

Reflective practice and communities of practice to facilitate the experiential learning of varsity volleyball coaches



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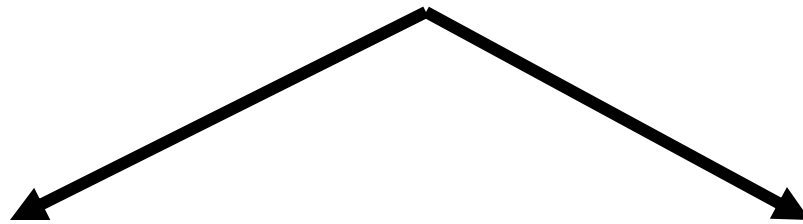
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Introduction

- Growing interest in the literature for coaching and particularly for coach education (Gilbert & Trudel, 2004).
- Overview of coaching and coach education research (Trudel & Gilbert, 2006).

Literature Review

- Two ways through which coaches learn to coach (Trudel & Gilbert, 2006):



Large-scale (L-S)
coach education program

Experience

Literature Review (cont.)

- Few empirical studies,
- Mixed opinions from coaches,
- Emergence of new programs.

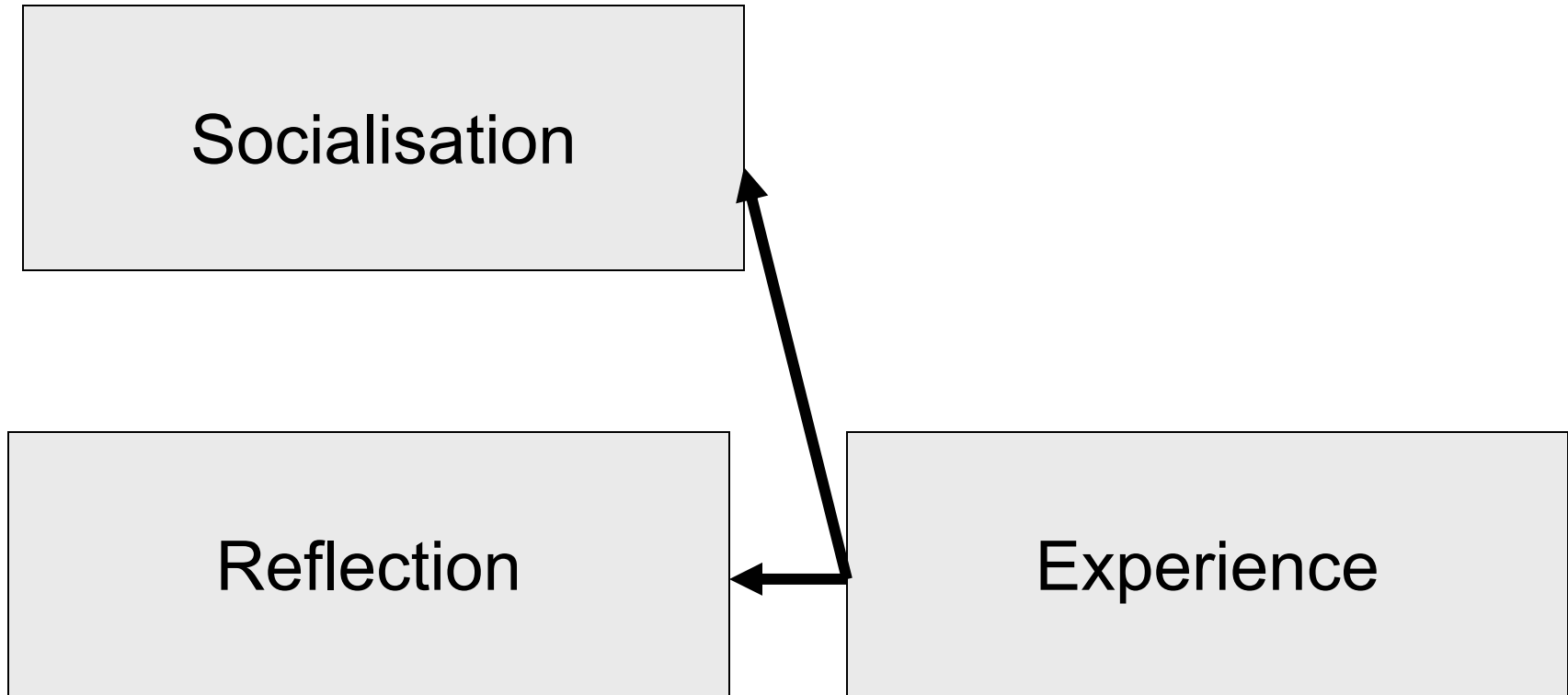
Large-scale (L-S)
coach education program

Literature Review (cont.)

- The main way they learn to coach, according to many coaches.
- Hours on the field vs. hours in L-S programs.

Experience

Literature Review (cont.)



Literature Review (cont.)

Socialisation



- Learning the sport's sub-culture
- Facilitate integration
- Learn questionable values
- Slow the learning process

Reflection



- Schön's theory
- Influence of the context
- Social dimension

Literature Review (cont.)

- Wenger's social learning theory:
- *“Such learning has to do with the development of our practices and our ability to negotiate meaning. It is not just the acquisition of memories, habits, and skills, but the formation of an identity. Our experience and our membership inform each other, pull each other, transform each other.”* (Wenger, 1998, p. 96)

Literature Review (cont.)

- Communities of practice (CoP) are groups of people who share a concern, a set of problems, or a passion about a topic, and who deepen their knowledge and expertise in this area by interacting on an ongoing basis. (Wenger, McDermott, & Snyder, 2000, p.4)
- 3 dimensions:
 - Joint enterprise, Mutual engagement, Shared repertoire.

Literature Review (cont.)

- CoP in coaching:
 - Trudel & Gilbert (2004): The ice hockey subculture limits the emergence of a CoP
 - Galipeau & Trudel (2006): A team is not a CoP.
 - Culver & Trudel (2006): Only research done on the creation of a Coach CoP (CCoP).

Purpose

- The goal of this study was to determine the role of the facilitator in nurturing reflective practice and in creating a CoP within a high school setting with varsity volleyball coaches and to see how they would engage in the activity proposed by the facilitator.

Method

- Individual narrative interview (60 minutes),
- Videotape one practice session and one game for each participant,
- Individual stimulated recall interview,
- Individual mid-season interview,
- Group discussion,
- Individual post-season interview,
- Follow-up interview.

Participants

	Carl	Paul	Nicolas	Raymond
Years as coach	8	8	12	2
Coached other sports	No	No	No	Yes
Years as player	4	6	7	6
Played other sports	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
NCCP	1	2	2	1
Employment	High school teacher	High school teacher	State employee	State employee
Former student	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
Child in the team	No	No	Yes	Yes



Results

1. Inquiring on issues emanating from the context is vital to the process of creating a CoP.
 - *“ Now personally, I’ve never coached. But I’ve been the school’s athletic director for the past 20 years and I’ve witnessed over the years many inappropriate behaviours from parents, players, and coaches. I believe that your project might be the key to solving some of these issues” .*

Results (cont.)

2. Fostering the reflective process is an excellent strategy to stimulate interactions among the coaches.
 - *“ The group meeting was almost like a therapy session. Often, I got my answer while I was asking the question. This is probably because I actually took the time to think about it. All this reflection started with the one on one session. It was interesting thinking about the little things that can make a world of difference during practice sessions” . (Raymond)*

Results (cont.)

3. Videotaping is an excellent tool to solicit individual reflection and group discussion.
 - *“ The best thing about this study was when we watched the tape of my practice session. I was able to see mistakes I was doing and you made me think about things that I’d never consider before” . (Carl)*
 - *“ The clips of everyone was what made the meeting interesting, otherwise it would have been just another meeting were everybody talks, nobody listens and nothing gets done” .(Paul)*

Results (cont.)

4. Getting familiar with and acknowledging the institution's history and tradition is vital for the facilitator.
 - Main focus of the school is on academic excellence,
 - Tradition of excellence in boy's volley-ball,

Results (cont.)

5. Having diversity amongst participants is key to enabling rich group discussion.
 - *“ I think the group meeting was one of the best activities of the study. Paul had a lot of experience coaching boys and I listened carefully to his advice. I think Raymond learned a lot with what I had to tell him about my experiences coaching girls. I even learned from him thanks to his experience working in human resources. ” (Nicolas)*

Results (cont.)

6. Seeing improvements in their practice will motivate participants to engage and be proactive in the process.
- *“ My involvement during games is something that I’ve improved and this had a direct impact on my athletes. So I could see that what we were doing was paying off. However, I was also conscious that I had to be careful not to get back to the way I was before. During games, I was constantly being aware of my involvement and this is something I will keep working on next year. ”*
(Nicolas)

Discussion

- Having the support of key members of the CoP is vital to ensure the creation/progress of the CoP (Wenger, McDermott, Snyder, 2000).
- However, without the presence of a facilitator, the CoP has a greater chance of fading over time (Culver & Trudel, 2006).

Conclusion

- Challenges CCoP
 - Time commitment from both the facilitator and the participants is extensive.
 - Barriers related to the subculture of the institution.
- Benefits of CCoP
 - Individual as well as collective learning.
 - Sharing of knowledge is contextualized and easily applicable.
 - Creates and solidifies bonds between its members.

Thank you

Questions?

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