports coaching based on coaches' thinking and decisions in order to improve performance because coach decisions and communication. I think it is the most interesting understanding, differently from what is known, seeking to develop a coaching process.

The first to knock on this communicative concept of the coaching process was Martínez de Santos (2007), when proposed and explained the “intervention realm” concept and built a communicative model of the motor intervention. In order to grasp the complexity of the coaching process, an understanding of the practical context of coaching appears essential, including the social relationships that tie coach, player, and club environment together (Potrac & Jones, 1999).

Indeed, Schempp (1998) argues that “our social world offers no immunity to sport fields or gymnasia”. Yet despite increasing recognition of the social nature of the coaching process and the realization that coaching is vulnerable to different social pressures and constraints (Cross, 1995a, 1995b; Tinning, 1982), sociological research and analysis of the coaching process are relatively underdeveloped (Schempp, 1998; Potrac & Jones, 1999).

While existing socio-psychological theories of the coaching process and coach conduct have proved useful in identifying frameworks for good practice, they have been found wanting in helping us to understand the dynamics that construct and affect relationships between the coach, player, and club within the coaching process (Potrac & Jones, 1999). This is particularly the case in elite or performance programs where empirical data about coaching practice and the implementation of the coaching process remains scant (Trudel, Cote & Donohue, 1993; Lyle, 1999).

### ***Communicative process***

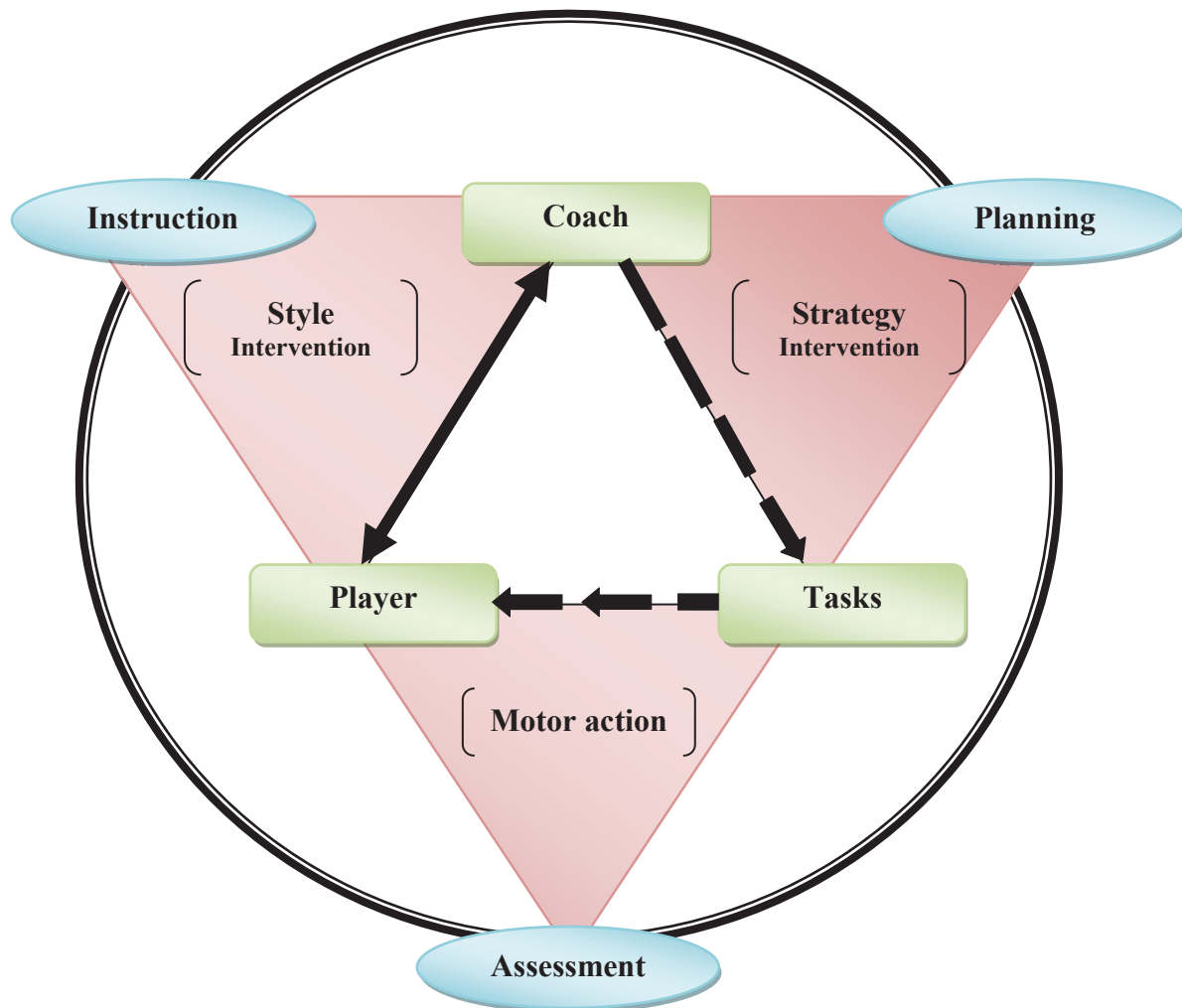
Sports coaching is a communication action with other people, whether done by direct channels such as speaking and explaining from the coach to the players or indirect channels, such as what the players perform in their activities. Soccer coaching is a complex reality

since it is considered an area of intervention, it includes many fields of practice: physical education, professional practice, and popular soccer (Martínez de Santos, 2005).

To understand the factors surrounding the players during practice, it is necessary to resort to the concept of the “intervention realm”, according to Martínez de Santos (2007). This concept refers to the social contexts where the motor practice involves participants who share the same function assigned to the activities. School sports and the minor leagues seem to be closely related but completely differ with a practice that aims at preparing athletes for peak, professional performance (Martínez de Santos, 2007): “The first is a formal educational environment regulated by law and embodied in an educational curriculum, while the second aims to train players to prepare them for competition” (Martínez de Santos, 2007, p. 371).

Interpreting the understanding of the communicative model of the motor intervention as an interaction operation aims to describe the processes of interaction between coach and player; this model of coaching was proposed (Martínez de Santos, 2007, p. 389). to shed light on the socio-didactic perspective of the motor intervention process (Figure 2):

**Figure 2** *Socio-didactic model of sports coaching* (Martínez de Santos, 2007, p. 389).



The three elements of the previous model can also be understood in this way, proactive decisions of strategies, interactive decisions of style, and post-evaluation decisions. The intervention strategy is through an indirect communication channel between the coach and the players through which the conditions of the motor action are modified through the internal logic of the motor tasks (Martínez de Santos, 2007, p. 392):

- *Coaching strategies* refer to the planning process, that is, distribution of resting and practice time into split periods with different contents; in contrast to strategies, coaching style would include those specific aspects of the relationship that coaches establish with players during the sessions (Martínez de Santos, Castellano & Los Arcos, 2003).

- The *style* is defined as “the relatively stable way in which a teacher reflexively adapts his teaching to context, goals, and content, and makes decisions at the exact moment” (Sicilia & Delgado Noguera, 2002, p. 30). Parlebas defined it as “the particular way of approaching the various exercises or tasks that constitute the teaching progression of a particular motor skill” (p. 22).
- *Assessment*: the performance of motor action-oriented by the effects pursued by the practitioners or those responsible for the corresponding results. The general concept of motor intervention can be conceived as a program of physical activity (Anguera & Hernández Mendo, 2003) that can be evaluated. In the case of sports training, the evaluation depends on the field to which it applies: it will be an evaluation of the educational effects if the field is training, or it will be an evaluation of the performance achieved if the field is competitive.

Every coach shows the way of conducting practice sessions. (Hughes & Franks, 1997) have analyzed instructors performance focusing on different aspects of “verbal coaching strategies” (performance-related, and conduct, feedbacks and time aspects of back feeding, such as temporal location or frequency) and non-verbal communication procedures for “demonstration” or modeling, and other skills “establishing the learning environment climate”. These aspects can be put together and described as a 'coaching style' as a whole (Martínez de Santos, Castellano & Los Arcos, 2003). It is interesting to note that these interactions between coach and players are heavily based on verbal or speech acts (Searle, 1980): illocutionary act uttered by the coach in the hope that the consequent perlocutionary act produced by the players be as close as possible to the required action.

### *The coaching strategies*

Traditionally, coaching strategy is understood as the activities and actions that preceded a sports confrontation (Teodorescu, 1977; Wrzos, 1984; Gréhaigne, 1992). It is the collection of activities and procedures used during game development (Mercier & Cross, 1972; Morín, 1973; Kirkov, 1979; Zerhouni, 1980; Duriceck, 1985; Parlebas, 2008). If we extract the substantive meaning of this syntagma, we can focus on what *strategy* is, or more conveniently on what can make any phenome *strategic*.

Mintzberg (1994) indicates that strategic thinking is a complex process of employing both knowledge and personal experience with the aim of dealing with the environment to determine the future vision and the direction in which to act based on a holistic and integrated perspective, and it is a requirement of the context more than a personal choice (Morin, 2003), suggesting (Martínez de Santos, 2001) a distinction between two aspects of coaching: on the one hand, planning; On the other hand, putting this into practice.

Competition and preparation are complementary aspects of the strategy used in an athletic discipline. The ultimate goal is to improve the player or team's performance. Both processes are especially important when we talk about high-performance sports. Playing tactics will always be governed by the pre-designed strategy (Teodorescu, 1977; Wrzos, 1984; Gréhaigne, 1992; Larose, 1996; Hernández-Moreno & Rodríguez-Ribas, 2004). Gréhaigne, Godbout, and Zerai (2011) mentioned that by classic monitoring instruments, improvements could be made to the players attitude and the game's development, and new strategies can be applied.

Planning is the most relevant aspect of coaching (Martínez de Santos, Castellano & Los Arcos, 2003). From a methodological point of view, planning decisions are states, not events (Bakeman & Quera, 1996): Exercise A and B have different meanings for the coach depending on how long each is to planned to last, greater length suggesting greater

importance in relation to desired effects. Following these guidelines, it was possible, for example, to identify objectively the specific traits of certain instructions or competitive domains (Martínez de Santos, 1999, 2003); strategies used in the Spanish 1<sup>st</sup> Division of basketball (A.C.B), for example, were characterized by the high presence of opponents, shooting and counterattack practice without opposition, motor relationships based on asymmetric duel structure with more than four players aside, and anecdotic presence of the scoring system. From another point of view, Flanagan and Merrick (2002) used players heart rate as an indicator of work-load during soccer physical training. We think a similar approach is possible and necessary, trying to gather together as many relevant aspects of the practice activities as possible. Energetic demand is another pertinent trait of the internal logic of physical activities.

In the relationship between the coach and the motor tasks proposed, two different phenomena can be distinguished: the design of training tasks, which is an issue of transforming the game's internal logic, and the selection of appropriate tasks within the objectives of the coaching process. Experiential learning is more than just doing. Coaches must be able to solve problems and then develop and evaluate their problem-solving strategies (Trudell & Gilbert, 2006). These experiences and interactions should be promoted in some way (Cushion, 2006; Cushion et al., 2003; Werthner & Trudel, 2006), for example, through the use of mentors to identify and develop learning opportunities (Cushion, 2006) or participate with learning communities (Culver & Trudel, 2008).

### *Contents of practice*

It is a truism that one activity cannot generate all the effects and that all activities cannot generate the same effect. The selection of motor action logic is the coaches' responsibility and their main task (Hargreaves, 1990). Parlebas and Dugas (1998) showed that the internal logic of practice situations was at the center of learning transfer: there is no

transfer at all between athletics and team sports; there is a positive transfer between traditional games and team sports, and vice versa. In this sense, this dimension of coaching is a type of human performance that consists of choosing appropriate activities to achieve the desired effects; this goal orientation, limitation of time resources, and uncertainty associated with the evolution and capabilities make coaching a paradigm of human strategic action (Mosterín, 1987).

Accordingly, motor praxeology will be used to reach an understanding of the components of soccer coaching in Palestine. Motor praxeology was developed to investigate motor practices. Its origin goes back to France in the 1960s when Pierre Parlebas laid the foundations for what would later be embodied in the proposal of new science, which he called “Science of motor action, especially of the conditions, modes of operation and the results of its implementation” (Parlebas, 1981).

Parlebas's starting point was the critical analysis of physical education, one of the areas in which he was a teacher. The difficulty in finding answers to his questions and answering those of his students arose from his teaching practice and his intervention in the field of games and sports teaching and training: his reflections were a product of the practice itself (Saraví, 2012). The difficulty lies in finding scientific criteria to justify physical education as an academic discipline, justify its decisions, and establish relationships in the field of daily practice with the academic knowledge it produces (Parlebas, 2017).

The physical education class was characterized by the teacher's presence, who makes all the decisions. The students only have to comply with the teacher's orders through instructions and a whistle directing the students where to start and how to move. The teacher evaluates the students. Parlebas (1967) assumes from his early writings that it was necessary to produce a revolution in physical education teaching by discontinuing the focus on movement and paying attention to the movement purpose. Years later, During (1992) added



that it was the scientific proposal of Pierre Parlebas that produced this revolution. The teachers of that time “knew how to do many things, but they did not know why or the results of them” (Parlebas, 2005, p. 92). In an article published by *Education Physique et Sport* in 1974, Parlebas asserted that the first references the need for a science that reinforces studies of human motor skills differently (Martínez de Santos, 2015).

Nevertheless, by publishing the book “*Contribution à un lexique commenté en science de l'action motrice*” (1981), the French author will advance resolutely in his proposal to create a “new science”, through which he seeks to consolidate “a coherent and unified study of all relevant knowledge” (Parlebas, 1981, p. 173). Disciplines such as sociology, anthropology, history, anatomy, physiology, and biomechanics give an explanation from their own approaches and, in part, to their particular subject of study: the practices of the body. However, the proposal does not claim the exclusivity of motor situational analysis. However, it assumes that a plurality of approaches to which it can be completed is feasible (Parlebas, 1985).

Motor praxeology perspective suggests a connection that does not replace others but is an addition, a suggestion, and attempt to introduce a new scientific view, characteristic of specialists who engage in physical and sports activities as the subject of their analysis” (Parlebas, 1985, p. 11). The first studies of Motor Praxeology focused on the traditional games (Saraví, 2012) by investigating the physical, recreational, and sports practices he developed with groups of children and adolescents. Over time, investigations have been diverse, covering new topics closely related to the academic field of physical education, sports sociology, and cultural studies of games (Parlebas, 1986, 2003).

Through his theory of motor praxeology that he proposes, this author attempts to abandon the concept of movement, which is widely used in a long tradition in French physical education Bordes, (2010), derived from physics, which focuses on the use of

mechanical aspects of the human being: such as body displacement a concept generally associated with physiological research and biomechanical orientation (Parlebas, 2001). These approaches, reductive and centered on description, will attempt to be pushed aside with the formation of another concept, the concept of motor action (Parlebas, 1981). The starting point of Parlebas is the search for specificity in scientific studies through the concept of motor interactions, in an attempt to go beyond the study of describing human movement superficially but rather to reach its deepest effects (Parlebas, 1981).

Motor action refers to a deeper view through which it seeks to distinguish between the individualistic personalities in work (Parlebas, 2001). In this way, motor actions in which each participant or player's component is manifested, which means the meaning it carries for these participants and the external aspects or observable actions. From there arises the definition of physical education as “pedagogy of motor conducts” (Parlebas, 1981, p. 51). In this sense, motor praxeology allows us to make a particular study because “practical knowledge explains the ways of operating motor situations subject to rules and obligations” (Parlebas, 1991, p. 149). The author defines a motor situation as “a set of objective and subjective elements that characterize the motor action of one or more persons who perform a motor task in a particular physical environment” (Parlebas, 2001, p. 423). He defines motor action as “the significant regulation of motor action as a bearer of meaning” (Parlebas, 2001, p. 85). It refers to the actions and reactions of a person acting in an observable and meaningful motor situation. It concerns the motor action of people involved in a particular motor situation and the meanings directly related to these actions (Parlebas, 2001).

With the efforts of Parlebas and his believers, an international scientific association, AIPRAM (*Asociación Internacional de Praxiología Motriz*), was established, conferences were held, and a new academic horizon was opened for the exchange and building of knowledge. In the past two decades, studies in this field have multiplied in Europe, America,

and Africa, especially in those countries where its languages are Latin, such as French and Spanish. Although some symposia and publications have been held in the United States and Asia, this perspective is not widely spread in English-speaking countries or countries that use English for scientific research, such as Arab countries. There are initiatives to spread this idea, the most recent of which was translating the “*jeux sports et sociétés lexique de praxéologie motrice*” into the Arabic language by Dr. Ahmed Torki from Algeria (2021). Motor Praxeology has a place in the academic field of physical education, gradually transforming itself into an almost inescapable theoretical reference. Its concepts are incorporated into curriculum designs, articles, and conferences. However, its knowledge is not massive or generalized; among other reasons, it is not part of physical education curriculum networks. This has often resulted in little dissemination and generalization of ideas and terminology (Saraví, 2009).

It is necessary to standardize scientific studies to use clear and precise terminology. Therefore, he authored a specific lexicon reflected in several editions (Parlebas, 1981, 1999, 2001); Parlebas studies were pioneering in introducing contact concerning practices. This perspective emphasizes the communication that connects those who engage in a physical practice through motor interaction, whether a game, sport, or dance. When we refer to the relationships between the participants in this thesis, it is not about relations like friendship. It is not about verbal language: it is about motor communication.

The structure of motor praxeology is based on the relationship of knowledge of social psychology and applied sports, oriented to the social sciences because it interprets the game as a social aspect. In 1999, the author published the main work of Motor Praxeology: “*Jeux, Sports et Sociétés: Lexique de Praxéologie Motrice*” in the form of a lexicon. In 2001, the Spanish version was launched in 2017, which served as an incentive to complete the

education in a Ph.D. degree in Spain with the one who translated and prepared it, by Raul de Santos Martínez (2017).

Motor Praxeology is presented as “the science of motor and the especially conditions, methods of operation and the results of its development” (Parlebas, 2001, 354). Motor praxeology considers motor practice and games, sports, and dances as structures to be understood, “practical systems” (Lagardera & Lavega, 2003, p. 123). Although the various components can be identified or named for study or research purposes, these elements are closely related to each other. They cannot be analyzed in isolation (During, 1992). The perspective that Parlebas proposes to construct the theoretical framework of praxeological motor science refers to the relationships of those who practice (with each other) and their roles with space and time.

One of the basic concepts is internal logic, which Parlebas defines as “the system of traits related to a motor situation and the consequences thereof for performing the corresponding motor situations” (Parlebas, 2001, p. 302). In other words, it is the system of obligations imposed by the rules of motor situations (Parlebas, 2001). Parlebas (2001) states that “deepening the internal logic of the different motor states will allow us to appreciate more clearly to what extent each of them can meet the specific purposes” (p. 176). Internal logic consists of “a system of features related to a motor situation and outcomes.

Therefore, revealing the internal logic of motor situations allows” the identification of the major domains of motor action (Parlebas, 2001 p. 149). Elucidating the characteristics of the internal logic of games allows us to explain the models of social conduct that guide them. Games are cultural constructs and the rules that regulate them (Etxebeste, 2009), enabling them to guide them towards accommodating different social models based on their characteristics (Collard, 1998; Fernandes, 2010; Oboeuf 2010). For coaches and their association with their purposes, the coaching effects differ according to the type of motor

developed (Dugas, 2011). Knowing each characteristic of the internal logic serves as a 'cornerstone' (Parlebas, 2001, p. 176) to more clearly appreciate 'to what extent each can achieve the specified purposes.

This concept focuses on the foundational properties of all motor practices, or in other words, those properties that allow us to understand what they consist of, how they are played or how physical practice is developed, and how they differ from each other. Parlebas refers to "features which are considered relevant because they are based on the characteristic elements of motor action" (Parlebas, 2003, p. 146). We find that they are as follows: The relationship between the participants, the relationship of the participants with space, the relationship of the participants with time, the relationship of the participants with objects (Parlebas, 2001; Lagardera & Lavega, 2003):

*i. Relationships between participants*

This aspect refers to motor interactions, that is, how those who practice a particular discipline relate to each other. The person can move or play alone, but he is always accompanied in the presence of others or interacting with them directly. It refers to the motor interactions between participants, describing it as a key phenomenon in the task (Ribas, 2014). According to Parlebas (2001), the social nature of a game depends on the network that a game includes. Parlebas (1976) highlights the direct dependence between performance and communication between players, as each player's action is always communicative. They cannot decide when to start or end communication because all motor conduct acts as a signal (Jiménez & Gorostiaga, 2015). It can be classified into two types: communication situations and opposite communication, generated through messages sent to partners and opponents (Lagardera & Lavega, 2003). Each player is the bearer of messages. They must be conveyed as clearly as possible to his partners, and at the same time, difficult to decipher by opponents (Ribas, 2014).

*ii. The participants' relationship to space*

Depending on the game or sport we refer to, participants use the space through diverse ways and forms of practice. In soccer, for example, the goalkeeper is the only one who can touch the ball with his hands, which is limited to the goal area. Space takes many forms and is organized in different ways depending on the motor practice (Parlebas, 2001).

*iii. The participants' relationship to time*

Time is closely related to the game rules. In some games, there is a time limit for their completion, such as soccer. In other cases, time is counted at the end, such as sprints in athletics, and the winner will be the one who completes them in the least time; in soccer, it is classified as a rival net as the goal is to score the goal in the goal defended by the opposing team and defend the goal itself. It corresponds to how the score is organized to win or lose a match (Parlebas, 2001). It can be linked to time limit, score limit, or a combination of both.

*iv. The participants' relationship to objects*

These are the materials that players use in motor practice in some games. The player uses the ball, and there are games in which materials such as wrestling are not used. The use of materials in practice is due to the game or sports activity conditions because there are activities that do not require material to practice. Sports should need material to practice them according to their internal logic. For example, soccer and basketball cannot be played without a ball. Stretching and running can be done without material. The material profoundly determines and transforms the dynamics of the exercise (Parlebas, 1999).

Analyzing these relationships enables us to understand motor practice in terms of the motor situation through how the participant interacts with other Participants, space, time, or materials. "Attributes of internal logic do not refer exclusively to the rules system of the activity or the subjective characteristics of the person acting, but rather provide a hidden testimony of the interaction. Thus, the feature that connects the participants to the space and

its environment takes into account certain rules of the game such as pitch dimensions, playing areas, materials identified, and the motor actions that are appropriate for it” (Parlebas, 1992, p. 18).

Rules and regulations become important elements that give meaning and structure to the actions. That is why the central aspect that allows the identification of the internal logic of practice is the rules: “The internal logic of games is manifested above all in the rules of the game code, which elicit accurate motor actions”, Parlebas (2001, p. 303). Understanding the internal logic means knowing the rules that determine the individual motor actions of the participants, which define the guiding principles that regulate relationships, divide the space in one way or another and determine the time for practice. Physical and motor actions are not chaotic but rather determined by the structure provided by the rules (Parlebas, 2003).

The concept of an external logic organized based on social and cultural contexts that give conditions, values, and meanings to a particular physical practice emerged (Lavega, 2002), which evolved from the motor practices themselves. This identification between internal and external logic has been created for the analytical purposes of scientific research. However, it must be intertwined in an overall perspective that allows both logics to be seen in an integrated way. Internal and external logic are intertwined, influence each other, and constantly link; a close relation is woven between its lines (Bordes, Collard, & Dugas, 2007). The analysis of the external logic of motor tasks also consists of examining space, relationships, time, and materials. In other words, similar to the study of internal logic, external logic is organized according to the analytic categories “in relation to space”, “in relation to objects”, “in relation to time”, and “in relation to others” (Etxebeste et al., 2015).

According to the studies of Parlebas (1981, 1986, 2001), the concept of internal logic has been taken up by several researcher, among them (Lagardera & Lavega, 2003; Hernández & Rodríguez, 2004; Bordes, Collard & Dugas, 2007; Franco, 2020; Gil, 2017; martínez de

Santos, 2007; Etxebeste, 2001). Various researchers have chosen certain practices to analyze from this perspective, for example, Hernández Moreno (1988) for basketball, cooperation, and opposition sports; Lasierra Aguila (1993) in handball; Valenzuela (2002) in Cycling Tourism; Bortoleto (2004) in artistic gymnastics; de Marimon (2004) on paragliding and practices related to the natural environment; Ruffino (2007) at rugby; Mateu & Lavega (2008) in fencing; Roque and Iturriaga (2009) on Olympic tennis; Etxebeste (2009) for traditional games in the Basque Country; Matteo & Portolito (2011) in motor situations of expression, Martínez de Santos (2007) in soccer, Franco (2020) in physical education in schools, Gill (2017) in school physical education. An effort lasting nearly four decades has led to multiple and important contributions to physical education and other areas of knowledge concerned with sports practices.

A series of studies links praxeology to soccer (Hernández Moreno, 2001; Mancilla & Pozo, 2013; Marques Filho, Schmitz Filho, Ribas & Bettega, 2017; Puig, 2011; Torres, 2013; Martínez de Santos, 2007). In all cases, Motor Praxeology is used as an analytical instrument to analyze certain details of the game. Literature is presented that seeks to visualize the game more deeply, analyze its internal logic, and contribute significantly to knowledge in new ways.

In light of the above, the study is justified in using Motor Praxeology as an analysis instrument to better understand the playing conditions in Palestinian soccer. The science of praxeology is not proposed to be a method of teaching and coaching. However, the scientific knowledge of games and sports allows revealing their important internal logic (Fagundes & Ribas, 2017). We seek progress in understanding what is being trained. This process acquires greater consistency and meaning, leading to better organization and content selection (Ribas, 2005). In this way, we intend to influence the practical context of soccer coaches in Palestine and contribute to the consistent selection of coaching development strategies.



The internal logic of each game, the grammar that players must share to understand each other for both cooperation and/or opposition remains stable in time to allow the acquisition of specific motor competencies. In the same way that a language orientates the speech acts of a speaker, internal logic orientates the motor conduct of the players, the motor action of the game, this being the real power of coaches over trainees.

From a didactical point of view, internal logic traits guide the instructor's choice for coaching effects depending on the characteristic of motor actions promoted. From an investigative point of view, the internal logic of sporting games works as a reading code that supports research from a structural-systemic approach (Martínez de Santos, Castellano & Los Arcos, 2003).

Motor interaction in soccer is included in two large groups of direct practical contact: the collaboration motor interaction and opposition motor interaction, and that the motor interaction of soccer leads to a complete overlap, unlike the incomplete volleyball and the alternate in snooker, which allows any player to play the ball at any time. It was mentioned by Parlebas (2007):

- i. Relationships between players are complete (each player is connected to any other player by a collaboration or opposition relationship), exclusive (each player is a partner or opponent of any other player), and stable (relations of collaboration or opposition between players are maintained throughout the whole match)
- ii. The two teams, except for a penalty kick, show perfect symmetry in terms of the number of players (11) and the structure of the sociomotor roles (goalkeeper and ten players), and their number is closely related to understanding formations different playing lines (defense, midfield, or attack)

Team players cannot change roles during the game. Moreover, that stable exclusive network (Parlebas, 1988) forces us to look for special characteristics in other aspects of the game; however, regarding the motor skills to which soccer belongs, it may be interesting to take into account statements made by Parlebas about a sport that is always symmetrical and exclusive and derives from particular characteristics (Parlebas, 1988):

- i. Their communication networks are all stable.
- ii. Their networks are all exclusive.
- iii. Sociomotor networks with partners and opponents are complete.
- iv. All their networks are equitable (positive relationships within the group and negative relationships between groups).

#### **Where do the coaches' decisions come from?**

The coach has an important part in the development of players and their performance on the field in order to achieve victory, and many studies have focused on the coach (Abraham, Collins, & Martindale, 2006; Gilbert, Côté, & Mallet, 2006; Gutiérrez del Pozo, 2007; Nash & Collins, 2006; Nelson, Cushion, & Potrac, 2006). The coach is a primary focus and the highest authority in team management, Vázquez and Gayo (2000) among the variables that affect the sporting development of players to obtain maximum performance and improve it, to become a determining factor for the coaching of players (Jones, 2003; Sousa, Cruz, Torregrosa, Vilches, & Viladrich, 2006; Viciano & Zabala, 2004).

The coach is an educated person who deals with the agents to fulfill the coaching process. He prepares coaching programs or participates in their preparation, implements these programs, and observes the extent of their influence, whether educational or physical, on the player's personality. His role goes beyond evaluation and follow-up and then amendment and review. Coaching conducts are also important to implement the coaching process (Price & Weiss, 2000). Ruiz and Sanchez (1997) point out that the coach plays a key role as

confidence is the anchor the player anchors when he needs it. The beacon will illuminate the player's doubts about aspects of the sport or his private life. Recognizing this is essential to be able to steer the player's path properly and plan its end in such a way that it is in itself something natural (p. 232).

Morcillo (2007) collects what has been expressed by several authors and provides a definition of the coach as follows: The team leader is the team manager who manages coaching, the game and the players, and building and representing the team. In order to carry out all his functions, the coach must have the basic requirements, interest, and excitement for sports, enjoyment of soccer coaching teaching. Constant analysis and evaluation of his performance and that of his players will help him gain greater knowledge in all areas of knowledge related to soccer (p. 94).

Zeigler (1983) suggests that the attributes involved in a sports coach's work can be categorized into five categories:

- i. Personal skills: which are indicative of their competence and organizational ability.
- ii. Relationship skills: refers to the ability to interact with and influence the players and the people around them.
- iii. Scientific skills: they are related to the way the elements associated with organized coaching.
- iv. Technical skills: dealing with specific knowledge of coaching related factors for high performance.
- v. Complementary skills: which are necessary to develop this act, such as leadership, management, and decision-making.

The coach's duty is to be fully convinced of his work values to help the players through coaching. It is a coach's personality traits:

i. Personal requirements

- Must have a strong desire for a career in coaching.
- To be of a high standard of manners and treatment.
- Has the ability to take responsibility and make decisions
- To have patience and generosity, and not to be bossy.
- To be fit and in good health.
- Realistic in praise, praise, and blame.
- Independence in thinking.
- He believes in teamwork and giving everyone the opportunity.
- To be ideal for the players in the performance of duty.

ii. Professional requirements

- Familiarity with the topics and sciences related to sports coaching in general and the specialized game in particular.
- To have the appropriate educational qualification to work with young, old.
- To know the theories of the game fully in terms of skills, rules, competition rules, plans, and all related developments.
- To be constantly aware of the research and studies conducted in his field of specialization.
- Has the ability to prepare and plan programs.
- He must have a minimum level of coaching and education.

The player is affected by his perceptions (negative, positive) in his attitudes towards his coach. If the player likes and respects his coach, the coach's suggestions and the goals he seeks will be achieved. However, on the contrary, if the player does not respect his coach or is not convinced of him. He finds it very difficult to achieve any positive results. Once

athletes reach a certain developmental stage, they are willing to accept harsh coaching treatment if they consider the outcome favorably (Cushion & Jones, 2006).

### *Competitive divisions*

Competition is often understood as the basic manifestation of an athletic discipline and the factor on which the coaching process revolves. It is part of the strategic plan for sports coaching, in which clubs, athletes, and coaches work in the short, medium, or long term to improve sporting outcomes (García-Manso, 2013). Sports competition has been defined as comparing performance achieved by an individual or team (El-Hodiri & Quirk, 1971). Its characteristics and structures include creating a confrontation system with the criteria of uncertainty in the result, competition between opponents, and excitement in competitive practice (Szymanski & Kesenne, 2004). Thiess, Tschiene, and Nickel (2004) define it as a performance comparison based on mandatory rules and guidelines to be followed, reflected in the sports regulations.

Hernández-Moreno (1998) defines a competition organized as a set of rules and regulations with a central logic that defines the requirements necessary for developing the game's that partly defines its internal logic. Through sporting competitions, economic, political, and ideological interests arise that go beyond sporting practice (resources, matches, equipment, refereeing, etc.) can significantly influence its development and even the content and appearance of its practice (Parlebas, 2008). The professional soccer competition is a sporting competition. The internal logic of soccer forces us to describe motor soccer as a motor semiotics competition (Martínez de Santos, 2007).

The Palestinian soccer League is the official competitive league organized by the PFA and accredited by Asia within the national leagues. It has a large number of Palestinian followers. The soccer coaching process is considered one of the important pillars in achieving victory in the league and the continuity of improving performance. It is worth asking, is

coach decisions affected by competitive divisions? What kind of soccer drills are performed in the soccer coaching sessions for the elite Palestinian clubs? It is, therefore, necessary to resort to an operational concept: *practice realm*.

According to Martínez de Santos (2007), this concept refers to social contexts in which motor situations call for participants who share the same function assigned to activities. and the concept of the scope of intervention which is the different social contexts that generate goals that give meaning to the work of the third party that directs the work of practitioners to a particular activity (Martínez de Santos, 2007). He also presents a classification of the different social situations in which soccer is constituted as a realm of practice; this proposal defines the final practice as one that does not seek to transcend because its purpose is to play only (playing for play). Within this category, we find the self-regulating practice, the activities of which are regulated by the practitioners themselves, unlike the scope of standard practice, where a set of regulations conditions its existence. Standard practice will be systematic when implemented within the levels of compulsory education when directed to the development of the motor skills of the practitioners and not to a certain level of performance.

### ***Qualification of coach***

Each coach must have high personal and professional qualifications, which impacts players actions (Tutko & Richards, 1984). Like any human activity that requires a specialized body of knowledge, sports coaches are obligated to obtain the appropriate qualifications and continue training throughout their careers (Cordón Muñoz, 2008). Any coach education program must contextualize the knowledge presented and highlights the practical application (Cushion, Armour & Jones, 2003). This reinforces the notion of 'holistic coaching' and suggests that this should be the result of the coach education process (Potrac, Brewer, Jones, Armour, & Hoff, 2000).

Moreno Contreras (1997) mentions that the training of coaches follows the regulations of sports federations as the entities responsible for their qualification processes. Del Villar et al. (2002) suggest three essential components that should be included in training qualification programs for a sports coach field:

- i. Academic knowledge, referring to the theoretical foundations that guide training processes.
- ii. Training skills related to the way they transfer their knowledge.
- iii. Practical knowledge refers to the application of the contents in the real field of play.

Araujo (1994) and Mesquita (2000) added a fourth component to these points, the ability to communicate, which means establishing a strong connection between a coach and his players. On his part, Hernández (1998) asserts that starting work in sports coaching involves acquiring knowledge and its applicability in practice. Moreno Contreras (1997) declares that coaches must acquire the sports knowledge, methodological, and educational value of their work. In the field of soccer, many clubs have training vacancies within their organizational structure. This demonstrates the need for coaches capable of meeting the overall needs as a determining factor in youth training and sports development (Ruiz Perez & Martínez, 1992).

Saura (1996) suggests that the coach's training should depend on the psychology field, motor development field, the educational field, the coaching field, medicine and physiology field, the first aid field, philosophy field, and the management field. Wein (2000) asserts that a large part of successful coaching processes responds to the type of coach who directs the sporting development of players within clubs. Deakin and Copley (2003) mention the importance of coach qualification and the method used to guide their practice and transfer knowledge. Ibáñez (1997) mentioned the types of coaches.

i. In terms of coach personality

- Permissive coach: The person who allows his players to control the situation does not fully control the coaching process and does not set performance standards.
- The authoritarian coach: Unlike the previous coach, this coach tries to command and control everything, imposing his decisions and standards.
- Democratic coach: is the coach who sets work standards, leads the team, takes responsibility for operations, and can adjust his schedule based on the standards, in addition to, opinion of his players.

ii. In terms of coach qualification

- Academic Coach: This group of coaches has studied in the formal academic education system, such as universities, and non-formal ones, such as qualification courses.
- Self-made coach: This is the group of coaches who have based their training on self-development by collecting freely acquired knowledge, such as multimedia and reading.
- The coach who former player: They are the former players who continue towards the coaching field.

iii. In terms of coaching planning.

- Coach with strict planning: There is no flexibility in his planning. He seeks to implement what is included in the plan, regardless of external or internal factors.
- Coach with flexible planning: Planning can be adapted to changing circumstances.



- Improvisation coach: Without planning, the contents of the coaching arise with the practice itself.

Coaches are improbably sticking to one type of coach because their performance can vary depending on the circumstances, competition, and season periods. However, this does not lead to a change in the general pattern of action (Ibáñez & Medina, 1999).

When looking at the coach's role as one factor that determines the players performance (Lorenzo & Calleja, 2010). and the definite impact of the coach in the coaching process of elite players (Bloom, Crumpton, & Anderson, 1999; Deakin & Cobley, 2003). The study of the impact of the coaches' characteristics takes on greater importance in the field of research; for this reason, we will investigate the impact of the characteristics of coaches (experience and qualification) on their coaching strategies.

The evaluation of coaches' education programs has become one of the most pressing issues in sports research (Cassidy et al., 2006; Gilbert & Trudel, 2005; Irwin et al., 2005). The coach has the first role in the player's access to the highest levels of sports, and this is related to the extent of this coach's qualification capabilities in managing the coaching process (planning - implementation - evaluation) in preparing the player psychologically and directing and guiding him before, during and after the competition, such as preparing coaching programs or participating in their preparation, implementation of coaching programs, observing the impact of coaching on the players, evaluating the coaching process and amendment and review. Coaches are prepared and qualified by:

- i. Academic preparation in colleges, institutes, and departments specializing in physical education and sports coaching.
- ii. Specialist preparation through long and short specialized courses inside and outside the country.

- iii. Self-follow-up of the coach himself with his effort and following up on everything new in scientific physical education and specialized sports.
- iv. Doing research and studies in the field of his specialization.

Through qualification types, the coach can be able to expand knowledge of theoretical information related to the coaching process in the game, such as education, sports psychology, sociology, physiology, coaching science, nutrition, and health, in addition to kinesiology and biomechanics, and to other sciences that are closely related to the completion of the coaching process and pay attention to all aspects of preparation (physical - skills - plans - psychological) and not ignore one of them, paying attention to the psychological qualities of the player and working to develop them, such as boldness, struggle, determination, and influential, familiarity with all new in the game, knowledge of the organizational aspects, familiarity the additional tools and materials used in it, and understanding the rules and regulations to get players to the highest level.

Moreno and Del Villar (2004); Saura (1996) agree that the coach's role acquires a critical meaning in players coaching and performance process, so he must receive the specific training that allows him to perform his functions optimally. Because of the clear importance of the coach, it is satisfying to study his characteristics such as experience and qualification and their impact on his strategic thinking.

### ***Experience of coach***

It is common for coaching programs to be based on the coach's experiences as a practitioner of the method, as well as the criteria used to select the contents imbued with cultural components of common sense (Coutinho & Silva, 2009; Machado, Shiengo & Scaglia, 2017). If performance expertise is multidimensional (Ollis & Sproule, 2007), it must surely follow that coaching expertise is also multidimensional. Coaches need to develop knowledge in a variety of domains, not just in their sport. Knowledge regarding tactical

problems in sports to better use this knowledge in gameplay is important to the team coach (Henninger, Pagnano, Patton, Griffin & Dodds, 2006). French and McPherson (1999) suggested “decision making was an important component of performance and decision making was related to underlying knowledge of the sport” (p. 178).

Suppose the coaches are not aware of the many factors involved in decision-making. How can they apply their participants in decision-making activities – a key aspect in developing expertise? Unless these decision-making skills are introduced, developed, extended, and synthesized during coach education courses, coaches cannot be expected to make authentic decisions during sessions or in competition (Lyle, 2002a).

Coaches have indicated that practical coaching experience and observing other coaches are the preferred methods of coach learning (Bloom, Schinke & Salmela, 1998, Jones, Armour & Potrac, 2003). That the coach must have the ability to get the best results from the time spent with the players, so he must have extensive knowledge of the sports specialization and have sufficient personal experience in association with the sports coaching process (Morales & Guzmán, 2000).

The coach derives the coaching experience through the years of work he spent in the stadiums, the circumstances surrounding him, the changes accompanying the training process, the types of competitions, etc., we find that experience is not built through an academic curriculum or a specialized course, and some aspects of the coaches' experience are (Lyle, 2002a; Johnson et al., 2011):

- *Practical level:* A successful coach is distinguished by motivation towards high levels of the sport. As a result, he seeks to motivate and direct his players to achieve the highest possible level.
- Flexibility is represented in adapting to changing situations, especially under difficult conditions, as in sports competitions.

- Creativity: The ability to create and use many influencing possibilities during coaching, the diverse configuration of the teaching and learning program, and the ability to use renewable and innovative species in the structured coaching process.
- Management: The ability to coordinate and organize group efforts to develop the team's capabilities and skills to the maximum degree is an important feature of a successful coach.
- Perseverance: It consists of patience and endurance to explain, clarify and repeat performance, correct mistakes, endure exercises of a routine nature, and not lose hope in achieving the final goal.
- Confidence status: The player's sense of the coach's efforts and dedication to developing and developing his level earn the coach the player's confidence, contributing positively to the extent of cooperation between them.
- Take responsibility: A successful coach is willing to take responsibility at all times, especially in failure cases, and seeks to practice self-criticism before criticizing others.
- Critical capacity: A successful coach is not afraid to criticize the player on time. The nature of the coach's work requires exercising criticism in necessary cases or requires the infliction of some penalties or depriving the player of some privileges. In those cases, it is taken into account to clarify the objective reasons for this and ensure it understands them.
- The ability to make judgments: This is represented in the ability to notice coaching or competition situations quickly, objectively judge them, rapidly diversify or change planning developments, and analyze motor performance possible identification of errors.

- Self-confidence: Confidence in making judgments and decisions gives the coach a strong position with the players. The instructions and directions provided by the coach are clear and firm without being violent and aggressive. It forces players to respect and abide by it.
- Emotional constancy: Control of emotions is of the importance of the place of a successful coach so that he can create calm and stability in the souls of the players and so that he can give his instructions and advice to the players in a correct, clear, and calm tone, especially in the situation of competitions of an important nature.

### **Summary**

Coaching is an intervention practice: that is action, communicative action done by direct channels, such as speaking and explaining from the coach to the players, or indirect channels, such as what the players have to perform in their activities. Soccer coaching is a complex reality since it can be developed in different social contexts that must affect and guide their style, strategy and evaluation. Intervention, communication, practice, realm, strategy, etc., allow us to think about our study object operationally.

As far as this study is concerned, the main role of a coach is to modify the internal logic of the game in order to improve performance and produce the transformation of the players competences. To do so, we must understand first what kind of a game football is (symmetric team duel), because this praxio-logic drives both players and coaches. Coaching requires from coaches to get into the boots of the players to help them find the best solutions when playing. To investigate the way coaches think we take benefit from Pierre Parlebas' framework, presented in quite a canonical way. In addition, the formation paths of Palestinian coaches have been shown, as well as the basics of coaching theory in Middle East. The main influence in the qualification of football coaches comes from the Asian football Confederation in the realization of FA qualification programs.



## **PART II OBJECTIVES, QUESTIONS, METHODOLOGY**





## OBJECTIVES AND RESEARCH QUESTIONS

This study aims to discover the basis of the strategic thinking of elite soccer coaches in Palestine when they organize practice during the critical period of the pre-season, in terms of *competitive divisions* (Pro, first, and second), *coaching experience* (as former players and as coaches), and *qualifications* (such as Physical education specialization and soccer coaching certificates). This study aimed in general to:

- i. Contribute to Palestine as a national project that can benefit from the social, international relevance of soccer.
- ii. Produce scientific knowledge on the fundamental, relevant social practice of elite soccer coaching in Palestine.
- iii. Contribute to the improvement of soccer in Palestine that impact elite and general practices alike through more specific, scientific training of coaches.

Given that this investigation is the first to clarify relevant features in Palestine's soccer strategically thinking, it is impossible to suggest reasonable hypotheses. However, research questions such as the alleged impact of competition divisions, coaches' experience, and qualifications on strategic thinking will be considered.

- i. What does it take to be a soccer coach in the professional division in Palestine?
- ii. What does the Palestinian soccer coach take into account prior to the coaching sessions?
- iii. Can we distinguish coaching strategies in relation to competitive divisions and the coaches' experience and qualifications?

More specifically, to us better-knowing football in Palestine means knowing about the strategic dimension of coaching in Palestinian soccer; that is to understand how coaches

manipulate the internal logic of football when designing activities. The specific objectives in this doctoral thesis were:

- i. To find the general and specific profiles of Palestinian soccer coaches.
- ii. To describe the design of motor tasks in elite soccer coaching in Palestine.
- iii. To explain the planning strategies of coaches in elite soccer in Palestine according to their personal characteristics.

## METHODOLOGICAL APPROACH

This study investigates 36 elite Palestinian coaches' intervention strategies. To provide relevant information from their content and theoretical contexts about the types of motor tasks used in Palestine, the rules of the activities that guide the players motor conducts provide of the internal structures that can be used to describe the coaches' knowledge and understanding how they plan and how they think during soccer coaching sessions in Palestine.

The study of theoretical contexts is shaped as a practical analysis from a quantitative-qualitative perspective because of the need to understand a particular phenomenon (Martínez de Santos, 2007; Etxebeste, 2001; Fagundes & Ribas, 2017; Gil, 2017; Marques Filho, Schmitz Filho, Ribas & Bettega, 2017). In this study, the object is Palestinian soccer coaching, with a purposeful descriptive and analytical view, based on the criteria referred to motor praxeology. The analytical instrument is based on the fact that the internal logic of any sports situation can be brought to light by the “operational models that represent the basic operational structures and contain its internal logic” (Parlebas, 2001, 463).

Soccer competition is understood as a motor competition, so the analysis focuses on describing pertinent systems related to activities. Soccer internal logic will be the standard for analyzing motor situations, considering possible differences according to the motor praxeological system's practical models. The perspective of analysis is purely structural. What has been described indicates a clarification of the features that soccer coaches work in Palestinian soccer clubs through their decisions, as coaching agents whose competition divisions, experiences, and qualifications affected their work.

This study differs from other studies. It considers the external logic to be the competition divisions, coaches' characteristics, such as their experience as players and coaches, and their qualifications such as university specialization in physical education and

coaching certificate. It examines the effect of the external logic on the internal logic of practice, which are the coaching strategies and decisions of coaches during the coaching sessions for elite soccer in Palestine.

### **Participants**

In West Bank, there are four official soccer leagues, and the clubs are divided into different divisions. The club's classification is based on the clubs' results in the general leagues: *Professional division, First Division, Second Division, Third division, and Fourth division.*

- i. Professional League includes 12 clubs.
- ii. First Division League includes 12 clubs.
- iii. Second Division League includes 27 clubs during 2019/2020.
- iv. Third Division League includes 39 clubs during 2019/2020.
- v. Fourth Division League includes 88 clubs during 2019/2020.

In this study, the three top divisions in the Palestinian soccer League were focused on, the clubs in the top three divisions were selected divided into three divisions, 12 from the professional division, 12 from the first division, and 12 from the second division; these clubs were chosen for the following reasons:

- i. The top three: professional, first, and second divisions, are the highest standards in the Palestinian soccer League's general structure.
- ii. The coaches working in these clubs must have professional qualifications degrees.
- iii. Their coaching is regular and follows a strict system of players commitment to practice.
- iv. They are the basis for forming the Palestinian national soccer team.
- v. These leagues' matches are played in the full league system (home and away).

The third and fourth divisions clubs were not chosen because:

- i. Most coaches preferred not to work with this division because of their low monthly salaries, which they may not receive it.
- ii. Their session coaching is intermittent and only before the season because they cannot pay their monthly salaries for their player and coach staff for a long time.
- iii. No player from this division is chosen for the Palestinian national soccer team.
- iv. They have a short league system in one stage.

Data were collected from the 36 top clubs according to the following variables:

1. *Professional division (Pro)*: It is the highest league in Palestine and is organized by the PFA, which includes 12 clubs in the West Bank. They apply the professional system, fulfill the contracts of players and coaches, and pay their monthly salaries. This league is the core of the Palestinian national team.
2. *The first division (1<sup>st</sup>)*: It is the top league in Palestine amateur football league. It is organized by the PFA and includes 12 clubs in the West Bank. It is also called the semi-professional league because part of the professionalism system is applied, especially in the commitment of clubs to pay the monthly salaries of players and coaches. Players are chosen from it to represent the Palestinian national team.
3. *The second division (2<sup>nd</sup>)*: It is the second-highest league for amateur clubs, is divided into three regions. According to the West Bank territories (south, central, north), it consists of many clubs as a minimum is 12 clubs each season. Players are chosen from it to represent the Palestinian national team.

Accordingly, the clubs participating in the different official leagues for the higher competitive divisions were selected for the 2019/2020 season; table (18) shows the number of

these clubs' participation during all previous seasons in terms of competitive divisions, which started from 2010 until 2019

**Table 18** *Number of times each club participated in the seasons from 2010 to 2019*

	Pro	1 <sup>st</sup>	2 <sup>nd</sup>	Total
Balata	10			10
Hilal al-Quds	10			10
Taraji Wad Alness	10			10
Shabab Alkhalil	10			10
Thaqafi Tolkarm	9	1		10
Dharia	9	1		10
Jabal Al Mukaber	8	2		10
Alamari	8	2		10
Al bireh	7	3		10
Markaz Tolkarm	4	6		10
Markaz Askar	1	7	2	10
Ahli Alkhalil	8	1		9
Al khader	4	4	1	9
Islami Qalqilya	2	6	1	9
Nadi Jenin	1	6	2	9
Silwan	1	7	1	9
Ubaidiya		5	4	9
Abu Dees		3	6	9
AlSamou	5	2	1	8
Alquwwat	1	5	2	8
Ahli Qalqilya	1	1	6	8
Tobas		5	3	8
Abnaa al-Quds		5	3	8
Markaz jineen		3	5	8
Raqam 1			8	8
Jabal alzayton			8	8
Mouwathfen			8	8
Joret alshama		1	7	8
Beit Safafa		3	4	7
Isawiya		2	5	7
Karmel yata		1	5	6
Shuqba			5	5
Alsieleh			4	4
Shabab Nablus			4	4
Sour Baher			3	3
Osrin			2	2

The coaches belonging to the 36 selected soccer clubs were proposed to take part in the study because they were among the distinguished head coaches in Palestine and according to the applicable law in the PFA. Only those holding coaching certificates approved by the PFA can work as coaches in these top divisions. All 36 coaches agreed to voluntarily participate in accordance to the regular ethical standards of privacy and respect.

### **Study instrument**

Written diaries were collected, processed, and data entered into the computer, arranged, and categorized through an instrument consisting of (31) elements within four domains: *first*, the relationships between players; *second*, relationships to time; *third*, relationships to space; *fourthly*, relationships to objects. Moreover, coaches' characteristics such as experience and qualifications and competitive divisions of the clubs in addition to coaching sessions information, the proposed elements come from a previously validated instrument that has been used in different, similar studies (Martínez de Santos, 2007); the following table (19), table (20); table (21); table (22); and table (23) show a description of the study instrument, the target variables and their levels.

### ***Identification variables***

The identification variables univocally identify each analyzed activity within the clubs, coaches, and registered sessions; however, all classifying variables are activities since planning materializes the motor action that we generically call motor tasks or activities. For this reason, those that appear in the following tables can only be assigned to activities, although all of the above also refer to them.

**Table 19** *Identification activities*

	Description	Levels
ID activates	The ordinal number is assigned automatically and allows the system to distinguish it in the database	<i>Auto number</i>
ID sessions	The respective number that belongs to the session	<i>Code</i>
ID coach	The respective number that belongs to the coach	<i>Code</i>
Club division	The respective division to which the club belongs	<i>Prof, 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup></i>
Session date	The date of the session as it appears in the diaries	<i>Date</i>
Session parts	the temporal sector of the session in which each coach places the recorded activity	<i>Warm-up/ Main part/ Closing part</i>

***Analysis variables***

The following variables have been identified from the internal logical features of soccer, grouped according to the four main axes of movement: (relationships, time, space, and objects). In addition, other variables that may arise after their collection and analysis are not taken into consideration.

**Table 20** *Descriptive variables in the relationship to others*

	Description	Levels
P_ partners	The number of players with the same sociomotor role who collaborate in attaining the objective of the task (scoring)	<i>Natural number, one at least</i>
G_ partners	The number of cooperating goalkeepers in the same group	<i>Natural number</i>
Alt_ partners	The number of players with other motor roles than the ones in an official cooperating with the attackers	<i>Natural number</i>
P_ Opponents	The number of players with the same sociomotor role	<i>Natural</i>



	Description	Levels
	who Opponents in attaining the objective of the task (scoring)	<i>number</i>
G_ Opponents	The number of goalkeepers opposed to the attackers	<i>Natural number</i>
Alt_ Opponents	The number of players with other motor roles than the ones in official Opponents the attackers	<i>Natural number</i>
Groups	The number of groups doing separately but at the same time on the same space	<i>Natural number</i>
Motor interaction	relationship between the players throw the activities  <i>Psychomotor:</i> the player performs the activities independently without interacting with partners or opponents.  <i>Collaboration:</i> performing the activities with a pure collaborative interaction with partners and without Opposition interaction with opponents.  <i>Opposition:</i> the player performs the activities with a pure Opposition interaction with opponents and without any collaboration interaction with partners.  <i>Collaboration-opposition:</i> player performs the activities with a collaborative interaction with partners and an opposition interaction against opponents.	

**Table 21** *Descriptive variables of relationships to time*

Variables	Description	Levels
Duration	The time spent on the activities	<i>Minutes</i>
Cycles	The playing sequence (attack) is permitted by the rules stipulating the number of planned shifts from defense to attack.  <i>Ascending order,</i> We begin with (1) when one group attacks and the other defends, and the number increases in proportion to the increase of transformations	
Scoring support	An organizational device that allows knowing when the	

Variables	Description	Levels
	activities end based on the rules of the action (Defining the winner and loser).	
	<p><i>None:</i> When the event related to the end of the task is not mentioned and depends on the coach's decision.</p> <p><i>Score limit:</i> When the activities end with the player or his group reaching a predefined mark (a number of goals, for example)</p> <p><i>Time limit:</i> When the activities end with the player or his group reaching a predetermined time (3 minutes, the duration of the mission, for example)</p> <p><i>Both:</i> When the activities end with the player reaching a predetermined mark or the end of the time set by the coach.</p>	
Times	How does the performance end	
	<p><i>Competitions:</i> mean the end of the activities by identifying a winner and a loser.</p> <p><i>Duration:</i> means specifying a time for completion, such as competitive and skillful activities. There is no winner and loser and has a specific time to end.</p> <p><i>Repetitions:</i> means stopping the performance of activities upon reaching a certain number of times, such as running fitness and skill exercises that end after a limited repetition.</p>	
Scoring Consequence	The action expected from the activities, the type of interaction, and the procedure by which interactions can register a mark (Without defining the winner and the loser)	
	<p><i>Score change:</i> means scoring the goal after completing the activities.</p> <p><i>Role change:</i> This means that the goal is not calculated like an attacking game without a goalkeeper, and the target is to take the ball from the other team.</p> <p><i>Both:</i> means is score change and role change together.</p>	

**Table 22** *Descriptive variables of relationship to space*

	Description	Levels
Space type	<p>Determining the area through rules and order, which are recorded according to the coaching session for each activity</p> <p><i>Not specified:</i> Space has not been determined</p> <p>Free use, with boundaries: Use all space freely and without boundaries</p> <p><i>subspaces with boundaries:</i> It is the same free use, but there are parts of the earth that have different organizational meanings (the goalkeeper spaces are not counted)</p> <p><i>Circuit:</i> When area is one of the conditions of the task and within the movement task</p>	
Width	Line of the goal. In the absence of goals, it corresponds to the shortest axes to determine the area of the field	<i>Natural number</i>
Length	The longest two axes determine the area of the field	<i>Natural number</i>
Goal Type	<p>The human, material, spatial elements provided by the rules of the activities and associated with the scoring system</p> <p><i>None</i></p> <p><i>Human target:</i> When they scored by touching or hitting another player</p> <p><i>Scoring object:</i> when points are scored, objects determine it.</p> <p><i>Score area:</i> When scoring depends on a distance, it is determined by the activities.</p> <p><i>Official goals:</i> Score goals like official matches.</p> <p><i>“Non-regular goal:</i> When scoring depends on irregular goals</p> <p>Multiple targets: different targets and of different types (time, points, and area</p>	
Offside	A regulatory mechanism prevents the attacking player from entering the game based on their spatial and temporal relationship with other players	<i>Yes/ No</i>

**Table 23** *Descriptive variables of relationships to objects*

	Description	Levels
Objects	A physical Objects used to get the activities done	<i>None:</i> When no instrument is included in the activities <i>Official ball</i> <i>Informal ball</i> <i>Others</i>

### Procedure

To describe and interpret the strategically thinking on elite soccer coaches in terms of competitive divisions, “*Pro, first, second*”, coaches' experience as “*former players and as coaches*” and their qualification such as “*Physical education specialization and soccer coaching certificates*”; the focus will be on the coaches way of thinking through their coaching session diaries, including motor tasks to analyze the characteristics of the internal logic chosen for this study; this session script consists of coaching papers that coaches must hand over to the sports director after each session.

### Data collection

Personal data related were collected by interviewing the coaches and taking information from them for scientific research purposes; the general information for coaches was according to the following variables:

1. *Playing experience:* That the coach was a soccer player at the level of 11 players and participated in the official league for any competitive division, for more than one season, and was officially registered in the records of any recognized FIFA by two levels (Pro+, Pro-) and a number of playing years if the coach was a former professional soccer player.
2. *Coaching experience:* The number of years of hiring as a coach in any soccer club and is measured by integer years and was determined in the study by

three levels (High: more than 11 years, Medium: from 6-10 years, and Low: less than five years).

3. *Physical Education Specialization*: The coach's field is in his academic specialization. Therefore, the focus in this study was that the coaches have a certificate of specialization in physical education by two levels (PE+, PE-).
4. *Soccer coaching certificate*: The coaching certificate specialized in soccer coaching issued by any federation recognized by FIFA, with four levels: (D, C, B, A, and Pro).

**Table 24** *Coaches' data variables.*

	Levels
Age	Integer years
Former professional player	Pro+, Pro-
Playing experience	Integer years
Coaching experience	Integer years
Coaching certificate	Pro, A, B, C, D
PE specialization	PE+, PE-

The participants in the study were asked to send the last ten scripts of their sessions before the start of season 2019/2020. Some of them were provided photographed or pictured diaries; some others could provide diaries in PDF format:

- i. *Professional division*: the coaching sessions were from 05/09/2019 to 25/09/2019 because their season started on 26/09/2019.
- ii. *First division*: the coaching sessions were from 01/09/2019 to 18/09/2019 because their season started on 20/09/2019.
- iii. *Second division*: the coaching sessions were from 01/10/2019 to 24/10/2019 because their season started on 26/10/2019.

The collected diaries totaled 360 coaching sessions, containing 2,342 motor situations by 31,980 practice minutes. These scripts contained a traditional structure and included the following data (Table, 25):

**Table 25** *The design of the formed record of the session for Palestinian soccer coaches*

Session identification variables	Session content variables
The week during the season	General theme
Session number	Session parts
Number of Players	Activity
Objects	Description
Category	Activity duration
Season	Graphic forms
Date	
Venue	
Start-time	
End-time	
Observations	

Before beginning data collection from the Palestinian coaches, the investigation project and its purpose were explained; after showing their willingness to participate, I explained to them the following:

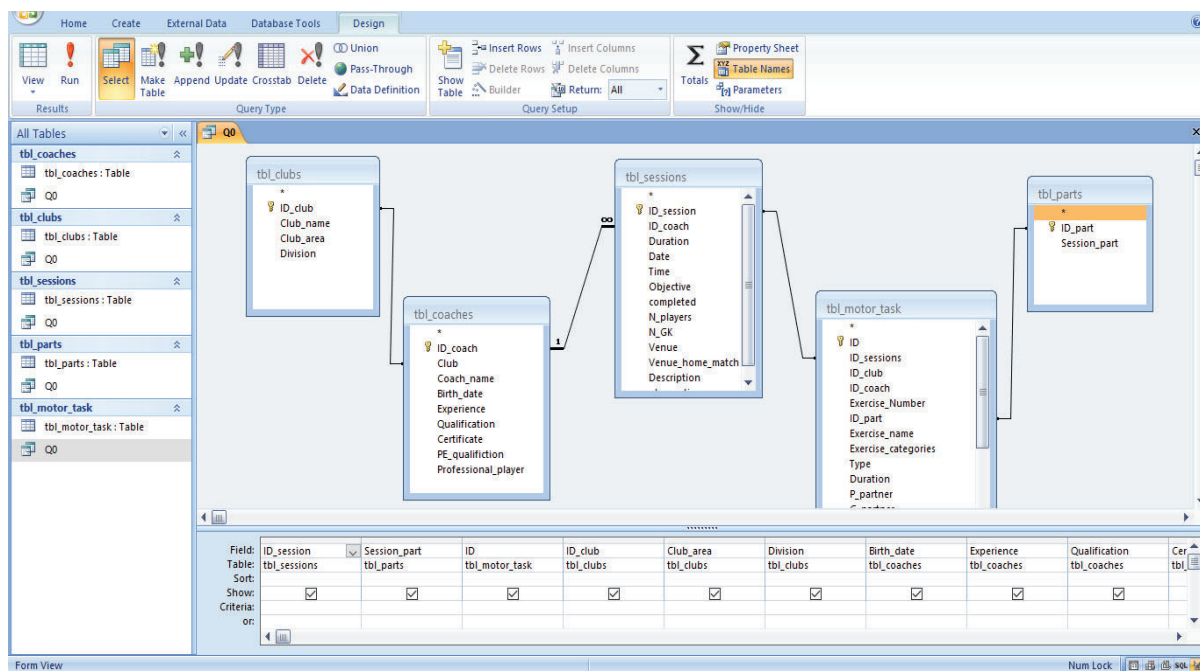
- i. The object was not an assessment of their ability to coach.
- ii. Do not change their coaching habits.
- iii. The results will be treated with confidentiality and for scientific research.

Consultation with the coaches was ongoing in some aspects that needed clarification. I asked them to explain the activity clearly and describe what practice meant to be at the moment they designed it.

### Data registering

An application in *MS Access*© was designed to analyze the internal logic of activities. A database is a collection of related tables that are accessed through a series of forms that allow them to be used as if they were a closed application. To better manage database resources, variables were coded and described in another table related to other tables.

**Figure 3** Form of data collection application



As shown in the figure (3), the tables' structure was more complicated than expected. However, it enabled to manage data registering efficiently. Using *MS Access*© and this related table to register data and analyze it has many advantages, including:

- i. It allows us to avoid spelling errors when entering data.
- ii. Allows default variable values distinguished.
- iii. Allows using real-time data verification algorithms for recording
- iv. It helps to learn a new registering instrument.

The database with relational and relevant tables allows us to create a table that adapts to the reality described and is used in this study as a data collection instrument.

**Data quality**

Data is a general term that indicates some or all facts, figures, symbols, and numbers that refer to or describe an object, idea, case, or situation (Maynard, 1982). The concept of data quality makes sense because the data must be adapted to its intended use, which means an operational context, and that the data to be used meets the expectations of its users. These expectations are highly satisfactory if the data is useful for what they need and is easy to understand and interpret (Lochin, 2001; Redman, 2001). Blanco mentioned the importance of the data being collected, subject to statistical variation, reliable, accurate, and correct (Blanco, 1993).

**Table 26** *Cohen's kappa coefficient ( $\kappa$ ) and measures of the strength of agreement for each item*

	Cohen's $K$ coefficient	Stander error of $K$	Strength of agreement
All Partners	0.75	0.031	Substantial
All Opponents	0.84	0.028	Perfect
Groups	0.71	0.067	Substantial
Motor interaction	0.82	0.031	Perfect
Cycles	0.85	0.030	Perfect
Scoring support	0.75	0.044	Substantial
Time	0.77	0.037	Substantial
Scoring consequence	0.78	0.034	Substantial
Space	0.78	0.033	Substantial
Surface	0.92	0.023	Perfect
Target type	0.80	0.030	Substantial
Offside	0.70	0.062	Substantial
Objects	0.79	0.036	Substantial

*Strength of agreement based on Cohen (1991) Poor agreement  $\kappa < 0.00$ , slight agreement  $\kappa = 0.00-0.20$ , fair agreement  $\kappa = 0.21-0.40$ , moderate agreement  $\kappa = 0.41-0.60$ , substantial agreement  $\kappa = 0.61-0.80$ , almost perfect agreement  $\kappa = 0.81-1.00$ .*



To ensure the quality of the data in this study I defined the categories that will be used in the study, then I met with experts in motor praxeology to fully understand the meaning of the category and choose the appropriate ones for the study, and then I started analyzing the motor tasks and after a month I re-analyzed 10% of the data (235 tasks) they were randomly selected, in order to ensure the accuracy of the analysis using the Cohen's kappa coefficient by pre-test and post-test, it is shown in table (26), that the concordance was substantial or perfect agreement. The analysis was performed using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) software, version 21.

### **Statistical procedures**

Data analysis were performed using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (version 21.0 for Windows, SPSS™, Chicago, IL, USA). Standard statistical methods were used for calculating the mean and standard deviations (*SD*) to describe some data. Chi-Square test and Analysis of variance (ANOVA), were used to show the differences between the characteristics of coaches, and multinomial logistic regression to examine differences when combining the coach's characteristics and distinguish coaching strategies according to competitive divisions and the coaches' experience and qualifications. These analysis were weighted according to the duration of the activities, and the  $p < 0.05$  criterion was used for establishing statistical significance. Have also been used Phi Coefficient measures to examine the size effect of the internal logic of motor tasks in different competitive divisions, the effect size (Phi) was calculated using the method proposed by Cohen (1988): small effect:  $w = 0.10$ ; medium effect:  $w = 0.30$ ; large effect:  $w = 0.50$ .



## **PART III RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**



## CHARACTERISTICS OF PALESTINIAN SOCCER COACHES

What does it take to be a soccer coach in the professional division in Palestine? What do pro clubs pay attention to when hiring coaches? These questions are the beginning of this investigation. When we think of soccer coaches, we think of persons with certain requirements, certain experience, and certain extra qualifications. Based on the coach's characteristics, can we define what it takes to be a professional coach? Can we explain those decisions based on these variables?

To answer these questions, let us start analyzing variable per variable; we will focus on two specific vectors: The qualifications, including (*the coaching certificate and the specialization in physical education*), and the experience, including (*the coach's experience as a player and as a coach*) by chi-Square, and ANOVA test, to show the differences between the characteristics of coaches in terms of the competitive division. Then, we will use multinomial logistic regression analysis to examine differences when combining the coach's characteristics in terms of each vector.

**Table 27** *Coaches age description in terms of different competition divisions*

	N	Minimum	Maximum	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
Professional	12	30	57	40.7	8.2
First	12	30	48	37.4	5.4
Second	12	31	56	40	7.6
Total	36	30	57	39.4	7.1

Mean age of coaches is  $39.4 \pm 7.1$  years, indicating a discrepancy between the ages of soccer coaches in Palestine. The maximum age was 57 years, and the minimum age was 30 years. We see a convergence in their mean age between the professional and second divisions. The mean age in the professional division is 40.7 years and the second division 40 years, while in the first division, 37.4 years. This variable was divided into categories, as we see from table (28), the age of coaches in terms of the different competitive divisions.

Where it appears that the age of coaches (37-43 years) was the highest for 17 coaches 47.3%, and from (51-57 years), the lowest was for four coaches 11.1%.

**Table 28** *Coaches' age categories in terms of different competition divisions*

	30- 36	37- 43	44- 50	51- 57	Total
Professional	4 (33.3%)	5 (41.7%)	1 (8.3%)	2 (16.7%)	12 (100%)
First	5 (41.7%)	6 (50%)	1 (8.3%)		12 (100%)
Second	3 (25%)	6 (50%)	1 (8.3%)	2 (16.7%)	12 (100%)
Total	12 (33.3%)	17 (47.3%)	7 (8.3%)	4 (11.1%)	36 (100%)

On table (29) we see that there are no differences in the age of the coaches in terms of the competitive divisions; this indicates the homogeneity of the age of the coaches participating in the study in terms of different competitive divisions.

**Table 29** *ANOVA Comparisons of Coaches age in terms of the competitive divisions*

	Sum of Squares	<i>df</i>	Mean Square	F	P
Between Groups	70.722	2	35.361	.693	.507
Within Groups	1683.583	33	51.018		
Total	1754.306	35			

### Qualification

This vector includes two characteristics (*coaching certificate and specialization in physical education*). As we discussed, coaches must have a professional certificate as a minimum to work in soccer coaching in Palestine because the law in force in the PFA does not allow the coach to work without an approved coaching certificate from any association recognized FIFA.

Table (30) shows the soccer coaching certificates obtained by Palestinian coaches in terms of the different competitive divisions, as all the coaches have official coaching certificates (A, B, C). We see that the coaches who have (A) certificates are the highest, which is the third certificate, and they have not stopped continuing learning in the training

courses since its inception; they are graded from D to A. Clubs of all divisions may prefer coaches with higher coaching certificates.

**Table 30** *Coaching certificates in terms of different competition divisions*

	A	B	C	Total
Professional	8 (66.7%)	4 (33.3%)		12 (100%)
First	5 (41.7%)	6 (50%)	1 (8.3%)	12 (100%)
Second	6 (50%)	5 (41.7%)	1 (8.3%)	12 (100%)
Total	19 (52.8%)	15 (41.7%)	2 (5.6%)	36 (100%)

Levels of this variable were reduced to binary categorization by focusing on two levels: (A+) or less (A-). We also see no differences in the variable of coaching certificate in terms of competitive divisions; this means that having the (A+) certificate does not affect the probability of hiring by the pro division.

**Table 31** *Chi-square test results of "A" coaching certificate in terms of different competition divisions*

	A+	A-	Total
Professional	8 (66.7%)	4 (33.3%)	12 (100%)
First	5 (41.7%)	7 (58.3%)	12 (100%)
Second	6 (50%)	6 (50%)	12 (100%)
Total	19 (52.8%)	17 (47.2%)	36 (100%)

$$\chi^2 (2) = 1.560, p = 0.458$$

Concerning the physical education specialization of soccer coaches at the top levels in Palestinian League, we see that 27 of those coaches, 75%, graduated from universities or colleges. We see from the following table (32) that 22 coaches, 81.5% studied physical education in universities or colleges, and this is within the context of the coach's orientation and their sporting hobby, which they reinforced through the study, some of them work as PE teachers in schools or colleges, and their work as soccer coaches. Moreover, five coaches,

18.5%, graduated from universities or colleges with a specialization other than physical education, such as accounting, management, and Islamic education.

**Table 32** *PE specialization in terms of different competition divisions*

	Yes	No	Total
Professional	6 (50%)	6 (50%)	6 (100%)
First	9 (90%)	1 (10%)	10 (100%)
Second	7 (63.6%)	4 (36.4%)	11 (100%)
Total	22 (81.5%)	5 (18.5%)	27 (100%)

We see no differences in the variable of PE specialization in terms of the competitive divisions; this means that specialization in physical education does not affect the probability of hiring by the pro division.

**Table 33** *Chi-square test results of PE specialization in terms of different competition divisions*

	PE+	PE-	Total
Professional	6 (50%)	6 (50%)	12 (100%)
First	9 (75%)	3 (25%)	12 (100%)
Second	7 (58.3%)	5 (41.7%)	12 (100%)
Total	22 (61.1%)	14 (38.9%)	36 (100%)

$$\chi^2 (2) = 1.636, p = 0.441$$



## Experience

We deal with the experience in terms of playing experience and coaching experience. We will start by playing experience because the coach usually starts as a player and then starts coaching. We see that 29 coaches were former soccer players in the Palestinian league or in the neighboring countries of Palestine. Their mean years of experience as former players were  $11.8 \pm 4.7$  years. The highest years of experience as a former player were 21 years, and the lowest was five years.

**Table 34** *Experience years as a former player in terms of different competition divisions*

	N	Minimum	Maximum	M	SD
Professional	8	10	20	14.5	3.3
First	10	5	19	11	4.9
Second	11	5	21	10.6	4.9
Total	29	5	21	11.8	4.7

This variable has been divided into categories, as shown in table (35), the years of experience in terms of different competitive divisions, where it appears that the coach's experience as a former player (more than 11 years) was the highest for 17 coaches, 47.2%, and (less than five years) was the lowest for only two coaches, 5.6%.

**Table 35** *Experience years category as a former player in terms of different competition divisions*

	None	$\leq 5$	6-10	$\geq 11$	Total
Professional	4 (33.3%)		1 (8.3%)	7 (58.3%)	12 (100%)
First	2 (16.7%)	1 (8.3%)	4 (33.3%)	5 (41.7%)	12 (100%)
Second	1 (8.3%)	1 (8.3%)	5 (41.7%)	5 (41.7%)	12 (100%)
Total	7 (19.4%)	2 (5.6%)	10 (27.8%)	17 (47.2%)	36 (100%)

Does it make any difference having been a former player at the different competitive divisions? The levels of this variable were reduced to inform if he had been a former

professional soccer player (Pro+) or not (Pro-) regardless of the number of experience years as a player. There are no differences in the former player variable in terms of the competitive divisions; having been a former soccer player does not affect the probability of being hired in the professional division.

**Table 36** *Chi-square test results of former players in terms of different competitive divisions*

	Pro+	Pro-	Total
Professional	8 (66.7%)	4 (33.3%)	12 (100%)
First	10 (83.3%)	2 (16.7%)	12 (100%)
Second	11 (91.7%)	1 (8.3%)	12 (100%)
Total	29 (80.6%)	7 (19.4%)	36 (100%)

$$\chi^2 (2) = 2.483, p = 0.289$$

It appears that 80.6% of the coaches were former professional soccer players, as they played for different clubs, whether in Palestine or neighboring countries, and after their retirement, they followed specialized soccer coaching courses and continued the profession of coaching, as one of the policies of the PFA is to encourage players to work in the coaching profession after retiring. Clubs of all competitive divisions may prefer to hire a coach who was a former player because he is famous and had the experience and a leadership personality.

Does it make any difference between coaches in experience years as a former player in different competitive divisions? On table (37) we see no differences in the playing experience year's variable in terms of the competitive divisions; this means that playing years also does not affect the probability of hiring by the professional division.

**Table 37** ANOVA comparisons for coaches' experience years as former players in terms of different competitive divisions

	Sum of Squares	<i>df</i>	Mean Square	F	P
Between Groups	79.592	2	39.796	1.950	.162
Within Groups	530.545	26	20.406		
Total	610.138	28			

Regarding the coaches' experience as a coach, the mean was  $8.6 \pm 5.1$  years, with less difference between coaches. The highest years of experience were 25 years, and the lowest was two years.

**Table 38** Experience years as a coach in terms of different competitive divisions

	N	Minimum	Maximum	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
Professional	12	3	18	8.8	4.8
First	12	2	20	7.1	4.6
Second	12	4	25	9.9	5.8
Total	36	2	25	8.6	5.1

As we see from table (39), this variable has been divided into categories, the years of experience in terms of the different competitive divisions. It appears that the coaching experience (6 -10 years) was the highest for 19 coaches, 52.8%, due to the beginning of the qualifying courses and the regularity of the Palestinian league in the new form starting from 2010/2011. In addition, highly experienced coaches (more than 11 years) 19.4% had worked in soccer coaching in the general soccer leagues before the professionalization system was implemented.

**Table 39** *Experience years category as a coach in terms of different competition divisions*

	$\leq 5$	6-10	$\geq 11$	Total
Professional	4 (33.3%)	4 (33.3%)	4 (33.3%)	12 (100%)
First	5 (41.7%)	6 (50%)	1 (8.3%)	12 (100%)
Second	1 (8.3%)	9 (75%)	2 (1.7%)	12 (100%)
Total	10 (27.8%)	19 (52.8%)	7 (19.4%)	36 (100%)

Concerning the coach's experience as a soccer coach, let us consider the same question to the previous one, focusing on the categories of experience (*high*,  $\geq 10$  years, *low*  $\leq 9$  years) regardless of the number of years of experience as a coach, as we see from the following table (40) there are no differences in the variable of coaching experience in terms of the competitive divisions, which means that having high coaching experience also does not affect the Palestinian soccer coaches in the probability of hiring by the professional club's division.

**Table 40** *Chi-square test results of coaching experience in terms of different competition divisions*

	Low	High	Total
Professional	8 (66.7%)	4 (33.3%)	12 (100%)
First	11 (91.7%)	1 (8.3%)	12 (100%)
Second	7 (58.3%)	5 (41.7%)	12 (100%)
Total	26 (72.2%)	10 (27.8%)	36 (100%)

$$\chi^2 (2) = 3.600, p = 0.165$$

Does it make any difference between coaches in terms of experience years as soccer coaches in the different competitive divisions? On table (41) we see no differences in the coaching experience year's variable in terms of the competitive divisions; this means that coaching experience years also do not affect the probability of hiring by the professional division.

**Table 41** ANOVA comparisons for coaches' experience years as a coach in terms of different competitive divisions

	Sum of Squares	<i>df</i>	Mean Square	F	P
Between Groups	49.056	2	24.528	.951	.397
Within Groups	851.500	33	25.803		
Total	900.556	35			

In order to check on the possible relationship between these elements (*experience years as a player and as a coach*), we run a Multinomial Logistics Regression. The results in table (42) show there is no interaction between them, and therefore there are no differences in the probability to be hired by a pro club.

**Table 42** Multinomial logistic regression results of the interaction between experience years as a former player and as a coach in different competitive divisions.

Model	Model Fitting Criteria		Likelihood Ratio Tests		
	-2 Log Likelihood	Chi-Square	<i>df</i>	P	
Intercept Only	60.454				
Final	53.318	7.136	4	.129	

Based on the results of experience and qualifications characteristics, it does not seem that coaches are required to have long experience or a high level of qualification; this result contradicts expectations and is clear evidence that the professional clubs do not consider scientific qualification because they may look for a coach with a wide reputation and quick achievement. These may depend on contracting famous players before thinking about the coach.

**Table 43** *Chi-square test results of all characteristics*

	Chi-Square	<i>df</i>	P
Former player	2.486	2	0.289
Experience	3.600	2	0.165
PE	1.636	2	0.441
Certificate	1.560	2	0.458

What if we combine those characteristics “*coaching certificate, and PE specialization*”? We are corroborating that becoming in top soccer coaching in Palestine does not relate to any of our decided treats. Therefore, we will use a multinomial logistic regression analysis when combining the coach's characteristics according to the qualification vectors.

**Table 44** *The results of multinomial logistic regression of the interaction between qualification vectors in terms of deferent competitive divisions*

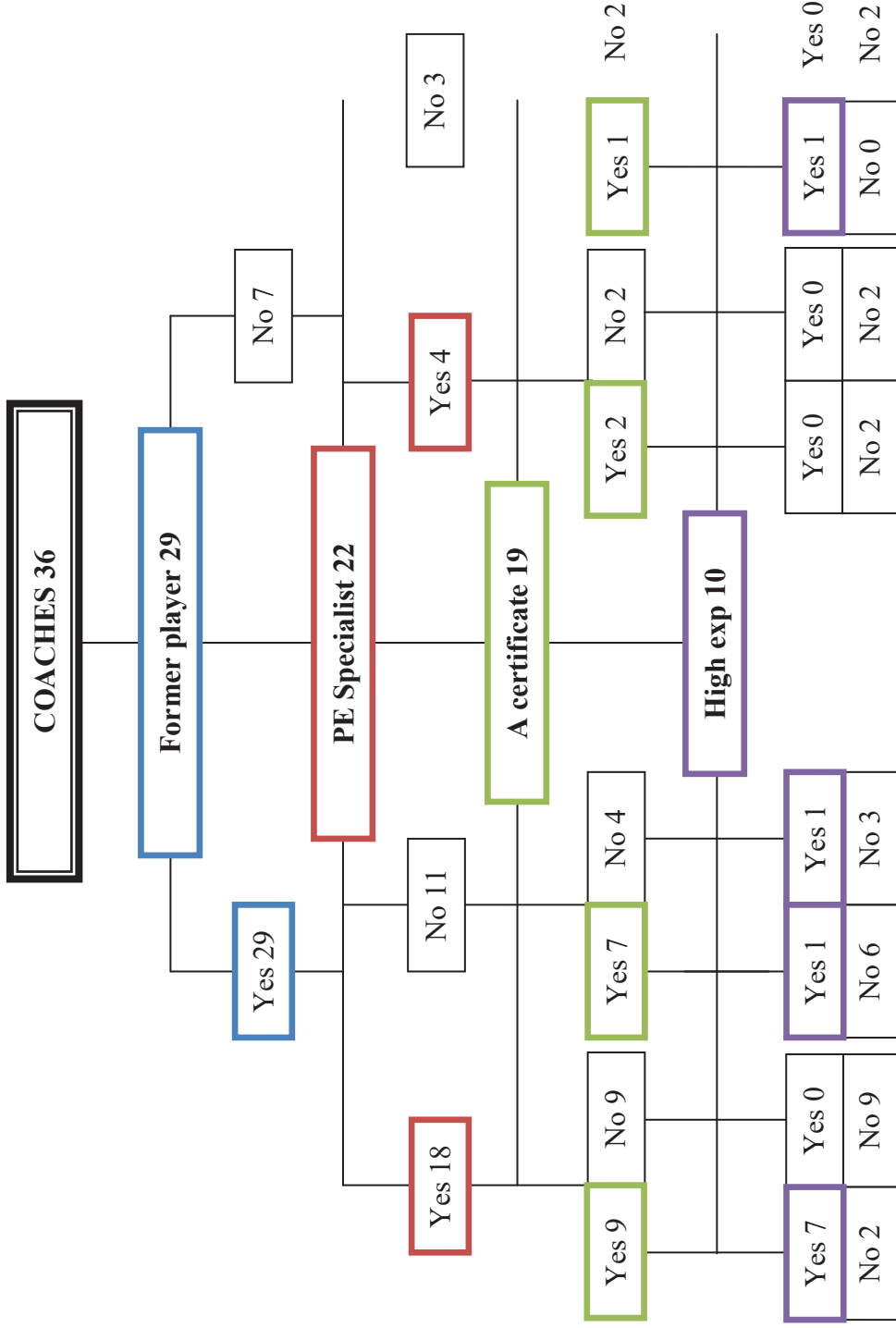
Model	Model Fitting Criteria	Likelihood Ratio Tests		
	-2 Log Likelihood	Chi-Square	<i>df</i>	P
Intercept Only	23.246			
Final	20.124	3.121	4	.538

Table (44) shows no interaction between them, and therefore there are no differences; this means that there is no difference between coaches in terms of qualification vector, and therefore does not affect hiring in the professional division clubs.

### Coaches' profile

We will try to find a specific profile for elite Palestinian soccer coaches, and given the following figure (4), we can explore different profiles in terms of their characteristics; we will now try to find a unified profile for coaches based on the common characteristics between them.

Figure 4 Coaches combined characteristics



The combination of the pertinent traits used in Figure (4) is shown in table (45) as a system of 11 *empirical profiles*.

**Table 45** *Coaches' empirical profiles*

	Former player	PE specialist	A certificate	High Experience	N
Profile 1	✓	✓	✓	✓	7
Profile 2	✓	✓	✓	×	2
Profile 3	✓	✓	×	×	9
Profile 4	✓	×	✓	✓	1
Profile 5	✓	×	✓	×	6
Profile 6	✓	×	×	✓	1
Profile 7	✓	×	×	×	3
Profile 8	×	✓	✓	×	2
Profile 9	×	✓	×	×	2
Profile 10	×	×	✓	✓	1
Profile 11	×	×	×	×	2

We see from figure (4) that the distribution of those coaches in terms of their combined characteristics are as follows:

**On the left side we see that 29 coaches were former soccer players:**

- Eighteen coaches specialized in physical education; nine coaches have an “A” coaching certificate, seven with high coaching experience, and two with low coaching experience. We also see that nine coaches have a coaching certificate less than an “A” with low coaching experience.
- Eleven coaches did not specialize in physical education; seven coaches have an “A” coaching certificate, one coach with high coaching experience, and six with low coaching experience. We also see four coaches have a coaching certificate of less than an “A”, one with high coaching experience, and three with low coaching experience.



**On the right side we see that seven coaches were not former soccer players:**

- Four coaches specialized in physical education; two have an “A” coaching certificate with high coaching experience. We also see two coaches have a coaching certificate less than an “A” with low coaching experience.
- Three coaches did not specialize in physical education, one coach with an “A” coaching certificate with high coaching experience, and two coaches with a coaching certificate less than “A” with low coaching experience.

Now we will try to find a specific profile for coaches by combining the characteristics of coaches according to competitive divisions.

**Figure 5** *Two-step cluster analysis result of the coaches' characteristics*

Cluster	2	1	3
Label			
Description			
Size	47.2% (17)	33.3% (12)	19.4% (7)
Inputs	PE PE+ (88.2%)	PE PE- (100.0%)	PE PE+ (100.0%)
	Coach_experience low (100.0%)	Coach_experience low (75.0%)	Coach_experience high (100.0%)
	Certificate A+ (76.5%)	Certificate A+ (66.7%)	Certificate A+ (100.0%)
	fomer_player pro+ (64.7%)	fomer_player pro+ (91.7%)	fomer_player pro+ (100.0%)

We see from the analysis results that the coaches were distributed according to their characteristics into three clusters if we cross the distribution of the members of the clusters by using the Chi-square test analysis.

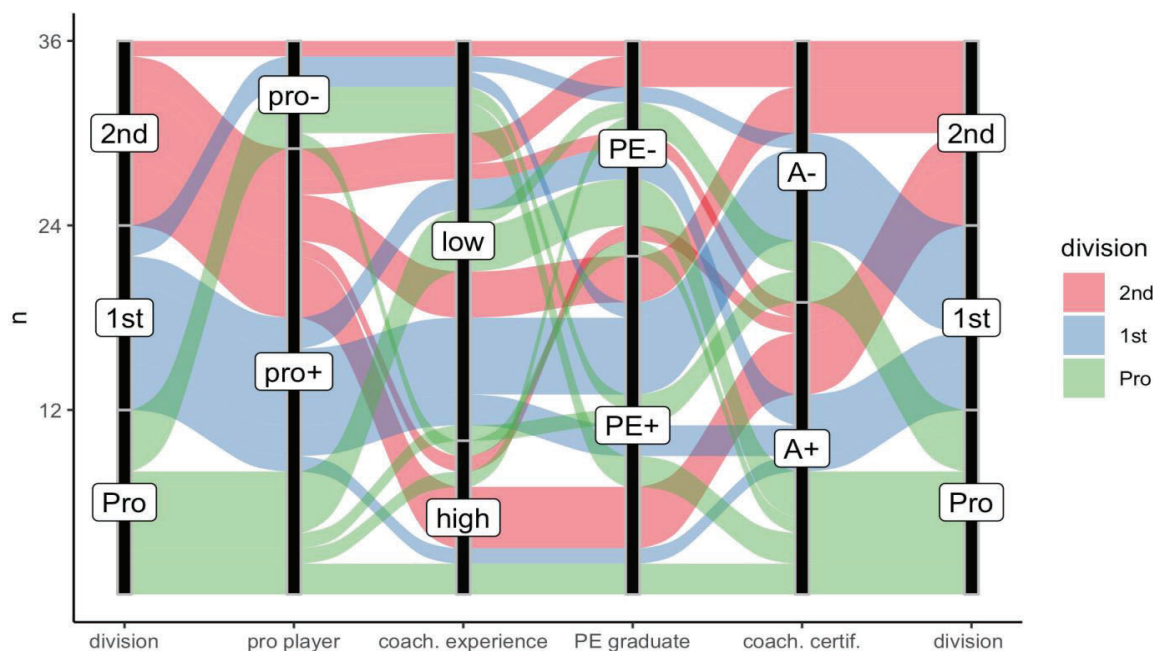
**Table 46** Chi-square test results of the distribution of the members of the clusters

	1	2	3	Total
Pro	6 (50%)	4 (23.5%)	2 (28.6%)	12 (33.3%)
1 <sup>st</sup>	2 (17.6%)	9 (52.9%)	1 (14.3%)	12 (33.3%)
2 <sup>nd</sup>	4 (33.4%)	4 (23.5%)	4 (57.1%)	12 (33.3%)
Total	12 (100%)	17 (100%)	7 (100%)	36 (100%)

$\chi^2(4) = 6.941, p = 0.139$

We can see that the distribution of the clusters into divisions was random, and therefore there is no profiling operating system that collects coaches according to their characteristics of Palestinian soccer coaches.

**Figure 6** Randomness attached to the characteristics of coaches in terms of different competition divisions integrated



In Figure (6), we see many crosses, as coaches from 1 to 12 are belong to the professional division, from 13 to 24 belong to the first division and from 25 to 36 belong to the second division, such as most of the second division coaches were former players, that most of the first division coaches have low coaching experience, that most coaches in the

same division studied physical education and that most of the professional division coaches have A coaching certificate, and this leads us to the fact that professional coaches do not have different characteristics from first and second division coaches, so we will try to examine this distribution of coaches using a two-step cluster analysis according to competitive divisions.

### **Summary**

There is not relationship whatsoever between the characteristics of the coaches and the probability to be hired by a Pro, 1<sup>st</sup> or 2<sup>nd</sup> divisions club. The absence of similar investigations in other countries impedes us to interpret these results as normal extraordinary, but the random distribution of the coaches' capital is intriguing.

Having been a professional player is almost a must, but the larger proportion of non-player coaches is in Pro division! This may indicate that the clubs are open to hire coaches with different backgrounds in terms of their sporting biography. The short history of professional football in Palestine can explain this oddity as well. Conversely, or complementary, the top qualification degree is most common in Pro division. Fulfilling the whole path within the federative structures seems to be appreciated by the clubs.

It is not difficult to be a professional coach in Palestine because the clubs do not pay attention to the coach's characteristics of experience and qualification but may depend on the coach has reputation and achievements. Because there is no difference between coaches' characteristics in terms of their experience and qualification between the first and second divisions compared to the professional division.

The coaches strive to develop their scientific and professional capabilities to reach the highest levels. However, as a result of this analysis, they could be disappointed and frustrated. Therefore, their motivation may change from heading towards self-development to seeking a quick achievement, which can be done by bringing ready players and achieving victory.



## **THE INTERNAL LOGIC OF PRACTICE STRATEGIES**

In this second section of results, we are trying to understand in which way the activities presented by Palestinian coaches are similar to the game itself: a time-limited collective duel. This study aims to describe Pre-season coaching strategies in Palestinian top-level Soccer showing the relationship between Palestinian coaches' thinking and the types of activities most used in their work; the results will be presented based on the study variables to choose the appropriate variables and levels to reach this study's main object.

The study was conducted on 36 soccer coaches in Palestine during the 2019/2020 season selected from the 36 soccer teams participating in the three divisions described earlier. After collecting and analyzing the data, the total number of sessions was 360, comprising 2,342 activities and 31,980 minutes. The analysis will be developed according to the four vectors of the internal logic of any motor situation:

- i. The relationship to others
- ii. Relationship to time
- iii. Relationship to space
- iv. Relationship to objects

### **Relationship to others**

#### ***Interaction domain***

The relationship between players is determined by the role they perform. Somehow, the most basic role is determined by the relationship established in terms of collaboration or opposition. When looking at the distribution of motor tasks in soccer coaching in Palestine, based on the presence of the partner and opponents, we find that the sociomotor situations summed up 1,627, 66%, and this type contains three kinds of interaction system; the practice with the presence of two or more partners and the absence of opponents in 559 activities 23.9%, which is collaboration motor interaction "P", practice with opponents in the absence

of partners in 82 activities 3.5%, which is opposition motor interaction “O”, and practice with partners and opponents at the same time in 986 activities, 42.1%, which is collaboration-opposition motor interaction “PO”, while practice activities with the presence of only one player without partners and opponents in 715 activities, 30.5%, which is psychomotor practice “Ø”.

Thus, the number of activities without opponents (“P”, “Ø”) increases to 1.274 cases, 54.4%. Moreover, the number of activities with the opposition (“O”, “PO”) reached 1.068 cases, that is 45.6%, in an overview of the relationship between players practicing activities, we find that the most used is “PO” in 986 activities, 42.1%, and this follows the internal logic of soccer game (Parlebas, 2001), such as soccer matches and attacking games, followed by the “Ø” in 715 activities, 30.5% such as fitness exercise, technical and control activities, in the third place is pure “P” in 559 activities, 23.9% such as passing drills, plans, and reciprocal performance with a partner, the last used is pure “O” in 82 activities, 3.5% such as shooting drills and (1x1). All domains of motor interaction are present, which is interesting in this case, but very unevenly distributed. However, the possibilities of interaction between player’ will differ depending on the number of players.

**Table 47** *Distribution of motor situations according to interaction domains*

		Partner		
		No	Yes	Total
Opponent	No	715 (30.5%)	559 (23.9%)	1274 (54.4%)
	Yes	82 (3.5%)	986 (42.1%)	1068 (45.6%)
	Total	797 (34.0%)	1545 (66.0%)	2342 (100.0%)

*Quantitative dimension*

The number of players involved in the situations ranged from a minimum of one to a maximum of 22 players, as shown in the following table (48):

**Table 48** *Distribution of activities according to number of players*

	N	Cumulative sum
1	715 (30.5%)	30.5%
2	224 (9.6%)	40.1%
3	178 (7.6%)	47.7%
4	138 (5.9%)	53.6%
5	79 (3.4%)	57.0%
6	91 (3.9%)	60.8%
7	91 (3.9%)	64.7%
8	120 (5.1%)	69.9%
9	37 (1.6%)	71.4%
10	92 (3.9%)	75.4%
11	19 (0.8%)	76.2%
12	54 (2.3%)	78.5%
13	13 (0.6%)	79.0%
14	46 (2%)	81.0%
15	12 (0.5%)	81.5%
16	27 (1.2%)	82.7%
17	1 (0%)	82.7%
18	11 (0.5%)	83.2%
20	44 (1.9%)	85.1%
21	2 (0.1%)	85.1%
22	246 (10.5%)	95.6%
99	102 (4.4%)	100.0%
Total	2342 (100%)	

Let us see if smaller groups of players played the same task simultaneously and in the same place. In tables (49) and table (50) we see that Palestinian coaches do not follow the division of players into groups overlapping in the same place except for a few, as it appears that the practice in one group was 2177, 93%, distributed on all domains of motor interaction, while 165 activities 7%, were practiced within two groups distributed among the “P” domain in 154, 6.6% cases such as reciprocal exercises and small games; 11, 0.5% cases within the “PO” domain, such as the overlapping attacking games on more than two soccer goals.

**Table 49** *Distribution of motor situations and number of players with different roles according to number of groups*

	One group				Two groups				Total
	“Ø”	“P”	“O”	“PO”	“Ø”	“P”	“O”	“PO”	
1	715 (100%)								715 (100%)
2		88 (39.3%)	21 (9.4%)		115(51.3%)				224 (100%)
3		90 (50.6%)	14 (7.9%)	67 (37.6%)	7 (3.9%)				178 (100%)
4		52 (37.7%)	8 (5.8%)	70 (50.7%)	5 (3.6%)		3 (2.2%)		138 (100%)
5		11 (13.9%)	6 (7.6%)	61 (77.2%)	1 (1.3%)				79 (100%)
6		8 (8.8%)	16 (17.6%)	62 (68.1%)	1 (1.1%)		4 (4.4%)		91 (100%)
7		3 (3.3%)	17 (18.7%)	68 (74.7%)	3 (3.3%)				91 (100%)
8		10 (8.3%)		105 (87.5%)	3 (2.5%)		2 (1.7%)		120 (100%)
9		1 (2.7%)		27 (73%)	9 (24.3%)				37 (100%)
10		36 (39.1%)		44 (47.8%)	10 (10.9%)		2 (2.2%)		92 (100%)
11		4 (21.1%)		15 (78.9%)					19 (100%)
12				54 (100%)					54 (100%)
13				13 (100%)					13 (100%)
14				46 (100%)					46 (100%)
15				12 (100%)					12 (100%)
16				27 (100%)					27 (100%)
17				1 (100%)					1 (100%)
18				11 (100%)					11 (100%)
20				44 (100%)					44 (100%)



	One group				Two groups		Total
21				2 (100%)			2 (100%)
22				246 (100%)			246 (100%)
99	102 (100%)						102 (100%)
Total	715(30.5%)	405 (17.3%)	82 (3.5%)	975 (41.6%)	154 (6.6%)	11 (0.5%)	2342 (100%)

This expanded distribution is not very helpful when trying to understand how coaches think: too many cases show very few cases. When dividing the number of players into groups corresponding to the quartiles we find that when the number of player's increases, the use of groups' decreases (Table 50), and this is due to the available space, as the use of two groups is almost more for two players to four, and this means working in pairs.

**Table 50** *Distribution of motor situations and number of players with all interaction domains according to number of groups*

	One group	Two groups	Total
1	715 (32.8%)	0	715 (30.5%)
2- 4	410 (18.8%)	130 (78.8%)	540 (23.1%)
5- 10	475 (21.8%)	35 (21.2%)	510 (21.8%)
11- full team	577 (26.6%)		577 (24.6%)
Total	2177 (100%)	165 (100%)	2342 (100%)

From the number of players in each motor situation based on the four categories mentioned before, we find that the “PO” practice was most used, from one to 11 players against one to 11 players, distributed over the different activities according to the constraints. The second mostly used, “Ø”, means one player by definition. The third used is pure “P” interaction, from two to 11 players and the whole team group. The fourth and least used is pure opposition, “O”: the number of players in it is one player against one to six, distributed according to the motor situation types and conditions, as in the following table (51):

**Table 51** *Distribution of motor situations with all interaction domains according to the number of players*

		O											Total	
		0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	Total
P	1	715	21	14	8	6	16	17						797
	2	203	67	47	6	15	3							341
	3	97	26	29	31	5	6	8						202
	4	57	26	20	45	79	3	2	2					234
	5	12		15	22	10	33	4	1	1				98
	6	9			6	9	5	31	4	1	3			68
	7	6			2	4	22	3	37	6	2	1		83
	8	13					5	8	3	22				51
	9	10							2		6			18
	10	46						1		5		44	2	98
	11	4											246	250
99	102												102	
Total		1274	140	125	120	128	93	74	49	35	11	45	248	2342
Psychomotor		Collaboration			Opposition			Collaboration- opposition						
30.5%		23.9%			3.5%			42.1%						

One of the main features of the soccer internal logic is the opponent's presence so that the focus will be on "PO" and "O" domains, which are 1068 activities, 45.6%. By looking at the number of players we find that the symmetry in the number of partner and opponent players was as follows: 1x1 is 21 cases, 2x2 is 47 cases, 3x3 is 31 cases, 4x4 is 79 cases, 5x5 is 33 cases, 6x6 is 31 cases, 7x7 is 37 cases, 8x8 is 22 cases, 9x9 is six cases, 10x10 is 44 cases, 11x11 is 246 cases, and all symmetry cases as mentioned above have reached 597 motor situations 55.9%.

We find that the activities in which the opponents had more partners than at the upper of the line of *symmetry* in table (51) reached 136 cases 12.8%, which means a tendency

towards to defensive side, *inferiority numerical*; and the cases in which the partners were more than the opponents at the lower of the line of symmetry reached 335 cases, 31.4%, meaning that there was a tendency towards the offensive side; *superiority numerical* Now we can see where the motor situations tend to be more defensive or offensive ( Table 52).

**Table 52** *Quantitative symmetry and action domain*

<b>O 715</b> (30.5%)	<b>O 82</b> - defense oriented 61 (2.6%) = symmetry 21 (0.9%) + offense oriented 0 (0%)
<b>P 559</b> (23.9%)	<b>PO 986</b> - defense oriented 75 (3.2%) = symmetry 576 (24.6%) + offense oriented 335 (14.3%)

Looking at the following table (53), we explore these trends when subtracting the number of partners from the number of opponents for each case; if it is positive (+) the number of partners is greater than the number of opponents, and practice tends to be offensive within numerical superiority. If it is negative (–): the number of partners is less than the number of opponents, and the practice tends to be defensive within numerical inferiority. If the subtraction result is zero the number of partners and opponents is symmetrical.

**Table 53** *Distribution of the motor situations with opposition according to quantitative symmetry*

	O	PO	Total
-5	17 (100%)		17 (100%)
-4	16 (100%)		16 (100%)
-	6 (25%)	18 (75%)	24 (100%)
-2	8 (22.9%)	27 (77.1%)	35 (100%)
-1	14 (31.8%)	30 (68.2%)	44 (100%)
=	21 (3.5%)	576 (96.5%)	597 (100%)
1		162 (100%)	162 (100%)
+		114 (100%)	114 (100%)
3		56 (100%)	56 (100%)
4		3 (100%)	3 (100%)
Total	82 (7.7%)	986 (92.3%)	1068 (100%)

More interesting is that what is the total distribution of inferiority, symmetry, and superiority numerical: (Table 54) sheer opposition empowers defensive attitudes, but collaboration-opposition leans on attackers rather than defenders.

**Table 54** *Distribution of motor situations with opposition according to quantitative symmetry*

	O	PO	Total
—	61 (74.4%)	75 (7.6%)	136 (12.7%)
=	21 (25.6%)	576 (58.4%)	597 (55.9%)
+		335 (34%)	335 (31.4%)
Total	82 (100%)	986 (100%)	1068 (100%)

During the “O” and “PO” domains there was symmetry between the partners and opponents in 597 cases, 55.9% regardless of the presence of goalkeepers or alternative players (to be discussed later), as there is a minimum in these cases, one player and a maximum of 11 players, such as attacking games and training matches, and we see that 335,

31.4% of cases tend to the offensive side, with a minimum of one player and a maximum of 10 players, where the number of partners players is greater than opponents players, such as offensive plans and some condition games. As for the cases that tend to the defensive side, there are 136 activities 12.7%, with a minimum of one player and a maximum of 11 players, such as defensive plans practice and condition games as well.

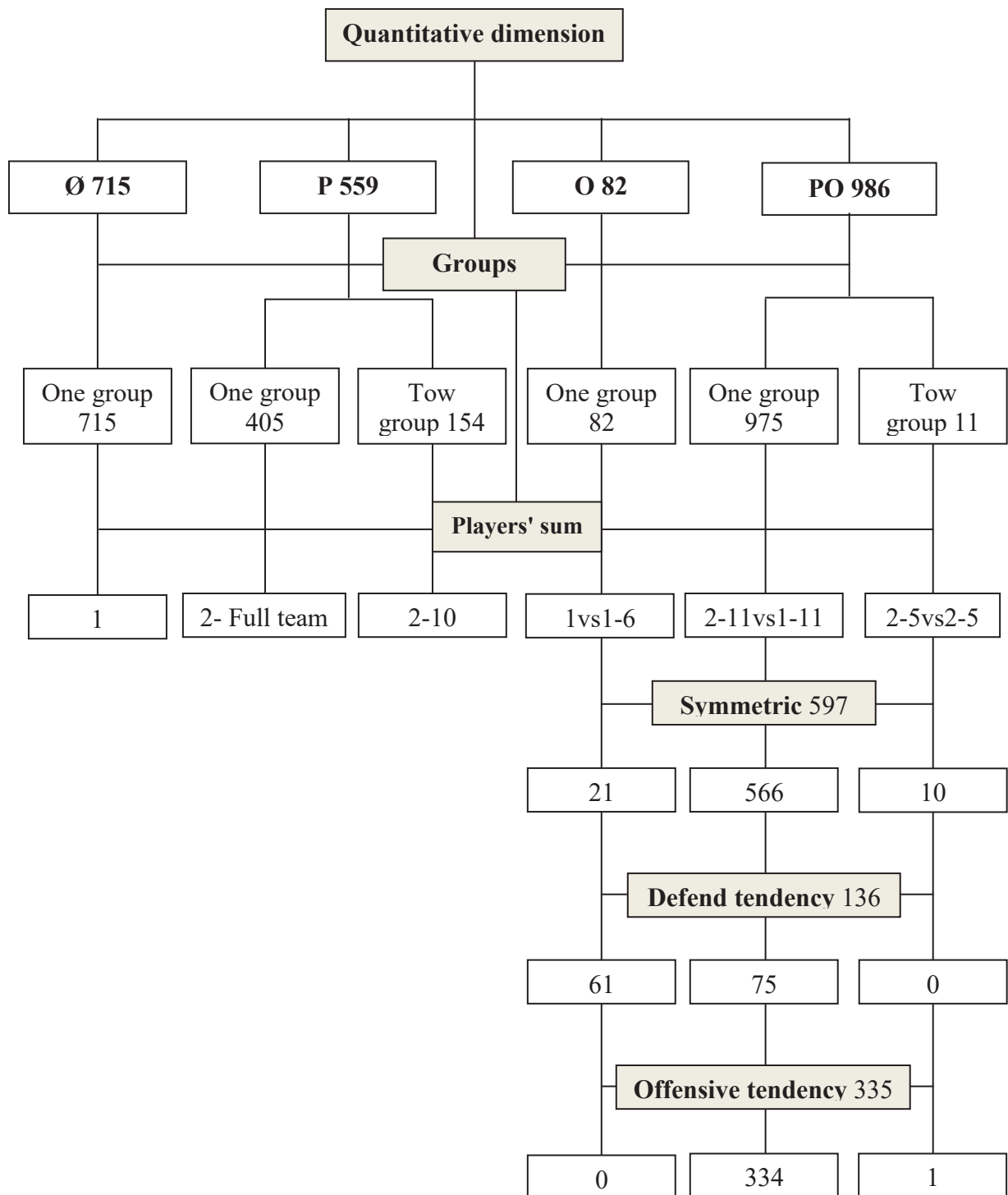
If we bin the levels shown in table (55) according to quartiles, we can see that when the number of players in different motor situations increases their symmetry.

**Table 55** *Distribution of motor situations with opposition according to the number of players and quantitative symmetry*

	2-5	6-8	9-18	20-22	Total
-5		17 (6.2%)			
-4		16 (5.8%)			
— -3	6 (2.4%)	3 (1.1%)	15 (6%)		136 (12.7%)
-2	8 (3.2%)	21 (7.7%)	6 (2.4%)		
-1	20 (8%)	5 (1.4%)	17 (6.7%)	2 (0.7%)	
= 0	68 (27.2%)	110 (40.1%)	129 (51.2%)	290 (99.3%)	597 (55.9%)
1	96 (38.4%)	45 (16.4%)	21 (8.3%)		
2	26 (10.4%)	42 (15.3%)	46 (18.3%)		335 (31.4%)
+ 3	26 (10.4%)	15 (5.5%)	15 (6%)		
4			3 (1.2%)		
Total	250 (100%)	274 (100%)	252 (100%)	292 (100%)	1068 (100%)

Figure (7) is a pictorial representation of the analysis described in this section.

Figure 7 Quantitative summary



***Qualitative dimension***

When looking at the qualitative vectors in the activities used in Palestinian soccer coaching, the focus will be on the activities in the presence of opponents and the mechanism for organizing them; based on *normative practice, presence of goalkeeper, and alternative players*.

**Normative practice**

Concerning activities in light of the presence of opponents and goalkeepers on both sides, and without alternative players, we found 314, 29.4% activities in the same normative soccer game, (Tables 56) and that the number of players during this practice was three players as a minimum and 11 players as a maximum, where the number of partners and opponents tends to be 100% symmetry in all cases, within the “PO” domain, such as training matches and small-sided games with the same number of partners, opponents, and goalkeepers on each side.

**Table 56** *Distribution of motor situations with normative practice according to the number of players*

		O							Total	
		3	4	5	6	7	8	9	11	Total
P	3	1								1
	4		8							8
	5			18						18
	6				8					8
	7					21				21
	8						8			8
	9							5		5
	11								245	245
	Total	1	8	18	8	21	8	5	245	314

### Goalkeeping

As for the motor situations in the “PO”, “O” practice also, which were without the presence of goalkeepers on both sides, we see from the following tables (57), and table (58), it is 479 activities, 44.9%, the number of players during this practice was a minimum of one player and a maximum of 11 players. There are similarities in the number of partners and opponents in 219 cases, 45.7%, such as attacking games (1x1) or more and smaller games with the same number of partners and opponents, and without goalkeepers in each team. We see that 77, 16.1% cases show tendency for the defensive side, and 183 cases, 38.2% for the offensive side, such as defense drills, attacking games and small side's game without goalkeepers in each team.

**Table 57** *Distribution of motor situations without goalkeepers according to the number of players*

		O											
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	Total
P	1	14	5	8	6	14							47
	2	35	18	4	15	3							75
	3	3	1	16	2	5	8						35
	4	10	13	19	61		1	1					105
	5		13	17	4	15	1	1	1				52
	6			4	9	3	21	1					38
	7			2	4	19	3	15		1			44
	8					5	8	3	13				29
	9							2		1			3
	10						1		5		44		50
	11											1	1
Total		62	50	70	101	64	43	23	19	2	44	1	479



**Table 58** *Distribution of motor situations without goalkeepers according to the number of players and quantitative symmetry*

		“O”	“PO”	Total
	-4	14 (29.8%)		
	-3	6 (12.8%)	13 (3%)	
—	-2	8 (17%)	23 (5.3%)	77 (16.1%)
	-1	5 (10.6%)	8 (1.9%)	
=	0	14 (29.8%)	205 (47.5%)	219 (45.7%)
	1		68 (15.7%)	
+	2		76 (17.6%)	183 (28.2%)
	3		36 (8.3%)	
	4		3 (0.7%)	
	Total	47 (100%)	432 (100%)	479 (100%)

In addition, upon identifying the motor situations in the goalkeeper's presence on one side only, we see from the following tables (59), and table (60) it is 275 activities, 25.7% was on the defensive side only, the number of players during these activities was a minimum of one player, a maximum of 11 players. Symmetry appeared in the number of partners and opponents in 64 cases, in 23.3% of these cases, such as attacking functional and shooting drills in the presence of the goalkeeper on the defensive side. We see 59 cases, 21.5% appeared without symmetry in the number of partners and opponents, tend towards the defensive side, such as direct free kick drills in the presence of the goalkeeper on the defensive side. There were 152 cases, 55.3%, with no symmetry in the number of partners and opponents, tend towards to the offensive side, such as corner and shooting drills, with more players collaborating in the offensive role than the opponent's players defense role in the presence of the goalkeeper on the defensive side. Moreover, we have not found any case in the presence of the goalkeeper on the offensive side only.

**Table 59** *Distribution of motor situations with goalkeeper on the defensive side according to the number of players*

		O											Total
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	Total
P	1	7	9			2	17						35
	2	32	29	2									63
	3	23	28	14	3	1							69
	4	16	7	26	10	3	1	1					64
	5		2	5	6		3						16
	6			2		2	2	3	1	3			13
	7					3		1	6	1	1		12
	8								1				1
	10											2	2
	Total		78	75	49	19	11	23	5	8	4	1	2

**Table 60** *Distribution of motor situations with goalkeeper on the defensive side according to the number of players and quantitative symmetry*

		O	PO	Total
-	-5	17 (48.6%)		
-	-4	2 (5.7%)		
-	-3		5 (2.1%)	59 (21.5%)
-	-2		4 (1.7%)	
-	-1	9 (25.7%)	22 (9.2%)	
=	0	7 (20%)	57 (23.8%)	64 (23.3%)
	1		94 (39.2%)	
+	2		38 (15.8%)	152 (55.3%)
	3		20 (8.3%)	
Total		35 (100%)	240 (100%)	275 (100%)

Therefore, we have three different roles for the goalkeeper in the motor interactions with the presence of the opponent, which are

- i. Present on both sides only: 314 cases that is 29.4% (Table 56).
- ii. Absent on both sides: 479 cases, 44.9%. (Table 57)
- iii. Present on the defensive side only: 275 cases that is 25.7%. (Table 59)

The question now is what is the effect of the goalkeeper's in the quantitative symmetric dimension of the interaction system? To answer this question, we will look at the following table (61):

**Table 61** *Distribution of motor situations according to goalkeeper side and quantitative symmetry*

	Both side	Without	Defense side	Total
-5			17 (6.2%)	
-4		14 (2.9%)	2 (0.7%)	
— -3		19 (4%)	5 (1.8%)	136 (12.7%)
-2		31 (6.5%)	4 (1.5%)	
-1		13 (2.7%)	31 (11.3%)	
= 0	314 (52.6%)	219 (45.7%)	64 (23.3%)	597 (55.9%)
1		68 (14.2%)	94 (34.2%)	
+ 2		76 (15.9%)	38 (13.8%)	335 (31.4%)
3		36 (7.5%)	20 (7.3%)	
4		3 (0.6%)		
Total	314 (100%)	479 (100%)	275 (100%)	1068 (100%)

We see that the activities with goalkeepers on both sides are all practiced in complete symmetry with the number of players, which are 314 activities 100%. The most used activities without a goalkeeper are cases with the symmetric number of players in 219 activities, 45.7%. Its second use tends to be offensive; in 183 activities, 38.2%. In activities where the goalkeeper was on the defensive side, the offensively tending cases were the most

commonly used; in 152 activities, 55.3%. Therefore, the difference in the goalkeeper's presence affects the quantitative dimension and symmetry.

### *Extra roles*

We will explore the extra roles through alternative players side during motor situations. We will start with the existence of these alternative roles on the defensive side. We see that coaches used the alternative role in “PO” practice only. We find that it was 12 activities, 1.8% and that the number of players during this practice was a minimum of two players and a maximum of nine players table (62). There was no symmetry between the number of partners and opponents. All cases of this role tended to be on the defensive side. It meets the goal of increasing the number of opponents through more alternate players than partner players, such as some condition attack games.

**Table 62** *Distribution of motor situations with alternative players on the defense side according to number of players*

		O					
		3	4	6	7	9	Total
P	2	3					3
	3		2	3			5
	4			1			1
	5			1			1
	6				1		1
	7					1	1
	Total	3	2	5	1	1	12

Concerning the practice of activities in the presence of alternative players on the offensive side, it also appeared in “PO” interaction only; we find that it is 91 cases, 8.5%, as the number of players during these activities was a minimum of one player and a maximum of 10 players table (63). Moreover, there was symmetry in the number of partners and

opponents in 5 cases, 5.5%. All the remaining cases appeared in 86 cases, 94.5% on the offensive side, such as some shooting drills and conditional attack games, by increasing the number of partners through the players alternative role over opponent players.

**Table 63** *Distribution of motor situations with alternative players on the offensive side according to number of players*

		O								
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	Total
P	2	8	2							10
	3	1	1	1						3
	4		3	2	1					6
	5			14	3					17
	6			4	6	3	1			14
	7			2	3	14	3			22
	8						8	3		11
	9							2		2
	10						1		5	6
	Total		9	6	23	13	17	13	5	5

Therefore, we have three different cases for alternative roles with opposition, which are:

- i. Present on the defensive side only: 12 cases that is 1.2% (Table 62).
- ii. Present on the offensive side only: 91cases that is 8.5% (Table 63).
- iii. Absent on both sides: 965 cases, 90.3%.

The question now is: What is the effect of the alternative players in the quantitative symmetric dimension? To answer this question we will look at the following table (64):

**Table 64** *Distribution of motor situations according to different alternative player side and quantitative symmetry*

	Both side	Without	Defense side	Offensive side	Total
-5		17 (1.8%)			
-4		16 (1.7%)			
— -3		21 (2.2%)	3 (25%)		136 (12.7%)
-2		33 (3.4%)	2 (16.7%)		
-1		37 (3.8%)	7 (58.3%)		
= 0		592 (61.3%)		5 (5.5%)	597 (55.9%)
1		139 (14.4%)		23 (25.3%)	
+ 2		61 (6.3%)		53 (58.2%)	335 (31.4%)
3		49 (5.1%)		7 (7.7%)	
4				3 (3.3%)	
Total	0	965 (100%)	12 (100%)	91 (100%)	1068 (100%)

We see no activities with alternative players on both sides, in activities without an alternative player, the most used cases with the symmetric number of players in 592 activities 61.3%. Its second use tends to be offensive, with 249 activities 25.8%. In activities where the alternative player was on the offensive side, the offensive tending cases were most used, in 86 activities 94.5%. There are no cases on the defense side. In the alternative player's activities on the defensive side, the defensive tending cases were totally used in 12 activities, 100%. Therefore, the difference in the alternative player's presence affects the quantitative dimension and the symmetric.

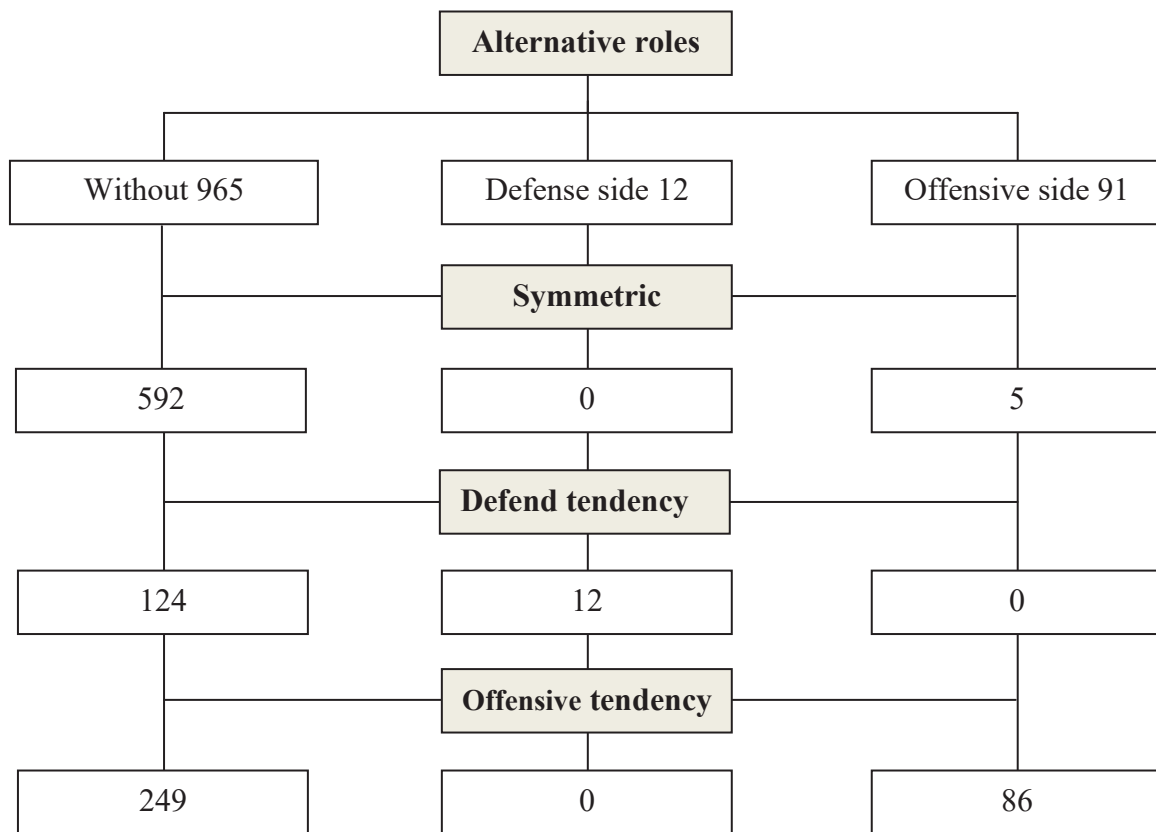
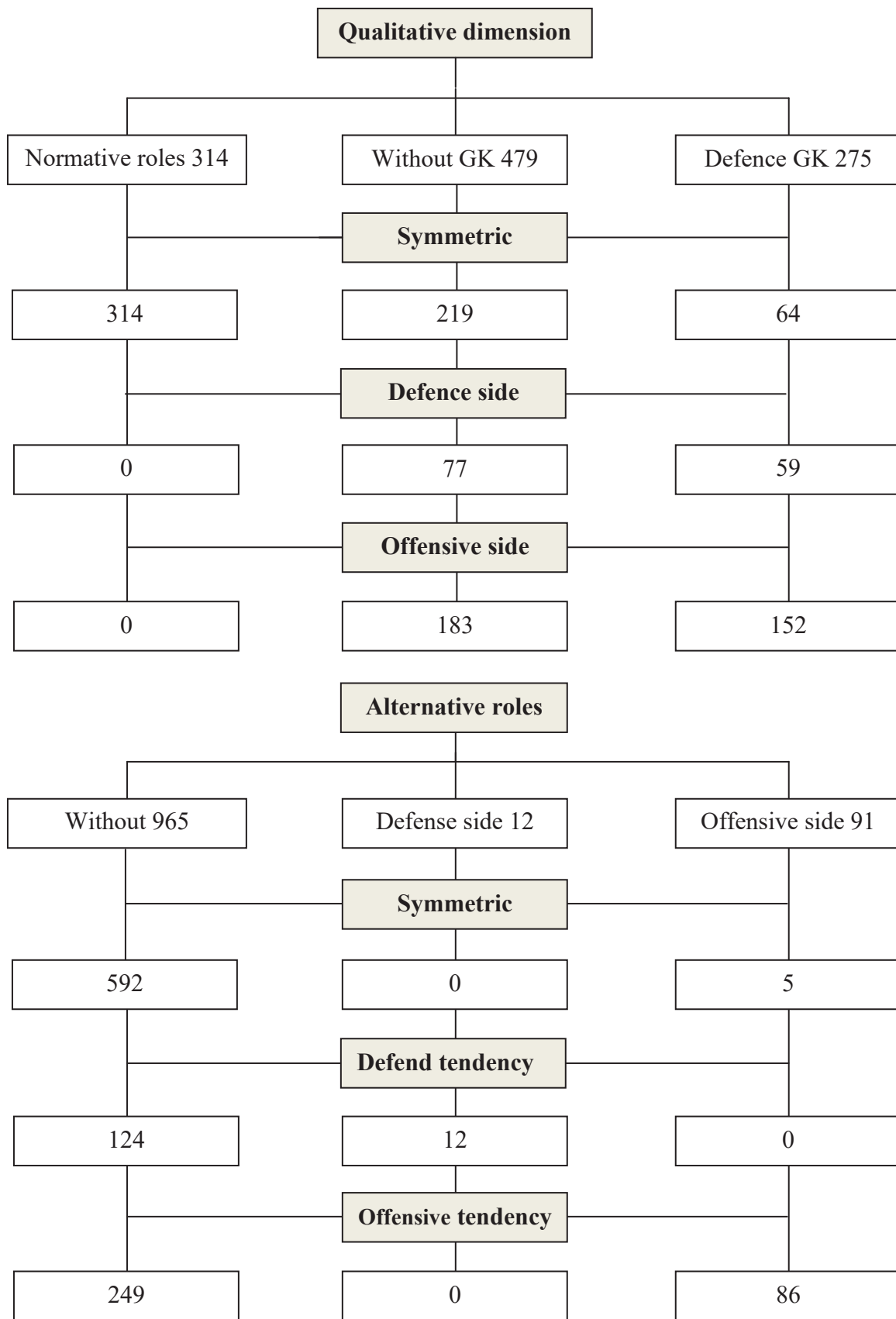
***Profile***

In summary, we have found that the relationship to others is built up by Palestinian elite coaches in preseason according to the following principles:

- All motor domains are present, but the cases without opposition were a little more than the cases with opposition: the number of players ranged from a minimum of one player to a maximum of 22 players.
- Half of the motor situations with opposition tended to be symmetric and the other half was distributed between the inferiority and superiority numerical, with a tendency to superiority on the attacking side.
- Half of the motor situations with opposition were without goalkeepers on both sides, and the other half was distributed between presence on the defensive side or on both sides, with more tendency to presence on both sides.
- The presence of the GK affects the quantitative dimension and symmetry, as it was shown that when GK on both sides, the symmetry was in all cases, and in GK absence, symmetry appeared in half of the cases.
- The presence of the alternative players affects the quantitative dimension and symmetry, as it was shown that when they were absent from both sides, symmetry was in more than half of the cases, and there were no cases where the alternative players was in both sides in the same time.

Figure (8) is a pictorial representation of these principles.

**Figure 8** *Qualitative summary*





### **Relationship to time**

The time factor is related to soccer's internal logic through the scoring memory, especially with the opponent's presence. Still, there is more than a scoring memory system in the relationship factor with time, such as analyzing the motor situations according to ending performance mechanism within a specific question: "How do the motor tasks end?", with a specific time or repeated a limited number or with determining the winner? We will also discuss the transfers of players roles between attack and defense. Let us now get to identify all this information.

### ***General structure***

The time variable means how activities performance ends within the coaching session by three types; *competitions, duration, and repetition*. Furthermore, all kinds of activities in all motor interactions have a specific formula and are distributed at all these levels (table 65). In "*Duration*", the player performs the activities over a specified time. This level took the largest percentage of 1,580 activities 67.7%, such as stretching and running exercises with or without objects, planning drills, and all activities that the coach has set a time to complete it, the coaching session's duration is limited, the coaches set a time by minute to complete most motor tasks without knowing the winner or specifying repetitions.

"*Repetition*" level means that the player performs the skill by repeating a preset one, two times or more: it took 461, 19.4% activities, such as shooting, control, and running exercises for a certain number of times.

We see that in 301 cases, 12.9% activities were within the "*Competition*" level, which means that the winner and loser are determined when the practice are finished, such as training matches and attacking games, by "*time limit*", "*score limit*" or "*both*". The activities are divided into three levels; this makes the coaching session disciplined by determining the

timely completion of activities by identifying the winner and loser or relying on practice repetition for a certain number or ending by time.

**Table 65** *Distribution of motor situations according to time structure*

	Ø	P	O	PO	Total
Duration	698 (97.6%)	398 (72.1%)	42 (51.2%)	448 (45.4%)	1580 (67.7%)
Repetition	17 (2.4%)	161 (28.8%)	40 (48.8%)	237 (24%)	461 (19.4%)
Competition				301 (30.5%)	301 (12.9%)
Grand Total	715 (100%)	559 (100%)	82 (100%)	986 (100%)	2342 (100%)

### *Scoring system*

Let us start with what is known, namely, the score memory system. We see that it was not common to use this system in Palestinian soccer coaching in the sessions through the following table (66):

**Table 66** *Distribution of motor situations with different roles according to score memory system*

	Ø	P	O	PO	Total
Yes				301 (30.5%)	301 (12.9%)
No	715	559	82	685 (69.5%)	2041 (87.1%)
Total	715 (100%)	559 (100%)	82 (100%)	986 (100%)	2342 (100%)

We see that the motor situations without a *score memory* in 2,041, 87.1% among all motor interactions, the score memory system's use appeared in the "PO" interaction only in 301 cases, 12.9%, such as training matches, and some conditional games, which comes under the "*competition*" concept by determining the winner and the loser after its end; this is evident in the time variable previously.

It appears that all of these cases tend to be offensively by increasing the number of partners over the opponents, as we see in the following table (67):

**Table 67** *Distribution of motor situations with opposition in score memory according to quantitative symmetry*

		PO	Total
-	-1	0	0
=	0	294 (97.7%)	294 (97.7%)
+	2	4 (1.3%)	4 (1.3%)
	3	3 (1%)	3 (1%)
Total		301 (100%)	301 (100%)

After discovering that the scoring memory system is present within the “PO” activities interaction only, we will now see how to interrupt these activities in three ways: 271, 90.1% cases determined by “*time limit*”, and this is similar to the internal logic of the soccer game in terms of ending the game by setting a specific time, such as training matches: 13 activities, 4.3%, appeared within the “*score limit*”, such as some conditional games in which the coach determines two goals or more to end, and some small games which determine the winner who reaches a specific number of goals or pass between players; 17 cases, 5.6%, showed both systems, such as games contingent upon time or score for it end, such as game with a duration of 7 minutes, it also ends if one of the two teams scores two goals to win the game.

With concern to the scoring consequence, regardless of the determination of the winner and the loser, we will find that the activities are divided into a “*score change*”, “*roles change*”, or “*both*”, and this appears in the following table (68):

**Table 68** *Distribution of motor situations with different roles according to scoring consequence*

	Ø	P	O	PO	Total
None	715 (100%)	559 (100%)			1274 (54.4%)
Score change			45 (54.9%)	631 (64%)	676 (28.9%)
Role change			37 (45.1%)	309 (31.3%)	346 (14.8%)
Both				46 (4.7%)	29 (2%)
Total	715 (100%)	559 (100%)	82 (100%)	986 (100%)	2342 (100%)

The “*score change*” took the most use, 676 activities, 63.3% such as attacking games, conditional games, and shooting drills, using different types of goals, including 564 activities 83.4%, with a goalkeeper and 112 activities 16.6%, without a goalkeeper; at the level of “*role change*”, we find 346 activities, 32.4%, such as attacking games 4x4 without specifying one of the types of goals and without the presence of goalkeepers. The lowest uses 46 activities, 4.3% at the level of “*both*”, such as small games in which the number of passes or the number of goals is changed, the goal of the second team is to steal the ball to become attackers instead of defenders.

After knowing the types of scoring consequences, now we are curious to know what kinds of goals were used in soccer Palestinian coaching. To answer the question, we will look at the following table (69). We see that 346 activities, 14.8% out of 2342, practice with the opponent's presence did not use any target type; these are the same activities for “*role change*” that appear in the previous variable, the activity is to consequence scoring by using the changing roles without using goal scoring.

**Table 69** *Distribution of motor situations with different roles according to the target type*

	Ø	P	O	PO	Total
None	715 (100%)	559 (100%)	37 (45.1%)	309 (31.3%)	1620 (69.2%)
Non-regular goal			8 (9.8%)	194 (19.7%)	202 (8.6%)
Official goal			31 (37.8%)	464 (47.1%)	495 (21.1%)
Human target				7 (0.7%)	7 (0.4)
Score area			6 (7.3%)	9 (0.9%)	15 (0.6%)
Multiple targets				3 (0.3%)	3 (0.1%)
Total	715 (100%)	559 (100%)	82 (100%)	986 (100%)	2342 (100%)

The uses of the “*target type*” were in the motor interaction in the presence of the opponent, and through the following table (70), we will discover about these types

**Table 70** *Distribution of motor situations with opposition according to the target type*

	O	PO	Total
Non-regular goal	8 (17.8%)	194 (28.7%)	202 (28%)
Official goal	31 (68.9%)	464 (68.5%)	495 (68.6%)
Human target		7 (1%)	7 (1%)
Score area	6 (13.3%)	9 (1.3%)	15 (2.1%)
Multiple targets		3 (0.4%)	3 (0.4%)
Total	45 (100%)	677 (100%)	722 (100%)

Regarding the target type used, we find that the different types were used in 722 activities that are 30.8% out of 2342, which are the same in the previous variable within the scoring consequence in “*score change*” and “*both*”. The most used type is the “*official goal*” in 495 activities, 68.6%. Moreover, 202 cases 28%, in which were used “*non-regular goal*”, and in the rest of the activities were used different target types, such as “*human target*” in 7, 1%, “*score area*” in 15, 2.1%, and a “*multiple targets*” in three activities 0.4%.

### *Cycles*

Football is a continuous game: this means that the possession of the ball in play can change sides nonstop. The cycle variable means the number of changes from offense to defense in opposition motor interaction. We counted the number of transitions from defense to attack based on the coach's decisions; the following table (71) indicates that the use of continuous and infinite cycles was at 791 cases, 74.1%, which means that there is no specific number for transfers from defense to attack; it can be called “*continuous*” activities, such as attacking games and training matches, and in the “*discontinued*” practice of performing an attack only once. In addition, this type had 273 activities, 25.6%, such as offensive shooting, direct free kick, and corner drills; in the transfer twice, it only appeared in four cases, 0.4% such as shooting drills and transitions from attacker to defender twice.

The cycle variable cannot be applied to the rest of the activities which are free of competition, the player cannot move from defense to attack because he does not have an opponent, such as fitness, technical and collaborative drills.

**Table 71** *Number of cycles and opposition*

	O	PO	Total
1	40 (48.8%)	233 (23.6%)	273 (25.6%)
2		4 (0.4%)	4 (0.4%)
9	42 (51.2%)	749 (76%)	791 (74.1%)
Total	82 (100%)	986 (100%)	1068 (100%)

When looking at the distribution of the number of cycles and the number of players corresponding to the quartiles in the motor situations (Table 72), we find that “*continuous*” cycles increase when the number of players increases; On the other hand, the use of “*discontinues*” or one transfer increased as the number of players decreased.

**Table 72** *Distribution of number of players in opposition according to the interaction cycles*

	2-5	6-8	9-18	20-22	Total
1	168 (67.2%)	86 (31.4%)	19 (7.5%)		273 (25.6%)
2	3 (1.2%)	1 (0.4%)			4 (0.4%)
9	79 (31.6%)	187 (68.2%)	233 (92.5%)	292 (100%)	791 (74.1%)
Total	250 (100%)	274 (100%)	252 (100%)	292 (100%)	1068 (100%)

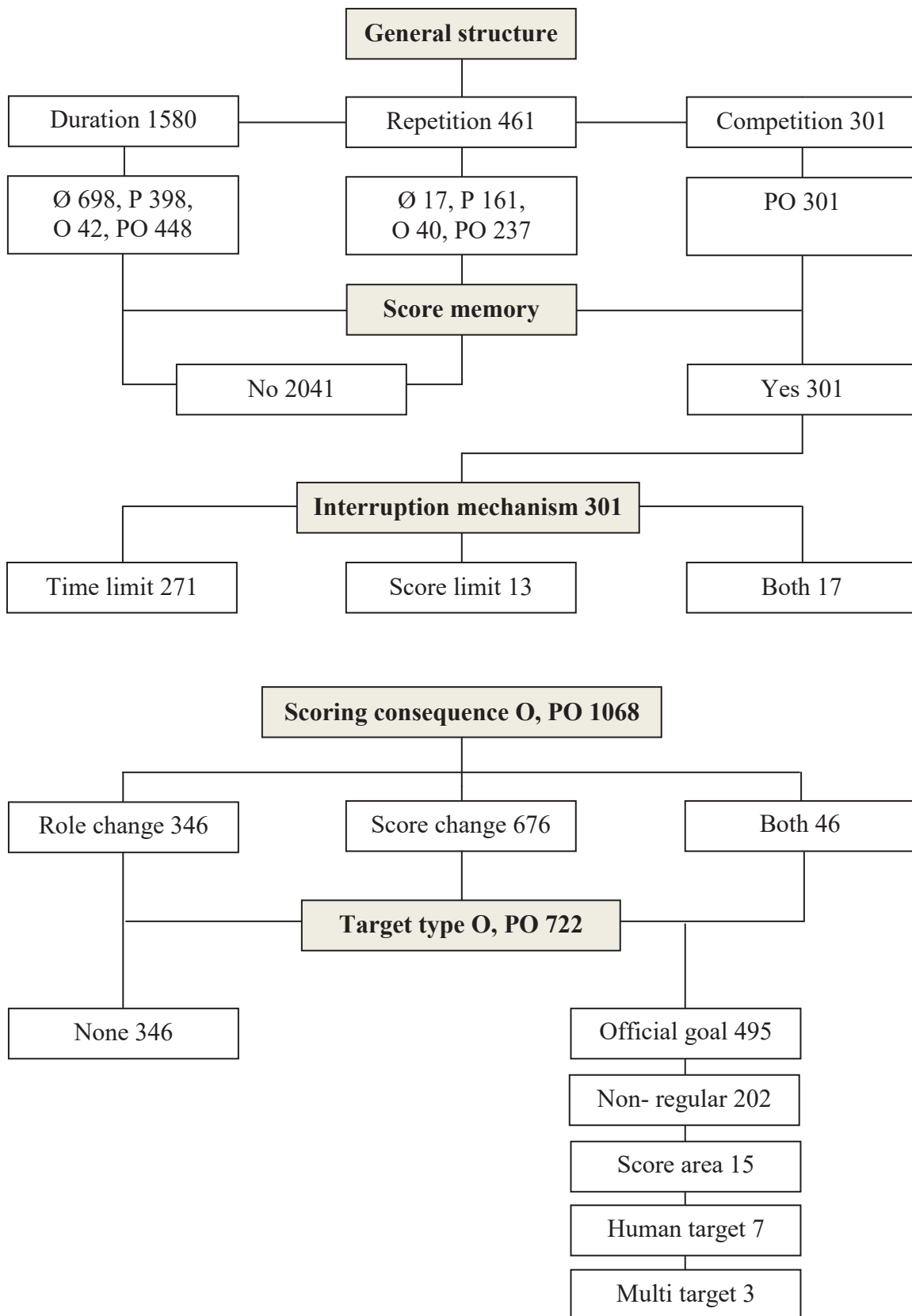
**Profile**

In summary, we have found that the relationship to time is built up by Palestinian elite coaches in preseason according to the following principles:

- All cases ended in the form of *competitions, repetitions or a duration*, and more than half of the cases ended within the *duration*, and the *score memory system* appeared with opposition modest manner, most of them were numerical symmetry, and *time limit* was used in many of them.
- All the cases with opposition, the coaches used *scoring consequence*; more than half of them in *score change* mode, and the other half were distributed between *role change* and *both* with more tendencies to *role change*.
- Continuous *cycles* increase when the number of players increases, on the other hand, discontinuing or one transfer increased as the number of players decreased.

Figure (9) is a pictorial representation of these principles.

**Figure 9** *General summary*





## Relationship to space

Relation to space is important in any motor situation because it is part of the player's decision. In the first analysis, I will focus on the qualitative dimension by knowing the space type and its relation to the internal logic of soccer and decision-making; in the quantitative dimension, by investigating the measurement of the space used for practice.

### *Qualitative dimension*

#### Space type

The four different types of space were used in soccer coaching for the top level in Palestine, as shown in the following table (73):

**Table 73** *Distribution of motor situations with all interaction domains according to space type*

	Activities N
Not specified	628 (26.8%)
Circuit	829 (35.4%)
Free use with boundaries	448 (19.1%)
subspaces with boundaries	437 (18.7%)
Total	2342 (100%)

We find that the most used option is “Circuit”, in 829 activities, 35.4%, which, as explained, means motor situations within a space between the players that make the player practice within a specific space, and this corresponds to closed activities, such as reciprocally performing, passing and shooting drills, running, etc.

Moreover, in 628 cases, 26.8% that the coaches did “Not specify” the space used to perform the motor task, and 448 cases, 19.1% in the space specified by spaces “Sub-space with boundaries” such as the use of the soccer pitch in different space and these sub-spaces have meaning in the performance of activities like matches training, and 437 activities, 18.7%

within the “Free use with boundaries” such as attack games with specific areas without specifying sub-spaces.

The focus will be on two types of spaces defined in meters: “subspaces with boundaries” and “free use with boundaries”, often used in the two important interactions of the internal logic of soccer such as “O” and “PO”. This appears through the following table (74), in which the types of space appear according to the types of motor interactions.

**Table 74** *Distribution of motor domains according to space type*

	Ø	P	O	PO	Total
Not specified	578 (80.8%)	50 (8.9%)			628 (26.8%)
Circuit	137 (19.2%)	444 (79.4%)	41 (50%)	207 (21%)	829 (35.4%)
Free use		65 (11.6%)	35 (42.7%)	348 (35.3%)	448 (19.1%)
Subspaces			6 (7.3%)	431 (43.7%)	437 (18.7%)
Total	715 (100%)	559 (100%)	82 (100%)	986 (100%)	2342 (100%)

We see that practicing “Ø”, which was used in the fitness and individual skills drills, did not use “subspaces with boundaries” “and free use with boundaries”, and its uses were in a “circuit” in 137 cases, 19.2% or “not specified” by the coaches in 578 cases, 80.8%.

The most used in “P” motor interaction is “circuit”, in 444 cases, 79.4%, because the skills performance in it was practice between two partners or more, and in the use of “free use with boundaries” in 65 cases, 11.6%, such as small games in calculated space.

As for the “O” interaction, it has appeared to use more than one type of space “circuit” in 41 cases, 50%, “free use with boundaries” in 35 cases, 42.7%, and “subspaces with boundaries” in 6 cases, 7.3%, because it contains different motor situations such as direct free-kicks, shooting on the goal, individual confrontation drills, against goalkeeper or another player.

The “PO” interaction appeared in its uses of “subspaces with boundaries” in 431 cases, 43.7%, giving organizational meanings such as training matches and activities must be

played in certain areas. Moreover, “free use with boundaries” in 348, 35.3% such as attacking games in a calculated area like 5v5, and used “circuit” type in 207, 21% through the attack and shooting drills without specifying a specific area or its organizational meanings.

We will now discover the type of goals because their presence gives meaning to the different types of space and is related to the team’s tactics and players decisions. We see in table (75) in which the focus will be on the motor interactions with the presence of an opponent because these motor situations follow the soccer game's internal logic, and the only practice in which the coaches set the target in it, as the use of different types of targets did not appear in motor interactions without the opponent's presence.

**Table 75** *Opposition according to the presence of target*

	O	PO	Total
No	37 (45.1%)	309 (31.3%)	346 (32.4%)
Yes	45 (54.9%)	677 (68.7%)	722 (67.6%)
Grand Total	82 (100%)	986 (100%)	1068 (100%)

The use of the target in “O” and “PO” activities 722, 67.6%, according to the target type and 346, 32.4% did not use the target like attacking games without a target. The question that arises now is what types of targets are used within the motor situations of the opponent's presence, and is there a relationship between goal type and goalkeeper presence. To answer this question, let us look at the following table (76):

**Table 76** *Distribution of the motor situations with opposition according to target types*

	O	PO	Total
Non-regular goal	8 (17.8%)	194 (28.7%)	202 (28%)
Official goal	31 (68.9%)	464 (68.5%)	495 (68.6%)
Human target		7 (1%)	7 (1%)
Score area	6 (13.3%)	9 (1.3%)	15 (2.1%)
Multiple targets		3 (0.4%)	3 (0.4%)
Total	45 (100%)	677 (100%)	722 (100%)

All target types used were in motor situations in the presence of the opponent. We see that using the “official goal” was the highest in 495 cases, 68.6% such as training matches, shooting, direct and indirect kicks, followed by the use of the “non-regular goal” in 202, cases 28% such as conditional games and individual confrontation 1v1 on mini-goal, and the third types the “other” include “score areas”, “human target”, and “multiple targets”, appeared in 25 cases, 3.5%, such as small games and conditional exercises with different goals.

**Table 77** *Distribution of the motor situations with opposition according to target types and space*

	Circuit	Free use	Subspaces	Total
Non-regular goal	30 (14.9%)	116 (57.4%)	56 (27.7%)	202 (100%)
Official goal	188 (38%)	6 (1.2%)	301(60.8%)	495 (100%)
Score area			15 (100%)	15 (100%)
Human target	7 (100%)			7 (100%)
Multiple targets		1(33.3%)	2 (66.7%)	3 (100%)
Total	225 (31.2%)	123 (17%)	374 (51.8%)	722 (100%)

Before discussing the effect of the goalkeeper's presence on the use of the target types, we see from the previous table (77) that all activities practices defined by the target type were known by the space used and the opponent's presence. We see that the “non-regular

goal” was used in “free use with boundaries” more than others in 116 cases, 57.4% such as small side games like 4x4. It was also used in “sub-space with boundaries” in 56 activities, 27.7% such as condition games like 7x7 in spaces with organizational meanings on the pitches, and the “circuit” space in 30, 14.9%, such as passing drills and shooting on mini-goal.

The “official goal” was used in the “subspace with boundaries” in 301 cases, 60.8% such as training matches. It was used in the 'circuit” in 188 cases, 38% as the shooting drills on the official goal. It was used in the “free use with boundaries” in six cases, 1.2% such as moving drills without a ball and shooting.

The “scoring area” was only used in the “subspace with boundaries” 15 cases, 100% such as small games. The “human target” was used in the “circuit” only in seven cases 100%, such as confrontation drills to hit the ball by the head with the opponent. In “multiple targets”, it was used in three cases within the “subspace with boundaries” and “free use with boundaries” as the 5v5 small side game to score multiple targets.

In all cases where the goalkeeper was present, which is 589 cases, 81.6% of the total cases in which the targets different types were used, divided into 275 cases 38.1% on the defensive side and 314 cases 18.4% on both sides, in which the coaches used the target type variable in the two levels of the “official goal” and the “non-regular goal”, we see that the “non-regular goal” was used in 202 cases distributed on 94 cases 46.5% with the goalkeeper, it is divided into 54 cases, 26.7% with the goalkeeper on the defensive side, and 40 cases 19.8% with the goalkeeper on both sides such as using mini-goals like 3m x 2m because some Palestinian soccer clubs share the area of the pitches with each other. In the other cases, 108, 53.5%, were without the goalkeeper present, such as using mini-goals in conditional games.

**Table 78** *Presence of goalkeepers according to target types*

	Defense side	Both sides	Without	Total
Non-regular goal	54 (26.7%)	40 (19.8%)	108 (53.4%)	202 (100%)
Official goal	221 (44.6%)	274 (55.4%)	0	495 (100%)
Score area			15 (100%)	15 (100%)
Human target			7 (100%)	7 (100%)
Multiple targets			3 (100%)	3 (100%)
Total	275 (38.1%)	314 (43.5%)	133 (18.4%)	722 (100%)

Regarding “official goal”, it was used in 495 cases, all of which were in the presence of the goalkeeper, distributed into 221 cases 44.6% with the presence of the goalkeeper on the defensive side, and 274 cases 55.4% with the presence of the goalkeeper on both sides, and the official goal was not used without the presence of the goalkeeper. We see that the remaining types of goals (score area, human target, and multiple targets) were used without the goalkeeper's presence in 25 cases, 3.5% in activities that did not require an official goal or a non-regular goal.

**Table 79** *Distribution of the motor situation with a goalkeeper on the defensive side according to target types*

	Circuit	Free use	Subspaces	Total
Non-regular goal	25 (46.3%)	12 (22.2%)	17 (31.5%)	54 (100%)
Official goal	188 (85.1%)	6 (2.7%)	27 (12.2%)	221 (100%)
Total	213 (77.5%)	18 (6.5%)	44 (16%)	275 (100%)

Given the space types used with a goalkeeper's presence on the defensive side in 275 cases and using different target types, we see from the previous table (79) that the “circuit” was the most used in the “non-regular goal” in 25 cases, 46.3%, such as passing and shooting drills on mini- goal. It was the most used in the “official goal” in 188 cases, 85.1%, such as shooting, corner kick drills. In the second use, the “subspace with boundaries” such as

condition games like 5x6 with spaces that have organizational meanings on “non-regular goal” in 17 cases 31.5% and shooting drills and attacking plans in spaces with organizational meanings on “official goals” in 27 cases 12.2%. In the third use, “free space with boundaries” like 2 x 3 games on “non-regular goal” in 12 cases, 22.2%, and moving without a ball, receiving and shooting drills, on “official goal” in 6 cases 2.7%.

**Table 80** *Distribution of the motor situation with a goalkeeper on both sides according to target types*

	Free use	Subspaces	Total
Non-regular goal	30 (75%)	10 (25%)	40 (100%)
Official goal		274 (100%)	274 (100%)
Total	30 (9.6%)	284 (90.4%)	314 (100%)

There were 314 cases of goalkeepers on both sides. The same activities appeared in the previous variable “normative roles” that bears the characteristic of symmetry between player's number, the use of “official goal” in 274, 87.3% and “non-regular goal” in 40 cases 12.7 %. Given the types of spaces used with the goalkeeper on both sides and the types of goals used in them. We see that “free space with boundaries” was the most used for “non-regular goal” in 30 cases 75%, such as small-sided games on a mini-goal. Moreover, this type of space, in this case, was never used in the “official goal”, and the use of “subspace with boundaries” in 10 cases 25% such as training matches with spaces that have organizational meanings on “non-regular goal”. Using the “official goal” with a goalkeeper on both sides in “subspace with boundaries” was for all its situations in 274 cases, 100% such as training matches.

**Table 81** *Opposition according to target types without a goalkeeper on both sides*

	Circuit	Free use	Subspaces	Total
Non-regular goal	5 (4.6%)	74 (68.5%)	29 (26.9%)	108 (100%)
Score area			15 (100%)	15 (100%)
Human target	7 (100%)			7 (100%)
Multiple targets		1 (33.3%)	2 (66.7%)	3 (100%)
Total	12 (9%)	75 (56.4%)	46 (34.6%)	133 (100.0%)

In activities without a goalkeeper, in which target types were used, they appeared in 133 cases, distributed among different target types except for the “official goal”. Where the use of the “non-regular goal” was in 108 cases distributed over a “free use with boundaries” in 74 cases 68.5% as small games, in the use of “subspace with boundaries” it was in 29 cases, 26.9% as conditional games on mini-goal without a goalkeeper. In five cases, the use of “circuit” was 4.6%, such as zigzag running drills and shooting at a mini-goal without a goalkeeper.

“Score area” was used in “subspace with boundaries” in all 15 cases, such as small and conditional games. The use of the “human target” was in the “circuit” in all seven cases, such as head drills in conjunction with the opponent. In using the “multiple targets”, it was in the “subspace with boundaries” in two cases, which are 3 x 5 to score on a “non-regular goal” and score a point by reaching a specific area, and one case in “free use with boundaries”, which is 4 x 4, to try to score on a “non-regular goal” and beat the opponent's body.

### ***Offside regulation***

One of the qualitative dimensions related to offside regulation in space factor shows that soccer coaches in Palestine have little interest in offside regulation when designing their coaching. As shown in the following table (82), we see that offside regulation appeared in “PO” interaction only in 294, 29.8% cases and that all of them were done in the “subspaces with boundaries” and with the goalkeeper on the defensive side in 24 cases 8.2%, and in both



sides together in 270 cases 91.8%, by using both types of goals, official and non-regular goal, such as training matches.

**Table 82** *Distribution of the motor situation with opposition according to offside regulation*

	O	PO	Total
Yes		294 (29.8%)	294 (27.5%)
No	82 (100%)	692(70.2%)	774 (72.5%)
Total	82 (100%)	986 (100%)	1068 (100%)

### *Quantitative dimension*

The individual interaction space “IIS” is defined as a “theoretical pitch area that corresponds to each player and is calculated by dividing the total pitch area by participating players in each motor situation” (Parlebas, 2008).

This variable is the “surface”, which means the space used in activities' performance by finding the multiplication of length by width in square meters.

To explore this aspect, we will look at the types of spaces that are defined by meters, which are “free use with boundaries” and “subspaces with boundaries” within the motor situation and this will be analyzed by knowing the specific space surface measure (length x width) for each motor task by meters square; the surface is divided by the participant player's number.

The playing area depends on the number of players participating in the motor situation; with this result, and we know the “IIS” for each player in each motor task.

Through the following table (83), we see all the cases that have been practiced in the spaces calculated within the two types of “free use with boundaries” and “sub-space with boundaries”, which number 885 activities, and the table shows the space in square meters and the frequency of its uses and the table (84) categories were made for ease of study based on the cumulative sum.

**Table 83** *Distribution of motor situation with different roles according to the surface (m<sup>2</sup>)*

	P	O	PO	N	Cumulative sum
50			12 (1.5%)	12 (1.4%)	1.4%
100	4 (6.2%)	14 (34.1%)	9 (1.2%)	27 (3.1%)	4.4%
150		1 (2.4%)	9 (1.2%)	10 (1.1%)	5.5%
200		9 (22%)	44 (5.6%)	53 (6%)	11.5%
225			17 (2.2%)	17 (1.9%)	13.4%
250			6 (0.8%)	6 (0.7%)	14.1%
300		1 (2.4%)	23 (3%)	24 (2.7%)	16.8%
375			7 (0.9%)	7 (0.8%)	17.6%
400	6 (9.2%)	2 (4.9%)	9 (1.2%)	17 (1.9%)	19.5%
450	2 (3.1%)	3 (7.3%)	57 (7.3%)	62 (7%)	26.6%
600	2 (3.1%)	4 (9.8%)	109 (14%)	115 (13%)	39.5%
625			4 (0.5%)	4 (0.5%)	40%
700	1 (0.1%)		1 (0.1%)	2 (0.2%)	40.2%
750			10 (1.3%)	10 (1.1%)	41.4%
800	7 (10.8%)	7 (17.1%)	59 (7.6%)	73 (8.2%)	49.6%
900	7 (10.8%)		8 (1%)	15 (1.7%)	51.3%
1000	2 (3.1%)		12 (1.5%)	14 (1.6%)	52.9%
1200	8 (12.3%)		15 (1.9%)	23 (2.6%)	55.5%
1500	2 (3.1%)		19 (2.4%)	21 (2.4%)	57.9%
1600			15 (1.9%)	15 (1.7%)	59.5%
1800			6 (0.8%)	6 (0.7%)	60.2%
2000			15 (1.9%)	15 (1.7%)	61.9%
2100			3 (0.4%)	3 (0.3%)	62.3%
2400	1 (1.5%)		28 (3.6%)	29 (3.3%)	65.5%
2500	23 (35.4%)		5 (0.6%)	28 (3.2%)	68.7%
3000			8 (1%)	8 (0.9%)	69.6%
3200			9 (1.2%)	9 (1%)	70.6%
3500			4 (0.5%)	4 (0.5%)	71.1%
4500			5 (0.6%)	5 (0.6%)	71.6%
4750			2 (0.3%)	2 (0.2%)	71.8%
5000			4 (0.5%)	4 (0.5%)	72.3%

	P	O	PO	N	Cumulative sum
5400			16 (2.1%)	16 (1.8%)	74.1%
5700			4 (0.5%)	4 (0.5%)	74.6%
6000			65 (8.3%)	65 (7.3%)	81.9%
6175			7 (0.9%)	7 (0.8%)	82.7%
6180			11 (1.4%)	11 (1.2%)	84%
6500			9 (1.2%)	9 (1%)	85%
7000			37 (4.7%)	37 (4.2%)	89.2%
7140			35 (4.5%)	35 (4%)	93.1%
7420			61 (7.8%)	61 (6.9%)	100%
<b>Total</b>	65 (100%)	41 (100%)	779 (100%)	885 (100%)	

**Table 84** *Distribution of motor situation with different roles according to the surface (m<sup>2</sup>) by categories*

	P	O	PO	N
50 – 450	12 (5.1%)	30 (12.8%)	193 (82.1%)	235 (100%)
600 – 800	10 (4.9%)	11 (5.4%)	183 (89.7%)	204 (100%)
900 – 5700	43 (19.5%)		178 (80.5%)	221 (100%)
6000 – 7420			225 (100%)	225 (100%)
<b>Total</b>	65 (7.3%)	41 (4.6%)	779 (88%)	885 (100%)

The computed area's use was in “P” interaction practice, 65 activities 7.4% such as performing the 4-4-2 plan, changing direction, and passing drills in a specific space. In interaction “O” practices with 41 activities 4.6% such as the 1x1 or more, confrontational drills in a computed area. The interaction “PO” appeared with the most use in 779, that is 88%, such as attacking games, training matches, and some small games.

We also see that areas 600 (m<sup>2</sup>), in space 20 (m) x 30 (m) were the most used in 115 cases, that is 13% such as attacking games like 4 x 4 or more with different conditions, and

also some coaches are forced to implement the motor situation in the middle of the field at times and in small spaces due to the participation of another team in the same pitch.

In large areas, 6000 (m<sup>2</sup>) in space 100 (m) x 60 (m) were the most used 65, 7.3% as training matches and common at the end of the daily coaching session, as previously indicated, the Palestinian pitch is not all the same surface.

Now let us get acquainted with the quantitative indicators of the spaces used, which appear in the following table (85); Let us see that the width ranged between 5 (m) to 70 (m) on a mean of 34.8 (m), the length ranged between 10 (m) to 106 (m) on a mean of 53.5 (m), the ratio of width to length was one or less, indicating that all the measurements used were length more than width.

**Table 85** *Quantitative variables of the space factor*

	N	Minimum	Maximum	<i>M</i>	Median	<i>SD</i>
Width (m)	885	5	70	34.8	25	21.7
Length (m)	885	10	106	53.5	40	33
W/L	885	0.25	1	0.66	0.66	0.01
Surface (m <sup>2</sup> )	885	50	7420	2543	900	2689.4
IIS (m <sup>2</sup> )	885	8.3	337.3	152.2	100	110.9
IIS PAL (m <sup>2</sup> )	22	2.9	116.5	52.6	34.6	38.3

We find that the total area ranged between 50 (m<sup>2</sup>) and 7420 (m<sup>2</sup>), and it also appears that the “IIS”, which is related to the motor situations in Palestinian soccer coaching, ranged between 8.3 (m<sup>2</sup>) to 337.3 (m<sup>2</sup>) (Table 86), which is “IIS” in each activity, and the “IIS” for the Palestinian pitch, after investigating the area of the 15 pitches in Palestine, which were used for coaching (Table 87), it ranged from 2.9 (m<sup>2</sup>) to 116.5 (m<sup>2</sup>) (Table 88).

Concerning the “IIS” related to the motor situations, it was divided into categories, to find that the area of 272.7 (m<sup>2</sup>) was the most used in the individual interaction space, with 65

cases 7.3%, the less used “IIS” was 8.3 (m<sup>2</sup>) with one case of 0.9%, according to the task conditions, this diversity in “IIS” is due to the difference in the areas used in motor situations.

**Table 86** *Distribution of motor situations in calculated space according to IIS*

	N
8.3 - 46.9	183 (20.7%)
50 – 93.8	232 (26.2%)
100 – 266.7	237 (26.8%)
272.7 – 337.3	233 (26.3%)
Total	885 (100%)

By examining the Palestinian stadium's area used in coaching and matches; the average area of the pitches used by Palestinian football clubs for the top level of coaching was calculated, which is 15 fields (Table 87), by dividing the surface average of the Palestinian soccer pitches by the number of official players for both teams, were:

Averages of the pitch area = surface m<sup>2</sup> total / 15 pitch.

$$95515(m^2) / 15 = 6367.7 (m^2).$$

“PAL IIS” = averages of the Palestinian pitch area / number of players.

$$6367.7 (m^2) / 22 = 289.4 (m^2) \text{ per player.}$$

**Table 87** *Palestinian pitches space*

	width	length	Surface (m <sup>2</sup> )
Amari	60	100	6000
Al-beerah	60	100	6000
Al-Fara'a	70	100	7000
Hussein	60	90	5400
Khadair	70	106	7420
Dora	70	100	7000
Faisal	70	100	7000
Jericho	65	100	6500
Jenin	60	100	6000
Nablus	68	105	7140
Qalqilya	60	103	6180
Tubas	60	95	5700
Tulkarm	65	95	6175
Yatta	60	100	6000
Al-Dhaherih	60	100	6000
Total	958	1494	95515

**Table 88** *Distribution of motor situations according to IIS PAL*

	N
2.9 – 16.2	183 (20.7%)
17.3 – 32.4	232 (26.2%)
34.6 – 92.1	237 (26.8%)
94.2 – 116.5	233 (26.3%)
Total	885 (100%)

To find out how similar the area used in the motor situations is to the official area in Palestinian soccer pitches, we divide the “IIS” for each motor task by “IIS” for the Palestinian pitches: 289.4 (m<sup>2</sup>), so if it is less than 100, the motor task requires playing in a

relatively smaller area than the real game, and vice versa as we see from the following table (89):

**Table 89** *Distribution of motor situations according to IIS PAL in quantitative symmetry*

	N
< 100	717 (81%)
100	35 (4%)
> 100	133 (15%)
Total	885 (100%)

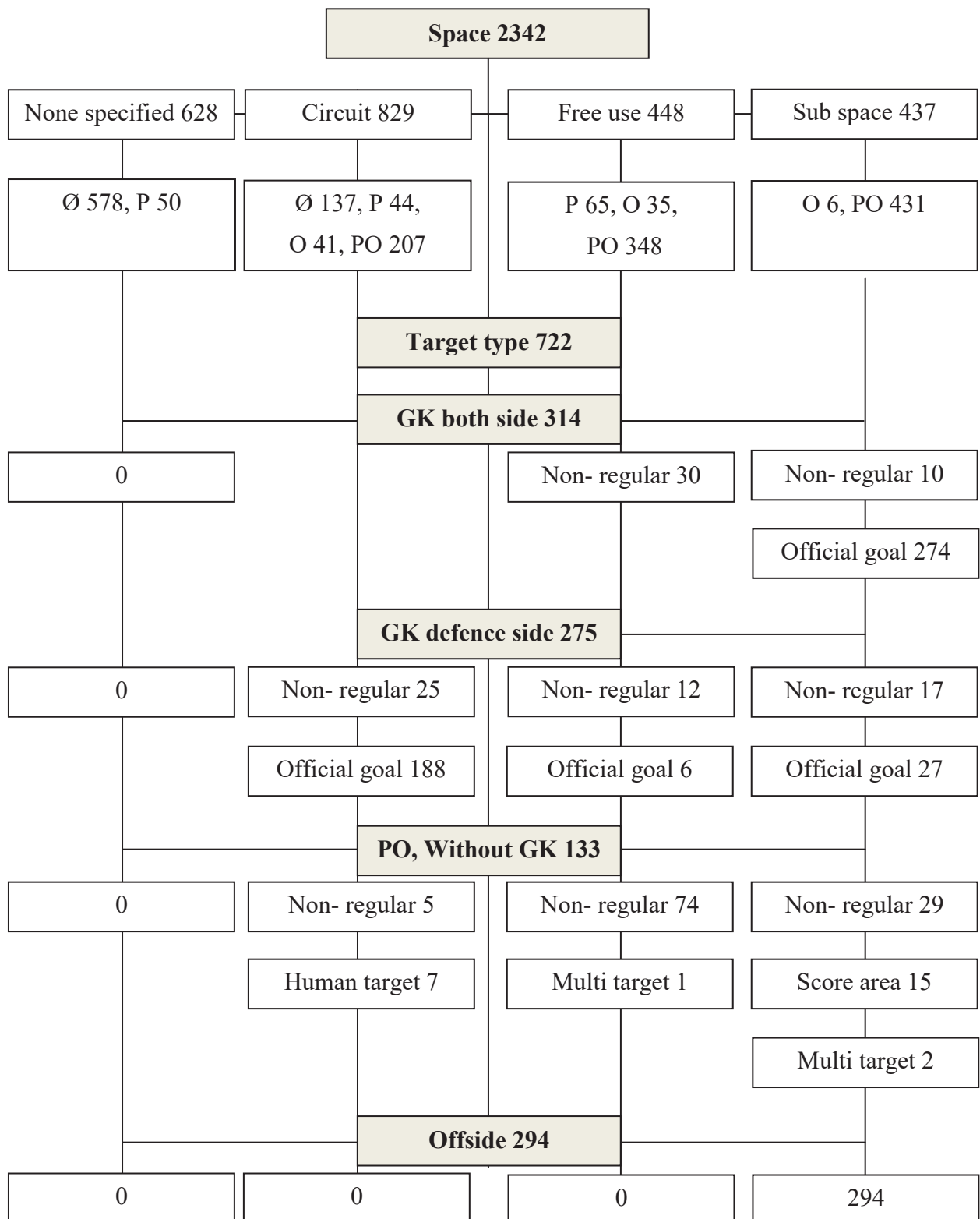
In the “IIS” related to Palestinian pitches, after its calculation (previously explained), that 717, 81% of the activities were of an area less than the actual area required by Palestinian soccer pitches for players, and this is due to the use of smaller areas to increase the difficulty of decision-making for the player, because the more “IIS” has on the field, the easier decision-making. The other reason is that Palestinian coaches in some clubs use half of the pitch to carry out motor tasks for two teams to share the pitch simultaneously due to the lack of stadiums compared to the number of clubs. As we can see, 35 cases, 4%, were proportional to the “IIS” for Palestinian pitches, and 133 cases, 15%, where more than the “IIS” cases for Palestinian pitch, based on the pitch area used for these motor situations.

### *Profile*

- The Palestinian soccer coaches used different types of spaces, one third of the motor situations were practiced in the “*circuit*”. The type of “*free use with boundaries*” and “*subspace with boundaries*” were used in all cases with opposition, while these two types were not used in the psychomotor activities.
- Coaches used different types of goals with opposition; more than half of the cases were using the “*official goal*” and the rest were distributed among other types of goals, and with the goalkeeper on both sides’ cases, the “*official goal*” also was used within the “*subspace with boundaries*” in most cases.
- In all cases where the goalkeeper was on the defensive side, the “*official goal*” was used within different types of space, most of which was the “*circuit*”. In cases without a goalkeeper on both sides, “*free use with boundaries*” and “*non-regular goal*” was used in more than half of the cases.
- In all cases of use “*offside regulation*”, the *official and non-regular goal* was used within the “*subspace with boundaries*” with opposition.
- In space types calculated by meters, the *length* was longer than the *width*, the length average= 53.5 (m); the width average: 34.8 (m) and the total area between 50 (m<sup>2</sup>) to 4720 (m<sup>2</sup>) all this cases were within sociomotor interaction domains, one third of the cases were within 6000 (m<sup>2</sup>) and 7420 (m<sup>2</sup>).
- The interaction individual space “*IIS*” from 8.3 (m<sup>2</sup>) to 337.3 (m<sup>2</sup>), and the most widely used is 272.7 (m<sup>2</sup>) within the area = 6000 (m<sup>2</sup>) and the number of players is 22 players.
- In most cases, it appeared that the “*IIS*” during the coaching sessions was less than the “*IIS*” for Palestinian pitches, which is 289.4 (m<sup>2</sup>).



**Figure 10** *Space summary*



## Relationship to objects

### *Objects*

This variable means knowing the objects used in the activities; it is divided into “official ball” or “other”. The following table (90) shows that “official ball” was used in 1716 activities, 73.3% distributed among all types of motor reactions. There are 514 activities; 21.9% did not use any object, such as fitness exercises like running and stretching. In 112 activities, 4.8% used other objects such as sports hoops, Swiss balls, and seats, which appeared in fitness exercises. What is striking here is that all the motor situations in the opponent's presence were by using an official ball only.

**Table 90** *Distribution of the motor situation with different roles according to objects used*

	Ø	P	O	PO	Total
None	412 (57.6%)	102(18.2%)			514 (21.9%)
Official ball	244 (34.1%)	404 (72.3%)	82 (100%)	986 (100%)	1716 (73.3%)
Others	59 (8.3%)	53 (9.5%)			112 (4.8%)
Total	715 (100%)	559 (100%)	82 (100%)	986 (100%)	2342 (100%)

### *Profile*

- The use of the “official ball” was the most prominent as it was used in all motor situations with opposition.

## Summary

Table (91) shows the preferences of the coaches when designing practice. This aspect of the strategic dimension of coaching can be summarized in numbers as follows.

**Table 91** *The internal logic of football elite practice in Palestine*

Variable	Without opposition “Ø”, “P”	With opposition “O”, “PO”
<i>Frequency</i>	1274 motor situation 54.4%	1068 motor situation 45.6%
<i>Motor interaction</i>	Psychomotor 56.1%, collaboration 43.9%	Collaboration- opposition 92.3%, opposition 7.7%
<i>Tendency</i>		Defense 12.7%, Symmetric 55.9%, Offensive 31.4%
<i>Groups</i>	One 87.9%, two 12.1%	One 98.9%, two 1.2%
<i>Cycles</i>		Continuous 74.1%, discontinuous 25.9%
<i>Times</i>	Duration 86%, repetition 14%	Duration 45.9%, competition 28.2%, repetition 25.9%
<i>Score memory</i>		No 71.8%, Yes 28.2%
<i>Scoring support</i>		None 71.8%, Time limit 25.4%, both 1.6%, score limit 1.2%
<i>Scoring consequence</i>		Score change 63.3%, role change 23.4%, both 4.3%
<i>Target type</i>		Official goal 46.4%, none 32.4%, non-regular goal 18.9%, others 2.3%
<i>Space</i>	Not specifies 49.3%, circuit 45.6%, free use 5.1%	Sub space 40.9%, free use 35.9%, circuit 23.2%
<i>Goalkeeper side</i>		Defense side 55.1%, offensive 29.4%
<i>Offside</i>		No 72.5%, Yes 27.5%
<i>IIS</i>	Low 2%, high 3.1%	Low 39.2, high 37.5%
<i>Object</i>	Official ball 50.9%, none 40.3%, others 8.8%	Official ball 100%
<i>Session part</i>	Warm-up 43.2%, main part 28.9%, closing part 27.9%	Main part 93%, warm-up 6.4%, closing part 0.7%

Variable	Without opposition “Ø”, “P”	With opposition “O”, “PO”
<i>Number</i>	1 (56.1%), 2-4 (28%), 5-10	2-4 (17.1%), 5-10 (38.8%) 11-22
<i>players</i>	(7.5%), 11-22 (0.3%) all team (8%)	(44.1%)

## SOCCER COACHING STRATEGIES

Can we distinguish coaching strategies in relation to competitive divisions and the coaches' experience and qualifications? This is, in fact, the main question of this research. Both previous sections have paved the way to this final analysis. In order to answer the questions, let us examine the different motor situation in terms of basic internal logic, according to the meaningful levels of the variables describes in the previous part. Having found no specific profile for coaches, we will try and predict *competitive divisions*, coaches' qualification “*coaching certificate, and PE specialization*”, coaches' experience “*as players and as coaches*”, of the participants by means of the predictive variables discussed so far, as shown in the following table (92).

**Table 92** *Dependent variables of the regression models*

	Description	Levels
Competitive divisions	Sections of the Palestinian Football League, to which the clubs belong	<i>Pro/ 1<sup>st</sup>/ 2<sup>nd</sup></i>
Coaching certificate	The coaching certificate specialized in soccer coaching issued by any federation recognized by FIFA	<i>A+ / A-</i>
PE specialization	The coach's field is in his academic specialization.	<i>PE+ / PE-</i>
Coaching experience	The number of years hired as a coach in any soccer club in years	<i>Low ≤ 9 years</i> <i>High ≥ 10 year</i>
Former professional player	That the coach was a soccer player at the level of 11 players and participated in the official league for any competitive division, for more than one season, and was officially registered in the records of any recognized FIFA	<i>Pro+ / Pro-</i>

Based on this analysis, we reduced the system of variables and level to the following structure (Table 93).

**Table 93** *Independent variables of the regression models*

	Description	Levels
Interaction domain	The relationship between the players through the activities	<i>Psychomotor/ Collaboration/ Opposition/ Collaboration-opposition</i>
Tendency	Quantitative dimension and symmetry	<i>High defense -3/ -4/ -5 Low defensive -1/ -2 Symmetric Low offensive +1/ +2 High offensive +3/ +4/ +5</i>
Cycles	The playing sequence (attack) is permitted by the rules stipulating the number of planned shifts from defense to attack.	<i>Continuity/ Discontinuity</i>
Scoring support	An organizational device that allows knowing when the activities end based on the rules of the action (Defining the winner and loser).	<i>Yes/ No</i>
Goal Type	The human, material, spatial elements provided by the rules of the activities and associated with the scoring system	<i>non/ official goal/ non-regular goal</i>
Gk_ defense	The number of cooperating goalkeepers in the same group	<i>Yes/ No</i>
G_ offensive	The number of goalkeepers opposed to the attackers	<i>Yes/ No</i>
Offside	A regulatory mechanism prevents the attacking player from entering the game based on their spatial and temporal relationship with other players	<i>Yes/ No</i>
IIS	Theoretical pitch area that corresponds to each player and is calculated by dividing the total pitch area by participating players in each motor situation	<i>Low <math>\leq 0.3</math> High <math>\geq 0.4</math></i>

All the analysis will be explained as follows: after presenting the table of results of the regression models the effect size calculation will be displayed. We can present in advance the main finding of this research: coaching strategies in elite Palestinian football were only slightly affected by the competition level. For this reason, discussion on this variable will be the last on because it comes to be a diversion from the overall strategy of Palestinian football coaches'.

### Experience

Is the internal logic of practice determined by the experience of coaches? In this case, we are looking into two traits: experience *as a soccer coach* and *as a former professional player*.

#### *Experience as former player*

Former professional players tend to be professional coaches, taking the way they have been trained and coached onto their practice sessions.

**Table 94** *The results of multinomial logistic regression of former player*

Former player		B	95% CI for Odds Ratio		
			Lower	Odds Ratio	Upper
No	Intercept	-1.86 (0.18)*			
	opposition	-1.50 (0.18)*	0.15	0.22	0.32
	Collaboration-opposition	0			
	low defense	0.02 (0.14)	0.77	1.02	1.33
	high defense	0.49 (0.17)*	1.18	1.63	2.26
	Symmetric Tendency	-0.01 (0.11)	0.80	0.99	1.23
	low offensive	-0.35 (0.12)*	0.56	0.70	0.88
	High offensive	0			
	Discontinuity	1.08 (0.10)*	2.41	2.95	3.61
	without Scoring support	0.48 (0.10)*	1.32	1.61	1.96
	without target	-0.44 (0.07)*	0.56	0.64	0.74
	official goal	0.35 (0.13)*	1.10	1.41	1.81
	Non-regular goal	0			
	without Gk defense	0.64 (0.14)*	1.44	1.89	2.48
	without Gk offensive	-0.66 (0.13)*	0.40	0.52	0.67
	without offside	0.40 (0.13)*	1.15	1.49	1.92
	low IIS	0.05 (0.06)	0.93	1.05	1.20

*Note.* The reference category is: yes- \*  $p < 0.05$

From table (94) we learn that:

- If the motor tasks were using the “opposition” interaction, the odds ratio of a coach who was not a former player compared to the coach who was a former player decreased by 78% than using the motor interaction “collaboration- opposition”.
- If the motor tasks were using “high defense”, the odds ratio of a coach who was not a former player compared to the coach who was a former player increased by 63% than using “highly offensive”.
- If the motor tasks were using “low offensive”, the odds ratio of a coach who was not a former player compared to the coach who was a former player decreased by 30% using “highly offensive”.
- If the motor tasks were using “discontinuity”, the odds ratio of a coach who was not a former player compared to the coach who was a former player increased by 2.95 times than using “continuity”.
- If the motor tasks were without “scoring support”, the odds ratio of a coach who was not a former player compared to the coach who was a former player increased by 61% than using “scoring support”.
- If the motor tasks were without “target”, the odds ratio of a coach who was not a former player compared to the coach who was a former player decreased by 36% than using “non-regular goal”.
- If the motor tasks were using “official goal”, the odds ratio of a coach who was not a former player compared to the coach who was a former player increased by 41% than using “non-regular goal”.
- If the motor tasks were without the presence of a “goalkeeper on the defense side”, the odds ratio of a coach who was not a former player compared to the coach who was



a former player increased by 89% than the presence of the “goalkeeper on the defense side”.

- If the motor tasks are without the presence of a “goalkeeper on the offensive side”, the odds ratio of a coach who was not a former player compared to the coach who was a former player decreased by 48% than the presence of the “goalkeeper on the offensive side”.
- If the motor tasks were without “offside” regulation, the odds ratio of a coach who was not a former player compared to the coach who was a former player increased by 49% than using “offside” regulation.

How big are these differences in terms of their real impact on the team’s organization and practice? The great amount of data makes it very likely to find statistically significant differences between the categories involved. However, this makes compulsory to value those likelihoods in terms of the amount of change the studied object actually produces. Because we count on categorical data, we will examine the size of the relationship between the internal logic of motor tasks and coaches' experience as former player by means of the *Phi* Coefficient Measure, which is shown at three levels: *small effect*:  $w = 0.10$ , *Medium effect*:  $w = 0.30$ , *Big effect*:  $w = 0.50$  (Cohen, 1988). As seen on table (95), no real effects are visible and the overall strategy described as a system of probabilities associated to the different levels of the praxeological categories.

**Table 95** Results of the Phi Coefficient Analysis: The Chi-Squared Result of Former player

	No	Yes	$\chi^2$	df	P	Phi	Effect size
Action domain			64.554	3	.000	0.045	<i>invisible</i>
	Psychomotor	22.7%	20.9%				
	Collaboration	20.7%	23.2%				
	Opposition	2.1%	3.6%				
	Collaboration	54.5%	52.2%				
	Opposition						
Tendency			24.235	4	.000	0.037	<i>invisible</i>
	Symmetric	60%	59.6%				
	Low defense	5%	7.2%				
	High defense	4.4%	4.2%				
	Low offensive	24.9%	24.2%				
	High offensive	5.6%	4.8%				
Continuity			41.653	1	.000	0.48	<i>invisible</i>
	No	28.1%	23%				
	Yes	71.9%	77%				
Scoring support			12.996	1	.000	0.020	<i>invisible</i>
	No	83.1%	81.1%				
	Yes	16.9%	18.9%				
Target			28.602	2	.000	0.030	<i>invisible</i>
	None	59%	61.3%				
	Official goal	29.4%	29.2%				
	Non regular goal	11.7%	9.5%				
Gk defense			2.582	1	.108	0.009	<i>invisible</i>
	No	65.3%	66.4%				
	Yes	34.7%	33.6%				
Gk offensive			.436	1	.509	0.004	<i>invisible</i>
	No	80%	79.6%				
	Yes	20%	20.4%				
Offside			8.868	1	0.003	0.017	<i>invisible</i>
	No	82%	80.3%				
	Yes	18%	19.7%				
IIS			5.682	1	0.017	0.19	<i>invisible</i>
	Low	44.4%	42%				
	High	55.6%	58%				

Note. Small effect:  $w = 0.10$ , Medium effect:  $w = 0.30$ , Big effect:  $w = 0.50$  (Cohen, 1988).

*Experience as coach*

Is the internal logic of practice determined by the coach's *experience as a coach*?

**Table 96** *The results of multinomial logistic regression of coaching experience*

Coaching experience		B	95% CI for Odds Ratio		
			Lower	Odds Ratio	Upper
low	Intercept	0.63 (0.16)*			
	opposition	-0.56 (0.12)*		0.57	0.73
	Collaboration- opposition	0			
	low defense	1.19 (0.13)*	0.45	3.28	4.22
	high defense	1.64 (0.17)*	2.56	5.14	7.22
	Symmetric Tendency	0.58 (0.10)*	3.67	1.78	2.16
	low offensive	0.45 (0.10)*	1.48	1.57	1.91
	High offensive	0			
	Discontinuity	-0.13 (0.10)	1.29	0.88	1.06
	without Scoring support	-0.11 (0.10)	0.73	0.90	1.08
	without target	-0.30 (0.07)*	0.74	0.74	0.85
	official goal	-0.15 (0.12)	0.64	0.86	1.08
	Non-regular goal	0			
	without Gk defense	0.31 (0.13)*	0.70	1.36	1.76
	without Gk offensive	-0.11 (0.12)	1.06	0.89	1.13
	without offside	-0.11 (0.12)	0.68	0.90	1.14
	low IIS	-0.04 (0.06)	0.71	0.96	1.08

*Note.* The reference category is: high.

From table (96) we learn that:

- If the motor tasks used the “opposition” interaction, the odds ratio of a coach with low coaching experience compared to the coach with high coaching experience decreased by 43% than using the motor interaction “collaboration- opposition”.
- If the motor tasks were using “low defense”, the odds ratio of a coach who has low coaching experience compared to the coach who has high coaching experience increased by 3.28 times than using a “highly offensive”.
- If the motor tasks were using “high defense”, the odds ratio of a coach who has low coaching experience compared to the coach who has high coaching experience increased by 5.14 times than using a “highly offensive”.

- If the motor tasks were using “symmetric”, the odds ratio of a coach who has low coaching experience compared to the coach who has high coaching experience increased by 78% than using a “highly offensive”.
- If the motor tasks were using “low offensive”, the odds ratio of a coach who has low coaching experience compared to the coach who has high coaching experience increased by 57% than using a “highly offensive”.
- If the motor tasks were without a “target”, the odds ratio of a coach who has low coaching experience compared to the coach who has high coaching experience decreased by 26% than using “non-regular goal”.
- If the motor tasks were without the presence of a “goalkeeper on the defense side”, the odds ratio of a coach who has low coaching experience compared to the coach who has high coaching experience increases by 36% than the presence of the “goalkeeper on the defense side”.

As it happens with playing experience, no real effect can be found between coaching experience and praxeological variables according to the results on table (97)

**Table 97** Results of the Phi Coefficient Analysis: The Chi-Squared Result of coaching experience as a coach

		Low	High	$\chi^2$	df	P	Phi	Effect size
Interaction domain				34.114	3	.000	0.033	<i>invisible</i>
	Psychomotor	21.5%	20.8%					
	Collaboration	22%	24.8%					
	Opposition	3.5%	2.9%					
	Collaboration	53.1%	51.5%					
	Opposition							
Tendency				67.507	4	.000	0.061	<i>invisible</i>
	Symmetric	59.7%	59.5%					
	Low defense	7.2%	5.6%					
	High defense	4.8%	2.7%					
	Low offensive	23.5%	26.8%					
	High offensive	4.8%	5.4%					
Continuity				3.570	1	0.059	0.014	<i>invisible</i>
	No	24.3%	23%					
	Yes	75.7%	77%					
Scoring support				15.245	1	.000	0.22	<i>invisible</i>
	No	81%	82.9%					
	Yes	19%	17.1%					
Target				54.506	2	.000	0.041	<i>invisible</i>
	None	59.7%	64.1%					
	Official goal	29.9%	27.7%					
	Non regular goal	10.4%	8.7%					
Gk defense				37.749	1	.000	0.034	<i>invisible</i>
	No	65.2%	68.8%					
	Yes	34.8%	31.2%					
Gk offensive				8.696	1	.003	0.016	<i>invisible</i>
	No	79.2	80.7					
	Yes	20.8%	19.3%					
Offside				15.074	1	.000	0.022	<i>invisible</i>
	No	80.1%	82%					
	Yes	19.9%	18%					
IIS				11.741	1	.001	0.028	<i>invisible</i>
	Low	41.6%	44.7%					
	High	58.4%	55.3%					

Note. Small effect:  $w = 0.10$ , Medium effect:  $w = 0.30$ , Big effect:  $w = 0.50$  (Cohen, 1988).

### Qualification

Is the internal logic of practice determined by the *education* of coaches? In this case we are looking into two traits: qualification as a soccer coach (*coaching certificate*) and specialization in physical education (*PE specialization*).

#### *Coaching certificate*

Is the internal logic of practice determined by the coach's *certificate of coaching*?

**Table 98** *The results of multinomial logistic regression of coaching certificate*

		<i>B</i>	95% CI for Odds Ratio		
			Lower	<i>Odds Ratio</i>	Upper
No	Intercept	0.08 (0.15)			
	opposition	-0.35 (0.11)*	0.57	0.71	0.88
	Collaboration-opposition	0			
	low defense	0.94 (0.12)*	2.04	2.57	3.24
	high defense	0.94 (0.14)*	1.93	2.56	3.38
	Symmetric Tendency	0.58 (0.10)*	1.48	1.79	2.17
	low offensive	0.39 (0.10)*	1.21	1.48	1.80
	High offensive	0			
	Discontinuity	-0.39 (0.09)*	0.57	0.68	0.81
	without Scoring support	-0.22 (0.08)*	0.68	0.80	0.95
	without target	-0.35 (0.06)*	0.62	0.70	0.79
	official goal	-0.59 (0.11)*	0.45	0.55	0.68
	Non-regular goal	0			
	without Gk defense	-0.13 (0.12)	0.70	0.88	1.10
	without Gk offensive	0.53 (0.11)*	1.38	1.70	2.10
	without offside	-0.24 (0.11)*	0.63	0.78	0.98
	Low IIS	-0.42 (0.05)*	0.59	0.66	0.73

*Note.* The reference category is: yes - \*  $p < 0.05$

From table (96) we learn that:

- If the motor tasks were using the “opposition” interaction, the odds ratio of a coach who has a coaching certificate less than “A” compared to the coach who has coaching certificate “A” decreased by 29% than using the motor interaction “collaboration-opposition”.

- If the motor tasks were using “low defense”, the odds ratio of a coach who has a coaching certificate less than “A” compared to the coach who has a coaching certificate “A” increased by 2.57 times than using a “highly offensive”.
- If the motor tasks were using “high defense”, the odds ratio of a coach who has a coaching certificate less than “A” compared to the coach who has coaching certificate “A” increased by 2.56 times than using a “highly offensive”.
- If the motor tasks were using “symmetric”, the odds ratio of a coach who has a coaching certificate less than “A” compared to the coach who has coaching certificate “A” increased by 79% than using a “highly offensive”.
- If the motor tasks were using “low offensive”, the odds ratio of a coach who has a coaching certificate less than “A” compared to the coach who has coaching certificate “A” increased by 48% than using a “highly offensive”.
- If the motor tasks were using “discontinuity”, the odds ratio of a coach who has a coaching certificate less than “A” compared to the coach who has coaching certificate “A” decreased by 32% than using “continuity”.
- If the motor tasks were without “scoring support”, the odds ratio of a coach who has a coaching certificate less than “A” compared to the coach who has a coaching certificate “A” decreased by 20% than using “scoring support”.
- If the motor tasks were without “target”, the odds ratio of a coach who has a coaching certificate less than “A” compared to the coach who has coaching certificate “A” decreased by 30% than using “non-regular goal”.
- If the motor tasks were using “official goal”, the odds ratio of a coach who has a coaching certificate less than “A” compared to the coach who has coaching certificate “A” decreased by 45% than using “non-regular goal”.

- If the motor tasks were without the presence of “goalkeeper on the offensive side”, the odds ratio of a coach who has a coaching certificate less than “A” compared to the coach who has coaching certificate “A” increased by 70% than the presence of the “goalkeeper on the offensive side”.
- If the motor tasks were without “offside” regulation, the odds ratio of a coach who has a coaching certificate less than “A” compared to the coach who has a coaching certificate “A” decreased by 22% than using “offside” regulation.
- If the motor tasks were in a “low” individual interaction space, the odds ratio of a coach who has a coaching certificate less than “A” compared to the coach who has a coaching certificate “A” decreased by 34% than using individual interaction space “high”.

As it happens with coaching experience, no real effect can be found between PE specialization and praxeological variables according to the results on table (99)



**Table 99** Results of the Phi Coefficient Analysis: The Chi-Squared Result of coaching certificate

	No	Yes	$\chi^2$	df	P	Phi	Effect size
Interaction domain			60.316	3	.000	0.043	<i>invisible</i>
	Psychomotor	19.5%	22.9%				
	Collaboration	23.6%	22.0%				
	Opposition	3.2%	3.4%				
	Collaboration	53.7%	51.7%				
	Opposition						
Tendency			127.257	4	.000	0.084	<i>invisible</i>
	Symmetric	61.9%	57.5%				
	Low defense	7.9%	5.7%				
	High defense	4.3%	4.2%				
	Low offensive	22.1%	26.5%				
	High offensive	3.8%	6.1%				
Continuity			66.617	1	.000	0.061	<i>invisible</i>
	No	21.3%	26.5%				
	Yes	78.7%	73.5%				
Scoring support			70.853	1	.000	0.047	<i>invisible</i>
	No	79.6%	83.2%				
	Yes	20.4%	16.8%				
Target			79.201	2	.000	0.050	<i>invisible</i>
	None	58.8%	62.7%				
	Official goal	29.8%	28.6%				
	Non regular goal	11.3%	8.7%				
Gk defense			15.068	1	.000	0.022	<i>invisible</i>
	No	65.1%	67.1%				
	Yes	34.9%	32.9%				
Gk offensive			40.160	1	.000	0.035	<i>invisible</i>
	No	78.1%	81.0%				
	Yes	21.9%	19.0%				
Offside			79.628	1	.000	0.050	<i>invisible</i>
	No	78.5%	82.5%				
	Yes	21.5%	17.5%				
IIS			22.582	1	.000	0.039	<i>invisible</i>
	Low	40.5%	44.4%				
	High	59.5%	55.6%				

Note. Small effect:  $w = 0.10$ , Medium effect:  $w = 0.30$ , Big effect:  $w = 0.50$  (Cohen, 1988).

***PE specialization***

Is the internal logic of practice determined by the coach's *PE specialization*?

**Table 100** *The results of multinomial logistic regression of PE specialization*

PE specialization		B	95% CI for Odds Ratio		
			Lower	Odds Ratio	Upper
No	Intercept	0.84 (0.15) *			
	opposition	-0.02 (0.11)	0.79	0.98	1.22
	Collaboration-opposition	0			
	low defense	-0.05 (0.12)	0.76	0.95	1.20
	high defense	-0.14 (0.14)	0.66	0.87	1.15
	Symmetric Tendency	-0.63 (0.10)*	0.44	0.54	0.64
	low offensive	-0.27 (0.10)*	0.63	0.76	0.92
	High offensive	0			
	Discontinuity	0.71 (0.09)*	1.69	2.04	2.45
	without Scoring support	-0.22 (0.09)*	0.67	0.80	0.96
	without target	0.49 (0.07)*	1.43	1.63	1.85
	official goal	-0.75 (0.11)*	0.38	0.47	0.59
	Non-regular goal	0			
	without Gk defense	0.01 (0.12)	0.80	1.01	1.27
	without Gk offensive	-0.51 (0.11)*	0.48	0.60	0.75
	without offside	-0.52 (0.11)*	0.47	0.60	0.75
	low IIS	0.13 (0.05)*	0.79	0.88	0.98

*Note.* The reference category is: yes- \*  $p < 0.05$

From table (100) we learn that:

- If the motor tasks were using “symmetric”, the odds ratio of a coach who has not specialized in PE compared to the coach who specialized in PE decreased by 46% than using a “highly offensive”.
- If the motor tasks used “low offensive”, the odds ratio of a coach who has not specialized in PE compared to the coach who specialized in PE decreased by 24% than using a “highly offensive”.
- If the motor tasks used “discontinuity”, the odds ratio of a coach who has not specialized in PE compared to the coach who specialized in PE increased by 2.04 times than using “continuity”.

- If the motor tasks were without “scoring support”, the odds ratio of a coach who has not specialized in PE compared to the coach who specialized in PE decreased by 20% than using “scoring support”.
- If the motor tasks were without “target”, the odds ratio of a coach who has not specialized in PE compared to the coach who specialized in PE increased by 63% than using “non-regular goal”.
- If the motor tasks used “official goal”, the odds ratio of a coach who has not specialized in PE compared to the coach who specialized in PE decreased by 53% than using “non-regular goal”.
- If the motor tasks were without the presence of a “goalkeeper on the offensive side”, the odds ratio of a coach who has not specialized in PE compared to the coach who specialized in PE decreased by 40% than the presence of the “goalkeeper on the offensive side”.
- If the motor tasks were without “offside” regulation, the odds ratio of a coach who has not specialized in PE compared to the coach who specialized in PE decreased by 40% than using “offside” regulation.
- If the motor tasks were in a “low” individual interaction space, the odds ratio of a coach who has not specialized in PE compared to the coach who specialized in PE increased by 12% than using individual interaction space “high”.

As it happens with PE specialization, no real effect can be found between competitive divisions and praxeological variables according to the results on table (101)

**Table 101** Results of the Phi Coefficient Analysis: The Chi-Squared Result of PE*specialization*

	No	Yes	$\chi^2$	df	P	Phi	Effect size
interaction domain			63.628	3	.000	0.045	<i>invisible</i>
	Psychomotor	23.2%	20.1%				
	Collaboration	22.5%	22.9%				
	Opposition	3.8%	3.1%				
	Collaboration	50.5%	54%				
	Opposition						
Tendency			156.967	4	.000	.094	<i>invisible</i>
	Symmetric	56.2%	61.7%				
	Low defense	7.8%	6.2%				
	High defense	5.5%	3.5%				
	Low offensive	23.7%	24.8%				
	High offensive	6.9%	3.8%				
Continuity			8.006	1	.005	0.021	<i>invisible</i>
	No	25.1%	23.3%				
	Yes	74.9%	76.7%				
Scoring support			18.702	1	.000	0.024	<i>invisible</i>
	No	82.7%	80.7%				
	Yes	17.3%	19.3%				
Target			93.000	2	.000	0.054	<i>invisible</i>
	None	64.2%	58.8%				
	Official goal	26.8%	30.7%				
	Non regular goal	9%	10.5%				
Gk defense			32.571	1	.000	0.032	<i>invisible</i>
	No	68.1%	65%				
	Yes	31.9%	35%				
Gk offensive			18.146	1	.000	0.024	<i>invisible</i>
	No	80.9%	78.9%				
	Yes	19.1%	21.1%				
Offside			10.992	1	.001	0.019	<i>invisible</i>
	No	81.5%	80%				
	Yes	18.5%	20%				
IIS			12.721	1	.000	0.029	<i>invisible</i>
	Low	40.6%	43.5%				
	High	59.5%	56.5%				

Note. Small effect:  $w = 0.10$ , Medium effect:  $w = 0.30$ , Big effect:  $w = 0.50$  (Cohen, 1988).

So far so good. We have found that coaching strategies are not affected by the coaches' characteristics. This can be coherent with the impossibility of profiling coaches as shown in the first part of these results. But the lack of differences is as informative as their finding. For this reason, the results provided in tables (95, 97, 99, 100) are different, random instances of *the elite coaching strategy in Palestine*:

- Interaction domains: practice with cooperation-opposition slightly equal to its absence.
- Tendency is mainly symmetry and then low offensive.
- Continuity in three times the Discontinuity in practice.
- Scoring support absent in most cases and present in few.
- The target is absent in more than half of the cases, and the official goal and non-regular goal are distributed among the rest.
- The absence of the goalkeeper in the defense side, third of the cases and present in one-third.
- Offside regulation absent in most cases and present in few.
- Individual interaction space is high in slightly more than half of the cases.

We find that the motor situations are less relevant to the soccer match performing, as the absence of opponents slightly equal to presence of opponents, and the scoring memory system was used only in one third on the official goal in half of them, within subspaces with boundaries for half of this practice as well, with lowest offside regulation used, by the symmetry numerical in half of this cases, followed by the superiority numerical more than the inferiority numerical, such as their dependence on training situations and motor techniques, and this results similar with study of Ford, Yates, & Williams (2010); Partington & Cushion (2013); Partington, Cushion & Harvey (2014) that found motor tasks were deemed less relevant to soccer match performance, termed "training form" (e.g. physical training,

technique and skills practices), than activities deemed more relevant, termed "playing form" (eg small-sided/conditioned games and phase of play activities), and it differ with the study O'Connor, Larkin, & Williams (2018). And with a study Martínez de Santos (1999, 2003); about the strategies used in the Spanish 1<sup>st</sup> Division of basketball (ACB), for example, were characterized by the high presence of opponents, motor relationships based on asymmetric duel structure with more than four players aside.

Undoubtedly, this overall strategy is due to the characteristics of the Palestinian coaches, but we expected them to deviate from normality anyhow. Do they all act as one? Do personal traits affect their decisions? Experience and qualification are one and only in Palestinian football? We can be certain they are not, but during preseason there are no traces of relationship between them, and there is only one variable left to test in search of the strategically thinking of Palestinian elite soccer coaches: competition level.

**Competitive divisions**

Is the internal logic of practice determined by the *competitive division* in which the coaches intervene?

**Table 102** *The results of multinomial logistic regression of Competitive divisions*

		<i>B</i>	95% CI for Odds Ratio		
			Lower	<i>Odds Ratio</i>	Upper
First	Intercept	-0.13 (0.17)			
	opposition	1.68 (0.16)*	3.94	5.39	7.37
	Collaboration-opposition	0			
	low defense	0.78 (0.14)*	1.64	2.18	2.88
	high defense	0.19 (0.17)	0.87	1.21	1.67
	Symmetric Tendency	0.23 (0.12)	1.00	1.26	1.58
	low offensive	0.73 (0.12)*	1.63	2.08	2.65
	High offensive	0			
	Discontinuity	-1.07 (0.11)*	0.28	0.34	0.43
	without Scoring support	-0.33 (0.10)*	0.60	0.72	0.87
	without target	-0.09 (0.07)	0.80	0.92	1.05
	official goal	0.38 (0.12)*	1.16	1.46	1.83
	Non-regular goal	0			
	without Gk defense	0.55 (0.13)*	1.36	1.74	2.23
	without Gk offensive	-0.35 (0.12)*	0.56	0.71	0.89
	without offside	0.56 (0.13)*	1.36	1.75	2.24
low IIS	-0.58 (0.07)*	0.49	0.56	0.64	
Second	Intercept	1.37 (0.20)*			
	opposition	1.82 (0.18)*	4.35	6.20	8.85
	Collaboration-opposition	0			
	low defense	-0.32 (0.15)*	0.54	0.73	0.97
	high defense	-1.64 (0.20)*	0.13	0.19	0.29
	Symmetric Tendency	-0.77 (0.12)*	0.37	0.46	0.58
	low offensive	0.02 (0.12)	0.81	1.02	1.30
	High offensive	0			
	Discontinuity	-1.52 (0.13)*	0.17	0.22	0.28
	without Scoring support	-0.89 (0.12)*	0.33	0.41	0.52
	without target	1.26 (0.09)*	2.93	3.51	4.20
	official goal	0.00 (0.16)	0.73	1.00	1.36
	Non-regular goal	0			
	without Gk defense	0.77 (0.18)*	1.52	2.16	3.08
	without Gk offensive	-0.12 (0.16)*	0.24	0.33	0.45
	without offside	0.24 (0.16)	0.92	1.28	1.76
low IIS	-1.20 (0.07)*	0.26	0.30	0.35	

*Note:* The reference category is Professional- \*  $p < 0.05$

From table (102) we learn that:

*Between first and professional divisions:*

- If the motor tasks were using the “opposition” interaction, the odds ratio of the first division compared to the professional division increased by 5.39 times than using the motor interaction “collaboration- opposition”.
- If the motor tasks were using “low defense”, the odds ratio of the first division compared to the professional division increased by 2.18 times than using a “highly offensive”.
- If the motor tasks were using “low offensive”, the odds ratio of the first division compared to the professional division increased by 2.08 times than using a “highly offensive”.
- If the motor tasks were using “discontinuity”, the odds ratio of the first division compared to the professional division decreased by 66% than using “continuity”.
- If the motor tasks were without “scoring support”, the odds ratio of the first division compared to the professional division decreased by 28% than using “scoring support”.
- If the motor tasks were using “official goal”, the odds ratio of the first division compared to the professional division increased by 46% than using “non-regular goal”.
- If the motor tasks were without the presence of a “goalkeeper on the defense side”, the odds ratio of the first division compared to the professional division increased by 74% than the presence of the “goalkeeper on the defense side”.
- If the motor tasks are without the presence of a “goalkeeper on the offensive side”, the odds ratio of the first division compared to the professional division decreased by 29% than the presence of the “goalkeeper on the offensive side”.



- If the motor tasks were without “offside” regulation, the odds ratio of the first division compared to the professional division increased by 75% than using “offside” regulation.
- If the motor tasks were in a “low” individual interaction space, the odds ratio of the first division compared to the professional division decreased by 44% than using individual interaction space “high”.

*Between second and professional divisions:*

- If the motor tasks were using the “opposition” interaction, the odds ratio of the second division compared to the professional division increased by 6.20 times than using the motor interaction “collaboration- opposition”.
- If the motor tasks were using low defense, the odds ratio of the second division compared to the professional division decreased by 27% than using a “highly offensive”.
- If the motor tasks were using “high defense”, the odds ratio of the second division compared to the professional division decreased by 81% than using a “highly offensive”.
- If the motor tasks were using “symmetric”, the odds ratio of the second division compared to the professional division decreased by 54% than using a “highly offensive”.
- If the motor tasks were using “discontinuity”, the odds ratio of the second division compared to the professional division decreased by 54% than using a “highly offensive”. 88% than using “continuity”.
- If the motor tasks were without “scoring support”, the odds ratio of the second division compared to the professional division decreased by 59% than using “scoring support”.

- If the motor tasks were without a “target”, the odds ratio of the second division compared to the professional division increased by 3.51 times than using “non-regular goal”.
- If the motor tasks were without the presence of a “goalkeeper on the defense side”, the odds ratio of the second division compared to the professional division increased by 2.16 times than the presence of the “goalkeeper on the defense side”.
- If the motor tasks were without the presence of a “goalkeeper on the offensive side”, the odds ratio of the second division compared to the professional division decreases by 67% than the presence of the “goalkeeper on the offensive side”.
- If the motor tasks were in a “low” individual interaction space, the odds ratio of the second division compared to the professional division decreased by 70% than using individual interaction space “high”.

As a whole, there are not considerable differences in the coaching strategies displayed in the different competitive divisions. However, looking into the distribution of practice times according to the variables of the internal logic of activities when measuring the effect size (Table 103) we find small effects in many praxeological variables.

Regarding the interaction domain, what is interesting is that the second division used less psychomotor activities than the second and professional divisions, and it appeared that the practice with collaboration was higher than them, the coaches in the second division may have used the technical practice in the pairs form, such as reciprocal performing, in fact the players are different based on the competitive divisions (Rodrigo et al., 2017). Competitive divisions have an impact on the level of practice. We find studies that have focused on them, especially for (professional, semi-professional and amateur), according to team formation and playing position (Barros et al., 2007; Bradley et al., 2011, 2013; Carling, 2011; Di Salvo, Pigozzi, Gonzalez-Haro, Laughlin, & De Witt, 2013; Di Salvo et al., 2007). In this division

may be less skilled than first and professional players. They might also need to develop the physical abilities, as the clubs gather the players before the beginning of the season due to the lack of financial resources in this division, so coaches use (pre-season) as a preparation period (Amad, 2009).

**Table 103** Results of the Phi Coefficient Analysis: The Chi-Squared Result of competitive divisions

		Pro	1 <sup>st</sup>	2 <sup>nd</sup>	$\chi^2$	df	P	Phi	Effect size
Interaction domain					916.438	6	.000	0.169	small
	Psychomotor	25.1%	21.9%	16.8%					
	Collaboration	19.5%	16.8%	32%					
	Opposition	3%	4.3%	2.6%					
	Collaboration	52.4%	<b>57.0%</b>	48.5%					
	Opposition								
Tendency					236.679	8	.000	0.115	small
	Low defense	7.3%	8.1%	4.6%					
	High defense	5.5%	4.8%	2.1%					
	Symmetric	55.2%	59.0%	<b>65.2%</b>					
	Low offensive	25.5%	24.2%	23.4%					
	High offensive	6.5%	3.9%	4.7%					
Continuity					504.784	2	.000	0.168	small
	No	<b>33.7%</b>	21.8%	16.1%					
	Yes	66.3%	78.2%	83.9%					
Scoring Support					330.395	2	.000	0.102	small
	No	<b>87.0%</b>	79.6%	77.9%					
	Yes	13.0%	20.4%	22.1%					
Target					576.060	4	.000	0.134	small
	None	60%	55.9%	<b>66.8%</b>					
	Official goal	27.9%	31.1%	28.6%					
	Non regular goal	12.1%	13%	4.7%					
Gk defense					69.912	2	.000	0.047	invisible
	No	65.8%	63.7%	69.1%					
	Yes	34.2%	36.3%	30.9%					
Gk offensive					216.060	2	.000	0.082	invisible
	No	84.3%	77.9%	76.8%					
	Yes	15.7%	22.1%	23.2%					
Offside					225.706	2	.000	0.084	invisible
	No	85.3%	79.1%	77.6%					
	Yes	14.7%	20.9%	22.4%					
IIS					339.445	2	.000	0.150	small
	Low	<b>51.6%</b>	43.8%	32.9%					
	High	48.4%	56.2%	67.1%					

Note. Small effect:  $w = 0.10$ , Medium effect:  $w = 0.30$ , Big effect:  $w = 0.50$  (Cohen, 1988).

This is also shown in the motor situation with the opposition, where it was the lowest in comparison to other division. When coaches decided to practice with opposition, we see they used the practice with numerical symmetry, more than other division, and this means that this practice was as the training matches and this also shows from the high use of continuity and scoring support. It is surprising though that the practice seems to be without a goal, so we understand they used attacking games without a goalkeeper on both sides with the offside regulation in order to develop players by using the offside traps or breaking it, because this league is characterized by quick counter-attacks. Practice was within the field completely because they use the un-official pitch for the formal matches, often available for full use; coaches in the second competitive division relied on preparing the players physically, increasing competition orientation, tending towards technical and getting used to the condition of the matches more than plans training, tactics and different offensive situations and these results differ from a study Larkin, & Williams (2016).

Looking at second division based on interaction domain, we find that they used practice with collaboration less than the second and professional divisions, and this is what we see in the practice with opposition, where it was the highest compared to the other divisions. This can be explained for the higher level competition in the first division league, because they aspire to promote to the *league of lights* (professional division) and want to escape from the specter of relegation to the second division: relegation makes them lose many advantages, the most important of which is the support and financing of companies for clubs in these first and professional division, so we see the coaches were their strategy practice with the opposition to increase competition orientation and prepare the team for the league.

Let us not forget here that the analyzed data was before entering the competition period (pre-season) such as the study of (Jordan et al., 2015; Rich et al., 2015 219) which

were to investigate the player's abilities before the season, and this study looks at the internal logic of practice; where we find dissymmetry, through a lower defense and higher attack, and this is what we see with the variable of the goalkeeper's presence on the defensive side, more than in other divisions. The form of the league for the first division follows this mechanism, because the way of playing depends on the stability defender in the back line, and when the team attack we see that the defenders are usually more than the attackers (numerical inferiority). This can be due to the *zona mixta* that the coaches pursue in this league, and the timid in the attack, they had a tendency to practice in the form of matches, such as training matches and attacking games, through, continuity and offside regulation using the official goal more than the others divisions. The strategies of coaches in the first competitive division is the closest to the real game and preparation for competition and trying to reach the result of winning directly and quickly in this period of the season.

Looking at the professional division practice, we see interesting things that shock us at first glance, but when we try to explain them we find that they have a special meaning for this period of the season. In one hand we can conclude that the coach turned to preparing the players physically and tactically and setting them to enter the season. As the professional player is supposed to have almost complete skills, so we see that psychomotor practice was higher than in other divisions, such as fitness activities and skills practice as part of the warm-up individually, because these clubs have enough sports equipment for each player separately, so the activities were with the ball in the warm-up part and increase the sense of the ball without interacting with the partner or opponent.

On the other hand, the coaches want to increase the familiarity and understanding between the players by distributing positions and applying the game plan. We see that the practice with opposition was higher than in second division and lower than in first division, and by practicing in the numerical superiority and with the presence of the goalkeeper on the

defensive side more than other divisions. This shows that they do not practice small games so often through the high discontinuity, and then exercise is repeated, maybe by modifying the coach on it. It seems that the coaches in this division also had their strategy using tactical and automatism tasks without focusing on the regular form of the game (Yates, & Williams 2010; Partington, & Cushion 2013; Partington, Cushion, & Harvey 2014) and the validity of this conclusion also appears from the lack of their use of scoring support, the lack of use of the official goal and the lack of use of offside regulation compared to the first and second divisions, where they relied in their practice on the small space as well.

The reason for this may be the decision of the coaches in this division to make the motor situations difficult for the players when the individual interaction space is reduced, or because these clubs wish to prefer training on the official stadiums in which their matches are held, so two teams may share the same pitch. This practice is almost the closest to preparing the players tactically and increasing the harmony among them to enter the season because some of them may be new to the team because the transfers between clubs in this division particularly are high, so coaches consider that the players are technically and competitively ready, as the coaches' strategy differs from the other division. In the professional division, the coaches' strategy was directed towards more tactical preparation, this is the interpretation of the difference in the technical level of the different divisions in the league matches.

We can confirm that the competitive divisions' variable affects the coaches' strategies in a visible way. The small size of the effects must be explained in relation to the aforementioned variables: experience and qualification. If the coaches' characteristics do not affect strategies, and there is no significant profile of pro, first or second divisions' coaches, differences due to competitive level cannot be large.

However, we can extract the following strategically rules according to competition levels:

- Collaboration-opposition practice slightly higher in first division.
- Symmetry is higher in second division.
- Continuity is lowest in Pro division.
- Scoring support is lowest in Pro division.
- Target present is lowest in second division.
- Goalkeeper on defense present is highest in Pro division.
- Goalkeeper on offensive present is lowest in Pro.
- Offside regulation is lowest in Pro division.
- Individual interaction space is lowest in Pro division.

### Summary

This last summary collects 11 main ideas that may explain the absence of differences, or the small size effects described:

- *Similar qualification courses*

Qualifying courses for soccer coaches in Palestine, which the PFA organizes in cooperation with the AFC, follow the same approach, work plan, and the same trainers repeatedly, and thus almost the decisions of Palestinian soccer coaches in preparing the coaching sessions and suggested motor tasks are similar because they were qualified from the same source.

- *Short coaching contracts*

Palestinian soccer clubs often put their teams' results at the forefront of their concerns, far from planning for the medium and long term. This makes the coaches suffer from a lack of vision from the club administration, which prevents them from working in good conditions. Therefore, soccer coaches move between Palestinian clubs continuously, as the

period of common contracts between them and the clubs is for one season only. The coach tries to train the team with one aim of achieving a win in fastest and least effort. In addition, it appeared that 77.8% of the coaches participating in the study moved between more than one club during the 2010-2019 seasons.

- *Depend on players more than coaches*

It is well known in the Palestinian soccer leagues in different competitive divisions that the clubs depend on the ready player to achieve their goal of winning matches and finishing the league in a good rank. Some coaches even require before signing the contract with the clubs to bring some selected players, so we see many shifts of players between soccer clubs, and the common notion is that the duration of the players contracts ranges between one or two seasons only so that they can move to the club that offers them a better offer.

- *Sharing the same pitch during coaching sessions*

Many Palestinian soccer clubs share the same pitch with each other during coaching sessions, as there is no private stadium for each club. For example, in the 36 clubs participating in this study, we see that they used only 15 pitches. Due to the lack of stadiums, clubs are forced to share them. Each team takes up half a field, making them see each other during the coaching session, which may lead to imitating each other in the proposed motor tasks.

- *Similar resources*

Many Palestinian coaches look on the Internet to get motor tasks with new ideas in order to be distinct, and different from the rest of the coaches. However, these coaching sources are often similar. They look at different Arabic websites and social media forums for soccer coaching. They even use the same suggested coaching sessions; most look to the same sources, which means the same orientation.



- *Similar background*

We see that the coaches' background is almost the same, seeing that 80.6% were former soccer players, 72.2% had low coaching experience, 61% had studied physical education in their universities studies, and 52.8% had an “A” coaching certificate. This may be another reason for the similarity of their work and decisions in their suggested motor tasks in the different coaching sessions.

- *Financial constraints*

During the data collection of the study, the coaches complained that the general preparation period could not be used adequately, as most clubs start preparing for the season about a month before the start of the competition period, because the clubs' administrations contract with coaches and players belatedly, due to the financial distress facing most clubs, they do not have investment sources of income, but rather depend on donations from businessmen or sponsorship from commercial companies before the start of the competition period. This makes coaches follow the same process of coaching aimed at preparing for entry into competitions.

- *Absence of a foreign coach*

All the soccer coaches in the Palestinian clubs are Palestinians who live in the same community and have the same customs, traditions, experiences, and general culture. There are no foreign soccer coaches in Palestine because they do not prefer to work in a place with no security and safety due to the continuing practices of the Israeli occupation and the occupation policy. It is also forbidden for foreigners to stay for more than a month in the Palestinian territories. This could be a reason for the similarity of the coaches' strategies because the presence of a foreign coach means the existence of different strategies and methods of coaching.

- *Part-time*

There is no full-time for the player or coach to practice the soccer profession in Palestine, which leads to poor planning and creativity, so the coaches tend to implement coaching sessions with what they have of pre-ready coaching sessions may they have obtained through qualification courses or commonly used websites. Most of the players and coaches work in a government or private job or study in universities, so the coaching process may be routine in order to complete the playing plan and distribute the players.

- *Administration and fans interventions*

Most Soccer coaches in Palestinian clubs think and focus on satisfying the administration and the club's fans in all ways. Usually, deviating from the common and working in a way different from what is familiar to them is unacceptable because the most important thing for them is a quick achievement and winning, so the coach's focus is on following what is compatible with them because they compare the coach's work with the work of the coaches who before him, in addition, the coach feels job insecure because they will hold him responsible for the loss in the league matches. Moreover, they see that the matter depends more on the ready player than creativity in the coaching process.

- *Absence of coaching staff*

The absence of coaching staff may be one of the most important reasons that the teams coaches suffer from, which makes them assume greater responsibilities than those required of them because most clubs have a main coach and assistant coach because they do not want to spend their money on the coaching staff known in all its specializations. Still, rather they want to focus on bringing in players. This eliminates the consultations and the suggestion of alternative plans from the staff assisting the coach. We see coaches only who suggest, propose and decide what they think is appropriate, which puts pressure on the

coaches due to their many responsibilities. They resort to the ready coaching units and depend on the ready player to win.

Soccer coaches in Palestine whose duties differ from that of all soccer coaches in the world, as they may be a technical director, a goalkeeper coach, or even a team director, as these disciplines are almost non-existent in the Palestinian football system because of the lack of possibilities for preparing coaches with subtle specialties in football. It is possible to see the head coach of the team who trainer for the goalkeepers, preparing the players physically, or physiotherapist for players injured on the pitch. This matter burdens the coach with greater responsibilities than necessary.

Most football coaches in Palestine do not depend on their coaching programs. This comes because all coaches have the same strategic thinking. One of the most important reasons for this matter is the lack of foreign expertise for soccer coaches in Palestine. The lecturers are training courses to qualify coaches in Palestine they are Arab lecturers from neighboring countries or local trainers, they frequently attend various training courses because of the occupation's ban on entering foreign lecturers more than one month, so the approach taken by the Palestinian coaches is similar and can be expected for each other during the different matches, which leads to the coaches dependence on Players to achieve their goals during the competition period, we see a common trend in Palestine that before the coaches signs a contract with any club, they are required to bring in certain players who trained them in another club so that they can achieve what is required of them, so that reliance turns on the quality and skills of the players in the team instead of being reliance on coaching programs.

Technical instability is also one of the most important obstacles to the different football leagues in Palestine, which burdens the coach; it is seldom contracted with a coach

for more than one season which causes technical instability for the team. The coach directs to zero in the event of starting preparation for a new team.

Palestinian players specially in the professional division are contracted for a period of one season only due to the lack of financial capabilities of the Palestinian clubs, which prompts the coaches to think about a way to compensate the players at the end of the season, this leads to the imbalance of the team; that requires the coaches to restore balance to it so that they can achieve the goals required of them in the sports season.

All the reasons mentioned above have led to a few Palestinian coaches who are distinguished in the soccer coaching field. They are frequently requested by clubs that think about competing for different Palestinian titles, so we see them moving between clubs, but this does not change the fact that the Palestinian coach needs contact with foreign coaches to change their approach and provide them with new strategies that benefit the development of Palestinian football.

## **PART IV CONCLUSIONS AND PERSPECTIVES**



## CONCLUSIONS AND PERSPECTIVES

Personal characteristics do not seem to affect the judgment of Palestinian elite soccer coaching when designing and selecting the content of practice. However, some small, but interpretable differences have been found in regard to the level of the competition. The 36 coaches participating in this study have allow us to better know about the internal, most relevant manifestation of football in Palestine, but also rise important questions that may require a follow-up.

Coaches are decision makers. During the pre-season period of season 2019/2020 different preparatory strategies were develop according to the praxeological variables described, but the lack of relationship to experience and qualification make us wonder about the impact on individuals of the educational paths, both specific (FIFA) and general (physical education degrees). As a university and school teacher, a different approach to coaching and training could be expected from university graduates. In the same vein, we can wonder about the balance between uniformity and creativity that FIFA qualification programs produce. This piece of work can be the starting point for a national reflection about the training program of Palestinian football coaches from the grassroots, based on the nature of the game itself: a sporting duel that puts intelligence in play.

There are certainly many more factors that can be taken into account to understand this standardization: social media and YouTube, the absence of different foreign experiences from what is common, the continuous transfers of coaches between clubs, and the clubs' dependence on one month before the beginning of competitions period, due to Palestine's financial hardship in general and the sports clubs in particular, can also lead to a very similar way of thinking.

Besides, the clubs sharing the same pitch during coaching sessions due to the lack of stadiums allow coaches watch each other during their sessions, and the fact that coaches are

not fully employed reduces the chance of pre-preparing daily sessions and increases the use of ready-made units, which are almost the same that all coaches took from the curriculum of the qualifying courses. The surveillance of the clubs' administrations of the coach's work can lead them too to feel restricted in making decisions and feel a high pressure, even higher due to the lack of any assistant staff in many clubs.

Coaching is a social practice. For this reason, the aforementioned factors constitute the guidelines for future investigations and interventions. It may be necessary to work on distinguishing and selecting the contents of the qualification courses according to the classification level, and to benefit from the experiences of the foreign trainers, and to encourage coaches to review and follow up on specialized information sources and important scientific references in the soccer coaching world. For example, some federations participate in highly ranked, specific websites and permit coaches to access them; in other cases, federations impose on the clubs a minimum duration of the contracts with the coaches (two seasons at least) which reduces the transfers of coaches between clubs; federations also encourage the clubs to start the preparation period during the beginning period of the season, so that the coach has enough time to prepare the team.

In our case, early financial assistance is granted to the clubs by the PFA one month before the competition period start, which forces them to start the season a month before the start of the league. This leads the clubs to look for the time of the session when there is no one else on the pitch without participating with any other club, and setting a minimum wage for coaches that matches the standard of living in Palestine so that the coaches could devote themselves fully to the coaching profession. These actions should be complemented with educational actions to improve the practice of the players and the building of the teams.

This study would have been impossible without the coaches. The continuous, generous attention we have received from them is the main asset of our work. We have been



able to build up a solid network of collaborators that represent the most prominent agents of Palestinian football. However, we did not succeed in finding the different profiles of coaches according to their personal characteristics. Conversely, there is no relationship between the competitive structure of elite Palestinian football and the personal paths that can take any of them to the peak.

The absence of similar investigations in other countries impedes us to interpret these results as normal or extraordinary, but these results could be due to the interest of Palestinian football clubs in the coach's achievements and reputation which may have been achieved by the presence of top players in the team they were coaching, or other temporary reasons. Clubs in the different competitive divisions may not care about the coach's characteristics, qualifications, and experience. Therefore, the clubs direct their interest towards hiring a coach distinguished in their achievements from other lower divisions.

This is very much the logic of competition itself. We are aware of the fact that elite coaches are as valuable as their latest success; that they are managers more than trainers. But this is not the case in Palestine, so we can think of a system in which the individuality of the coaches be valued in searching the best of the solutions for the interest of their clubs and, what is most important, for the development of their players. We did not deny nor hide away that this venture is guided by a desire to contribute to the advancement of Palestine as a country through the improvement of football and sport. As we said, better coaches make better players, and better players can take Palestine to the global market of soccer.

Incidentally, when writing this thesis, we did not find archives nor records nor information related to football in Palestine, maybe because the PFA was recently restructured. It is understandable that the institution was more concerned about issues considered to be more important than keeping the memory over the past 12 years. Although identity and history are very important for the Palestinian people, many Palestinian

researchers face the difficulty of the paucity of references and the weakness of archiving in the sports field: a great lot of information and dates need to be formally written down and preserved in places that any researcher can access.

Given the rapid transformation of electronic operations, we still lack an electronic library through which anyone can search for information related to Palestinian sports and football in particular, such as the general league and its results since its inception, the participation of the national team, information about clubs, players, the qualifications of coaches, and referees, stadium names and capacity, and everything related to the game in a systematic way. The importance of a memory preserve goes beyond scientific and research benefits, as it provides evidence of the identity of the Palestinian sport in confirming the presence on the Palestinian land and conveying an honorable image to the world that the Palestinians work systematically and institutionally and are able to their state.

It may necessary to work on forming a committee in cooperation with universities, the Ministry of Culture and Information, the Supreme Council for Youth and Sports, or researchers to document records and archive and preserve the memory of all sports federations systematically and scientifically and present it in a place accessible to all. There are always unknown people who are keen to record history and preserve the identity of the land and pass it on to future generation.

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## APPENDICE



## APPENDICES

### History of Palestine

Palestine resides in a particular geographical location which was blessed by god ‘ jebusite (Canaanite tribe) lived there 6000 years ago , they settled in alquds (Jerusalem) which used to be known as jebus , then more Canaanite tribes settled in northern part of Palestine , which used to be known as the “land of Canaan”, the name “Palestine” probably came from “Palestia” that came from the sea , they settled and mixed with the original people in that land and became known as “Palestine”, over time ,many nation ruled Palestine , {Canaanites , Prophet David , Prophet Solomon , Israel Kingdom , Jehovah Kingdom , Assyrians , Babylon's, Persians , Greeks , Romans , Muslims } The last one was the Islamic nation which ruled Palestine for 1100 years , for centuries Muslims, Christians, and Jews coexisted peacefully in Palestine , by the end of 19th century, Zionist schemes surfaced and the Palestinian plight began , in that time, Palestine population was around 460,000 in 1878 , Jews were around 3% , (McCarthy, 1990), with the rise European nationalism more Jewish suffered persecution so they started to organize and think of emigrating from Europe ... but to where? The Jewish journalist “Theodor Herzl“ answered this question in his book where he called for a national homeland for the Jewish, he suggested Palestine and Argentina and other places in Africa as well , then several Jewish conferences took place to collect funding and support for this cause and Palestine was chosen to be that place , influential Jews in UK and USA pressured their governments to support them as well and the emigration of Jews to Palestine began , 25,000 Jewish came to Palestine from eastern Europe and Russia , Jewish population increased to 5% , we will see How these enormous waves of emigrant Jewish with Zionist ideology were the main reason in the Palestinian plight , with every wave, problems on livelihood and land arose with the original people of Palestine , in 1891 , alquds

(Jerusalem) notables appealed to the ottoman government to stop Russian Jewish immigration and land ownership but the immigration of the Jewish did not stop , 40,000 Jewish emigrated to Palestine and their population became 8% , with the collapse of ottoman empire and the end to world war I, united Kingdome and France divided the Levant region according to Sykes picot treaty , then UK conquered Palestine according to San Remo conference and promised to fulfill Balfour declaration , what is Balfour declaration? In 1917, the UK gave a secret promise to support the Jewish in establishing a national homeland in Palestine and support emigration and land ownership (Mattar, 2005).

Moreover, it supports emigration and land ownership. The United States government-backed up this promise; this declaration significantly affected the Palestinian plight. The third wave of immigrants arrived, and Jews became 12%; however, Jews and ownership did not exceed 3%. With these changes, Palestine's demography changed dramatically. More problems between Arabs and Jews, seven big Palestinian conferences were held to denounce the Balfour declaration. Intifada (uprising) broke out, and significant turbulences took place in Jaffa. A conference in Nablus called for an economic boycott with Zionists. The Supreme Muslim Council was established; on the other side, the Haganah was established as a military Zionist organization (Khalidi, 1998).

Although it was covert and illegal, Britain's supported it directly and indirectly. At the same time, Britain's used to arrest every Arab who hid a weapon in his house. More immigration waves came from Poland, Russia, Germany, and other Jewish populations increased to 17%. Riots around the AlBuraq wall (western wall) broke out in the Al-Aqsa mosque in Alquds (Jerusalem). More Palestinians joined the uprisings. In 1933 Alquds' significant revolt broke out, another wave of immigrants reached Palestine with a quarter of a million Jews, Jews population increased to 30% (Shehata, 1974).

From 1936 to 1939, the big Palestinian Revolution broke out against British and Jewish gangs all over Palestine; this revolt was more significant than the other uprisings. It started with a strike six months; during the revolt, Britain established the “Peel” commission it recommends dividing Palestine into a Jewish state [in Purple} and an Arab state {in green} and Jerusalem {in pink} to stay under British mandate this entails evacuating hundreds of thousands of Arabs from the Jewish state to the Arab state. At that time, Jews only owned 5.5% of Palestine land; nevertheless, the proposed Jewish state resides on 33% of Palestine (Mansour, 2007).

**Figure 11** Peel commission partition plan 1937



*Note.* In the public domain ([Google, n.d.](#))

Palestinians rejected these propositions, and they were not implemented; under the revolt pressure, Britain issued what was known as “MacDonald White paper”, the paper

prevented Jewish immigration to Palestine after five years and offered Palestinians independence within ten years, the Zionist movement rejected these recommendations and terrorist organizations such as Haganah, Irgun, Stern committed bloody massacres not only Palestinians but also against the British to force them. One of the most bloody operations was king David's hotel in Jerusalem, where British officials met. Palestine partition plan 181 in 1947, Britain decided to withdraw from Palestine and asked the UN for its recommendations (Mattar, 2005).

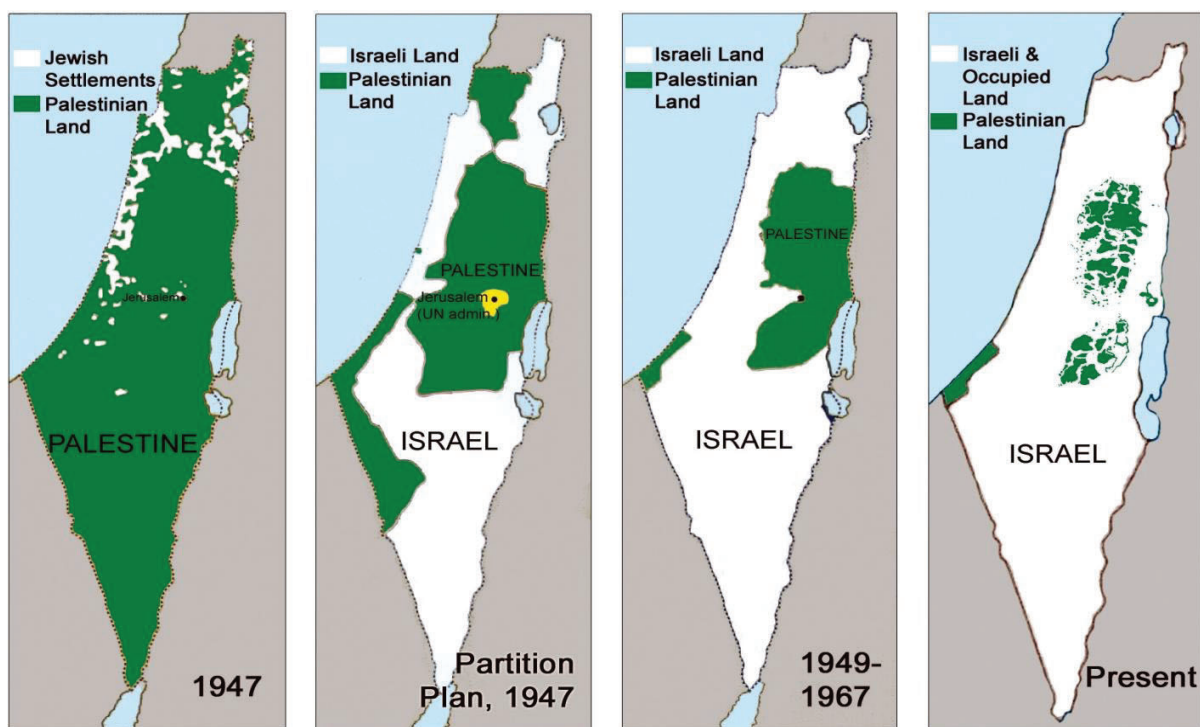
UN convened and proposed the famous partition plan “resolution 181” The resolution proposes dividing Palestine into two states: Arab and Jewish While Alquds (Jerusalem) stays under the special international regime, the USA and the Soviet Union supported this resolution. At that time, Jews owned only 6.5% of Palestine, while the resolution gave the Jews 56% of land! Palestine and Arabs rejected this resolution and were not implemented. It was clear that a war would break out in Palestine; Haganah called for army conscription for all Jewish with ages between 17 and 25. On the other hand, the league of Arab states created “The Arab Liberation Army” Another wave of emigrant Jewish reached Palestine; the Jewish population increased to 31.5% before the war. At that time, Jewish owned only 9% of Palestine (Rogan, 2000).

In 1948 Britain withdrew from Palestine. The war between the Arabs and the Jews armies broke out; War ended with Zionists' victory. They occupied 78% of Palestine and established the state of “Israel” on this part; the USA immediately recognized this new state. In the following year, Israel joined the UN as an official country and was recognized internationally.

Due to the 48 war, Alquds was divided into two parts: the “western” part that stayed with the Jewish and the “eastern” part that stayed under Jordanian control. In 1967, Zionists occupied the eastern part of Alquds. From 9% pre-war to 78% post-war... This is 48 war

Nakbah (Catastrophe). To summarize the root cause of the Palestinian plight, the main problem was with the huge immigration waves for Jewish with the Zionist ideology, which states that Palestine belongs to Jewish alone. They have to establish their homeland there with any means possible regardless of the original people's fate. Big colonial countries also conspired to help achieve this occupational plot, which fits right with its strategic goals in the region. All this led to creating the Palestine cause and the plight of Palestine (Khalidi, 1998).

**Figure 12** *Palestinian loss of land - 1947 to present*



*Note.* In the public domain ([Google, n.d.](#))

The situation remained as it is to this day. The pace of occupational practices increased the seizure of land and the construction of illegal settlements. The division of Palestinian areas by checkpoints and the Palestinian people's uprising continued. Tens of thousands of martyrs, wounded, destroyed homes, and many Palestinians are imprisoned in Israeli prisons.

**Impact of occupation on Palestinian football**

Among the most important obstacles facing PFA work is the Israeli practices against Palestinian soccer, as the Israeli occupation authorities have expanded their aggression against the Palestinian sports movement, especially since the early 1990s after it had registered a strong sports presence at the local, regional, and international levels; These achievements were accompanied by the raising of the Palestinian flag and the playing of the Palestinian national anthem in many sporting forums in most parts of the world. They deliberately prevented and obstructed the construction of sports facilities' infrastructure, destroyed existing facilities, stormed them and destroyed their property, closed some of them, and prevented them from practicing their activities; In addition to targeting the lives of players and administrators, so that many of them became martyrs. It also restricted their freedom of movement and travel and forced large numbers into prisons and detention centers. Not to mention the detention of tools and equipment in the ports and the imposition of exorbitant customs duties. The violations did not stop there. Rather, it established so-called "settlement clubs" as one of its tools to serve the settlements and swallow more Palestinian land.

All these violations aim to assassinate the Palestinian sports movement, which represents one of the Palestinian national symbols that guarantees its emergence in the spaces of international sports forums. Moreover, to kill it as a sponsor of the youth sector, on which the construction of the Palestinian future depends - to violate all international conventions and norms; In particular, the Olympic Charter, the statutes and regulations of the International and AFC, and even the conventions and principles governing human rights.

Because sport in Palestine is a form of national struggle, the Palestinians have succeeded in conveying a clear message to the Israeli occupation, that its aggression and brutality will not undermine their resolve amid the current events in Palestine, and while the



rising youths were courageously and aggressively confronting the occupation soldiers and mechanisms on The extension of the Palestinian land, and the martyrs rise from them, the Palestinian national team militants used to restore hope to the masses of the Palestinian people, and paint joy on the faces of the Palestinians in their various places, in confirmation of the greatness and pride of the Palestinian people, who carry a strong will and unprecedented challenge, so that they jump over The obstacles created by the appalling conditions of occupation. The Palestinian player has made us accustomed to carrying the message, drawing a smile on the lips of the Palestinian people and the public in the darkest circumstances, and proving to everyone that it will work miracles and that Palestinian sport can overcome all difficult circumstances and achieve the desired goal.

Types of targeting sports facilities:

i. Preventing and obstructing the construction of sports facilities infrastructure

The Israeli occupation authorities have spared no effort to prevent or hinder the construction of the infrastructure for Palestinian sports facilities, using all means and methods To prevent it from developing according to international standards; To remain incapable of meeting the needs of Palestinian youth and sports. The occupation has prevented the building of dozens of stadiums in different areas in Palestine, under many pretexts, including establishing a playground that threatens the security of the Israeli settlers who stole the land and built houses there as illegal settlements.

ii. Destroying existing facilities

The Israeli occupation authorities did not stop and obstruct the construction of infrastructures for Palestinian sports. Rather, it is working to destroy the existing facilities, to the point of attacking some of them by warplanes and bombing them with missiles. Dozens of stadiums and sports headquarters have been destroyed in separate areas in Palestine.

**Figure 13** *Palestine stadium in Gaza after being bombed by the Israeli army*



*Note.* In the public domain ([Google, n.d.](#))

iii. Breaking into sports establishments and facilities

The Israeli occupation authorities deliberately stormed Palestinian sports institutions to confuse their work and tighten the screws on their activities, as happened in the storming of the Palestinian Olympic headquarters and the headquarters of various clubs under the pretext of searching for wanted and saboteurs.

iv. Sports facilities are closed by military orders.

The Israeli occupation authorities implemented a policy of closing Palestinian sports institutions. These practices began with the closure of sports establishments in 1967 because they believed that Palestinian youth gatherings were forbidden.

v. Preventing institutions from holding and organizing sporting events

The Israeli occupation authorities work to prevent the organization of many sporting events by issuing orders or using military force under the pretext of avoiding youth gatherings.

Targeting players and administrators ways:

i. Targeting the lives of players and administrators

The life of every Palestinian is a target for the weapons of the Israeli occupation soldiers, including the Palestinian sports family, whether players, administrators or media professionals. That is why the Palestinian sports movement offered a series of martyrs throughout its history full of giving and sacrifices as an integral part of the Palestinian national movement. According to a report published in (Al-Hayat Al-Jadidah newspaper on 12/31/2014), the number of martyrs who rose since 2000 to date from the Palestinian sports movement (540), in addition to thousands of wounded and injured cadres of the Palestinian sports movement.

- ii. Restricting the movement of players, administrators, and journalists inside and outside the State of Palestine

The Israeli occupation authorities prevent players, administrators, and even journalists working within the Palestinian sports movement from moving freely between the Palestinian governorates. Specifically, between the West Bank and the Gaza Strip and vice versa, but rather works to restrict their freedom of movement from inside Palestine to outside it and vice versa; This includes preventing and blocking Arab and foreign sporting missions from abroad to participate in friendly, official, unique and collective sporting events.

These measures affect the level of players and their ability to participate in tournaments. The Israeli occupation authorities refuse the intervention of many countries to provide freedom of movement for Palestinian athletes under pretenses. This forces the bodies supervising Palestinian sports to take decisions to cancel meetings and postpone other meetings, except for some players or staff of the administrative apparatus, and this had negative effects on the results of teams, clubs, players, and administrators, and evidence for this are:

1. The PFA announced the postponement of the Palestine Cup final match for the 2019/2018 season between the Balata Youth Center and Rafah Services Club

due to the occupation's refusal to grant permits for the Rafah Services Club delegation to enter the West Bank under the pretext of "security reasons".

2. On June 15, 2019, the Israeli occupation authorities prevented the Egyptian Arab Olympic teams and the Jordan Junior National Team from coming to Palestine and engaging in friendly matches. After refusing to obtain special permits that allow elected officials to enter the Palestinian territories.
3. On 7/1/2017, the Israeli occupation authorities prevented eight players from the Palestinian Olympic team from traveling to Algeria to prepare for the Asian qualifiers for the AFC U-23 Football Cup.
4. On 9/21/2016, the Israeli occupation authorities prevented the Palestinian beach soccer team members from traveling from the Gaza Strip to Vietnam to participate in the fifth Asian Beach Games.
5. On 5/13/2013, the women's teams department in the PFA was forced to cancel a friendly match and postpone the training camp in the women's Asian Cup qualifiers framework. Because the national team coach is in Jordan, awaiting a permit to enter Palestine.
6. On April 21, 2013, the Israeli occupation authorities prevented 26 runners from the Gaza Strip to Bethlehem from participating in the "International Palestine Marathon" without giving any reasons.
7. The Israeli occupation authorities prevented six Iraqi players and administrators, including two from the Iraqi Air Force team. He was supposed to play an official match against the Palestinian Dhahriya team on December 4, 2012, the framework of the Arab Clubs Cup.

8. On October 4, 2004, the Israeli occupation authorities prevented five of the Palestinian soccer team from traveling to Qatar to participate with the team in its match against Uzbekistan in the Asian qualifiers for the 2006 World Cup.

- iii. Players arrested

The prisons and jails of the Israeli occupation are filled with prisoners of the Palestinian sports movement, including two governors, two detainees, and administrators (who are sentenced to administrative detention). Despite the absence of accurate statistics about their number, there are several indications that the number of athletes detained in the prisons of the Israeli occupation continues to increase.

The Israeli occupation authorities are seizing many tools and equipment sent by international parties and FIFA not to reach the Palestinian sports federations. It is known that Palestinian shipments are brought in through Jordan or Israeli ports, including Ben Gurion Airport. For the release of equipment donated to the PFA; The Palestinian customs authority must provide the Israeli customs authority with the documents to decide to release this equipment. In past years, the PFA could not receive FIFA and the European Football Association (UEFA) shipments except after paying heavy customs duties.

The Israeli occupation authorities intervene in organizing friendly soccer matches between Palestine and other federations. It usually prevents many of them from being established, and evidence for this is:

In 2009, an agreement was reached between the PFA and two of the most powerful Brazilian clubs to hold a peace match in Palestine. It was decided to take place on 9/15 of the same year. Still, the match was canceled under Israeli pressure.

The Israeli occupation authorities pressured the Zambian government to abort an attempt to set up a friendly match between the teams of Zambia and Palestine on October 9,

2011, noting that an agreement was reached between the Federations of Palestine and Zambia to organize the meeting.

In 2011, it was decided to hold an international meeting between Palestine and the Central African Republic. Still, the attempt was aborted, through Israeli intervention, at the highest political levels.

Several sports clubs belong to the Israeli settlements built on the Palestinian lands occupied in 1967. These clubs were approved by the Israel Football Association to carry out their activities on stadiums built on occupied Palestinian land that Israel confiscated from their owners by military orders or taken over from the settlements a headquarters and address and are illegal under international law.

Since 2011, the PFA has demanded that the Israeli federation be held accountable for allowing clubs established on the territories of the occupied Palestinian state (in settlements). This is in implementation of Article 2.72 of the “FIFA” constitution, which stipulates that “states are prohibited from establishing soccer clubs on the territory of another political entity that is a member of FIFA and involving them in their games without the consent of the political entity”.

The PFA called for preventing the Israeli Federation from organizing matches in settlements in the West Bank, which FIFA considers part of the territories of the PFA.

On October 29, 2017, FIFA announced that it was distancing itself from the issue of Israeli settlement clubs that play in the West Bank, announcing that it would adhere to “neutrality” in the case, and refuse to impose sanctions on these clubs; Although this is inconsistent with FIFA laws, despite the recommendations of the commission in charge of the International Federation, and the message of the Assistant Secretary-General of the United Nations to FIFA, according to which: The presence of sporting activity in the settlements is

inconsistent with United Nations resolutions, the principle of human rights, and the laws of “FIFA”.

These violations constitute a clear and flagrant breach of the Olympic Charter, the statutes, and the FIFA regulations.

It is noteworthy that the Palestinian soccer file was the scene of political disputes between the Palestinian and Israeli leadership, as this file was raised in FIFA meetings on May 29, 2015, after the president of the PFA, Major General Jibril Rajoub, raised the red card in the face of Israel for the first time. In a clear message before the international community to show the extent of the violations and abuses committed by Israel against Palestinian soccer.

**Figure 14** *Red card against the occupation*



*Note.* In the public domain ([Google, n.d.](#))