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PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT OF COACHES AND TEACHERS: TRENDS AND CHALLENGES

1. INTRODUCTION

Our knowledge on sport and physical activity clearly indicate that they are indispensable ingredient of culture and health of the societies. Following the needs of society and the increasing knowledge on sport and athletes, sports are evolving. These changes make the sports coaches and teachers continuous professional development more important due to their leading role on training of athletes'.

Societal needs are mainly shaped by the factors related with better functioning in the current globalized knowledge society. Therefore, understanding the effects of knowledge society trends on sport and physical activity are critical for the professional subject matter knowledge of sports coaches and teachers.

Hargreaves (2003), in his seminal work, identifies teachers of knowledge society as professionals who promote deep cognitive learning, learn to teach in ways they were not taught, commit to continuous professional learning, work and learn in collegial teams, treat parents as partners in learning, develop and draw on collective intelligence, build a capacity for change on risk, and foster trust in processes. These competencies are directly applicable to sport coaches of knowledge society too. Current studies indicate that sport coaches/teachers should ensure the holistic development (physical, intellectual, mental, social and, spiritual) of their athletes/learners by deep learning, coach in ways they were not coached, commit to continuous learning, work and learn in collegial teams with a research perspective, collaborate with the parents for the development of athletes, collaborate with the other professionals for better coaching, manage the risks for the athletes/learner benefit, and foster trust in training processes to reach best possible outcomes.

Moreover, sport coaching/teaching subject matter knowledge on every aspect of sports is developing rapidly. Every other day, our understanding on human body, physiology of exercise, biomechanics, nutrition, sports medicine, psychology of exercise, sports pedagogy, sport management and organization, measurement and evaluation of sport performance, sport philosophy and ethics, and sports coaching have been increasing. Our knowledge on the athletes also becomes deeper by using information gathered with different newly developed instruments and measurement approaches. Currently, sport coaches and teachers are required to internalize all these subject matter content knowledge and knowledge on athletes to offer best coaching (NASPE, 2006).

The purpose of this presentation is to examine trends and challenges in professional development of sport coaches and teachers in the knowledge society. To

reach this end, firstly the trends and then the challenges will be discussed based on the findings of research studies. The goal of sport coaching/teaching is to unlocking the athletes' potential to maximize their performance (Whitmore, 2009). However, meaning of sport performance for a coach of an adult competitive athlete is quite different than the meaning of it for a coach of a sport participant who is looking for health benefits, socialization and enjoyment from participation. Design of the sport training is sensitive to the aims of the participation. Similar to the instructional design, training design should include “aims”, “content”, “implementation” and “outcome evaluation” phases and all phases should be aligned. Therefore, current trends and challenges in professional development are discussed under the a) aims, b) content, c) implementation, and d) outcome evaluation order.

2. TRENDS

Aims- Cote & Gilbert (2009) identifies two different sport contexts; 1) participation, and 2) performance. They also further divide participation context and performance context into groups by growth and developmental level of athletes [participation: 1) children, 2) adolescent-adult; performance: 1) young adolescent and 2) older adolescent-adult]. Both coaching context and their subgroups have different aims of coaching (See Table).

Participation coach/teacher for children should emphasis on the development of fundamental movements by child-centered view. Participation coach/teacher for adolescents-adults should stress on the development of fitness and health related physical activity participation. Performance coach for young adolescents should teach and assess physical, technical, perceptual, and mental skills by focusing on one sport. Performance coach for older adolescents and adults should prepare athletes for consistent high-level competitive performance by teaching and assessing physical, technical, perceptual, and mental skills. These coaches should also consider providing “life after sport” opportunities for athletes.

Cote & Gilberts' (2009) above mentioned frameworks is a good representation of coaching aims for different contexts. The framework has been empirically tested in different studies. Therefore, coaches/teachers' internalization of the aims of coaching context in which they will function should be at the center of all professional development programs.

Content- Sport coaches/teachers subject matter knowledge should mainly depend on the aims of coaching in each context. Rooted on the aims of coaching context coaches/teachers should mainly internalize the professional subject matter knowledge (i.e. knowledge on different areas of sport sciences), interpersonal knowledge (i.e. communication with athletes, groups, parents) and intrapersonal knowledge (understanding of himself/herself, reflection) (Cote & Gilbert, 2009).

However, speed of scientific knowledge accumulation within the knowledge society especially makes the coaching/teaching subject matter knowledge ineffective in a very short time. Best sport coaches/teachers of knowledge society are the continuous scientific knowledge consumers who are updating themselves with the newest

professional knowledge. Best coaches are also characterized by being a “coach/teacher as researcher”. Therefore, professional development programs should encourage coaches for being a “lifelong learner” and should develop their “action research” skills (Jones, Morgan & Harris, 2012).

Studies also indicate that coaches can develop their subject matter content knowledge by informal, formal and self-directed learning opportunities. Therefore, professional development programs should include a mix of informal, formal and self-directed learning opportunities (Cushion et al, 2010).

Implementation- Athlete-centered and autonomy-supportive coaching is recommended for all coaching contexts (NASPE Standards for Sport Coaches, 2006). However, coaches should also adopt other implementation methods and strategies specific to the nature of each coaching context. For example, creating a mastery oriented motivational climate is more important in participation coaching context for children, providing opportunities for athletes to have fun and playfully compete is more important in participation coaching for adolescents-adults, offering opportunities for fun with increasingly greater demands for deliberate practice is more important for performance coaching context for young adolescents, and setting up training on deliberate practice is more important for performance coaching context for older adolescents and adults (Cote & Gilbert, 2009).

Professional development programs should provide appropriate implementation strategies specific to the coaching context. Studies also indicate that informal professional development approaches such as “Community of Practice” (CoP) approach, and theory based programs are promising in developing coaching skills (Hunuk & Ince, 2013; Langan, Blake & Lonsdale, 2013).

Outcome evaluation- Intended outcome for participation coaching for children is development of fundamental movement skills, socialization and inclusion of all. In the participation coaching for adolescents and adults main intended outcome is inclusion of all, enjoyment, socialization, maintenance of participation and gaining health related fitness. In the performance coaching for young adolescents, intended outcome is development of an understanding of rules of competition, and development of physical, technical, perceptual, mental skills. In the performance coaching for older adolescents and adults main intended outcome is consistent high-level competitive performance and development of physical, technical, perceptual, mental skills (Cote & Gilbert, 2009).

Table. Aims, related coaching competencies, trends and challenges in professional development of coaches by using Cote & Gilberts' (2009) coaching context framework

	Coaching Context			
	Participation		Performance	
	Children	Young Adolescents & Adults	Young Adolescent	Older Adolescents & Adults
Aims of coaching/teaching	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development of fundamental movement skills by child-centered view 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development of fitness and health related physical activity participation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development of physical, technical, perceptual and mental skills by focusing on one sport 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensuring consistent high-level competitive performance by improvement of physical, technical, perceptual and mental skills
Related coaching/teaching competencies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Knowledge on aims of coaching children • Subject matter knowledge on sports for children • Communication skills by children and their parents • Capacity to reflect on experiences • Knowledge on action research • Inclusion of all • Autonomy supportiveness • Creating mastery learning climate • Measurement & evaluation skills 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Knowledge on aims of coaching young adolescents & adults • Subject matter knowledge on lifelong sport participation for young adolescents & adults • Communication skills by young adolescents & adults • Capacity to reflect on experiences • Knowledge on action research • Inclusion of all • Autonomy supportiveness • Creating mastery learning climate • Measurement & evaluation skills 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Knowledge on aims of coaching young adolescents for performance • Knowledge of talent identification • Advanced subject matter knowledge on one sport for young adolescents & parents • Communication skills by young adolescents and their parents • Advanced problem solving skills • Collaboration with sport scientists • Autonomy supportiveness • Capacity to reflect on experiences 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Knowledge on aims of coaching older adolescents & adults for performance • Advanced subject matter knowledge on one sport for older adolescents & adults • Communication skills by older adolescent & adult athletes • Advanced problem solving skills • Collaboration with sport scientists • Autonomy supportiveness • Capacity to reflect on experiences • Knowledge on action research

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Knowledge on action research • Measurement & evaluation skills 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mentoring skills to prepare athletes “life after sports” • Measurement & evaluation skills
Trends for professional development of coaches/ teachers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Formal • Informal • Self-directed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Formal • Informal • Self-directed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Self-directed • Informal • Formal 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Self-directed • Informal • Formal
Challenges in professional development of coaches/ teachers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coaches/teachers’ performance orientation instead of participation • Limited subject matter content knowledge • Poor lifelong learning skills • Limited communication skills with children & parents • Lack of research skills • Poor measurement & evaluation skills 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coaches/teachers’ performance orientation instead of participation • Limited subject matter content knowledge • Poor lifelong learning skills • Limited communication skills with young adolescents & adults • Lack of research skills • Poor measurement & evaluation skills 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coaches’ limited subject matter content knowledge • Limited communication skills with young adolescents & parents • Lack of research skills • Poor collaboration with the sport scientist • Limited measurement & evaluation skills 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coaches’ limited communication skills with older adolescent & adult athletes • Lack of research skills • Limited collaboration with the sport scientist • Poor mentorship skills to prepare athletes “life after sport” • Limited measurement & evaluation skills

Coaching success should be evaluated mainly with the intended outcome for each specific setting. Through the professional development programs, sport coaches/teachers should learn the coaching outcome evaluation for their own setting.

3. CHALLENGES

Findings of recent studies examining the coaches/teachers professional characteristics have indicated some issues that are critical for the coaching effectiveness. The below mentioned sports coaches/teachers’ characteristics are the challenges for future professional development programs.

Sport coaches/teachers’ regardless of their coaching context emphasize on performance in sport participation (Yapar & Ince, 2012). Participation context coaches/teachers and performance coaches for young adolescent have limited subject

matter knowledge (Hunuk & Ince, 2013; Kılıç & Ince, 2012). Regardless of the coaching context, coaches/teachers have poor research skills, limited communication skills with athletes & parents, and limited measurement & evaluation skills (Kılıç & Ince, 2012). Performance context coaches are not effectively collaborate with the sport scientist.

4. CONCLUSION

Future professional development programs should focus on clarifying the aims of coaching for different coaching contexts, improving the subject matter knowledge of coaching, developing research skills and lifelong learning skills, improving measurement and evaluation skills of the coaches to ensure quality coaching. Theory based and informal CoP type professional development programs are promising as intervention techniques for future coach education programs.

5. LITERATURE

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Coaches and teachers are two key figures in the management and facilitation of the transformational process (i.e. training-education) in sport. Therefore, providing high quality professional development opportunities for them can directly impact on the transformational process in sport. Professional development content for coaches and teachers is influenced by current and future needs of the athletes. Traditionally, aim of athletic success has the strongest effect on sport practices. Focus of this aim is mainly on talented children and youth. Therefore, it requires a very selective process and it is not inclusive. Recently, increased awareness of health promotion and the strong link between health and regular sport participation have also deeply impacted on sport practices. This point of view emphasizes on “sports for all” and “lifelong sport participation”, and it is inclusive. Aim of athletic success and aim of health promotion require different coaching and teaching approaches. However, developing a sense of autonomy in athletes is important in both settings. Above mentioned issues influence the “training design” and “instructional design” approaches for coaches and teachers in different contexts. Current presentation will include a discussion on both trends and challenges in the professional development of coaches and teachers in making them better facilitators of teaching and learning.