

## Referees', coaches', and experts' opinions on the utilisation of the rules in the teaching-learning process of mini-basketball

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*REFEREES', COACHES', AND EXPERTS' OPINIONS ON THE UTILISATION OF THE RULES IN THE TEACHING-LEARNING PROCESS OF MINI-BASKETBALL*

KEYWORDS: Rules, Regulations, Basketball, Initiation.

ABSTRACT: Rules affect the technical-tactical elements since they establish the limits on the players' actions in relation to the ball and the rest of the players. However, there are very few references that discuss this topic. Thus, it was decided to get familiar with the opinions of experts, referees, and coaches regarding the utilisation of the rules and regulations at the mini-basketball stage. The sample was made up of 9 subjects who were interviewed: three coaches, three referees, and three experts. All had university degrees and certification from the federation as well as experience in the mini-basketball division. The instrument that was used was the semi-structured interview. The Delphi method was followed for the design of the interview, and 5 university professors participated in selecting the dimensions and questions. After the definitive composition and the pilot study, the various professionals from the sample were contacted and interviewed. The content of the interviews was recorded and transcribed. The coding was done by four researchers, and the reliability was assured by the *Kappa* index, of which the mean index was  $K = .78$ . The analysis was done with MXQDA 10 and SPSS 20.

The participants insist on the importance of teaching the rules to the players when they begin playing basketball, given that this learning allows them to understand the internal logic of the game. Further, they explain the need for this relationship in the learning process and it even opens up the possibility for programming around the rules, given that they are what give the game and its technical-tactical elements meaning.

The combined knowledge that a basketball player needs is related to the logic of the game (Alarcón, et al, 2011; Grehaigne, Godbout and Bouthier, 1999). The internal logic of any sport establishes the relationships that are produced between all the elements that shape the dynamic of the game, such as the space, the material, the technical-tactical elements, and the rules (Hernández, 1994). The rules and regulations, among other aspects, establish the limits for the players, with regard to the ball and/or the rest of the players (Alarcón and Cárdenas, 2010). Therefore, it can be asserted that the rules are what affect the technical-tactical elements (Lagardera and Lavega 2003).

However, traditionally, the processes of teaching and learning basketball have been carried out by starting with the technical and tactical elements when they are a consequence of the rules. Therefore, it would be interesting to assess the importance of the rules in the teaching of mini-basketball, whether their teaching is related to the learning of technical-tactical content, whether they could be the focus of programming, which rules or regulations should be the first ones to teach, etc. This way, we could shape intelligent players that would understand the reasoning for the game's actions (Giménez and Sáenz-López, 2004; Mesquita, 1997). However, there are few references that allude to the planning and teaching of the rules in initiation sport teams (Ortega et al., 2012). Therefore, the present study was undertaken, in which the following was sought: to assess the opinions of experts, referees, and coaches regarding the teaching and learning of rules at the mini-basketball stage; to describe the rules that they

consider most important for teaching basketball at the initiation level; and to analyse the possibility for teaching the technical-tactical elements by beginning with the learning of the rules.

### Method

The design of this study was within the interpretative paradigm (Colás and Buendía, 1998), with a qualitative methodology, since it was necessary to look in-depth at the opinions that could be overlooked with other, more standardised methods (Thomas and Nelson, 2007).

The sample was composed of nine interviewees, divided into three groups, with the following profiles: three coaches (subjects 1, 2, and 3) with national certification, who had coached mini-basketball teams for at least four years; three referees (subjects 4, 5, and 6), who had refereed for at least three mini-basketball seasons, had basic coaching certification, and were currently active referees; and, three experts (subjects 7, 8, and 9), who were university professors with national coaching certification, had coordinated mini-basketball clubs, and had coached in this division for at least four years. All had some university degree.

The instrument that was utilised was the semi-structured interview. For its design, the *Delphi* method (Landeta, 1999; Steurer, 2011) was followed. Five university professors who were experts in the topic and knowledgeable of the procedure were selected and informed about the study and the subject of how to teach mini-basketball beginning with the rules. The first question

asked was: *what large dimensions should be used to create an interview about this subject?* The answers were analysed by the coordinators (three researchers) and then sent again to the group of experts so they could be analysed. The experts then answered the following question: *what subjects would you include within each dimension?* The coordinators again managed the answers, and, finally, following the recommendations of authors such as Flick (2007), Patton (1983) and Roulston (2006), they designed the interview's questions. The interview outline was sent to the group of experts so they could make the final corrections. Finally,

a pilot interview was carried out before the definitive draft was set. The part of the interview selected for the present article had four codes, in which questions related to these codes were asked (e.g. *“How do you feel about the possibility of teaching the rules and the technical-tactical elements at the same time?”*).

The procedure consisted of making contact with the selected subjects to ask for their collaboration and set a date for the interview. Five were interviewed in person, and four were interviewed over the phone.

Dimension	Categories	Description
Rules	Importance of the rules in the teaching and learning	Comments about the importance of introducing the learning of the rules in the training sessions.
	First rules	Rules that are important or that are kept in mind to introduce them in training sessions.
	Rules and technical-tactical elements	Information related to the possible relationship between the rules and the technical and tactical elements in mini-basketball.
	Programming through rules	Opinions about the possibility for working on the technical and tactical elements through the rules.

Table 1. The codes utilised.

After the literal transcription of the interviews and the definition of the codes were completed (chart 1), the codes were assigned to the transcribed text. Authors such as Moreno et al. (2002) and Flick (2007) recommend that this process be carried out by various coders to guarantee greater reliability. The coding was carried out by the four researchers. The first meeting was done to become familiarised with the codes. In the second meeting, the researchers began to code together to solve any doubts. After the second meeting, each coded individually and worked out the results together. After each meeting, the degree of reliability was calculated until it passed 80% (Goetz and LeCompte, 1988). Likewise, Cohen's *Kappa* index (1960) was calculated to analyse the association between the coding, taken two by two (Gorospe et al., 2005). An average of  $K = .78$  was obtained, which was a good degree of agreement (Landis and Koch, 1977).

The data were processed in the MXQDA 2010 computer program, which allowed us to determine the frequencies and

recover the texts by code and interview. The *Kappa* index was calculated through the use of SPSS 20.

## Results

Beginning with frequency, it is observed in table 1 that the code that was most repeated was "Importance of the rules in the teaching and learning of basketball". Eight of the nine interviewees insisted on the importance of teaching the rules to the players that are beginning to play basketball due to the fact that this learning allows them to understand the internal logic of the game. "The use of the rules in practical tasks influences the learning process" (subject 9). Players should "have the basic notions of basketball, in regards to technique, tactics, and regulations" (subject 3).

Codes	Frequency
Importance of the rules in the teaching and learning	30
First rules	15
Rules and technical-tactical elements	25
Programming through the rules	17

Table 1. Code frequency.

The second most frequently cited code was “Rules and technical-tactical elements”. Four subjects stated the need for a relationship between the rules and the technical and tactical elements. Subject 4 recommends continuing to analyse in depth its complexity. In this sense, subject 6 believes that if we do not teach the rules and the technical and tactical elements at the same time we can cause players to perform errors in the execution and decision-making of some actions. This interviewee analysed the need to improve the coach’s formative process since the process of relating the rules and the teaching by establishing sequences of learning of the technical and tactical elements has a certain complexity.

The third most frequent code was “programming from the rules”. There is a first group of four subjects that reflect on the possibility of designing a program from the rules, arguing that they are what give meaning to the game, and consequently, give rise to the technical-tactical elements. On the other hand, three of the interviewees insist that rules and technical-tactical elements should go together, so the players see the relationship more naturally. Finally, a couple of experts believe that the programming should begin with the emotional and psychological sphere and, later, consider the rules. Subject 7 explains that “if the internal logic of the game is going to mark the beginning and the process, evidently we need to approach the programming from the rules, since these are what affect the internal logic of the game”. Subject 8 points out that “it is obvious that to teach the content you have to be familiar with the rules; thus, teaching the rules and later the content is most logical”.

Finally, the fourth code was “First rules”. There was unanimity in the rules that should be taught first to a team that is in the initiation stages of basketball, and they are the following: travelling, double-dribbling, personal fouls, and the rules that refer to space. With regard to other rules, three subjects believe that players should become familiar with the scoring system of the game, with regard to the type of basket, since it is the primary objective of basketball and on which the game is constructed. For subject 7, the rules that players should first learn “are those that allow the player to be in possession of the ball”.

## Discussion

The majority of the interviewees agree with authors such as Piñar (2005), and Alarcón and Cárdenas (2010) that gave importance to the rules that are present in the process of teaching

and learning in mini-basketball. There were few differences in the opinions of the three groups of interviewees: coaches, referees, and experts. The experts were most familiarised with this possibility, to which the others responded positively although it appears that they had never given it any thought.

The rules are what determine the internal logic of the game, along with the technical-tactical elements (Hernández Moreno, 1994). If we understand that the rules and regulations are what limit the technical movements, it seems reasonable to plan the teaching of basketball by teaching the basic rules in order to give meaning to the technical-tactical actions. A part of the interviewees were in favour of having the rules as a part of the teaching-learning process guides in mini-basketball. Another group of the subjects believed that the learning of the technical-tactical elements and the rules should be worked on in a parallel manner. Regardless, it is necessary for the players to be familiar with the rules and for them to relate them with the motor situations that develop during the game. In this way, the players will act more intelligently, becoming familiar with the reasoning for their actions and benefitting more from them (Giménez and Sáenz-López, 2004).

Regarding the four rules that the participants believe that should be first taught to a team in initiation (travelling, double-dribbling, personal fouls, and the rules regarding the out-of-bounds lines) these are the ones that the participants believe that are basic and necessary for players to understand the meaning of the game. It is observed that these rules are, basically, those that allow the player to carry out the actions that are directly related to the possession of the ball, and for some authors they are the most important in the first stages of initiation (Leite, Gómez, Lorenzo and Sampaio, 2011; Ortega and Sainz de Baranda, 2009).

Finally, we can conclude that all of the interviewees agree that the rules should be present in the teaching of basketball at the initiation stage. It is recommended that they be related to the technical-tactical elements and even program by starting with their teaching. The rules that are considered most important in the initiation to basketball are travelling, double-dribbling, personal fouls (no grabbing or pushing), and the rules that refer to the out-of-bounds lines.

From this study, it is necessary to investigate the technical-tactical elements that arise from each rule, as well as the way to work on them in training sessions.

*OPINIÓN DE ÁRBITROS, ENTRENADORES Y EXPERTOS SOBRE LA UTILIZACIÓN DE LAS REGLAS EN EL PROCESO DE ENSEÑANZA-APRENDIZAJE DEL BALONCESTO*

**PALABRAS CLAVE:** Reglas, Baloncesto, Iniciación.

**RESUMEN:** Las reglas condicionan los medios técnico-tácticos ya que establecen los límites de acción de los jugadores, en su relación con el balón y con el resto de jugadores. Sin embargo, existen muy pocas referencias que aborden esta temática. Así, se planteó conocer las opiniones de expertos, árbitros y entrenadores en torno a la utilización de las reglas en la etapa de minibasket. La muestra estuvo formada por 9 entrevistados: tres entrenadores, tres árbitros y tres expertos. Todos con titulación federativa y universitaria y con experiencia suficiente en la categoría de minibasket. El instrumento utilizado fue la entrevista semi-estructurada. Para su diseño se siguió el método Delphi en el que participaron 5 profesores universitarios que fueron seleccionando las dimensiones y preguntas a realizar. Tras la redacción definitiva y el pilotaje, se contactó con los diferentes profesionales de la muestra y se les entrevistó grabando y transcribiendo el contenido. La codificación se llevó a cabo por cuatro investigadores, garantizando la fiabilidad mediante el índice *Kappa*, obteniendo un promedio de  $K = .78$ . El análisis se llevó a cabo usando el MXQDA 10 y el SPSS 20.

Los entrevistados manifiestan la importancia de enseñar las reglas a los jugadores que se inician en el baloncesto debido a que este aprendizaje les permite entender la lógica interna del juego. Asimismo, se expone la necesidad de que exista esta relación en el proceso de aprendizaje e incluso se abre la posibilidad de programar a partir de las reglas, puesto que son las que dan sentido al juego y a los medios técnico-tácticos.

*OPINIÃO DE ÁRBITRO, TREINADORES E PERITOS SOBRE A UTILIZAÇÃO DAS REGRAS NO PROCESSO DE ENSINO-APRENDIZAGEM DO BASQUETEBOL*

**PALABRAS CLAVE:** Regras, Basquetebol, Iniciação.

**RESUMO:** As regras condicionam os meios técnico-tácticos, já que estabelecem os limites de acção dos jogadores, na sua relação com a bola e com os outros jogadores. No entanto, existem poucas referências que abordam esta temática. Assim procurou-se conhecer a opinião de especialistas, árbitros e treinadores em torno da utilização de regras na etapa de minibasket. A amostra foi composta por nove entrevistados: três treinadores, três árbitros e três peritos. Todos com formação federativa e universitária e com experiência suficiente no escalão de minibasket. O instrumento utilizado foi a entrevista semi-estructurada. Para o seu delineamento seguiu-se o método Delphi no qual participaram cinco professores universitários que foram seleccionando as dimensões e as perguntas a realizar. Após a redacção definitiva, contactou-se vários profissionais da amostra que foram entrevistados, gravando-se e transcrevendo o conteúdo. A codificação foi realizada por quatro investigadores, assegurando a fidelidade mediante o índice *Kappa*, obtendo-se uma média de  $K = .78$ . A análise foi realizada com o programa MXQDA 10 e o SPSS 20. Os entrevistados expressaram a importância de ensinar as regras aos jogadores que começam no basquetebol porque esta aprendizagem permite-lhes compreender a lógica interna do jogo. Como tal discute-se a necessidade de que exista esta relação no processo de aprendizagem e inclusivamente abre a possibilidade de programar a partir das regras, visto que são estas que dão sentido ao jogo e aos meios técnico-tácticos.

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