

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR PEDAGOGIC TALENT DEVELOPMENT WITHIN DUTCH ELITE SPORTS

*A qualitative
study on how the
process of
responsible
pedagogic talent
development can
be improved for
talents between
12-18 years of age
in the Netherlands*

INTERN & AUTHOR
R.A.H. KOOLMEES (RUBEN)
1926519
M. +31 (0)6 52474832
RAH.KOOLMEES@GMAIL.COM
MPA – POLICY ANALYSIS

VU SUPERVISOR
DR. ESSINK, D.R. (DIRK)
VU UNIVERSITY – ATHENA
D.R.ESSINK@VU.NL
T. +31 (0)20 - 59 86980

ONSITE SUPERVISOR
DR. AGNES ELLING- MARCHARTZKI
MULIER INSTITUUT
A.ELLING@MULIERINSTITUUT.NL
T. +31 (0)30 - 7210222

AUGUST 22, 2013



Table of contents

Executive Summary	2
1. Introduction	5
2. Theoretic Background	8
2.1 Actors within pedagogic talent development	8
2.2 Conceptual model	14
2.3 Study Questions	19
3. Methodology	21
3.1 Method focus groups	21
4. Results	26
4.1 Levels of responsible pedagogic talent development	26
4.2 Obstacles and recommendations for responsible pedagogic talent development	37
5. Discussion	44
5.1 Holistic perspective and contribution to athletic talent development	44
5.2 Shortcomings and recommendations	45
5.3 Reflection on methods	49
5.4 Future Research	50
6. Conclusion and Recommendations	52
7. Acknowledgements	54
Literature	55
Appendix I	59

Executive Summary

The success on the Olympic Games of 2000 and 1998 led to an ambition, 'The Netherlands structural in the top 10 of best sports countries of the world' (NOC*NSF, 2010). In the following thirteen years changes on Dutch talent development were made (Elfrink-Gemser, Visscher, Lemmink, Mulder 2004, 2007; Elling & van Rens, 2012; Helsen, Hodges, Micknkel, Starkes, 2000; Howe, Davidson, Sloboda, 1998). In line with the policy changes, four centers for elite sports and education (CTOs) were formed to develop *"an excelling environment for (potential) elite athletes by providing them with better possibilities to develop themselves"* (NOC*NSF, 2009, p.55). However, literature report difficulties in the process of pedagogic talent development (Oberon, 2012; Reijgersberg & Elling, 2013). These irresponsible non-pedagogic difficulties arise, because it seems that the current talent development programs are mainly focused on the athletic level. Actors like supervisors within CTOs and talent coaches may perceive obstacles in the process of responsible talent development. Therefore, the following research objective is formulated:

'The current study focuses on recommendations to improve responsible pedagogic talent development for talents between 12-18 years of age by getting more insight into the perceptions of talent coaches and supervisors within CTOs regarding their involvement in (pedagogic) talent development'.

Methodology

In order to answer the main research question, qualitative research was performed because responsible pedagogic talent development is complex, dynamic in nature and different per talent. Decisions are made by different supervisors and is possibly done in accordance with parents and talents.

The method used is focus groups, because this gives insight into the complex nature of pedagogic talent development. Five focus groups involving four CTOs and one similar organization were held. Average duration was 1 hour and 20 minutes and had 6 participants on average. Participants were talentcoaches, account managers, educational representatives, physiotherapist, sports doctor, sports psychologist and lifestyle or -skill coaches. Audiotapes were made with consent of the participants. Analysis was done by transcribing, open coding, axial coding and selective coding with aid of the qualitative software program MAXQDA10. Analysis found thirteen shortcomings and possible recommendations.

Results & Discussion

Four levels of responsible pedagogic talent development had a total of thirteen shortcomings and recommendations, which are integrated into six points of discussion.

First, supervisors experience a lack of coordination leading to a lack of assessment of personal well-being and unintentional communication issues between athlete, coach, supervisors and parents. This research recommends a communication model which stimulates wanted communication and aims to limits unintentional communication.

Second, agendas of athletes are overbooked leading to experienced chronic stress by athletes in all CTO programs, leading to possible overtraining, burn-out and identity foreclosure. To counter the negative consequences of stress, this study recommends giving an athlete more time for himself in order to rest and develop his own identity. The development of an identity needs positive athlete's well-being and is assessed by supervisors and parents, but assessing the well-being is difficult.

Third, assessment of personal well-being of the athlete by the supervisors is difficult due to time constraints. Four recommendations are focused on assessing personal well-being of the talent more effectively by making athletic progress more transparent, use scientific reliable and valid monitoring instruments, increase the amount of supervisors and increase engagement in informal conversation.

Fourth, new athletes are introduced at an increasingly younger age into the CTO programs, contributing to the lack of understanding for a choice to participate in a CTO program and lack of security. These shortcomings could diminish by early diversification of sports, educating parents and talent on the choice to join a CTO program and housing policy changes should be made.

Fifth, an overlooked shortcoming is the lack of after care. Providing after-care for the transition from the CTO-programs back to the former environment may be needed for some of the athletes to overcome the consequences of the neglected development levels.

Sixth, most learned skills are effective within the egocentric sporting culture and much less effective in an interdependent society preventing maturity on psychosocial level. Hence, introducing interdependent skills in the CTO program may be beneficial to make the transition.

Reflection on the methods gave:

- Focus groups were effective due to the discussion achieved.
- No pilot focus group was done, due to inability to find a similar organization in time.
- Longer focus group is advised for future research to get more in-depth.
- Bias of facilitators was anticipated upon.

- Bias of participants is possible due to loyalty for employers, disinterest or selective choosing of participants.

Conclusion

The current talent development model of having a focus on merely sport needs revision. It is beneficial to have an ambition to have a top-ten position within the Olympic medal table for countries every four years, but the process of doing it pedagogically responsible and in a balanced way is equally important. This study contributes by addressing six points of interests, including shortcomings and their recommendations to keep the talent development responsible pedagogic and balanced. NOC*NSF may use this to revise their policy to create importance for the pedagogic process, as well for the prestigious end-result both in- and out of sport. After all, is talent development successful if a prestigious medal is achieved with an non-pedagogic irresponsible process?

1. Introduction

Investments in the Dutch elite sports resulted in a top ten ranking within the medal count between countries of the Olympic Games in Australia, Sydney in 2000. This success led to an ambition 'The Netherlands in a structural top ten of the best sports countries of the world' (NOC*NSF, 2010). Thirteen years later, the Netherlands has no place in the top ten, although the Dutch elite sports climate has changed.

Elite sports is not a 'hobby' anymore, instead Elling & Van Rens (2012) report an ongoing trend of increasing training intensity and level of performance in sports. Young athletes in an increasing amount of sports are expected to train more intensively (Elling & Van Rens, 2012). After a playful introduction to the sport – between six and ten years of age – a more serious form of practice is required (Ericsson, Krampe, & Tesch-Römer, 1993). That means a high performance program of 20-30 hours a week with increasing frequency (Van Rens et al., 2012). It is mostly at this stage already clear that the young athlete is a talent, an athlete in training and competition better than – most of – his or her peers and possess the capabilities to achieve the elite level (Howe, Davidson, Sloboda, 1998; Helsen, Hodges, Micknkel, Starkes, 2000; Elfrink-Gemser, Visscher, Lemmink, Mulder 2004, 2007). It takes the talent approximately 5.000 to 10.000 hours over a period of ten years of dedicated practice to achieve the elite level (Bloom, 1985; Ericsson et al, 1993; Von Heijden et al, 2012; Van Rossum, 2000). But there is more than merely the athletic level.

Wylleman and Lavallee (2004) state that an adolescent talent should develop by making transitions on a psychological-, psychosocial- and academic vocational level. Especially when a junior talent does not make it to the senior elite sports, which happens on average to two of the three talented athletes (Van Rens et al., 2012). Moreover on the long-term, every talent or elite athlete is bound to start a second career, because the average retirement in most elite sports is at 30 to 40 years of age (Von Heijden et al., 2012). The reason for retirement is that talent that achieves the senior level is forced to retire due to physical incapacity around the age of 30-40 years (Van Rens et al., 2012). The early dropped and retired senior athletes both face big changes in their lives due to an almost instant loss of elite athletic identity. The athlete identity is such a crucial factor affecting smooth transition to a non-elite sport career, leading in some cases to refusing the transition. Part of the dropped or retired group may refuse to accept that elite sports is not part of their life anymore, so they try to reinitiate their career and keep at it until they succeed. This has negative consequences for the development on other levels and delay of a second career. Concern about the one sided development is not misplaced.

“Young athletes become and remain involved in high level competitive sport through adolescence”, because *“their self-identity may become strongly and exclusively based on athletic performance”* (Wylleman and Lavalée, 2004, p.511). Thus youngsters may focus merely on their athletic performance, neglecting their development on other areas and decreasing their chances to become a balanced individual. It is comparable with talents who give exclusive commitment to their athletic role, without engaging in exploratory behavior done in their adolescence. The effect will be a decreased amount of learned coping strategies that are essential during later career transitions (*Identity foreclosure*; Wylleman and Lavalée, 2004). It may seem as if athletes need to do it on their own, but reality is that they also need support to make later career transitions.

Luijt et al. (2009) reported that younger talents without an alternative plan, experience more difficulties with the transition to society, due to a lack in mental- and societal support. In addition, Luijt et al. (2009) shows that the younger talents and parents themselves are for the most part prepared for a life other than elite sports, but Dutch talent coaches and sport organizations lack the preventative attention to the development of physical and psychosocial wellbeing, and social environment of their athletes. Thus there is a lack of support for the dropped talents to make a career transition. The concerning examples of the exclusive athlete identity, identity foreclosure and lack of support may be prevented by sport organizations, parents and talent coaches with support of the broader pedagogic development on a psychological-, psychological- and academic vocational level.

In 2009, sport organizations like the ‘Centrum voor Topsport en Onderwijs’¹ (CTO) and ‘National Training Centre’ (NTC) were developed by the ‘Netherlands Olympic Committee*Netherlands Sports Federation (NOC*NSF), in cooperation with the Ministry of Health, Welfare and Sport (NOC*NSF, 2009). CTOs and NTC’s aim to *“create an excelling environment for (potential) elite athletes by providing them with better possibilities to develop themselves”* (NOC*NSF, 2009, p.55). Talents may expect to get the academic vocational-, psychological-, psychosocial support, housing and nutritional support from these organizations to enhance their athletic development. Recently, they got evaluated.

Oberon (2012) reported in an evaluation of the CTOs that (1) the development of the athletic level is beneficial for the top ten ambition, but (2) *“the combination between elite sports, fulltime training with regular education and independent living is for a lot of athletes heavy”* (p.45), leading to *“sacrificing educational performance”* (p.45) and (3) athletes and sport federation reported that there was a lack of availability of mental accompaniment and lack of availability and quality of

¹ Centre for Elite sports and Education

nutrition accompaniment. Furthermore, one third of the talent coaches focused only on the athletic level and lacked the attention on the school results (Reijgersberg & Elling, 2013). Luijt et al. (2009) reported that the one-sided development of a social identity as elite athlete is needed to achieve the top level, but contests a healthy psychosocial development. It seems that the current talent development programs are mainly focused on the athletic level and may fall short on academic vocational-, psychological- and psychosocial development, and therefore on sound pedagogical development. The shortcoming can be detrimental to the wellbeing of elite athletes in young and older ages, and reflects a negative image of elite sports on society. Actors like the CTO and talent coaches may perceive obstacles in the process of responsible talent development.

Research objective:

The objective of this research is to give recommendations to improve responsible pedagogic talent development for talents between 12-18 years of age by getting more insight into the perceptions of talent coaches and supervisors within CTOs regarding their involvement in (pedagogic) talent development.

Research question:

How can the process of responsible pedagogic talent development be improved for talents between 12-18 years of age in the Netherlands ?

In the next chapter we are going to look into the theoretic background of this research to learn more about the problem field.

2. Theoretic background

The focus within this chapter lies upon the elaboration of the theoretic background of this research in order to understand the problem field. Part of the theoretic background is the conceptual model. The conceptual model will explain transitions within talent development where these actors play a role. Subsequently, study questions are derived from the theoretic background as a whole. But first, description on the different actors within pedagogic talent development and their role within pedagogic talent development is needed before progressing to other sections.

2.1 Actors within pedagogic talent development

Different actors are known from literature to be active within the problem field of pedagogic talent development. First, talent needs to be defined if we want to understand the behavior of the other actors. We continue with the talent coach, which is an important part of the life of the talent and one of the supervisors of talent development. Third, parents support their talented child in various ways and it is important to know what their role in talent development is in order to understand the behavior of others. Last, CTO's are facilitating the process of talent development by having multiple supervisors employed with funding of the government and NOC*NSF. We start with the definition of talent.

Talent

Over the last years, the definition of a talent has been interpreted in multiple ways or was not defined². Since then, there has been more research into the definition of a talent and the field of high ability is coming to consensus about the existence of a nature and a nurture part. For example, a talent is in training and competition better than most of his or her peers and possess the capabilities to achieve the elite level (Howe et al., 1998; Helsen et al., 2000; Elfrink-Gemser, Visscher et al., 2004, 2007). In accordance, Gagné (1985; 2004, p.222) differentiated between giftedness and talent:

Giftedness designates the possession and use of untrained and spontaneously expressed natural abilities (called outstanding aptitudes or gifts), in at least one ability domain, to a degree that places an individual at least among the top 10 per cent of age peers.

Talent designates the outstanding mastery of systematically developed abilities (or skills) and knowledge in at least one field of human activity to a degree that places an individual at least among the top 10 per cent of age peers who are or have been active in that field or fields.

² For more information, Gagné (2004).

Differences in giftedness and talent are partly integrated into the talent development programs. These programs identify young individuals who are able to reach the elite sports on (1) the qualitative method like scouting and (2) quantitative methods like tests for anthropometrics, physical capabilities, technical skill, mental strategies and tactics (NOC*NSF, 2013).

Different statuses are given out when an athlete is identified as talent. Identified talents who are part of the international top 8 in their discipline are given the A-status, talents part of the international top 16 are given the B-status and the High Potential-status (HP) is given when a sport federation and NOC*NSF agree on a potential close up with the top 8 on a short term (NOC*NSF, 2013).

Furthermore, a sport federation can give the IT-status (international), NT-status (national) and the BEL-status ('belofte' or potential), without the consent of NOC*NSF. In this research we define a talent as an individual between twelve and eighteen years of age, participating in an talent development program. Athletes who are identified as talents can also be degraded when standards of the talent program are not met.

Sooner or later, all elite or talented athletes end up starting a second career, because the average retirement in most elite sports is at 30 to 40 years of age (Von Heijden et al., 2012). The second career usually lies outside of sports and the chances on a successful 'second career' will increase when the highest possible academic vocational level is achieved (Luijt et al, 2009). Within this process, the athletic triangle – parents, coach and athlete (Smoll, 1986) – is important to support the talent on his way up. Talentcoaches are the supervisors of the athlete within the athletic setting.

Talents have an opinion about their coaches. They are mainly satisfied about the (sport) technical quality of their coach, and a majority finds their coach sufficient supporting their school performance (Reijgersberg & Elling, 2013). However, there is a lack of regular communication between their coach and school, and one third of the talents opinionates their coach is only interested in the athletic level of the athlete (Reijgersberg & Elling, 2013).

Talent coach

A talent coach is able to socially influence their athlete's perception of competence, autonomy, and relatedness (Cox, 2007a). Their influence could go as far that a dictatorial or controlling style can undermine an athlete's motivation by taking away their feeling of competence or autonomy. They are leaders for their pupils and use various ways to communicate. If we overgeneralize, there would be two categories of coaches. The first one would be the dictatorial or controlling coach, down to the smallest detail, to keep everything in the field or pool in line. The second category of coaches is a more altruistic, democratic style of coach. He is willing to share the control with his athletes and assistant coaches. The difference between both is that the first category takes away the autonomy

and eventually the intrinsic motivation for the sake of control or more wins, and the second coach is using sports to develop the athlete to become a better performer by learning him universal skills, like goal setting, sportsmanship and coping skills. Cox (2007a, p.118) quotes Bill Walton³ on his now-classical contrast between the coaching styles of John Wooden of UCLA basketball fame and Bobby Knight of Indiana basketball fame:

Wooden fostered hope, Knight represents the death of hope, the stifling control freak. Look at his coaching style: "Get the ball, and look over here at me, and I'll tell you what to do. I'll put you in a position where you can win by one or two points, because it's my strategy in the end."

Wooden gave you the freedom to perform. He was the conductor of a free-form symphony. He always said, "Don't look over here at the sideline. I've already done my job. When the game starts, it's about you guys having fun playing a game and doing your best."

These coaching styles can be of influence on the pedagogic development of a talent. Bloom (1985) reported different attributes related to the coaching styles in the different stages of talent development (table 1). Bloom (1985) shows that different attributes or styles are shown by successful trainer-coaches in different stages of a talent's development.

Both overgeneralizations can be beneficial for the development of a talent. A more controlling coach could force lifestyle rules upon their pupils, or will make decision for the pupil at the beginning of his career to give the talent a direction (e.a. demanding in the middle years; table 1). On the other hand, the more democratic coach could delegate decisions to a more experienced athlete. In general, a coach is better of matching their leadership behavior to their followers needs which shows in the situational leadership theory.

Bloisi et al. (2003) reports of this matching in the situational leadership theory (SLT)⁴. The situational leadership theory states that leaders shift the intensity of their *relationship behavior*⁵ relative to their *follower readiness*⁶. Furthermore, leaders are more organizing, establishing communication channels and "*explaining necessary activities that need to be done*" (Bloisi et al., 2003, p. 661) in case the followers readiness is low. This autocratic or controlling coach is needed in the beginning of the development of the talent where athletes are *unable and unwilling* or *unable and willing*. In case the athlete becomes *able and unwilling* or *able and willing*, the leader switches to a more democratic

³ American retired basketball player and television sportscaster.

⁴ For more information, Hersey and Blanchard (1996).

⁵ E.a. "maintaining personal relationships with followers by opening channels of communication, providing socio-emotional support, and facilitating behaviours" (Bloisi et al., 2003, p. 661).

⁶ E.a. "Degree of capacity to set high but attainable goals, willingness and ability to take responsibility, and education and/or experience of an individual or a group" (Bloisi et al., 2003, p. 661).

leadership style to give the athlete more responsibility for his own behavior. However, this dynamic style of coaching is not in every coach repertoire and therefore the shift from autocratic to democratic is not always made. In the previous described basketball case, Knight has possibly failed to make the shift, whereas Wooden on the other hand succeeded. The style of coaches could be different, because of how they are embedded within talent development.

Talent coaches are embedded in different ways in the field of talent development. For example, regional talent coaches are no part of officially accredited programs of NOC*NSF. These kind of coaches are mostly part-time and have a fulltime job on the side, as they are not funded to fulfill a basic income. Other talent coaches take part in a CTO or NTC funded by the government and NOC*NSF and are part of an national accredited athletic development program. Both types of talent coaches have influence on the development of the talent, but the latter is part of this research.

Table 1. - Bloom (1985) phases and attributes of trainer-coaches and parents in talent development

Development Phase	Trainer-coach Attributes	Parents Attributes
<u>Early years</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - About choice of sports - Phase until end of primary school - Sport is one of the leisure activities 	kind, cheerful, caring, process-centred	shared excitement, supportive, seek out mentors, positive
<u>Middle Years</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - About commitment in sports - Phase until end of secondary school - Sport perceived less as leisure activity 	strong, respecting, skilled, demanding	make sacrifices, restricted activity
<u>Late Years</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - About mastery and perfection of sports - Phase of adulthood - Sport is the only activity 	successful, is respected/feared, emotionally bonded	-

Parents

The role of the parent needs to be discussed to understand the perspectives of CTOs and talentcoaches, because parents play an important part in supporting their talented children in talent development (Van der Loo & van Rossum, 1997; Bloom, 1985). Parents are an important factor on financial, moral support, psychological support, logistics and changes on the home environment in which the talent may flourish (Van der Loo & van Rossum, 1997). Although, parents may act differently in supporting the child to maximize their potential.

The behavior of the parents towards their children can be focused on self-improvement (task) or more on outperforming others (ego) (Cox, 2007a). Coakley (2006) describes the used argument for the ego-oriented attitude as the quality of parenting is seen as related to the achievements of the child in an environment of competitive sports that provides tangible measures of success. In other words, some parents today measure their parenting success by their youth' achievements in sport and overly involve themselves into the sport careers of their children. The ambitious parents rationalize their behavior that their *"pushy behaviors were perceived to do so for winning and rankings as well as for the sake of developing talent"* (Lauer et al., 2010 p. 493).

On the other hand, some parents use the task-oriented climate. The parents use the talent's own intrinsic motivation to motivate their children. These parents recognize that winning is seldom at the top of any child's list of reasons for participating (Cox, 2007a). The real motivations are mainly about *"having fun to enjoy participating in sport"* and gaining self-confidence (Cox, 2007a p.131). These parents recognize they are the most important adult role model children could have to influence the psychological, academic vocational and psychosocial upbringing. Parents who do recognize their role, change their behavior or style over time.

Bloom (1985) gives a changing style or attributes of parents involving the athlete's development (Table 1). Parents change their behavior from directing in the early years to a more facilitating role in the middle years. It seemed that parents were absent in the late years for the American target group. However, Derksen et al. (2002) found that parents play a significant facilitating role in later years for Dutch volleyball players. The difference in roles lies in the difference in organizational structure around sports. The talent development in sports is mostly integrated with educational institutes, providing housing and financial support. Whereas in the Netherlands, this kind of integration does not exist resulting in a higher dependency on parents for housing and financial support (Radtke & Coalter, 2007). The financial burden could lead to most Dutch parents loving their children unconditionally by supporting them positively, or the distance could lead to a decreased involvement in the talent development of their child.

Difference in perceptions on responsible pedagogic talent development between parents exist. It is also interesting that most parent perceive a lack of communication about the expectations elite sport programs have (e.g. Von Heijden et al., 2012; Luijt et al., 2009; Oberon, 2012). This gap in communication may be filled by the CTOs.

CTO

The 'Centrum voor Topsport en Onderwijs' or 'Centre for Elite Sports and Education' was formed by NOC*NSF and the Dutch Ministry of Health, Welfare and Sport supporting the top ten ambition⁷. To keep up with the international elite in sports, an increase of volume in training- and in the competition program of talent programs was needed (NOC*NSF, 2006). However, several infrastructure problems were preventing the possibility for talents to increase the volume in an important phase of their development. NOC*NSF (2006) identified challenges on the combination between sport and education, the increasing travelling times, the lack of high quality training facilities and a lack of specialized supervision. In 2009, four CTOs were found to solve these challenges by centralizing training facilities, education and housing for multiple sports.

A CTO was accredited by NOC*NSF when demands were fulfilled in fields of organizational, infrastructural, trainings accommodation, education, housing, experts/support and (para)medical support (NOC*NSF, n.d.). Additionally, facilitation of a minimum of 6 sport federations, 11 programs and 55 athletes was needed to get an accreditation at the end of 2009. Eventually, four CTOs were founded in Papendal, Eindhoven, Heerenveen and Amsterdam and have different supervisors employed.

CTOs have supervisors on psychological-, lifestyle-, education-, medical-, athletic level and management employed or within their close business network. For example, a sport psychologist who attends to psychological problems like the first signs of overtraining. A lifeskill- or lifestyle coach who attends to the life outside of training, i.e. filling out a tax form. A teacher or educational coordinator who attends to keeping track of education results. A physiotherapist or doctor who attends to injuries and massages athletes before important tournaments. A talent-coach that attends to training, periodization and a trustworthy relationship with parents and athlete. Lastly, account managers who attend to administrative tasks like housing, booking of hotels and nutrition. Recently, some of these actors were interviewed to evaluate the CTOs.

Oberon (2012) evaluated the four CTOs and concluded that the CTOs are effective (i.e. more talents, accelerated development and quality of the centralized facilities are sufficient) and reach enough

⁷'The Netherlands in a structural top ten of the best sports countries of the world' (NOC*NSF, 2010)⁷

federations, programs and athletes. However, several points of interest were still identified, like lack of coordination between education and talent programs and an emphasis on sport performance sacrificing educational performance. This is one of the factors playing part in the development of the conceptual model, explaining different levels on pedagogic talent development.

2.2 Conceptual model

In order to demarcate and progress with our aim, we have to conceptualize responsible pedagogic talent development. Responsible pedagogic talent development within the conceptual model is derived from a developmental model on transitions faced by athletes, as illustrated by Wylleman and Lavallee (2004). The developmental model is intended as conceptual model for sport psychologists on transitions athletes go through in their athletic career. However, this holistic approach should also enable researchers to conceptualize *“the developmental, interactive, and interdependent nature of transitions and stages faced by individual athletes”* (Wylleman and Lavallee, 2004 p. 521). In other words, this model enables to investigate pedagogic talent development through the transitions athletes make on four levels. This was also the reason to choose for this model over the model made by Von Heijden et al. (2012) which provides a less holistic and broad view on the pedagogic talent development.

This conceptual model consists of four layers (figure 1). The top layer represents the stages and transitions talents face in their athletic development, including the three stages identified by Bloom (1985). The second layer reflects the normative stages and transitions occurring at a psychological level. The third layer represents changes that possibly occur in the athlete's social development relative to her or his athletic involvement. The final layer consists of the specific stages and transitions at academic and vocational levels. All layers have an overlap with each other and are equally important in responsible pedagogic talent development.

It should be noted that not all of the transitions are made, for example when the athlete drops out of the athletic program, further transitions in the athletic level are not made. The conceptual model is illustrated in figure 1.

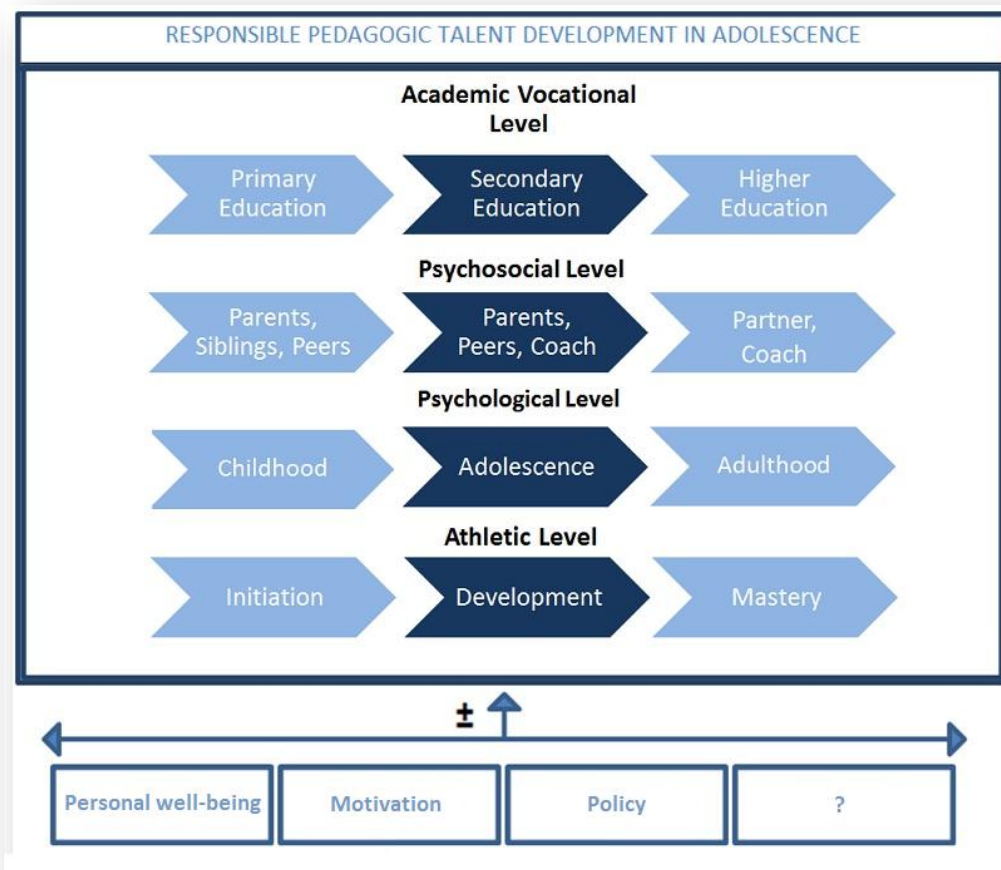


Figure 1 - Conceptual Model

The conceptual model focuses on every level and is demarcated to the second phase in the development of the individual, marked by dark blue (figure 1). Demarcation on these transitions and phase has been done, because preliminary research shows possible opportunities for improvement in the developmental stage of approximately 12 to 18 years of age. Different obstacle areas, like personal wellbeing, motivation and policy could influence responsible pedagogic talent development in adolescence (Luijt et al., 2009). However, these obstacles and possible others may be identified further through execution of the methods of this research.

The next section elaborates the different levels in order to understand the transitions present in the life of an athlete. Transitions on the athletic-, psychological-, psychosocial and academic vocational level are described.

Responsible pedagogic talent development

In order to continue with the progress in In order to understand the responsible pedagogic talent development of an athlete. Responsible pedagogic talent development is relative to individuals and within this research, open to the interpretation of CTOs, talent coaches and parents. However, some general transitions and phases can be found within the literature. To understand the main point of the conceptual model, clarification is needed. We start with the different types of transitions, to continue with transitions based on athletic level, psychological level, psychosocial level and end with the academic vocational level.

Types of transitions

Wylleman and Lavalée (2004) report two types of transitions, (1) normative and (2) non-normative. During the normative transitions, an athlete exits one stage and enters another on a predictable and thus anticipated way. They are part of “*age-related biological, social and emotional events or changes*” (Wylleman and Lavalée, 2004 p. 509). For example, children make the psychological transition from childhood to adolescent quite predictable based on their maturation. Parents can anticipate on buying bigger clothes and adjust their behavior fitting the maturation stage of the child. But non-normative transitions are different.

Non-normative transitions do not occur in predictable manner, but are outcomes of important events in the individuals life. For example on the psychological level, girls could struggle with their early maturation such as being exposed to greater social and sexual pressures, self-conscious about their bodies and eventually develop eating disorders, problems in school and major depression and anxiety (Graber et al., 2004). Not all girls do struggle with their early maturation, hence parents could not anticipate on the cause, nor effect.

Transitions are related to their developmental context, like the athletic level, psychological level, psychosocial level and academic vocational level. Both transitions between the phases are part of an athlete’s developmental process and are part of this research. We continue to increase our understanding of the different levels by elaborating on the transitions.

Transitions on an Athletic level

Transitions in competitive sports can be non-normative at times, but are also referred to as “*normal*” and “*planned*” (Wylleman and Lavalée, 2004 p. 509). For example, age related transitions from junior to senior level are part of most sports. Furthermore, organizational or structural factors within the sports play a role. In the Netherlands, this is seen during transitions from local sports clubs to regional and national teams (Wylleman and Lavalée, 2004). Finally, the athletes achievements are also related to a successful transition. The bigger the achievements of an athlete are, the higher the

status given by a sport federation or NOC*NSF will be. For example, an athlete gets the NT-status when it reaches the national level. Accordingly, an IT-status will be achieved when the international level is achieved. Wylleman & Lavalée (2004) report that high achievements leads to an athlete's longer stay in elite sports.

Bloom (1985) identified the initiation- (ages 6-12), the development- (ages 13-15) and the mastery phase (age 16+) in the development of talent in fields like science, art and sport. The initiation phase refers to a process of finding an organized sport and during this phase, and most promising individuals are identified as talented individuals during this stage. The transition into the development phase within sports refers to the dedication to one or more sports in terms of amount of training and consequently, the proficiency of the athlete increased. Transition into the mastery phase refers to athletes who achieve their highest level of achievement. Likewise, Côté (1999) identified transitions into stages such as sampling, specializing, investment and finally mastery regarding the development from deliberate play to deliberate practice.

Transitions on an athletic level are not possible without the right amount of motivation, which is part of the psychological level.

Transitions on a Psychological level

Children usually participate in physical exercise on school yards or near their home on grass fields, both unorganized sports. The child needs to mature on a psychological level to participate in organizational sports. Wylleman and Lavalée (2004) report a necessity for readiness of the child to participate in organizational sports. Readiness refers to the motivation of the child to participate and on a more cognitive level, *"the capacity for abstract reasoning and understanding of roles, responsibilities, and relational characteristics that are relevant to the athletic setting"* (Wylleman and Lavalée, 2004 p. 511). Transition into adolescence with sports is possible when the cognitive maturity is considered. For example, young immature cognitive athletes can perceive frustration, as they cannot handle the demands of sports and may lose interest. Accordingly, losing interest also occurs when a false comparison between peers exist. The false comparison based on ability can lead to a drop-out when the child perceives himself to have less ability than the rest (Cox, 2007b).

Adolescence for individuals confronted with the development of self-identity, including *"more mature relationships with peers of both sexes, identifying with a masculine or feminine role in society, accepting one's physique and using the body effectively, and attaining emotional independence from parents and other adults"* (Wylleman and Lavalée, 2004 p. 511). A longer period of high involvement into sports affects the development of self-identity. It can lead to a lack of exploration into other career, lifestyle and educational options (*Identity Foreclosure*; Wylleman and Lavalée, 2004). This

affects their development of coping strategies that are essential during career transitions, making transitions into (non-)athletic roles considerably difficult. Adolescence is therefore an important stage in developing self-identity that is not only essential to the athletic career, but also to transitions on other levels essential to an athletic career.

Transitions on an Psychosocial level

In general, individuals learn during childhood how to harmonize with peers; adolescents need to *“achieve new and more mature relationships with their peers, as well as establish emotional independence from parents and other adults”* and adults strive and accomplish stable and enduring family and social relationships (Wylleman and Lavalée, 2004 p.512).

Athlete’s social network consists mainly out of the athletic triangle: parents, coach and athlete (Smoll, Cumming and Smith, 2011), but also peers (Rossum, 1992). The interactions within this social system is of influence on the psychosocial wellbeing of the talent. For example, parents can facilitate the coach-athlete relationship defined by *“feelings of closeness, commitment, and complementarity”* (Smoll et al., 2011 p. 14; Jowett & Timson-Katchis, 2005). Peers are acting as friends and acquaintances to participate in social activities. Furthermore, coaches benefit with a healthy relationship with the parents, as both have important information about the wellbeing of the talent. This information could then be used to help and support the talent towards the transition.

In line with the aforementioned, parents are mostly supportive by not putting too much pressure on their children in order to achieve. Athletes perceived coaches and parents to be of influence on their different athletic stages (Wylleman and Lavalée, 2004; Bloom, 1985; Côté, 1999). Therefore, facilitation of the social environment in order to supervise and develop the psychosocial level is needed.

Transitions on an Academic and Vocational level

The process of formal education through primary, secondary and higher education to ultimately develop an professional occupation is pursued by a majority of individuals (Wylleman and Lavalée, 2004). These transitions are mostly normative based on age. Education in the Netherlands is compulsory to an age of 18 until a qualification is met. At the same time, athletes are confronted with an parallel progressing athletic development. This has led to a situation where a dual role of student and athlete requires to invest their available time and energy into developing both potential areas into two areas of achievement (Wylleman and Lavalée, 2004). This can lead to a sacrifice of academic performance over athletic performance such as a lowered level of education, delay in secondary education progression, drop-out and no choice for a new education after secondary

school (Oberon, 2012; Von Heijden et al., 2012). On the other hand, it could lead to termination of the elite sporting career (Wylleman and Lavalée, 2004).

In the Netherlands, children younger than twelve years of age participate in primary education. Most children make the transition from primary to secondary school at the age of twelve. This transition comes with choices based on “*physical maturation, cognitive advancements, emotional development, expanding relationships with peers and gaining the ability to have intimate relationships*” (Wylleman and Lavalée, 2004 p. 516). Specialized schools and organizations like CTOs aim for the most ideal situation to fulfill the educational and athletic goals within an training program. However, Oberon (2012) reported lacking coordination between the CTO and education. Furthermore according to talents, one third of the talent coaches emphasized only the athletic level and lacked the attention the school results (Reijgersberg & Elling, 2013). Difficulties between the academic development and the athletic development need to be looked upon to identify possible obstacles in responsible pedagogic talent development.

2.3 Study questions

In order to reach our goal, step one is to derive a main question. The main question is derived from the concern about the possible interleaving of non-pedagogic situations identified within the introduction and theoretic background.

Main Question

How can the process of responsible pedagogic talent development be improved for talents between 12-18 years of age in the Netherlands ?

In order to answer the main question, step two is to form study questions supporting the main question.

Study questions

The first study question is formed in order to establish a description of the four levels of responsible pedagogic talent development, as per the actors within each CTO. Actors within the CTOs may be experiencing environments or situations where talents are able to make their transitions, but differ from the description found in the literature. In addition, education and athletic are found to be competitors in terms of time (Oberon, 2012) and therefore an addition about the balance between the four levels has been made. Consequently, newly found descriptions may enrich already known descriptions of the four pedagogic levels, leading to possible undiscovered obstacle areas not thought of before.

1. *What is responsible pedagogic talent development regarding the supervisors within the CTOs?*
 - a) *With respect to the athletic level?*
 - b) *With respect to the psychosocial level?*
 - c) *With respect to the psychological level?*
 - d) *With respect to the academic vocational level?*
 - e) *With respect to the balance between previous four levels?*

Next, different fields where obstacles reside could be identified acting upon responsible pedagogic talent development.

2. What are the obstacles for CTO talents aged 12 to 18 years of age, according to the supervisors within the CTOs in the process of responsible pedagogic talent development?

As third and final study question, solutions for the obstacles could be identified to improve responsible pedagogic talent development.

3. What are the solutions for the obstacles for CTO talents aged 12 to 18 years of age, according to the supervisors within the CTOs in the process of responsible pedagogic talent development?

3. Methodology

The objective of this research is to give recommendations to improve responsible pedagogic talent development for talents between 12-18 years of age by getting more insight into the perceptions of talent coaches and supervisors within CTOs regarding their involvement in pedagogic talent development. In order to get insights into the perceptions, this explorative research uses a narrowing scope by establishing relevant areas of responsible pedagogic talent development and narrows into those areas where obstacles are experienced. Subsequently, this explorative research focuses on the balance between the areas by investigating the causal complexity of pedagogic talent development regarding the role of the CTO and talent coaches.

Empirical research instead of desk research is used, because Dutch responsible pedagogic talent development lacks on literature and is dynamic in nature. In other words, the talent development is highly innovative and therefore, literature is limited in describing current trends. Furthermore, a choice needed to be made between quantitative and qualitative research.

Qualitative research is chosen, because responsible pedagogic talent development is complex, dynamic in nature and different per talent. Decisions are made by different supervisors and is possibly done in accordance with parents and talents. The method needs to address the complex nature and will be discussed in the next section.

3.1 Method focus groups

In order to get answers on the research question, focus groups were conducted. However, group interviews or individual interviews could be also chosen as qualitative method, but were found less effective as focus groups. The choice on focus groups will be explained in the next section.

Why focus groups

Focus groups are chosen to be an effective method used to explore the insights of a CTO regarding responsible pedagogic talent development. First of all, the group could interact or discuss with each other to indicate differences and common ground. This gives in-depth information about the obstacles regarding responsible pedagogic talent development experienced in such a multidisciplinary group.

Second, focus groups are chosen over individual and group interviews, because of their more effective character for this research. This effective character is described by literature, stating that

certain aspects are inherently associated with focus groups, like organized discussion (Kitzinger, 1994), collective activity (Powell *et al.*, 1996), social events (Goss & Leinbach, 1996) and interaction (Kitzinger, 1995). Other researchers adopt a more holistic description for focus groups. Powell & Single (1996, p. 499) defined the focus group as *“a group of individuals selected and assembled by researchers to discuss and comment on, from personal experience, the topic that is the subject of the research”*. Consequently, Morgan (1997) stated, *“focus groups are a form of group interviewing but it is important to distinguish between the two. Group interviewing involves interviewing a number of people at the same time, the emphasis being on questions and responses between the researcher and participants. Focus groups, however, rely on the interaction within the group based on topics that are supplied by the researcher”* (p. 12). In other words, focus groups are used to gather empirical data produced by interaction between the participants about the topic addressed by the facilitator and interaction between participants is not present in group-, nor individual interviews. Besides the reason on interaction, another reason upon understanding participants played a role in the decision for focus groups.

The focus groups ensured that *“priority is given to the respondents’ hierarchy of importance, their language and concepts, their frameworks for understanding the world”* (Kupper, Krijgsman, Bout, & de Cock Buning, 2007, p. 659; Kitzinger, 1994). In other words, the researcher listens to understand the point of view of the participant, including the semantics of the participant. This process of understanding could improve rapport and trust. Having a trustworthy environment within a focus group contributes to the participant opening up. A participant who feels understood is more prone to give his opinion and share information.

Consequently, the understanding between the participant and the researcher improves the discussion between the participants, because the researcher is trusted by asking more questions close to the understanding of the participants. Therefore, focus groups are more valid and effective to get more in-depth insights of CTO supervisors and talent coaches about responsible pedagogic talent development.

Data Collection & Analysis

In this subsection, a description is given on how and what is done in the preparation, execution and analysis of the focus groups in order to give a transparent overview.

Preparation

The CTOs were contacted by phone or email to explain the research, to ask for cooperation and a date for the focus group. In addition, the CTOs were asked to seek out a group of at least six supervisors with a clear, but heterogeneous opinion on responsible pedagogic talent development. In addition, the group needed to be representative of each CTO by having talentcoaches, account managers, educational representatives, physiotherapist, sports doctor, sports psychologist and lifestyle or -skill coaches. That way, the chance on interacting between the participants increases. Several additional conditions were asked, like a quiet location with preferably refreshments, a table with chairs and an optional white board.

At the same time, the discussion guide was developed (Appendix I). A flexible discussion guide is chosen, because it allows the experienced facilitators to improvise within the confounds of a part. The discussion guide was developed based on preliminary research, and trends and quotes derived from an project overarching survey. Some trends given by talent coaches and parents were used to adapt language to the target group and seek out opportunities to increase fruitful discussion. For example, developing propositions where participants could first take a stand, followed by reacting to each other. Furthermore, the discussion guide was divided into three parts. Each part has questions to ask when discussion stagnated. The questions and propositions were formulated to aim for the corresponding aim within the part of the discussion guide.

The first part corresponds with the first study question. It focuses on getting the supervisor's perspective on responsible pedagogic talent development and gives an opportunity for the facilitators to adapt to the language and frameworks of the supervisors. The facilitators supplied post-its for every participant to write their associations about responsible pedagogic talent development on and stick them on a flip-over paper, categorized into a mind-map. These post-its were used to prevent an unwanted bias between the participants towards one area and provided the researchers with initial categories for analysis.

The second part focuses on the balance between the four development areas and to find out possible obstacles between the areas. For example, a proposition between the athletic level and the other development levels was formed. In this initial proposition, participants need to choose between responsible pedagogic talent development on one side and winning a prestigious medal on the other. Post-its are used to write an initial number between 0 and 100, to indicate the two most extreme opinions and let them discuss. More propositions to indicate the relationship between the areas were used, see for more information appendix I.

The third part focused more on the problem areas and their solutions. Problem areas identified within the second part are discussed more in-depth. Solutions for these obstacles were written on post-its for us to take with us to analyze and discuss further on the institute, because not all researchers were needed on the focus group. The three parts went through a couple of feedback session internally in the Mulier Institute and once at the VU.

After several feedback sessions internally and one externally with the VU supervisor, the discussion guide was ready to do a pilot with. However, it was not possible to find a suitable organization able to prepare a pilot before the actual data collection began. Despite that, feedback showed that the discussion guide was sufficient. Next was the decision on which researchers were going to what meeting.

Two facilitators were conducting per focus group. Dependent on time, place and experience, the facilitators were assigned to a specific meeting. The two conducting facilitators met before the focus group started and prepared the focus group in accordance with the guide, in order to prevent major different emphasizes of topics.

Execution

Focus groups were held on four CTO's and one comparable organization in Dordrecht. The CTO's were located in Heerenveen, Eindhoven, Amsterdam and Papendal.

The focus groups duration was on average 1 hour 20 minutes (maximum 2 hours and minimum 1 hour and 10 minutes). Focus groups started with an introduction, followed by asking consent to audiotape the participants. Notes were taken during the focus group in case of a technical failure of recording hardware. Subsequently, the three parts were executed. To close the focus group, people were thanked for their participation and explained what to expect on future documentation.

Afterwards, post-its and mind-maps were collected and photos were made of the mind-maps as a whole to store digitally for analysis. Furthermore, the facilitators discussed and summarized and noted important concepts and to ensure that the context of what was said, and other social cues, (e.g., laughter, triggering remarks, etc.) was retained for the analysis.

Analysis

The focus groups were audiotaped with verbal consent of the participants, transcribed and analyzed with MAXQDA 10⁸. Open coding is done in order to develop categories of information. This was done by categorizing quotes from the transcript, post-its from the mind-map according to the conceptual model. Axial coding is done to interconnect the categories, which is partly done by the participants in

⁸ <http://www.maxqda.com/products/maxqda10>

the execution by grouping post-its and discussing the connection between each area. The integration of the four focus groups is done through finding similarities amongst the focus groups and forming themes of the categories with the program *MAXQDA 10*. Lastly, selective coding is done in order to create a logical line of argument. The conceptual model is used within selective coding, meaning that responsible pedagogic talent development will be explained first, integrated by the explanation of the balance between the four areas. The explanation ends with experienced obstacles and their solutions.

4. Results

In order to give an coherent overview, the results are divided into two parts. The first part focuses on the first study question. It will give an overview of the levels of responsible pedagogic talent development and their possible effect on other areas. The second part focuses on the second and third study questions. It will give an overview of the possible obstacles and solutions of responsible pedagogic talent development for talent between 12-18 years of age.

4.1 Levels of responsible pedagogic talent development

Several main clusters can be identified with responsible pedagogic talent development according to the CTO actors. Also, all supervisors in all focus groups stated responsible pedagogic talent development was gradually different on all the four levels with each talent. The mentioned main clusters are on athletic-, psychosocial-, psychological- and academic vocational level.

Athletic level

Responsible talent development regarding the athletic level refers to dealing with main concepts like stress, demands and final responsibility.

Stress

Stress is mentioned in CTO Heerenveen as two parts not to be seen separately, namely physical and psychological stress. The physical stress comes mainly from intensive, frequent training to get fit for an important event. Psychological stress can come from intensive cognitive actions, such as dealing with new housing environment, having finals on school, or dealing with personal developmental challenges. Trainers use (annual) plans in order to monitor the physical and some the psychological stress.

Psychological stress can come from intensive cognitive actions, such as finals on school. Young athletes get stress for finals. Most examinations can be changed in date to fit the training program, thus preventing overload. However, leaving examinations are on a specific date and time for the Netherlands and can intermingle with the training program of the trainer. In that case, the interviewed trainer-coaches in Heerenveen and Amsterdam find it responsible to lower the physical stress to give the young athlete a chance on developing themselves on an educational level. However, educational mediators and trainer-coaches in CTO Papendal and Eindhoven find, even in relation to leaving exams, that education needs to adapt to the sporting environment and not the other way around. This results in some trainers disregarding with a part of the educational plan, which could lead to lower grades, a decreased level of education and a delayed high school diploma.

Trainer-coaches in CTO Heerenveen and Amsterdam find it important to keep track of social development besides education and physical areas. For example, social development is neglected when no attention is given to friends, nor family at home. In addition, the athletes live 5 days a week on CTO campus without effective interaction with their socials on-site. The trainer-coaches state that stress can come from lack of social skills, due to a neglected social development. In that case, trainer-coaches help the young athletes to set goals in order to lower the overall stress, preferably without lowering the physical- and educational stress.

“Maar het is misschien ook wel dat je rekening mee moet houden dat je dat moet plannen zodat ze een weekendje naar huis kan om daar ook gezellige dingen te kunnen blijven doen, zeg maar.”

Free translation:

“It is maybe also the case to consider social time within a plan for the athlete to make it possible that they can go a weekend home to keep doing sociable things, just to say.”

Stress could come from setting high demands on results, but if so, is this part of responsible pedagogic talent development?

Demands

Demands can be set naturally by the sport system itself (e.g. qualifying times, weight, jumping height, etc.) or set by the trainer-coach (e.g. concentration, ‘be on time for training’). Demands from the athletic sporting career are mentioned in all focus groups as part of responsible pedagogic talent development. In Heerenveen and Papendal, young athletes would develop traits as discipline, endurance and focus from having demands in order to prepare them for their life after their sporting career. Exercise physiologists and trainers in Papendal stated the need to pressurize the demand, because the athlete and the trainer have a common goal to fulfill. This common goal could be a qualifier for an important event or a medal place, instead of socializing or getting a good result in school.

“Ik denk, dat eisen stellen en dergelijke, dat zijn ook maatschappelijk dingen die gelden, en daar bereid je ze min of meer ook op voor”

Free translation:

“I think that setting demands and such, that setting those is also something that happens in society and you prepare them for those things, in a way.”

A wide interval of pressurizing exists, the limit in Amsterdam was pushing an athlete to complete a specific endurance activity, in Papendal pressurizing an athlete to choose solely for development on athletic level leaving social, societal and personal development neglected. Suggested by trainer-coaches in Amsterdam, this interval is wide, partly due of the wide range in trainer-coach age. A suggestion by trainer-coaches was made that on average, older trainer-coaches are wiser and therefore able to foresee the possible consequence of irresponsible non-pedagogic pressurizing of young athletes⁹. This may lead to different opinions.

Different opinions exist on the short term development demands to achieve the elite sports level on the longer term. Amsterdam, Heerenveen and Eindhoven emphasized on the one hand that chances drastically increase to fulfill ones potential and eventually to earn a prestigious medal, with responsible pedagogic talent development on societal-, social- and personal levels. On the other extreme, Papendal physical therapists and exercise physiologist mentioned elite sports is per definition not a responsible and pedagogic process and only hard decisions enables the pathway to a medal. The third opinion from Dordrecht lies in between, questioning both sides, acknowledging the pedagogic process is as important as a prestigious medal.

“Want als je 100% pedagogisch verantwoord te werk gaat dan haal je het maximale uit het kunnen van diegenen en daarmee krijg je een medaille”

“Maar ze zitten uiteindelijk hier om dat uiteindelijke doel, medaille te winnen. Dus maak ik die keuze [voor sport i.p.v. studie, RK] en zeg ik dan heb je pech gehad. “

Free translation:

“Because working in a 100% pedagogic responsible way, you will get the maximal potential from them and with it, you’ll get a medal”

“But eventually they are here for the end goal, to win the medal. So I will make the choice [In favor for sport instead study, RK] and then I say tough luck for you.”

The mentioned differences exist because there are different performance criteria in sports and education. On the one hand, sporting federations only assess the talent on sport results, while educational institutions only assess on grades. In both cases, the youngster needs to perform sufficient in order to keep in the educational or sporting program, while other areas of development also influence education and sporting results. Furthermore, talent coaches are also assessed by their employers, the sporting federations, based on their sporting results with the talents. The assessment

⁹ Participants referred to the book ‘De onvrije oefening’ by Heitinga and Köhler, 2013. ISBN: 9044521276.

gives talent-coaches from all focus groups conflicting stakes with on the one hand being the guardian of the pedagogic responsible process and on the other hand, only being assessed by the resulting medal outcome. Trainer-coaches within each CTO were unsure about their job regarding this conflicting nature.

Final responsibility

It is unclear to supervisors who the formal final responsibility on keeping track of balanced responsible pedagogic talent development has. Lawfully, the parents are responsible for the child until the age of 18. In reality, parents are not able to be on campus throughout the week to spend time with their child to find out how they are doing. Instead, they are informed about the program and establish a trusted relationship with the trainer-coach onsite. Other supervisors trust the trainer-coach to coordinate due to the trusted relationship with the parents. However, some trainer-coaches find themselves responsible for sporting development only. Therefore, trainer-coaches are informally seen by the other supervisors as responsible for the coordination of overall development within the program and trusted by the parents to keep track of their child, although some trainer-coaches only account for athletic development.

The supervisors monitor and may communicate with the trainer-coach within their own field of specialty. For example, the physiotherapist notices an abnormal tonus of muscles for a 3 weeks in a row. He suspects a higher amount of stress than normal and communicates with the trainer-coach, which in turn finds out that grades in school are worrying the athlete by talking with him/her.

Psychosocial level

Responsible talent development regarding the psychosocial level refers to dealing with main concepts like skills and friends.

Skills

Social skills are mentioned more developed in a CTO Heerenveen program, because of usage of self-reflection. There is attention for communication skills (e.g. assertiveness), presentation skills and building confidence. A steeper learning curve is noticeable with talent in comparison with mainstream high school students. Social media was also mentioned by a Heerenveen trainer-coach as a new skill in the life of some young athletes, especially it makes it possible to interact with a big audience. However, medical staff in Dordrecht and Heerenveen mentioned that most learned skills are effective within the egocentric sporting culture and much less effective in an interdependent society.

“Topsport is het toppunt van egocentrisme. Dat moet ook. De sporter moet alleen over zichzelf inzitten. Maar dan komt hij in de maatschappij en heeft een probleem. Op dat

moment dat ze moeten presteren kunnen ze van me eisen dat ik wil dat je nu komt. Maar daarbuiten is het gewoon heb je misschien tijd? Dat is dan een klein voorbeeldje van wat ik ze moet aanleren. Dat is geen natuurlijk gedrag, hetgeen je in de maatschappij wel zou aanleren.”

Free translation:

“Elite sports is the peak of egocentrism. That is needed. The athlete needs to worry about himself only. However, he has a problem when he enters society. When they need to perform, I accept that they demand my presence. But outside of sports, it is normal to ask if I have time left to spend and if I would mind spending it on them. That’s a small example of something I have to teach them. It is of course not natural behavior, instead it is something you would learn by living in society.”

Study mediators and medical staff in Heerenveen and Dordrecht mentioned that it is important for young athletes to step out of their own world and experience other worlds. To step outside the sporting culture of performance or egocentrism and think about how much the people around you do to help you. Experiencing non sporting culture would result in opening up for opportunities to help those around you. Taking multiple opportunities into account was mentioned in Dordrecht to help the young athletes teach interdependent acceptable behavior needed after ending the sport career.

“Dat vind ik dus wel het belangrijke van, ook kijken naar wat in de wereld om je heen gebeurt wat iemand allemaal wel niet doet voor jou wat je eventueel wel kan doen voor een ander.”

Free translation:

“That’s something I find important, looking in the world around you what is happening and what somebody else does for you and what you can do for someone else.”

Becoming aware of the interdependent process is mentioned pedagogic responsible. Talents may experience that their friends could also have difficulties with maintaining their friendship.

Friends

Young athletes can have friends within their sporting environment and outside of the sport culture. Genuine friendship within the sport culture was questioned by all actors within Heerenveen and Dordrecht, because these athletes are bound to each other by the competitive sport system. Young athletes having friends within the sport environment seemed happy, although this was seen as a social sacrifice in order to be more time-efficient. Some athletes simply have no time for friends

outside of sport. Actors within Amsterdam reported deterioration of the social life initiated after an athlete was introduced to the talent program and continued rapidly in the course of years.

Moreover, study mediators from Heerenveen mentioned that it may seem as if these athletes are happy, because they do not know how a social life outside sport is. This may result in having a small circle of friends in order to focus on the sporting development more easily. Additionally, most of these functional friends drop when athletes drop from the talent development program, resulting in a non-pedagogic responsible social situation.

“Ja dat je ziet, aan sporters die in de loop van de jaren binnenkomen, dat ze in de loop van de jaren, hè, hun sociale leven langzaam aan toegaat.”

Free translation:

“Yes, you see it happening with the athletes who come in over time. Over the years, you know, their social life slowly dies.”

Amsterdam supervisors find it important to have friends outside sport. Trainer-coaches plan and set goals to keep contact with friends outside sport. Dordrecht supervisors act similar under the impression that having friends, a strong social network, is of the essence for responsible pedagogic talent development.

Psychological level

Responsible talent development regarding the psychological level refers to dealing with concepts like identity, choices, puberty, sexual development and personal well-being.

Identity

It became clear from the focus groups that building identity for athletes between 12 and 18 years of age is important. Mostly, young athletes are building their identity as elite athlete in the long run. Egoism was mentioned by all as a positive innate trait for elite athletes, due to the ability to be assertive. However, it was mentioned when elite athletes stop or drop out of their sporting career, they do not manage in society with an egoistic attitude. Some ex-elite athletes need to reinvent themselves, asking themselves: “Who am I?” Therefore, supervisors find responsible pedagogic development to develop their own identity as elite athlete in order to prevent reinvention of themselves whenever the athlete decides to stop or drops out of sport. One instrument supervisors use is self-regulation.

Self-Regulation

Self-regulation is seen as stimulating development, guiding the young athlete at their own pace in order to maximize the learning experience. It is said that without self-regulation, athletes won't learn

to act more effectively when confronted with a similar situation. Stimulating their development means to empower the athlete to take responsibility for their own mistakes and guide them when needed to a more effective strategy. Guidance consists of creating safe environments that enable athletes to make mistakes and learn. All CTO actors use this technique, because they feel their main purpose is to let athletes cope independently. Furthermore, young athletes do not possess self-regulation innately, and therefore do not initiate self-regulation themselves. Hence, guidance from their environment is needed to initiate maximal learning. One form to stimulate self-regulation is making the right choices.

Choices

The talented athlete within a CTO program is expected to make choices in order to achieve standards necessary to stay in the program. An educational, sport and social system has criteria an athlete needs to fulfill in order to excel. For education it is having sufficient grades, for sport it is having specific qualifiers and friends demand a certain amount of time of sociable interaction. The athlete needs to decide for himself on how to spend his time. The athlete must prioritize or set goals. This process of setting goals is guided by his CTO supervisors. Supervisors influence the goal setting by making decisions for the athletes or explaining that they need to make the decision for sporting development in order to win a prestigious medal.

Most choices are highly complex and consequences are not overseen by parents, nor athletes. From the moment a talent shows potential, things overcome parents and athletes. Talents get invited on a national training event and then they get invited to train with the national team on a Sunday. Slowly, the athlete integrates into the program based on past experiences, without considering future consequences. It was mentioned talents find it much harder to choose to focus on something different than sport, after decisions are made to commit to the talent program.

Choices that focus too much on one area will impact all of the other areas in a negative way. For example, when school grades are dropping and produces stress. The stress reflects in the training, affecting self-confidence and the athlete may study too much, neglecting social life. Supervisors agreed upon that responsible pedagogic talent development is preventing too much of an emphasis on one development area.

Puberty

Pubescent behavior is mainly seen as approaching the limits, rebellious, unpredictable, surprising, unplanned and energetic. Talent programs in all CTOs are allowing puberty to surface, although less than non-talents due to strictly structured character. Talents need discipline and Amsterdam mentioned that a pubescent group of athletes needs more supervision than non-talents, especially in

team-sports. However life-skill coaches and trainer-coaches from Heerenveen, Dordrecht and Papendal find it responsible to let the young athletes make the mistakes that come with puberty. These mistakes if not made, will return later. Giving space to make the mistakes and guide the young athletes through this confusing time is broadly seen as pedagogic responsible talent development. However, some areas of development may need guidance of a supervisor or parent.

Sexual development

Young athletes enter talent programs at an increasing younger age since 2009. Young girls at an age of 14 are now able move out from the parental house and move into the campus, where they will live during the program. At CTO Heerenveen and Amsterdam, housing is closely monitored by social control¹⁰. Though, Amsterdam is partially unsatisfied with the current monitoring, because they would like to see someone from the CTO monitoring. In Papendal, the talent programs are unable to effectively monitor housing and whereabouts of talents. Trainer-coaches are concerned about this lack of control which enables easy interaction between 21 year old young men with 14 year old girls. Sexual intercourse in this example was not excluded in one of the housing environments, catalyzing sexual development of girls.

“Hier zo kom je in een hotel te zitten en het eerste wat er gebeurt, we zijn met de nieuwe lichting begonnen en daar zijn ook meisjes van 13 bij, en het eerste wat er gebeurt is dat er op de deur wordt geklopt van een paar jongens die net het nieuwe spul voorbij hebben zien komen en zo komen ze dus gelijk in aanraking met jongens van 21, 22 jaar. En het is niet vervelend naar die jongens of zo, maar het milieu waarmee je samen zit is absoluut anders dan wanneer jij gewoon naar school gaat en leuk met klasgenootjes gaat spelen. Dat is absoluut een ander milieu dan waarin je hier zit. En dat gebeurt nog steeds.”

“Ze zitten de wijze van spreken in een heel groot hok en daar zitten ze heel de dag. En daar doen ze het ook.”

Free translation:

“You come here inside of a hotel and the First thing that happens, we started with a new generation and there are also 13 year old girls with, and the first thing that happens is knocking on the door by a couple of guys who saw new meat walking by. Right away, they get interaction with the 21 or 22 year old guys. It is not meant mean towards the guys or so, but the environment where you living is absolutely different here than when you are going to

¹⁰ e.g. three girls of the same age in one living unit, or living in a service flat for elderly.

school and play nice with peers. It is absolutely another environment than here. It still happens.”

“They are, in a matter of speech, in one large shed en they are sitting there all day. And also, they do it in there.”

While concerned, actors within Amsterdam and trainer-coaches from Papendal do not agree monitoring whereabouts and housing to be their responsibility due to two reasons. First, supervisors suggest it to be unethical to guide the sexual development, because some freedom for the athletes needs to be respected. Second, they are not able to work 24/7 a week and are also not contracted to. Despite their limitations, concern about a healthy sexual development is present, which the supervisors find important for pedagogic responsible talent development.

It may be hard to see a result on the short term for responsible pedagogic talent development, but there is a tangible result to indicate a balanced pedagogic talent development.

Personal well-being

The personal well-being¹¹ of an athlete is mentioned a direct result from balanced pedagogic talent development. Temporary negative personal well-being is allowed, but supervisors intervene if the athlete stays unhappy. Supervisors try to assess personal well-being to indicate the needs of the talent and try to fulfill these needs within the bounds of the program. The needs could be assessed by a supervisor not present within the area the needs lie. In that case, communication between the different actors within the CTO is important to maintain a healthy personal well-being, resulting in a balanced responsible pedagogic talent development.

Some supervisors advise to drop from the program, if the talent is unable to keep a balanced responsible talent development. Consistent unhappiness is an important factor for advising a talent to drop out. Moreover, some coaches convinced of the potential of the talent would still advise to drop from the program if they are feeling consistent unhappy. Although, some coaches value their responsibility to achieve results more than the personal well-being of the athlete. The main reason is that coaches need results, it's in their job description.

¹¹ Personal well-being was associated with happiness or luck in life.

Academic Vocational level

Responsible talent development regarding the academic vocational level refers to dealing with main concepts like education, housing and societal roles.

Education

Two main opinions exist about the importance of secondary education. First, supervisors claim education needs to conform to the sporting level needs, because the young athlete has made the choice to participate and commit to the sporting program. Whenever education jeopardizes the sporting process, choices need to be made. Most choices are made to focus on the sporting development leading to a decreased level of education, delayed diploma and/or barely sufficient grades. Concern from the medical staff in Dordrecht and trainer-coaches from Amsterdam was opinionated for athletes who want to increase their chance for a numerous clauses study, needing high grades. More concern from a psychologist was about allowing deterioration on education. Deterioration would lead to a culture with decreased excellence. In this instance, responsible pedagogic on an educational level consists of leaving secondary school with a diploma, accepting it being of a lower level than the athlete potentially could handle, being delayed or graduating with a low grade list.

Second, psychologists stated that perfectionist athletes want to excel in both education and sport. In that case, it is possible in Heerenveen to emphasize sport or education on critical moments. Communication and trust between the different supervisors in sport and education is important to integrate the plan. Delaying with staying on the same level of education is advised whenever combining leads to degradation on either level. In extreme cases like a preparation for the Olympics, school is temporarily ceased entirely and emphasis is put on the sporting development. The emphasis is switched from sport to education to keep things in balance, during the year after the Olympics. In this case, pedagogic responsible development is acknowledging both education and sport are important for the talent and managing time to successfully enable the talent to excel in both.

P1: "De intrinsieke motivatie schuift natuurlijk vaker in een jaar naar de wedstrijden waar ze zouden moeten presteren. En dan doseren wij wel, dan leggen we die school stil."

P2: "Het was niet zo, nu doen we het niet meer en het komt ook niet terug. Nee, het is ontzettend belangrijk en daardoor zetten we het tijdelijk op stop."

P1: "Nee, precies. Nu dit schooljaar is het precies andersom de beslissing genomen."

Free translation:

P1: "Intrinsic motivation shifts of course often more in the years towards the tournaments where they need to perform. We arrange of course, the school was completely absent."

P2: "It wasn't, now we have stopped it and it will never come back again. No, it is of the utmost importance and therefore we have put it on hold, temporarily. "

P1: "No, exactly. The exact opposite decision has been made this school year."

Housing

Housing is a means to close the travel gap between the parental home, the training facilities and education. CTOs use housing for a broader purpose. First, living with fellow athletes gives a sociable environment. Second, teams and individuals from the same sport and same generation live close to each other in an - four-person - apartment in order to have more social control, safety and friends. In housing programs of Heerenveen, athletes younger than 16 years are placed within a foster home, while 16 and older are placed with other athletes in a shared apartment. Eindhoven uses also foster homes for athletes who are not able to live on their own. However, CTO Papendal allows thirteen year old girls into their housing program on-site with limited monitoring, with negative consequences on sexual development. Having a safe housing program is mentioned pedagogic responsible talent development, although the definition of safe may be different within CTO housing programs.

Societal roles

Talents tend to get isolated from societal life when they initiate in the talent program. This means they only get exposed to the sporting culture within the campus for 5 days a week, resulting in a lack of understanding of societal relations and roles. Having the opportunity to develop multiple societal roles by being exposed to 'normal' culture is pedagogic responsible talent development.

4.2 Obstacles and recommendations for responsible pedagogic talent development

13 obstacles are identified within the process of pedagogic talent development (table 1).

Recommendations were mentioned by the participants to overcome the obstacles. Lack of coordination supervisors, lack of security, lack of understanding consequences choice CTO program and lack of tailoring were mentioned broadly as priority. The structure of this section is one of a summation. Each obstacle is briefly explained, followed by a corresponding recommendation.

Table 1 – Overview of lacks and corresponding areas of improvement. Prioritized on times mentioned. Three levels of priority are distinguished, based on amount of mentions.

	Sport	Social	Personal	Societal
Lack of coordination supervisors	x	x	x	x
Lack of security				x
Lack of understanding consequences choice CTO program	x	x	x	x
Lack of pedagogic skillset trainer-coach	x	x	x	x
Lack of tailoring			x	x
Lack of rest athletes	x	x	x	x
Lack of after care		x	x	x
Lack of assessment personal well-being	x	x	x	x
Lack of available facilities	x			x
Lack of social development		x		
Lack of structure intake, evaluation and departures of sport federations	x			
Lack of talent identification	x			
Lack of accountability CTO supervisors	x	x	x	x

Lack of coordination supervisors

Monitoring personal well-being is of the essence in balancing pedagogic talent development. In order to monitor and interpreted arising issues with personal well-being, the supervisors need to communicate regularly with each other. It was mentioned that structural multidisciplinary meetings are lacking, due to time constraints. Communication gaps exist between supervisors within the CTO leading to lacking engagements on the guidance procedure (e.g. who is communicating what to whom and how).

Coaches mention that important issues are best to be talked over with parents and athletes by the coach itself, because they have the most trustworthy relationship. Currently, communication on important issues (e.g. choice to drop out, difficulties at home, etc.) between specialist and athlete happens in some programs without involving the coach. This leads to conflicting messages received by the athlete and undermining of the coach envisioned procedure. Furthermore, some specialists converse about important issues with the parents through the athletes, in which the athletes are at a young age ineffective of transferring.

Recommendation

- Multidisciplinary casuistry meetings led by the trainer-coach with a clear practical agenda once in four to six weeks in order to monitor and interpret possible issues that imbalances personal well-being of the young athlete. Video conference or other digital means could be a solution in case time is constraining.

Lack of security

Athletes are getting increasingly younger within the CTO programs. Young athletes and their parents are promised CTO programs to be safe. However, the program lacks the safety for younger athletes on housing and upbringing. Housing is unsafe in some CTO programs despite living rules set by the CTO, due to the lack of monitoring at night and the exposure of young vulnerable girls to older men.

A mentioned paradigm shift needs to take place from seeing talents as grown-ups to seeing talents as young children who need guidance. Young athletes are given the responsibility to handle their safety themselves (e.g. medical, administrative, physical, sexual development). It was mentioned that this subject needs more attention, besides the attention it already has.

Recommendations

- Introduce a pedagogic position within the multidisciplinary team in order to monitor talents. For example, invite a remedial educationist.
- Differentiate housing between minors (<18 years of age) and adults (>18 years of age).

Lack of understanding consequences choice CTO program

Parents and young athletes are unable to understand the consequences of the talent program, affecting their choice for the CTO program. Intake takes place with the parents and the athletes before they are allowed in the program. Consequences are explained to athlete and parents, however it was mentioned that athletes are blinded by the prestige of the talent program. This prestige or status is even more apparent in younger athletes, making them ignorant for the consequences. Moreover, young athletes were not seen able to comprehend the consequences on the long term. Parents were sometimes seen as an independent actor able to understand the consequences more than the athlete. Parents could help the athlete make the decision.

Recommendations

- Explain and educate parents of young athletes on positive and negative consequences in order to promote a conscious choice for the CTO program. For example, organize informational days for the new talents with counsel from current athletes and supervisors in order to give a better overview of the consequences a CTO program brings.

Lack of pedagogic skillset trainer-coach

It was mentioned by supervisors that most talent-coaches lack in pedagogic skills. Some older coaches agree by saying that younger talent-coaches are less capable of envisioning consequences of choices made in the present. Furthermore, talent-coaches see young athletes as an elite athlete already, which leads to non-pedagogic responsible situations.

Recommendations

- Invite a pedagogic specialist to educate and guide current talent-coaches.
- Introduce a pedagogic course within all coach levels.
- Add an assessment of pedagogic coach effectiveness on level 4 or higher every sport season, besides assessing for results on medals.

Lack of structure intake, evaluation and departures of sport federations

CTOs are working with a minimal of 5 and a maximum of 8 sport federations with their own evaluation criteria and deadlines of departures. It was mentioned that CTOs would like to see a more structured way of intake, evaluation and departures. A more structured way would lead to a more responsible athletic development by having less talents with no potential, which is currently experienced by the supervisors. Holding on to talents with no potential could lead to an overemphasis on athletic development and neglecting the other areas, which is considered as irresponsible pedagogic talent development.

Recommendation:

- Federations and CTOs should seek out comparable intake-, evaluation criteria and talent departure dates in order to improve responsible talent development.

Lack of accountability CTO supervisors

Assessment of CTO supervisors was mentioned not accurate with pedagogic responsible talent development. Supervisors with an indeterminate contract could do a bad job consistently and still be able to keep their job.

Recommendation

- Assess talent development jobs based on sport results and pedagogic responsible behavior (e.g. as rated by their athletes, parents and intermediate colleagues) in one Olympic cycle.

Lack of manpower

The upbringing and monitoring personal well-being is currently in jeopardy, because supervisors experience a lack in manpower. Some supervisors experience a workload of 25 talents or more and it is currently difficult to interact with each one on an individual basis, let alone their parents. The workload is experienced as due to time constraints.

Trainer-coaches also mentioned the lack of more trainer-coaches within one program. Mentioned were talents not able to work with the current coach and because that is the only one currently, the athlete has a problem.

Recommendations

- Hire a team of coaches, one head-coach and by his choice the several assistant coaches to be able to monitor personal well-being and introduce several possible guardians in the life of the athletes.

Lack of talent identification

Medical staff is lacking physical assessment instruments to prevent young athletes without physical potential assessed to enter the program. Supervisors currently experience talents that meet the criteria, but lack the physical potential. Medical staff would like to exclude talents without potential from talent program, preventing unnecessary stress physically or psychologically leading to injuries.

Recommendation

- Open up CTO talent programs to scientific research institutes in order to develop scientific assessment instruments. For example, open up to quantitative and qualitative research in order to provide a holistic assessment instrument.

Lack of available facilities

CTO programs have difficulties with capacity and availability of facilities. Education is in some CTO programs too far away from training facilities. In turn, most training facilities are also shared with societal organizations (e.g. recreational swimming afternoon in swimming pools) resulting in a less ideal CTO program with increased load.

Recommendation

- Mentioned was centralizing education and sport in order to make the combination more time efficient, resulting in less load. Less load for the athletes and for the supervisors.

Lack of tailoring

It was mentioned that young talents get too much responsibility within CTO affiliated schools. These high schools expect a pro-active attitude (e.g. clear communication when issues arise). This may be a good skill to learn for a young talent. However, mentioned was that these children still need guidance with most of the responsibilities, till they achieve the basic level.

Surprisingly, a lack of responsibility within the CTO program was also mentioned. The specialized CTO supervisors take responsibilities from the athlete instead of guiding the athlete towards a learned skill, making the talents dependent instead of autonomous.

A core curriculum within CTO education is being developed to strip unnecessary parts needed to graduate. CTO supervisors agreed that this would help talents be more time efficient, although they would like to see the same quality of education.

Recommendations

- Learn talents basic skills using guidance to make them autonomous instead of dependent.
- Initiate discussion about the core curriculum within education to safeguard the quality.

Lack of social development

The social environment becomes gradually very small within a talent program, because gradually they direct their social life towards one of an elite athlete. Mentioned was that the social life of a talent stagnates eventually with consequences for their social development. Furthermore, social life on the CTO campus – especially Papendal - is isolated from society, decreasing development of social roles.

Recommendations

- Mix classes within Topsport Talent schools with regular students to increase social development and social roles.

- Use goal setting as a means to stimulate social development of athletes by introducing social interaction as factor to reserve time within the annual plan, besides the physical, psychological and educational levels.

Lack of assessment personal well-being

Personal well-being was mentioned as one of the results of balanced pedagogic talent development. Supervisors are eager to spot a consistent unhappy talent to guide them, however they lack the time for consistent personal conversation. This conversation is seen as important to assess personal well-being, however some of the trainer-coaches lack the interview skills to engage effectively.

Recommendations

- Make individual talent development progress transparent for every supervisor to open up discussion and decrease the amount of non-pedagogic cases. E.g. use scientific reliable and valid methods in order to help monitor personal well-being (e.g. scientific talent tracking systems).
- Increase amount of supervisors, e.g. assistant trainer-coaches.
- Supervisors need to be present on regular and an informal basis¹² to engage in personal conversation.

Lack of rest athletes

All CTO supervisors experience a chronic overload with athletes. Their agendas are planned full from 7AM till 5PM with training, school, travel time and seminars. Talents are able to take a powernap, travel from one location to another and eat some food in between. Talents are expected to pay their full attention and concentration with all activities. Full weeks are planned by supervisors, appointments are sometimes not able sooner than two weeks. The increase of all activities within a talent program is mentioned to be of an important factor to the chronic overload present now. Moreover, supervisors are mentioned to keep cramming activities and plan no rest without a set limit. This limit is expected to be the athlete who says that he is not able to attend.

Recommendations

- Communicate on a regular basis with all supervisors about the program for the week. E.g. set as supervisory team one emphasis for a day and take rest into account.

¹² Around training, make an appointment in informal setting, invite athletes

Lack of after care

It was mentioned that there was no aftercare. Aftercare is needed, because the transition from talent programs to regular societal life is difficult. Talents are losing any social contacts they had within the program, move out of their house and need to switch school. Most talents hear within two months before ending of the program if they are allowed to stay.

After care is not institutionalized by the CTO at this moment, although the supervisors find aftercare an important task of the CTO program. Responsibility is felt for the initiation of the aftercare, although not to finish it. Currently, after care is only done by some supervisors on own initiative.

Recommendations

- Institutionalize the initiation of aftercare by guiding talent towards societal institutions.

Table 2 gives an overview of the shortcomings and their recommendations.

Table 2 - Overview of shortcomings and recommendations, with set priority from high-low based on amounts of mentions in the focus groups.

Shortcoming	Recommendation
Lack of coordination supervisors	Multidisciplinary casuistry meetings
Lack of security	Differentiate housing; introduce new position
Lack of understanding consequences choice CTO program	Educate parents; organize an information day
Lack of pedagogic skillset trainer-coach	Educate talent coaches; introduce new course; assess coaches on pedagogic coach effectiveness
Lack of tailoring	Guide talents to autonomy; discuss core curriculum
Lack of rest athletes	Communicate with supervisors to keep track of total athletic stress
Lack of after care	Institutionalize initiation of after-care
Lack of assessment personal well-being	Discuss athletic progress for all supervisors; use scientific reliable and valid tracking methods; engage in informal conversation
Lack of available facilities	Centralizing sport and education
Lack of social development	Mix regular and non-athletes on TTS; take social interaction within an annual plan into account
Lack of structure intake, evaluation and departures of sport federations	Federations and CTOs should seek out comparable intake, evaluation and departure dates.
Lack of talent identification	Open CTOs to develop quantitative and qualitative assessment instruments
Lack of accountability CTO supervisors	Assess on sport results and pedagogic responsible behavior

5. Discussion

5.1 Holistic perspective and contribution to athletic talent development

The current study makes a contribution to the current literature by adding perspectives and recommendations on improving responsible pedagogic talent development on four different levels according to CTO supervisors within the Dutch sport. In addition, the current study adds perspectives of CTO supervisors on underlying factors that influence the transitions described in the suggested developmental model on transitions (Wylleman & Lavallee, p. 11, 2004). One of the noticeable underlying factors is the rivalry regarding time between societal interests and sport.

In all focus groups it was noticeable that societal development and sport are rivals regarding time, laying a burden on transitions. Rivalry became apparent especially between institutionalized areas like education and sport. On the one hand the talents experience ambitions, interests and demands in the field of elite sport and on the other the requirements necessary for maintaining their educational career. This study found that there was also rivalry between sport on the one hand and the personal and social areas on the other. This suggests that a much larger problem than rivalry between education and sport is at hand.

Dutch sport has only focused since the beginning of the top-ten ambition focused on performance and sporting skills within talent development, but are only beneficial for the athlete for a limited amount of time (Henriksen, 2010). The main conservative reason heard in the field opinionates that prestigious medals and results are maximized when there is an absolute focus on the performance and sporting skills. However, the current study shows that too much emphasis on one area has a negative influence on the total development of the athlete. Accordingly, Christensen & Sørensen (2009) reported difficulties due to travel, insufficient social contact and a decreased aptitude for school leads to stress, drop-out of school and other psychological problems (e.g. mental breakdown). More stagnation of transition in all areas of development may be at hand with these kinds of problems. It seems that the current talent development is in need of recommendations to improve responsible pedagogic talent development.

The current study proposes recommendations all based on improving responsible pedagogic talent development. A majority of supervisors within the elite sports is ready to improve, however the system seems not to be designed as pedagogic responsible. The top-ten ambition of NOC*NSF is converted into policy stating that winning medals is the only focus within elite sports. Job descriptions of trainer-coaches and other supervisors within talent development are made with prestigious medals in mind. Though, broadly supported is that a clear ambition or goal is beneficial,

without a good process there is no good end result. Changing the policy of athletic development towards career development may have positive effect on the current landscape of elite sports.

Career development is viewed as a broader context for talent development, whereas an athlete's talent is considered not only as a set of motor skills and qualities, but also as the ability to develop and effectively use resources to overcome transition demands inside and outside of sport (Stambulova, 2009b p. 72-73)

Responsible balanced pedagogic talent development or career development may be the perspective needed in talent development policy. Assessing development programs on non-athletic and athletic demands is the next step. CTOs play an important part in monitoring and facilitating career development. However, they are bound to facilitate ambitions of sport federations. CTOs are more capable of facilitating a pedagogic responsible process when these ambitions regard for broader career development.

5.2 Shortcomings and recommendations

The current research has led to organizational shortcomings that lead to non-pedagogic responsible situations. Six points of interest are discussed.

First, supervisors experience a lack of coordination leading to a lack of assessment of personal well-being and unintentional communication issues between athlete, coach, supervisors and parents. Athletes find their trainer-coaches and parents equally affecting their sporting career (Rossum, 1992) and communication between parents and coaches should be increased. The relationship between athletes, coaches and parents is described in the 'athletic triangle'. Athletes, coaches and parents are part of the 'athletic triangle' where the social relationship between the three is described as a complex system that heightens the athlete's value of sport-experiences (Smoll, Cumming, Smith, 2011). Such a triangle is not exclusive to the sports, but can be seen in other areas of pedagogic talent development too.

Talents are also part of different communication triangles within education and healthcare. An 'educational triangle' consisting of a teacher, student and parent is described to positively influence academic achievement (Martin, Jackson, Richardson, Weiller, 1999) and doctors explain diagnoses to parents and child initiating another communication triad (Tates, Meeuwesen, 2001; Tates, Elbers, Meeuwesen, Bensing, 2002). To elaborate further, teachers, doctors and coaches all have their communication triad with the parents and the athlete that was mentioned to be conflicting in case these three do not cooperate and attune their message. Suggested was that the coach would have the end responsibility to filter the messages from other specialists and inform the parent and athlete.

However, teachers and doctors stated that they would neglect the coach if the message was jeopardizing the safety and personal well-being of the athlete. The three triads and limitations on the communication are combined in a suggested model (figure 2).

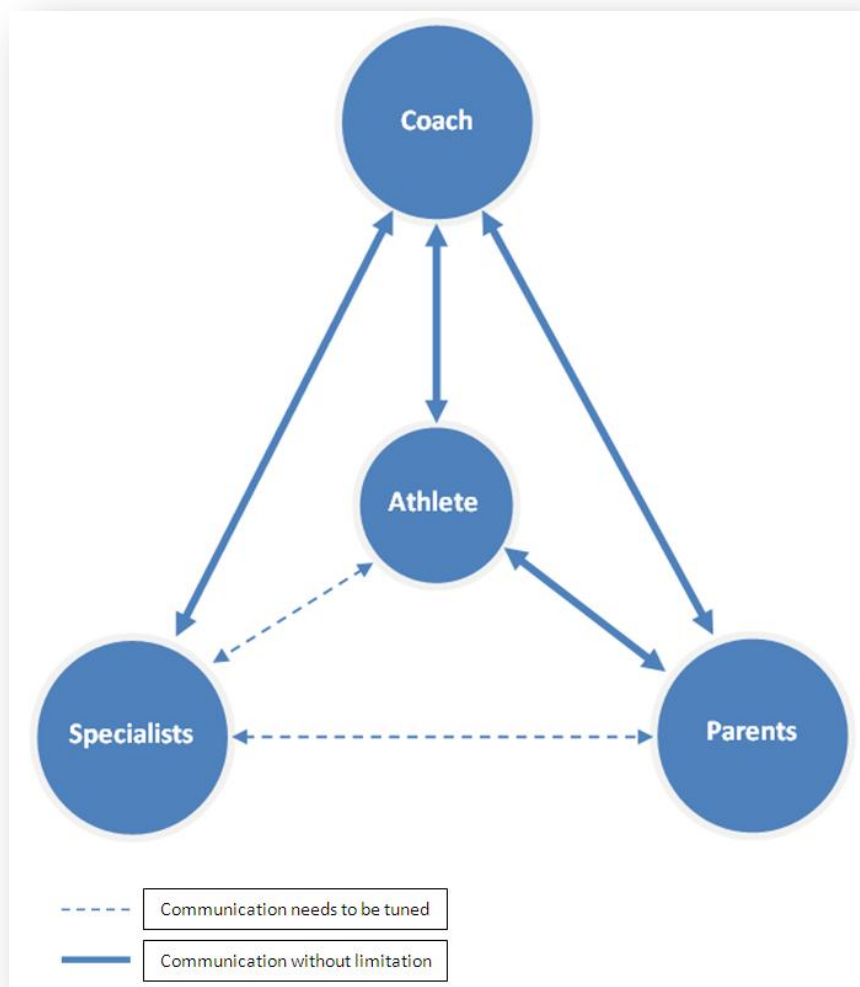


Figure 2 - Communication between trainer-coach, parents, athlete and specialists (e.g. psychologist, physiotherapist, doctor, exercise physiologist, life-skill coach). The interrupted arrows indicate that this communication needs to be tuned with the coach in order to prevent unwanted miscommunication, except when safety and personal well-being of the athlete is in jeopardy.

Second, agendas of athletes are overbooked leading to experienced chronic stress by athletes in all CTO programs. Overbooking happens when multiple supervisors plan extra hours on top of the existent ones. For example, nutrition education, sponsor activities or mandatory social activities. Persistent psychosocial- or physical stress can lead to overtraining syndrome and eventually to burn-out (Brenner 2007; Coakley, 1992; Kenttä, Hassmen, Raglin, 2001). The rivalry between athletic and non-athletic ambitions and demands may lead to a decreased amount of time to rest. Furthermore, too much time spent on the athletic development may lead to identity foreclosure (Coakley, 1992; Wylleman & Lavallee, 2004). The foreclosure and a possible burn-out may have to do with the athlete's increasing dependency, which is called 'psychodoping':

'Psychodoping consists of using psychological techniques to help athletes adjust to conditions of dependency and powerlessness, and to discourage them from asking critical questions about why they participate in sport and how sport participation is tied to the rest of their lives.' (Coakley, 1992, pp. 283)

In order to prevent burn-out, Coakley (1992) proposed to empower the athlete by giving responsibility over their own identity development and exclude any individual who tries to control the social organization of the athlete. Accordingly, giving an athlete more time for himself in order to rest and develop his own identity is recommended for CTO programs overall. The development of an identity needs positive athlete's well-being and is assessed by supervisors and parents, but assessing the well-being is difficult.

Third, assessment of personal well-being of the athlete by the supervisors is difficult due to time constraints. Concerns about the physical and psychosocial well-being of talent has been addressed in earlier research (Coakley, 1992; Luijt et al., 2009). Personal well-being is an essential concept, because it is a criterion in assessing balanced responsible pedagogic talent development. Balanced responsible pedagogic talent development is proposed to be the dividing of an athlete's time over development areas influenced by parents and supervisors with understanding of the athlete personal well-being in order to maximize the personal well-being of the athlete (figure 3). Some development levels are partly determined by institutions, like academic vocational and athletic levels.

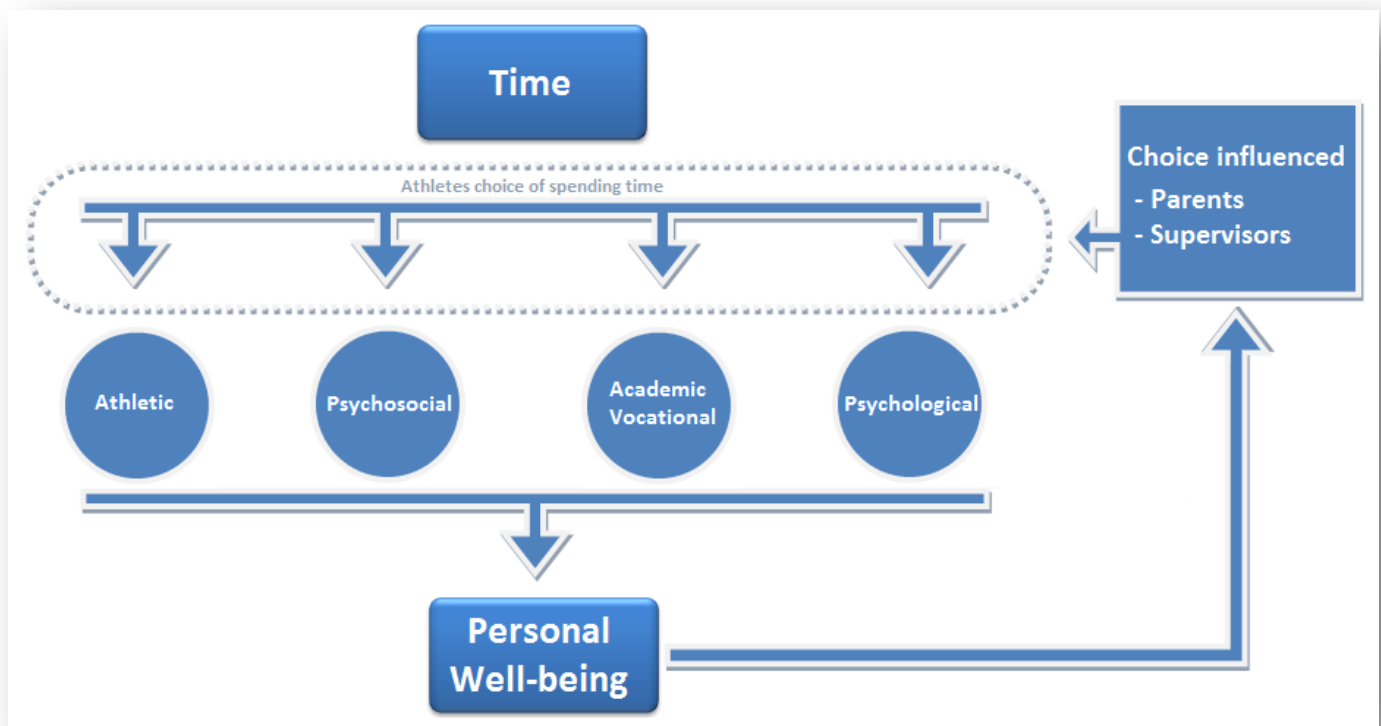


Figure 3 – Suggested process of balanced pedagogic talent development. Dividing time is regulated through feedback from the athlete's personal well-being.

Four recommendations are focused on assessing personal well-being of the talent more effectively. First, making the individual progress transparent and open for discussion should decrease the amount of non-pedagogic cases. Second, for team sports or supervisors with a limited amount of time, scientific reliable and valid instruments could be used as help to monitor personal well-being. Third, increase the amount of supervisors, especially assistant trainer-coaches in case of enough funding for the program. Final, supervisors need to be present on a regular and informal basis to engage in personal conversation in order to find out the personal well-being of the athlete.

Fourth, new athletes are introduced at an increasingly younger age into the CTO programs, contributing to the lack of understanding for a choice to participate in a CTO program and lack of security. Young athletes are characterized by their maturity in making choices, however the same young athletes are not able to comprehend the consequences for their later life. Making a choice for one sport and developing oneself in that sport is called early specialization. Literature suggests negative consequences regarding early specialization, such as possible limitations on overall motor skills, reducing amount of opportunities for sociological and psychological development, physical stress during growth leading to diseases in later life and sport drop-out due to a lack of enjoyment (Baker, 2003; Cox, 2007a). Instead, multiple complementary sports – or early diversification - is an alternative to consider. Furthermore, parents need to be involved and educated on the positive and negative consequences in order to promote a conscious choice for the CTO program. One way to do that is by organizing informational meet-ups for talents and parents to see the facilities, talk to supervisors and athletes who live there. Potential newcomers and their parents could then have an initial experience if they belong in such an environment, especially the young ones.

The lack of security within housing could also be explained by the increasingly younger age of athletes who come to the CTO program. The current system is built for older athletes and needs to change to ensure safety for the young. Most CTOs have changed their housing policy to increase safety for these young athletes. For example, foster homes, service flats and living with peers in the same unit. However, supervisors still hear about unsafe living situations and supervisors state that the focus upon the safety needs to increase. Changes should be made within the housing policy to be pedagogic responsible again.

Fifth, an overlooked shortcoming is the lack of after care. Trainer-coaches within the CTO Papendal are feeling responsible towards the ones who do not make it. The transition from the former home to the CTO program is arranged within the program. Young athletes transited within the CTO program tend to make choices merely in favor of athletic performance, neglecting other levels. This neglecting has consequences that may come up during the transition from the CTO program back

into their initial living environment and may need support with this transition. However, the specialists stop providing support for the child as soon as the program stops. Any difficulties that need professional help is then the burden of the parents again. Luijt et al. (2009, pp. 84) stated that drop-outs without a contingency plan are not prepared for a life without priority on elite-sports. Thus, elite-athletes could be in need of professional help after years of investing into a career of elite sports to make the transition to a life without elite-sports. Providing after-care for the transition from the CTO-programs back to the former environment may be needed for some of the athletes to overcome the consequences of the neglected levels. One of those consequences could be the egocentric attitude of most ex-elite athletes.

Sixth, most learned skills are effective within the egocentric sporting culture and much less effective in an interdependent society. Accordingly, egocentrism and non-social activities are predominant in early- and middle adolescence of non-athletes, but decline in egocentrism and non-social activities in later adolescence (Enright, Shulka and Lapsley, 1980). In sports, a high ego- and task orientation is beneficial for motivation in sports (Cox, 2007a; Fox, Goudas, Biddle, Duda and Armstrong, 1994). Better motivation within competitive environment is needed for better performance. It is not surprisingly that egocentrism is promoted in competitive sports in order to win. Moreover, young athletes fail to see their skill as dynamic and changing resulting in an ego-protecting behavior (Cox, 2007a, pp. 100). Thus facilitation of egocentrism by the athletes themselves and by their sport supervisors is seen in young athletes in order to keep their self-confidence and performance. Young athletes may not make the transition from middle adolescence to later adolescence and stay predominant in egocentrism. Athletes who do drop from elite sports still have to make the transition when they come back in society, where non-athletes already made the transition and became more social or interdependent. Hence, introducing interdependent skills in the CTO program may be beneficial to make a maturity transition on the psychosocial level.

5.3 Reflection on methods

The focus groups were effective when a heterogeneous group was present and discussion on topics was arrived. Discussion between the participants was present in all focus groups. Participants could share information at the end of the focus groups if they felt it was important to address, but in all focus groups there was no addition given.

The intention prior to the focus groups was to do a pilot with the discussion guide. However, we could not find a comparable organization within the field on that short notice to organize a meeting. Instead, we discussed internally and feedback was given by a VU supervisor. That way, the guide was

made face valid prior to the first focus group. After the first focus group, the discussion guide was made even more valid based on the experiences and answers given.

The duration of each focus group was on average one and a half hour. Focus groups with a longer duration could not be arranged due to the busy agendas of the participants. The idea is that most participants got in-depth just before the ending of the focus group. In one focus group with eight people, the duration of one hour and 15 minutes was too short to really get into a discussion in-depth. For future research, the focus groups are advised to be at least three hours.

The bias of the facilitators was made conscious in prior conversations amongst each other. Steering of questions was avoided by analysis of the discussion guide. Any bias made during the focus groups was recognized during transcribing and brought into context.

The bias of participants is possible, because the CTOs could choose the participants themselves. It is possible that some participants would not want to participate, but no information on this matter was gathered. It could be that supervisors were busy in that part of the season or found the subject not interesting, nor important enough. Also, participants from CTOs are possibly biased in favor of the top ten ambition, because of loyalty towards their indirect employer NOC*NSF. TSC in Dordrecht is not subsidized by NOC*NSF and was not biased in that way. Discussions in Dordrecht on pedagogic talent development were more critically on topics ranged from policy to personal experiences. Loyalty towards employers, disinterest or selective choosing of participants could all be factors contributing to a possible bias.

5.4 Future research

Future research could focus on four different fields of study. The first field is on the after care. It is unclear what kind of aftercare needs to be provided, by whom and for how long.

Second, parents could be asked about their perspective on participation in the life of their young athletic child. In what way would they want to be involved? What are their limitations for involvement and how do they see their responsibility?

Third, further research into the motivation to choose for elite sports by parents and young athletes is needed to get more insight into their choice process (figure 3) and pros and cons of early specialization and early diversification within the Dutch talent development should be researched in order to improve pedagogic talent development.

Fourth, soccer has its own organization that is comparable with the CTOs. Based on this research, the paid soccer organization (BVO) could have similar areas of development. Research into this field could give insight into the pedagogic talent development within soccer.

6. Conclusion & Recommendations

The objective of this research is to give recommendations to improve responsible pedagogic talent development for talents between 12-18 years of age by getting more insight into the perceptions of talent coaches and CTO supervisors regarding their involvement in (pedagogic) talent development. Perceptions on responsible pedagogic talent development brought recommendations on six points to improve pedagogic talent development to light. These recommendations were on psychological-, psychosocial-, athletic- and academic vocational levels, in accordance with the literature (Wylleman & Lavallee, 2004).

First, supervisors experience a lack of coordination leading to a lack of assessment of personal well-being and unintentional communication issues between athlete, coach, supervisors and parents. This research recommends a communication model which stimulates wanted communication and aims to limits unintentional communication.

Second, agendas of athletes are overbooked leading to experienced chronic stress by athletes in all CTO programs, leading to possible overtraining, burn-out and identity foreclosure. To counter the negative consequences of stress, this study recommends giving an athlete more time for himself in order to rest and develop his own identity. The development of an identity needs positive athlete's well-being and is assessed by supervisors and parents, but assessing the well-being is difficult.

Third, assessment of personal well-being of the athlete by the supervisors is difficult due to time constraints. Four recommendations are focused on assessing personal well-being of the talent more effectively by making athletic progress more transparent, use scientific reliable and valid monitoring instruments, increase the amount of supervisors and engage more in informal conversation.

Fourth, new athletes are introduced at an increasingly younger age into the CTO programs, contributing to the lack of understanding for a choice to participate in a CTO program and lack of security. These shortcomings could diminish by early diversification of sports, educating parents and talent on the choice to join a CTO program and housing policy changes should be made.

Fifth, an overlooked shortcoming is the lack of after care. Providing after-care for the transition from the CTO-programs back to the former environment may be needed for some of the athletes to overcome the consequences of the neglected development levels.

Sixth, most learned skills are effective within the egocentric sporting culture and much less effective in an interdependent society preventing maturity on psychosocial level. Hence, introducing interdependent skills in the CTO program may be beneficial to make the transition.

In addition, this study adds perspectives of CTO actors on underlying factors that influence transitions on these four levels. The four areas of pedagogic talent development are interconnected. Too much emphasis on one area was called non-pedagogic, eventually resulting in a handicap on all areas. Six major points of interests are identified, including shortcomings and their recommendations to keep the pedagogic talent development responsible and balanced.

The current talent development model of having a focus on merely sport needs revision. It is beneficial to have an ambition to have a top-ten position within the Olympic medal table for countries every four years, but the process of doing it pedagogically responsible and in a balanced way is equally important. The NOC*NSF policy is in need for a revise to make the pedagogic process and the prestigious end-result both in- and out of sport important. After all, is talent development successful if a prestigious medal is achieved with an non-pedagogic irresponsible process?

Acknowledgements

I want to thank my family and friends who supported me in writing this rapport. Special thanks are for my parents, writing this rapport was not possible without them.

I want to thank my supervisors, Dr. Agnes Elling- Marchartzki (Mulier Institute) and Dr. Essink (VU University) for giving me feedback.

And final, I want to thank my colleagues at the Mulier institute for their additions to this study. MSc. Stephan Hakkers (Mulier Institute), MSc. Niels Reijgelsberg (Mulier Institute) and Drs. Harold van der Werff (Mulier Institute).

Literature

- Baker, J. (2003). Early Specialization in Youth Sport: a requirement for adult expertise?. *High Ability Studies*, 14(1), 85-94.
- Bloisi, w., Cook, C.W., Hunsaker, P., L. (2003). Chapter 14 Leadership. In Bloisi, W. (Ed.), *Management & Organisational Behaviour: Second European Edition* (645-694). London: McGraw-Hill.
- Bloom, B. S. (1985). *Developing Talent in Young People*. New York: Ballantine Books.
- Coakley, J. (2006). The good father: parental expectations and youth sports. *Leisure Studies*, 25, 153-163.
- Cox, R.H. (2007a). *Sport Psychology: Concepts and Applications*. New york: McGraw-Hill.
- Cox, R.H. (2007b). Chapter 5 Self-Confidence and Intrinsic Motivation. In Cox, R.H. (Ed.), *Sport Psychology: Concepts and Applications* (103-142). New york: McGraw-Hill.
- Christensen, M. K., & Sørensen, J. K. (2009). Sport or school? Dreams and dilemmas for talented young Danish football players. *European Physical Education Review*, 15(1), 115-133.
- Derksen, Veldstra & van Rossum (2002), Op weg naar de top: de fasen die een sporter doorloopt. *Richting Sport-Gericht*, 2002 (2), 6-10
- Enright, R. D., Shukla, D. G., & Lapsley, D. K. (1980). Adolescent egocentrism-sociocentrism and self-consciousness. *Journal of Youth and Adolescence*, 9(2), 101-116.
- Elferink-Gemser, M.T., Visscher, C., Lemmink, K. and Mulder, T. (2004). Relation between multidimensional performance characteristics and level of performance in talented field hockey players. *Journal of Sport Sciences*, 22, 1053-1063.
- Elferink-Gemser, M.T., Visscher, C., Lemmink, K. and Mulder, T. (2007). Multidimensional performance characteristics and standard of performance in talented youth field hockey players: a longitudinal study. *Journal of Sport Sciences*, 25, 481-489.
- Ericsson, K. A., Krampe, R. Th., & Tesch-Roemer, C. (1993). The role of deliberate practice in the acquisition of expert performance. *Psychological Review*, 100, 363-406.
- Fox, K., Goudas, M., Biddle, S., Duda, J., & Armstrong, N. (1994). Children's task and ego goal profiles in sport. *British Journal of Educational Psychology*, 64(2), 253-261.
- Gagné, F. (1985). Giftedness and talent: Reexamining a reexamination of the definitions. *Gifted Child Quarterly*, 29(3), 103-112.
- Gagné, F. (2004). Transforming gifts into talents: the DMGT as a developmental theory 1. *High ability studies*, 15(2), 119-147.
- Goss J.D., Leinbach T.R., (1996). Focus groups as alternative research practice. *Area*, 28 (2), 115-23.

- Henriksen, K. (2010). The ecology of talent development in sport. (PhD), University of Southern Denmark, Odense.
- Howe, M. J. A., Davidson J. W., & Sloboda, J. A. (1998). Innate Talents: Reality Or Myth. *Brain and Behavioural Sciences*, 21, 399-442.
- Heijden, A. von, Elling, A., Hakkers, S., Reijgersberg, N., Rens, F. van, Wisse, E. (2012). *Evaluatie Topsport Talentscholen*. Nieuwegein: Arko Sports Media.
- Elling, A., van Rens, F. (2012). Hoofdstuk 3 - Theoretische achtergrond. In Elling, A. (Ed.), *Evaluatie Topsport Talentscholen* (29-37). Nieuwegein: Arko Sports Media.
- Graber, J. A., Seeley, J. R., Brooks-Gunn, J., & Lewinsohn, P. M. (2004). Is pubertal timing associated with psychopathology in young adulthood?. *Journal of the American Academy of Child & Adolescent Psychiatry*, 43(6), 718-726.
- Helsen, W. F., Hodges, N.J., Van Winckel, J., & Starkes, J.L. (2000). The roles of talent, physical precocity and practice in the development of soccer expertise. *Journal of Sports Sciences*, 18 (9), 727-736.
- Jowett, S. and Timson-Katchis, M. (2005). Social Networks in Sport: Parental Influence on the Coach-Athlete Relationship, *The Sport Psychologist*, 19, 267-287.
- Kenttä, G., Hassmen, P., & Raglin, J. S. (2001). Training practices and overtraining syndrome in Swedish age-group athletes. *International journal of sports medicine*, 22(06), 460-465.
- Kitzinger J. (1994). The methodology of focus groups: the importance of interaction between research participants, *Sociology of Health*, 16 (1), 103-21.
- Kitzinger J., (1995). Introducing focus groups. *British Medical Journal* 311, 299-302.
- Kupper, F., Krijgsman, L., Bout, H., de Cock Buning, Tj. (2007) The value lab: exploring moral frameworks in the deliberation of values in the animal biotechnology debate. *Science and public policy*, 34(9), 657-670.
- Lauer, L., Gould, D., Roman, N., Pierce, M., (2010) Parental behaviors that affect junior tennis player development. *Psychology of Sport and Exercise*, 11, 487-496.
- Loo, H. van der & Rossum, J.H.A. van (1997). Talentontwikkeling: de thuissituatie van jeugdige sporters. Arnhem: NOC*NSF.
- Luijt, R., Reijgersberg, N., Elling., A. (2009). Alles voor de sport!? (Gestopte) Topsporttalenten en hun ouders over investeringen, opbrengsten en offers. Nieuwegein: Arko Sports Media.
- Martin, S. B., Jackson, A. W., Richardson, P. A., & Weiller, K. H. (1999). Coaching preferences of adolescent youths and their parents. *Journal of Applied Sport Psychology*, 11(2), 247-262.
- Morgan D.L. (1997, 2nd Edition). Focus groups as qualitative research. London: Sage.

- NOC*NSF (2006). Publieksversie Masterplan: Talentontwikkeling 2006-2010 Talent Centraal. Retrieved from <http://nocnsf.nl/xu/document/cms/streambin.asp?requestid=6D4D351E-0556-4195-A473-50C28BA82124> on March 11, 2013.
- NOC*NSF (2009). Olympisch Plan 2028: Heel Nederland naar Olympisch niveau, plan van aanpak op hoofdlijnen. Retrieved from <http://www.olympisch-vuur.nl/data/sitemanagement/media/downloads/Olympisch%20Plan%202028%20%20in%20lage%20resolutie.pdf> on March 12, 2013.
- NOC*NSF (2010, October 28). Nederland in the top 10. Retrieved from <http://www.nocnsf.nl/studietop10> on March 4, 2013.
- NOC*NSF (n.d.). Topsportcentra CTO en NTC. Retrieved March 11, 2013, from <http://www.nocnsf.nl/cms/showpage.aspx?id=627>.
- Oberon (2012). Evaluatie Centra voor Topsport en Onderwijs. Retrieved from <http://www.rijksoverheid.nl/documenten-en-publicaties/rapporten/2012/05/01/evaluatie-centra-voor-topsport-en-onderwijs-cto-s.html> on March 4, 2013.
- Powell, R.A., & Single H.M. (1996). Focus groups. *International Journal of Quality in Health Care*, 8 (5), 499-504.
- Radtke, S., & Coalter, F. (2007). Sport Schools: An International Review. *Department of Sports Studies, Report to the Scottish Institute of Sport Foundation*. University of Stirling.
- Reijgersberg, N. & Elling, A (2013, in press). Visies op talentontwikkeling Talenten over hun trainer(s). Factsheet. Utrecht: Mulier instituut.
- Rossum, J. van. (1992). *Talentontwikkeling : loopbaan en kenmerken van topsporters : een onderzoek bij de Nederlandse selecties van vier Olympische takken van sport* (71 p. bijl. Met lit. opg.). Amsterdam: NOC*NSF.
- Stambulova, N. (2009b). Talent development in sport: The perspective of career transitions. In E.Tsung-Min Hung, R. Lidor, & D. Hackfort (Eds.), *Psychology of sport excellence* (pp. 63-74). Morgantown, WV: Fitness Information Technology.
- Smoll, F. L. (1986). Coach-parent relationships: enhancing the quality of the athlete's sport experience. In J. M. Williams, (Ed.) *Applied sport psychology: personally growth to peak performance*, pp.47 – 58. CA: Mayfield Publishing Company.
- Smoll, F. L., Cumming, S. P., & Smith, R. E. (2011). Enhancing coach-parent relationships in youth sports: Increasing harmony and minimizing hassle. *International Journal of Sports Science and Coaching*, 6(1), 13-26.
- Tates, K., & Meeuwesen, L. (2001). Doctor–parent–child communication. A (re) view of the literature. *Social science & medicine*, 52(6), 839-851.

Tates, K., Elbers, E., Meeuwesen, L., & Bensing, J. (2002). Doctor–parent–child relationships: a ‘pas de trois’. *Patient Education and Counseling*, 48(1), 5-14.

Van Rens, ECA F., Elling, A., Reijgersberg, N. (2012). Topsport Talent Schools in the Netherlands: A retrospective analysis of the effect on performance in Sport and education. *International Review for the Sociology of Sport* (0), 1-19.

Van Rossum, J. H. A. (2000). Deliberate practice and Dutch field hockey: An addendum to Starkes. *International Journal of Sport Psychology*, 31(4), 452-460.

Wylleman, P., & Lavallee, D. (2004). A developmental perspective on transitions faced by athletes. *Developmental sport and exercise psychology: A lifespan perspective*, 507-527.

Appendix I

Focus groep design

Doel

Hoe kan het proces van verantwoorde pedagogische talent ontwikkeling voor sporttalenten tussen de 12 en 18 jaar in Nederland binnen Centra voor Topsport en Onderwijs verbeterd worden? Dat is de hoofdvraag die centraal staat in de focusgroepen. Om deze vraag te beantwoorden werken we drie deelvragen af, die elk een onderdeel vormen. De deelvragen zijn:

4. Wat is verantwoorde pedagogische talentontwikkeling volgens de actoren binnen een CTO?
5. Hoe belangrijk vinden de actoren binnen een CTO gebalanceerde verantwoorde pedagogische talentontwikkeling?
6. Wat voor uitdagingen ondervinden talenten binnen de CTOs op sociaal, biologisch, educationeel en psychologisch vlak volgens de actoren binnen de CTOs en hoe kunnen deze realiseerbaar verbeterd worden?

Participanten

Dit design is gemaakt voor actoren binnen centra voor topsport en onderwijs. Het gaat hier om een groep tussen de zes en negen personen. Deze groep bestaat uit een programmacoördinator, een maatschappelijk werker, sportpsycholoog, medisch specialist en 2-5 talent coaches afkomstig uit verschillende sporten.

Duur en Locatie

De duur van de focusgroep is anderhalf tot 2 uur. De ruimte is bij voorkeur een die rust en openheid bevordert, bijvoorbeeld een woonkamer achtige ruimte. Eventuele consumpties worden geregeld door het instituut in samenwerking met de locatie, afgestemd op de lengte van de sessie.

Tijdsplanning

Tijd	Duur (min) (1.5u)	Duur (min) (2u)	Activiteit
	20	20	[Voorbereiding (A1 papier, setting en post its)]
	10	10	Introductie
	15	20	Onderdeel 1
	20	30	Onderdeel 2
	45	60	Onderdeel 3
	10	10	[Energizer]

Benodigheden

Opname apparatuur	Naambordjes 8x	
2 dikkepuntsstiften (kleuren)	Flipover	
Post-its drie kleuren	Camera	
8 pennen		

Introductie (5min)

Vorbereiding:

- Naambordjes, post-its, pennen.
- Rustige omgeving en niet worden gestoord door bijvoorbeeld catering.
- Voldoende water, koffie, thee op tafel.
- Afspraken maken tussen gespreksleiders (signalen)
 - o Tijd
 - o Overname

Goedemorgen/goedemiddag/goedenavond en welkom bij deze focusgroep. Hartelijk dank dat jullie tijd willen vrijmaken om met elkaar te praten over succesvolle pedagogische talent ontwikkeling. Mijn naam is [Onderzoeker1] en ik ben hier samen met [Onderzoeker2]. Wij komen beide van het Mulier Instituut. Wij vinden het fijn om met je aangesproken te worden, geldt dat ook voor jullie? Het onderzoek dat wij uitvoeren richt zich op de invulling die jullie aan pedagogisch verantwoorde talent ontwikkeling geven, naar de knelpunten die jullie in dit proces ervaren en naar eventuele verbeteringen in het proces. Houdt in je achterhoofd dat deze focusgroep zich richt op talenten tussen de 12 en 18 jaar

Deze focusgroep is opgebouwd uit drie onderdelen. Het eerste onderdeel is een soort van 'brainstorm' over het thema pedagogisch verantwoorde talentontwikkeling. Bij het tweede onderdeel maken we een verdiepingsslag d.m.v. discussie en bij het laatste onderdeel gaan we in op verbeter- en knelpunten. Jullie maken deel uit van een van de vier centra voor topsport en onderwijs. Jullie zijn uitgenodigd omdat jullie experts zijn op het gebied van talent ontwikkeling.

Er zijn geen foute antwoorden, maar verschillen in beleving. Voel je vrij om je mening te geven, zelfs als die totaal verschillen van diegenen naast je. Wij vragen jullie om met respect naar elkaar te luisteren wanneer iemand zijn mening deelt. Reageer op elkaar. Wij zijn hier om de discussie te leiden. Graag horen wij zowel kritische- als positieve geluiden op een respectvolle manier. Verder zouden wij het zeer op prijs stellen als de telefoons gedurende de focusgroep uitstaan maar als het echt niet gaat of je moet antwoorden op een belangrijke inkomende oproep, verwijder je dan zo stil mogelijk en we zien je graag zo snel mogelijk weer terug.

Waarschijnlijk hebben jullie ook al de microfoon opgemerkt. Wij nemen deze sessie op, omdat we niets willen missen van jullie opmerkingen. Alles wat in deze sessies wordt gezegd, wordt anoniem en vertrouwelijk verwerkt. Dus voel je vrij! Laten we beginnen met vertellen wat je rol binnen het CTO is en iets waar je van houdt en dat totaal niks te maken heeft met je werk binnen het CTO. We zullen eerst ons zelf voorstellen.

Onderdeel 1 (15 min)

Doel:	What is responsible pedagogic talent development regarding the actors within a CTO, such as talent coach, social worker, sportpsychologist, physiotherapist, program coordinator/manager ?
Intro:	<p>Topsport verwacht veel van een sporter en van het CTO. Zo is in de opleiding tot topsporter ook belangrijk rekening te houden met de niet-sport gerelateerde ontwikkeling en bredere interesses/talenten van de sporter. De eerste vraag die ik jullie wil stellen is wat jullie verstaan onder pedagogisch verantwoorde talentontwikkeling? Schrijf hiervoor je eerste associaties op de post-its zonder te overleggen. <i>Wacht 1 minuut.</i></p> <p><i>Maak een ronde en geef een ieder de tijd om kort twee of drie associaties op te noemen. Vraag tussendoor of er meerdere mensen deze associaties delen, waarom wel, waarom niet? Laat ze deze op de whiteboard of flipover plakken, vraag of ze het al kunnen clusteren.</i></p>
Follow –ups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Op welke gebieden ontwikkelt een getalenteerde sporter zich (meest voor de handliggend is sport, kunnen jullie er meer noemen? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Omschrijf deze gebieden ? o Bestaat er samenhang tussen deze gebieden? o Hoe wordt er rekening gehouden met de leeftijd? o Waarom juist deze gebieden en geen andere? o Wie is er eens of oneens met de gestelde gebieden? - Op welke gebieden voelen jullie je verantwoordelijk (voor de ontwikkeling van het kind)? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Op welke gebieden absoluut niet? o Op welke gebieden hebben jullie vanuit jullie functie invloed? ? - Hoe geef je uitvoering aan jouw rol in de talentontwikkeling en in welke gebieden?? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o En hoe let je bij deze uitvoering op de pedagogische verantwoorde ontwikkeling? o Op welke gebieden ondervindt jij vanuit je eigen rol beperkingen?
Opmerkingen	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Laat de participanten allemaal hun eerste associaties opschrijven als ze denken aan verantwoorde pedagogische talent ontwikkeling. Het eerst laten opschrijven voorkomt mogelijke 'group think'.</i> - <i>Wanneer de gebieden op het bord of flip-over door de facilitator zijn opgeschreven, kunnen de leden van de focusgroep hun associaties op het bord of flip-over geclusterd opplakken. Goed voor de energie in de groep en wordt dit onderdeel afgesloten om in het volgende onderdeel dieper in te gaan op de gebieden die staan genoteerd.</i>

Onderdeel 2 (20 min)

Doel:	How important do the actors within the CTOs find a responsible pedagogic talent development?
Intro:	<p>'Een talent op een verantwoorde pedagogische manier ontwikkelen is belangrijker dan een medaille winnen' <i>geef de mensen een post-it en laat ze een cijfer tussen de 0 en de 100 opgeven hoe eens ze met deze stelling zijn. Ze mogen niet overleggen. Na 30 seconden moet iedereen in een keer hun post-it voor hun opplakken, zodat iedereen de cijfers kan zien. Begin afwijkende cijfers uit te vragen. Mits er een algehele consensus is, begin erachter te komen waarom mensen het met elkaar eens zijn, waarom deze verantwoorde ontwikkeling (on)belangrijk is.</i></p>
Follow-ups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 'Schoolprestaties mogen achteruit gaan als dat betekent dat de sportprestaties vooruit gaan' <i>(gebruik 'laddering')</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o In hoeverre is onderstaand acceptabel als offer <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Laag cijfer (6) ▪ Lager niveau ▪ Vertraging oplopen ▪ Geen vervolgopleiding kiezen - Hoe wordt er rekening gehouden met de sociale ontwikkeling van de sporter? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Hoe wordt er contact gehouden met vrienden buiten sport en familie? o Hoe vaak / regelmatig wordt er contact gehouden met vrienden en familie? o Wat doet het CTO aan het bevorderen van de sociale ontwikkeling, e.a. woonkamerinrichting binnen CTO, uitgaan, feestdagen, technische ondersteuning voor contact met vrienden/familie, verjaardagen? - Hoe wordt er rekening gehouden met de lifestyle van een sporter? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o <i>Stelling:</i> Talenten moeten leven zoals strikt voorgedragen leefregels. o Op welke manieren wordt er anders omgegaan met een jonge puber dan met een jong volwassene? o Hoe anders wordt er omgegaan met een puberend meisje in vergelijking met een puberende jongen? o <i>Stelling:</i> Een talent op een CTO is prima in staat puber te zijn. - <i>Stelling:</i> Ik zou het prima vinden als mijn kind deel uit zou maken van een CTO.
Opmerkingen	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Stelling in combinatie met 'Laddering'</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o <i>de participanten krijgen en zien zoals voorgaand voorgelegd en kunnen hun invulling daaraan geven. Vervolgens wordt er vijfmaal doorgevraagd op waarom zij dit zo belangrijk vinden. Bij deze oefening is er meestal de verwachting dat na vijf keer er tot de kern is doorgedrongen.</i>

Onderdeel 3 (45 min)

Doel:	What challenges of talents on social, biological, academic vocational and physiological do actors within the CTO perceive and how do they want to see these improved?
Intro:	Als we kijken naar het bord / flipover dan zien we dat jullie je midden in het proces van talentontwikkeling begeven. We willen verder praten over onder andere de gebieden als fysieke ontwikkeling, onderwijs, wonen en sociaal maatschappelijke ontwikkeling. We focussen hier op het proces, de knelpunten en hoe deze verbeterd kunnen worden. Laten we beginnen met het proces. Wie heeft de eindverantwoordelijkheid voor deze ontwikkeling van het kind?.
Follow-ups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Fysieke ontwikkeling (belastbaarheid, maar ook bijv geslacht specifieke lichamelijke ontwikkeling)</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Tegen wat voor knelpunten lopen jullie aan met betrekking tot de belastbaarheid in de talentontwikkeling? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Hoe signaleren jullie overbelasting (op sport en school)? ▪ Hoe vaak is er contact met de school/(pleeg)ouders/talent en het CTO over de belasting? ▪ Op welke gebieden zien jullie probleemgedrag ontstaan indien sprake van mogelijke overbelasting/overtraining? ▪ Wordt daar door iedereen verantwoord mee omgegaan? o Wat voor uitdagingen merken jullie met betrekking tot de verschillen in leeftijd in de talentontwikkeling? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Biologische versus chronologische leeftijd? ▪ <i>Indien er rekening wordt gehouden met de biologische leeftijd, hoe signaleren ze dat?</i> o Wat voor uitdagingen merken jullie dat geslacht heeft op de talentontwikkeling? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Worden meisjes anders getraind dan jongens? ▪ Word er anders gecommuniceerd met meisjes t.o.v. jongens? ▪ Wat voor effecten zien jullie op de belasting, als we kijken naar geslacht? o Wat voor verbeterpunten zien jullie in het gehele proces op het gebied van de fysieke ontwikkeling ? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Hoe zouden deze kunnen worden gerealiseerd? - <i>Onderwijs (hoogst haalbare diploma)</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Tegen wat voor knelpunten lopen jullie aan met betrekking tot de combinatie met onderwijs? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Hoe is de communicatie tussen ouders, coach, talent, school en CTO? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hoe vaak is er contact? • Waarover is er contact (inhoudelijke afstemming?)? • Hoe kan de communicatie tussen talent, coach en CTO verbeterd worden? • Ook oog voor de niet cognitieve ontwikkeling? ▪ Welke knelpunten ontstaan op het gebied van afstemming trainingsprogramma versus onderwijsprogramma? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hoe zijn deze knelpunten opgelost of kunnen ze worden opgelost?

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Zijn er verbeterpunten die jullie zien op het gebied van onderwijs? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Hoe zouden deze kunnen worden gerealiseerd? - <i>Wonen (begeleid/(semi)zelfstandig)</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <i>Stelling: 'De combinatie tussen wonen, studeren en sporten is voor talenten een té zware belasting.'</i> Wie wil hierop reageren? ○ Hoe signaleert het CTO of een talent begeleid of (semi)zelfstandig kan wonen? ○ Hoe zijn knelpunten opgelost op het gebied van wonen? ○ Zijn er verbeterpunten die jullie zien in het proces van wonen? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Hoe zouden deze kunnen worden gerealiseerd? - <i>Sociaal-maatschappelijk (o.a. ouders, vrienden, 'normaal' leeftijdsspecifiek gedrag)</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Hoe signaleren jullie gezond tegenover ongezond sociaal gedrag? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Hoe houden jullie rekening met leeftijd? ▪ Wie zijn er bij deze signalering betrokken? ○ Zijn er verbeterpunten in jullie ogen met betrekking tot de sociale ontwikkeling? - <i>Mentaal (niet alleen sportspecifieke, maar bredere psychische gesteldheid/belastbaarheid)</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Hoe signaleren jullie gezond versus ongezonde mentale gesteldheid bij talenten? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Wie worden er geraadpleegd bij de signalering? ▪ Wanneer wordt op geanticipeerd en door wie? ○ 'Niet sportspecifieke mentale gesteldheid is belangrijker dan sportspecifieke mentale gesteldheid' ○ Zijn er verbeterpunten in jullie ogen met betrekking tot de mentale gesteldheid van de talenten? - In hoeverre voldoet de huidige structuur en jullie functie specifieke taken en verantwoordelijkheden? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Wanneer er knelpunten worden gesignaleerd, wat doen jullie daar dan mee? ○ Waar liggen grootste uitdagingen? ○ Is er voldoende pedagogische kennis? Op een schaal van 0-100 hoe schatten jullie je pedagogisch kennis in? ○ Waarover willen jullie nog meer weten? Hoe is dit te realiseren? <p>Wat is voor jullie het belangrijkste verbeterpunt?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Plak of laat deze weer op de mind map plakken.</i> <p>Laatste vraag: Is er iets niet gevraagd wat jullie wel verwacht hadden?</p>
Opmerkingen	<p><i>Slechtste idee</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>er kan door de facilitator aan de participanten gevraagd worden om een (fictieve) worst-case scenario te beschrijven. Vervolgens wordt er gevraagd hoe de verschillende drempels opgelost worden en eventuele bestaande drempels opgelost kunnen worden. Deze manier ontstaat er een discussie waarbij een ieder zijn input kan leveren, gezien vanuit zijn eigen perspectief. Deze manier van aanpakken kan ten alle tijden worden toegepast, wanneer er een tekort aan discussie ontstaat.</i>

Belangrijk bij focusgroep:

- regisseren en discussie leiden
- Doorvragen / Samenvattende vragen stellen / “Is er iemand anders die hierop wil reageren?” / Kun je me dan vertellen wat dat voor jou betekent? / Op dat punt komen we later terug / “Maar nu eerst algemeen” /
- Opmerkingen opschrijven als je er later op terug wilt komen
- Niet inhoudelijk reageren!
- Houd het respectvol
- Houd de tijd in de gaten
- Rustig en beheerst overkomen

Energizer (5 min)

Deze oefening is een korte fysieke activiteit om de participanten de tijd te geven zich weer even op te laden en ze te laten samenwerken. Deze kan tussen de topics uitgevoerd worden, indien het enthousiasme en input verlaagd is.

Voorbeeld:

Name: Bouncy-Ball Memory Game

Use: juggling tasks, knowing to look ahead and “behind,” team work, problem solving

Materials: 3 balls or more, they can range in size, weight, etc.

Activity Description:

Participants stand in a circle, shoulder to shoulder. The leader does not participate but only starts the activity. The leader explains that each ball will be tossed to someone in the ring who will in turn toss it to someone else in the ring. This continues until all members in the ring have tossed the ball. Start with one ball and go around once.

Have them repeat the exercise but in reverse order. ON the next round, after the ball gets to the 3rd person, add a second ball, and a third, fourth, etc. depending on the size of the group and the numbers of balls you have. Next, tell the group that you will now give them a time limit (base this on how long that first time took). On the next round, shorten the time. Stop play and ask how they might be able to

accomplish the task better and faster. Ask them how fast they think they can go. Have them try to do it in that time.

Process it by asking them to relate this to juggling tasks in their organization... sometimes you don't know what is coming, sometimes the person throws something to you without you knowing how to handle it, sometimes things go too fast and you “drop the ball,” etc...

Einde

Vat de focusgroep kort samen door de gebieden, de knelpunten en de verbeterpunten te benoemen. Bedankt de participanten voor hun inbreng en tijd.

