



# Stakeholders Exposition of Knowledge And Practice on Male Youth Football Programs In Addis Ababa: In View of Long Term Sport Development

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### Abstract

Modern soccer calls for better understanding, spirit, and attentiveness, the part of all involved in the business. This reinforces that stakeholders are well-versed and practice based on the facts. This in turn helps them extend unrelenting support during critical ages and stages in the process of long-term soccer player development. In achieving youth sports developmental goals having well formulated model is very crucial. In light of this, through purposeful identification of participants, this study attempted to assess understanding of coaches, administrators, players and parents and academicians. The sight of the study was Addis Ababa. The participants account on their knowledge and knowledge based practices related to models in youth soccer development programs. The study adopted a mixed research design. A total of 80 male youth soccer players and 80 families were taken as sample to fill out the questionnaire. In addition to these four academicians, 6 youth soccer coaches and administrative workers were interviewed. Mean, standard deviation and spearman correlation were employed to analyze quantitative data. The qualitative data were analyzed and organized thematically. Following the analysis it was found, comprehension of facts and related practices model in long-term youth soccer development was recognized by those who have academic background in sport science, some coaches and administrator. On the other hand, it was observed, remained administrators, some coaches, and majority of parents and players were

### Key words:-

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*found to have a disconnected and insignificant knowledge on models youth soccer development and related practices.*

## Background of the study

Football in our time has evolved towards a more developed breath taking level. At the premier level, it is fast, extremely demanding, where players of exceeding qualities make differences. AFF (2013) and Frank (2009) stated modern soccer is one of a kind that calls for the highest degree of commitment, willingness and concentration. It demands from everyone involved in order to meet fitness and tactical performance loads. Moreover, it was explained players must develop characteristics such as stamina, resilience, fast reactions, sociability, and strong nerves.

It is claimed becoming best performer at top-level demands, basic skills and right techniques already be imprinted by age of 12-13. After this age players can only catch up and patch up to mask or modify bad habits and technical differences (AFF, 2013). This is why professional clubs throughout the world are constantly searching for, or looking to develop, the latest footballing talent

(North, Lara-Bercial, Morgan & Rongen, 2014). Countries like Australia (AFF 2013), Ireland (FAI, 2004), United States of America, (UYSCED, 2012), Canada (Canada Soccer Pathway: Coaches Toolkit, n.d.), New Zealand (National Player Development Framework, n.d., [www.nzfootball.co.nz](http://www.nzfootball.co.nz)) also can serve as an example in their effort to build a well-designed soccer development programs.

Experiences of different nations illustrate importance of owning a model in sport development programs. It affirms having one which provides clear picture of relationships among essential elements and end products. Initial assessments of various sources have revealed a widespread occurrence of misconceptions and inadequate practices regarding soccer development at both the national and regional levels.

Most of researches conducted on youth soccer trainings has attempted to show challenges and prospects of programs from different researched cites. Most of them focus on facility and provisions of equipment or are single

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case studies. These researched studies have showed youth programs are not done in the way it was supposed to be. They have attempted to uncover fundamental issues that need basic reform work. However, the researcher has found these researches share common characteristics except to change of location. Moreover, most of them focused on what is visible on the surface, issues different from the one to be raised by this study. Based on anecdotal evidence, and researches mentioned above, it was comprehended youth football training and development in Ethiopia and in Addis Ababa is faced with a number of problems. Among problems that are not touched is the matter on knowledge and practice.

This research is based on a number of philosophical standpoints and orientations on striving for the right program of youth soccer development. In this regard in depth review of literature, personal experience, and informal discussions educated the researcher many involved with an impact, has gap in understanding the what, why, when, who, by whom of youth soccer developmental programs. The main participants are family and trainees, and then come coaches. The

knowledge of administrators is also fundamental. Federations are big part of these struggles. As a result, staffs need to have knowledge on what they put to order. Looking to possible knowledge basis, there exist higher institutions specializing in football coaching. Thus, academicians and their experience also need important consideration.

In the process, pre study informative interviews with government officers, academicians and coaches has exposed youth training in Addis Ababa is stifled. Duet to unsatisfactory performance, even some have witnessed the termination of some levels like the U-17 in to different program modalities. Irrespective of the thoughts in long term developmental needs of participants. Thus, this study is conducted to answer ‘what stakeholders do understand about knowledge and knowledge based practice of male youth soccer in Addis Ababa with relation to long-term sport development?’

Thus this article questions what explanation will stakeholder’s forward on the idea of a model, which is one of the pillars of soccer development programs. It is organized in manner that it introduces and presents scholarly reviews on the idea of model. Then it

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respectively forwards statement of the problem, method, result, discussion, and conclusion and finally the way forward is presented.

### Model in sport

In sport, raw talent is converted into greater competency through stubborn and regular process of preparation. Chapman, Derse & Hansen (2008) explained through proper training, athletes become faster, stronger, more skilled, knowledgeable, confident and mentally tough. Proper training enables players meet their individual performance potential through ages 18 and 21 (Dost, Hyballa, & Poel, 2016). In line with this explanation on the purpose of model and its nature is essentially proposed by different scholars and practitioners of the field (Balyi and Hamilton, 1999; Oakley & Green, 2001; Green & Houlihan, 2005; Bergsgard et al., 2007) who have underlined its importance.

Models in youth sport development prompt important consideration of purely academic and also substantiated actions in long-term youth soccer development. That can be single or combined engagement of; scholars, academies, national federations, coaches, players, parents, different scientific communities,

exercise physiologist; the list is too many. It shows level of advancement achieved in science and progress of football to a level as well, and importance of having them. In order to create sustained success at the international senior level, it is important to establish thorough and evidence-based developmental pathways. This facilitates improvement of the next generation of players (Keller, 2018). Moreover, it is recognized that a long-term development plan is needed to establish a clear path towards excellence in performance in games Reilly (2003).

Models set the overall philosophy for coaching at each stage of a young person's development. It provides structured happenings enabling trainees voluntarily engage in a seemly environment for positive development (Larson et al., 2015; Reverdito et al., 2017a in Reverdito, Galatti, Strachan, Scaglia., & Paes, 2020). World class athletes are produced through different elite sport development systems (Ridpath et al., 2019; Metsä-Tokila, 2002; Nikolai & Leigh, 2009; Houlihan & Zheng, 2013; Bergsgard, Houlihan, Mangset, Nodland & Rommetvedt, 2007; Green & Houlihan, 2005). Alexander (2000) explanation entails systems as having; a

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set of parts, inter-relationship between these parts or elements, and a coherent pattern (i.e. common purpose or objective) ensuring that the interacting parts form the whole. Nonetheless time has also showed elite sports systems of leading nations have become increasingly homogenous. Several authors state that, more than ever before, they are based around a single model of elite sports development with only slight variations (Bergsgard et al., 2007; Green & Houlihan, 2005; Oakley & Green, 2001).

As different models (Wein, 2001; Mero and colleagues, 1990; Balyi and Hamilton, 1999; and Arbeit, 1998) as cited in Stratton, Reilly, Williams, & Richardson (2004) highlighted the concepts like age and stage, training and competition, 'sensitive periods' for training, sequentially interrelation of developmental models. In addition, some of them have indicated years are required before an athlete is psychologically and physically shaped and ready for competitive performance at a high level. Laver (2016) expounded, it is through nurturing and planned development over a long period of time that their skills is harnessed to the extent that they can overcome some of their human

weaknesses. It is also claimed no player have reached elite level without a significant commitment to the process of refining and developing their soccer skills (Stratton et al., 2004).

To give way for proper understanding and implementation of a model based developmental program, comprehending the concepts of process, system, and coaches and their quality is important. It is asserted a skilled and committed workforce, most notably; coaches are the emblem of effective development system (North et al, 2014). Laver (2016) stated a coach is essential, particularly in the earlier stages when the player may not necessarily have all the background knowledge to make it into world-class soccer. It should be known not to wrong young players as miniature adults. It is important to have the right knowledge that training differs according to developmental age of the player. Consequently, it is understood considering model based development as a long-term process for young players to develop into elite players is crucial (FAI, 2004; Chapman et al, 2008; UYSCED, 2012).

In contrast to this specific understanding and general picture of

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youth football development, the venture in Ethiopia is not satisfactory (Heerden & Tariku, 2017). Lack of proper talent identification process, unattended development environment, obsolete curriculum that overlooks importance of continuance of key fundamental aspects, shortage of finance and administrative breaches, and termination of talent development process at the under-17 stage are among many problems youth training in Ethiopia is stated to struggle with (Denboba, 2014; Amare 2014; & Tamiru, 2014). These mentioned problems also expose implied message of lacking on knowledge and understanding regarding the whole process of youth training. That it is led by different modeling concepts.

### **Objective of the study**

The purpose of this study is to assess stakeholders' response on knowledge and knowledge based practice of male youth soccer in Addis Ababa with relation to long-term sport development. The focus is on currently operational category of age groups common for all centers included in this study.

### **Method**

In this study, positivist approach is used in acquiring knowledge on the objective reality through extensive literature review and collection of quantitative data. In addition, assuming knowledge is built deliberately by humans experiencing the construction process, interview is used for triangulation and getting at facts creeping through the process. Hence, interpretivism and constructivism approach are employed to understand the building factors of this reality. This assures accreditation of the process in comprehension of other domains of knowledge construction of participants. This urges the study follows a pragmatic approach. Pragmatism is based on the proposition that researchers should use the philosophical and/or methodological approach that works best for the particular research problem that is investigated (Tashakkori and Teddlie, 1998) and justifying plurality of methods (Maxcy, 2003).

### **Sampling**

In this study, four youth football projects were considered, two from government and two from private projects using random and purposive sampling methods respectively. A total of

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160 respondents (80 male youth soccer players and 80 families) were taken as a sample to fill out the questionnaire. The population for each group (the government and private programs) had size of 40 players and 40 families. On the other hand thirteen respondents (Academics = 4, Coaches = 6 and Administrators = 3) were sampled through non-probability (*availability*, *convenience* and *snowball*) sampling techniques for the qualitative part. Six (6) youth soccer coaches from government and private youth training centers are included in this study.

The academicians were selected through snowball sampling. The coaches were selected with availability and convenience sampling methods. In the case of private centers, two coaches were taken from each center through convenience sampling, while the available were taken from the government programs. The three (3) administrative workers were sampled with availability sampling. Two technical directors, one from Addis Ababa Football Federation and one from Ethiopian Football Federation, and the other administrative worker from Addis Ababa City Administration Sport Commission, took part in this study.

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### Data collection instruments

The instruments used were a questionnaire on a four point likert scale with twenty items. And unstructured interview where the researcher guided respondents to remain focused on the point of discourse.

### Method of Data Analysis

Percentile (demographics only), mean, standard deviation and spearman correlation are used to present, analyze and discuss the quantitative data. Regarding qualitative data, coding and thematic analysis resulted in ideas quoted or paraphrased, which either refuted or supported quantitative results.

### Results

In this section, analyzed statistics on items related to concepts of models of youth soccer development are presented in tables. Both parents and players have a separate segment with tables displaying mean, and standard deviations together and, spearman correlation values with separate tables. In reporting results from each table details on meaning of values obtained and relevant explanatory results from interviewees' account are offered. The presentation begins with forwarding parents responses entrenching quoted



renderings from the interview. After being through with section for parents, a section for players’ responses follows embedding explanations from the interview.

**Parents’ response on items related to model together with responses from the interview.**

The tables have five items intended to solicit parents’ perceived interpretation of knowledge and practice on models in sport and related concepts of youth soccer development. Table 1 presents mean and standard deviation values identified for each item. Results on correlation coefficients are provided in table 2 followed by description of significant outcomes.

Looking at table 1 in a nutshell depicts two items having mean scores near to the minimum value. While remaining mean scores observed are proximal to the maximum value.

The detected standard deviations show existence of minor disparity among parents’ responses. The first item in this table has mean value of 1.48 (0.75). Here it can be seen inclination of the mean towards disagreement and the standard deviation shows insignificant variations among respondents.

**Table. 1: Std. deviations, means, max and min values of items on concepts of model for parents.**

Descriptive Statistics					
	N	Min	Max	Mean	S.D
Absence of national long-term player development model (a way things should be part and how they are done leading towards a goal) of soccer is not worrying	73	1.00	4.00	1.48	.75
General attributes that define a soccer player are qualities to be developed and refined through training.	73	2.00	4.00	3.44	.60
In youth soccer training and development experience wining should be emphasized as more important	73	2.00	4.00	3.07	.84
Youth soccer player development process is highly related with biological growth changes	73	1.00	4.00	2.00	.85
There exists different long term player development models	73	1.00	4.00	2.99	.81
Valid N (list wise)	73				

This stance of parents is supported by the academician (Ac3) who clarified

*“Soccer development in our country in every region looks a part time*

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activity. It is not taken as a professional practice. We have no model and talking about model would be unrealistic. Nevertheless, do we need one? It is not to be argued. The development program I believe is done spontaneously.”

The other academician (Ac4) also explained,

“I see our model as a hunter. As a nation, we have no model that purposely develops a soccer player. If you ask me, what model would do? It could have helped manage the finance, delegate responsibilities to the right stakeholder; that is the parts to be planned and implemented by the government, federation, clubs universities, parents, schools and so on. If you have model it helps to do, follow ups on trainees’ selection, promotion, growth and progression.”

The second item with a 3.44 higher mean value and 0.60 lowest standard deviation observed in this group of items also indicates parents’ agreement on the item with a small variation among them. Moreover it can be claimed that all the interviewees in their response have consolidated that qualities of a soccer player is developed through training.

The third item with mean 3.07 (0.84) shows majority of parents are leaning to the maximum point on the scale, in spite

of minor variation among respondents. In line with this response of interviewees concerning winning games in youth developmental soccer programs can be summarized by these quoted words from academician (Ac4). He made clear that “the case in our soccer is not about development and learning, at any level it is about winning by any means”

The other obtained mean and standard deviation values are 2.00 and 0.85 respectively. The value of the standard deviation coupled with the mean value suggests majority is hanging almost half way from the extremes. However it portrays parents’ tendency to disregard relationship of biological growth and the process of player development. Relevant to this and dissenting from parents Ac2 in his response has emphasized the importance of considering biological growth in youth soccer development. He described, “Unless you developed speed at the right age you cannot have it at the latter ages. You can see this problem in other qualities also and it is observed on many of our elite players”.

The last item in this section has an observed mean of 2.99 (0.81). These two obtained values illustrate that the majority of participants are leaning

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towards the maximum value with low variability. Suggesting they are acquainted with the presence of different types of models. In relation to this, responses obtained from interviewees showed that only one of the administrator and all the academicians have attempted to name some models most importantly the LTAD. A work formulated and reported by Balyi and Hamilton ( 2000).

The part to follow presents results of correlation coefficients for items based on table 2. This analysis is intended to clearly understand consistency of respondents as they scale their report. Furthermore, on top of blending soft and hard data employing another statistical tool adds a value in the triangulation process.

Table 2: Correlation Coefficients and Level of Significance on Concepts of Model for Parents.

Correlations	Absence of national long-term player development model	Wining should be emphasized as more important	Qualities to be developed and refined through training.	Highly related with biological growth changes	There exists different long term player development models
Qualities to be developed and refined through training.	-.06	.19	1.00	-.24*	.22
Highly related with biological growth changes	.16	.17	-.24*	1.00	.19

\*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

The coefficients displayed in table 2 are ‘r’ values for items from table 1 correlating with each other. This is done to understand the strength mean values have in illustrating parents suggestions in being defined and consistent.

one relationship with ‘r’ -0.24 significant at  $p \leq 0.05$ . This lonely but worthwhile affiliation to mention is negative and weak. This insignificant result shows respondents were not able to assert general attributes of soccer player to be developed is highly related with biological growth changes.

The analysis conducted in this category among items has showed only

Table. 3: Descriptive statistics values of items on concepts of model for players.

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Items	N	Min	Max	Mean	SD.
Absence of national long-term player development model (a way things should be part and how they are done leading towards a goal) of soccer is not worrying	73	1.00	4.00	1.59	.85
Skills that signify a soccer player are qualities that are developed and improved through training	73	1.00	4.00	3.32	.78
Winning at any cost is more important in youth soccer games.	73	1.00	4.00	3.22	.85
Youth soccer player development process is highly related with biological growth changes (e.g. Change in height, weight, brain development etc.)	73	1.00	4.00	2.36	1.14
There are different long term development models with relation to youth sport.	73	1.00	4.00	2.92	.88

**Players’ response on items related to model together with response from the interview**

Items in table 3 and 4 solicit players for their version of clarification on concepts of models and related facts. Table 3 presents identified mean and standard deviation values while table 4 forwards correlation coefficients based on players response. Items in this theme ensuing presentation of statistical results are clarified based on what is observed. The first item of this section has observed mean on this variable is 1.59(0.85). The mean is close to the minimum value of the scale, exhibiting the disagreement to the statement. That is respondents have claimed absence of a national model is something to worry about. The standard deviation with small infringement

suggests majority of respondents are not far from the mean. From the interview it was identified importance of a model was more understood by academicians than the other interview participants. However, some coaches and administrators were not even clear in answering questions related to models.

The second item in Table 3 has a detected mean 3.32(0.78). The mean is near to the maximum value and the standard deviation shows the great majority are not far from the mean. This indicates they consider training as an important part of youth soccer development programs. In relation to this point interviewees in general have also reiterated the importance of appropriate training in their explanation of different

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points on long term sport development programs.

The third variable in theme two has mean 3.22(0.85). The mean is near to the maximum value and together with the low variation indicates respondents' agreement that winning games is crucial in youth programs. On the other hand, interviewees account on this element is different than players. One of the academicians (**Ac4**) explained "*the case in our soccer is not about development and learning, it is about winning by any means*". In addition to this one of the coaches (**Co6**) described his desire stated as:

*"We do not have many game days. It is very limited. I wish we had weekly games and strived to work on the development process. We want to win any match we are able to play. However, I try to give chance for every player. Even, if it is a couple of minutes."*

The mean value of 2.36(1.14) is observed on the fourth variable. The mean is a little above the lower margin of the agreement section of the scale. The standard deviation shows a significant dispersion among respondents on

existence of relationship between player development process and biological growth changes. It illustrates a substantial size of participants lie far from the mean. In relation to this, to benefit from youth soccer, interviewees have explained the need to recognize biological growth changes. Regarding this item the other coach (**Co3**) stated, "*Though we are not able to employ it here, in our country, however it is a must to observe developmental stages players are currently in*".

The last variable from table 3 has an observed mean of 2.92(0.88). The mean and standard deviation indicate majority of respondents with minimum difference agree on the presence of diverse youth sport development models. Accounts of academicians among interviewees on concepts related with this item asserted their familiarity with availability of different youth sport long-term development models. Unlike the other interviewees, except one of the administrators (**Ad2**), they mentioned a number of models and commonly the famous Long Term Athlete Development Model (LTADM).

Being through with the mean and standard deviation analysis and

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presentation spearman correlation analysis presented down here. In this analysis, five significant relations were observed. The magnitude of most relationships found exhibited in table 4 shows a weak to moderately weak interaction. The 'r' value - 0.47 significant at  $p \leq 0.05$  is observed between "absence of national player development model is not worrying" and "winning is more important in youth soccer games." This is a moderately weak negative relationship. In such inverse relationship therefore it is

expected the surge in one brings a decline in the other. The other observed 'r' value is 0.35 significant at  $p \leq 0.05$  shows a relatively weak positive connection between statements "absence of national player development model is not worrying" and "player development is highly related with biological growth." The obtained value shows existence of a positive relationship between these two variables.

**Table. 4: Correlation coefficients and level of significance on concepts of model for players.**

Items	Absence of national player development	Skills are developed and improved through training	Wining is more important	Player development highly related with biological growth	There are different long term player development models
Absence of national player development model	1.00	-.05	-.47**	.35**	.06
Skills are developed and improved through training	-.05	1.00	.14	-.50**	.28*
Wining is more important	-.47**	.14	1.00	-.30*	.03
Player development highly related with biological growth	.35**	-.50**	-.30*	1.00	.13
There are different long term player development models	.06	.28*	.03	.13	1.00
N	73	73	73	73	73

\*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

However, this relationship is refuted by the content of the statements themselves. That is nonexistence of player development model is not worrying then considering biological facts would not relate to conception of fundamental

ideas. That is common in long-term youth soccer development activities.

The 'r' value -0.50 significant at  $p \leq 0.05$  is observed between variables stating "player development is

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moderately related with biological growth” and “skills that signify a soccer player are developed and improved through training.” This detected moderately strong negative value shows suggestion of players that these two variables have inverse relationship.

Another analysis done was between variables stating “skills that signify a soccer player are developed and improved through training” and “there are different long term player development models”. The ‘r’ value found is weak. That is 0.28 significant at  $p \leq 0.05$ . This ‘r’ value, though weak displays presence of positive relationship on these two variables. That is availability of different long-term development models influences skills to be developed. Based on obtained mean and standard deviations coupled with this result it can be assumed respondents have showed consistency in relation to these concepts.

The last significant and negative relationship was detected between the variables “winning is more important in youth soccer games” and “player development is highly related with biological growth”. The observed ‘r’ value at  $p \leq 0.05$  is  $-0.30$ . This displays

the analysis has produced a relatively weak and negative association. This result shows that as the focus for winning is intensified considerations related to biological growth in youth sport is impacted or the other way round.

### Discussions

The analyses of data have resulted in some statistical and thematic patterns. This enabled the writer to discuss results obtained from different respondents in combination. The discussion is organized on a succession based on their appearance in the tables.

Therefore, response on item 1 shows parents and players recognize absence of model for soccer development at national level as an issue to be recognized. In addition to interviewees’ explanations indicated they understand a model as a better path for reaching a goal. One benefit discussed by interviewees is that, it gives accountability and financial structure to the system of youth soccer development. Furthermore, they have discussed that “*it is not to be argued that we need one, though our nation have no model that purposely develops a soccer player, it should be noted it helps on selection, promotion, growth,*

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progression , and follow ups on trainees”  
Acd1.

The result on item 1, convey a fair section of participants have shown a level of knowledge on the importance of model in youth soccer development. In relation to this authorities like, Bergsgard et al (2007); Green & Houlihan (2005); Oakley & Green (2001); & Reverdito et al., (2017a) in Reverdito et al, (2020) have clarified model as a significant consideration in development of youth sport.

The values and thematically tailored responses of participants portrays that they recognize training improves soccer qualities. Majority of parents and players showed agreement with little strayed respondents. Interviewees in general have also asserted youths should be properly trained so that they can serve their country as well as themselves by developing and enhancing their skills. Scholars (Aggerholm, 2015; Frank, 2009 and Chapman et al., 2008) have given a detailed explanation on nature and aspects of sport and soccer training. That is all the discussion on sport is about realizing a training program which is appropriate through consideration of

myriad important inputs (Sneyers, 2007; Dost et al., 2016; Ziegler, and Shi, 2011).

In relation to item 3 the presentation of results from statistical values indicates that majority of players and parents indicated that they value winning as an important in youth soccer games as the process. To the contrary, the focus on winning is criticized by interviewees. Their explanation addressed that stakeholders at many instances display a desire for winning at any level at any cost. With the same token Balyi, Way, Higgs (2013) mentioned competition as one among ten of the factors in the LTAD model. They spell out that it helps coaches understand variety of points. They also exposed the fact parents, administrators, and politicians define success based on the outcome.

This being the experience models of Wein (2001), Mero and colleagues (1990), Balyi and Hamilton (1999) and Arbeit (1998) in Stratton et al (2004) discussed concepts like age and stage, training and competition, ‘sensitive periods’ for training and they provided vital considerations. They explicated that years are required before an athlete is psychologically and physically shaped and ready for competitive performance.

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Moreover Maughan (2009); Chapman et al, (2008) and Fung (1999) asserted positive personal development as the greatest reward of training and competition in developmental programs but not winning.

The reaction of parents and players on the existence of relationship between player development process and biological growth changes is found to be different. The majority of parents with minor deviation declared their disagreement on the relationship of biological growth and process of player development. This exposes the inconsistency of parents' knowledge on the matters of long-term youth soccer development. On the other hand, the result for players that is a mean inclined towards the maximum point indicated agreement of the majority. However, the standard deviation shows existence of a significant dispersion among respondents where a substantial size of participants lie far from the mean.

In relation to this, interviewees have explained the need to recognize biological growth changes. In support of this one of the coaches (Co3) reacted as *“Though we are not able to employ it here, in our country, however it is a must*

*to observe developmental stages players are currently in”*. In addition to this dissenting from parents stance one of the academicians (Ac2) in his response emphasized importance of considering biological growth in youth soccer development. He specified, *“Unless you developed speed at the right age you cannot have it at the latter ages. You can see this problem in other qualities also and it is observed on many of our elite players”*. Study results (FAI, 2004; Reilly, 2003; Stratton et al, 2004; Maughan, 2009; Kuhn, 2005b) have repeatedly indicated fundamentals of sports and soccer as well are developed before entering the ages after peak height velocity (PHV). In clarifying this point scholars (Stratton et al., 2004; Williams & Reilly, 2000; and Haywood & Getchell,2001) stressed the need for understanding facts in growth and maturation. And an overriding consideration in under-age soccer being the young player is still growing. Therefore, they argued stages of development demands matching of ability to training intensity and competition.

The result on the last variable from participants suggests majority of respondents with minimum difference

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agree on the presence of diverse youth sport development models. Accounts of academicians among interviewees on concepts related with this item asserted their familiarity with availability of different youth sport long-term development models. Unlike the other interviewees, except one of the administrators (**Ad2**), they mentioned a number of models and commonly the famous Long Term Athlete Development Model (LTADM). In this regard Wein (2001) in Stratton et al (2004) gives a detailed soccer development models for both girls and boys based on age and stage.

The mean values and standard deviations show participants have a level of knowledge on the importance of model and existence of different models on player development. However, during the analysis of the other items it was evident parents fail to acknowledge that player development is a process and has relationship to biological growth. This entails parents knowledge on the essence of model in youth sport development is to be questioned. In addition to this as parents, also does players perspective on the importance of winning games indicates they both are short of concepts

in youth sport development model and its process.

The correlation values resulted in the analysis are intended to show presence of consistency in substantiating indications made by respondents. In relation to this obtained significant “r” results are discussed. Here the number of identified significant results for parents and players are discussed separately. They differ in number, direction and content of relationship.

Consequently the only obtained significant “r” value for parents is on the concept of the natural relationship training has with biological growth. No need to mention a multitude of scholars has showed that these two items are related. However the detected ‘r’ value in this case is negative and weak. This absence of linearity in relationship is in line with indication of the mean and dispersion values for the second item presented earlier. That is parents with great deviation have not preferred to decisively indicate the relationship of biological growth and training. Nevertheless, mean of parents for the first item indicated their huge inclination in agreement to the statement. Thus, these contradictory responses of parents

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suggest presence of a level of awareness on youth sport development model is unlikely to be taken as a substantive knowledge.

On the other hand the inverse relationship suggests the presence of a national model would affect in changing the focus on winning at youth soccer development programs. That is if stakeholders are more worried about absence of a model they would have been concerned on important points in the developmental process other than winning.

If there had been a national model winning would not have been given priority. In the previous explanations of notions from the interview unveiled it is a development plan or a system to be followed that envisages and captures every activity. Coaches and administrators explained winning is not the main aim of youth development programs. For most part of the discussion, they have linked everything to availability of a **system** or a **path** to be followed. They repeatedly answered “*we do not have a model or a system*” to lead the efforts made by individuals and groups. They further described almost

every scene in our football practice is result oriented. .

The other observed ‘r’ value is 0.35 significant at  $p < 0.05$ . The obtained value shows existence of a positive relationship between these two variables. However, this relationship is refuted by the content of the statements themselves. That is nonexistence of player development model is not worrying then considering biological facts would not relate to conception of fundamental ideas. That is common in long-term youth soccer development activities.

The third ‘r’ value is -0.50 significant at  $p \leq 0.05$ . This inverse affiliation suggests disregarding biological growth will positively affect development and improvement of soccer players. To the reverse though forwarded a number of times, interviewees in general never indicated the idea of training without directly or indirectly referring to level or considerations of biological growth. However majority of players with slight variation have earlier demonstrated consensus on these statements. Despite this, further analysis has resulted in an inverse relationship. This proposes respondents were not consistent in their

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conception of determining elements in youth sport development tenets.

At many instance clarifications of different models on youth sport development by scholars intensively discussed proper training and growth as natural to player development program. As a result it is expected that these two items have a positive relationship. Stratton et al (2004); Williams & Reilly (2000); and, Haywood & Getchell (2001) stressed the need for understanding facts in growth and maturation. It is also claimed physiological and psychological building blocks of soccer excellence are laid down during the growth process (Reilly, 2003; Tofler & Butterbaugh, 2005 in Maughan, 2009).

The fourth “r” value is 0.28 significant at  $p < 0.05$ . This “r” value, though weak displays presence of positive relationship on these two variables. That is availability of different long-term development models influences skills to be developed. Based on obtained mean and standard deviations coupled with this result it can be assumed respondents have showed consistency in relation to these concepts.

The fifth “r” value is  $-0.30$  significant at  $p \leq 0.05$ . This suggests winning would

not be prioritized if there is awareness on the relationship of biological growth and process of youth soccer development. The result on these two statements influences each other in reverse.

Here the analysis indicated presence of inverse relationship. However, during the analysis of mean and standard deviation, soliciting understanding on winning, players have suggested, winning as important. This result hints inconsistency in their indication of knowledge related concepts in youth sport development activities. Additionally, highlighting the case one of the academicians (Ac4) clarified the fact with this simple statement “*winning is not the main element of youth soccer*”. Here it is vital to know that a good share of interview informants designated winning as a supplementary component of youth training.

### Conclusion

In the analysis, using mean and standard deviations parents and players showed some indications of possession of information on concepts of model in youth soccer development with recognizable deviations. However, the evaluation using correlation, whether they were able to indicate knowledge and

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practice on concepts of model is interconnected was found to be superficial. In most of the analysis using correlation, items that have significance were weaker in magnitude. Moreover, parents and players were giving some contradicting indications on items with similar intentions. Thus, it can be concluded knowledge on the concept of model in youth soccer development and its practice among parents and players is insufficient. Among the interviewees, it was observed academicians all in all, some of the coaches and one of the administrator are more informed on concepts of model in long-term youth soccer development. There were coaches and administrators found to indicate unfamiliarity with gross facts regarding use of model in long-term youth soccer development.

In general, importance of having a model, owning systematic and structural organization in view of stage transition is recognized by those who have academic background in sport science, some coaches and an administrator. On the other hand, it was observed some administrators, some coaches, and majority of parents and players were found to have a disconnected and insignificant knowledge on model in

long-term youth soccer development and related practices.

### The way forward

This article is anticipated to play a greater role in clearly depicting the importance of building knowledge so that practices are not done with impulse and spontaneity. Rather with a properly formulated model with all sorts of concerns addressed. Therefore it must be known every stakeholder should have a good level of knowledge. And play their part in building the knowledge which in turn will observe the practice. To sum up due to limitations mentioned is not conducted broadly. However, it had showed stakeholders are not on the same page inhibiting positive change. Therefore, the researcher suggests to largely conducting this study throughout the country.

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