

SPORTS COACH EDUCATION: GUIDELINES FOR THE SYSTEMATIZATION OF PEDAGOGICAL PRACTICES IN BACHELOR PROGRAM IN PHYSICAL EDUCATION

FORMAÇÃO DE TREINADORES ESPORTIVOS: ORIENTAÇÕES PARA A ORGANIZAÇÃO DAS PRÁTICAS PEDAGÓGICAS NOS CURSOS DE BACHARELADO EM EDUCAÇÃO FÍSICA

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RESUMO

Diante da importância da formação de treinadores no ambiente universitário e da relevância de diferentes bases de conhecimento para a atuação desse profissional, o objetivo do ensaio é apresentar orientações para a sistematização das práticas pedagógicas ao longo do curso de bacharelado em Educação Física. A preocupação do modelo de organização das práticas pedagógicas é de fortalecer o desenvolvimento de competências profissionais voltadas à prática de treinadores esportivos, em função do nível de progressão do estudante no curso.

Palavras-chave: Treinador Esportivo, Prática Pedagógica, Aprendizagem Profissional, Coaching.

ABSTRACT

Given the importance of Coach education at university context and the relevance of knowledge bases for the professional intervention, the purpose of this paper is to provide guidelines for the systematization of pedagogical practices during the Bachelor Program in Physical Education. The concern of the organizational model of pedagogical practices is to improve the development of coaching competences, depending on the level of the student into the BA Program.

Keywords: Sports Coach, Pedagogical Practices, Professional Learning, Coaching.

Introduction

Coaching effectiveness is supported by a set of knowledge and skills that are related not only to mastering its intervention field, but also to the need for interacting with other actors in the sports scenario and to the ability of thinking, making decisions and reflecting about the own coaches' practice^{1,2}. Thus, the professional characteristics of sports coaches demand an preparation adjusted to the specific aspects of coaching, providing conditions to help in solving the problems of coaches' practice, which can encourage to think critically and develops communication and leading skills, considered as essential axes of coaches' professional intervention³.

Traditionally, the Sports Federations and the National Sports Organizations have been responsible for the coaches' preparation in many countries⁴. In these formation programs, coaches are certificated to operate in different environments, such as, participation context, aiming to leisure, education and health aspects of children, adolescents, adults, and on the performance context aiming to enhance athletes' preparation⁵. Despite the high number of coaches these programs are able to certify, the quality of these formation processes has been questioned during the last years. Among the main critiques, it stands out the teaching strategies employed, which situate coaches as simple information receptors, having few moments to practical activities, in which coaches' experience and previous knowledge are

little explored^{6,7}. At this point, contents are abstractedly developed⁸, which ends up inhibiting the reflexive process and meaning-making as well as maintaining superficial learning levels.

Based on this reality, reorganizing these learning activities has been suggested as one of the alternatives to achieve more positive impacts on coach education^{9,10}. In recent studies performed in Canada^{11,12} and Europe^{13,14}, the use of active pedagogies, based on offer more interaction between coaches and the content, have found results favorable to these changes. The strategies employed in these investigations were centered in practical experimentation and in situated problems, through which the participants were encouraged to reflect and discuss developing content, that were perceived as positive by the coaches, having a impact on their learning process.

Most of the recent research performed based on new education strategies have been developed in the university context, namely in undergraduate¹⁴⁻¹⁶ and graduate¹⁷ programs. Indeed, sports coaches' education has been directed towards the academic context, not only in guaranteeing formation quality in an adequate environment for that, but also in guaranteeing minimum conditions in order to recognize the sports coach's activity as a profession worldwide⁴.

In Brazilian reality, the Higher Education Institutions (IES) are set as the main context for formal education of sports coaches since the regulation of the Physical Education profession. Although undergraduate programs often present a generalist character, since they do not only cover the sports field, there is legal support¹⁸ to ensure the offer of a thematic unit for deepening the coaches' education, since it uses up to 20 percent of the course's total workload. The teaching activities are multiple and should offer diverse learning experiences that guarantee the acquisition of knowledge and skills for future practice in different work posts in the field. Beyond the theoretic-practical classes, students should take a considerable workload in pedagogical practices (practices as a curriculum component), internships and complementary activities¹⁸.

According to the national guidelines for undergraduate programs in Physical Education¹⁸, internship must be performed after the second part of the program and must be supervised by a qualified professional, consisting on an important moment to favor experience and the consolidation of competencies demanded for the academic and professional activity in different intervention fields. Therefore, before initiating the internship activities, the students should already have experienced and developed a list of necessary competencies to support their practical intervention in the second part of the program.

The role of pedagogical practices is to offer conditions for these experiences since the beginning of the program¹⁸. However, Nascimento et al.¹⁹ and Marcon²⁰ call attention to the underutilization of pedagogical practices during the Physical Education Programs and highlight its preparatory function for the internships. In many cases, due to the lack of guidance and guidelines for these practices, the experiences are restricted to observe the professional field or to the simulation of teaching practices to pairs into the university.

Considering the national context of coaches' education and the significance of different knowledge basis for coaching practice, this article aims to guide the development of pedagogical practices throughout the bachelor's program in Physical Education. The concern is to improve the development of professional competencies oriented towards the coaching intervention from the systematization of pedagogical practices, considering six central competencies: (1) Learn and Reflect; (2) Set Vision and Strategy; (3) Shape the Environment; (4) Conduct Practices; (5) Build Relationships; and (6) Read and React to the Field. Initially there was the concern in presenting the conceptual structure of coaching knowledge and competencies. Secondly, it was approached the characterization of pedagogical practices in

initial training. And, lastly, it was defined some guidelines for the organization of pedagogical practices according to the level in the program and the competencies to be developed.

Sports Coach's Knowledge and Competencies

The success of a sports coach depends on an efficient practice directed towards its intervention context⁵. Thus, the coaches' working abilities involve the development of specific skills, supported by a set of knowledge and its individual characteristics, as the identity, work philosophy, values and professional ethics²².

In this perspective, the sports coaches' professional development comprises a continuous process that is extended throughout the career, by the ability of adapting themselves to the new needs imposed by a highly dynamic and complex environment²³. However, the development of the sports coaches' knowledge basis in the beginning of their career provides conditions to a continuous development through the professional years. The International Council for Coaching Excellence (ICCE) currently recognizes three major knowledge bases for sports coaches: Professional Knowledge, Interpersonal Knowledge and Intrapersonal Knowledge^{3,5}.

The professional knowledge represents the specific knowledge that provides the base of coaches' professional intervention. That is, the specific knowledge of the sport and the correlated areas that guide the teaching-learning process of athletes and players – such as pedagogy, physiology, psychology, anatomy, among other Sports Sciences areas and subjects. It is necessary to consider that its notion out of context loses its relevance and minimizes the importance of the reflexive, interactive and complex nature of efficient professional intervention^{19,24-26}. The interpersonal knowledge is related to the coaches' social interactions. Indeed, the coaches' effectiveness depends on the individual and group relationships, in which the success requires regular interactions with their athletes and assistants, directors, parents and other professionals. Due to such interactions, the coaches can develop more efficient and adequate ways of communicating with all people involved in the sportive development process. That way the coach will have more ability to help the athletes considering the specificities of different ages, competition levels, sports practice meanings, and the particular social context^{24,27}. Lastly, the intrapersonal knowledge concerns the coaches' self-comprehension and understanding of their introspection and reflection abilities. The self-critical role can be built according to predefined experiences. In essence, a coach's ability to maximize the athletes' results does not lie only on the broaden professional and interpersonal knowledge, but also on constant reflection, evaluation and revision of their own practice^{10,28}.

From the union of these three kinds of knowledge in practical field, arise the central competences of a coach for the development of professionals' functions⁴: Set Vision and Strategy; Shape the Environment; Build Relationships; Conduct Practices; Read and React to the Field; Learn and Reflect. These skills are related to the planning, communication, intervention, evaluation and reflection abilities, activities that are the basis of a sports coach practice (Figure 1).

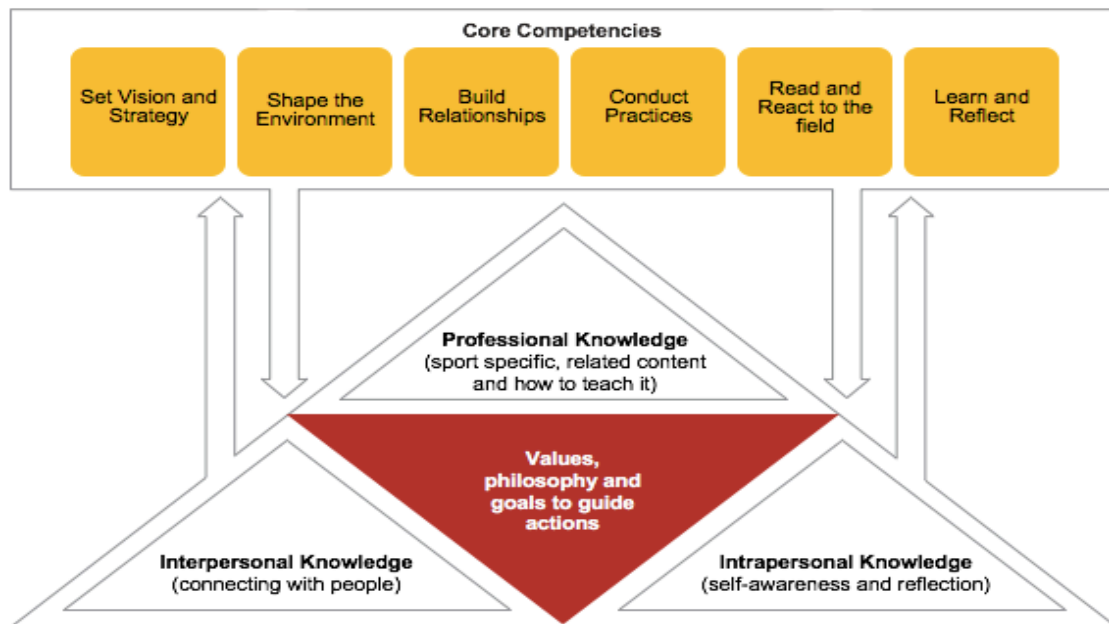


Figure 1. Core competencies and knowledge on sports coaching (adapted from the *International Sport Coaching Framework*⁴).

Considering this, the need for qualification to the development of the competences in coaches is justified by the constant search for new experiences, to extend the repertoire to the new aspects of the work (beliefs, philosophy, values) and to develop themselves in formal, non-formal and informal learning situations^{4,24,25,27}. However, it is important to highlight that, regardless of the coaches' learning situations, it is necessary that the ethical, personal and social conditions be assumed as support to the process of professional development, which should allow the apprehension of the competence's situation dimension. The coaches' values and principles are highlighted due to the involvement they have with many characters (besides athletes, children, profession colleagues, directors, professionals from other areas, parents, supporters). In this case, they need to reflect and guide their actions critically, being concerned with the player in its completeness.

The satisfactory development of these coaches' skills, along with new knowledge, abilities and work strategies, can lead to the progression in the professional career, to the improvement of the training and the competitive performance, and to higher valuation and autonomy by their athletes. Consequently, it will demand from these qualified coaches to organize, innovate and to promote the sport, as well as to be able to offer real conditions to the education of all athletes and players involved in different sport contexts²⁵.

Pedagogical practices in the initial training

University initial training is known as a preparation step oriented towards the exercise or initial qualification of the profession, in which the aim is to develop a wide knowledge and skills repertoire for the future labor field. The undergraduate programs should offer adequate conditions for the acquisition and practical application of knowledge with multiple possibilities of experimentation in contexts of different levels of complexity. In the specific case of the programs in Physical Education, besides the organization of adequate pedagogical strategies, future professionals should be encouraged to discuss and reflect on their learning

opportunities, aiming to widen their intervention conditions and, at the same time, to assess concepts and ideas, reorganizing their knowledge through the connection of received information throughout their initial training²¹.

In this sense, pedagogical practices take on a leading role in the initial training in Physical Education, for they are considered as opportunities in which the future professionals will experiment and apply the diversity of knowledge acquired in their education path. That is, professors and coaches in training should live the learning process with real elements of their professional daily lives, planning activities, performing exercises and trainings, assessing their practice and reflecting on their results. However, for this learning process to be meaningful, the professors responsible for these practices must increase gradually the application demands, in situations that are initially simple and have low interference to situations in which the students feel increasingly more prepared to face the complexity of the professional context²⁰.

By discussing professor's education, authors^{30,31} have mentioned that pedagogical practices are initiated by the observation of contexts, of classes and children, and after that, specific teaching practice, having a gradual transition from the contexts to the classroom. Therefore, future teachers should be involved early on with situations of diagnostic evaluation, planning, teaching, and evaluating the learning process and their own behavior. In the case of sports coaches, such strategies should also be used from the initial training context to the evolution of the knowledge to the training and competition contexts, in which the different learning situations will enable the increase of technical and pedagogical skills for these professionals.

In order to enable the gradual implementation of pedagogical practices in Physical Education programs, Marcon²⁰ suggests the distribution of these experiences throughout the initial training, considering five main questions: In which place? Who is teaching? To which students? To how many students? Under which structure? By trying to answer these questions progressively during the program, the education programs will have more possibilities of training qualified professionals that are prepared for acting on different contexts, able to deal with the most diverse situations that are presented in the professional practice contexts.

The context of pedagogical practices that involve these five markers should be interrelated during the whole process of initial training. The first is related to the place the activities are performed, which comprise, progressively, the pedagogical practices inside the high education institutes' facilities or in the community, be it in the school, sports institutions or even specific public places for recreation and leisure. The second marker concerns the teachers, who are the initial training students (student-coaches), who should start teaching classes/trainings in groups, then having practices in trios, until they can act individually^{20,31}.

Next, another important marker is related to the characteristics of the students that will take on the role of students/athletes, who should involve, initially, the class colleagues, then other training colleagues until the community at the moment of practice in a controlled context and under the supervision of professors. The fourth marker concerns the number of students/athletes for whom the classes/trainings are given and should involve, progressively, only one student, then groups of students, and finally the whole class. Lastly, the structure where the classes/trainings are given also represent a context in which there should be a progressive increase in complexity, in which the pedagogical practice can be comprised by a single activity, then by pedagogical sequence/progression or by a complete teaching unit – or, in sports speech, an activity, a training session, a complete microcycle^{20,31}.

The systematization of such markers in the coach's education should consider the specific characteristics of each academic subject; however, its progression principles should be common to all subjects. In the first year, for example, in which happens the entry in initial

training and should represent de low demand level, calls for a less complex pedagogical practice, given by the student-coaches in the high education institution to their own colleagues and that is composed by a single activity, at the same time that it will be given by a group of student-coaches for few players – in this case, their own colleagues. On the other hand, in the last year of initial training – which represents the phase related to internships and has a high demand level – refers to a more complex pedagogical practice, given by the student-coaches in the contexts of professional action, to students/athletes of different ages and that will be comprised by a complete microcycle, given individually for the whole players class.

The opportunities for pedagogical practices during the coaches' initial training should happen in all theoretical-practical subjects, having a progressive increase in complexity, since the first to the fourth year of the program in Physical Education. They are important situations that precede the internships, and include the students' preparation to act on internships having more quality and being more secure. Thus, the students will have opportunities to make mistakes and to admit that the error is a part of learning and that it contributes to the building of new knowledge and to improve their competencies, besides taking on risks and managing their doubts³¹. This is a process of gradual building, permanent and consistent, that should be followed by rigorous and constant reflection and feedback by the professors, who should admit it as one of their main strategies³¹. The process of the students' constant reflection makes the process more meaningful and consistent in the education of capable and qualified professionals to act on the various work fields.

Implementation of pedagogical practices for the development of a sports coach's competencies

By recognizing the characteristics of the Brazilian scenario for the education of sports coaches, it is considered as most important that undergraduate programs in Physical Education promote learning experiences throughout the education so that the future professionals can develop their knowledge and skills in opportunities that are close to their intervention reality. It is in this sense that pedagogical practices take a leading role in the national guidelines¹⁸ and should offer progressive demand conditions, in such a way that students do not act only as coaches, but can also experience, discuss and reflect on their actions, allowing a meaningful learning of their professional competencies.

The national guidelines for the Physical Education programs¹⁸ highlight the significance of pedagogical practices, however they do not guide the progressive development of these practices, leaving as a matter of choice for each program to distribute their hours among different subjects or single activities oriented to that end²⁴. Therefore, considering the guidance for the development of pedagogical practices in Physical Education programs²⁰ and the sports coaches' main skills⁴, Figure 2 shows the model for the progressive development of the professional competencies for the future sports coaches throughout the undergraduate program in Physical Education.

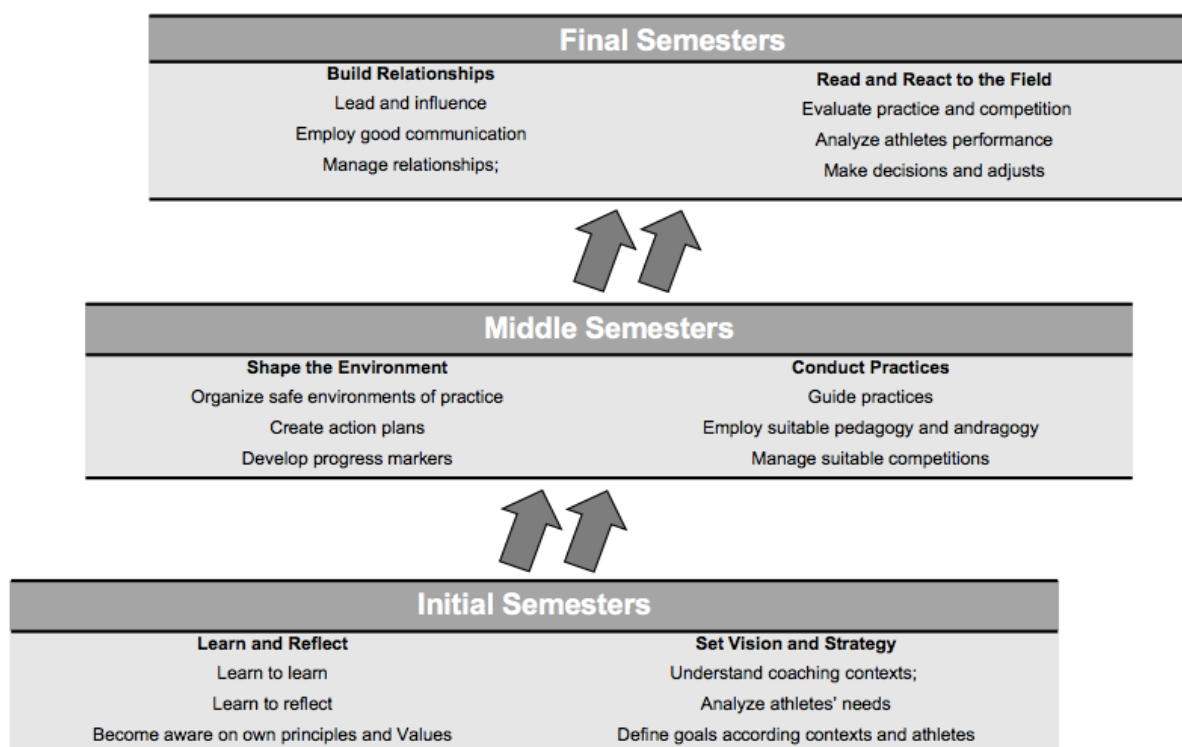


Figure 2. Process for the development of sports coaches' professional skills in undergraduate programs in Physical Education.

Source: Elaborated by the authors.

An important aspect to be highlighted is that the development of a sports coach's professional competencies does not happen separately. Considering the dynamic and multiple action that characterizes the sports coaching activity³² (a process of teaching-learning-training in which many characters are involved, such as coaches, athletes, assistant coaches and professionals from other areas¹³), all skills shown in Figure 2 are collectively developed. The proposal of an acquisition process emphasizing two main competencies in each program period aims to value the experiences and activities for learning and reflection centered in the mentioned skills. The progressive thinking of the development of pedagogical practices is based on the need for promoting the acquisition of professional skills that are going to be consolidated in the internship field, which should only occur from the program's second half on¹⁸. Regardless of where the pedagogical practices are placed in each program's curriculum, be it distributed among specific knowledge subjects, in the Teaching-Pedagogical, Technical-instrumental or Human Movement Culture dimensions, or in specific interdisciplinary classes, it must be offered to the students the possibility of having practical experiences and learning activities guided by the main skills of each program phase. For example, if in a bachelor program in Physical Education, in its second year, is programmed the development of 30 lesson hours of pedagogical practices in Volleyball and Athletics subjects, the student taking these subjects should have the opportunity of shaping the training environment according to the specific planning of the training session of each sport, as well as defining the criteria for success of the athletes and players in the planned activities, focusing on the main skill "Shape the Environment." These opportunities should not only be offered as tasks to be performed, but also as activities in which the students can try taking the role of coach, sharing with colleagues, discussing and reflecting with the aid of the professor, aiming to widen the action possibilities and to open up their intervention perspectives.

Below are discussed learning activities focusing on specific skills during the initial training.

Development of pedagogical practices in the initial semesters

Among the base skills to be developed in the bachelor programs in Physical Education, it is highlighted the *Learn and Reflect* ability. In an age characterized by the easy access to knowledge and by the high rate of information sharing in information media, being conscious about learning is essential for a whole professional development³⁴. Learn how to learn and learn to reflect are basic conditions so that future sports coaches can explore to the most their context and the knowledge potential that other possess around them.

The main proposal of the pedagogical practices is that the future professionals have meaningful practices and that these learning opportunities contribute to the development of their professional skills. Considering the new environment in which the students are inserted, a flood of new information received during the beginning of the undergraduate program is constant, enabling the acquisition and appropriation of new knowledge to be incorporated to the range of previous experiences. Thus, learning how to learn, being conscious about learning theories, the value of collaborative practice, the experiences interpretation, among other theoretical aspects, will favor the inner process of adjusting new information in the students' cognitive structure, making it more efficient³⁵. It is in this sense that the student-coaches should be conscious of the experiences lived and be encouraged to evaluate and reflect on their own practice. Therefore, it is the responsibility of the professors of the program's initial semesters to offer an adequate support so that these students can learn to ponder on their experiences, to reflect on the activities developed and to change pre-concepts about the sport and the coaches' education.

One of the initial conditions to consciously learn through experiences is to develop a shared understanding of the meaning of reflection. This first step requires a "negotiation" process among students and teachers, in such a way that they can define together the meaning the reflexive activity has and how it should be applied³⁶. Therefore, the possibilities and levels of reflection should be explored, besides the medium organized for the reflexive activity. This activity demands a level a self-analysis and openness to new ways of thinking and approaching the world, in which not all students are able to achieve³⁵. Given that, the use of support resources to the development of reflection has been widely discussed in coaches' education^{10,37}. Although filling written dairies is recognized as one of the main ways of the reflexive activity, countless options can be used to support students during the initial formation. The use of video-dairies¹⁵, blogs³⁸, virtual platforms³⁹, and even scenarios and dramatizations¹⁴ have been referred as effective options in coach education programs.

The importance of using these resources in the beginning of the program is based on the mutual development of the reflexive routine, through the experience of sports practices, observation of training sessions, competitions or even films, the students organized into groups can share perception and go beyond the description of facts (superficial reflection). Through discussions and the support of the professor, the students should achieve more complex reflection levels, in which their perspectives are challenged, making room to new concepts and knowledge, widening the acting possibilities, and facing issues and dilemmas that will be faced in their practice in the following years³⁶.

Concurrently to Learn and Reflect, the future professionals should develop their ability of *Set Vision and Strategy*. Considering the different acting contexts of the sports coach, it is essential for the students to know and understand the specificities and characteristics of each environment. In the same way it highlights the main skills of the sports coach, the ICCE also defines the main contexts for professional acting, namely the Sports Participation and Sports

Performance. While the Participation context is centered on the sports practice as a means to health and leisure development, promoting self-improvement, the adoption of a healthy lifestyle, socialization, and entertainment among players; the Performance context is focused on enhancing the athletes' performance skills, from emerging athletes to high-performance ones⁴.

Therefore, to understand who are the athletes and players that act in each of these environments, their educational needs and the meaning the sport has to each individual, comprises the initial point for the planning and intervention in the sports coaching area. It is also important to highlight that the coaches' action goes beyond guiding teaching-learning activities in sports. The sports coaching activity is supported by the direct relationship with athletes and also by the relationship with other actors in the context. For example, in participation sports, parents, teachers and relatives are constantly present, and the sports coaches take on the direct role of dialogue to these participants, since they directly influence their work. In the case of performance sports, the support of coach assistants, physical coaches and other specialists is essential, besides the direct interference of directors, entrepreneurs or the media, which requires a mastering of communication and knowledge that go beyond the processes of teaching and training.

Given such complex and dynamic context that characterizes the sports coaches' acting field³², the future professionals must be able to identify the details that will influence the planning and execution of their actions. Still in an initial phase of the program, the observation of different practice contexts is essential for such "reading," encouraging the collective observation and reflection of the environment characteristics, training styles, intervention activities, linking those to theoretical concepts of sports pedagogy, of human development, of motor learning, among other areas of the widened knowledge that are developed in the initial semesters of the programs in Physical Education.

Development of pedagogical practices in the middle semesters

The skills of *Shape the environment* and *Conduct Practices* take on the leading role of the pedagogical practices in the second and third years of the program. After mastering the characteristics of each context and understanding the elements that concern to the coaching practice, students must be encouraged to take on the behavior of a sports coach inside and outside of the university environment. Initially, the skill of shaping the environment, which concerns a planning condition, organizing and managing the training environment, designing activities and training sessions, and defining the success criteria for players and athletes, should be developed focusing on different contexts and with players of different levels. Thus, the critical markers of the expected performance should be evinced, along with the "routes" that must be taken in order to achieve success in practical field. In other words, the student-coaches should design training plans, with all significant information that support their practice, such as: session's goals, intervention context, check-list for a safe environment and training, players' profiles, exercise description and duration, activities' nature, method, progression and variation, materials needed, transition between training elements, means of evaluation, success criteria and general observations.

Exercising the description of training routines and sharing in trios or pairs, at the same time it encourages the attention to the process of planning the intervention, provides a support to collaborative learning, enabling the sharing of information and perspectives for a safer execution of the training. It is in this sense that future professionals should experience and practice the role of a sports coach, initially among their colleagues so that later they can act on the external community. The professor responsible for the subjects that have pedagogical practices should value the knowledge acquired by the students up to that moment, challenging

the future professionals to put it to practice, encouraging the development of procedure and attitude thinking in the coaching practice.

Given this perspective, the focus shifts for the *Conduct Practices* skill. According to Marcon²⁰, the pedagogical practices should be initially guided by the conduction of short activities to the colleagues during the classes, until the moment they can do it in communities out of the university. It is important to highlight here the importance of the relation between teaching activities and extension programs done inside the university, which represent contexts that have high potential for developing pedagogical practices, since future coaches can experience the role of a coach in a controlled environment, having the support of their pairs and, specially, supervisors.

These opportunities should correspond to the moments for applying contents learned in different subjects, as the employment of training methodologies, organizing competitions, among others. However, experience learning should not be considered only as a strategy for the application of a series of techniques, but as an activity of creating and recreating personal and cultural meanings³⁵. In experience learning, the individual faces practical dilemmas and unexpected situations, which spark off the need for making decisions, reflecting before, during, and after the action itself, looking for solutions for the problems that arise⁴⁰. During these moments, there is the opportunity for transforming the meaningful experiences into conscious learning. Considering that the supervisor figure is essential for students to be able to achieve a level of reflection that they would not achieve by themselves, the professor must seize these opportunities to discuss with future coaches, specially on the new ways of interpreting problems, concepts and discussions sparked in the learning process⁴¹. Besides that, the opportunity for the students to take on the role of coaches involves the interaction not only with athletes, but also with other professionals, exercising their communication skills, a main characteristic of the sports coach activity³.

Development of pedagogical practices in the final semesters

Aiming to provide more autonomy to students in the pedagogical practices, the skills *Build Relationships* and *Read and React to the Field* must have their development focused during the final semesters of the bachelor programs in Physical Education. Having acquired in the previous years the experiences in collective activities of learning, reflecting, planning and conducting training session, future coaches must acquire the ability of managing the training process by themselves, with the addition of a new coaching element, the evaluation of the training and athletes.

Based on evidence by Marcon³¹, who investigated students in training in Physical Education degree programs, it was clear that the future professionals were concerned about mastering the sport (content knowledge) during the first pedagogical practices. By acquiring experience in the program, student-coaches shifted their attention to the teaching-learning process, the context and players. Thus, by accumulating experiences in taking on the role of a sports coach in the first years of the undergraduate programs in Physical Education, the students will be able to develop a more critical thinking about their own actions, shifting their focus to the quality of pedagogical instruction.

The use of different teaching methods, be it direct instruction, centered on content, or using guided discovery, focusing on widening the athletes' awareness, should be experienced aiming to conduct distinct practices and to develop the communication effectiveness in the future professionals. Besides that, the insertion of a future professional in activities along with coaching staff, management and participation in competitions should contribute to student-coaches understanding of the whole context that involves coaching practice outside the field,

running track, or court and it would also encourage their ability of communicating to other agents in the sports scenario.

The activity of a sports coach or the art of coaching can be recognized as a “structured adaptive” activity^{42:215}. According to a professional practice that happens in highly dynamic and random environments, the sports coach must be able to *Read and React to the Field*. Therefore, student-coaches must be encouraged to solve the problems of their practice, based on the repertoire of knowledge acquired and also guided by the tasks’ demands.

Given the experience acquired in training planning and conduction aspects during pedagogical practices in the first years, in the last semesters of the program, future professionals should be encouraged to assess their own practice and the results they achieved. Recording their own trainings is an important tool for future professionals to have the chance of watching themselves in action and it allows the feedback on their pedagogical behavior⁴³. Simultaneously, the evaluation of athletes, through physical, tactic-technical or psychological analysis favors the guidance on the results obtained by their action. In fact, these strategies should not be considered as activities that evaluate the quality of future coaches’ interventions, but as strategies that widen the students’ consciousness, providing information that help their reflection process, guided for the improvement of their activities, as well as in their own action.

Final Remarks

University initial training, naturally, should be recognized as a phase in the training that does not end in itself. It represents the training for the beginning of a professional career, which should be continuously supported by the process of constant learning. In the case of undergraduate programs in Physical Education, despite being an area recently regulated, its generalist formation ensures the development of future professionals for the growing challenges of their field, just as it widens the intervention objects and spaces.

The discussion on the training of sports coaches, initially must consider the complex acting field of this professional, which demands diverse knowledge and flexible skills in order to meet different demands, created from their action in diverse contexts. Therefore, valuing pedagogical practices in the initial training is extremely important for the development of these sports professionals, respecting the characteristics of their actions, which have their origins the pedagogical and social activity³². However, it is perceived that pedagogical practices have been little explored in the undergraduate programs in Physical Education, a situation that may come from the lack of guidance for these activities in the national curricular guidelines. Based on such lack, we presented some contributions to establishing priorities in implementing pedagogical practices, which meet the training demands of a sports coach and that consider the progressive development throughout the initial training.

At first, it is necessary for the students to learn how to learn and to reflect, to understand that their development as a coach will happen through life, and that it is necessary to recognize the different acting contexts and the central position of the athlete/player, setting vision and strategy. Once these premises are recognized and the basis for a coach philosophy are established, the middle semesters move on to the ability of shaping acting environments and conducting practices, experiencing the systematization, organization and application of pedagogical procedures in training and competition, thus widening the knowledge and skills. Lastly, in the last semesters, the suggestion is to add the process evaluation, widening to problem solving as the initial training grows closer to its end, being able to read and react to the field, still having the professor’s support and collaboratively with colleagues, encouraging

the development of autonomy in leadership, management and evaluation of the coaching process.

To conclude, it is important to highlight that the suggested model does not aim to undervalue to other areas for the action of the Physical Education professional in Brazil. This process of acquiring skills should also be direct to the professional intervention contexts in the areas of health, management and leisure. However, this study's focus on the professional learning of sports coaches is justified by the international historic moment, when different organizations broaden their efforts in such a way that the sports coach activity can have the status of a recognized profession. Besides that, since Brazil already established its professional condition, it must be essential to be concerned in offering excellence training, providing real learning conditions, developing knowledge and skills that can be incorporated and taken to sports coaches throughout their professional path.

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