

The selection of sport talents. A complex and necessary process for the development of the sport
La selección de talentos deportivos. Un proceso complejo y necesario para el desarrollo del deporte

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ABSTRACT

Appropriately apply the principles for talent selection is unavoidably a norm for their effective implementation. The proposed present offers a description of some methodological approaches found in the revision of the contemporary specialized literature that approaches this thematic one, applying for it methods of the theoretical level of the knowledge, becoming a valuable consultation instrument to the specialists of these institutions of the sport.

RESUMEN

Aplicar adecuadamente los principios para la selección de talentos es ineludiblemente una norma para su eficaz implementación. La presente propuesta ofrece una descripción de algunos criterios metodológicos encontrados en la revisión de la literatura especializada contemporánea que aborda esta temática, aplicando para ello métodos del nivel teórico del conocimiento, convirtiéndose en un valioso instrumento de consulta a los especialistas de estas instituciones del deporte.

Keywords

Talent; Sport talent; Identification; Detection; Selection.

Palabras clave

Talento; Talento deportivo; Identificación; Detección; Selección.

INTRODUCTION

Sport is one of the most complete expressions of the muscle and the mind of man, who during the historical development of humanity has formed an inseparable part of the culture, idiosyncrasies and progress of different peoples and regions. Its evolution has been so dizzying that many scholars of the social sciences describe it as one of the manifestations that characterizes contemporary society. That is why, at present, the evolution of the sporting phenomenon has erupted in such a way in recent years that the social sciences define it as one of the characterizing features of contemporary society throughout the world.

Performance sport is an important component of physical culture, therefore, it includes the incorporation of young talents who aspire to achieve the highest results. Discovering athletes with a greater future projection in the field of performance is perhaps the most important problem for current coaches. The need to know how to choose correctly the athletes who have the right "wood" for the work to which they will have to submit is observed. Before, there was only the intuition of the coach, now, this intuition "smell" is still necessary, but confirmation will come through the incorporation of science and technology.

Over time, sport has experienced advances of recognized value in its results, which has caused scientific knowledge to become increasingly important in determining subjects with great potential for sports practice.

Undoubtedly, the selection of sports talents as a process pursues the search for those individuals who will be able to develop their skills and abilities in a specific sport during the phases of the sports training process.

As has been stated, the process implicit in the selection of possible sports talents is very complex and a large group of considerations must always be kept in mind, which have become methodological regularities in order to carry out a correct selection, taking into account the type of sports and their characteristics, since not all claim the same physical and psychological demands.

One of the ways to ensure the success of selecting the most gifted subjects for a certain sport is based on a rigorous and previous evaluation of the aptitudes and capacities with which children and adolescents are incorporated into sports practice.

Therefore, the talent selection process for an organized training program is one of the most pressing concerns in contemporary sport.

In sport, as in the arts, it is important to discover the most capable individuals, select them at an early age, continually observe them, and help them reach the highest level of mastery of their modality, applying pathways and methods that ensure the future of the athlete.

The selection of sports talent is nothing more than the process through which people endowed with talent and favorable attitudes for the sport in question are individualized. This can only be successfully resolved based on a set of correctly chosen research methods that involves the study of the different aspects of the athlete's personality, through pedagogical, medical-physiological, and psychological methods. Volkov and Filin, (1991).

Therefore, according to López, (1995), the selection of sports talent is a complex operation that rests on the basis of a short-term prediction of the possibilities of a given subject within a group of athletes, taking into account the level of learning, training and maturity necessary to carry out a specific sporting activity.

That is why, the selection of sports talents should be seen as the process through which people endowed with talent and favorable aptitudes for sports of any modality are individualized and selected, with the help of scientifically valid methods and tests (Brotons , 2005).

The talent selection process for initiation into the demands of contemporary sports training cannot be seen isolated from the process that initiates the development of skills and motor skills, which make up the basis of any sporting event. This undoubtedly refers to Physical Education and the scientific and pedagogical structuring of its plans and programs in different sports institutions, whether basic, initiation or high performance sports (Pila 2003).

The main objective of a sports talent selection system is the detection, selection and monitoring of those individuals with great aptitudes for the practice of a specific sport, based on the influence of a well-structured preparation process and their own actions. in a conscious way, to guarantee in the future, to reach the highest level of sports mastery. It is also part of its objectives to provide individuals who could become potential players in the sporting order at different levels.

In this direction, García (2006) refers that the selection process is not easy for those in charge of this process, since not all practicing individuals are part of the aspirants to be a sports talent, for this reason, the area in charge For the detection and selection of these future athletes, it must have a multidisciplinary team sufficiently prepared to carry out the detection and selection, in order to certify the observation and development of this process.

It should be remembered that the selection of talents is not a simple process, which in order to have the expected success, must take into account different aspects, including motor learning capacity, physical aptitude, mental and physical characteristics, among others. , for the chosen sport.

When evaluating the criteria of the different authors on the conceptualization of the selection of sports talents, we consider to point out that it is the process called to scientifically solve the problem related to this subject, becoming the same for coaches and specialists in one of the most important problems to to solve in the field of applied sports sciences, in response to the search for subjects endowed with exceptional characteristics to assume the increasingly complex demands of modern sport. That it is a process that is present in each one of the stages of the athlete's development, from its initiation in the chosen modality until reaching the phase of maximum sports performance, taking as its essence the processing of the characteristics of numbers of subjects in the early stages of sports training, until defining the talented subjects who will be able to obtain relevant results in a certain sport in the later stages.

On the other hand, it is considered by most authors as a system of organizational-methodological measures, which include pedagogical, psychological, sociological and medical-biological methods, which scientifically reveal the aptitudes and capacities of children and adolescents. to specialize in a particular sport, move from one sporting stage to another, to form teams" and finally achieve the highest sporting mastery.

In turn, the selection of talents is considered a systematic process in constant movement that is present during sports preparation, which is projected on the basis of the interests of the sports organization that carries it out, without assuming rigid schemes, tempering its development. to the current situation.

It is currently considered the number one priority of any country in the world to guarantee the achievement of high sports results internationally, which, due to its importance, constitutes a determining moment in the athlete's training process, therefore, it is considered necessary the establishment of certain sociopolitical and economic conditions essential for its successful development.

DEVELOPMENT

The need to identify, detect, capture and select potential talents at an early age has become a very important issue for all sports specialists from all latitudes. However, it is contradictory and difficult to understand that there are differences in its foundation in the consulted literature, which give rise to confusion and disagreements.

The identification and selection of sports talents constitutes the fundamental basis of high performance sport. In this sense, it is necessary to define the methods and procedures to more effectively execute the detection and selection of potential sports talents.

To ensure an adequate selection of sports talents, it is necessary to take into account, according to Drabik (1996), the phases that comprise it and that guarantee its effectiveness and success, which are: initial selection (by a group of experts or specialists in the corresponding sports areas); assessment or determination of possible talents and predisposition for a discipline or group of modalities and the systematic evaluation of the development achieved in the sport modality in which it is inserted.

The criteria of other authors such as: Salmela and Regnier (1983), Bompa (1985), Hebbelinck (1990), indicate the identification, development and training and confirmation of talent, as phases of this process, but without substantial differences to the proposals by Drabik (1996).

Despite the discrepancies with respect to defining the total phases for the organization and development of the selection process, there is a general criterion that focuses on the definition of logically ordered moments, each one with its respective characteristics based on materializing a process. aimed at identifying and finally selecting sports talent.

Identification is accepted as the first step in the organizational process (some authors also consider it as detection), characterized by the application of tests that record and measure various parameters that allow predicting the ability to perform and act, considering the level of physical preparation. and maturity of the child at that time, going through other intermediate phases, detection and recruitment, which the criteria of various specialists consider a single phase, and ending with the selection of sports talent. On the other hand, the fact of conceiving the process taking identification as a starting point is recognized, especially at an early age, since this would guarantee long-term training without violating the instruction and education stages through which the possible talent would adequately transit. sportsmanship until reaching the mastery of sportsmanship.

Considering the detection and selection concepts with double significance, the first of them (detection), taking it as the general process in which the phases of identification, recruitment and selection of talents are present, and where the subject exposes his potentialities in the sport sphere; and on the other hand, that of considering the selection as a system of organizational-methodological measures that include pedagogical, psychological, sociological and medical-biological research methods based on which the capacities of children, adolescents and young people are detected. to specialize in a certain sport modality or in a group of modalities, according to Volkov and Filin (1989).

The previously characterized organizational phases are organized in correspondence with the stages of formation or transit of talent until reaching sports excellence.

When summarizing, we must express the fact that there are different conceptualizations and positions of various authors when focusing on identification, detection, recruitment and selection, as determining organizational phases within the general process for the selection of possible sports talent. Also recognize that the need to achieve and maintain competitive results on a large international scale requires selecting those subjects who have the greatest capacity for the successful practice of a certain sport, a reason that forces any country to develop a deeper selection process and rationale of future athletes. The identification-detection and selection of sports talents constitutes the fundamental basis of high performance sport. It is, according to several authors, what ensures the achievement of superior competitive results, for which it is necessary to define in advance the methods and procedures to execute, in the most efficient way, these processes.

The term talent in its general conceptualization assumes the criteria of being a gift or natural disposition, a combination of capacities, it is all supranormal or outstanding behavior of the human being, it is an accentuated attitude in a direction above the average level of the normal man in a certain field, which is not yet fully developed, which allows man the possibility of successfully fulfilling any complex activity in society in an independent and creative way.

By talent, Álvarez (2021) considers the exceptional attitudes that an individual possesses, regardless of their sex, from the morpho-physiological and psychic and intellectual point of view for performance in any sport or modality that they practice, all under the direction of of a sports coach.

In this sense, Álvarez, (2021), refers that in talented people a series of variables converge, among which are, with a very important weight, those that have to do with genetics. For this researcher, sports talent is characterized by an efficient combination of motor and psychological abilities; as well as the aptitudes, which from the anatomo-physiological point of view, are present in the practitioners of a specific sport.

Based on the fact that people with talent are those who, due to their capacity for assimilation and performance, stand out in a certain sports specialty, López (1995) considers that it is nothing more than a natural or acquired aptitude that an individual possesses to do some activity, be it sports or otherwise. For this author, talent depends on individual capacity, the subject's motivations and the social environment; that is materialized in the interaction of all these conditions and that talent has to be not only discovered but also stimulated, trained, developed and adjusted to the needs and particularities of each sport.

On the other hand, Pila, (2000) when referring to the subject, expresses that talent is present in the human being when it shows a supernormal or outstanding behavior in its manifestations as a social being, be it in any area such as: art, culture, science or sport.

The definition of talent exposed by Soto and Andújar (2000) is of importance, when they state that it is the set of faculties or aptitudes for one thing, a natural or acquired aptitude to do something, which depends on the individual capacity of the subject, but also of a series of external and internal aspects, such as the social and affective conditions that surround him or his motivation towards training. In this sense, talent has to be not only discovered, but also stimulated and trained.

When addressing talent, it is important to mention the criteria of García Manso (1996), who refers, citing Rice (1970), to six categories when typifying it: academic talent, creative talent, psychosocial talent (leadership), talent in performing arts, kinesthetic talent (athletic), perceptual-motor talent (sports, manipulative, artistic).

There are other contexts that intervene decisively in talent, these are: innate talent and its influence. The innate or natural talent, unlike the learned talent, is the one that the individual can stop exercising for a long time, and use it again with the same skill as when he stopped using it; while learned talent, on the contrary, requires continuous work in order not to lose skill.

For its part, sporting talent is characterized by certain combinations of motor and psychological capacities, as well as anatomo-physiological aptitudes that together create the potential for achieving high sporting results in a specific sport (Zatsiorski, V.M. 1989).

A sports talent, according to Jiménez, (2012), is an individual with physical aptitudes above the normal average for his age and that are not yet fully developed and perfected, often with a higher somatotype for his age, with certain individual aptitudes for Quickly learn complex motor actions that require great coordination.

For Ayala and Benavides, (2014) talent can be classified into several types, including those related to sports, among them the following stand out:

- General motor talent: which implies a great motor learning capacity that leads to an easier, safer and faster motor control, and a greater motor repertoire applicable in a more differentiated way.
- Sports talent: above-average willingness to undergo a sports training program to achieve sporting success.
- The specific talent for a sport: the one that entails the physical and mental requirements to be able to achieve extraordinary performances.

What has been previously stated can be summarized in that sports talent acquires an integral character, depending on hereditary and motor conditions, as well as outstanding morphological, functional and psychological characteristics, which for their development must be interrelated with the environment, that is, the coach, peers, family, socioeconomic conditions, climate, place of residence, etc., so that as a whole they contribute to their sports training and with it, later, to the achievement of high sports results. That it is not discovered immediately, just because the subject has skills and abilities above the population average. Its manifestation is due to an adequate training process, in which these characteristics are developed under the pedagogical action, a process that implies initial learning and subsequent progressive training, to enter the chosen sport.

On the other hand, it is necessary to bear in mind the divergences existing in the scientific community to determine which characteristics of the subject (innate or natural and acquired) would have greater weight in determining talent, although many consider that the innate or natural condition of the subject is what prevails to excel above the population average, although these characteristics for its development must be interrelated with environmental, psychological, motivational, affective, nutritional, family, training, material resource situations, among others.

The multifactorial study is considered important and determinant when selecting talent, but nevertheless it would be necessary to determine, among so many criteria expressed on this subject in the specialized literature at present, which would be the system to be used to achieve this task.

It is essential to highlight that the problem of the selection of sports talent should not be focused only taking into account heritability factors, since sports results are a conquest of the integral personality and not of specific functions of the organism.

Adds Bompa (1987), that there are important variables and indicators that intervene in the performance of these, which, if not taken into account, hinder an adequate selection and development of these.

Therefore, for a sport, modality and sports category, several aspects should be taken into account in the order, biological, psychological, sociological and physical that define the development and growth of the child and that in turn have different levels of influence on the sports performance of the talent, according to the sport modality chosen.

For the scientific selection of sports talents, it is essential to take into account, among other criteria, those proposed by García (1996), who recommends keeping in mind: heredity, biological age, optimum age for selection, state of health, anthropometric parameters, muscle composition, potential for the development of physical and coordinative qualities, predisposition to performance,

psychological characteristics, cognitive abilities, socioeconomic characteristics, and historical background.

When considering heredity, we must point out that its basis is constituted by the genetic information that is transmitted from parents to children, which determines growth to a considerable degree. The child who is tall before puberty is generally tall as an adult. Also the child whose parents are tall is also taller than average as an adult. En nuestros días, ya es común escuchar los términos de edad cronológica y edad biológica.

Chronological age is the age in years and months that an individual has since birth, that is, it is the temporal duration of the interrelationship between the organism and the environment, expressed in years, months, and days, thus ignoring the time of life corresponding to the prenatal stage, to which a relevant importance is conferred. Its use today is very common when it is used in the organization of student evaluation processes, in which the results obtained in the applied tests are processed, graded, and analyzed, as well as a point of reference when forming training groups and to establish the competitive categories, as well as to carry out the selection of subjects suitable for the practice of certain sporting events.

The biological age must be understood as the level of maturation reached by the organism as a unit, as a single whole and by extension of the degree of maturity of each one of the systems that form the concepts "maturity", "biological or physiological age". In relation to chronological age (calendar age, certified, from the almanac) its knowledge is important to understand the anatomical, physiological and biochemical events that take place during human development (Ferreiro, 1984).

The level of biological development achieved can be expressed through the analysis of various morphological and functional indicators, among which are the values of height and other anthropometric magnitudes (body dimensions and proportions); the dental system, the terms in which the primary teeth are replaced by permanent teeth and the characteristics of dental and maxillofacial development (dental age).

When checking the degree of development of the different indicators of sexual maturation of each sex; the age of the first menstruation or menarche, the development of the mammary glands and the distribution of pubic and axillary hair are considered in females; while in males the development of the external genitalia and the distribution of pubic, axillary and facial hair are taken into account. Another indicator of individual development is the degree of skeletal maturation or bone age, a measure of how much the bones have matured, not only the size they have reached, but also their shape and composition; that is, the transformations that lead from the initial membranous and chondral patterns

to the ossified skeleton of the adult individual. It should be noted that neurological age is one of the indicators to verify the degree of individual biological development, which is closely associated with motor age due to its influence on the level of maturation of the nervous system and its sensorimotor connections with the organs of locomotion, particularly neuromuscular relationships.

General anthropometry is the science that studies the measurements of the human body, in order to establish differences between individuals, groups, races, etc. The dimensions of the human body vary according to sex, age, race, socioeconomic level, etc.; Therefore, this science dedicated to investigating, collecting and analyzing this data is a guideline in the design of architectural objects and spaces, as these are containers or extensions of the body, and therefore must be determined by their dimensions. (Urrutia, 2016). It is also a science that, with the use of knowledge from others, such as biomechanics; It allows the analysis of the movements that people make.

The anthropometric dimensions of the athlete, which reflect the shape, proportionality and body composition, are variables that play a role, sometimes a major one, in determining success in a given sport. Anthropometric measurements can be considered in their absolute value and therefore not in terms of proportionality, including height, which is considered essential for the success of many sports. Tall stature, as well as relative short stature, provide advantages in many sports.

On the other hand, the somatotype, according to Carter (1975), is the description of the morphological configuration of an individual at the moment in which the evaluation is carried out. It is expressed with a rating made up of three numbers separated by hyphens, each of them whole or with fractions, representing the magnitude of the three primary components of the body: endomorphy, mesomorphy and ectomorphy.

We have a concrete example of it, in the following case, an 11-year-old athlete with a height of 1.70 cm, and with long limbs, it would not be convenient to train him in sports such as weights, diving, artistic gymnastics, but it would be a possible talent for some sports with balls, such as basketball, volleyball, handball, etc., since it would be useful for practicing other sports such as fencing or athletics, in this case high jumping, etc., but we have only compared one parameter, his height, which is still important, but when selecting him for a sport, many more physical, psychological, medical and even sociological aspects would have to be taken into account. All of which reaffirms the complexity of this process.

Sometimes it is easy to detect a talent and think that this athlete will be brought to the highest performance in their sport, without recognizing that this is a long, difficult process, full of obstacles of

all kinds, where the subject must go through a very difficult process. complex, of detection, selection and orientation.

For this reason, it is not enough just to detect and select these talents, it is necessary to stimulate and train them; for which a previously planned process is required, where different stages are present to materialize their long-term training until they reach sports mastery.

A good selection system allows to choose the best talents, which results not only in better results, but also in an optimal use of economic, technical and human material resources. On the other hand, it prevents individuals from being selected who do not meet the requirements for a given sport and their unsatisfactory results give them a feeling of failure and waste of time. That is why it becomes a necessity for the entire selection process to be carried out in accordance with scientific principles and knowledge.

The study and analysis of the specialized literature, socialized in journals of the Web of Science and Scopus of works contributed by Bompa (1987), Pila (2000), Soto and Andújar (2000), Brotons (2005), Jiménez (2012), Ayala and Benavides (2014), Frómeta et al (2015), Urrutia (2016), Garzón (2017), Bakert et al., (2018), González and Sánchez (2018), Mojenas (2019), Muñoz and Sánchez (2019) and Álvarez (2021), reveals the value of the subject for the different specialties and a series of indicators that must be used for the selection of sports talents associated with chronological age, skeletal age, morphology (weight, height, 5 folds skin, 4 diameters), physical condition (speed, flexibility, muscular power, resistance, coordination, agility), body dimensions, body fat, functional capacities, training pattern and functional capacities. The aforementioned authors also point out in their works that they concentrate studies on the basis of several dimensions: social context, sports context, individual psychological context, collective psychological context, anthropometric data, technique, tactics and physical condition.

A summary of what has been stated leads us to assume as a generality that the criteria addressed focus on aspects of a pedagogical nature (the development of motor skills, the technical-tactical level, the growth rate of performance, motor skills, the possibilities of coordination), of a biological nature (in the state of health of the child, his biological age, the morphofunctional characteristics, the state of the functional systems), of a psychological nature (they attest to the possibilities of improving the different mental qualities according to the demands of the sports modality, among them the development of volitional and cognitive qualities, the particularities of character and temperament stand out), and of a sociological nature (they include the characterization of the motives, the

interests and the demands of the students, to know what drives the child to practice sports and what her aspirations are).

It should be noted that the selection criteria, according to Mateo (1990), are conditioned by each sports specialty, therefore, it is not possible to speak of a methodology applicable to all sports equally, which forces each modality to establish its own methodology for identify and select potential sports talents.

CONCLUSIONS

The systematized theoretical referents allow to establish coincidences in aspects about the selection of talents as a process that is oriented to the discovery and orientation of the individual with great potential for sports practice, based on its structuring in different phases, which become a necessity. For the adequate organization of this process, without neglecting to consider that in order to achieve greater effectiveness in its implementation, it is necessary to take into account such important indicators as: anthropometrics, physical characteristics, techno-motor conditions, capacity cognitive, the predisposition for performance, the psychological aspect, the socio-affective factors, which will allow the prediction of results in the short, medium and long term in the performance of athletes.

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