



Can we recreate the "Bengan Boys" era?

A case study on Athletic Talent Development Environment and psychological needs in young handball players

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Sammanfattning

Syftet med föreliggande studie var att beskriva en handbolls-ATDE (Talangutvecklingsmiljö) i södra Sverige samt att granska och förklara framgångsfaktorer i ATDE. Utöver detta undersöker författarna hur motivationsklimatet och autonomistödet uppfattas av medlemmarna i denna ATDE. Studien baseras på tre teorier: det holistiska ekologiska synsättet, självbestämmande teorin samt målorienteringsteorin. Samtliga deltagare representerade samma klubb i södra Sverige och de bestod av handbollsspelare i åldrarna 15-19 samt klubbens manager, tränare och föräldrar. Undersökningen genomfördes genom semi-strukturerade intervjuer, observationer och analys av dokument kring klubbens visioner och tränings/matchpolicy. Totalt genomfördes sju intervjuer med fyra spelare, två tränare och managern. Fem observationstillfällen om minst 90 minuter gav författarna en vidare bild av talangutvecklingsmiljön. En innehållsanalys och en triangulering tillsammans med handledaren genomfördes för att frambringa resultatet.

Resultatet beskriver en klubb under omorganisering, samt dess vilja att utvecklas och bli än bättre. Studien fann ATDEn ha ett uppgiftsorienterat och autonomistödande klimat som på många sätt bidrar till de framgångsrika faktorerna i ATDEn. Studien bekräftar tidigare forskning om framgångsfaktorer för ATDE samt kopplingar mellan SDT och AGT. Resultatet ger även en djupare förståelse kring hur framgångsfaktorer, relationer, motivationsklimatet och autonomistödet inom denna ATDE påverkar motivationen hos de unga handbollsspelarna avseende utveckling och möjlighet att nå sin fulla potential. Implikationer kopplade till använda teorier lämnas.

Nyckelord: Autonomistöd, Holistisk ekologiskt perspektiv, motivationsklimat, talangutvecklingsmiljö.

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Abstract

The study's purpose was to describe a handball ATDE (Athletic Talent Development Environment) in the south of Sweden and to examine and derive the success factors of the ATDE, and within this context explore the motivational climate and autonomy support as perceived by members of the ATDE. The study is based on three theories: the Holistic ecological approach, Self Determination theory and Achievement Goal theory. The study's participants all represented a club in the south of Sweden and consisted of players in the age of 15-19, the club manager, coaches and parents. The study was conducted through semi-structured interviews, observations and analysis of documents surrounding the club's vision and training/match policies. A total of seven interviews with four players, two coaches and the manager were conducted. Five observations at a minimum of 90 minutes gave the authors a broader view of the ATDE. An analysis of content and a triangulation with the supervisor were conducted in order to interpret the empirical data.

The study revealed that the club is under re-organization, and its enthusiasm to evolve and become even better. The study found the ATDE to have a mastery oriented and autonomy supportive climate which in many ways contributed to the successful features of the ATDE. The study confirms earlier research regarding ATDE success factors as well as connections between SDT and AGT. The results also provide a deeper understanding of how successful factors, relationships, motivational climate and the autonomy support in an ATDE, affects young handball player's motivation to evolve and reach their full potential. Implications with a basis in the theories used are presented.

Keywords: Athletic Talent Development Environment, autonomy support, Holistic ecological approach, motivational climate.

Can we recreate the "Bengan Boys" era? A case study on an Athletic Talent Development Environment and psychological needs in young handball players

The "Bengan Boys" era of Swedish handball is a milestone in Swedish sports history. The national team, led by Bengt "Bengan" Johansson, became one of the most popular and successful teams in Swedish sport history. During the years 1990 through 2002 the team captured 13 medals among these two world championships and established Sweden as a dominant force in world handball (Albinsson, 2014). Can Sweden again become a dominant force in handball by developing a number of world class players on a regular basis? Elite sport in Sweden has during the 1900s brought a greater interest to both the public and the media (Uebel, 2006). This increased interest has led to a bigger focus on the individual athlete, even in team sports, and therefore resulted in higher demands on performance. This change has led to the extended need for support systems around the athlete (Uebel, 2006). As development takes place more effort is placed on schools, university etc. to accommodate for both sports and academic development of young athletes (Henriksen, Larsen & Christensen, 2014). That certain career transition from a promising athlete into an elite athlete has shown to be a hardship for many athletes and what comes out of the transition is difficult to predict (Stambulova, Alfermann, Statler, Côté, 2009). So what seems to make younger athletes motivated and affect their development? Keegan, Harwood, Spray and Lavalley (2008) argue that the environment around athlete such as, coaches, parents and teachers plays a significant role in athlete's perception of motivation. According to Deci and Ryan (2000) the highest degree of motivation is attained when individuals are driven by instinct and self-determined motivation, and this is only possible when the environment satisfies all of the basic psychological needs. So far only a few of the theories take in account the entire surrounding of an athlete (Henriksen, 2010; Henriksen, Larsen & Christensen, 2014) but the holistic ecological approach as developed by Henriksen (2010) has shifted focus into that area. Therefore it's of interest to study how the environment affects athlete's perception of autonomy. Because a greater understanding of what influences athlete's instinct and self-determined motivation will hopefully increase the likelihood that athletes chooses to stay active, and therefore give themselves the opportunity reach their full potential.

Definitions

Athletic Talent Development Environment. "An ATDE is a dynamic system comprising a) an athlete's immediate surroundings at the micro-level where athletic and personal development take place, b) the interrelations between these surroundings, c) at the macro-level, the larger context in which these surroundings are embedded, and d) the organizational culture of the sports club or team, which is an integrative factor of the ADTE's effectiveness in helping young talented athletes to develop into senior elite athletes." (Henriksen, 2010, p. 160).

Organizational Culture. A pattern of shared basic assumptions that a group has learned as it solved its problems of external adaptation and internal integration that has worked well enough to be considered valid and therefore, to be taught to new members as the correct way to perceive, think, and feel in relation to those problems (Schein, 1985). This culture and its patterns may also be influenced by artefacts and espoused values (Schein, 1984).

Motivational climate. A description of the situational goal structure affecting an entire group of people. This also concerns the way the group thinks about this goal structure, interpret achievement and how they perceive the social context (Ames & Archer, 1988).

Self-determined motivation. Motivation is defined as the amount of energy, the direction we focus our actions and intentions towards, the adherence we have and finally what

path we follow to reach the final goal (Ryan & Deci, 2000). Motivation can be divided into two directions, intrinsic and extrinsic motivation (Deci & Ryan, 2000). Intrinsic motivation is closely associated with self-determination, and is defined as activities that people do naturally, voluntarily and spontaneously, when they feel free to perform their own interests. External motivation is the opposite of intrinsic and self-determined motivation, and is when people participate in an activity because they feel forced to so or to obtain external rewards.

Basic psychological needs. Humans basic psychological needs include; autonomy, competence and relatedness (Deci & Ryan, 2000). Autonomy is the need to be self-determined in one's choices and actions. Competence is the need to get the opportunity to both demonstrate and challenge one's ability. Relatedness is the need to both give and receive support from others. According to Deci and Ryan (2000) an environment that is autonomy supportive is an environment that satisfies all of these psychological needs, which promotes intrinsic motivation and psychological well-being.

Theoretical frameworks

Holistic ecological perspective on talent career development (Henriksen, 2010).

What distinguishes the holistic ecological approach from other talent development models is that it focuses on the environment surrounding the athlete instead of looking at, for example, how early the athlete specializes, genes or how much he trains. The holistic and ecological approach consists of: definition of ATDE (see definition above), criteria for ATDE success, descriptive model of ATDE and model of Environment Success Factors (ESF) to describe how well a talent development environment works. The main purpose of the perspective is to help talented athletes to transition from the junior level to become a senior athlete at the highest level by analyzing the relationships and interactions of the athlete within its surroundings.

ATDE model.

The ATDE model is described by figure 1; this figure shows possible components of an ATDE. However each particular ATDE will have a different structure and look depending on how the components affect the athlete and each other.

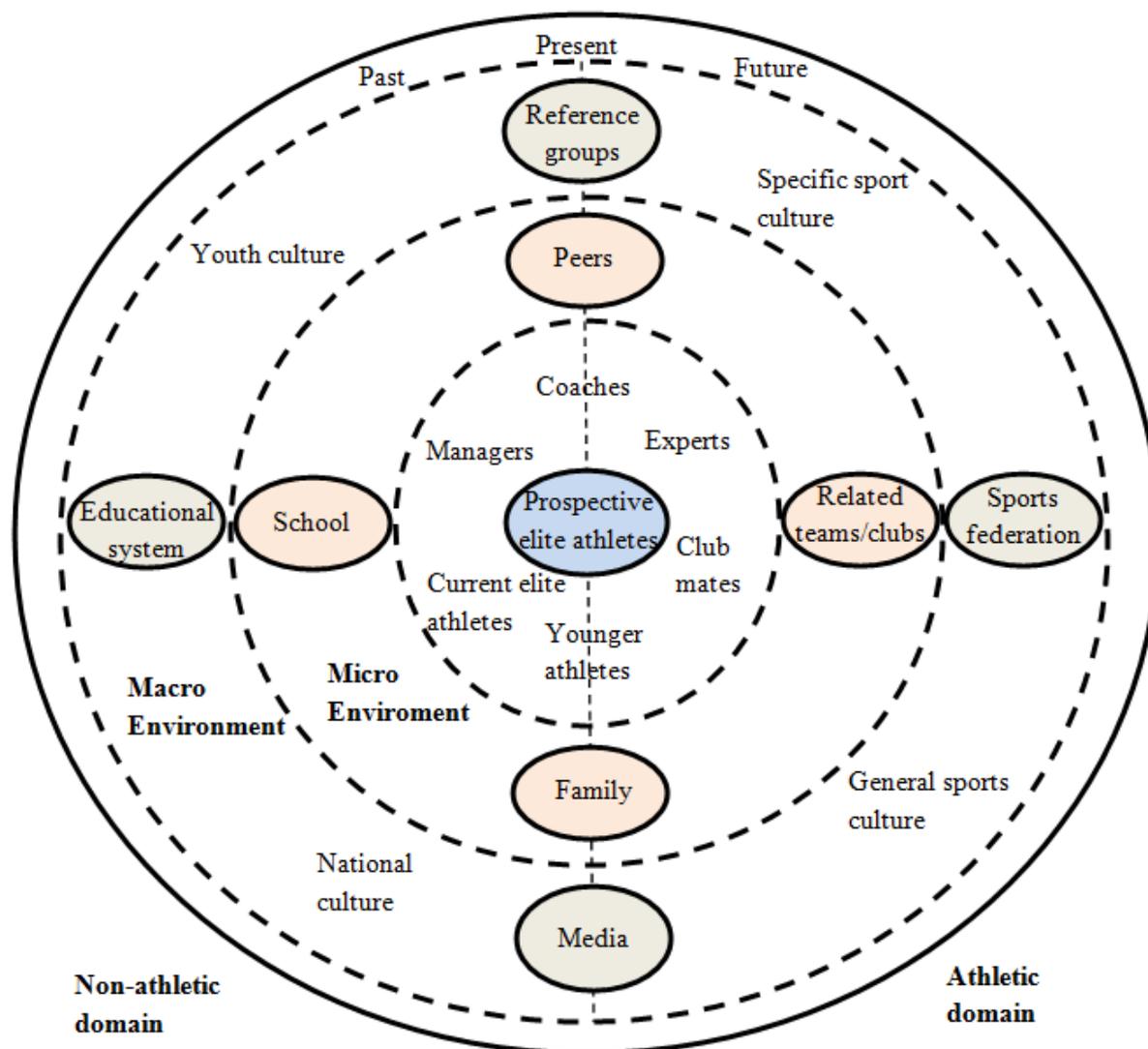


Figure 1. Working model Athletic Talent Development Environment (adapted from Henriksen, 2010, p. 39)

The main purpose of the ATDE working model is to help describe the relationships athletes encounter within a single talent development climate. In this model the athlete is placed at the center as that is the focus and the most integral part of the environment. When all of these relationships are identified, they create an overall picture that can show the complexity and flexibility of a talent development environment. Additional complexity and flexibility demonstrated by the various components can be found in the various domains or environments. Examples of this are that the family or circle of friends may be involved in the sports team or club that the athlete is active within and thus included in both the sporting and non-sporting domain and be closer to the athlete than the working model really shows. This has been made clear by drawing dashed lines in the model where there are no clear dividing points.

The model itself is ecological in the sense that it refers to the development of an athlete who is influenced by the context in which the athlete is active. Regarding the holistic nature of the model, it can be considered to be so in three respects: firstly: it includes the sporting and non-sporting relationships of the athlete, secondly: it includes both the micro-environment (directly impacting) as well as the macro-environment (indirectly influencing)

and lastly: it includes the development of the talent development environment itself by taking into account environmental history, past and present.

Environment Success Factors model (Henriksen, 2010).

The environment success factors model (ESF) is an explanatory working model which explains how the daily routines and processes affect the success rate of the ATDE with the organizational culture in the center; it is explained by figure 2.

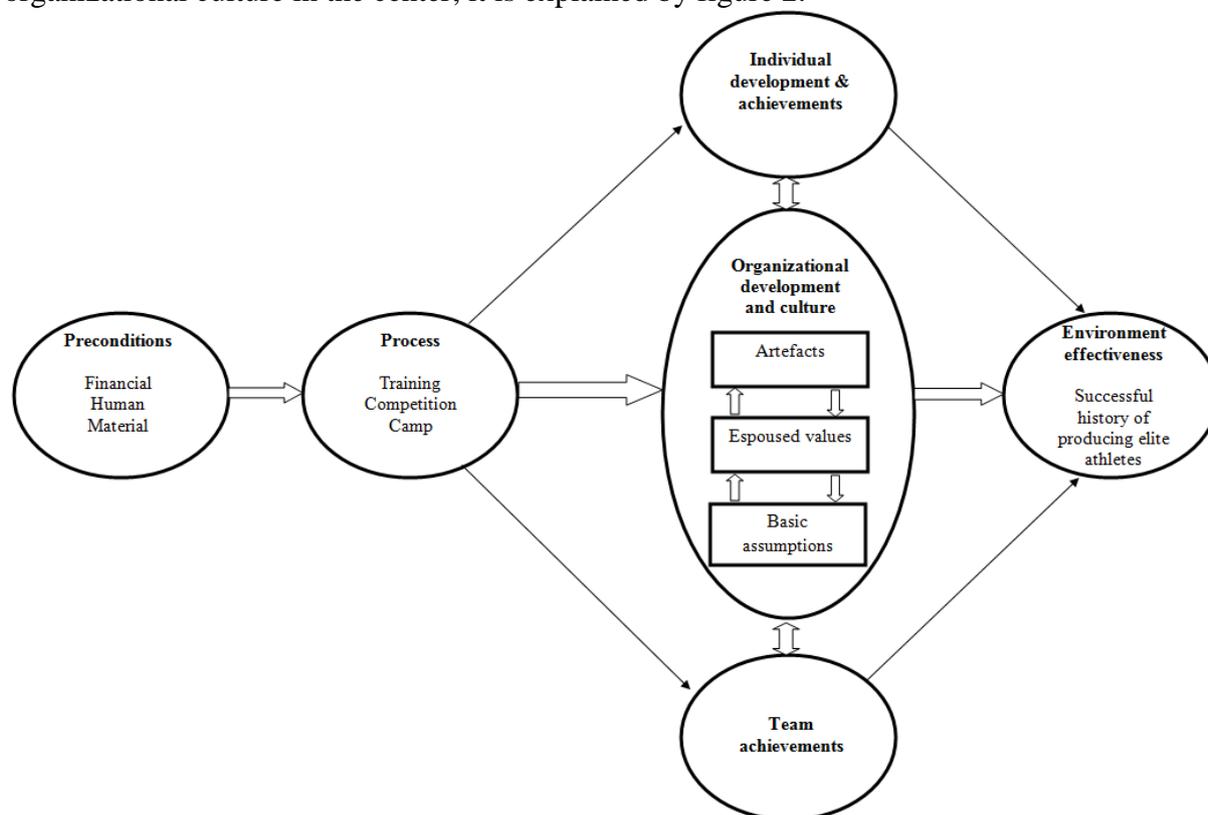


Figure 2. Explanatory working model Environment Success Factors (adapted from Henriksen 2010, p.42)

Firstly the preconditions and processes (daily routines and happenings) influence the entire spectrum of the ESF. Individual development and achievements refers to the athletes development in of psycho-social competencies and athletic skill which together also leads to sporting success. Team achievements are obviously mostly notable in team sports and refer to the athletic success of the team. The team achievements and individual development and achievements are of course a product of the process but are also influenced by organizational development and culture.

Organizational development and culture is the central part of the ESF model and it contains three levels each affecting each other: artefacts, espoused values and basic assumptions directly linked to the work by Schein (1984). Artefacts are hard to decipher but easy to detect, it contains stories and myths within the ATDE, also customs, traditions and physical cultural manifestations (e.g. clothing, buildings organization charts etc.). The espoused values contain the social principles, norms, goals and standards that the ATDEs organization shows towards others. The espoused values exist in the minds of the members and are visible and made aware to them. Basic assumptions consist of beliefs and assumptions that serve as underlying reasons for actions. The basic assumptions are no longer questioned but taken for granted and exist at a sub-conscious level. The organizational culture is dependent on the group's development of these cultural expressions to provide stability within

the group, educate new members about the culture and make adaptations when the environment deems it necessary.

In the end the ESF model predicts the success of the ATDE as a result of the interplay between preconditions, process, individual and team development and achievements with the organizational culture in the middle to get these different elements to integrate.

Basic tenets of Achievement goal theory (AGT). Achievement goal theory focuses on what orientation the persons goals follow in comparison to their achievement and divides these into task- or ego oriented goals (Ntoumanis, 2001). Ames (1992) has in her work instead used the terms mastery- and performance oriented goals instead of task- and ego oriented as a different way to describe the goal orientation. The meaning doesn't differ but makes for a different take on what the focal points of the goal orientation really is. A simple description of the differences and the basic features of the mastery and performance climates are shown in table 1.

Table 1

Description of mastery and performance climates (adapted from Ntoumanis & Biddle, 1999)

	Mastery	Performance
Tasks	Challenging and diverse	Absence of variety and challenge
Authority	Students are given choices and leadership roles	Students do not take part in the decision making process
Recognition	Private and based on individual progress	Public and based on social comparison
Grouping	Promotion of cooperative learning	Groups are formed on the basis of ability
Evaluation	Based on mastery of tasks and on individual improvement	Based on winning or outperforming others
Time	Time requirements are adjusted to personal capabilities	Time allocated for learning is uniform to all students

The goal orientation you follow is based upon your interpretation of competence or ability; naturally the task oriented person doesn't make any difference between effort and ability and see effort as a way of making improvements. The ego oriented person see ability as capacity and your effort is not something affecting your ability (Kavussanu & Roberts, 1996).

Basic tenets of Self-determination theory (SDT). SDT is a multidimensional theory with roots in both cognitive and humanistic psychology (Ryan & Deci 2002). Its emphasis is on the social context and how it affects motivation, where behaviors can be either self-determined or controlled in nature, capturing both situational and personality aspects that are related to motivation (Deci & Ryan, 2000).

Deci and Ryan (2000) argue that an individual's behavior is the result of an individual's perceived motivation, where a motivated behavior is governed by what is to be achieved and

why. SDT focuses on the quality of motivation in different situations, and how the environment affects the choice of activity. If an environment is perceived as controlling it reduces the self-determined motivation, and therefore weakens the commitment to the activity.

SDT distinguishes between different levels of motivation at a continuum of amotivation, extrinsic motivation and intrinsic motivation (Deci & Ryan, 2000). Amotivation contains no self-determination and includes individuals that feel incompetent and helpless, and see no point in participating in a particular activity. Extrinsic motivation is divided over four levels of external regulation (external regulation, introjected regulation, identified regulation and integrated regulation). Intrinsic motivation is the last part of the continuum and is the highest degree of self-determination. Here, individuals are participating in an activity only because it feels natural, voluntarily and that the activity is associated with enjoyment and passion.

According to SDT self-determined motivation and psychological well-being can be attained only when we satisfy our basic psychological needs, being autonomy, competence and relatedness (Deci & Ryan, 2000). Depending on the social context, and individual differences these psychological needs are satisfied in different ways, but it requires all three to be satisfied for the individual to experience a high level of self-determined motivation (Deci & Ryan, 2000).

Empirical research

Successful and less successful ATDEs. Even though the ATDEs themselves differ from each other, cross case analysis of several successful ATDEs showed some interesting things. In particular it showed that regardless of sport, individual or team sport and country similarities could be found between all the successful environments. A lot of the claims made by Henriksen (2010) are based on this cross case analysis, most notably the importance of the organizational culture but also the benefits of late specialization. Other things noted for these successful environments were the influence of the socio-cultural context they were situated in and also the aspect of time, where the importance of constantly evolving the environment over time whilst at the same time holding on to the specific ideals, norms, values and routines were essential. One thing to keep in mind regarding the features of successful ATDEs are the fact that all the environments examined in the cross case analysis are situated in Scandinavia which means that the list might have to be revised if further studies are done in other areas of the world (Henriksen, 2010; Henriksen, Stambulova, Roessler, 2010a; Henriksen, Stambulova, Roessler, 2010b; Henriksen, Stambulova, Roessler, 2011).

Presented below in table 2 are a summary of the features for successful ATDEs.

Table 2

Features of successful ATDEs (adapted from Henriksen, 2010)

Features of successful ATDEs	Descriptors
Training groups with supportive relationships	Opportunities for inclusion; good communication
Proximal role models	Opportunities to train with the elite athletes; elite athletes who are willing to pass on their knowledge
Support of sporting goals by the wider environment	Opportunities to focus on the sport; school, family, friends, and others acknowledge and accept the athletes' dedication to sport
Support for the development of psychosocial skills	Opportunities to develop non-athletic skills and competences (i.e. autonomy and responsibility); considering athletes as whole human beings
Training that allows for diversification	Opportunities to sample from different sports; integration of different sports; appreciation of variety
Focus on long-term development	Focus on long-term development of the athletes; age appropriate training
Strong and coherent organizational culture	Coherent organizational culture; culture provides stability and supports a learning environment
Integration of efforts	Coordination and communication between sport, school, family and other components

In regards to this Henriksen et al. (2014) studied a less successful ATDE and found that the less successful ATDE did not show these features, but instead showed the opposite, or in some cases lacked some details in these features. The main reasons for the environment being less successful seemed to be lack of communication and connection between the components in the ATDE, and an incoherent organizational culture. The non-successful environment also had a lack of proximal role models, incoherencies between the sporting life and school and no diversification in sports. The organizational culture is the most critical of the components in the ESF, which is validated further by the study of a non-successful environment by Henriksen et al. (2014). This can be said because the organizational culture in that case was especially incongruent whilst the other components of the ESF seemed to hold a reasonably good standard.

Motivational climate research in youth sport. Understanding what leads young people to choose, expend effort in and continue to be active in sport has received considerable attention from sport scientist, this because such knowledge can be related to providing developmentally meaningful sport experiences (Smith, Balaguer & Duda, 2006).

Achievement goal theory has since the late 1980 been a well-used approach to study this processes (Smith, Balaguer & Duda, 2006). The research indicates that athletes that perceive their coach to praise individual improvement, mastery strivings, and personal improvement will experience more satisfaction, than will athletes how perceives their coach

to encourage social comparison and normative ability (Garcia-Calvo, Miguel Leo, Gonzalez-Ponce, Sanchez-Miguel, Mouratidis & Ntoumanis, 2014).

Research on motivational climate in youth sport indicates that a mastery involving motivation climate covariance with high levels of perceived self-esteem, and that a performance involving motivational climate covariance with low level of perceived self-worth. Research also report that an performance involving climate is related to emotional and physical exhaustion, and that mastery involving climate has the opposite effect and reduces emotional and physical exhaustion among youth athletes (Reinboth & Duda, 2004). Research by Reinboth and Duda (2006) argues that a mastery involving climate that is reinforcing effort, personal progress, and views that everyone has an important role on the team, will maximize the opportunities to satisfy the basic needs. And performance involving climate that on the other hand is focusing on intra-team rivalry, outdoing others, and recognizing only the most talented players will over time have negative effects on relatedness. Ntoumanis (2001) argues that a high mastery orientation can satisfy all the basic needs, and therefore enhance self-determined motivation.

Empirical evidence provided by the results of Theeboom, Knop and Weiss (1995) study indicate that a mastery involving climate unlike an performance involving climate can result in more positive experiences for young athletes as they learn new skills. Ntoumanis and Biddle (1999) argue that when mastery -oriented instructions are given or mastery -involving climate are perceived, individuals are more likely to exhibit adaptive cognitive, affective and behavioral patterns. In contrast when performance involving instructions are given or a performance involving climate is perceived, individuals are not likely to exhibit this patterns. Instead according to Miller, Roberts & Ommundsen (2004) individuals are likely to experience lower moral cognitions and behavior (Miller, Roberts & Ommundsen, 2004).

Both high performance orientation and low perceived ability are strong predictors to youth sport dropout (Cervelló, Escartí & Guzmán, 2007). Young athletes that is mastery orientated is instead likely to maintain a desire to improve and keep on trying hard regardless of how competent she or he feels in sport. Therefore a mastery involving motivational climate is a climate that should lay the foundation for maximal skill development, optimal performance and continued involvement in sport (Horn, Duda & Miller, 1993).

Autonomy support and basic needs satisfaction in young athletes. Previous research on autonomy support provides links between interpersonal behaviors and positive outcomes on basic needs satisfaction. However predictors of autonomy supportive behavior have received much less empirical attention. Recently, researchers in academic, physical education and sport settings have begun to examine the environment and psychological factors that determine these interpersonal behaviors (Rocchi, Pelletier & Couture, 2013).

According to Deci (2014) a need-supportive environment is defined as an environment that relate from the other's perspective, encourage self-initiation and experimentation, offer relevant choices, calibrate for optimal challenge, focus on indirect rather than direct competition, provide meaningful feedback, give a rationale for requested behavior and minimize use of controlling language.

Adie, Duda & Ntoumanis (2012) argue that an autonomy supportive environment alone can satisfy all three basic psychological needs of autonomy, competence and relatedness. That is if the environment empower the young athletes with choices and decision making (autonomy support), convey trust in their abilities though non-controlling feedback (competence support) and take and respect the young athletes perspective (relatedness support). They argue that this kind of environment will led to sustaining optimal functioning in youth sport. Jõesaar, Hein & Hagger (2011) research also highlights the importance of autonomy support and basic needs satisfaction. Their research indicated that motivation to

participate in activity will be enhanced when young athletes are given control and choice and are encouraged to be mastery -involved by significant others.

Young athletes will experience autonomy support from their coach when they feel that their perspective is valued and when there are given rationales for requested activities. To support the need for competence coaches could involve their young athletes in the evaluation process of their own performance (Reinboth & Duda, 2006). Competence can even be satisfied through positive feedback, that is if the feedback is delivered in a non-controlling way (Deci & Ryan, 2000). According to Reinboth and Duda (2006) the need for relatedness is satisfied if the young athlete perceived them self to be valued, listen to and supported by the coach and the teammates. Cohesion has also showed to have positive effects on relatedness, interestingly enough; it has also showed to have positive effects on autonomy and competence (Blanchard, Amio, Perreault & Vallerand, 2009).

Coaches, parents and peers play a significant role in how young athletes perceive satisfaction in the basic needs (Keegan, Harwood, Spray & Lavalley, 2008). Evidence of how this is provide successfully if through collaborative leadership styles, facilitating the formation of friendship and the establishing of group identity, also friendship and affiliations among peers is an important component for satisfaction in the basic needs (Keegan, Harwood, Spray & Lavalley, 2008). Gagne (2003) establish in his study on young gymnast perception on coaches and parents autonomy support, that the more autonomy supportive and involved parents and coaches were perceived, the more autonomously motivated the gymnasts were.

On the basis of previous research the general conclusion is that people benefit when others support their autonomy, which promotes psychological well-being (Su & Reeve, 2011) and basic needs satisfaction.

Summary and objectives

Interesting connections might be found between SDT, AGT and the holistic ecological approach that can further enhance the understanding of them and possibly develop the theories further. These connections would most certainly also widen the understanding and the concept of talent development and motivation in sports that is so important and in demand these days.

The obvious connections found when studying the theories are that they all view motivation with effects from a social context, where relationships and leadership seem to determine the likelihood of creating successful elite athletes. When looking at the factors for successful ATDEs, most factors can be linked with tenets of AGT and SDT except for the factors “proximal role models” and “strong and coherent organizational culture” which seem to be unique when describing motivation and talent development which is mainly contributed to the fact of its holistic standpoint. This is especially interesting because the organizational culture is considered as the most integral component of the ESF but is not considered like this in AGT or SDT. Another thing worth noticing, when comparing the two orientations in AGT, a performance -oriented environment is not likely to work well in promoting basic needs or contributing to success factors in the same way a mastery oriented climate would.

Other connections found in earlier research have been regarding SDT and AGT, where the only real difference is that SDT focuses on the effects of goal involvement for intrinsic motivation and see competence as a basic psychological need whereas goal achievement theory focuses on the climate type’s effects on performance and preferred task difficulty (Henriksen 2010; Ntoumanis & Biddle, 1999). With this taken in to consideration, more research should be done using the holistic ecological approach to continue the development and understanding of the theories and claims made. This line of thought is also presented by Henriksen (2010) and with that in mind this essay will use the ecological holistic approach as

the umbrella theory and to use ideas from SDT and AGT to support this. Those theories will also be used to deepen the understanding of the process and the culture in the ATDE.

In regards to this two objectives were made for the study:

- 1) To describe a handball ATDE in the south of Sweden.
- 2) To examine and derive the ATDE success factors and within this context explore the motivational climate and autonomy support as perceived by members of the ATDE.

Method

Research Design

The research design chosen for this study takes the form of a case study with a qualitative approach, which is based on a triangulation between several data collection methods: observation, interviews and document analysis. By using a triangulation the authors, despite a limited time, got the opportunity to profoundly study a talent development environment and motivational climate in a handball club in the south of Sweden.

Participants

The central members of the environment under the study were male young handball players in the age of 15-19. This environment where chosen because the players of this environment are recognized as “talented” but haven’t yet made it to the senior elite level. More specifically, the players of the study are in approaching they’re transition from talented junior to elite athletes. Beside the target group of prospective elite handball players, the environment had a number of other participants, such as coaches, managers and parents all of which were males. The choice of club to work with is based on the fact that they were eager to participate and it was also the first club that we contacted.

Instruments

Interview guides. Semi-structured interview guides were created based on Henriksen (2010). The interview guides purpose was to allow reflection of the interviewees but also make sure the interviewees commented on pre-selected issues derived from the ATDE and the ESF working models.

Keeping a similar structure, separate interview guides were made to allow for different perspectives from the prospective elite athletes, coaches, and managers (see appendix 4 & 5). The interviews with the parents had the structure of informal conversations with the authors.

The interview guides was structured in six main parts. Part one contained information about the study’s ethical issues, part two described the purpose of the study, and parts three and four contained questions about their background and immediate perceptions of the environment. Part five and six were built on the basis of the ATDE and ESF working models (see appendix 4 & 5).

Observation scheme. The purpose of the observations was to get the opportunity to study the everyday life in the environment, by listening to myths and stories, watching rites, customs and traditions, and seeing buildings logos and styles of clothing. This gave the authors an impression of the environment culture. Sharing these experiences is often the only way to access themes that interviewees would never mention, because it’s either too obvious or unimportant from their perspective or because it is too difficult to verbalize (Henriksen, 2010).

At each observation the authors followed an observation scheme based on ESF (Henriksen, 2010) and need-supportive environment (Deci, 2014) (see appendix 6 & 7).

Document analysis. The club's website was scrutinized in order to get information and documents about the club's contact persons, visions/goals and policies.

Procedure

After an environment had been selected, contact through phone call with the manager was taken, where the purpose of the study was explained. After interest had been showed the study was described more in detail.

Through a signed consent letter from the participants it was agreed that the identity of the team could be disclosed but the names of individuals would be kept confidential. However a disclosed consent to use the name of the parenting club hasn't been reached, as the authors weren't able to get in touch with the clubs representatives. Therefore the clubs had to be given different names, as one name would reveal the other as they are closely associated to each other. The participants were also informed that they had the right to terminate their participation at any time. The coach acted as a deputy parent permitting contact and participation of the underage players (see appendix 1, 2 & 3). The manager gave us permission to observe any practice sessions and games we wanted to.

It was also agreed that the findings would be shown to the environment before publication; the authors would present the result to the coaches and manger, and have a dialogue about the findings and potential areas of improvement.

Data collection. All interviews lasted between 30-60 minutes and were recorded for later transcription. Interviews were conducted in connection to the participant's club or school environment and a total of four players ($M=17$, $SD=2$, 31) were interviewed. Interviews were conducted with two players at the age of fifteen, these played for the U15-U16 team and occasionally in the U17-U19. Two of the players interviewed were nineteen years old and played for the U17-U19, the senior division 2 and 3 teams as well as the senior elite team. Interviews were also conducted with two coaches and one manager. A number of informal talks were also held with parents that had connections to the environment.

The observations had a non-participating approach and carried out for 3 practice (270 minutes) and 2 games (180 minutes). Throughout the practices the authors sat close to the field and could observe all conversations and interactions. Throughout the games observations carried out the same way as during the practice, but the authors were also given access to the dressing room during pre-match, half time and after game talk.

The document analysis included reading the clubs web-pages, where the club's contact persons, visions/goals and policies could be found. The documents were also used to formulate specific points of interest to be investigated during the interviews and observations.

Data analysis

In the first step of the data analysis documents from the clubs website about visions/goals and policies were studied thoroughly. Also the formal and informal interviews and observations notes were transcribed verbatim, which altogether came up to 73 pages. In the second step all documents, interviews and observations were read several times and ordered in high order themes. The high order themes were derived from the ATDE and ESF working models (e.g. elite athletes, coaches, experts, family, preconditions, etc). In the third step notes in the high order themes was read several of times and discussed between the authors, and later ordered in low order themes, this to provide a more descriptive image of the specific environment. In the fourth step, based on the high and low order themes, first drafts of the ATDE and ESF empirical models were formed. The last step contained further discussions between the authors, and later a triangulation with their supervisor, which led to some changes in the ATDE and ESF empirical models as presented later in the essay. The

results have been sent via email to the manager of the club and a meeting was set up to share the results in more detail. Unfortunately he was unable to attend the participant check in person and therefore it had to be conducted with just one of the participating coaches instead.

Results

In the results the targeted club and environment will be called “the Tigers” and the parenting club will be called “the Sharks”.

Introduction of the environment

The targeted environment is a handball club located in the South of Sweden, and the study’s result is based on the club’s male youth team: U15-U16 and the club’s male junior team: U17-U19. The club has recently entered a partnership with another club in the city that plays in the highest ranked league, Elitserien, in Sweden. The partnership is structured in the way that “the Tigers” represents the club’s youth section, and also represent the club’s two senior teams in division 2 and 3, and “the Sharks” is the club’s elite section that represents the club in Elitserien. Most of the players are playing with the teams that match their own age, but players that need a greater challenge to match their level of skill, are offered to play with older teams in order to stimulate their development.

ATDE Empirical Model

From the ATDE Working Model to the Empirical Model of “The Tigers”. Figure 3 presents the empirical model of “the Tigers”. The components of the environment are interconnected and affect one another. The empirical model describes the most important components and relations as well as the structure of the environment. The dotted lines in the model illustrate interactions where the contact is relatively weak. Complete lines illustrate interactions that are stable. At the center of the model are the prospect athletes and their relation toward the coaches, manager and club-mates, which are fundamental components in the environment. The micro-environment is mainly structured toward an athletic domain which contains younger/older athletes, current elite athletes, related teams/clubs and school. Here the contacts toward the prospects are relatively weak, except for the contact to the school, which is a part of every prospect’s daily life, both in an athletic and non-athletic domain. For example the prospects in U16 and U17-U19 have handball on their schedule. The partnership between the club and the school mainly goes through the manager and the head coach for the school, and the contact is mainly based around the schools and clubs training schedule. The only components in the micro environments non-athletic domain are family and peers. Families provide both an emotional and financial support to the prospects but don’t have much contact within the athletic domain. The prospects have some friends outside of the athletic domain, but most of their friends come through handball. The macro-environment consists of the general sport culture and youth culture, both of which haven’t much impact on the players’ athletic lives. However it does sometimes put them at a cross road of how they should prioritize their interests. The time-frame describes a club that has been unsuccessful in talent development but that are under re-organization and seems to be heading in the right direction.

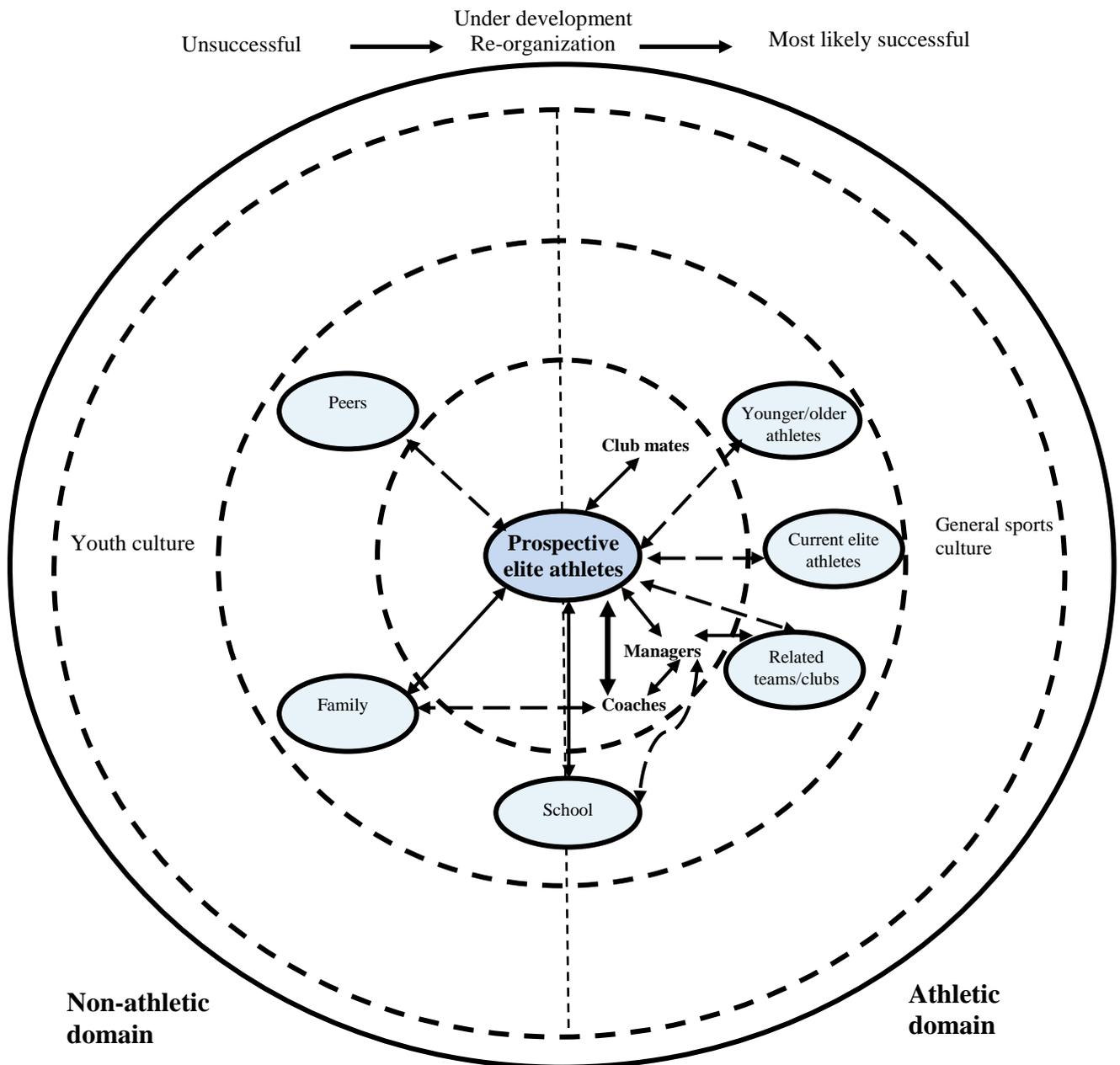


Figure 3. Empirical ATDE model of "the Tigers"

Micro environment: Athletic domain

Prospects – Managers – Coaches. The prospects are placed at the center of the model, and closest to the prospects are the relationship with the managers and coaches. "The Tigers" places a large focus on the development of the individual player, and this is supported both by the clubs training and matches policies, and by the interviews with the prospects, coaches and manager. Player A explained that: "We shouldn't be at the top of our game right now. We will be at our best when we are in our late twenties, so we are looking forward". One of the strengths of the club is the connection between the coaches and manager, and their passion in developing youth players. The strong connection between the coaches and manager became very clear during the interviews and observations, where the manager, both served the

roll as manager and coach for the U15-U16 teams and is attending most of their trainings and matches. Through the interviews prospects, coaches and manager expressed the roll of the coach as crucial for enabling players to reach their full potential. “He [the coach] should listen to me as a player, teach me what he knows. And above all, listen to me as a player, and listen to what I have to say”, explained by player A. During the interviews the coaches and manager explained the importance of having competent and educated coaches, in order to get their players to reach their full potential which is also stated in the clubs visions/goals. In these visions/goals all coaches are expected to both attend training held within the club as well as outside the club, organized by the club as well as the Swedish handball federation.

Club mates. U15-U16 is merged to one big training group so these players have a large-size group of club mates, the same goes for the U17-U19. It is not unusual for younger players to get the opportunity to attend trainings and matches with the older training groups, which contributes to an even greater network within the club.

After the interviews with the prospects, coaches and manager it became very clear that the cohesion between the club mates is very strong. The prospects explained that most of their friends are through handball and that the friendship with the club mates is crucial for wanting to continue their commitment to handball, and where described as an important support both on and off the pitch. Coach A explained that “even players that are injured come to trainings and want to be a part of what we are doing”.

Younger/older athletes. The prospects occasionally train younger players during the weekends. Player A explained that: “We do sometimes train younger players that are three to six years old, and then you can talk to them and let them ask questions, they often have a lot of questions”. Coach B described this as an important process in order to create relatedness within the club. But the connection between younger and older players mostly derives through trainings and matches. For instance when a player gets the opportunity to advance and play with the older teams, and through trainings that is conducted between the U15-U16 and between the U17-U19. Outside the club’s environment the contact is described as weak. Player D explained: “We got some of the younger players at school, but no, we don’t talk to them as much”.

Current elite athletes. The contact between the elite athletes and the youngest prospects (U15 and U16) is quite weak, except the relation they have toward their coaches, where one is an injured player from the clubs division 2 and 3 team, and another is a recently retired player from the club’s elite team. Through the interviews coach A expressed the importance for young players to have elite players to follow and look up to. The oldest prospects (U17-U19) have a closer relationship to the elite athletes as one of the clubs goals is to have the U17 and U18 to increase their commitment to handball, and for the U19 to start representing the clubs senior teams. Player C explained that the step from junior to senior is not as frightening as it can seem at first, “They are very nice and let you feel as a part of the group, there is no ranked difference of any kind”.

Related teams/clubs. The relationship that the club has towards other teams/clubs is through the partnership that they have with “the Sharks”. Both clubs merged into the same club; however they still go under different names. “The Tigers” is representing the club youth teams and the clubs senior teams in division 2 and 3, and “the Sharks” is representing the clubs elite team. The goal is that the youth players one day will represent the clubs senior teams, preferably the elite team. Coach A describes this as an advantage when it comes to recruiting young players to the club:

[it's important] for the club that [the parent club] is located in the highest division it also means that you can get more people to, i.e. young people to high schools who move here, that will course not be the case if you play in the second division.

This contact is described by the interviews as a contact that mainly goes through the manager, as the players don't have any direct contact with "the Sharks" until they reach the right age and skill level.

School. The school is a part of every prospect's daily life, both in an athletic and non-athletic domain. But the collaboration between the school and the club is limited to the prospects who study the handball specific "Nationellt godkända idrottsutbildningar" (NIU) program at the different local high schools, which is the case for the majority of the prospects in the U16 and U17-U19. This program gives the prospects the opportunity to train handball during school time. For the prospects in U15 who are still in primary school the contact is non-existing, and there is no handball on the schedule. The collaboration between the club and the high schools goes mainly through the manager and the head coach for the different high schools. In the interviews the contact is described both by the prospects, coaches and manager as a contact that is mainly based on the schools and the clubs training schedule, in order to avoid repeating the same trainings session. "It could be better, there is collaboration but it could be better, like what the main focus for trainings should be", expressed by coach A.

Micro environment: Non-athletic domain

Peers. The prospects all report having friends both inside and outside of handball, but the majority of friends are through handball. They didn't describe handball as a significant hindrance for socializing with friends outside of handball, but was described as something that falls naturally as they share the same interest. However during the interviews the prospects in U15 where describing a situation that gives more room for friends outside the world of handball, than the prospects in U16 and U17-U19, whose investment in handballs is increasing, and a situation which doesn't leave as much room for friends that isn't related to handball. Player C explained: "I got some friends that aren't related to handball but I don't hang out with them as much, it's basically when you're at school. Outside of school we are a couple of handball guys that hang out all the time".

Family. Through the interviews the prospects explained that the families provide an emotional support. Player B explained: "My parents like to watch when we play, of course, and my little brother also plays handball". The prospects in U15 expressed a closer relationship to their parents than did the prospects in U16 and U17-U19, as some of them have moved away from their hometown in order to be able to attend the local high schools handball programs, and to represent the club. "We don't only talk about handball, they've supported me to move down here, but I don't have any pressure on me. I do what I want to do" was explained by player D. Coach B explained that parents also is an important financial support, and without support from home an elite career in handball is not possible.

Some parents contribute to the club by working as material organizer and transport organizers for the team's away games. Through the interviews with the players and coaches it was explained that in order to remain a closer contact with the players parents and relatives, a Facebook group has taken form in order to provide information about activities and results for the families. Some of the insights into the family's impact on the environment also came through informal talks with parents.

Macro environment: Related context

Youth culture – General sport culture. The youth culture and general sport culture weren't expressed to have any significant impact on the prospects' athletic performance. But some prospects expressed through the interviews that the youth culture possibly could influence them to a certain degree of being lazy. Coach A expressed a difficulty in convincing their players that their career shouldn't be peaking right now, and this was perceived as difficult because today's youth somewhat is striving for fast results.

Player C and D expressed that the youth culture sometimes is affecting them through friends wanting them to go out and party. "They understand that you have the desire to play sports instead, but if there isn't any practice or game later, then you will tag along" was expressed by player D. The general sport culture and its perceived demands of being a serious athlete was expressed by coach B to be beneficial for the players as it led the players to make rational choices, for instance choosing to not go out and party the night before a game.

Time frame

Unsuccessful – Under development, Re-organization – Most likely successful.

Both the coaches and manager describe through the interviews that the club is in a transition period, where the youth section is under re-organization. Coach B answered if "the Tigers" could be seen as a successful ATDE by saying:

To some extent, this year we are under re-organization, we've got a brand new organization, and have made guidelines of how we should work in order to become more successful. So in the current situation this year: no, we're not there yet, especially not, if we consider the fact that we want our senior teams to be built by our own products.

The manager explained through the interview that the majority of the organization is on board with the new way of working, but that some hindrances arise from people that have been in the club for many years, and wants things to stay as they are.

The manager clarified that the re-organization of the youth section is structured on a unified game plan, which describes strategies and main focus for trainings and matches for the whole youth section. The manager explained that the purpose of this is to simplify the transition between the different youth teams, for older player to be able to coach younger players, as they have the same game plan, and for enabling coaches in the youth section to work together and help each other.

ESF empirical model

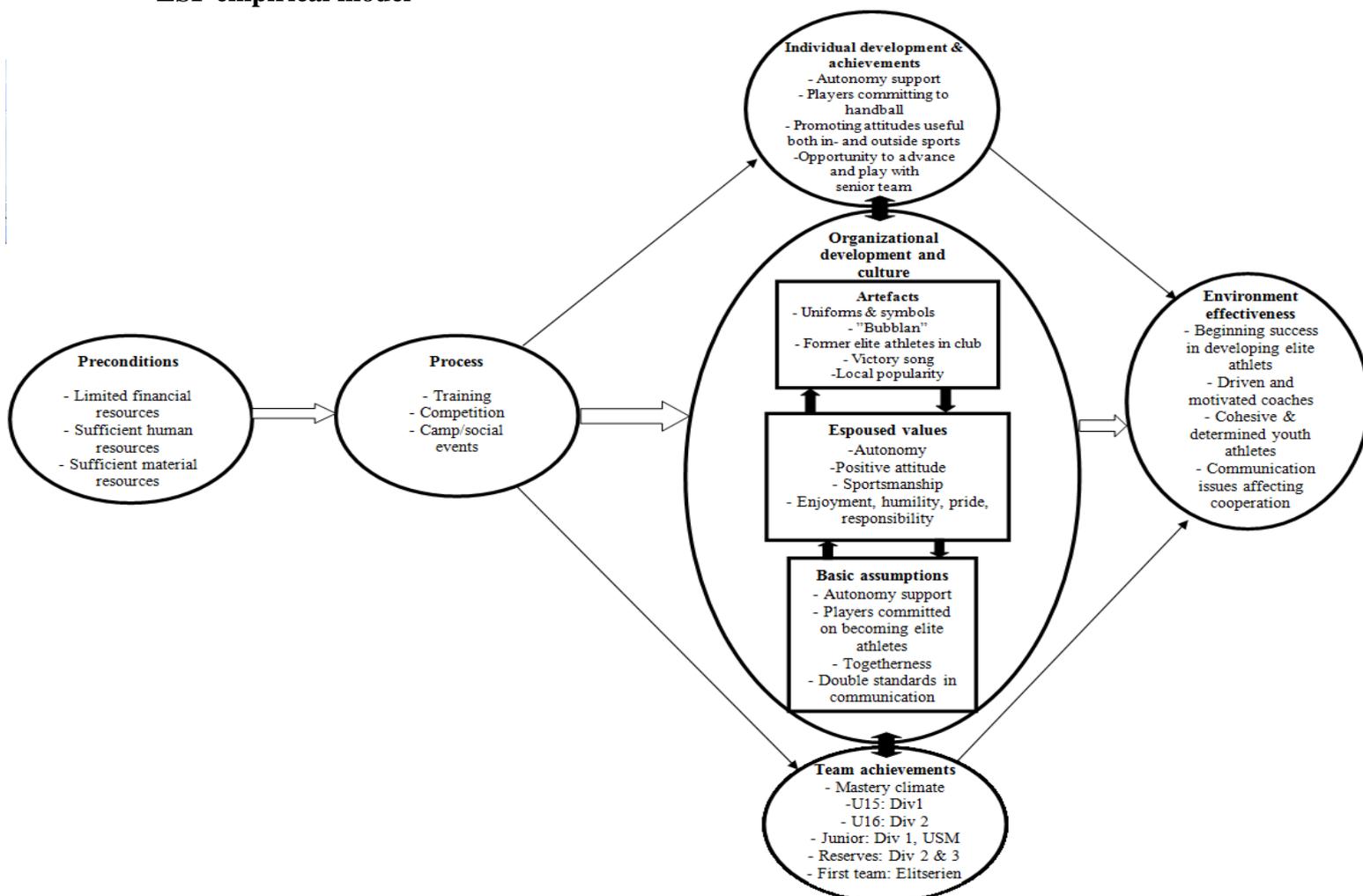


Figure 4. Empirical ESF model of "the Tigers"

Preconditions and process.

Regarding the preconditions it was mentioned by both prospects and the coaches that the financial resources were limited. This was mostly notable for the senior team players and for the coaches as they are paid by the club and also have more in depth knowledge than the younger athletes, who didn't seem to have taken notice or been effected by the financial situation in the club. Both athletes and coaches expressed that the coaches' competence was on a high level but that in order to achieve a good standard and to be able to cater to all the prospecting elite athletes in the club, more coaches were needed as expressed by player D: "It's not as if the coaches talk to you all the time, there are some stuff they say to you sometimes, so perhaps the club needs more coaches". As far as material resources are concerned, both players and coaches are happy with training equipment, for instance all players each have a handball to take care of and use during practice. None of the players express any discontent with the facilities but the coaches stressed the need for more venues to train in. The quality of the training facilities is excellent but for the club to be able to develop more of its prospect young athletes and to recruit and retain larger portions of the younger athletes more facilities are required. This is expressed by coach B when he says:

The quality of them [the training facilities] is good, then it's a lack of time and hours to use the facilities and it will be even worse later on because of increasing cohorts of athletes, the big problem is the number of venues that we are allowed to use handball

glue in. So they [the local municipality] need to open up two more venues, so that's where the problem really is.

Training is held between 3 and 7 times a week, depending on what teams players are part of. If they only play for the one team it's 3 times a week but if a player plays for three teams as some of the older athletes in this study do, they can have practice every day. In addition to this they also have practices arranged by the school. All of the athletes play at least one game a week in their regular team and league but may play more with other teams, normally only as much as two at the most. All teams compete in some sorts of tournaments as well during the year where matches are played more frequently. Training camps and social events are held within the club but opportunities are scarce and far between, except for the younger players that can attend a local training camp each summer. Player C however talks about social events in this way:

It's happened at times but it's also a bit connected with handball. We might have a weekend off and in that case we might have a small simple, training camp you might call it and you eat together, spend time looking at some theory, more in that way.

The reason these types of activities are held rarely is mainly accredited to the aforementioned financial situation.

Team development and achievements. All teams in the club(s) play high up in the league rankings, the senior team for instance play in the highest ranked league, Elitserien, in Sweden. This makes for a natural elite oriented surrounding that promotes the importance and values of making it to the highest level, along with this comes expectations of achievements but also proximal role models to help promote the right values and to show that it's possible to come that far. As far as the motivational climate is concerned, both the interviews and observations point to a climate that is closely linked to the mastery climate. The players spoke of their development as something they felt as the key goal and drive of the coaches, when asked about their goals of the season player B responded: "Nah we haven't really talked about how far we'll get, that's not what is in focus, the focus is more on that we're to evolve [as handball players]". Another thing pointing to this is a quote picked up during training when one of the coaches said: "we are supposed to give you the letters and you build the words" as a metaphor of the players making own decisions with the guidance and supervision of the coaches. Another interesting thing noticed was that a lot of the feedback produced to the players is delivered individually and not in front of the whole group something coach B also spoke of as something important for him to do. Individual adjustment is mentioned in the policy documents of the club as something essential for the club's future, so everyone will feel welcome and at home on the right level but the coaches also mentioned it as part of their challenges. One of the difficulties in coaching a team is that development is a highly individual factor, some learn quicker than others; this has to be taken in to consideration and seems to be so within the club according to observations. Coach B sums up the philosophy and the experiences of the observations well in this quote:

You have to be somewhat of a compass that governs what the athletes need to work with: "you have to reach this level in order to take these steps". Then if it comes down to physical training, mental training or handball technical training that is different for each player, some are very talented in one aspect but completely lacks the other two, some have everything so the coach becomes more of a, what to say, a guiding hand maybe, especially at the junior level where it's not... I have the philosophy that I don't coach based on the results I coach based on performance and then it will be more along the lines of you only controlling and trying to get them to develop as much as possible as handball players and people in order to get the elite players in the future.

Individual development and achievements. First and foremost the climate came across as autonomy supportive, the coaches and staff didn't talk about their philosophy or work as autonomy supportive though but that was the general impression given. Little to none controlling feedback was used; instead a large amount of positive feedback was noticed. The athletes were encouraged to make their own decisions and find flaws on their own. To experiment and try new things was also encouraged by the coaches, to "play imaginatively" was mentioned during the practice and also to "dance handball" and "play with the defenders" as a way to feel free whilst playing. A lot of effort and emphasis is put on the team's relatedness and team spirit. Many of the players and coaches mentioned this as a feeling that dominates in the club and affects the values and mentality in the club. Player C reflected on it by answering the question of what the most important thing for the club to keep was, by saying: "It's the solidarity; yeah the solidarity and the excellent go [in the club]".

The coaches wanted the players to commit to play handball and stressed the importance of this for the individual to develop and reach newer heights, for instance the U17-U19 coach had made it clear for his players that they had to come to practice in order to play, no one was given any special treatment regardless of how good they were. The coaches did not only stress the importance of developing the prospects as handball players but also to help them develop as human beings. As mentioned by coach B "some have made more progress than others in terms of maturity, of course that plays a very important role. In short: the more mature you are, the longer you've come as a person, the better handball player you are really".

A big part of the development of the individuals is the opportunity for them to play with the teams above (or under) them in age and difficulty level. This is written in the clubs policy and during an informal talk with the manager he mentioned that the teams within the club cooperate closely in order to make this a reality. He also mentioned the importance of being able to try on the higher level of play at a young age and for the players to feel that there is a possibility of playing in the elite senior team, to have a mental image to cling to. For him it was absolutely natural for it to be this way as he said: "the player who is mature at a junior age should be able to try and feel out senior handball".

Organizational development and culture. First and foremost, the impression of the club and the image mediated by the coaches, players and the manager is that it's in a phase of transformation. Everything described is part of the new model and set-up that was adopted just about a year earlier according to the manager. With this in mind a description of each of the underlying factors of the organizational culture is described below.

Artefacts. The club's uniform and symbol is something mentioned as the only common clothing style in the club but should also be the most important as this could gel the players together. However even though it's portrayed as an artefact and wearing the uniform gives the players an indication, it doesn't seem to have that big of an effect. The color scheme and the logo is relatively new since the partnership took place also, a lot of the athletes at the junior level are not from the local vicinity and therefore lack a direct connection and history with the club to which this effect seems to lessen as mentioned by player D:

Interviewer: But does workout clothes, match clothes all this. Do they mean something special to you? When you have those on you does that make you feel something stronger?

Player D: No, nothing like that

Interviewer: Could that be because you came here from another team recently, well many of the player's did.

Player D: Yes, it's almost the whole team, could be because of that, and could be why we have to stay together more as a team".

Before a match or tournament, the teams use a method of focusing and channeling the values and emotions agreed upon by each respective team. This is called “bubblan” (“the bubble”) and the players are asked to: “gå in i bubblan” (“go inside the bubble”) and focus from within themselves when listening to a song to set the right mood. One of the teams have also created a banner with a bubble and written down the feelings they want to bring forth and which to keep out of their bubble. These things together serves as a help to block out the negative emotions and values and promote the positives that the teams agreed upon will hinder them from reaching an optimal performance. The coaches also talk about and can reference to things agreed upon in “bubblan” that are to be brought forward in training as well.

Within the club, several former elite athletes are active as coaches, in the club board or in some other way engaged. This gives the trainings and the club itself certain legitimacy and a wide array of connections that can be, and are used to help the club and take them forward in the development. The manager for example states: “the only thing I've done really is to take the models available internationally with the basis of the Swedish Handball Federation one can say, there is nothing that goes against the Swedish Handball Federation”. The former players can give examples themselves and have a concept of ideas on what to work on to develop new successful elite athletes, legends and myths of the training regime, the clubs history etcetera can be created. The former elite athletes may also promote the values they deem necessary for success and serve as “proximal mentors” that shows the prospecting elite athletes that it's possible to reach their goal of becoming a successful elite athlete. The manager again states, talking about himself: “I always say: if a chubby, short Spaniard have played 17 years as a pro then anyone can absolutely do it”. The only real tradition mentioned within the club is that after each victory a certain victory song is sung by the entire team in the dressing room. This is a tradition shared by both the parent and the feeder club and has been around for a long time.

Along with the sport of handball comes a certain local popularity in the area. The elite team has a history of being successful and popular among the local people, it has also won the national championship on numerous occasions. This has created a certain sort of expectation and pressure as well as a certain atmosphere in the local area. Many successful players and coaches have also risen through these ranks which not only creates the aforementioned expectations but also a reputation as an environment in which you can learn and be successful. This is mentioned and stressed by coach A as described in an earlier quote about the importance of having an elite team to attract elite prospects to go to school in this city.

Esposued values. As mentioned earlier in the section regarding individual development and achievement, autonomy is seen as important in the club. The policy documents stress the work and the importance of letting the athletes be empowered with the feeling of autonomy. The club sees the promotion of autonomy as a natural part of its identity and way to develop talented athletes, as mentioned in the policy documents to “let the youth players have influence, be a part of and take responsibility for the development of Swedish handball”. This is also promoted in trainings as we mentioned before, that the athletes are to take responsibility for their own development but also for their decisions and are both trusted and expected to make decisions on their own.

A positive attitude is mentioned by the manager but also the coaches and the players as integral for the club's development, success and its atmosphere. It is brought forward in the beginning of the policy documents of the club, both to promote enjoyment within the club and to show a positive side to all the other club's and to the media. It is also seen as a way to keep the athletes active longer, not only as active athletes but also as coaches etc. within the club. The positive attitude is also promoted in trainings with the playfulness and to “dance

handball” mentioned earlier. Sportsmanship isn’t only important and seen as an obvious value to promote according to the clubs policy documents but also mentioned as part of the general sports culture. This is promoted by coaches and managers and seen as having positive effects on the athletes. Not only in the general sports culture was sportsmanship mentioned but also as an integral part of the handball culture, as mentioned by coach B: “handball culture has always regarded the sport as being a fair sport, tough but fair and it still is”. However he also mentions the decline in effect of the handball culture with: “there’s a lot of work required [to maintain the handball culture] and right now it’s OK but it’s also on the decline”. Therefore the handball culture seems to have a lesser impact on the athletes than the general sports culture.

Enjoyment, humility, pride, responsibility, these are the guiding words and the basic values that all within the club are set to follow, promote and recognize according to the club’s documents. These values are certainly promoted within the club and visible during observations, however only the manager mentioned all these values when asked about the policy, guidelines, and motto etc. Some players and coaches mentioned one or two of these words or something similar but it seems to be guidelines that are far from being established firmly in the club.

Basic assumptions. Autonomy support is once again seen as an important part but as an assumption. It is acted out as mentioned earlier and described in the documents, however not called autonomy support but the way the coaches act, speak and the documents are written all signal autonomy support very clearly.

A basic assumption regards players’ commitment on becoming elite athletes. The clubs aim is to produce elite senior athletes which can play for their senior team or the parent clubs senior team. As coach B describes it:

The vision is to develop our own talents; really that is what we are doing. The vision is that always, through everything in the end it all comes down to winning the national championships, if you twist and turn and you take it far enough we will get there I hope.

The club also expects the players in the club to commit and make efforts to become elite athletes, and most of the players want this and can feel this in the atmosphere, as described by player D: “you want to make investment [in handball], you want to develop. It is more serious here. [Handball here is] a bigger thing, so to say”

As mentioned earlier the commitment, the positive attitude and the enjoyment are seen to cause a special togetherness within the club. Efforts are made to create this like involving youth players in coaching the minors, keeping an open climate and having close relationships with the elite team. All people interviewed mentioned the togetherness as something special within the club and something they need to hold on to in the future. Player B talked about what distinguishes their team by saying: “Eh, I think it's that we all like each other and have fun together, good team cohesion”. This feeling is seen by coaches and managers as something to build a future upon and create a foundation for attracting more talented athletes and to garner future success. As mentioned under the positive attitude, this is also a factor to keep people active longer in the club in some fashion.

Among these assumptions a double standard in communication can also be noticed. Everything isn’t communicated as well as it should be, for instance the basic values and guidelines in the clubs’ documents. There seem to be a basic assumption that everyone in the club knows of all things going on even though communication of certain things can be scarce. Player D answered the question of what can be made better in the club by saying: “Communication and economy, that’s something that just came to mind”. As an example Communication and collaboration with parents are not coordinated by the club but individual

efforts are made by certain coaches which are good but can make for incongruent communication. Some players and coaches are also not that happy with the collaboration between the school and the club, even though it's touted as being an excellent partnership. This is highlighted with this excerpt from what coach B had to say about the school and the collaboration:

They [the school] are controlled by a curriculum, they have to achieve certain, they must go through certain things and the curriculum is not at all adapted to becoming a better handball player/.../[the communication is] Inadequate, there was a lot of good intentions this year but it has like petered out a bit and would have liked to have an ongoing communication constantly/.../it's not a priority in that way and sometimes it feels like that the school thinks: as long as I do my curriculum and it's finished, it's good.

Discussion

The purpose of the present study was to describe a handball ATDE in the South of Sweden and to examine and derive the success factors of the ATDE, and within this context explore the motivational climate and autonomy support as perceived by members of the ATDE.

Comparison of the targeted club with successful ATDEs

Findings in the present study are discussed below in relation to each of the categories attributed to a successful ATDE. An evaluation on whether the criterion is fulfilled or not will be made based on literature regarding the ecological and holistic approach (Henriksen, 2010; Henriksen, Stambulova, Roessler, 2010a; Henriksen, Stambulova, Roessler, 2010b; Henriksen, Stambulova, Roessler, 2011; Balish & Côté, 2014).

Training groups with supportive relationships. The groups seem to be balanced correctly and contain the players with the right competence in each group. This is also made easier with the clubs policy of moving players between teams, for them to develop and be challenged, when necessary. Also mentioned in all interviews are the week functioning climate and the togetherness. However, as mentioned in the basic assumptions, there is a double standard regarding the communication and the players can notice this and express a lack of communication quality. This is not satisfactory and something to see over as a club. The importance of well-functioning communication and coordination is a concept most can understand. The flaws in communication can of course be attributed to the fact that the club is under re-organization and the ways to communicate and the correct channels haven't been made clear yet. These arguments together make us consider that this criterion hasn't been met to a sufficient level.

Proximal role models. In this sense we believe the club is working very well, it's clear for the younger athletes that the club wants to develop their own elite athletes. There's also some communication between the different coaches within the club to help the younger athletes get a chance to train and play for the senior team(s). Some of these coaches are also former elite athletes that just quit playing at the elite level; this also makes for a type of proximal role model, maybe more of a mentoring relationship with "proximal mentors". It's also clear that a lot of contacts exist between the elite senior team and the rest of the club which is good, some players though expressed that the contact could be more frequent and better. With this in mind the club seems to be doing well on this criterion with the notion that it also could develop from the athletes' point of view.

Support of sporting goals by the wider environment. This criterion is harder for the club to control on its own because a lot of this support is made up by the rest of the environment. However some initiatives should be made from the club to make the support have a better chance of being successful. A lot of effort is made by the club to make the

athletes focus on handball; however the Scandinavian culture calls for a focus on education as well. As a proof of this, the coaches in this study even mentioned the importance of an education and that they at times had to make some players study when they were supposed to train. The fact that the schools around the area offer a combined sporting and educational program is good, but some concerns exist with the coaches of the club both regarding the curriculum and the communication between club and school which needs to be addressed. A clarification to the athletes on what focus they should have might be needed, on the other hand no concern on this was expressed as the fact that they rather wanted to make a serious commitment to becoming elite handball players than succeed in school were obvious. The support from friends was mentioned as something important by coaches and players alike. Also the fact that the friends could “lure” the players in to making decisions that wouldn’t favor them in the long run was mentioned but seeing as most of the players friends were the others in the team this was made unlikely. The fact that the bulk of friends for the athletes are made up of the team mates can in the case of support and opportunity to focus be a good thing. However psychosocially this can be problematic as the surrounding will all be about handball and few other impressions will be made on the athletes.

The family support is seen as important and most of the players have a supporting family, both emotionally and monetarily, to help them develop in to elite athletes. The coaches mention this as an important factor but only individual efforts of trying to engage the parents in the teams are made. Coach B also mentioned the fact that the society today makes the parents be less engaged in sports as the children become older. An effort from the entire club to better connect the families with both teams and club would however probably make a lot of difference to them and also make for a coherent and clear communication to the families. With all this in mind this criterion is unsatisfied within the environment. A more evident plan on where the players focus should be established, better communication and cooperation with the schools and more inclusions of the families are needed to satisfy this.

Support for the development of psychosocial skills. The club works a lot with this support in both their day to day life and also in the policy documents they have. A lot of emphasis is put on autonomy, as the players are to make their own decisions and take responsibility for actions and the outcome of their actions. The manager mentioned the importance of viewing the players as individuals and all the coaches mentioned the importance of taking the entire individual in to consideration when coaching and training. This is also mentioned very clearly in the policy documents together with the wish to develop the players outside of handball. Although studies have found inconsistencies regarding the effect of sporting on psychosocial skills, most researchers agree that it’s beneficial for athletes as well as clubs/organizations to systematically promote development in psychosocial skills (Petitpas, Cornelius, Van Raalte & Jones, 2005). The manager, which is the person mainly behind the new orientation of the club, speaks of learning the players to not only be winners in handball but also in life, that they are to affect the things they can and not let things out of their control affect them. The other coaches also felt that the work of influencing the players with positive values and skills useful outside of handball is something important in their work. Players were a bit divided on this though, some of them felt that they could take these things with them from the trainings and some didn’t feel this at all. All in all the work within the club promotes this criterion in a positive and sufficient way.

Training that allows for diversification. This criterion is a bit hard to in regard of the teams in the present study. Since the players in this study are part of the group of players just below the senior level, most have naturally already chosen handball as their sport to focus on. This is also something the coaches talked about, at a certain age the athletes have to choose which sport to focus on becoming good at and they wanted it so be somewhere around 15

years of age. This is also found to be a crucial age according to earlier studies and seem to be the somewhat of a breaking point of when you are to specialize to be more likely on becoming an elite athlete (Moesch, Elbe, Hauge & Wikman, 2011). At the training sessions a lot of diversification is allowed and the players are allowed and expected to make own decisions and act based on what happens from there. This of course leads to diversification in outcome and performance in the particular exercises. Even though the players in the present study didn't participate in other sports they used to do and the manager also mentioned the importance of this and that the club is trying to widen its cooperation and collaboration to incorporate football clubs in order to be more efficient in training and development of younger athletes. With all this said, we believe sufficient efforts are made to let the players train diversely and efforts are even made from the club to develop this further.

Focus on long-term development. The club is definitely focused on long term development for its athletes and don't want to rush into this. As noted by the clubs manager, the identification of talents at an early age is risky and some of the best players might bloom at a late stage. This mind-set calls for a concept of long-term development which is not only conceptualized by Henriksen but also found in other studies (Vaeyens, Lenoir, Williams & Philippaerts, 2008). At no point is there anything found in the present study to contradict this mind-set, the players, manager and coaches all speak of it in interviews and during the observations we could hear coaches saying things like: "Now is not the time for you to be a great handball player, that will come with age". Also mentioned by managers, coaches and the policy documents is the fact that no one can decide at any stage who is to become an elite athlete, the club is trying to give the players great circumstances to do so but it's no guarantee. A player who is good at a young age might not be when older and vice versa according to coach B for example and as mentioned earlier the climate is evidently mastery oriented which also makes for a long-term focus on talent development. With this mind-set, the club also has divided age appropriate training groups and goals for these which can be found in detail in the policy documents and as mentioned before criterions for how players are to move between teams if they can benefit from it. The conclusion here is that the club is definitely working with a long-term focus that is beneficial for the athletes.

Strong and coherent organizational culture. This criterion seems to be problematic for the club, but one would figure it to be since the club is re-organizing. The organizational culture is strong and evident for most observers, coaches and athletes. The problem is instead the inconsistencies mentioned earlier, for instance regarding communication. The manager and coaches also mentioned an inconsistency within the board and leaders of the club where some of the newer methods and people can be taken in to question by those who are older and have been in the club for a very long time. Some inconsistencies also seem to exist between "the Tigers" and "the Sharks" which leads to players feeling the need for communication to be better. With this said, not all is doom and gloom, the environment itself promotes learning through a mastery climate and is also autonomy supportive which both have proven to be successful in promoting a positive learning climate. Also the players and coaches all mention the togetherness and that they are happy with the club which is a basis for a feeling of stability. In conclusion, this criterion is something the club certainly needs to work on for the environment to be absolutely successful, especially regarding the incoherencies and the communication.

Integration of efforts. As mentioned above, this needs to improve on all aspects. Most participants mentioned disappointment in the communication between school and club and some concerns with the curriculum where also mentioned. This must be addressed from the club, the same goes for the interaction with the families and the work to make them more involved in the business of the club. Coherency in communication for all the components

seems to be the key in this case and the environment cannot be said to satisfy this criterion sufficiently.

Motivational climate and autonomy support

The results goes in line with Ntoumanis (2001) argumentation that a climate that is mastery orientated can satisfy all the basic needs, and therefore enhance self-determined motivation.

Through the mapping of the chosen environment it can be concluded that “the Tigers” leans toward a climate that is mastery orientated. Based on the previous study’s data and Ntoumanis and Biddles’ (1999) features of a mastery orientated climate; tasks, authority, recognition, grouping, evaluation and time (see table 1), a connection can be derived between this features, the basic needs and Deci’s (2014) description of a need-supportive environment.

Tasks. Describes a mastery orientated climate as challenging and diverse, which is a definition that can be related to the need for competence. The need for competence is satisfied by the club giving their prospects the opportunity to advance and play with older teams in order to match their level of skill. This reduces the risk that the prospects will perceive trainings or matches as too hard or too easy. The players are given the opportunity to both prove and to challenge their capacity, and therefore stimulate their development. This is stated in the clubs policy document and was also stated by the manager. The manager explained the importance of getting the opportunity to try on a high level of play at a young age and for players to feel that there is a possibility of playing in the elite senior team.

Authority. Describes a mastery orientated climate as climate that promotes choices and leadership roles, which can be related to the need for autonomy. According to Adie, Duda & Ntoumanis (2012) an environment satisfies need for autonomy when it empowers young athletes with choices and decision making. This was also described by the prospects in the interviews as absolutely necessary, in order for them to reach their full potential, and that is to have their coach to listen to what they have to say. This was also stated in the clubs policy documents how highlights the importance of letting the athletes be empowered with the felling of autonomy by “letting the youth players have influence, be a part of and take responsibility of the development of Swedish handball”. The coaches also encouraged the prospects to make their own decisions and to find flaws on their own, and to experiment and try new thing, which also show that the club support the prospects need for autonomy.

Recognition. Describes a mastery orientated climate as climate that provides recognition by private and individual progress. This can be related to need of competence, as Reinboth and Duda (2006) argue that the need for competence can be satisfied by coaches who involve the young athletes in the evaluation process of their own performance. This became clear during the observations where the coaches delivered feedback to the prospects individually and not in front of the whole group, and by doing so gave the prospects the opportunity to utter their reflections as well. This can also be related to need for relatedness, as the coaches by letting the prospects utter their reflections, shows that they respect their perspective (Adie, Duda & Ntoumanis, 2012).

Grouping. Describes a mastery orientated climate as climate that promote cooperative learning, and this can be related to need for relatedness, as it gives athletes the opportunity to both give and receive support from others (Deci & Ryan, 2000). From the observation and interviews this became very clear as the prospects and coaches expressed a strong cohesion in the club, and the prospects described this as a support that is crucial for wanting to continue their commitment to handball. This can also be deduced from “bubblan” (“the bubble”) which describes the values and emotions agreed upon by each respective team. This shows that the prospects and coaches are united and has to work together in order for the prospects to reach

their full potential. The willingness to work together and the establishment of team cohesion can also satisfy the needs of autonomy and competence (Blanchard, Amio, Perreault & Vallerand, 2009). This highlights the importance of having a group that can work together as it can satisfy all the basic needs.

Evaluation. Describes a mastery orientated climate as climate that values the mastery of tasks and individual improvement, and this can be related to the need for autonomy. This because if an environment values individual improvement and mastery strivings the athletes will experience more satisfaction, than they would do in a climate that encourage social comparison and normative ability (Garcia-Calvo, Miguel Leo, Gonzalez-Ponce, Sanchez-Miguel, Mouratidis & Ntoumanis, 2014). Since the data collection clearly indicates that “the Tigers” values mastery of tasks and individual improvement, they also support the prospects autonomy by giving them the control to evaluate their own athletic performance, and not let it be controlled by social comparison and normative ability.

Time. Describes a mastery orientated climate as a climate that adjusts time requirements after personal capabilities and this can be related to the need for competence as it allows athletes to both prove and challenge their capacity (Deci & Ryan, 2000). The clubs policy documents describe the importance of individual adjustments, with the purpose to make everyone feel welcome and at home on the right level, which indicates that the club is working toward a mastery orientated climate. The opportunity to advance and play with older teams is also an indicator of that the club adjusts time requirements after personal capabilities. The coaches also expressed the importance of accepting that some learn quicker than others, and that the prospects shouldn't be judge after result, but after the way they perform. This way of thinking also demonstrates that the club adjusts time requirements after personal capabilities.

Contributions of the study to the holistic ecological perspective, AGT and SDT

We believe this study can add to a deeper understanding of the holistic ecological approach and its key elements. For instance the use of motivational climate in connection to team and individual achievements and development in the ESF empirical model is especially clear and something that could be used further. In the same way autonomy support, or lack thereof, seem to be able to influence the entire ATDE which in turn also could be used in further research to understand the success (or lack of success) of an ATDE. Certain key elements of SDT, AGT and holistic ecological approach can also further deepen our understanding of how and why the ATDE work in a certain way. Does the way feedback delivered promote a successful ATDE? Does the attitude of the coach(es) promote a motivational climate that allows for a successful climate? These questions are examples of what we suggest further investigations in the holistic ecological approach to start moving towards, and in our minds and in these results there are clear connections between all three theories.

Method reflections

The authors of the present study decided to follow Henriksen's (2010) recommendations on how an ADTE should be studied. Henriksen suggested that an adequate methodological approach to the study of ATDE should have the design of a case study, use qualitative methods, look at the real-time functioning of the environment and use multiple sources of evidence. This approach provides insight into the actual existence of the environment. Interviews, observations of the participants and analysis of documents complemented each other, which allowed the authors of the present study to identify the current status of the environment, and its history and perceived further challenges.

Some limitations of the present study are worth mentioning. First, the authors' intentions were to have participant observations. Henriksen (2010) highlights the importance of "living the culture" and taking part in the everyday cultural activities alongside with the athletes and coaches in order to capture the uniqueness of the cultural characteristics, and to interpret the basic assumptions of the groups' organizational culture. But even though the authors offered to help the team during trainings and matches with equipment and other, the offer never came to use. And the authors decide on to not push too hard on this as it could be perceived as a source of irritation by the participants. So it lead to that the observations had more of an approach of non- participant observation.

Second, in order to get a greater understanding of the relationships, and of the successful factors of the specific environment, more interviewees could have been included. Like the coaches from the different high schools, this to get the other side of the collaboration between the school and the club. Perhaps a board member, that possibly could have offered a more detailed information about the clubs financial situation, and perhaps some of the current elite athletes, this to get a greater understanding of the prospects relationship toward the clubs current elite athletes.

Third, the authors of the present study decide to use an already establish interview guide created by Henriksen (2010). And therefore made the choice to not make a pilot interview, as the interview guide had already been used on athletes that where in the same age as the present study's participants. But during the interviews the authors noticed that the prospect unlike the coaches and manager, had a hard time answering questions about the different cultures effect on their athletic performance, especially about the youth culture. This is understandable as the prospects don't have anything to compare with, in the same manner that the coaches and manager do. So in further research it would be wise to make some clarification for the questions related to the different cultures effect on the prospects athletic performance.

In relation to ethical aspects of the study, some problems could have arisen that never did, and that is if some participant would have chosen to withdraw their participation. Before the study the authors informed the participants that they could at any moment chose to withdraw their participation, and before each interview the interviewee signed a consent letter that informed them about their right to drop out at any moment. None of the participants decided to so, but if they had made that chose, the authors would have faced a dilemma, because the study involved observations where coaches, mangers and players took part. If some of the interviewee would have chosen to drop out, it would have been easy to remove their interview from the study. But to remove players from the observations would have been hard to do. Further research should therefore consider to inform the participants of this dilemma, or to make a more specific contract regarding participation in the different parts of the study. Some of the players participating in the study are under 18 but over 15 and the entire study of the team has been approved by the manager, which follows the standard practice of ethical conduct.

Implications

First we would like to say that considering that the club is under a form of re-organization we believe they have come a long way and are headed in the right direction. This direction is that of a more autonomy supportive climate that also promotes psychosocial skills useful outside of sports. The club also promotes enjoyment and togetherness which in the long run should create athletes that are active longer and have a bigger chance of reaching their full potential (Deci & Ryan, 2000).

However some issues have to be addressed, according to the study, in order to succeed. These first and foremost concern the communication issues within the club but also between the club and the school as well as between the club and families. Coaches mention issues with communication within the club. In order to create a better flow of communication, clear and structured policies and structures should be established, the study of Eccles & Tenenbaum (2004) would be a good inspiration and influence in this work. In all sense and purposes a well-oiled and smooth chain of command and communication takes the issue of this away. This in turn eliminates the issues of the organizational culture not being strong and coherent enough, and determines in what way the entire ATDE will communicate with each other (Henriksen, 2010).

In the same sense this type of regulations and guidelines should be drawn up between the schools and the club. This might at first appear strange to some since the club can't determine and demand anything from those who operate outside the club. But if the club and school don't recognize and acknowledge that they both in fact are part of the same ATDE, problems will still arise and have to be dealt with in the future. We therefore recommend regular meetings and follow-up conversations between coaches/managers of both the school and the club, based on similar documents and guidelines as mentioned earlier, which of course have to be agreed upon together between the local schools and the club.

Regarding the communication between club and families it's not good enough to mainly rely on individual coaches' efforts to communicate to the families. As established earlier, the families and the especially the relationship between the athletes and their family are important for the entire club but most certainly for athletes in this age to have a greater likelihood of becoming elite athletes (Côté, 1999). For this we recommend for the club to create a "family-section" on their webpage where all the necessary information and continuous information are posted. All this should have sub-headings for each of the teams as well as message boards and the proper contact information. Of course we can also see the benefit of using a social media platform used by most people and that is the second alternative, the important thing is for the club to have one unified way of communication and to encourage the parents to engage themselves more. Reoccurring family meetings or parent meetings should also be held to further increase the communication aside from the communication on the web. Of course some parents will invest more time in their child's development than others but it's a way to start and, as mentioned earlier, to encourage it.

Whilst on the subject we would recommend an overlook of the webpage as it in some parts are a bit unclear to navigate in, for instance it would be easier to find all the proper documents if put in one and the same place instead of putting them under different pages and headings. We also believe the webpage's esthetical look could resemble its parent club more in order to further strengthen the connection between the clubs.

Furthermore, the club should engage players, coaches, families etc. a lot more in social events not directly connected with the sport of handball. As described by the players this is missing, especially when they become older. The importance and benefit of social events for the ATDE can be great (Henriksen, 2010) and also promote all the basic psychological needs according to SDT (Ryan & Deci, 2000). In the long run, the relatedness, the club spirit would be enhanced greatly from more social events. This could also be a great way to further enhance the connections between senior/older athletes with the young athletes within the club.

Regular sports psychology workshops would also be recommended. If athletes solely work on their physical skills they are in a way only developing part of their actual capabilities since the mental development and skills are neglected. We would recommend having a workshop/meeting once every other week with the elite/senior players and juniors soon to be playing at the elite/senior level. This should be led by a sports psychology consultant that can

structure and set up a schedule that can work over a long time. The workshops can be created around topics like team building, performance mental skills (stress reduction, imagery etc.), life skills (e.g., time managements, dealing with success and failures) or they can be hold in a form of meetings to ventilating any concerns within the ATDE.

Lastly we would also like to recommend the club to work more on injury prevention. As we could understand little to no work is done by the club on this area but instead injuries are dealt with when they occur. Sport psychology research acknowledges mental factors as contributing to sporting injuries and also proves that a wide array of psychological intervention methods can work as both preventive measures for injury as well as beneficial when recovering from an injury (Andersen & Williams, 1988; Cupal, 1998; Ivarsson & Sönnnersted, 2007). Handball is a sport where the stress on the athletes' bodies is high, and a career-ending injury can occur at any given time. For example, this was well shown in the study of a world-class handball player who had to prematurely end his career because of a serious ACL injury (Ivarsson, Stambulova, & Johnson, in preparation). The stress of school and everyday life outside of the sport is also likely to affect the athletes which are factors that can further contribute to injuries as described in the aforementioned studies. This further demonstrates the benefits for the club of working with not only physical but also psychological injury prevention.

A participant check was held before completion of the study. The check consisted of a short briefing of the empirical models, the detailed results regarding success of the ATDE as well as the implications. The participants were pleased with the results and wanted a more detailed presentation at a later stage. The only thing they found a bit concerning was the suggestion of more social events. The coach in question mentioned that this had been done on at least three separate occasions. However, after a brief discussion the conclusion was that regardless of how many times it was done, the players would like to see even more social events. The information was also shared with the club via email.

Future research

For future research it would be interesting to dive even deeper into to the objectives of this study, and continue working with the club using the holistic ecological perspective, SDT and AGT, but with greater focus on the holistic ecological perspective and SDT, as satisfaction of the basic needs is fundamental for the self-determined motivation and for sustaining optimal functioning in youth sport (Adie, Duda & Ntoumanis, 2012). This to further see what can be done by the club in order to be even more autonomy supportive, and continuing their development to an even more successful ATDE. The use of AGT would still be of interest, as a mastery oriented climate can satisfy all the basic needs (Ntoumanis, 2001) and provides a good description of how coaches should work in order to create a mastery oriented climate.

The authors advocate using a qualitative method even in further research, as it allows for a deeper understating of what influence athletes perception on the environment. But perhaps it would be contributing to embrace both a qualitative and quantitative method, because even though a qualitative method allows for a greater understanding of the perceived environment, it reduces the anonymity for the participants. The participants therefore perhaps don't feel comfortable enough to reflect honestly about their feelings of the environment. A quantitative method also gives the opportunity to include even more members from the club and results acquired over a long period of time are easier to present and make visible.

For future research with the holistic ecological perspective in focus, it would be interesting to further investigate environments that are outside of Scandinavia. More such studies may reveal what highly successful environments have in common, and what

environments can learn from each other in order to evolve and become even more successful. In the previous study the national culture didn't show to have any significant impact on the athletes' athletic performance, but Henriksen's (2010) research in Scandinavia revealed that the national culture had some impact on the athletes, like the importance of performing well in school. Further research outside of Scandinavia would be interesting in order to see what national cultures can learn from each other, as the national culture in Scandinavia have some resemblances to each other. For instance Scandinavian athletes are generally regarded as being "team players"; it would therefore be interesting to compare cultures that differ in collectives and individualists. Each ATDE is unique, but successful ATDE share some features (Henriksen, 2010), and it would be interesting to see what these cultures have in common and what they can learn from each other.

It would also be interesting to use the holistic ecological perspectives with AGT and SDT in environments where athletes peak in an early age, like in gymnastics and figure skating. As the athletes in the previous study are in their investment years, and are expected to be at the top of their career in their late twenties and perhaps therefore permits an environment to be more mastery oriented than performance oriented. This aspect is also mentioned in Henriksen's (2010) earlier research.

Conclusion

Would you be able to recreate the successful era of "Bengan Boys"? The authors' of this study sees it as unlikely and as a unique period of time in Swedish handball. For instance, the team had to consist of exactly the right players, coaches, staff etc. that created that unique atmosphere at that specific time. It also has to be said that basically all players in that team played at the absolute highest level in the world their entire career. Something like that is unusual in handball today; the pressure and rotation of players are higher these days. The culture in Sweden is also different nowadays and so is the various other cultural movements impacting today's handball players and coaches. The authors still believe that Sweden once again can become a dominant nation in the sport of handball and could once again produce world class players on a regular basis if more clubs would consider using the holistic ecological approach as a base in their work with talented athletes.

The present study describes a Swedish handball ATDE under re-organization in the south of Sweden. It also examines and derives the ATDE success factors as intended in the objectives and finds it to be on the right track and more successful at this point than it used to be in creating senior athletes on the elite level. Within the ATDE context the study explores the motivational climate and autonomy support as perceived by members of the ATDE. The study finds a mastery climate that in many ways promotes a successful ATDE as well as autonomy support. With the re-organization in mind, there is still some work to be done in order to attain optimal functioning of the ATDE.

Connections between SDT, AGT and the holistic ecological approach are found that can deepen the understanding of ATDEs and what factors that possibly contributes to success of different ATDEs. The result also confirms earlier studies that find empirical links between SDT and AGT. The authors also find the connection between SDT and holistic ecological approach to be particularly interesting and should be studied further.

Recommendations to the club are given; first and foremost they need to work on the communication within the club, with the schools and with the families of its players. Secondly more social events should be held in order to further promote basic psychological needs as well as relationships within the club and club spirit. Sports psychology workshops are also recommended since little to no work on this is done by the club. Lastly, the authors

recommend the club to start working with injury prevention. These implications were shared with the targeted club through emails and a participant check.

The authors recognize some areas where future research would be interesting. These are to work more in depth with the same club with a focus on the holistic ecological approach but also using AGT and SDT to some extent. Further research could also involve quantitative methods in order to attain another type of result as well as results over longer periods of time. Studies of the holistic ecological approach outside of Scandinavia are scarce and therefore studies outside Scandinavia would be interesting. Lastly studies of ATDEs where the athletes' peak at a young age could be interesting to study and to find differences in.

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Informationsbrev och förfrågan till idrottare angående medverkan i en studie gällande idrottares upplevelser av stöd från sin omgivning.

Hej!

Du tillfrågas härmed att delta i en underökning där målet är att få mer kunskap om idrottares upplevelser av stöd från sin omgivning. Detta för att få en bättre förståelse för hur detta upplevs påverka motivation.

Deltagande i undersökningen är frivilligt. Informationen som samlas in kommer behandlas konfidentiellt vilket innebär att varje intervju kommer nummerkodas och att ingen utomstående kommer att kunna se vem som sagt vad när studien redovisas. Du har rätt att dra dig ur studien när som helst utan att behöva ange varför.

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Natalia Stambulova

Informerat samtycke och bekräftelse att:

- Jag har blivit informerad om studiens syfte.
- Jag har blivit informerad om hur mina svar kommer behandlas.
- Jag har blivit informerad om att jag kan dra mig ur studien när som helst.

Jag är villig att delta i denna studie för att undersöka idrottares upplevelse av stöd från sin omgivning.

Namnsteckning: _____

Namnförtydligande: _____

Datum: _____



Informationsbrev och förfrågan till tränare angående medverkan i en studie gällande idrottares upplevelser av stöd från sin omgivning.

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Namn-teckning: _____

Namn-förtydligande: _____

Datum: _____



Informationsbrev och förfrågan till manager angående medverkan i en studie gällande idrottares upplevelser av stöd från sin omgivning.

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Namnsteckning: _____

Namnförtydligande: _____

Datum: _____

Jag ger tillåtelse till att lagets och klubbens namn redovisas i studien.

Namnteckning: _____

Namnförtydligande: _____

Datum: _____

Intervjuguide för spelare

1. Respondent delges information

Etik/information

- Att det är frivilligt.
- Kan avbryta när du vill.
- Alla svar behandlas konfidentiellt.
- Fråga om lov att spela in intervjun.

2. Syfte förklaras

Syftet med studien är att undersöka stödet som idrottare upplever från sin omgivning och hur det påverkar motivationen i relationen till olika motivations och talangutvecklings teorier.

3. Bakgrundsfrågor

Vänligen berätta lite om dig själv och vilken anknytning du har till denna förening.

- Hur länge har du varit i föreningen?
- Hur kommer det sig att du hamnade i just denna förening?
- Hur trivs du i föreningen?
- På vilket sätt då?

Vilka tror du är nycklarna till personlig framgång?

4. Introduktion

Anser du att miljön i denna förening kan ses en framgångsrik talangutvecklingsmiljö?

- På vilket sätt?

5. Beskrivning av miljön baserat på ATDE

Mikro-miljö

Vad är det som hjälper dig i strävan att nå din fulla potential? Vad hindrar dig?

Hur skulle du beskriva din tränare?

- Vad är hans roll?
- Vilka är hans värderingar?

Vad anser du om de äldre spelarna i föreningen?

- Har ni någon kontakt med dem?
- Hur skulle du beskriva denna kontakt?

På vilket sätt är följande personer en del av ditt handbollsliv? (Stödande inverkan)

- Yngre spelare?
- Skola?
- Din familj?
- Experter i klubben? (T.ex. sjukgymnaster/idrottspsykologer)
- Dina vänner inom och utanför handbollen?

Makro-miljö

Finns det personer inom eller utanför handbollen som du ser upp till?

Hur skulle du beskriva ungdomskulturen?

- Vilka värderingar ser du som framträdande bland ungdomar idag?
- På vilket sätt upplever att ungdomskulturen påverkar ditt vardagliga handbollsliv?

Hur skulle du beskriva den svenska kulturen?

- På vilket sätt upplever att den svenska kulturen påverkar ditt vardagliga handbollsliv? (T.ex. jantelagen)

Relationer inom miljön

Hur ser du på föreningens samarbete med följande personer/aktörer:

- Skolan?
- Dina föräldrar?
- Andra föreningar och lag?

6. Framgångsrika faktorer baserat på ESF

Förutsättningar:

- Vad skulle du beskriva som föreningens/ lagets viktigaste resurser?
- Upplever du att föreningen har tillräckligt med resurser i termer om t.ex. pengar och antalet tränare?

Process

Vänligen beskriv hur vardagen ser ut i ert lag?

- Träning – hur ofta tränar ni? Hur är den organiserad?
- Hur ofta spelar ni matcher?
- Brukar ni åka på träningsläger?
- Har ni någon gång gemensamma aktiviteter utanför idrotten?

Organisationskultur

Vänligen beskriv vad som kännetecknar kulturen i ert lag (normer och värderingar)?

- Vänligen reflektera över en händelse som är beskrivande för kulturen i ert lag?

Har ni någon speciell symbol eller klädstil som är framträdande i ert lag?

- Vad betyder dem för dig?

Har ni några speciella traditioner? Vänligen ge exempel.

Vad har in för mål med säsongen?

- Vem har satt upp dessa mål?
- Har du haft möjlighet att påverka hur dessa mål ser ut?

Har klubben något speciellt motto/vision?

- Vad säger det?
- På vilket sätt upplever du att detta motto/vision ger sig tillkänna?

Om en spelare från ett annat lag skulle bli en del av ert lag under en vecka – vad tror du han skulle uppleva som unikt för ert lag?

Individuell utveckling

Vänligen berätta vad du anser att denna miljö lär dig.

- Vilka attityder/värderingar uppskattas i denna miljö?
- När är tränare, till exempel, nöjd med dina insatser under träning och match?
- Vilka värderingar tar du med dig från den här miljön?
- Upplever du att denna miljö lär dig någonting som kan vara till nytta även utanför handbollen?

Tidsram

Vad anser du kan göras för att göra denna miljö ännu mer framgångsrik?

Vilka traditioner anser du att man bör hålla fast vid?

Innan vi avslutar finns det något du skulle vilja tillägga, fråga eller reflektera mer kring?

Tack för att du ställde upp!

Intervjuguide för tränare/manager

1. Respondent delges information

Etik/information

- Att det är frivilligt.
- Kan avbryta när du vill.
- Alla svar behandlas konfidentiellt.
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2. Syfte förklaras

Syftet med studien är att undersöka stödet som idrottare upplever från sin omgivning och hur det påverkar motivationen i relationen till olika motivations och talangutvecklings teorier.

3. Bakgrundsfrågor

Vänligen berätta om dig själv och din anknytning till denna förening.

Hur länge har du varit i föreningen/laget?

Vilken är din roll/uppgift i föreningen?

Hur känns det att vara en del av denna förening/lag? På vilket sätt?

4. Introduktion

Anser du att miljön i denna förening kan ses en framgångsrik talangutvecklingsmiljö?

- På vilket sätt?

5. Beskrivning av miljön baserat på ATDE

Mikro-miljö

Vilka resurser anser du är viktiga för föreningen i strävan efter att era spelare ska uppnå sin fulla potential?

Vilka hinder finns?

Sett till ungdomsspelarna i föreningen och strävan efter att dem ska uppnå sin fulla potential, kan du vänligen beskriva vilken roll har:

- Tränaren?
- A-lagsspelare?
- Experter? (T.ex. sjukgymnaster/idrottspsykologer)

- Yngre idrottare?
- Vänner inom och utanför idrotten?
- Familj?
- Skola?

Makro-miljö

Låt oss nu titta närmare på hur olika aspekter i den yttre miljön interagerar och påverkar den miljö som finns i klubben.

- Utbildningsystemet – främjar det klubbens/spelarens miljö?
- Svenska handbollsförbundet?
- Media?

I förhållande till att antingen hämma eller stärka spelarnas utvecklingsmiljö, hur skulle du beskriva följande kulturers inverkan?

- Den svenska kulturen? (T.ex. Jantelagen).
- Den föreliggande ungdomskulturen?
- Handbollskulturen?
- Den generella idrottskulturen?

Relationer inom miljön

Hur ser du på samarbetet mellan lagets/föreningen sett till:

- Skolan?
- Föräldrar?
- Andraklubbar?
- Förbund?

Vad görs för att upprätthålla ett gott samarbete?

6. Framgångsrika faktorer baserat på ESF

Förutsättningar

Hur skulle du beskriva lagets/föreningens resurser sett till:

- Anläggningar?

- Möjlighet till tränarutbildning?
- Tillgång till experter som t.ex. sjukgymnast och idrottspsykologer?
- Finansiella resurser?
- Annat?

Organisationskultur

Vad karakteriserar kulturen i ert lag/förening?

Finns det några speciella värderingar som framhävs?

Om en tränare för ett annat lag att bli en del av ert lag under en vecka – vad tror du han/hon skulle uppleva som unikt för ert lag?

Har ni någon speciell symbol eller klädstil som är framträdande i ert lag?

- Vad betyder den för dig?

Har ni i laget/föreningen några speciella traditioner? Vänligen ge exempel

Har klubben något speciellt motto/vision?

- Vad säger det?
- Vänligen beskriv vilka ansträngningar du gör för att ditt lag/er föreningen ska leva upp till dessa visioner värderingar?

Hur påverkas ungdomsspelarna av att vara en del av detta lag/förening sett till?

- Färdigheter i handboll?
- Träningsattityd?
- Färdigheter som även kan användas utanför handbollen?

Tidsram

Vilken framtid utmaningar ser du för ert lag/er förening?

Vad kan göras för att göra denna miljö ännu mera framgångsrik?

Vilka traditioner anser du att man bör hålla fast vid?

Innan vi avslutar finns det något du skulle vilja tillägga, fråga eller reflektera mer kring?

Tack för att du ställde upp!

Observationsschema ESF

<p><u>Preconditions - förutsättningar</u> Finansiella Personella - Coaching and management resources Materiella - Training and accommodation facilities</p>	
<p><u>Process – vardagsaktiviteter inom föreningen</u> Träning Tävling Läger Social events</p>	
<p><u>Organizational dev. and culture</u> Artefacts - Stories and myths - Customs and traditions - Clothing, buildings, org charts Espoused values - Social principles - Norms - Goals - Standards - Visible motivation Basic assumptions - Underlying reasons for action - Beliefs - Assumptions</p>	
<p><u>Individual development and achievements</u></p>	
<p><u>Team achievements</u></p>	
<p><u>Environment effectiveness</u> Successful history of producing elite athletes</p>	

Observationsschema Need-Supportive Environment

<p><u>Relate from the other's perspective</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Värdesätta spelarnas känslor och perspektiv. 	
<p><u>Encourage self-initiation and experimentation</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Uppmuntra spelarna till att vara kreativa. 	
<p><u>Offer relevant choices</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Förse spelarna med valmöjlighet gällande regler och övningar. 	
<p><u>Calibrate for optimal challenge</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ge spelarna möjligheten att bevisa samt utmana sin kompetens. 	
<p><u>Focus on indirect rather than direct competition</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Mät framgång efter förbättring och värdera arbetsinsatsen högt. 	
<p><u>Provide meaningful feedback</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Leverera feedback som gör att spelarna upplever sig vara ansvariga för prestationen, samt att feedbacken levereras på ett sätt som inte hindrar upplevelsen av autonomi. 	
<p><u>Give a rationale for requested behavior</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Motivera varför en viss övning eller regel införlivas. 	
<p><u>Minimize use of controlling language</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ge spelarna möjlighet att reagera på den information som levereras genom att ge utrymme för frågor och synpunkter. 	

Mattias Dahl was born 1987 in Landskrona, Sweden. He is studying his third and final year of Sport Science at the University of Halmstad. This is his second study on Athletic Talent Development Environment and basic needs.

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