

Talent Participation & Detection

Popularity and investment into soccer has grown exponentially with thousands of young male and female players actively participating in systemic training programs in professional soccer clubs across the world (Ford et al., 2020). Despite interest in soccer, the potential talent pool is limited by socioeconomic factors, psycho-social response of low perceived competence due to early rejection during trial periods (Meylan et al., 2010). Detection of talent outside of professional football club structure is outside the scope of this review of literature. Instead, the focus will be narrowed to footballers currently participating within a soccer club's youth to a professional team-based structure. Within this context, detection of talent is further reduced in part to clubs' internal player pool and external competitive counterparts. During training and competition, the clubs' scouting, and coaching staff transition from detection to identification and onto recruitment of talent footballers suited for advancement. These interconnected processes are commonly driven by experienced coaches that consider potential predictors of professional-level football performance and receive empirical support from sport science staff. Various potential predictors and mediators of high performance in football have been identified (See Figure 1.1). More research investigation to elucidate current trends in talent recruitment is needed.

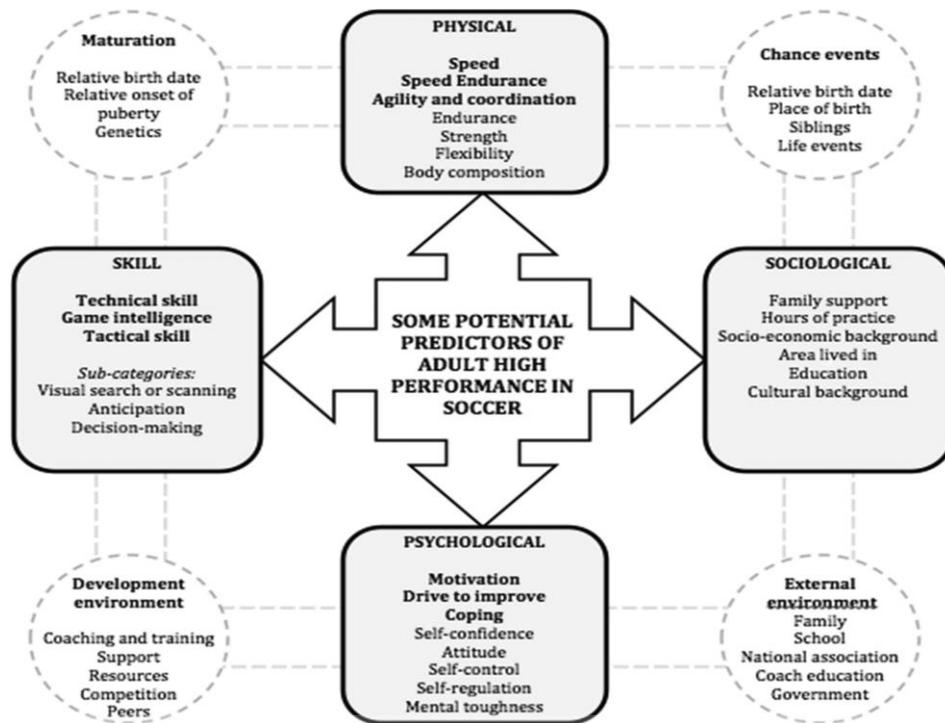


Figure 1.1 Potential predictors of adult high performance in youth soccer players from each sports science discipline, with mediating factors. **Bold** predictors denote those with at least some empirical evidence of predictive value from adolescence to adult performance level in soccer (Williams et al., 2020).

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