

Educational Path for Pedagogical Skills: A Football School Experience

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Abstract : The current pedagogical culture recognizes an educational scope within the sports practices. It is widely accepted, in the pedagogical culture, that thanks to the acquisition and development of motor skills, it is also possible to exercise abilities that concern the way of facing and managing the difficulties of everyday life. Sport is a peculiar educational environment: the children have the opportunity to discover the possibilities of their body, to correlate with their peers, and to learn how to manage the rules and the relationship with authorities, such as coaches. Educational aspects of the sport concern both non-formal and formal educational environments. Coaches play a critical role in an agonistic sphere: exactly like the competencies developed by the children, coaches have to work on their skills to properly set up the educational scene. Facing these new educational tasks - which are not new per se, but new because they are brought back to awareness - a few questions arise: does the coach have adequate preparation? Is the training of the coach in this specific area appropriate? This contribution aims to explore the issue in depth by focusing on the reality of the Football School. Starting from a possible sense of pedagogical inadequacy detected during a series of meetings with several football clubs in Piedmont (Italy), there have been highlighted some important educational needs within the professional training of sports coaches. It is indeed necessary for the coach to know the processes underlying the educational relationship in order to better understand the centrality of the assessment during the educational intervention and to be able to manage the asymmetry in the coach-athlete relationship. In order to provide a response to these pedagogical needs, a formative plan has been designed to allow both an in-depth study of educational issues and a correct self-evaluation of certain pedagogical skills; control levels, led by the coach. This plan has been based on particular practices, the Educational Practices of Pre-test (EPP), a specific version of community practices designed for the extracurricular activities. The above-mentioned practices realized through the use of texts meant as pre-tests, promoted a reflection within the group of coaches: they set up real and plausible sports experiences - in particular football, triggering a reflection about the relationship's object, spaces, and methods. The characteristic aspect of pre-tests is that it is impossible to anticipate the reflection as it is necessarily connected to the personal experience and sensitivity, requiring a strong interest and involvement by participants: situations must be considered by the coaches as possible settings in which they could be found on the field.

Keywords : relational needs, values, responsibility, self-evaluation

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