

Creation, implementation, and evaluation of a values-based training program for sport coaches and physical education teachers in Singapore

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Abstract

The purpose of the study was to create, implement, and evaluate a values-based training program for sport coaches and physical education teachers in Singapore. Four sport coaches with two to eight years of coaching experience ($M = 5.0$, $SD = 1.4$) and four physical education teachers with two to nine years of teaching experience ($M = 5.25$, $SD = 3.3$) took part in three 2-h training workshops focusing on the teaching of values to athletes and students. Following the workshops, the participants took part in an individual interview to document their perspectives of the values-based training program. Results of the thematic analysis revealed many benefits of the values-based training program, including an increased awareness of the importance of systematically teaching values through physical education and sport. Further, the participants felt better equipped to work with parents and other teachers in helping athletes and students transfer values.

Keywords

Athlete prosocial behaviour, coaching philosophy, parents, youth sport

Introduction

Values represent an array of social and moral qualities that enable human beings to fulfil themselves and live cooperatively and harmoniously with others.¹ As such, values can have a “self-regarding” feature (e.g. strong work ethic) that serves the welfare of the individual and an “other-regarding” feature (e.g. honesty, fairness) that attends to the good of others. The learning of values commences early in life, with children drawing behavioral references from surrounding individuals (e.g. members of their family, community). As they enter formal education, children spend most of their days at school and get exposed to a range of values in this setting.² Physical education and sport (PES) in schools represents an inclusive term that refers to “structured, supervised physical activities that take place at school during the school day” (see Bailey,³ p. 398). PES is often framed as a platform conducive to the development of values, given its prominence as a social activity in which youth are generally intrinsically motivated to engage.⁴ Thus, the school setting represents a key environment for teaching essential values,

in which PES has been identified as a particularly favorable context to facilitate values acquisition among students and athletes.^{3,5}

The debate on whether PES actually builds values has endured for years and remains ever fervent today. Some critics have challenged its value-building potential,⁶ perhaps as a result of research demonstrating participant decreases in value-orientations through continued sport participation.⁷ Most experts agree that participation in PES does not automatically guarantee the development of positive values.⁸ However, appropriately structured

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