

## **Sport and Teaching Innovation**

### **Sport e Innovazione Formativa**

**Patrizia Belfiore**

University Parthenope of Naples  
[patrizia.belfiore@uniparthenope.it](mailto:patrizia.belfiore@uniparthenope.it)

**Davide Di Palma**

University Parthenope of Naples  
[davide.dipalma@uniparthenope.it](mailto:davide.dipalma@uniparthenope.it)

#### **Abstract**

The present paper was created with the aim of investigating the role of sport in the training process. It is necessary to consider that, from this point of view, innovation is assuming a very important role for the evolution of sporting practice in the enrichment of formative values.

The starting point of the paper was the definition of the role of physical education in schools, to then shift the focus on aspects of psycho-pedagogical nature.

Il presente elaborato nasce con l'obiettivo di indagare il ruolo dello sport nel processo formativo. Bisogna considerare che, in quest'ottica, l'innovazione sta assumendo un ruolo molto importante per l'evoluzione della pratica sportiva nell'arricchimento dei valori formativi.

La base di partenza del paper è stata la definizione del ruolo dell'educazione fisica nelle scuole, per poi spostare l'attenzione sugli aspetti di natura psico-pedagogica.

#### **Keywords**

Sport; Innovation; Education.

Sport; Innovazione; Educazione

## **Introduction<sup>1</sup>**

Physical education is often considered as a fundamental element of early childhood. A role of sport in the development of educational objectives is considered to be of decisive importance.

Education is a complete development of education and is a variety of sports. Quality education is the key between athletic talent and evaluation of the educational system (Di Palma, 2017).

Innovation is a driver of growth and well-being. New technologies, products, services and organizations create jobs and rejuvenate industries. But to reap those gains, policy makers need to understand how the way we innovate is changing. This has implications for human resources and education systems if they are to feed this innovation society. This also presents new opportunities for innovation and improvement in education systems.

Schools need to do more than just select students according to their cognitive abilities (Birnik, 2008).

In order to maintain a physical education program based on high quality standards, it is important to invest in training. It is therefore necessary that educators follow a complete and innovative professional path.

To address the systemic success necessary to continue the advancement of physical education, it is essential that educators are committed to high-quality and sustainable professional development. We need to develop a high quality physical education program. Above all, it is necessary to create an individualized learning environment that takes into account the different needs of the student population (Di Palma, 2017).

Physical education is a discipline that continuously evolves through research in kinesiology, predicted physiology and biomechanics. To support the development of physically literate learners, educators should build on their profound knowledge of content.

### **1. The educational function of sport**

Sport, as a current social phenomenon, can be analyzed in many ways.

An important aspect is school sports as an educational value. The scholastic institution does not live in an ivory tower. It is one of the elements of social life and represents the link between the family and society. The school cannot, therefore, ignore the living conditions of the students or their personal past.

The “sport” is present in the information received daily by the whole community: the child, the adolescent, the adult.

The specialist in educational sciences and the one in motor sciences must be interested in this flagrant distortion between the world of scholastic knowledge and the world of knowledge of the “parallel school”.

The historian of education would have much to say on this point and an analysis of educational conceptions and their education over the centuries would help us to better understand this ostracism towards sports (Orio, 2016).

For a long time the school was concerned only with intelligence. All the difficulties encountered by the technical teacher to recognize all his intellectual and cultural components are known. The movements of New Education have insisted on the need for a general formation of the individual on the intellectual, motor, emotional, social, physical and bodily planes. In this area, several foreign schools have shown us that the path and importance of sport in universities

---

<sup>1</sup> The manuscript is the result of a collective work of the authors, the specific contribution of which is to be referred to as follows: Davide Di Palma: Introduction and paragraph n. 1 – Patrizia Belfiore: paragraph n. 2 and Conclusion

is a fact on which it is not necessary to insist. The problems of sport must therefore normally integrate - like artistic, economic and political problems - with the whole of the educational action in view of preparing the student to become a complete citizen (Belfiore, 2018).

Sport represents a complementary value with the system of values of education; here are some notions such as personal overcoming, the dialectic of the individual and of the group within the team, participation in a social reality that has its own rules and that must be learned and applied later, the feeling of belonging to a community .

For a long time, psychologists and pedagogues have insisted on the difference that had to be made between the effort “imposed” from the outside and the effort of “sporting type”. To the tranquility of the “work done”, the sportsman opposes the search for something more, both from his body, both from his actions, in his performances, a sort of anxiety to reach the frontiers of his possibilities, to highlight and explore all the virtualities that it feels in itself (Ascione, 2018).

The opposite of a school that uses only individual work, competition among the subjects, sport introduces a fundamental component in the evolution and psychological functioning of the individual and, on this point, is an excellent educational complement of the school as the we still know today.

At school the child is in a peer group animated by an adult. Sport - and team sport in particular - is one of the most effective forms of this socialization: each has its own role to play, its place and its function and is at the service of all; the individual is situated in relation to others, acts according to the others and his personal value is at the service of the community; hence the double preoccupation of perfecting oneself personally to be an active element of the group on the one hand, to better serve the community to which one belongs on the other (Belfiore, 2017).

Teamwork, belonging to a sports team develop a new feeling of participation in an organism that transcends individuality; this does not exist in scholastic work marked by competition and loneliness. Too often the unity of a class is not created only in view of making noise or opposition. Education must know the dynamics of the development of this feeling in order to preserve all its positive components and not lead up to the opposition with the other, to a modern form of chauvinism.

## **2. Sport management, sport education and innovation**

Over the past two decades or more the context in which organisations have operated has changed radically as a result of globalisation, information technology, and economic and environmental crises (Whatley, 2005). In order to reflect the widening societal, political and corporate concerns regarding the impact of business decisions on the organisation, the community in which it operates, and indeed the inhabitants of our world, the calls for a re-examination of business school curricula have been growing (Berry, 2009; Natale & Sora, 2010). The scholarship of teaching and learning has received its fair share of the criticism, with some accusing it of lacking critique (Servage, 2009).

Using a critical pedagogical approach in sport management teaching does not mean that all formal teaching has to be abandoned or that this approach is appropriate to all topics (McLaren, 2005).

By exposing students to contemporary issues in sport management that relate to various conceptions of social justice, economic priorities, and environmental sustainability would allow them to debate and critique different perspectives on these issues to forge their own understandings and moral commitments. Thus, rather than take the present state of modern global capitalism for granted, students could be encouraged to analyze how the current system enables or constrains particular outcomes, and potentially consider alternatives (Belhassen & Caton, 2011). Broadening the sport management curricula in ways like those discussed above essentially invites dialogue about values, power interests, and desirable ends back into the conversation, thus allowing students to reflect critically, as free thinkers, on the kind of world they want to build (Belhassen & Caton, 2011). Elite professional sports offer a poor model for sport in an

educational context (Kirk, 2004) with cheating, drug use, abuse of athletes, the celebration of hegemonic masculinity, and the corrupting power of money all contributing to undermine the moral value of this form of human endeavour.

It is not new that the relationship between Physical Education and Sport has been surrounded by a lot of polemics. It is undeniable that the current moment of sport in the world is characterized by a dissemination of sports habits in a context of massification at different levels, for different audiences and by different languages, and any analysis of the social significance of sport that do not refer to the processes of commercialization, professionalization, and spectacularization are incomplete. At first glance, one can believe that these themes do not have direct binding with the teaching of sport for children. But it should be noted that the broadcasting of games on television, the sponsorships to top athletes, the sports organization model, and the public investment in sport are elements that make up the contemporary sports universe and shape the social representation of each sport (Gallè, 2017).

In addition, children can be seen as potential consumers of the “sports fact,” which justifies a particular concern for the critical role of “sport educators” when approaching the topic. It can be said that sports marketing seeks to induce wishes that go beyond the basic needs of people and that it is reflected in many environments, in the different manifestations of sport. Its importance can be perceived in the strategies adopted by the sports industry, defined as “markets in which the products offered to buyers are related to sport, fitness, recreation or leisure and may include activities, goods, services, people, places or ideas”. This media and promotional content is present quite intensely on a daily basis in the lives of children and has influence in different ways in their preferences (Culpan, 2010; Dart, 2008).

Despite the challenge of approximating different theoretical frameworks, it is possible and necessary to create a theoretical reflection about the linkages and tensions in the relationship between the pedagogical practice in the field of sport and the influence exerted by the actions of sports marketing on children in different social contexts, from the understanding of contemporary sport phenomena, especially the sport-spectacle (Birnik, 2008; Light, 2007). It starts from the premise that external elements affect the teaching of sport and that the role of Sport Pedagogy is discussing and contemplating these aspects highlighted in the systemic complexity of the current sport (Antonacopoulou, 2010).

The educational action is characterized by the act of teaching, through relationships that transmit and share knowledge, and is a field of study of the theory and practice of education, addressing what was produced by people during their historical process. The contemporary sport, with its diversity, growth, and articulations, brought significant aspects to be explored by sport educators, and although a critical analysis on the relationship between sport “consumer product x Sport Pedagogy” is possible, there are still aspects not perceived and that certainly should be more deepened in understanding the phenomenon (Barnes, 2006).

Seeking to overcome these challenges presented earlier regarding the objectives of Sport Education, we rescue the study of Freire, which discusses the role of sport educators and presents four basic principles that should guide their activities: (1) teaching sports, (2) teaching well sports for all, (3) teaching more than sports for all, and (4) teaching the love of sports. These principles are quite relevant, but to expand and advance the reach of Sport Education, we suggest a fifth guiding principle of the pedagogical action in sport, face of the contemporary sports context: (5) teaching students to critically understand the sport in the current society, i.e., qualifying them to perceive each sports manifestation as a historically situated knowledge, to understand this phenomenon as a significant element of culture.

## **Conclusion**

If the old saying always remains valid in general, “mens sana in corpore sano”, modern conceptions have greatly enriched it. Now all the relationships that exist between the different

aspects of personality are at stake and it is in what education is involved in this process.

Physical education and sport should not be considered solely as conditions for a better psychic life or as a necessary hygiene for the proper functioning of the brain: these are educational components that must be integrated into the whole of contemporary educational action. They sometimes introduce forms of educational action totally absent in habitual education.

Sport at school is also one of the means to bring school closer to life, to find new sources of motivation for young people. The intelligent practice of sport, the discussions on this practice and this social fact will develop in young people this critical and objective attitude necessary for a fight against the drifts we currently witness.

## References

- Antonacopoulou, E. P. (2010). *Making the Business School more "Critical": Reflexive critique based on phronesis as a foundation for impact*. *British Journal of Management*, 21, S6-S25.
- Ascione, A., Belfiore, P., Di Palma, D. *Sports Program To Promote The Wellbeing Of People With Disabilities*. *Acta Medica Mediterranea* 2018; 34: 1261. DOI: 10.19193/0393-6384\_2018\_5\_194.
- Barnes, M. C., & Keleher, M. (2006). *Ethics in Conflict: Making the Case for a Critical Pedagogy*. *Business Communication Quarterly*, 69(2), 144.
- Belfiore, P., Miele, A., Gallè, F., Liguori, G. *Adapted physical exercise and stroke: a systematic review*. *J Sports Med Phys Fitness*. *Minerva Medica* 2018 DOI doi: 10.23736/S0022-4707.17.07749-0
- Belfiore, P., Di Palma, D., Ascione, A. *Adapted Physical Activity (Apa) For The Tutelage Of Patients With Type II Diabetes*. *Acta Medica Mediterranea* 2018; 34: 1257.
- Belhassen, Yaniv & Caton, Kellee (2011). *On the need for critical pedagogy in tourism education*. *Tourism Management*. 32. 1389-1396. Available from: [http://www.bgu.ac.il/~yaniv-bel/pdf%20files/CMS\\_in\\_Tourism.pdf](http://www.bgu.ac.il/~yaniv-bel/pdf%20files/CMS_in_Tourism.pdf) [Accessed 23/2/12]
- Berry, P. (2009). *Redesign Of The Undergraduate Business Curriculum: The Way Forward, A Paradigm Shift*. *American Journal of Business Education*, 2(8), 55.
- Birnik, A., & Billsberry, J. (2008). *Reorienting the Business School Agenda: The Case for Relevance, Rigor, and Righteousness*. *Journal of Business Ethics*, 82(4), 985.
- Culpan, Ian and Wigmore, Sheila (2010). *The Delivery of Olympism Education within a Physical Education Context Drawing on Critical Pedagogy*. *International Journal of Sport Health Science*, 8: 67-76.
- Dart, R. (2008). *A commentary on "Piercing the Bubble": Should Management Education "Confront" Poverty?* *Journal of Management Education*, 32(6), 731.
- Di Palma, D., Ascione, A., Belfiore, P. (2018). *Experimental Approach Of Water Polo Training To Improve Psycho-Physical*. *Acta Medica Mediterranea* 2018; 34: 1253.
- Gallè, F., Di Onofrio, V., Romano Spica, V., Mastronuzzi, R., Russo Krauss, P., Belfiore, P., Buono, P., Liguori, G. (2017). *Improving physical fitness and health status perception in community-dwelling older adults through a structured program for physical activity promotion in the city of Naples, Italy: A randomized controlled trial*. *GeriatrGerontolInt*. 2017 Oct;17(10):1421-1428.
- Kirk, D. (2004). *Framing quality physical education: The elite sport model or Sport Education?* *Physical Education and Sport Pedagogy*, 9(2), 185-195.
- Light, Richard & Dixon, Marlene A. (2007). *Contemporary Developments in Sport Pedagogy and their Implications for Sport Management Education*. *Sport Management Review*. 10,159-175.
- McLaren, P., & Farahmandpur, R. (2005). *Teaching against global capitalism and the new imperialism: A critical pedagogy*. Lanham, MD: Rowan and Littlefield.
- Natale, S., & Sora, S. (2010). *Exceeding Our Grasp: Curricular Change and the Challenge to the*

- Assumptive World. *Journal of Business Ethics*, 92(1), 79.
- Orio, F., Tafuri, D., Ascione, A., Marciano, F., Savastano, S., Colarieti, G. (2016). *Lifestyle changes in the management of adulthood and childhood obesity*. *MINERVA ENDOCRINOLOGICA* 2016; vol. 41, p. 509-51.
- Servage, L. (2009). The Scholarship of Teaching and Learning and the Neo-Liberalization of Higher Education: Constructing the “Entrepreneurial Learner”. *The Canadian Journal of Higher Education*, 39(2), 25.
- Whatley, Art (2005) *Critical Pedagogy and Management Education*. *Proceedings of the Academy of Educational Leadership*, 10, 2. Available from: <http://www.sbaer.uca.edu/research/allied/2005vegas/edu%20ldrship/25.pdf>