



## The Formation of Talent in the Sports Field: The Transfer of Formative Processes in the Field of Education to the Young Football Player

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### Abstract

The overall objective of this doctoral thesis was to improve the processes of identifying and developing gifted young football players, and the specific objectives were: 1) to determine the reliability of the evaluation of gifted football players; 2) to create a reliable detection instrument; and 3) to ascertain the technical-tactical differences between gifted and non-gifted football players.

The research had two phases. First, a study was conducted with 103 football players to analyse the differences shown in the following performance indicators: influence on the team, goals/shots, aerial duels, penalties, entries and short and long passes. Secondly, an instrument to detect gifted young football players (Nomination Scale for Identifying Football Talent) was validated within the academy of a professional football club that plays in Spain's second division. A total of 201 players and 11 coaches participated. The effective processes carried out in education to identify students with high intellectual capacity were adapted: inclusion of coaches, parents and peers in the evaluation process. Thirdly, the performance of the 33 players identified in technical-tactical play was analysed, comparing their performance with that of the non-gifted players. The instruments used were the Game Performance Evaluation Tool and the Tactical Evaluation System in Football.

The results showed that the performance indicators were not reliable as a measure to evaluate gifted players. The instrument designed and validated was valid and reliable to be used in detection processes. The teammates best discriminate the gifted players. Very strong performance was shown in the players considered gifted compared to the sample of players not chosen.

Finally, the importance of using validated tools when identifying and training football players is highlighted with the goal of avoiding biases in the selection of gifted young football players.

**Keywords:** sports initiation, physical education, giftedness, teaching, high capacities

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