



- **Holistic patterns as an instrument to predict performance of promising young football players**

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Multidimensional talent models represent the current state of the art. However, it remains unclear how these different dimensions interact. Based on current theories of human development, person-oriented approaches seem to be particularly appropriate for talent research. The present study adopts this approach by looking at how a holistic system consisting of the different dimensions motivation, motor behaviour and the stage of development goes along with athletic performance. For this purpose, it has to be examined which patterns were formed by the constructs net hope (Elbe et al., 2003), motor abilities (3 motor tests; Höner et al., 2014), technical skills (3 motor tests; Höner et al., 2014) and the so far achieved percentage of the predicted adult height (Mirwald et al, 2002) and how these patterns are related to subsequent sporting success. 119 young elite football players were questioned and tested three times at intervals of one year, beginning at the age of 12. At the age of 15, the performance level the players had reached was examined (national, regional or no talent card). At all three measuring points, four patterns were identified which displayed



partial structural and high individual stability. As expected, the players showing values above average in all factors were significantly more likely to advance to the highest performance level (Odds ratio = 2.2,  $p < .01$ ). Physically strong, precocious developed players though having some technical weaknesses, have good chances to reach the middle performance level (OR = 1.6,  $p = .01$ ). Players showing values under average, have an one and a half times higher probability to advance to the lowest performance level ( $p < .01$ ). The results point to the importance of holistic approaches for the prediction of performance among promising football talents in the medium-term and thus provide valuable clues for their selection and promotion.