

THE EFFECT OF A SPORT DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME ON SPRINTING AND LONG-JUMP ABILITIES IN 10-15 YEAR OLD BOYS FROM DISADVANTAGED COMMUNITIES IN SOUTH AFRICA

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ABSTRACT

Sixty-two ($N=62$) boys between the age of 10 and 15 years from two different farm schools in the Potchefstroom district were subjected to a Talent Search testing protocol. Potentially talented athletes ($n=21$), with a mean age of 12.0 ± 1.67 years, at one of the farm schools were randomly assigned to the experimental group. A control group was selected in the same way consisting of equally talented boys from the other farm school, with an average age of 12.1 ± 1.26 years. The talented children in both groups then underwent a specific test battery designed for sprinting and long jump. Maturity was determined by means of a maturity questionnaire. The development programme contributed statistically significant to the improvement in flexibility, muscle endurance, 0-40 meter speed and long-jump ability. Explosive power, reaction time, speed endurance, acceleration and stride length did not improve. The results revealed that a development programme of 10 weeks had a positive effect on the conditioning of motor and physical abilities and skills for sprinting and long-jump in talented 10 to 15 year old boys, regardless of poor socio-economic circumstances and a restricted environment.

Key words: Performance; Sprint; Long jump; Motor development; Talent identification.

INTRODUCTION

Youth from disadvantaged communities in South Africa are confronted by social crises in regard to family, crime, violence, own identity and limitations in terms of participation in sport and recreation. The community, especially in the rural areas, is usually limited to self-built facilities and a lack of the necessary equipment results in almost no opportunity for participation in sport (Goslin, 1996). Furthermore, Chappel (2004) is of the opinion that the level of poverty in these disadvantaged communities places a further hindrance on participation in sport, as financial resources are used primarily to address the immediate social problems.

Except for socio-economic status, an individual's participation in sport is often determined by social factors, tradition, ideals, desire to participate in popular types of sport, parental pressure, a teacher's expertise and the availability of the necessary infra-structure and sporting facilities (Burgess, 2005). Other factors that could also influence participation in sport are the physiological, heredity, anthropometrical and psychological factors (Jarver, 1982; Hahn, 1990; Peltola, 1992; Bompa, 2000).