A Developmental Perspective of Sports Participation in the UK: Implications for Coaching

Martin Toms PhD
Matthew Bridge PhD & Richard Bailey PhD
(ICCE 2009, Vancouver)
Current Perspectives on Participant Developmental

• Balyi: *Long Term Athlete Development* – Physiological focus

• Côté: *Developmental Model of Sports Participation* – Psychological focus

• Important need for the direct consideration of socio-cultural factors

• Educational transition moments appear important (c.f. Bailey., et al, In Press)
Current Theory for DMSP

• Côté (1999) and Côté & Hay (2002)
  – Sampling \(\textit{many sports – aged 7-12}\)
  – Specialising \(\textit{1 or 2 sports – aged around 13}\)
  – Investing \(\textit{single sport focus – 14-16}\)

• \textit{Generally} model reflects the Canadian education system(s)
  – Elementary 6-12
  – Junior High 12-15
  – High School 15-18
Data Collection Methods

• Online questionnaire to sports participants (n=1,040) (sample gathered by national recruitment through: NGB’s, sports leagues, BUCS, and SportsCoachUK).

• Retrospective review of ‘organised’ sports participation between ages of 5 - 18.

• Data analysed using SPSS.
Variables Investigated

(a) Age & gender
(b) Geographical location
(c) Educational background/attainment
(d) Family background/sport involvement
(e) Sports played at each age
(f) Level achieved (School, Club, Representative [county; academy; regional], National)
(d) Hours of practice undertaken
Variables Investigated

(a) Age & gender
(b) Geographical location
(c) Educational background/attainment
(d) Family background/sport involvement
(e) Sports played at each age
(f) Level achieved (School, Club, Representative [county; academy; regional], National)
(d) Hours of practice undertaken
Educational background of the ‘elite’ performers

UK school ‘populations’: State = 85.1%; Independent = 11.9%; Grammar = 4.0%
Discussion of Key Findings

1. DMSP in the UK appears to be linked to Educational transitions:
   - Primary 5-11: Sampling starts at 11 and peaks at 15
   - Secondary 11-16: Specialising occurs around 16-17
   - Further Education 16-18 (non-compulsory) – Investing …?

2. Tendency for young representative and national athletes to maintain a wide balance of organised sporting behaviour

3. Clear need to evaluate social factors within participant development (e.g. family, socio-economic status, educational background etc)
Conclusion

- DMSP model appears to require a UK cultural context:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Côté/Côté &amp; Hay</th>
<th>Toms et al</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sampling</td>
<td>7 – 12</td>
<td>11 – 15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Specialising</td>
<td>13 – 14</td>
<td>16+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Investing</td>
<td>14 – 16</td>
<td>Does not occur</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- Influence of Educational System and Sports Policy
- Over-representation of Grammar and Independent school students in Representative & National Sport
- Significant implications for coaches and NGB’s
- Participant Development models require an interdisciplinary approach
Participant Development: an inter-disciplinary ‘BPS’ Thought

Participant Development: an inter-disciplinary ‘BPS’ Thought

Participant Development: an inter-disciplinary ‘BPS’ Thought

Bibliography


UNIVERSITY OF BIRMINGHAM