

SPORT AS SUPPORT FOR SCHOOL REINTEGRATION. A CASE STUDY

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INTRODUCTION. In the today's world, sport is considered as a mean to be used in order to struggle against some of the problems that society is facing in most developed countries: lack of social cohesion, school and social disengagement, lack of social references, urban violence In 1999, the Council of Europe pointed out the role that sport had to play in social integration. This assumption is based more on traditional concepts related to the fundamental values of sport than on objective data. The Committee of the Regions (1996) highlighted that sport can have as much negative as positive social impacts according to the context. On the other hand, in many countries, projects have been implemented to improve social insertion through sport activities. Despite the determination of the physical educators and managers involved in this sector, it appears that priority is given to other forms of sport practice. This could also explain why few researchers seem interested by this context. In this paper, our goal was to analyze the case of one martial art school that is proposing one weekly kung fu course to youth (12 to 18 years old) who dropped out the school and were integrated into a specific programme aiming to help them to voluntarily look for a new start. In this presentation, the focus will be especially the identification of the teaching strategies that are used by the physical educators. Other aspects were analyzed: specific context of the practice, evolution of the students' behaviour.

METHOD. This study respected a qualitative approach. Data were collected between October 2008 and March 2009 according a real triangulation process (analysis of written material, participating observation, interviews with the educators, interview and questionnaire with the youth, analysis of the teaching process). A content analysis has been processed to identify any information and classify it according to its units of sense. The data obtained through the various sources were organized in parallel. The reliability of the analysis was based on the cross checking of a part of the available data by two researchers. Moreover, the physical educators validated a written report summarizing the findings and their interpretation.

RESULTS. Four themes were identified about the teaching strategies: main values underlined during the activity, discipline management, modes of communication, improvement of student's motivation. In the interviews as well as during the teaching process, it was underlined that the priority was to increase physical and motor level of the youth in order to make them aware that they are able to achieve something. Experience of courage, self-transcendence, team spirit and absolute respect of the rules were the main values. To reach this, three principles were applied: obligation to experiment, completion of tasks and equity of the treatment. About the discipline, the only principle is the respect of physical educators' authority. Any infraction was followed by an intervention, an explanation and a sanction. The aim was to restore personal rigor. Communication was based on adapted verbal interaction where using of specific terminology seemed to enhance the usefulness of language learning. Questioning was frequent in order to check the assimilation of the aspects taught by the educators. The latter demonstrated all the time, contributing to impress the youth and bringing respect. Dialogue was bidirectional to underline that rigor did not mean absence of human contacts. Three principles designed to improve students' motivation were highlighted: individualization of the requirements, recognition of individual rate of progress, exclusive use of positive interventions.

DISCUSSION. Proposing to learn one martial art is an interesting approach as it is an original context where the youth can see that they are competent and able to reach goals working with others. Rigor of the activity is self-supported contrary to what happens at school. The picture offered by the teaching style demonstrated in this martial art school is the opposite of what is currently recommended in physical education. However, some teachers may consider these approaches with difficult classes.

REFERENCES

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