

## **‘That is like a 24 hours-day tournament!’: using social media to further an authentic sport experience within Sport Education**

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## **‘That is like a 24 hours-day tournament!’: using social media to further an authentic sport experience within Sport Education**

### **Abstract**

Several studies demonstrate that Sport Education supports the development of an authentic experience of sport. Social media has the potential to further the development of an authentic sport experience since it is a key aspect of contemporary sport culture and can be a space for individuals to interact during the Sport Education. Yet the evidence-base on the use of social media within Sport Education is limited.

The purpose of this study was to explore how social media supports the development of an authentic sport experience within Sport Education. The context of this study was within a female recreational community sport futsal club. Players engaged with Sport Education as a focus for their sessions for 13 weeks. The Sport Education season embedded the six key features. During the Sport Education season, players interacted with each other through Facebook. Data were generated from; (1) researcher/player field journal, (2) Facebook posts and (3) post-season player interviews. Data analysis involved inductive, constant comparison and member-checking methods.

Results showed that players’ uses of Facebook supported the development of an authentic sport experience. Players’ uses of Facebook strengthened the development of three key Sport Education features; affiliation, festivity and season. Based on the limited amount of research on the impact of social media within Sport Education and community sport, future studies should continue to examine the effectiveness of social media as an interactional tool to enhance the development of an authentic sport experience.

**Keywords:** *Sport Education; Soccer; Social Media; Facebook; Learning; Technology; Pedagogical Models; Innovation; Social Networking; Communities of Practice.*

Sport Education is a pedagogical model that has been researched extensively and internationally in physical education and sport pedagogy literature (Hastie, Ojeda, & Luquin, 2011; Hastie, 2011; Wallhead & O’Sullivan, 2005). Several studies, in a variety of settings (e.g., schools, universities and community sport) demonstrate that the model is capable of providing an authentic and educationally rich sport experience (Hastie et al., 2011; Siedentop, Hastie, & Van der Mars, 2011). Specifically, the model can be

used to foster the development of three learning outcomes; competent, literate and enthusiastic sportspersons (Siedentop et al., 2011). A *competent* sportsperson is someone who develops skills and strategies to participate successfully in a game; a *literate* sportsperson is someone who understands rules, traditions, and values associated with sport, and also can distinguish between good and bad sport practices; and an *enthusiastic* sportsperson is someone who plays and behaves in ways that preserves, protects and enhances the sport culture (Siedentop et al., 2011). Thus, Sport Education is “the most mature of the models-based approach currently available to us” (Kirk, 2013, p.975) and is a model that encourages learners to experience the culture of sport and the diverse roles in sport (that extend beyond on a performer). In this sense, an authentic sport experience is defined by standards of excellence, ‘goods’ that are derived from the pursuit of excellence, and virtues such as honesty, justice and courage that are necessary to achieve these ‘goods’ (Kirk, 2013; Siedentop, 2002).

Digital technologies and social media sites have been recently positioned as tools that can accelerate and extend learning within Sport Education (Calderón et al., 2016; Casey, Hastie, & Rovegno, 2011; Casey & Hastie, 2011; Hastie & Sinelnikov, 2007; Sinelnikov, 2012). Hastie, Casey and Tarter (2010), for example, showed how wikis can be used to help students create games. Hastie et al. (2010) described that wikis created a community of practice (CoP) that could extend participation and learning. Hastie and Sinelnikov (2007) also demonstrated how college students developed web pages to represent their engagement with volleyball in Sport Education. These authors suggested that web pages created a new way of learning and assessment. Calderón et al. (2016) is one of the few authors to explore the use of social media. Calderón et al. (2016) demonstrated that social media promotes an authentic student-centered learning context for higher education students by offering additional opportunities for students to discuss their participation and learning. Yet while the potential for social media use within Sport Education was noted by Calderón et al. (2016), engagement by all students, digital identity and digital competence were noted to be barriers to social media integration. The authors, consequently, called for further empirical evidence to determine if and how social media can be used effectively within Sport Education.

Building on the work of Calderón et al. (2016), we believe that there are new opportunities for learning within Sport Education through social media that could

extend participants experiences of sport; the culture, roles, and ethical values. Indeed, social media has a level of relevance to the culture of sport and has been shown to be a key space to attract fans (Özsoy, 2011) and increase fan–athlete interaction (Frederick, Lim, Clavio, Pedersen, & Burch, 2012; Pegoraro, 2010). For example, to access updates on sport events, view pictures and post event reports, 1.1 million people joined the Facebook page of the London 2012 Olympic Games (Atali, Serbas, & Akkus, 2014) and 14.6 million for Rio 2016<sup>2</sup>. As such, we argue that if social media is part of professional sport it could be considered as an important tool for promoting an authentic sport experience within Sport Education.

The potential for social media to further promote an authentic sport experience within Sport Education can be grounded, theoretically, in situated learning within CoP (see Lave & Wenger, 1991; Wenger, 1998; Wenger and Wenger-Trayner, 2015). Situated learning within a CoP could be summarized as ‘groups of people who share a concern or a passion for something they do and learn how to do it better as they interact regularly’ (Wenger and Wenger-Traynor 2015, p 1). Individuals within a group come together to interact, and contribute to shared ‘public’ practices in particular spheres of life (Lave & Wenger, 1991; Wenger & Wenger-Traynor, 2015). The assumption for learning within a CoP is that ‘learning is an integral and inseparable aspect of social practice’ (Lave & Wenger, 1991, p. 31). Each individual person occupies a unique identity, where their contributions are seen as important for other members and the practices of the community (Wenger, 1998). Despite this, a person is not seen just as an individual but also as part of a cultural and community context (Fleer 2003; Lave & Wenger 1991; Wenger 1998). Participation in a CoP, therefore, involves genuine participation by a diverse range of individuals who share and develop common socially shared and public practices within an authentic context (Lave & Wenger, 1991; Wenger, 1998; Wenger & Wenger-Traynor 2015).

In using situated learning as a theoretical framework to examine learning within Sport Education, Kirk and Macdonald (1998) and Kirk and Kinchin (2003) argued that Sport Education provides an authentic sport experience by reproducing contemporary CoPs that are in-line with community based sport. The key features of Sport Education, that include, seasons, affiliation, competition, a culminating event, record keeping and

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<sup>2</sup> <https://www.facebook.com/olympics>

festivity (Siedentop et al, 2011) are central practices of community sport and, therefore, provide learners with replicable experiences (Kirk & Kinchin, 2003; Kirk & Macdonald, 1998). In addition, Sport Education promotes, through the feature of affiliation, learners adopting different roles in sport, for example, a coach, journalist or record keeper (Siedentop et al., 2011). These roles allow learners to authentically participate in a CoP, through encouraging them to occupy a unique identity where their contributions are seen as important for other members (Kirk & Kinchin, 2003; Kirk & Macdonald, 1998).

The justification for social media to further the authentic experience within Sport Education comes from social media's capabilities to strengthen and support interactions and the practices within CoPs (Goodyear, Casey, & Kirk, 2014; Goodyear & Casey, 2015; Wesely, 2013). Closely aligned with the theoretical underpinnings of CoPs (see Lave & Wenger, 1991; Wenger, 1998), Goodyear et al. (2014), for example, demonstrated that social media acted as a space external to the school site where members of a school-based CoP could gain support, develop shared practices and promote their individual and group identities. Wesely (2013), on the other hand, has shown that social media can be a space for the formation of online CoPs. In Wesely's (2013) exploration of Twitter-chats, social media was positioned as a socially and culturally relevant space for a group of individuals to come together to contribute to and develop shared public practices.

Through the discussions on situated learning within CoPs, we have shown that Sport Education provides an authentic experience of sport through re-producing CoPs in community based sport. Social media has the potential to further an authentic sport experience since it is a key aspect of contemporary sport culture and it can be a space to support the practices of CoPs and/or the formation of CoPs. The purpose of this paper, therefore, is to explore how social media supports an authentic sport experience within a Sport Education.

## **Methods**

The study design was a case study. A case study is a system; the examination of this system seeks to identify the many elements that compose its structure, and how each component affects one another (Stake, 2005). In this study, the system analyzed included (i) the six features of Sport Education (season, competition, score keeping,

festivity, team affiliation and culminating event) and (ii) community sport players' uses of Facebook during a Sport Education season. The study, therefore, sought to identify how players' uses of Facebook influenced the key features of Sport Education. Ethical approval was provided by the university ethics committee and all players provided informed consent for their participation. In the reporting of the findings names have been represented by pseudonyms and data is reported on verbatim. These anonymity strategies were selected because of the private nature of the Facebook groups used in this study; while posts could still be traced, privacy settings limited the traceability of players' posts by individuals external to this study. Facebook's terms of service were consulted and relevant procedures were followed for informed consent and copyright.

### *Setting and participants*

The setting was a female community futsal club within Santos, Brazil. At the time of this study, the players had rented a futsal<sup>3</sup> court for more than three years to play pick-up indoor soccer twice a week. There were 21 female players in total (20 were aged 22-34 years, and 1 player was aged 14). A1 (lead author researcher/masked for peer review) was a player within the futsal club and had been part of the futsal group for more than two years. A1 introduced the idea of engaging with a Sport Education season to the players, and following their agreed interest, A1 led the Sport Education season and also participated as a player. Prior to this study, none of the players had any experience with Sport Education and this was the first time A1 had led a Sport Education season.

### *Sport Education*

The implementation of Sport Education was based on six key features; seasons, affiliation, formal competition, a culminating event, record keeping and festivity (Siedentop et al, 2011). Table 1 describes these features and how they were implemented. Table 2 provides a week-by-week description of the Sport Education season.

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<sup>3</sup> Futsal is a variant of soccer that is played on a **smaller field (minimum 25x16m and maximum 42x25m) between two teams of five players each, one of whom is the goalkeeper.**

[Insert tables 1 and 2]

To support the lead author's delivery of Sport Education, the third author 'A3' [masked for peer review] acted to guide the implementation of the model. A3 has implemented Sport Education in variety of settings for more than six years (Author, 2013). A1 and A3 planned the seasons together and spoke on a weekly basis about the sessions to ensure a level of model fidelity i.e. that the implementation of Sport Education closely adhered to the key features (Hastie & Casey, 2014).

The Sport Education season lasted for 13 weeks and each week had two one-hour sessions. There were 4 teams (Spain, South Africa, Egypt and Italy) and 4 organizational roles (coach/manager, referee, scorekeepers and journalist). The coaches/managers were responsible for planning the training sessions and took care of team administrative duties, such as organizing the equipment for team practices and informing all team members of when and where matches would take place. The referees were responsible for defining rules prior to the start of the season, teaching the rules to teammates, and upholding rules during gameplay. The scorekeepers (two per team) recorded team and individual statistical performances and provided the journalists with the scores. The journalists were responsible for collecting information about their team's performance and updating their team's portfolio (see Kinchin, 2001 for an overview of Sport Education portfolios). A key place where the portfolio could exist was on a dedicated webpage. The webpage was created specifically for the study and it was an idea proposed by the journalists prior to the start of the Sport Education season. Despite the option to use the webpage to keep the team's portfolio, during the Sport Education season Facebook emerged as an additional space for discussing the Sport Education season.

#### *Facebook as a medium for interaction*

Interactions and discussions on Facebook that occurred during the season were not in the study's original design nor were they planned for aspect of the implementation of Sport Education. While the role of Facebook interactions within Sport Education will be detailed in the results section, it is important to provide some methodological and contextual information as to how Facebook was used by the players and A1. In particular, the types of interactions and the functions of Facebook can be understood in Table 3.

[Insert table 3]

Prior to this study A1 was friends with the players on Facebook. This Facebook friendship was mostly likely a result of A1's participation in the community sport club as a player for the past two years or more. Alongside being friends with one another, the players were also members of the community sport club's closed Facebook page. This Facebook page was mainly used for announcements (e.g. payment notices). At the start of the season, the players began to use the Facebook page as a space to talk about rules, fixtures and match play.

#### *Data gathering*

Over the course of the Sport Education season, 130 status updates, 398 likes, and 965 comments on the Facebook page were made. This data from Facebook were exported to Microsoft excel using the Facebook export application. In Table 4 the frequency of status update, likes and comments are provided.

[Insert table 4]

In addition to data gathered from Facebook, A1 wrote weekly field journals about her experiences of leading and participating in the Sport Education season (totaling 25 pages). Semi-structured interviews were also conducted at the end of the season (December 2013). A3 interviewed 13 participants; at least 3 players from each team were interviewed. These interviews ranged in length from 22 to 41 minutes and were audio recorded and transcribed verbatim. The interviews aimed to gather data about the players' perceptions of their experiences of Sport Education and the usefulness of Facebook during the intervention.

#### *Data analysis*

Data analysis involved four steps and was approached through an inductive lens (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Firstly, A1 and the A3 read all data sets separately (interviews transcripts, field notes and Facebook posts) and engaged in the process of coding. Through this inductive approach, statements, and ideas were developed as these authors read and re-read the data. After the data were coded, A1 and the A3 discussed the codes they had identified in relation to the research question: how does social media support

the development of an authentic sport experience within Sport Education? Examples of codes by each author were offered, and then questioned and critiqued by the other author. This enabled the authors to share commonalities and differences. By engaging in this step A1 and A3 attempted to act as external analysts of each other's reflections, seeking clarity by asking questions and probing for deeper meaning where appropriate. The third process of analysis involved constant comparison. Data were grouped and placed into categories and moved backwards and forwards until an agreement was reached. The fourth and final process of analysis involved the second author. The second author engaged in a process of member checking A1 and A3's interpretations. The second author added credibility to analysis because she challenged the interpretations of the coded data and the construction of themes. In this phase, data was moved between different themes until a level of agreement was reached.

## **Results**

The data demonstrated that Facebook extended the opportunities for players to participate in an authentic sport experience. Table 5 shows how interactions on Facebook supported the practices of the key features of Sport Education: seasons, competition, score keeping, festivity, team affiliation and a culminating event. Team affiliation, festivity and seasons, however, were the key features most impacted by interactions on Facebook. As a result, in this section these key features will be discussed.

[Insert Table 5]

Before the key features are discussed it is important to acknowledge players' different levels of engagement with Facebook. Variability in how the players' used Facebook is discussed first to demonstrate the differing levels of impact Facebook had on individual players' experiences of Sport Education.

### *The differing levels of engagement*

The players used Facebook in different ways and interacted with each other on this platform to different intensities (see Table 4). For example, the number of status updates made by individual players ranged from 32 - 1 (Table 4). Although it is not possible to argue that players' engagement was related to their roles (journalists, coaches, referees and scorekeepers), there is some evidence to suggest that players'

engagement with the Facebook page varied by role. Indeed, journalists (A1, Maria and Gabriela) made the greatest number of status updates. The journalists posted all information onto the Facebook page that they had already uploaded to the website. For example,

Girls, I just uploaded fresh news in relation to the games yesterday! See photos and news in our website (website link) :-) (Journalist Gabriela Facebook post 11-22).

Given that status updates are a message shared with the whole group and that all users can see (see Table 3), the frequency of status updates made by the journalists (see Table 4) is somewhat reflective of their role to disseminate and share information about team performances. Although coaches and referees were also required to disseminate information, their role predominantly focused on sharing information during face-to-face session time. The number of posts made by the coaches and referees ranged from 2-8 status updates. Further evidence for engagement with Facebook being associated with role comes from the scorekeepers. Scorekeepers were required to collect scores and share these with the journalists. The interactive component of their role was, subsequently, minimal and this was further evidenced through the scorekeepers posting the least amount of status updates. Although role was associated with the number of status updates all players, regardless of role, engaged with the Facebook page by liking and commenting on other's status updates (Table 4). Given that journalists posted the most status updates, this finding suggests that the journalists were the key drivers of player engagement with the Facebook page.

#### *Increasing opportunities for interaction: enhancing team affiliation*

The data revealed that Facebook extended the opportunities for players to participate in an authentic sport experience through the increased opportunities for interaction that were provided. Although Sport Education happened on Mondays and Thursdays, the players reported that Facebook was responsible for a "24 hours-day tournament" (Maria - interview). As Maria's comment below shows, Facebook allowed the players to interact with each other before and after the sessions.

I found the use of Internet very positive in our tournament. I think that nowadays, the use of technology is essential, Internet these days is essential. I think that the participation in Facebook and the webpage was a really cool idea. The tournament had a limited time [ i.e. Monday and Thursday]. However, the Facebook comments did not have a time to finish. We stayed all week commenting on the tournament on Facebook... That is like a 24 hours-day tournament! We sleep together, wake up

together and everything. And everything was totally informal, we pretty much spent the whole day together on the Internet (Maria - interview).

Besides the interactions that took place in this closed Facebook page, each of the four teams also created a private message group where they exchanged messages. While data could not be gathered from these private spaces of Facebook the field notes and interviews showed that private messages contributed to deepening the friendship among the players.

Yesterday I realized that the girls were writing a lot on Facebook. I have noticed that I have greatly increased the time that we stay online. We made a private message of my team and we discussed the shirt color, our bios on the web page. We also organized a day to go running on the beach. I realize that our contact in the webpage and Facebook has been very intense (A1 Fieldnote).

Although demonstrations of friendship and affection occurred in the private spaces, these were also noted to occur in the overall futsal club Facebook page. The following Facebook conversation illustrates this matter.

- Tabata - Regardless of who won or lost yesterday, I want to say thank you for everything. Both games were sensational. I feel a great happiness because we are brought together and playing. Everyone who was playing yesterday deserves congratulations. It was very pleasurable.
- Denise - I'm thrilled. Congratulations to you, Tabata. You are a good goalkeeper.
- Gabriela- How nice Tabata!!! Even more so because you support São Paulo (Brazilian soccer team)! hahaha Egypt !!!
- Laura - My goalkeeper is Perfect (11-01 Facebook post)

In summary, the Facebook page created an enjoyable space for informal and frequent conversations between players. Indeed, Facebook acted as a platform for players to talk about the Sport Education season beyond the formal sessions on Mondays and Thursdays and it was a space where players could demonstrate an affiliation toward their team mates. For example, players congratulated each other and demonstrated a sense of belonging to their team and team mates. It can be suggested, therefore, that because Facebook was a space that allowed players to interact more frequently, Facebook contributed to strengthening the key feature of affiliation.

### *Increasing festivity*

Festivity relates to players celebrating their participation in sport through the development of a festive atmosphere (see Table 1). A festive atmosphere was supported by Facebook through the ways in which the players created and expressed their team identities on the webpage and on Facebook, and through the subsequent opportunities

these spaces provided for players to engage in humorous discussions. For example, on the webpage each team created their online space with their names, colors, descriptions of their teams, and individual players' profiles. In some cases, imaginary ages, alternative nationalities and comic pictures were used to identify particular players and/or their teams. Indeed, most of the players chose funny and fictional player profiles.

Referee Denise

*Team:* Africa

*Age:* 17 – the youngest player

*Nationality:* Ilha Robben

*Strong points:* Perform plays that combine futsal, Artistic Gymnastics and Judo.

The opposing athletes usually stop playing to watch.

*Weak points:* when she is excited in the execution of acrobatics she forgot the ball.

Journalist Maria

It is considered the nicest athlete. She found space in your busy schedule to compete in this tournament

*Positive points:* Teamwork, communication, and very helpful.

*Negative points:* She does not kick on goal. She said she is afraid because lack confidence

*Expectation for the tournament:* win all games

Although there was space on the webpage for comments about these profiles, the players used Facebook as a space to discuss these player and team identities. Instead of creating t-shirts, team chants, banners or the decoration of festive spaces, the participants created a virtual space where humor was always present that represented notions of festivity.

Maria - #LetsSpain

Carolina - Let's go? Where?

Denise - Ha Ha Ha

Maria - Let's win the game against your team... hahahahaha

Carolina - ha ha ha (11-21 Facebook post)

I accessed the webpage every day. I even saved the webpage as my mobile's home page. We commented on Facebook what the journalists posted on the site. Generally, we would write funny comments about our webpage... I always laughed a lot. I posted funny comments and comic pictures (Audrey - interview).

Alongside festivity existing within player and team profiles, Facebook supported the development of a festive atmosphere within the culminating event. For example, players used awards to recognize outstanding performances and team-related efforts during the culminating event. Players rewarded each other based on game-play performance (top scorer, best defender, most improved player), excellence in fulfilling duty-team responsibilities (best coach/manager, best referee, best journalist and best

scorekeeper), and fair play behaviors (best fair play player). Although the awards for game-play performances were based on statistics collected during the season, awards for excellence in duty-team responsibilities and fair play behavior was voted for by using the Facebook page. All pictures of the festive day were posted by the journalists and players were encouraged to and comment on the Facebook page and vote.

Hello all!!! During our BBQ we also will award the best journalist, best statistics, best coach and best referee, as well as the fair play player! It will be fun! We selected 10 categories to be voted on by you. I talked to the coaches and they will collect your votes by private messages groups! Remember you cannot vote for yourself! ha ha ha (A1 Facebook post 12-18)

Facebook supported the development of a festive atmosphere by re-enforcing a team identity and by creating a sense of festivity within the culminating event. The ability to engage in humorous interactions about identity and the culminating event on Facebook furthered the development of a festive atmosphere.

#### *Creating a democratic space*

Facebook created a democratic space that supported decision-making during the season that allowed players to resolve challenges related to the organizational aspects of teams and gameplay. Indeed, Facebook provided an additional space for the players to discuss the organization of games and practices. This was important as during the season, unexpected eventualities occurred (e.g. injuries, dropout, discussions and absences) in which the players had to decide how to solve problems within a short period of time. It became evident that Facebook provided a democratic space for decision making where players could express their feelings in a safe environment, supporting players to resolve and avoid conflicts during the sessions.

Andressa/Marta - Good morning girls! I really want to apologize to you and especially, I want to apologize to Denise for not having controlled my emotions yesterday. I should not behave in that way... I apologize. We are in the tournament for fun and not to fight. Signed Marta

Melissa - No worries Marta. Sometimes we got nervous in the game. But I think all of us know how things are different on the field and offside the field. Outside the field our friendship will stay the same (12-04 Facebook post).

Nowadays everything is virtual, Internet has made everything more practical in our live. In our tournament, we had several schedule changes and the Internet has facilitated our communication. It was very practical

and convenient to suit the order of some games to help someone, for example (Karina - interview).

By creating a democratic environment, Facebook also increased players' understandings of how to perform in their individual roles to support the organization of the seasons. For example, some of the Facebook posts showed how players could give an opinion on their team's performance and how to improve. As the interaction on Facebook shows below, collectively the players realized that scorekeepers should have fewer criteria to observe, should share the criteria between the two scorekeepers and also should meet to discuss the criteria. Similarly, the referees could share difficulties of performing their role. Players discussed ideas on how to make better judgments (referees) during game play. Referees agreed to talk about mistakes and successes after games and not speak to spectators during the games. In addition, they pointed out that athletes needed to respect their decisions.

- A1 - Girls, I would like to hear your opinion. What do we need to improve so that we do not have statistical [score keeping] mistakes during the season?
- Denise - I'm not a scorekeeper, but I noted that the data is inaccurate. For example, it does not have goalkeepers' good and bad passes
- A1 - Thanks Denise! We need to consider goalkeepers' passes. Audrey also made excellent suggestions in her inbox: a) we should divide the criteria to observe between the two scorekeepers; b) we plan a meeting to organize/better train the criteria.

In summary, Facebook was a democratic space where players were able to voice their opinions, feelings and resolve many unexpected eventualities (injuries, dropout, discussions/ disagreements and absences) that are common in sport competitions. In addition, interactions that occurred on Facebook increased players' understandings of how to perform in their individual roles to support the organization of the seasons. Instead of having someone in a position of power (teacher or coach) to solve conflicts, Facebook acted as a medium for democratic decision making in a relatively short period of time.

### **Discussion and conclusion**

Data from this study has demonstrated that Facebook acted as an additional space for interaction between futsal players participating in a Sport Education season. In turn, Facebook was a medium for players to share information and discuss roles, rules, fixtures and results before and after their face-to-face weekly sessions. Facebook, therefore, supported and extended the opportunities players had to interact with each

other and engage with the practices inherent within Sport Education (see for example, Hastie et al., 2011).

There was evidence to suggest that the inclusion of Facebook as an interactional tool strengthened the existence of the key features of Sport Education (see Siedentop et al., 2011) and, consequently, supported the development of an authentic sport experience. While it should be noted that all six features were impacted by players uses of Facebook, affiliation, festivity and seasons were the features impacted the most and were evidenced explicitly. Affiliation was evident since Facebook provided a medium for players to express their sense of belonging to their team and team mates; festivity was developed through interactions on Facebook that represented humor; seasons were supported through the opportunities for players to voice opinions and resolve challenges related to the organizational nature of tournaments. Given that the features of affiliation, festivity and seasons are representative of community-based sport (Kirk & Kinchin, 2003; Kirk & Macdonald, 1998), we argue that there is evidence to suggest that social media acted as a tool to support the development of an authentic sport experience.

Drawing on the theoretical underpinnings of situated learning within CoPs (see Lave & Wenger, 1991; Wenger, 1998; Wenger & Wenger-Traynor, 2015), players' uses of Facebook supported the development of an authentic sport experience Facebook was a platform that provided more opportunities for interaction. Indeed, Wenger and Wenger-Traynor (2015) and Wenger (1998) emphasised that a CoP represents a group of individuals who share concerns and come together to interact regularly to contribute to shared public practices. The point around interacting regularly is significant to this study. A key finding was how players felt that Facebook enabled them to interact more frequently, before and after face-to-face sessions. Facebook was also used by the players because it was a socially and culturally relevant form of communication to them; as seen through the players prior uses of Facebook, the players established Facebook profiles, the players' preferences to interact through Facebook instead of the webpage, and the players uses of the community club's Facebook page prior to the beginning of the Sport Education season. It can be suggested, therefore, that more opportunities to interact in a space that was socially and culturally relevant to the players supported the development of an authentic sport context in this study.

Facebook's role in supporting an authentic sport experience can also be related to the identity as aspect of CoPs (see Wenger, 1998), since opportunities existed for the players to perform a particular identify on Facebook. In particular, Facebook acted as a

medium for the journalists to share information with their teams and perform in their role in a more efficient and effective manner. The positive responses from other members, in the form of comments and likes, suggest that other team members were aware of, and supportive of, the journalists' identity and their unique contribution to the team. Yet while the journalists could perform their identity on Facebook, this was not evident for all players or roles. Notably, the scorekeepers rarely interacted with their team through Facebook and there were differences amongst the players in their willingness to comment or like in their Facebook group. The differences in how the players used Facebook provide two key implications for the uses of social media within Sport Education. First, social media can strengthen particular players' ability to perform in their roles and contribute to the development of an authentic sport experience for others in their team and players within the wider Sport Education season. For example, a direct association can be made between social media and the media orientated role of the journalist. Second, the use of social media within Sport Education does not mean that all players will be subjected to the same authentic sport experience and that all players' experiences will be supported by social media. While variability in uses of social media between individuals has been reported in investigations of teachers and students within physical education contexts (Calderón et al., 2016; Goodyear et al., 2014; Wesely, 2013), differences in how players used Facebook highlight the variability of impact that interactions on Facebook could have. Overall, these two implications suggest that coaches should not rely on social media as the sole form of communication or the only space in which particular players, such as journalists, can perform in their roles. Indeed, we emphasize that social media should be positioned as a supportive interactive tool for Sport Education.

Although this study has demonstrated that social media can support the development of an authentic sport experience, there were key limitations that should be acknowledged. Firstly, A1 was an insider to the community sport club. While insider role status was also a strength of the research through supporting active participation, her closeness to the players may have impacted on the players uses of Facebook and/or A1's interpretation of the data. Indeed, objectivity, reflexivity, and authenticity can be affected by the researcher becoming too close to the context and the participants (Dwyer & Buckle, 2009). Despite this limitation, the second and third authors served to support credibility and dependability by advising on the conduct of the Sport Education season (third author) and by being outsiders to the players and context during data analysis

(second and third author). The second limitation of this study relates to transferability. While the use of a case study approach into a singular community sport club provided detailed insights into the role of social media within Sport Education, a larger sample size of a diverse range of community sport clubs and players would strengthen and legitimise the transferability of the findings. Future investigations, therefore, should aim to explore how players and coaches, from a diverse range of sport clubs, use and engage with social media.

In conclusion, the discussions in this paper have shown that social media plays a key role in sport, and more specifically community sport. In using Sport Education and in an effort to develop an authentic sport experience, social media should be considered as a platform for communication. Players' interactions on social media can provide increased opportunities for dialogue, before and after face-to-face sessions, and these social media interactions can support the development of particular players' identities within their team. Given the pace at which social media is being used by individuals in wider society (Selwyn & Stirling, 2016) and the difficulties in separating online and offline worlds (Bundon, 2016), this study has provided further empirical evidence to suggest that we cannot separate social media from sport. Indeed, an authentic sport experience, we suggest, encompasses social media interactions and if CoPs within Sport Education are said to be in-line with community sport (see Kirk & Kinchin, 2003; Kirk & Macdonald, 1998), social media should serve as a basis for communication between players.

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Table 1: Description of the key features of Sport Education and how they were fulfilled in each lesson

Key Features	How achieved in each lesson
<p><i>Seasons</i> - sport is done by seasons. A season implies a longer time period that includes a practice period, a pre-season, a regular season and a post-season with a culminating event.</p>	<p>Three seasons took place into the unit: 5 weeks in pre-season, 6 weeks in regular season and 2 weeks in post-season/culminating event.</p>
<p><i>Affiliation</i> - students remain members of the same team for the entire season. Affiliation is defined as the development of feelings of identity, the sense of belonging to a team, and the growth of social skills.</p>	<p>The players were organized in 4 teams (Spain, South Africa, Egypt and Italy), remaining in the same team for the entire season.</p>
<p><i>Formal competition</i> – students make many of the decisions that determine the structure and operation of the season. A formal schedule of competition allows each team and its participants to make short-term decisions for the season.</p>	<p>The players were encouraged to assign one of the roles: journalist, referee, scorekeeper, and coach/manager. During the season, the teams played in a round-robin formal competition. In the post-season all teams played at least one match - semi-final and final.</p>
<p><i>Culminating event</i> - the season ends with a culminating event. This event should be festive and allow all students to participate.</p>	<p>In the 2 last days (Festival day), the players played at least one match - semi-final and final. Medals awarded to all players according to their placement. The players also organized an event to give medals for top scorer, best defender, most improved player, , and others</p>
<p><i>Record keeping</i> - there is extensive record keeping. Game statistics can be used by coaches and participants to analyze their own team strengths and those of their opponents</p>	<p>Each team had two scorekeepers. They recorded team and individual statistical performances during games such as: offensive situation (passes, shots and goals), defensive situations (disarms, blocks and defenses) and fair play situations</p>
<p><i>Festivity</i> - sporting events are known for being festive. Teams have names that become part of their tradition and add to the lore of the sport. In that sense, teachers need to find ways to help students learn to celebrate their participation in sport activities by creating a festive atmosphere</p>	<p>The players were encouraged to discuss and agreeing on a team name, color and slogan. They decided to use country's names (Spain, South Africa, Egypt and Italy). All material produced were posted and commented in a Facebook page</p>

Table 2: Week by week season schedule

Week	Content
1	Meeting with all players to explain the Sport Education model and how a season would be developed.
2	Formation of mixed ability teams by the coaches (role in which four participants volunteered to be). Players encouraged discussing and agreeing on a team name, color and slogan.
3	Preseason training: The players s were encouraged to discuss each of the roles assigned by the lead author: journalist, referee, scorekeeper, and coach/manager. Introduction of the website idea as well as a Facebook page as dissemination tools of all the material produced during the season.
4-5	Continuation of preseason training: The coach/manager of each team led the sessions. Teams started playing on friendly games.

6-11	Season: Round-robin formal competition. All teams were wearing team shirts.
12	Postseason: Festival Day. All teams played at least one match - semi-final and final. Medals awarded to all players according to their placement.
13	Culminating Events: Continuation of Festival Day. Medals for top scorer, best defender, most improved player, fair play player, and others.

Table 3: Functions of Facebook

Function	Description
Status update	A message shared on either a page or a user's profile
Friends	Users choose to subscribe to other user's Facebook pages
Facebook page	A shared space created by one user where those who follow this page can see status updates and comment on these status updates
Private message	A message between two or more people that cannot be seen in the public spaces
Like	A user shows appreciation for a status update

Table 4: Interactions on Facebook page

Participants	Role	Status update	Likes	Comments
A1 – lead author	journalist	33	110	285
Gabriela	journalist	32	104	231
Maria	journalist	11	41	71
Teresa	coach/manager	8	17	24
Carolina	scorekeeper	6	12	32
Tabata	referee	6	16	56
Michele	coach/manager	4	11	6
Patrícia	referee	4	16	15
Melissa	scorekeeper	3	7	29
Denise	referee	3	18	14
Laura	coach/manager	5	11	85
Camila	journalist	2	3	8
Andressa/Marta	referee	2	17	21
Marisa	coach/manager	2	4	2
Karina	scorekeeper	2	1	21
Audrey	scorekeeper	1	9	30
Nair	scorekeeper	1	1	35
Tata	scorekeeper	0	3	2
Carol	scorekeeper	0	0	0
Andrea	scorekeeper	0	0	0
Renata	scorekeeper	0	0	0

Table 5: Description of the key features of Sport Education and how Facebook supported the practice of the key features

Key Features	How Facebook informed the key features
<i>Seasons</i>	Facebook showed different importance in each of the three seasons. In the pre-season (5 weeks) the interaction on Facebook aimed to produce and comment the team portfolio as well as the learning of the individual roles (journalist, referee, scorekeeper, and coach/manager). In the regular season (6 weeks) the Facebook page became a space to discuss the organization of the games and negotiate unexpected eventualities that occurred (e.g. injuries, dropout, discussions and absences). In the post-season/culminating event (2 weeks), Facebook also helped to create a festive environment where journalists and other participants posted immediately pictures and comments about the final games and medals.
<i>Affiliation</i>	Facebook allowed the participants to interact with each other before and after the sessions. Besides participating in the Facebook page, the participants also exchanged private messages within their teammates since the second week of the Sport Education season.
<i>Formal competition</i>	Facebook helped the participants to make many of the decisions that determine the structure and operation of the season. For example, the participants discussed about the roles: journalist, referee, scorekeeper, and coach/manager. During the season, the teams played in a formal competition and pictures/reports were publishing on the website and Facebook.
<i>Culminating event</i>	In the 2 last days (Festival day), pictures and comments were posted by the journalists and other participants, during the semi-finals, finals and the final event to give medals for top scorer, best defender, most improved player, fair play player, and others. In these days, pictures were published immediately on Facebook and commented during the events.
<i>Record keeping</i>	The journalists updated weekly on the website the team and individual statistical performances collected by the two scorekeepers. They were also responsible to post on Facebook the link to access the statistical performance. In the pre-season the participants also discussed how to improve the way the score keepers collected the statistical performance
<i>Festivity</i>	The journalists had roles to keep a portfolio on the webpage and post on Facebook the link of the updates. The players were also encouraged by the journalists to discuss and agreeing on a team name, color and slogan on Facebook. Besides created a team portfolio, journalists wrote and publish reports from completed matches. The news and pictures were commented by most of the players