


Handball tactics and game model

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ABSTRACT

The objective of this study was to discuss the process of teaching and training tactics in handball, in order to enable a game model for the teaching of this sport. It is a descriptive and exploratory narrative review of handball with regard to the use of tactical elements. The databases of Bireme, Pubmed, Scielo and SPORTDicus were used. The search period for studies was from 2013 to 2023. A total of 1,142 studies were found, after analysis of which 241 were eligible and only 19 were able to meet the research criteria. It should be noted that training should not be based only on traditional teaching and training methods. From the analysis carried out with this study, the learning of defensive and offensive tactical fundamentals in handball, facilitates the teaching-learning-training process of the modality, providing a possible construction of a game model.

Keywords: Attack, Defense, Game, Tactics, Training

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INTRODUCTION

Handball is a collective sport (MEC) modality of cooperation, opposition and invasion of the opponent's terrain, requiring the athlete to present a performance associated with physiological, emotional and cognitive skills of the technical and tactical aspects of the sport (Caldas, 2014). Thus, the teaching-learning-training (E-A-T) process of handball requires professionals to provide athletes with opportunities to appropriate situations that occur in the game, especially those that favor intelligence and creativity (Galatti et al., 2014).

In Brazilian handball, research related to the E-A-T process of tactical fundamentals is rare and incipient, providing subsidies almost exclusively of aspects related to teaching methodology, physical fitness, game analysis and that concern the improvement of physical capabilities inherent to performance (Pombo, Baldy, Pereira, 2016). The literature also deals with the E-A-T process of tactical game situations in the school environment, training of intelligent players, this exclusively on the base categories (Castro, 2013).

The teaching of tactical concepts of Brazilian handball refers to ways in which the Brazilian Handball Confederation (CBHb), the body that manages the sport in the country, has fought for results against the toughest opponents in South American and Pan American sports games, world championships and Olympic games (Uzeu, 2014).

On tactical changes and concepts, Anton (2002); Ibañez, Jiménez and Antúnez (2015) point out that the game tactic is related to the adequacy of the planned behaviors in the face of the strategies of the opposing team. The development of tactics in the game is established from the characteristics of the athletes and the opponent, so that they are less advantageous temporally and spatially for the opponents.

Still on tactics, Anton et al., (2000); Scaglia, Reverdito, Leonardo and Lizana (2013), state that this comprises the totality of individual, group and collective actions of a team, see table 1, developed rationally according to the rules of the game, aiming at their success. Tactics can also be defined as the cognitive content of the teams that face each other, so the essence of team sport is characterized by the intentions of the players and that each team cooperates with each other in the pursuit of a goal, to score more goals (Mendes, 2020; Rigon et al., 2022).

In handball, tactical training can be divided into phases: initial (08 to 12 years old), learning occurs through incidental processes (games and play); positional or sectoral (14 to 16 years old), emphasis is placed on improving discoveries and decisions, placing the athlete in different playing positions, so that he discovers where he will best act and realizes the responsibility of each specific position; and the situational phase (16 years old onwards), in which there is an improvement in decision-making, in the different positions, already thinking about specialization in the face of the functional structures that the defense and attack systems provide (Menezes, Reis and Filho, 2015).

According to Dallegrave, Berno and Folle (2017), tactical training based on problem situations provides greater development of the ability to play in situations that arise in a match. This type of training fosters cooperation work, autonomy in decision-making, and the interaction of athletes in tasks within the team. It is expected to train more intelligent and creative athletes, who must know how to effectively solve problems they will face (Ibañez, Feu, Cañadas, 2016).

Table 1 below shows the tactical actions of the athletes in handball.

Table 1 – Individual, group and collective, defensive and offensive Handball tactical actions.

Defensive Tactical Actions		
Individual	Group	Collective
Coverage	Fluctuation	Fluctuation
Deterrence	Marker change	*Specific stations
Fluctuation	* Specific defensive positions	**Defense systems
Interception	----	----
Pressure	----	----
Offensive Tactical Actions		
Individual	Group	Collective
Offensive blocking	Circulations	Offshoot
Curtain	Intersection	Commitment
Penetrations	*Specific offensive posts	**Attack systems
Break in meaning	----	----
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(SILVA, 2024)

* Specific Posts - These are partial zones of the defensive and offensive game, of estimated dimensions, with tactical and real possibilities of useful actions; they determine the defense and attack systems in which the teams operate (Caldas, 2014).

**Defense and Attack Systems - Within the collective tactic, the defense and attack systems are presented as ways in which the team presents itself in a zone of the field of play. These are composed of their specific posts (Caldas, 2014).

Before knowing and executing the tactical elements above, the athlete, from the initiation, must act understanding the concepts of Depth and Defensive Width that for Menezes, Reis and Filho (2015); Simões (2012) refers to: depth - increase in the movements or runs of players, within a defensive system in relation to the length of the court, widely used in pressing, deterrence and in open defense systems by zone (1:5; 3:3; 3:2:1). Width - increase in the movements or runs of the athletes, within a defensive system, in relation to the width of the court, used in the movements of floating, coverage, exchange of markers and in closed defense systems by zone (5:1; 6:0).

At the same time that the athlete evolves defensively, he will have to improve in relation to the attack, identifying offensive tactical fundamentals to improve his performance. He will have to know the phases of attack in handball (arrival in attack, positional attack, engagement and tactical actions). This, according to Caldas (2014), refers to the evolution and training process, in addition to some cognitive processes developed by the trainer with the practitioners: perception, attention, concentration, decision-making, memory, recognition, language, reasoning and learning.

The possibility of building a tactical game model that meets the characteristics of Brazilian players requires a solid foundation of the subjects involved and knowledge about the phenomenon,



principles and rules of execution of the athletes' actions (Lozano, Camerino, Hileno, 2016; Souza et al., 2015).

According to Menezes and Reis (2014), the tactical changes in handball occur through the objectives of the attacking players, with specific fundamentals, and by the defenders who try to prevent the offensive tactical strategies. All this offensive and defensive structural organization is called the operational principles of the game.

Following the reflections of the previous paragraphs, there is a primordial subject in the construction of a tactical model of play in Brazilian handball. This individual is the coach, he should be qualified as one of the pillars for the growth of the sport (Cunha et al., 2014). A group of experts must assume the role of leaders of this complex activity that is based on power relations (Mendes, 2020).

Regarding the concept of model, Amorim (2017) defines that a model is presented as a symbolic representation of an institution or entity. This is organized by its constituent elements (managers, trainers, researchers, etc.) whose role is to facilitate recognition and identification by society. With regard to the game model, this means the ideal way for a modality to function, the style of practicing a sport, essential for recognition in the national and international scenarios (Rigon et al., 2022).

Thus, the objective of this study was to discuss issues related to the teaching and training process of defensive and offensive tactical fundamentals in handball, making the professionals involved with the modality reflect and be able to outline a game model for the teaching of this sport in their work environments (reality).

METHOD

This study is a review of the narrative, descriptive and exploratory literature (Gil, 2008). This type of approach allows the description and theoretical-reflective discussion of studies already produced on a relevant and current subject, providing access and processing of knowledge as well as new ideas about the studied theme (Antunes et al., 2022). The search on "tactics in handball with regard to the use of the tactical elements of this modality". The research period was from January to February 2024 and was carried out in the Bireme, Pubmed, Scielo and SPORTDiscus databases. Books, academic papers, original scientific articles and review articles pertinent to the theme were considered. The time cut-off period of the studies was 10 years (2013 to 2023).

The keywords were worked on in three languages: "Technique" AND "tactics" AND "handball" OR "tactics in handball" OR "tactical training in handball" AND "handball" OR "tactical actions in handball" AND "handball game model", in the Portuguese language. "Technique" OR "tactical" AND "handball" OR "tactic in handball" OR "tactical training in handball" AND



"handball" OR "tactical actions in handball" AND "handball game model". "Técnica" OR "táctica" AND "balonmano" OR "táctica en balonmano" OR "entrenamiento táctico en balonmano" AND "balonmano" OR "acciones tácticas en balonmano" AND "modelo de juego de balonmano", in Spanish.

The inclusion and exclusion criteria. The following criteria were used to include the studies in this review: (a) full articles published in journals, monographic studies, dissertations and/or theses; (b) cross-sectional, longitudinal, experimental and/or case studies that have evaluated the tactical aspects of offensive or defensive handball and its relationship with the E-A-T process of athletes, and (c) articles in Portuguese and English. Studies that did not analyze the proposed modality, studies that did not verify aspects of the technique and tactics involved with the theme studied were excluded.

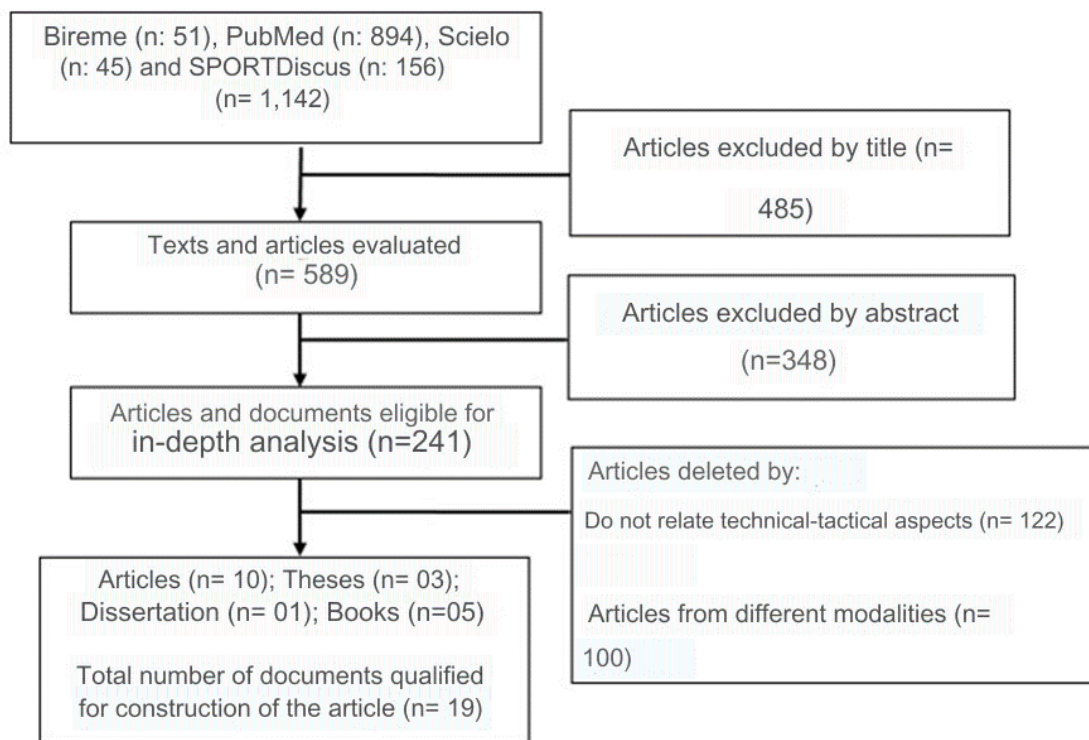
The analysis was based on the following premise: exploratory reading by title of all the material found; selection of studies that were linked to the theme; selective reading of studies as follows: exclusion of articles after reading the abstract, followed by the complete reading of compatible studies. Manuscripts unrelated to the theme were excluded.

The searches were carried out by two evaluators independently, until a consensus was reached for the inclusion of the studies. Those that presented duplicity were considered only in one database.

RESULTS

A total of 1,142 studies were found. After analyzing these, 241 documents were eligible and only 19 met the research criteria, being presented in Figure 1.

Figure 1. Flowchart of all studies found in the databases, discarded and included by type and quantity.



Source: (SILVA, 2024)

Table 2 - Studies found and included in this study; authors' perception of tactics and game model in handball.

Author and Year	Teaching Tactics in Handball	Game Model (MJ)
(Castro, 2013).	Knowledge about the internal logic of the modality.	In a MJ the main task is linked to the coaches, they will have to help the athletes to know and organize the knowledge about the game, in a coherent and logical way.
(Caldas, 2014).	Concepts about defensive and offensive tactical fundamentals in handball.	The MJ in handball will depend on the coach's planning and the environment where he is inserted.
(Menezes and Reis, 2014).	An extremely difficult task for coaches will be to understand the technical-tactical scenario of handball, to teach the relations of cooperation and opposition between athletes.	The choice for an MJ in handball is linked to the defensive and offensive characteristics provided by the opponent.
(Novaes et al., 2014).	Handball tactics are associated with the teams' ability to relate and establish coordinating situations to solve the problems that emerge in the game.	MJ is a construction of defensive and offensive actions in a coordinated way, to overcome opponents; in a successful performance of these actions to prevent the opponent's submission.
(Canãdas et al., 2015).	Establish connections between the cognitive dimensions (attention, anticipation and decision-making) with the tactical elements of the game.	GM should be based on the resources used by coaches to simplify the actions of the game, such as 2v2 and 3v3 confrontations.
(Menezes et al., 2015).	E-A-T methods should allow the development of motor, cognitive and socio-affective skills in the teaching of handball tactics.	The MJ created by the coach should be supported by various teaching methods related to handball.
(Sousa et al., 2015).	The teaching process needs to be based on the characteristics of the modality in which complexity and interactivity are decisive for the game.	The GM must be associated with the game systems. Since there is an activation relationship between these systems and defensive and offensive actions.
(Teles, 2015).	The teaching of tactical resources can be influenced by the level and improvement of technical aspects.	MJ has a peculiar profile of the players' levels and technical commitments.

(Amorim, 2017).	The teaching of tactics in handball consists of learning tactical means, linked to the athlete's motor and cognitive conditions.	GM will always be connected to the smartest and most creative player; From the training process, they should have greater autonomy and greater ability to develop their individual strategies to collaborate with the team.
(Flor et al., 2017).	Emphasis on activities that stimulate the cognitive processes of athletes and tasks related to the central nervous system, manipulating the training environment, within situations very close to the reality of the game.	To prepare a MJ, the coach in his training plan must control the technical-tactical variables involved, using teaching methods that emphasize the acquisition and improvement of motor and cognitive actions.
(Mendes et al., 2017).	The teaching of tactics is based on the reality of the game, elements of cooperation and opposition, characteristic of the sport.	MJ has structures aware of content hierarchies, such as defensive actions (recomposition/recovery of the ball), offensive (transfer to the opponent's zone/counterattack) and applied to the game, providing opportunities for creativity.
(Prudente et al., 2017).	The teaching of tactical elements must be interconnected with the player's behavioral profile and how he precedes/anticipates actions during the game.	MJ can also be established through the physical behaviors, but mainly the cognitive behaviors of the players, that is, more intelligent athletes (re)condition the game.
(Mendes et al., 2018).	In this process, athletes must be submitted to resolutions of the problem situations to be faced.	The construction of a MJ will require the coach to know the structural principles (defensive and offensive) of handball.
(Pereira, 2018).	The teaching of tactics involves understanding basic and complex tactical means.	The MJ of a team will be built from all the information obtained by the coaching staff: defensive, offensive and transition effectiveness.
(Ribeiro et al., 2019).	The teaching process based on individual (physical, understanding and situational perception) and collective (cooperation, ball recovery) elements seek to synergistically stimulate the players.	Understanding the general/global (running, jumping, and moving) and specific/local (defending, blocking, and attacking) demands of the game can ensure effective individual and collective self-organization and set up as a GM.
(Mendes et al., 2020).	It requires mastery of other variables of sports training, organization of thoughts and decisions about the process in question.	The MJ must be established based on the principles and rules of coordination of the handball game, always thinking about the opponents to be faced.
(Mendes et al., 2020).	Tactical training must have complex actions and a high level of uncertainty, but that allow athletes to develop behaviors to overcome the unpredictability of the game.	In the construction of a MJ in handball, it is necessary to hold events such as: training courses, leveling of coaches, regional and national camps, among others; This is for the technical-tactical development of athletes and coaches.
(Mendes et al., 2021).	The idea of tactical training in handball is based on the development of understanding of the game through tactical awareness, at the same time there is improvement of physical, cognitive and emotional capacities.	The creation of a GM requires several decisions from the coaches, in the selection and hierarchy of tasks that favor the assimilation and execution of objectives and contents of the problem situations that will occur in the game.
(Rigon et al., 2022).	The teaching of tactics in handball should provide athletes with the necessary adjustments to solve individual and collective team situations.	The MJ represents the basic functioning or general organization of the handball game, indicative of the minimum conditions for this game to take place.

Source: (Silva, 2024)

DISCUSSION

This discussion focuses on all the studies found and included on this topic. Thus, regarding the evolution of the athlete and the E-A-T process that the coach submits this individual, the use of problem situations in training should allow athletes to express creativity in the execution of the technical and tactical fundamentals of the game (Castro, 2013). On the other hand, according to Mendes, Dallegrave and Nascimento (2018), the tactical training process of the Brazilian women's

youth (U18) and junior (U20) teams, in relation to the activities of a training period, remains high with regard to unopposed game situations, for example "2x0" (U18=19.5% and U20=16.2%).

According to Caldas (2014), in the development of the E-A-T process, it is necessary to learn the basic tactical elements initially, in order to advance towards specific tactical skills. Thus, with regard to the content of individual defensive tactical elements, the demands must present increasing difficulties, which lead athletes to the mastery of such tactical intentions, in order to understand the variables that affect their functioning (Caldas, 2014; Menezes, Reis and Filho, 2015).

Menezes and Reis (2014) question coaches of teams in the adult female category about individual actions of defensive effectiveness, it was identified a great importance to float and cover (mutual help). For the float, an offensive characteristic was attributed to the behavior of the defenders, as it tried to anticipate the actions of the attackers. From the float a cover can occur, due to the occupation of space in the defense and, at the same time, to give more security to the floating player. It was observed by these authors that, in the view of the coaches, the initial and central element of the game in defense is the control of the 1v1 game, in which the individual tactical action of coverage is essential, making offensive numerical superiority difficult. According to Novaes et al., (2014) the construction of a game model concerns, for example, the planning and use of defensive technical and tactical elements.

As for group tactics, for Menezes and Reis (2014), the change of marking is pointed out by the coaches interviewed as a solution to a situation of creation of doubts (change of positions) by the attackers. Thus, defenders will not allow the production of spaces by the attackers, through marking by observation, body contact and by the technical action called fitting (holding the opponent). The performance of a marking exchange within a defense system occurs, for example, in the execution of a cross between two attackers (Caldas, 2014).

According to Canãdas et al., (2015) the MJ must be built from the resources available to the coach, who in the E-A-T process will try to help the athletes in solving problem situations by transmitting their knowledge about the game.

Thus, Pereira (2018) analyzed which defense system the Brazilian women's youth handball team had more facilities (higher incidence of goals) and in which errors occur (rules, finishing and technical), considering the two opposing defensive systems most faced by Brazil. Performing 260 attacks facing the 6:0 defense system and performed 56 attacks against the 5:1 defensive system. Within these attacks, against a 5:1 defense, 11 attacks were finished on goal (19.6%), 6 attacks on 7 meters (10.7%), and the rest were attacks made with finishing, technical and rule errors ($\Sigma=75.7\%$). Thus, of the attacks carried out against the opponent's 6:0 system, 37.7% ended in goal ($n=98$) and 8.5% ended in shots from 7 meters ($n=22$) and ineffective attacks totaled 53.8%.

Still Pereira (2018), the results above show that the Brazilian women's youth team performed better against the 6:0 defense system, with a lower percentage of errors. Information of this nature shows that the coaches and coaching staff of the Brazilian youth teams must think about training linked to what has been discovered (science), in addition to considering the situations of adversary difficulties that they may face, that is... Construction of a game model for the investigated team.

Reinforcing the discussion, Sousa et al., (2015); Mendes (2020) state that the coach's perception is fundamental in the construction of a game model in handball. And it involves the development of knowledge about the various actions that occur in the attack and defense phases, both of the athlete and the team, depending on the forms of individual, group and collective tactical behavior, required in a match.

For Teles (2015); Mendes, Greco, Ibáñez, and Nascimento (2021), the training activities that are developed for the defense system, must be carried out with high demands of anticipation of the defenders over the attackers, using greater depth in their technical and tactical defensive gestures. And in attack, it is necessary for athletes to perform technical-tactical, individual, group and collective variations, in situations of spatial-temporal pressure, seeking high levels of effectiveness.

In the case of tactical actions or offensive MJ, this study discusses the actions in which the attack and defense are positioned. In order to have an effective game model, training must require athletes to have a diversified repertoire of individual tactical actions taught in situations of stress regarding spatial-temporal pressure, aiming at high levels of performance. In addition, it requires group and collective tactical actions (2, 3 or more athletes) with decisions for two or three possibilities, requiring athletes with an excellent reading of the game, especially in the 1st line of attack (Amorim, 2017; Sousa et al., 2015).

In the research carried out by Prudente et al., (2017) 16 games of the first 09 teams of the 2012 men's European championship were observed, 1,028 attacks positioned in the 6x6 game were analyzed, and in these there were 390 2x2 situations. This concerns the use of individual and group offensive tactical actions in a high-level game, taking into account that the defense system was organized and tried to develop its role by preventing the success of the attackers.

In the results of Mendes, Pacheco and Taborda (2017), in a training phase of the Brazilian men's youth handball team, 11 sessions were counted for the technical and tactical aspects. And many activities carried out in half a court, in which the attack and defense systems were worked on. In these situations, there was an explanation from the coaches and an understanding from the athletes of what could happen.

Mendes, Pacheco and Taborda (2017), observed in tactical training that youth athletes exercised in a period in defense, where time was controlled by coaches. And, acting as attackers, there was no control of this variable, counting the number of repetitions, and tactical actions that the

team performed. It is believed that the coaches aimed to spend more time in the attacking phase, seeking greater offensive chemistry. It was also observed that many of the activities of the attack were carried out in rows (analytical method), which often emphasizes the monotony/waiting of the athlete in training, which can cause losses in learning the tactics for the game.

For Mendes et al., (2020), the exercises proposed in a Brazilian youth team (18 years old) should not be supported only by a teaching/training methodology, but by strategies that change the game environment, causing variation in the athletes' behaviors, to make quick and accurate decisions in the face of any situation that the opponent proposes.

In the findings of Mendes et al., (2020), on the level of opposition (NOP) of the training activities of the youth teams (female = U18 and male U19), tasks with oppositional situations were used with greater frequency and percentage of time. On the other hand, the coach of the U18 team carried out activities more often in situations without opposition. These are particularities of the training verified by the authors in the distribution of tasks among the interviewees. Coincidence or not, the findings of Mendes et al., (2020), for the women's youth team (U18), are similar to other studies in the field of sports training (1x0 and 2x0 activities) (Mendes et al., 2018; Mendes et al., 2017).

Finally, the results of Mendes et al., (2020) reveal that the coach of the U18 team had greater difficulties in structuring the training, using most of the time analytical activities. This aspect was also seen for professionals who work in basic categories in other modalities (Cañadas et al., 2015). The coach of the Brazilian handball team U19, on the other hand, showed a greater ability to manipulate the training/game environment, dominating, in his activities, the aspects of time and space involving the athletes in the attack and defense exercises (Mendes et al., 2020). These methodological differences in the teaching of the modality characterize professionals with greater knowledge (Novaes, Rigon, Dantas, 2014).

For Flor et al., (2017), according to the studies cited above, in order to build a MJ, the coach must, during the execution of his training plan, control the technical-tactical variables involved, using teaching methods that emphasize the acquisition and improvement of motor and cognitive actions, manipulating the training environment, in situations very close to the reality of the game in defense and attack.

According to Amorim (2017), for several years, the Brazilian adult handball teams were directed by foreign coaches. Such a strategy has borne fruit for the sport in terms of managing the training of the base teams (cadet, youth and junior). As examples of strategies, we cite several national camps and meetings of handball teachers in higher education in Brazil, thinking about the evolution of a multidisciplinary technical commission and the athlete. But, since the dismissal of

these professionals from the national teams and the end of the meetings, these strategies have no longer been carried out, generating substantial losses in the search for a game model for the sport.

For Mendes et al., (2018); Ribeiro et al., (2019), in the construction of a tactical game model within a country, divergences will arise among handball experts, especially what should be taught for each category. The search will be a goal among the professionals involved, about the contents to be taught, so that there is a gradual increase in the complexity of individual, group and collective tactical actions of the proposed game model. It is necessary in the specialization stage (16 to 18 years old) to qualify the players for maximum sporting performance in the high-level game.

Handball teams at the top level, positioned in attack and defense organized in numerical equality, obtained results in which balanced matches are defined in the final 10 minutes. Opponents, especially attackers, wait for the right moment to make a decision and take advantage of the opponent's mistakes, opting to carry out individual tactical actions (Teles and Volossovitch, 2015; Mendes et al., 2017; Prudente et al., 2017; Pereira, 2018).

Pereira (2018) observed the Brazilian national handball team at the 2016 World Youth Women's Championship and analyzed the use of basic tactical means and complex tactical means. The latter, in Brazil, are still called rehearsed moves. The author points out that the Brazilian team used the positioned attack more frequently, executing basic and complex tactical means (77%). On the other hand, he used the game in transition (counterattack) in only 22.3% of his participation in 07 games played. These data project future investigations on a possible game model to be adopted by Brazil, assuming a philosophy of playing more in transition than is perceived today (thinking about the Brazilian youth teams).

The same author also observed that the Brazilian women's youth team, in 07 games, obtained 179 goals using tactical means in 133 actions (41.6%) and carried out counterattack actions with a value of 43 (50%). It can be seen that the team executed approximately 3.5 times more positioned attacks than counterattacks. On the other hand, the counterattack action was more effective, taking into account the amount in which each of these actions was executed.

According to Castro (2013); Ribeiro et al., (2019) and Mendes et al., (2020) what one must know to play well has been known in Brazilian handball for a long time. Therefore, this text proposes a reflection on the understanding of tactics and game model to play better, that is, to know, execute and respect all the internal logic of the modality, thinking about creating a game model for Brazil. This would be the main task of those involved with the improvement and evolution of handball in the country, helping athletes to organize their thoughts and knowledge, especially during the competition, in a precise and effective way.

Thus, in order to build a tactical game model for Brazilian handball, it requires some changes from the CBHb and the coaches, who must have a broad domain (knowledge) about scientific



methodology, planning, programming and training prescription; structuring and hierarchization of objectives and content for each phase of the athlete's evolution; criteria to select this individual and have an understanding of the game models of the opponents who command the sport worldwide (Mendes et al., 2021; Rigon et al., 2022).

CONCLUSION

From what was discussed in the aforementioned investigation about the teaching and training process of defensive and offensive tactical fundamentals in handball, it enables the effective use of them, making those involved with the sport able to create a game model for this sport within their teaching reality.

Changes and innovations of a methodological and practical nature for Brazilian handball, as well as the involvement and evolution for the sport, concern the work of several professionals. Coaches, based on a proposal suggested by the CBHb, must have knowledge of the handball teaching phases by category, regardless of the region of Brazil. The proposal for a game model must be written by experts and disseminated in the country, in training, training and leveling courses for coaches who will be responsible for treating this knowledge in a single language.

It is worth noting that the authors are concerned with broadening the discussion on the tactical issue in Brazilian handball, in addition to allowing a contextualization of the teaching possibilities inherent to the construction or proposal of a game model. Stimulating the discussion about the creation of a school of coaches in the country for the evolution of athletes and Brazilian handball.



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