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Published in:
Scandinavian Journal of Sport and Exercise Psychology

DOI:
[10.7146/sjsep.v6i.141284](https://doi.org/10.7146/sjsep.v6i.141284)

Publication date:
2024

Document version:
Forlagets udgivne version

Document license:
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Citation for published version (APA):
Storm, L. K., Svendsen, A. M., Stambulova, N., Barker, D., Ronkainen, N., Bjørndal, C. T., Larsen, S. H., Book Jr, R., Kuettel, A., Larsen, C. H., & Henriksen, K. (2024). Cultural Leadership in Physical Education and Youth Sport: Consensus from a Nordic Think Tank. *Scandinavian Journal of Sport and Exercise Psychology*, 6, 1-9. <https://doi.org/10.7146/sjsep.v6i.141284>

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Cultural Leadership in Physical Education and Youth Sport: Consensus from a Nordic Think Tank

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Abstract

This paper is the product of a Nordic Think Tank. The purpose was to unify experienced educators and expert researchers to (a) provide a set of working definitions for cultural leadership in physical education and youth sport, and (b) set an agenda for future research and educational practice in both contexts. A cultural leader is the professional and social role of a person who has legitimacy (is in the position) and responsibility to develop, maintain, and (if needed) attempt to change culture of a group of learners, such as pupils or athletes, in the service of good (i.e., helps pupils or athletes to thrive inside and outside school or sport; are continuing to learn, develop in a holistic way, and meet their potential). Six postulates representing consensus views of the invited group are proposed: (1) cultural leadership is a meta-function that permeates all other pedagogical functions of the physical education teacher and the youth sport coach; (2) today cultural leadership is more important than ever; (3) cultural leadership in physical education and youth sport must be in the service of good; (4) cultural leadership in physical education and youth sport requires specific competencies and virtues; (5) culture is co-produced, but the physical education teacher and youth sport coach have a special responsibility; (6) cultural leadership should be integrated in physical education teacher education and youth sport coach education in the future; and future research should explore teachers and coaches as cultural leaders to inform future educational practices.

Keywords: *Critical pedagogy, Cultural sport psychology, Holistic ecological approach, Coach education, Teacher education, Consensus process*

This paper is the product of a Nordic Think Tank on cultural leadership in physical education and youth sport held at University of Southern Denmark on the initiative of the research unit Learning and Talent in Sport (LETS) in May 2022. The Think Tank was a non-political and non-profit entity. The purpose of the Think Tank was to bring expert researchers and experienced educators together to discuss the concept of cultural leadership in physical education and youth sport contexts, the status of research in the area, and the potential contribution of the concept for future teacher and coach education. The objectives were to: a) provide a set of working definitions for cultural leadership in physical education and youth sport contexts, and b) set an agenda for future research and educational practice in both focal contexts. A conceptual paper (Storm & Svendsen, 2022) was conducted prior to the Think Tank. This review identified a coach and a teacher as key social agents in the establishment, transmission, and

(re)construction of values, norms and meanings in physical education and youth sport. Storm & Svendsen (2022) identified five cultural leadership practices based on the literature: (1) designing purposeful practice, (2) managing inclusion and heterogeneity, (3) acting as a role model, (4) creating a motivational climate, and (5) communicating values and paying attention to discourses. It was concluded that, as a cultural leader, the physical education teacher and youth sport coach make a substantial impact on the cultural values that are (re)produced in the context in which they are operating. In relation to physical education, Quennerstedt (2019) argues that the art of teaching is about "asking questions regarding the why, what and how, questions concerning the content, purpose and relations in education" (pp. 616-617). The answers to such questions involve consideration of not only the curriculum but also the values and methods that should provide the foundation of teaching physical education. In relation to youth sport,

Henriksen et al. (2018) argue that a focus on individual athletes should be supplemented with an understanding of the environment in which they develop. The scholars further stress that a coherent organizational culture is a key feature of a successful athletic talent development environment, and that such a culture must be deliberately developed and maintained by the coach. The considerations above put the concept of cultural leadership at the core of physical education and youth sport because it directs the attention of teachers and coaches to the way in which their actions impact group norms and values that are (re)constructed in the lesson or training session. The following questions served as a starting point for the Think Tank:

- (1) How can we understand and conceptualize cultural leadership in physical education and youth sport and why is it relevant today?
- (2) What are the tasks of physical education teachers and youth sport coaches as cultural leaders, and what are strategies to meet these tasks?
- (3) What competences (knowledge, skills, attitudes, and strategies) are needed to be a competent cultural leader?

A Think Tank can take many shapes and forms. We were inspired by an international Think Tank on the initiative of the International Society of Sport Psychology (Henriksen et al., 2020), which was a non-political and non-profit entity, a group of people representing academia and practice. It served an overall purpose that was bigger than the interest of any one individual member, and provided a

written outcome with recommendations (i.e., consensus statement), which potentially can guide, inform, or challenge decision-makers.

The present paper seeks to achieve conceptual integration and consensus across multiple fields relevant for the development of the notion of cultural leadership. Jaakkola (2020) distinguished between four different types of conceptual papers (i.e., theory synthesis, theory adaptation, typology, and model) and outlined some methodological requirements that helped us to design this work as a process where we were summarizing and integrating current understanding and outlining the conceptual domain of a new idea. In the present paper, we propose a set of postulates representing consensus views of an invited group of experts representing Nordic perspectives in critical sports pedagogy, cultural sport psychology, applied sport psychology, coach education, and physical education teacher education.

The Think Tank

Panel of Experts

By inviting experts, the Think Tank organizers secured relevant research and applied expertise, and Nordic representation. The Think Tank members cover different types of expertise that include expert researchers from Nordic countries, and practitioners with multiple roles (e.g., physical education teacher educators and youth sport coach educators) representing several Danish sports federations, the Danish Sport Confederation who are responsible for coach education, and Danish educational organizations for physical education teacher education. The experts who participated in the Think Tank are (alphabetically) listed and introduced in Table 1.

Table 1: Presentation of Think Tank Members

Member	Invited as	Background and Perspective
Dean Barker (PhD) is an associate professor at Örebro University and professor at Oslo Metropolitan University.	Researcher and PE teacher educator	He has worked as a PE teacher for five years and a PE teacher educator for 16 years. He has conducted research on inclusion and diversity, forms of interaction and communication, and ethics and values within PE contexts. Resides in Sweden.
Christian Thue Bjørndal (PhD) is an associate professor at Norwegian School of Sports Sciences.	Researcher and coach educator	He has worked as a handball coach and coach educator for several years. He has conducted research on talent development, youth sport and sports coaching. Resides in Norway.
Rob Book Jr. (PhD) is an associate professor at the University of South-eastern Norway.	Researcher	He has been a PE teacher and a coach for 10 years and his research focuses on athlete development in areas with low socio-economic status. Canadian, resides in Norway.
Torben Hansen (PhD) is a project leader at the Danish School Sports organization.	PE teacher educator	He is an experienced PE teacher educator and coach educator. Previous research has looked into PE settings.
Kristoffer Henriksen (PhD) is a professor in sport psychology at the University of Southern Denmark and a sport psychology practitioner.	Researcher	His research looks at talent development environments and he has supervised numerous coaches during his work as a sport psychology practitioner in Olympic sport. Resides in Denmark.
Ulrik Jørgensen is a consultant in the Danish Handball Federation.	Coach educator	He is an experienced youth handball coach and has been responsible for handball coach education in Denmark for 25 years.

Member	Invited as	Background and Perspective
Andreas Küttel (PhD) is an assistant professor at the University of Southern Denmark.	Researcher	His research looks at mental health in elite sport. He is an educated PE teacher. As an elite athlete he experienced culturally different coaches and leadership styles. Swiss, resides in Denmark.
Carsten Hvid Larsen (PhD) is head of sport psychology in the Danish Football Association (DFA) and part time associate professor at the University of Southern Denmark.	Sport psychology practitioner and researcher	His applied research is in football psychology and looks at talent development and mental health. As head of sport psychology in the DFA he is implementing psychology in coach education. Resides in Denmark.
Signe Højbjerg Larsen (PhD) is an associate professor at University of Southern Denmark.	Researcher and teacher educator	She works in the fields of philosophy of sport, sociology of sport and cultural analysis. Her research focuses on urban lifestyle sports and the institutionalization of these activities in different cultural contexts. She has 12 years of experience as a teacher educator in gymnastics/sport science. Resides in Denmark.
Pil Christiane Lindekron is a development consultant in the Danish Gymnastic Federation.	Coach educator	She is an experienced youth gymnastics coach and responsible for gymnastics coach education in Denmark.
Noora Ronkainen (PhD) is an assistant professor at the Institute of Sport Psychology and Research Methods at the University of Bern.	Researcher	In her research, she has mainly used qualitative methodologies to explore meaning and identity in sport, both in professional and recreational settings. In many of her projects, she has applied a cultural sport psychology lens. Finnish, resides in Switzerland.
Natalia Stambulova is a Professor in Sport and Exercise Psychology at Halmstad University.	Researcher	Her educational background is in PE teaching and coaching and current main areas of expertise are holistic developmental, holistic ecological and cultural sport psychology research and practice related to athletic career and talent development. Resides in Sweden.
Emil Peter Søhus is an educational consultant at The Danish Sports Confederation.	Coach educator	He is responsible for fundamental coach education in the Danish Sports Confederation.
Jonas Vestergaard Jensen is a consultant at The Danish Sports Confederation.	Coach educator	He is responsible for higher-level coach education in the Danish Sports Confederation.
Louise Kamuk Storm (PhD) is an associate professor at University of Southern Denmark.	Think Tank co-organizer	In her research, she explores youth sport from holistic-ecological and cultural sport psychology perspectives. Louise is the Think Tank co-organizer. Resides in Denmark.
Annemari Munk Svendsen (PhD) is an associate professor at University of Southern Denmark.	Think Tank co-organizer	Former PE teacher educator. In her research, she explores PE and PE teacher education with a specific interest in discourse analysis and learning materials. Annemari is the Think Tank co-organizer. Resides in Denmark.

The Think Tank Process

The two-day Think Tank included three main sessions containing short presentations followed by three group discussions composed differently across the sessions and topics in focus. The presentations opening each session provided a backdrop to the ensuing discussions by suggesting key terms, examples, and questions to frame cultural leadership. In group discussions, Think Tank members sought consensus, the groups were tasked to summarize agreements as well as opposing opinions, rather than aim to provide 'the correct' answer to a question (Blazey et al., 2022; Green, 2014).

- The first group session – what is cultural leadership? – was initiated by a presentation of applied insights and reflections based on working with athletes within their environments delivered by Kristoffer Henriksen. Forming the discussion groups for this session, we aimed to create the most-heterogeneous groups. Every group included educators and researchers representing physical education and youth sports.
- The second group session – Tasks and strategies of physical education teachers and youth coaches as cultural leaders – was initiated by a presentation delivered by Natalia Stambulova that suggested working definitions of cultural leadership, tasks, and strategies. Discussion groups were formed as domain-specific groups (i.e., physical education or youth sport) with educators and researchers in each group.
- The third and last session – Key competencies and future challenges – was initiated with two domain-specific presentations delivered by Dean Barker and Christian Thue Bjørndal that provided insights on research status in physical education and youth sport respectively and included reflections on the cultural leadership concept and its potential in the fields. In the following discussion, experts were grouped as either educators or researchers.

In each session, to keep Think Tank members on topic and to make sure that all were included, one participant led the discussion in each group. Each group provided a written summary of their discussions in a Padlet® (i.e., digital notice board) and presented main points in plenum, and all members of the Think Tank were invited to comment. Additionally, in each group, a student assistant took notes. The two-day Think Tank was closed by consensus on a preliminary list of propositions formulated in plenum, an overall summary, and all participants added a personal key reflection. After the Think Tank the consensus process continued. The Think Tank organizers read and re-read Padlet notes and the additional notes (33 pages), and drafted postulates with short descriptions. All Think Tank members were asked to read and comment on the draft as a collective narrative (e.g., are the statements the right ones? Is something missing? What do you think about the order?). The organizers revised and expanded the text and sent a new draft to all Authors². This draft went back-and-forth several times. All approved the final version.

Postulates

The Think Tank experts panel offers six postulates to inspire researchers and educators in their efforts to understand, apply and investigate cultural leadership in physical

education and youth sport settings, and to set the agenda for future research and education within these two contexts. The postulates are seen as a framework to stimulate the readers' own reflections on the topic.

1. Cultural leadership is a meta-function that permeates all other pedagogical functions of the physical education teacher and the youth sport coach

Culture has been defined differently throughout history and across several diverse disciplines. Common notions revolve around social systems with traditions, rituals, actions, stories, symbols, norms, values, meanings, and perspectives that are shared to some degree and mutually negotiated by people in their relationships with others (e.g., Hodkinson et al., 2008; Ryba et al., 2013; Schein, 2010; Stead, 2004). The Think Tank members agreed on a meaning-centered perspective on culture defined as a:

[...] set of meanings ...that are shared to some degree, consensual to some degree, socially transmitted within a collection of individuals, and that on the whole serve the purpose of coordinating collective living. (Adopted from Doucerain, 2019, p. 13)

We propose that *cultural leadership in physical education and youth sport is a specific type of leadership and a meta-function with the overall purpose of facilitating learning and development of pupils' and athletes' skills and competences by creating a functional environment and culture. A cultural leader is thus the professional and social role of a person who has legitimacy (is in the position) and responsibility to develop, maintain, and (if needed) attempt to change the culture of a group of learners, such as pupils or athletes, in the service of good* (i.e., helps pupils or athletes to thrive inside and outside school or sport; are continuing to learn, develop in a holistic way, and meet their potential). By holistic, we refer to "a view of the environment as a complex and dynamic whole that consists of multiple interrelated settings, levels and domains" (Henriksen & Stambulova, 2023, p. 2) and it means that people from one life domain take an interest in the athletes' or pupils' experiences, challenges, and learning in the other domains. The role as a cultural leader is not given by a formal position but is earned. Subgroups can also resist or reject leader-centered cultural content and a cultural leader works to achieve group members' commitment in their way of leading the collective meaningful living in the group.

The physical education teacher or youth sport coach has the potential to be a cultural leader because they play a crucial role in developing and maintaining a positive group culture for their pupils or athletes. Thus, we argue that cultural leadership is a meta-function (i.e., systemic clusters, groups of semantic systems that make meanings of a related kind; Halliday, 2003) that permeates all other pedagogical functions, such as educating/teaching, upbringing, and organizing the groups. Cultural leadership includes an intention to pay attention to the backgrounds, beliefs, and dreams of the pupils and athletes and to develop ethical values and a safe and caring climate within the group.

2. Today cultural leadership is more important than ever

Today there is an urgent need for governing bodies – including schools and sports clubs – to ensure an enjoyable, safe, healthy, and sustainable experience for all participants. The ways in which people connect, or become

disconnected, have changed over the years. Some have argued that there is a crisis in our social connectedness and communities, and that this poses a serious threat to our civic and personal health in general (e.g., Putnam, 2020). Current social life is extensively influenced by social media, and the internet has introduced previously unthinkable opportunities for social connection, as well as unprecedented levels of alienation and isolation (Putnam, 2020; Rosa, 2019). Although it has always been important for physical education teachers and youth sport coaches to adapt their teaching and coaching to the target group, this may be more important today than ever before as they adjust to a new generation of young people. Today's athletes and pupils are the first generation to have grown up in a totally digital world (Gould et al., 2020; McDougall et al., 2023; Twenge, 2017). Some have argued that growing up in the digital world, spending less time in direct contact with friends is one reason why we have highest ever generational reports of depression, anxiety, and loneliness (Twenge, 2017). Ruptures in social life coincides with a crisis in young people's mental health (Patel et al., 2007). From a social health perspective, physical education and youth sport settings hold the potential to bring young people physically together and work with relatedness and meaningfulness (e.g., Frydendal & Thing, 2023). Cultural leaders aim to develop and maintain group cultures that may serve as important arenas for such meaningful experiences and relationships, and then we found consensus that there is an urgent need for researchers and educators to more thoroughly understand how coaches and teachers facilitate, maintain, and continuously develop certain environments.

3. Cultural leadership in physical education and youth sport must be in the service of good

We propose that as part of the definition of cultural leadership that the leadership role is used in the service of good (i.e., helps pupils or athletes to thrive inside and outside school or sport; are continuing to learn, develop in a holistic way, and meet their potential). If a physical education teacher or youth sport coach uses strategies to develop a culture that prevents athletes from thriving athletically, psychologically, and/or socially, we thus argue that such practices while aimed at leading culture should not be promoted by coaching and physical education teacher educations.

Leadership is not always practiced in ways that are positive and empowering for group participants, practices can also be destructive and dysfunctional. Sports environments can be functional and dysfunctional (Hauser et al., 2022), thus they can nourish but also work to the detriment of physical and mental health (Henriksen et al., 2020) and motivation (Borghi et al., 2017). For example, positive training environments in Danish youth swimming have been identified as protective factors for the athletes' mental health and stressful environments were shown to be as risk factors (Kuettel & Larsen, 2021). In sport, we can observe some environments that have jeopardized the physical and mental health of their members (e.g., Feddersen et al., 2021) as well as examples where coherent cultures based on holistic values support athletes' thriving and development (Henriksen & Stambulova, 2017).

Engaging in physical education and youth sport is not in itself a sufficient precondition for mental wellbeing, meaning, and community. Engaging in physical education or youth sport are sociocultural affairs with significance for the individuals' development, well-being, and performance. From a holistic perspective, the physical education teachers' and youth sport coaches' tasks goes far beyond organizing activities, developing a specific set of skills, or

teaching a specific curriculum. While effective teaching and coaching methods are surely relevant, developing psychological safety for the athletes and pupils is just as important. Psychological safety is described as people's perceptions of the positive (or no negative) consequences of taking interpersonal risks to ask questions, contribute with ideas, and/or challenge the norms in a particular context or group (Edmondson & Lei, 2014). Based on the discussions, we suggest that safe cultures are where everyone can openly speak up without fear of failure or being humiliated. In physical education and youth sport settings, it is a task of the cultural leader to develop that kind of climate, although it might be difficult to achieve in highly competitive environments (Hickey & Roderick, 2023; Taylor et al., 2022).

We propose that developing fair group norms and ethically responsible values in the group of athletes and pupils are key tasks of a cultural leader, and that cultural leaders should recognize the power and potential that comes with their position and use it for good. Fair means that there is one justice for all, and that there are no privileges for 'the stars' (for example see Snyder et al., 1985).

4. Cultural leadership in physical education and youth sport requires specific competencies and virtues

Physical education teachers and youth sport coaches need to understand that whatever they do, they continuously produce, re-produce, and (sometimes) change culture whether they are aware of their role or not (Cushion & Jones, 2014). Schein (2010) describes cultural leadership in the daily life of organizations and how leaders often unknowingly (and culturally insensitively) teach the members of the team how to think, feel, and act.

In line with cultural sport psychology (Schinke et al., 2012) and critical sports pedagogy (Harrison et al., 2010; Young & Sternod, 2011), we perceive cultural sensitivity to be an underlying competence and a sine qua non in successful cultural leadership. Competent cultural leaders in physical education or youth sports rely on their ability to act in a culturally sensitive manner (McGannon & Johnson, 2009). Such ability, on the one hand, requires a willingness to confront "one's own background, biases, and interests in a self-reflexive manner" (Schinke et al., 2012, p. 35), be attentive to some ambiguous dilemmas inherent to physical education and youth sport practices (Jones & Ronglan, 2017), engage in an ongoing critical examination of the knowledges and assumptions that inform their problem-solving approaches (Denison & Avner, 2011), and be aware of how an emphasis on specific values and norms often foreshadows other values and norms that on other occasions might be fruitful (Vaughan et al., 2022). On the other hand, a cultural leader should be reflective about the different backgrounds and value systems that pupils and youth athletes bring into the group to develop inclusive practices.

More specifically, the Think Tank experts suggested a list of competences required for cultural leadership, which can be grouped as knowledge, skills, attitudes, and strategies. The basic *knowledge* includes teachers' and coaches' awareness of their role as a cultural leader and their understanding of key concepts (e.g., culture; environments) and tasks related to that role. The *skills* that are needed to enact cultural leadership are contextual intelligence, active listening, communication, managing self, maintaining composure under pressure, being able to negotiate values and make ethical decisions (Barker-Ruchti & Purdy, 2023), and navigating in complex organizations. A cultural leader benefits from an open and positive *attitude*

towards group members regardless of their backgrounds, which implies being open to constructive criticism, being reflexive, and being able to develop a positive atmosphere. *Strategies* are techniques used to lead a group and include the deliberate use of stories, artefacts, rewards, consequences, promotions, and role models.

Related to Postulate 3, we recognize that disciplinary techniques are sometimes related to coercion, manipulation, and abusive managerial control. Therefore, we agreed, that competencies cannot stand alone but must be supplemented by personal qualities and virtues. We argue for a need to distinguish between competences in a narrow sense on the one hand, and personal qualities on the other. Culture is such a complex aspect of collective life that it cannot be managed with technical competences alone. Jones (2017) put forward the virtue of care and the concept of phronesis as important concepts for capturing the character of good teachers and coaches. Care and practical wisdom foreground the virtues and character of the teacher and coach above the technical skills or strategies they might develop or learn through their training. A caring teacher or coach is motivated and able to act in the best interest of the pupil or athlete *because* they care about them (Cronin & Amour, 2018).

In sum, we assert that cultural leadership requires an underlying cultural and contextual sensitivity and awareness, a specific set of knowledge, skills and attitudes, and finally a virtue of cultivating care.

5. Culture is co-produced, but the physical education teacher and youth sport coach have a special responsibility

Leadership is always distributed and culture always co-produced. No leader can singlehandedly create a certain desired culture. We recognize that the processes of developing, maintaining, and changing culture are complex, opaque and beyond the control of any single individual, and that culture is neither a controllable outcome of specific leadership practices nor a leadership tool. Culture is constantly reenacted and negotiated through people's interactions with each other and shaped by people's behaviour and meaning making (Doucerain, 2019). Today it is well-known that co-production and democratic processes are required in building motivational climates for young people. Therefore, competent cultural leadership is about including pupils and athletes in the discussion and developing values and group norms. Involving pupils and athletes in this work is also empowering. If they take part in co-producing the group norms, it is likely that they will be more willing to commit to them. Related to Postulate 1, groups or subgroups can also resist or reject leader-centered content (McDougall et al., 2020). Not all teachers or coaches achieve commitment from group members. Further, with this generation of pupils and athletes, autonomous-supportive practices and co-production will also develop athletes and pupils personal and social skills (Gould et al., 2020), which is arguably an important aim of physical education and youth sport.

That culture is co-produced and cultural leadership is distributed does not mean, however, that the teacher and coach do not have a special role and responsibility. The coach and teacher have power-positions in the environment, and according to Schein (2010), such positions have a substantial impact on culture. Through interactions, often guided by the teacher and coach, the underlying assumptions of a given group are implicitly and explicitly communicated to new group members as the correct way(s) to perceive, think, feel, and act in relation to different situations, tasks, and challenges. Because of this power position, the teacher and coach are not only

responsible for planning sessions and designing curricula but have an added responsibility to pay attention to their own actions and how they influence the values, norms, and behaviors of the group. Related to Postulates 1 and 4, the members of the Think Tank agreed that cultural leaders are expected to offer a "heightened standard of care" (Kjaer et al., 2022) due to their professional position. They must develop environments that young athletes and pupils perceive as caring to create a more positive experience, stronger commitment, and continued involvement in physical education and youth sport (Fry & Gano-Overway, 2010; Kjaer et al., 2022). This is not only a specific competence but also a special responsibility of the teacher and coach that should be addressed at an educational level.

6. Cultural leadership should be integrated in physical education teacher education and youth sport coach education in the future

To become a competent cultural leader education is required, and positive changes in physical education and youth sport begin at educational settings. For example, physical education teacher education in Denmark is offered by the Danish University Colleges, and students select three main subjects (one is physical education). The education modules amount to 30 ECTS. Coach education in Nordic countries contains mainly shorter courses delivered by Sport Federations. Additionally, several Nordic universities offer bachelors in sports coaching (e.g., in Finland, Norway and Sweden). In all educational settings, time is limited, and we found consensus on a preliminary suggestion that cultural leadership should be integrated in the existing content rather than included as a separate course or parts of it. This aligns with the statement that cultural leadership is a meta-function, and that teachers and coaches should be introduced to the idea of being a 'leader' of an environment with group norms and values (e.g., democracy, diversity, equality etc.). Central aspects should be values, ethics, and group norms as a meta-perspective on other relevant learning activities in the programs. We agree with Jones (2017) that "teachers and coaches should care about their role vis-à-vis the intrinsic goals of teaching or coaching rather than for any instrumental benefit it might bring (money, prestige, security)" (p. 218). This is a dilemma, related to Postulate 4, that must be handled by the teacher and coach because this endeavor will be challenged by today's society.

Concluding remarks

The Think Tank members have reached a consensus that a cultural leader holds a vital role in the physical education and youth sport environment and cultural leadership is a meta-function that goes far beyond merely engaging pupils in physical activities and honing the technical and tactical skills of athletes. It means that teachers and coaches as cultural leaders, irrespective of their other responsibilities, consistently facilitate, maintain, and develop culture through their communication and behavior (i.e., all that they say and do). Future research should explore physical education teachers and youth sport coaches as cultural leaders empirically to inform future educational practices. For example, physical education and youth sport environments can be productive for some athletes or pupils but can be marginalizing others (Cushion & Jones, 2014; Dowling et al., 2020). In a sense, this could be considered a key mechanism for how cultures are (re)produced.

For educational purposes, future research should address the ethics of care to deepen our understanding of cultural leadership in physical education and youth sport

and expand on the list provided by this Think Tank expert panel. Cultivating care as a core construct of cultural leadership should become a vital part of future research. Importantly, we suggest that future empirical research identify and explore cultural leadership *competences* (e.g., using Delphi design).

Developing postulates on cultural leadership in physical education and youth sport (i.e., why it is relevant, what specific tasks that are of teachers and coaches as cultural leaders, and what competences that are needed to be a cultural leader) was a collaborative and reflexive task and included lengthy discussions. A large and diverse group of both researchers and practitioners (i.e., multidisciplinary, multinational) discussed cultural leadership as a role and function in physical education and youth sport contexts. Discussion in groups was a suitable design for outlining the conceptual domain of a new idea because it ensured that everyone contributed. Compared to other consensus process designs, using quantitative techniques (Green, 2014), this process with participants interacting with each other was inspirational for all.

The Think Tank expert panel all had their idiosyncratic approaches and backgrounds, and all used their different positions to challenge each other's perspectives. We acknowledge that the postulates presented here are also limited to the perspectives of the Think Tank members and that relevant cultural issues, for example racism, power, and/or harmful sports practices, were not discussed. While universities across Europe were represented, a limitation is that the entire group consisted mainly of Danish participants and Danish educational institutions (federation, physical education teacher education). This may have skewed the discussions in favor of a Danish context. For a possible future process, we suggest a broader group composition. We consider the postulates presented in this paper to be provisional and open and invite readers to reflect on our postulates and possibly challenge them to continue an interdisciplinary discussion on cultural leadership in physical education and youth sport. Our hope is that this paper can stimulate a continuing dialogue about physical education teachers and youth sport coaches' roles in facilitating, maintaining, and developing sustainable environments. We would like to encourage broad and context-sensitive discussions and future Think Tanks on the topic to further develop the idea presented in this consensus paper.

Statement

Declaration of interest: None.

Footnotes

¹ We recognize that cultural leadership is a too complex topic for any group of experts to grasp in its nuanced entirety during a two-day Think Tank, and that the concept was only recently coined as pedagogical concept in the contexts of physical education and youth sport. We recognize that, because of procedures for selection and invitation, the participants only represented Nordic countries.

Author note

² The Think Tank expert panel includes those who took part in the two-day Think Tank (Tabel 1). The postulates presented in this paper constitute an intellectual output of the work in this group. The Author group wrote this paper based on the raw material collectively produced during Think Tank discussions. Here and further, we are talking on behalf of all Think Tank members.

Acknowledgement

This project was supported by grants from Ministry of Culture Denmark. (Award reference: FPK.2020-0049). The authors would like to express their gratitude to the members of Think Tank expert panel. Thanks to Sofie Dideriksen, Nicklas Stott Venzel and Simon Jørgensen for assisting the Think Tank.

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