

Good sport development environments - a study on successful Swedish elite sport environments.

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Aim

According to Alfermann & Stambulova (2007) successful talent development environments in sport are defined as *teams or clubs that manage to continually produce top-level athletes on the basis of their junior athletes, and provides them with resources for coping with future transitions*. These total resources are, according to Larsen (2013), significant for the transition to senior elite level and facilitate the step into professional sports. Henriksen (2011) studied talent environments in the Nordic countries and (inspired by Bronfenbrenner, 1979) developed the Athletic Talent Development Environment model (ATDE) to describe the framework of success within these environments.

The aim of this paper is to study successful Swedish talent environments and to identify similarities and differences among the successful environments that continually develop new elite athletes

Method

The project is carried out in two steps: (1) Interviews with representatives from 12 Swedish sport federations to identify and describe successful talent environments. The studied sports were Athletics, Badminton, Basketball, Figure skating, Floorball, Handball, Ice hockey, Orienteering, Shooting, Soccer, Swimming, and Tennis. (2) Data collections on regional and local level within six sports: Athletics, Basketball, Ice hockey, Soccer, Swimming, and Tennis.

Results

The characteristics of the successful environments were thematised into three groups (1) Organisation, culture and material resources, (2) Social factors and (3) The sporting and pedagogical competences of the coaches. During the presentation these categories will be developed and more precisely described.

Conclusions

The findings indicate that talent development is strongly influenced by the environment. These successful environments are well-organised and structured with clearly designed policies and programs. The programs are focused on holistic, long-term development. Extensive access to appropriate facilities is crucial. The training groups are supportive and challenging with close contact to established elite sport role models. But most significant is the competence and on-going development of the coaches.

References:

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