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Prifysgol Abertawe



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Sport education: fit for a purpose

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Introduction/editorial for Education & Training

Sport education: fit for a purpose

Abstract

Purpose: The purpose of this article is to describe the way sports education is changing to include the benefits of cross-disciplinary engagement and a move towards a more broader definition of sport in education and training systems.

Design/methodology/approach: A review of the literature about sport education is presented then linked to the main themes in the articles from the special issue about sport education.

Findings: Due to increased emphasis on leisure and fitness in society and more people becoming interested in sport as a career there is a need to focus on bringing a more entrepreneurial approach to sports education. This enables new forms of sport such as adventure and electronic being incorporated into the sport education curriculum.

Research limitations/implications: The increased interest in sport as a leisure activity has meant that there needs to be more of an entrepreneurial focus on sports education. This facilitates more emphasis on the innovative, futuristic and creative forms of education in sport.

Practical implications: Sport education is an important teaching and learning activity that occurs in a variety of educational contexts that link with the practical nature of the sport industry. The implications from this article are that there needs to be increased interest in how sport education can transform pedagogy methods through an experiential and practical approach.

Originality/value: This article will discuss the growing importance of sport education as a research area requiring an interdisciplinary perspective by stating the main research avenues arising from the articles included in the special issue.

Keywords: physical education, sport education

Introduction

Sport is a major social phenomenon and transcends ethnic and geographical boundaries (Hastie and Buchanan, 2000). There has been an increase in research focusing on sport education as it enables instructions involving experiential and real life learning methods (Jones, Jones,

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2
3 Williams-Burnett and Ratten, 2017). This is due to in the past there being limited research in
4 linking sport education to other education disciplines such as entrepreneurship education.
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7 Siedentop (2002:410) states in sport education “the sports are modified to be appropriate for the
8 skill levels and tactical competence of the students”. Sport education involves curriculum that
9 incorporates authentic teaching methods about a physical or mental activity (Hordvik et al,
10 2013). The main features of sport education are that it incorporates the cultural and societal
11 context endemic in a sport context. This is important in appreciating the different ways sport is
12 perceived in the community and the challenges of teaching sport. The aim of this article is to
13 review and suggest directions for sport education research.
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24 The main goals of sport education are to instill enthusiasm, competency and literacy in students
25 (Siedentop, 1998). Sport education was introduced as a way to change the traditional physical
26 education program, which meant with the increase in educational technologies the use of online
27 and multi-media in sport students. More emphasis is now placed on student learning that takes a
28 more individual perspective rather than the rote learning of the past (Ratten, 2017). Sport
29 education promotes interpersonal development through encouraging social and team learning
30 methods (Wallhead and O’Sullivan, 2005). The emphasis in sport education is to utilize
31 cooperation amongst a set of individuals to instill a sense of social membership based on trust.
32
33 This means that the core difference between physical and sport education is in the
34 contextualization of the learning and teaching method (Siedentop, 1987). The reason for the
35 shift from physical to sport education is due to in today’s society, the increase in adventure and
36 leisure sports has meant that there is a greater need to focus on sport education as a way to
37 connect to the actual business of sport (Ratten, 2016). This allows for sport to be taught in a
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3 more progressive and meaningful way that captures the reality of how sport is conducted in
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5 society.
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8 Hastie and Buchanan (2000:25) states “physical education, a vehicle for teaching children and
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10 inducting them into the sport culture, has rarely provided programs in which an authentic sport
11
12 experience is presented to students”. Sport education tries to mimic the sport context by
13
14 providing a more real life teaching method. Dyson et al (2004:229) states “sport education is an
15
16 institutional model which links the sport taught in physical education to the wider sporting
17
18 culture”. The goal of sport education is to provide a meaningful learning environment that
19
20 connects to industry. Sport is practiced in different ways so it is important that education
21
22 represents an authentic experience. This involves having purposeful tasks that engage students in
23
24 a learning environment that is reflective of real life.
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30 Siedentorp (1999) suggested that the main components of the sport education model are: seasons,
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32 affiliation, formal competition, record keeping, festivity and culminating events. Seasons refers
33
34 to the concept of sport education focusing on a topic in-depth over a long time period. This
35
36 enables the topic to be introduced then delved into allowing a more comprehensive
37
38 understanding of its importance to sport. Affiliation refers to students becoming part of teams
39
40 that enable social learning to take place. This is important as education about sport involves
41
42 practicing certain techniques that require team participation. Competition refers to having games
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44 in the sport curriculum that enable students to learn better. This sense of competition in sport
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46 education enables people to rate themselves compared to other students in terms of their learning
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48 ability. Record keeping means that there should be assessment that incorporates feedback to help
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50 students learn better. There needs to be a set of learning standards that enable students to be
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52 motivated knowledge recipients. Festivity involves celebrating learning successes through
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3 acknowledgement of the hard work involved. This can include awards ceremonies or certificates
4 that mark events in the sport educational experience of students. Culminating events involve the
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6 end periods of the learning that occur when a certain capacity has been reached. These
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8 culminating events are important ways to recognize the attainment of certain learning goals or
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10 standards.
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15 Siedentop (1998) suggests that the way sport education differs from institutionalized sport is via
16 participation requirements, developmentally appropriate competition and diverse roles.
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19 Participation requirements mean that all students are required to be involved in the learning
20 experience. This means dissemination of knowledge occurs via the classroom, which can occur
21
22 online, indoors or in an outdoors setting. Developmentally appropriate competition means
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24 learning games are matched to the intellectual level of students. This means emphasizing ethical
25
26 forms of competition that distinguishes students based on aptitude. Diverse roles mean teaching
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28 students different practices from the coach, athlete and fan perspective. There are also other roles
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30 or stakeholder views that students need to consider that take into account amateur, professional
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32 and social forms of sport. This is important given the differences in private versus public forms
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34 of sport organizations.
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41 Hastie (1998) suggests the main benefits of sport education involve an investment, learning and
42 opportunities. Investment involves spending time acquiring knowledge about sport that will
43
44 benefit them in the future. The key feature of investment is the enjoyment students receive about
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46 learning new knowledge about sport. Learning involves developing skills about sport, which
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48 includes strategies about how to perform in a sports context. Leadership is part of the learning
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50 experience as it involves students engaging in a new activity. Opportunities involve new ways of
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52 doing things from taking different perspectives into account.
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3 Dyson et al (2004) suggests that the pedagogical implications of sport education are facilitating
4 learning, active engagement, group activity, challenging tasks and accountability. Facilitated
5 learning involves teachers setting tasks but students completing them at their own pace. This
6 helps students learning about issues in sport with the help of feedback from teachers. Active
7 engagement refers to students taking an active role in the learning process. This is important in
8 managing workloads in a way that helps students be more responsible. Group activity involves
9 students playing games so they learn about communication, decision making and strategy.

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11 As sport involves group work it is a way students can practice negotiation and conflict
12 management. Challenging tasks involves students doing activities that are hard and beyond their
13 current capabilities. This helps them to utilize different skills that can contribute to knowledge
14 development. Accountability involves assessing students at each stage of the learning process.
15 This is essential for reflecting on topics taught and seeing how they align with the overall
16 curriculum.

37 38 **Overview of articles in the special issue**

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41 The first article titled 'The Flipped University: Exploring Student Progression in Football
42 Coaching and Development' by Robert Griffiths; Jay Probert and Brendan Cropley focuses on
43 how the nature of education in a sport context is changing. The article discusses how there is
44 more emphasis on interactive learning with students taking a more engaged role in the process.
45 The flipped university is especially relevant to sport studies as they are usually more practical
46 than other types of disciplines. The second article titled 'Sports university education and
47 entrepreneurial intentions: A comparison between Spain and Lithuania' by Maria Gonzalez-
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3 Serrano, Irena Valantine, Josep Cresp Hervas, Carlos Perez-Campos and Ferran Calabuig
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5 Moreno focuses on the issue of whether sport students are more entrepreneurial than other types
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7 of students. The article focuses on a cross-cultural comparison of sport students in two European
8
9 countries. This enables a better understanding of the internationalization of the sport education
10
11 curriculum. The third article titled “The ability to get a job”: Student understandings and
12
13 definitions of employability in a Marine Sport Science context’ by Emily Beaumont and Sharon
14
15 Gedye discusses the importance of vocational training for sport students. The article discusses
16
17 how sport students are focusing subject areas that increase their employability in the
18
19 marketplace. This is important in helping educational providers integrate more practical courses
20
21 into sport studies. The fourth article titled ‘Flipped learning and formative evaluation in higher
22
23 education’ by Jose Alvarez-Garcia, Fernando Otero-Saborido, Antonio Sanchez-Oliver and
24
25 Moses Grimaldi-Puyana discusses the role of emerging learning approaches in a sport context.
26
27 This is important in developing the field of sport education to take a more interdisciplinary
28
29 approach. Recently more emphasis has been placed on entrepreneurship education in sport and
30
31 this article focuses on innovative teaching methods. The fifth article titled ‘Motives and
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33 Constraints of Participants in Running Events’ by Koronios, Konstantinos; Marina Psiloutsikou
34
35 and Athanasios Kriemadis examines the training approaches of professional sports people. More
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37 athletes are focusing on education and training to increase their performance outcomes. This
38
39 article enables a more holistic understanding about the role of participants in sport events in
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41 terms of training initiatives. The sixth article titled ‘Sport education: Towards an entrepreneurial
42
43 learning approach’ by Vanessa Ratten and Paul Jones focuses on integrating sport education into
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45 entrepreneurship studies. This enables more sport courses to utilize entrepreneurship subjects in
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47 their curriculum. As there has been a growth in entrepreneurship education courses worldwide
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3 there is likely to be more emphasis in sport education also on education. The seventh article
4 titled 'Mind the Gap: An auto-ethnographical analysis of the distance between Sport
5 Management Education and the Sports Fitness Industry' by Steve Raven discusses the role of
6 sport professionals in the education experience. The article highlights how there needs to be
7 more usage of sport practitioners in subjects in order to enable more practical training. This is
8 important in fostering a more inclusive approach that takes into account emerging sport
9 practices. The eighth article titled 'Why talented athletes drop out from sport? The Portuguese
10 and Czech case' by Teresa Silva Dias, Katerina Novotna, Helder Oliveira, Carlos Azevedo,
11 Nuno Corte Real, Pavel Slepicka and Antonio Fonseca focuses on the need for sport education to
12 take a more entrepreneurial learning approach. The article discusses the different approaches in
13 two European countries in terms of sport pedagogy. This helps to understand the changing nature
14 of sport studies in the international marketplace. The ninth article titled 'Sport events at the
15 community level: A pedagogical tool to improve skills for students and teachers' by Dina
16 Miragaia, Carla Daniela Moreira da Costa and Vanessa Ratten focuses on the linkage between
17 sport studies and community sport events. This is helpful in bringing a societal approach into
18 sport studies. As sport is a popular leisure activity it can help sport educators to utilize
19 community events in terms of training students for their future careers. The tenth article titled 'A
20 new perspective: Consumer values and the consumption of physical activity' by Nicola
21 Williams-Burnett and Paula Kearns focuses on sport marketing from an educational perspective.
22 This is useful in bridging the gap between sport education and practical settings. There is
23 increased interest in co-creation in sport studies that is integrating the study of consumer
24 behavior.

A research agenda

The papers in this special issue show that there are new and innovative ways of understanding sport education. Due to the increased interest in sport it is important to highlight future research issues about educational matters. More interdisciplinary research is needed on sport education to link it to emerging areas such as entrepreneurship and innovation. This will enable different theoretical frameworks such as entrepreneurial learning to be utilized in a sport context.

We hope to stimulate further awareness and dialogue in sport education policy that will support future research. Education about sport is growing as more people are interested in the fitness and health areas for career reasons. The trend towards more awareness of the job prospects from sport education are predicted to continue. This trend matters as educators will need to keep up to date and current with market developments. Regardless of the economic impact of sport, the business activity at the social level for sport can be significant. To continue creating opportunities for all members of society to be involved in sport more emphasis on education initiatives are needed. This will result in the establishment of better pedagogical practices around sport education.

More research on this academically and practically important topic is needed to advance the field of sport education. Researchers need to take a more interdisciplinary approach to sport education. In particular, alternative theoretical perspectives including entrepreneurial learning need to be applied more to sport education. A key area of study needed might be the linkages of sport education to other emerging disciplines including sport entrepreneurship and sport for development. Possible topics need to focus on the public/private partnerships endemic in sport education. This will enable new research questions to be asked that allow a more deeper

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3 understanding of the antecedents and motivations for sport education, Potential research
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5 questions are how are innovative educational practices increasing the outcomes of sport
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7 education? And what are the outcomes of taking an interdisciplinary teaching model to sport
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9 education? The development of new theoretical and empirical approaches to sport education will
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11 influence the direction of sport education policies.
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