

Görüş Yazısı / Opinion Article

EVALUATION OF FAIR PLAY AND COACHING BEHAVIORS FROM A FLOURISHING PERSPECTIVE IN THE CONTEXT OF FIFA AND UEFA COACHING EDUCATION INFRASTRUCTURE (PART I)

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ABSTRACT

From a holistic perspective, performance improvement in football is often characterized by the interaction of different psychological, mental, technical, tactical and physiological factors. Professional football development is planned, implemented, controlled and developed by the FIFA Confederation. This process also evolves with the interaction of many lower and upper systems and forms the infrastructure of professional football. Especially young football is the most critical intermediate step and athletic infrastructure in the mental, emotional and physical development of football players who flourish under the influence of coaches. The advantage of investing in youth football is not only limited to the discovery, mentoring and training of talented players, but also the income that can be generated by selling players by clubs. In this context, coaches are asked to guide their players and teams to develop their sportive, technical, tactical, ethical standards and moral attitudes and to act in accordance with fair play principles. The advancement of future professional male or female football players can only be guaranteed by ensuring the overall quality of the training and sporting activities of those involved in youth education. This study aims to discuss professional football education processes, which have an important sociological and psychological place in human life, in the context of organizationality and complexity science by examining the programs carried out under the roof of FIFA. Positive athletic development is a process that flows with the interaction of sub-systems such as family awareness, school-sport-life balance, positive coaching approach, motivational climate, positive youth practices, structured sports and values education. For this reason, the study program was divided into subsections and structured to evaluate the subject from different perspectives. The first part discusses current views on coaching behaviors from a flourishing perspective.

Keywords: coaching education, fair play, human flourishing, athletic development, sports infrastructure, positive youth development

FIFA VE UEFA ANTRENÖRLÜK EĞİTİM ALTYAPISI BAĞLAMINDA ADİL OYUN VE ANTRENÖRLÜK DAVRANIŞLARININ İNSANİ GELİŞİM PERSPEKTİFİNDEN DEĞERLENDİRİLMESİ (I. BÖLÜM)

ÖZET

Bütünsel bir bakış açısından, futbolda performans gelişimi genellikle farklı psikolojik, zihinsel, teknik, taktiksel ve fizyolojik etmenlerin etkileşimi ile tanımlanmaktadır. Profesyonel futbol gelişimi FIFA Konfederasyonu tarafından planlanıp, uygulanmakta, kontrol edilip, geliştirilmektedir. Bu süreç aynı zamanda pek çok alt ve üst sistemin etkileşimi ile evrilmekte ve profesyonel futbolun altyapısını oluşturmaktadır. Özellikle genç futbolu, antrenörlerin etkisinde serpilen futbolcuların zihinsel, duygusal ve fiziksel gelişimindeki en kritik ara basamak ve atletik altyapıdır. Genç futboluna yatırım yapmanın avantajı sadece yetenekli oyuncuların keşfi, mentorluğu ve eğitimi ile sınırlı olmayıp, aynı zamanda kulüplerin oyuncu satarak elde edilebilecek gelirlerdir. Bu bağlamda öncelikle antrenörlerden oyuncularının ve takımlarının sportif, teknik, taktik, etik standartlarını ve ahlaki tutumlarını geliştirmeleri ve fair play ilkelerine uygun hareket etmeleri konusunda rehberlik etmeleri istenmektedir. Geleceğin profesyonel erkek veya kadın futbolcularının ilerlemesi, ancak gençlik eğitimine dahil olanların antrenman ve sportif faaliyetlerinin genel kalitesinin sağlanmasıyla garanti edilebilir. Bu çalışma, insan yaşamında sosyolojik ve psikolojik açıdan da önemli bir yere sahip olan profesyonel futbol eğitim süreçlerini, FIFA çatısı altında yürütülen programları inceleyerek, örgütsellik ve karmaşıklık bilimi bağlamında ele alıp tartışmayı amaçlamaktadır. Aile farkındalığı, okul-spor-yaşam dengesi, pozitif

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antrenörlük yaklaşımı, motivasyon iklimi, pozitif gençlik uygulamaları, yapılandırılmış spor ve değerler eğitimi gibi alt sistemlerin etkileşimi ile akan bir süreçtir pozitif sporcu gelişimi. Bu nedenle çalışma programı alt bölümlere ayrılmış ve konuyu farklı açılardan değerlendirecek şekilde yapılandırılmıştır. İlk bölüm, insani gelişim perspektifinden koçluk davranışlarına ilişkin mevcut görüşleri tartışmaktadır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: koçluk eğitimi, adil oyun, insani büyüme, atletik gelişim, spor altyapısı, olumlu gençlik gelişimi

1. INTRODUCTION

The European Union recommends that specialized working groups in the field of sports education focus on sports diplomacy and Grassroots sports (European University Sports Association, 2017). The Council emphasizes good governance in the context of “integrity in sports”, education and employment in sports in the context of “sports and society” and raising awareness of the importance of health-promoting physical activity for health and equal access to sports for all. For the programs developed in this context, it is recommended to encourage especially voluntary activities, social inclusion and equal opportunities (Council of the European Union, 2017). The fair play approach is also based on the principle of empowerment and motivating positive behavior. FIFA evaluates fair play performance by emphasizing the positive aspects (attacking tactics instead of defensive tactics, accelerating the game, constantly trying to score even if the desired result like qualification is achieved) rather than the negative aspects (tactics based on rough play, wasting time, pretending to play), because offensive and attractive gameplay is rewarded. As a general rule, the highest rating for fair play can only be obtained if the team concerned demonstrates a positive attitude (FIFA, 2022a:996).

Sport is one of the most effective ways to reveal true potential strength of a person. Positive psychology in sports, which is an important step in sports psychology, is expressed as the science of happiness and strength (Carr, 2011). The strengths approach in positive psychology encourages individuals to reveal their potential by working on themselves, and to act in an optimal flow for a more productive life, rather than repairing weaknesses in individuals (Seligman and Csikszentmihalyi, 2000; Wood et al., 2011). According to Self-Determination Theory (SDT), three innate psychological needs, namely autonomy (freedom to choose what to do for self-actualization), competence (confidence in what the person is doing) and relatedness (having close and secure human connections while the individual is active), affect the individual motivation process (Deci & Ryan, 2000). The PERMA model (Seligman, 2012) is a theory of well-being that emerged as a link between positive psychology and human performance. The PERMA model consists of positive emotions, engagement, relationships, meaning and achievement/accomplishment components. It expresses a structure consisting of five attitudes in which well-being cannot be explained by a single component in the model, but each component contributes synergistically to well-being in order to reveal the potential of the athlete.

Every athlete has a real and potential capacity. The most important person who predicts and reveals the potential of the athlete is the sports coach. The coach uses the necessary techniques and methods

to reveal the potential of the athlete and ensures that the athlete takes the necessary and planned steps for self-development. In career development, differences between individuals and multivariate situations invalidate the "one size fits all" approach (Uslu, 2021:28-29) while individual-centered approaches such as self-management become more functional (Uslu and Çubuk, 2015). Reconciling two different areas, such as the educational development and athletic performance of young elite athletes, requires finding an optimal balance in which these roles facilitate and complement each other rather than overlapping (Aquilina, 2013). The advantage of investing in youth elite sports is not only the discovery and training of talented players, but also the revenue that can be generated by selling players (FIFA, 2022b:66).

A sports coach is a person who determines all the deficiencies and faults in the way of maximizing the individual capacities of the athletes he/she works with, makes plans to correct them, and motivates them in a team spirit with the people he works with and leads them to success. In terms of coaches' attitudes towards athletes, some coaches may be more inclined towards optimal behaviors associated with higher levels of well-being in athletes, others may be more inclined towards less optimal styles by taking a hardcore approach to the athlete, and some coaches may use both behaviors together (Haerens et al., 2018). Team sports coaches adopt a more demanding style than individual sports and therefore tend to discipline team athletes more closely (Delrue et al., 2019). However, football contains significant personal development elements, as individual profiles of players vary greatly and decision making about opportunities for participation dictates individual activities (Drust et al., 2007:783) The sports coach, taking into account the characteristics of the athlete, plans what he should do to be more successful, helps the person see his own blind spots, supports him to get out of the emotional or physical whirlpools he is in, and plays an active role in realizing the real potential of the individual. A coach does not only direct an athlete or team, but also instills a discipline, philosophy of life and culture in athletes, team players and fans.

Football is a team sport with frequent fluctuations between high and low exercise intensities and needs different training methods. These unpredictable factors may be accompanied by different patterns of performance indicators revealed by unusual movement and specific skills (Durst et al., 2007:783). The effects of trainer training on flourishing-related variables among athletes involved in team sports is not yet understood (Langan et al., 2015; Pulido et al., 2017; Reynders et al., 2019). Although coaches play a crucial role in the development of young athletes, it is still not a subject of study whether coaches can be trained more optimally for their athletes, displaying well-being related behaviors and emphasizing health-related issues (Raabe et al., 2020). It is claimed by only a few cross-sectional studies that training of trainers will affect the well-being of athletes, but this effect on behavior change of coaches should be questioned in different branches and levels with longitudinal studies (Mossman et al., 2022). This study discusses how coaching behaviors are shaped and modified in newly developed FIFA and UEFA training programs.

2. INFRASTRUCTURE OF POSITIVE ATHLETIC DEVELOPMENT IN A HUMAN FLOURISHING CONTEXT

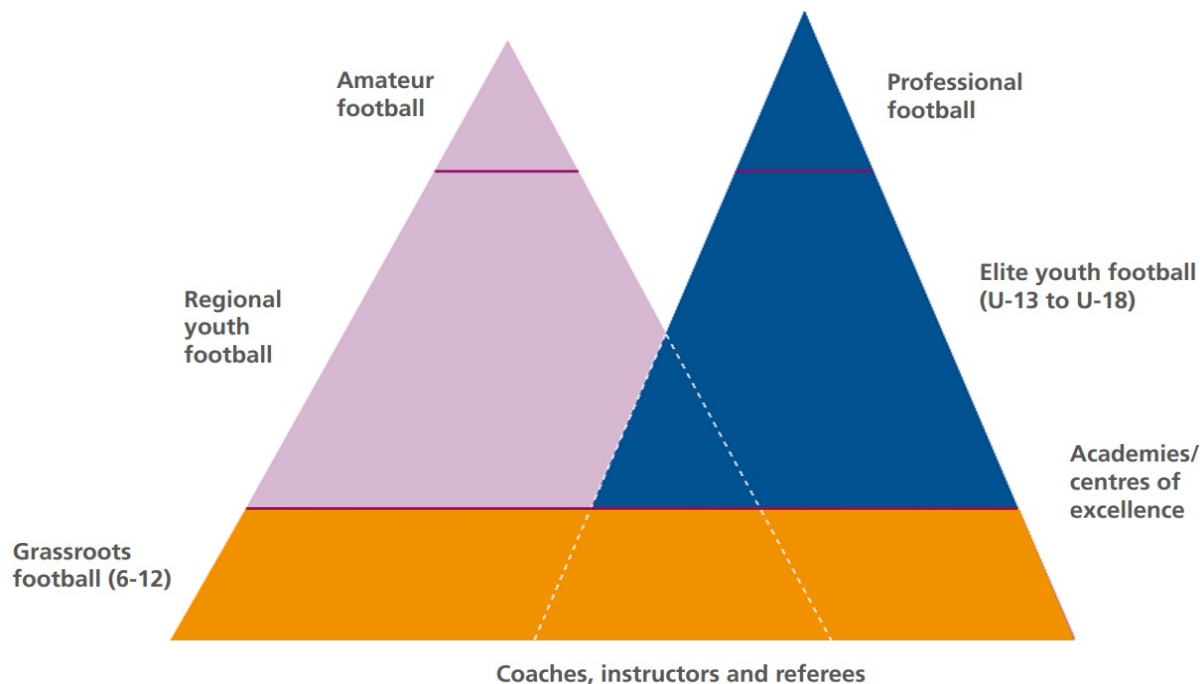
Athletic development requires a holistic and longitudinal approach that requires the gradual mental and psychological involvement and development of the young athlete at the individual level, using self-management strategies under the guidance of the coach. This approach which considers personal developmental stages of the athlete rather than associating athletic career development only with the qualifications specific to the relevant branch, requires three practices that require the athlete to set individual goals, follow sport-specific behaviors towards these goals, and make individual and environmental adjustments to reach the goals (Uslu, 2022:43). Customized, creative and proactive methods are needed in the athletic development and career planning of an athlete.

For the athletes, psychological empowerment acts as a bridge especially in the infrastructure of sports and athletic development. Positive personality and leadership characteristics in sports strengthen professionals in this field. Only in this way can it be possible for athletes and employees to be ready for different professional levels such as coaching. Again, the effect of flexible and enthusiastic personality on individual performance perception in the sports sector is realized only through psychological empowerment (Uslu, 2021:50). In this context, in addition to critical thinking and analysis skills, self-management skills such as problem solving and active learning, stress tolerance, resilience and flexibility appear as skills that need to be strengthened psychologically (World Economic Forum, 2020:35). Because each individual has their own goals in sport, education and personal life, it is important to enable athletes to chart their own career paths and decide on their own success. In order to empower athletes for career management and personal development, a structured but flexible and personalized three-stage career coaching can make student athletes' processes and career paths clearer and more robust (Uslu, 2022:50).

Adolescents who play sports generally score higher than their non-athletic peers on mental, emotional, and physical wellbeing measures (Synder et al., 2010). Schools and sports facilities for younger age groups should be designed in such a way as to enable both education and physical activity, as well as leisure activities. Whether a sports school or an educational institution, these facilities should consider the support needs of the athletes such as training, education and development, nutrition, physiotherapy, rehabilitation, sports psychology and medical services, and determine the flow of access or referral to this support. This strategy will also contribute to the development and dissemination of social responsibility perspective and corporate awareness by creating added value in the medium term for the sports schools that design this infrastructure (Uslu, 2022:49) The most critical intermediate step and the infrastructure in the development of football players is youth football (Table 1). The development of future professional male or female football players can only be guaranteed by ensuring the overall quality of the training and sporting activities of those involved in youth education (FIFA, 2022b:95). FIFA has

established a development program dedicated to youth football to support member associations in creating an educational philosophy adapted to the characteristics of each country (FIFA, 2021:6).

Table 1. The Structure of National Football Systems (FIFA, 2022a:15)



Unfortunately, if football education is not managed well, it can negatively affect the characteristics of a young player. The basic training of young players risks the formation of an unsportsmanlike game culture. However, although it is not hopeless, an intervention that will automatically create positive effects in youth football has not yet been found (FIFA, 2021:7). In this context, the view of this study is that fair play principles and positive behavior change in coaches can provide a solution to this problem with positive youth development (PYD).

The view in mental health psychology has shifted its focus from a negative conceptualization of mental illness to definitions that include positive aspects of mental health and the level of functioning and flourishing of individuals. In this context, participation in sport, both at the elite level and in general, offers many opportunities to improve mental health and well-being and develop social and emotional skills (Schinke et al., 2017). Flourishing athletes in the field of sports is defined as a multidimensional structure that improves physical, psychological and social well-being together (Martin et al., 2021). Flourishing, which is also an important concept from the career development of the young athletes to the retirement period of elites, refers to a psychological state in which the individual has positive feelings towards life and is defined as the presence of a strong mental health. In essence, it is a positive psychology term that is defined as a combination of feeling good and being effective, socially and psychologically functional. Individuals, who can also be classified as flourishing, exhibit positive emotions and positive

functioning signs in their lives, daily routines, and flow (Knight et al., 2017). With a coach education program structured for the purpose of human flourishing, coaches can also have the potential to develop a motivational climate that promotes positive youth development (Falcao et al., 2012; Santos et al., 2017; Ünlü et al., 2018).

3. THE IMPORTANCE OF MOTIVATIONAL CLIMATE, POSITIVE LEADERSHIP AND SUPERVISION FOR COACHING DEVELOPMENT

Coaching behavior is a high-level professional competence that is also necessary for the coordination of different life areas (Uslu, 2022:48). Due to the emergence and development of high-level professional competencies such as pro coaching behaviors with various connections established between individual and situational factors in different career paths in the field of sports, it is healthier to provide competence by experienced leaders and role models with activities and processes that include field-specific and partially structured practical training, rewarding active participation, and positive guiding (Uslu, 2021: 49). In order to create this climate, managers, sports directors, coaches and officials in the field of sports and education should adopt a positive leadership style and develop behaviors in this direction (Uslu, 2022:48). Young coach candidates who voluntarily guide children between the ages of 6 and 12 in football practices are strengthened by the positive leadership approach of their coordinators and trainers, and they perceive their own performances higher in this way. It is seen that managing the process with a positive leadership approach for coach candidates in the football branch has a positive and sustainable effect on the performance perceptions of the coaches (Ünlü et al., 2018).

A positive and open leadership approach will ensure that the technical director receives the best information from the other coaches at the same level and finds peer support when needed. Coaches should be expected to talk about alternatives among themselves on issues such as adapting football philosophy to the field, formats of competition for beginners and seniors, methods of finding talent, sharing information about young talented players, receiving feedback on elite youth training and matches, assessing noticed and recurring weaknesses in young professional players. Coaches should also be encouraged to share information amongst themselves on issues such as coping with repetitive challenges they face on and off the field (within the coach training curriculum), assessing the condition of infrastructure, facilities and equipment (FIFA, 2022b).

Organizational support and personality traits separately provide psychological empowerment, increase the hope of employees and have a positive effect on professional identification through this mediation. Organizational behaviors and personality traits interact with each other, and this interaction is effective on psychological empowerment and professional identification (Uslu et al., 2014:431). It is seen that the organizational support is perceived through the superiors with which the employees have one-to-one relationships, so the management in clubs and sports schools should pay attention to the key importance of coaches who adopt a positive leadership style in sports, because coaches who adopt a positive leadership style have a positive effect on the psychological empowerment of the athletes and the

development of the coaching characteristics of the athletes within the team and organization. Coaching behaviors in athletes emerge with the empowerment of athletes and employees with positive leadership (Uslu, 2021: 49).

4. COACHING EDUCATION FROM A FLOURISHING PERSPECTIVE AND THE FUNDAMENTAL FOUR COMPONENTS OF THE UEFA C TRAINING PROGRAM

Qualified coaches in football teams form the basis of high-quality athletic training. In order to achieve this goal, candidates who want to become a coach by obtaining a license must go through a structured series of coaching education programs organized by the member association like UEFA. Youth teams also need trained and qualified coaches to improve the football skills of the players and the team in all aspects (technically, tactically and physically). Every young athlete who dreams of becoming a professional football player has the right to have the most qualified coaches and support from a young age. In terms of qualification, different features such as psychology education, media literacy, cultural, social and language skills are sought in trainers, and these skills should be gained through special trainings organized by the federation that issued the coaching license. These developmental human qualities are not only desirable but necessary (FIFA, 2022a:633).

The UEFA C training program is supported by a moral perspective that makes players feel included, empowered and capable of making mistakes. Program guides coaches to design gamified applications related to players' decision making, enabling players to practice in a positive and fun environment. The program consists of theoretical courses and practical sessions in the four main areas of football coaching (football technique, individual tactics, physical performance and psycho-social training of young players). The program includes three practical components: training sessions, forming a team, and creating an individual program. The purpose of the training is to help understand the demands of the game and how to meet the needs of the players while developing an understanding of the various roles and responsibilities within the team. This training develops participants' ability to plan, prepare, present and reflect on coaching sessions for the development of players.

A successful performance in football is generally characterized as the interaction of different psychological, mental, technical, tactical and physiological factors (Drust et al., 2007; Carling et al., 2009). The UEFA C training program is structured on four pillars, including sub-goals for flourishing.

4.1. Coach (Trainer) Features

Coaches, sports professionals and other officials are requested to guide their players and teams to develop their sporting, technical, tactical, ethical standards and moral attitudes and to act in accordance with fair play principles. Positive or negative factors in the behavior of officials, such as calming down angry players or accepting the referee's decisions, are evaluated within the understanding of fair play. Collaboration of coaches and team officials with the media and other stakeholders is also considered a positive factor in fair play evaluation (FIFA, 2022a:998). In this context, the features that coaches need

to develop for their players are defined within the scope of the UEFA C training program (UEFA Coaching Convention, 2020).

- Creating football opportunities for Grassroots players (children, youth, adults, veterans, disabled and other amateur target groups) of different ages, genders, backgrounds and abilities
- Arousing a lifelong desire to play and be interested in football
- Developing a relationship with the player and getting to know the players
- Understanding the player-centered approach, players, their games and motivations
- Provide safe and appropriate coaching activities
- Teaching basic coaching skills
- Planning activities and applying review principles
- To understand the stressors that grassroots leaders may encounter in their roles and the coping strategies that can be used in the management of these factors.
- Demonstrate positive coaching behaviors
- Helping players love and learn football through training and on match day
- Establishing a reliable connection with parents and regulating the coach-parent relationship
- Understanding the importance of Grassroots coaches and volunteer leaders and their contribution to the football ecosystem

4.2. Environmental Features

Sports environment supports the flourishing of adolescents by providing various opportunities such as being involved in a team or community, learning about superior-subordinate relationships, socializing with peers, leading an active life, having new experiences, traveling for tournaments and seeing new places (Costigan et al., 2016; Kwong and Hayes, 2017). The duties of the coach defined within the scope of the UEFA C training program are to regulate environmental factors (UEFA Coaching Convention, 2020). These duties are listed below.

- Creating a consistent, safe and positive learning environment
- Creating positive spaces and experiences for players
- Establishing a thriving environment to support children's basic human needs and each of them
- Preparing the organization of the season and events
- Maintaining a positive motivational climate for players

- Discussing different types of discrimination, its consequences and causes, and taking proactive steps to combat discrimination and inappropriate behavior
- To create an equitable and inclusive sports environment by understanding the difficulties experienced by the players in the context of the environment and culture
- Unleash the passion and excitement of football for everyone, everywhere
- Guiding players on how to interact successfully on such platforms, as well as the potential risks of social media posts

4.3. Player Features

Within the scope of the UEFA C training program, what the coach should do for the flourishing of the player is also defined (UEFA Coaching Convention, 2020). These positive interventions are listed below.

- Adopting a holistic approach (technical, physical, psychological and social) to player development
- Developing players' basic techniques and understanding of the game
- Encouraging players to think for themselves
- To enable players to experience the benefits of playing football regularly (fitness, wellness, etc.) and improve their general fitness
- Instilling the values of fair play and respect in players
- Discovering the benefits of involving goalkeepers in training
- Evaluate players' unique personal progression and career paths
- Using strategies to support players with different abilities in a team environment
- Be able to guide children who have grown from young football players to young adults

Fair play evaluation is also based on positive attitudes of players (for example, helping an injured opponent) rather than offenses. Movements and behaviors that are basically faultless but do not show any positive attitude, respect or gesture, especially towards their opponent, do not receive the highest scores. Athletes are expected to respect match officials and their decisions. A positive attitude towards the referee is a reason to be rewarded for the players and the team, including the unquestioned acceptance of decisions in the warm atmosphere of the match. For example, behavior that is faultless but does not show a particularly positive attitude, respect or gesture towards match officials will not earn the highest fair play score (FIFA, 2022a:997). Players who encourage or provoke harsh behavior are evaluated negatively (FIFA, 2022a:998).

4.4. Game Features

Another important factor is the features of the game, including the atmosphere of the match, and an integral part of the atmosphere of the football match is the audience. Before, during and after the match, the audience and fans are expected to contribute to the positive atmosphere and festive spirit of the match by cheering and showing in accordance with the spirit of fair play, accompanying their teams with songs and marches. However, the crowd and the fans must respect the opponent and the referee. Regardless of the score, fans must applaud the opponent's performance and in no way engage in behavior designed to provoke or intimidate the opponent team, supporters and officials of opponents, or the referees. It can be judged that a positive environment and atmosphere in terms of fair play is formed only when all these requirements are met (FIFA, 2022a:998). Apart from this, under the control of the coach, there is the opportunity to shape the features of the game with the following actions in a format that will enable the player to maximize positive behaviors (UEFA Coaching Convention, 2020).

- Planning and presenting various game formats with an emphasis on fun and development
- Using the game as a tool to assist players in their personal and football development
- To convey the basic technical and tactical understanding of the game
- Focus on increasing the ball rolling and inclusion time
- To make the game as inclusive as possible in the context of Sports for All and Football for All

5. DISCUSSION

Football coaching is more than just managing a team and aiming to win trophies by continuing the season, it is essentially gaining experience. The greatest achievement for a coach is not the number of matches or trophies he has won, but the possibility to chat with a former player years later as if no time has passed. The football career of an athlete and a coach is a long-term and experiential journey. Positive athletic development is a process that flows with the interaction of systems such as family awareness, school-sport-life balance, positive coaching approach, motivating climate, culture compatible accumulation, positive youth practices and reinforcement, structured sports and values education.

From this perspective, the FIFA and UEFA training programs are designed to meet the technical, physical, psychological and social needs of the participants in modern football. This program combines learning materials, mentoring sessions and on-the-field development to help participants shape and develop their own philosophy as football coaches. It also demonstrates the participants' understanding of both offensive and defensive principles of the game and how to use this knowledge for offensive play. This competency improves coaches' ability to deal with the players they work with and enables them to

explore how they can help players develop by designing practices that encourage decision-making while meeting players' technical, tactical, physical, psychological and social needs.

Especially youth football is the most critical intermediate step and athletic infrastructure in the mental, emotional and physical development of young athletes who flourish under the influence of coaches. For clubs, the advantage of investing in youth football is not only limited to the discovery and inclusion of talented players, but also includes the revenues that clubs can generate by selling players. In this context, first of all, coaches should be expected to guide their players and teams to develop their sportive, technical, tactical, ethical standards and moral attitudes and to act in accordance with fair play principles. The development of future professional football players can only be ensured by improving the overall quality of training programs, special training recipes and sports activities of athletes involved in positive youth practices.

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