

Vol 6 Number 1 • ISSN 2830-3342



#### **Management in Elite Sport:**

### Jawa Barat Rowing Elite Athlete Development Strategies

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#### **Abstract**

The sports coaching strategy implemented by sports coaches allows athletes to be interested in or learn about the sport, to be consistent in continuing to practice, and to be at a level of training with high competition. Stakeholders in sports development range from governments and legal authorities to sports organizations and other key parties such as athletes, coaches, and sponsors. This research aims to examine elite rowing coaching by the Indonesia Rowing Sports Management Organization (PODSI) and the role of various stakeholders in supporting the sports coaching process. The research method uses the attraction, retention, transition, and nurturing (ARTN) framework to explore the role of rowing stakeholders in initiating or delivering programs and strategies. The ARTN framework was chosen because it offers a managerial and organizational (i.e., meso level) approach to studying elite athlete development. Results and Conclusions: This research suggests that the strategic process for developing elite rowing athletes in West Java consists of 3 stages, attraction, retention, and transition, depending on the PENGPROV, PENGCAB, PPLP, and several clubs in the West Java region implemented PODSI initiation. Meanwhile, at the nurturing stage, the implementation of elite athlete management was mainly carried out by PENGPROV West Java and continued by PB PODSI at the national elite athlete stage.

Keyword: Rowing, Elite Athlete, Elite Athlete Development, ARTN Methode.

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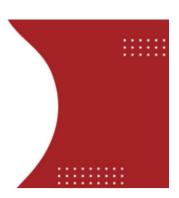
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Vol 6 Number 1

ISSN 2830-3342



#### Introduction

The coaching of elite athletes by national sports federations of organizations regulating them is financially dependent on government funding (Berrett & Slack, 2001; Green & Houlihan, 2006; Winand et al., 2013). Funding for sports organizations is often based on achievements (Sam, 2012; Sotiriadou et al., 2006) and based on the results of athletes in multievent championships such as the Olympics or other international championships (De Bosscher, Shibli, Westerbeek, & van Bottenburg, 2015; Green & Houlihan, 2006; Green & Oakley, 2001). The need to consistently succeed has motivated sports federations to improve their sports development practices and elite pathways and create sports development plans and strategies (Sotiriadou, 2013).

As a result, many sports utilize the Long-term Athlete Development (LTAD) framework (Balyi & Hamilton, 2004) as a platform for designing their elite development path (Ford et al., 2011; Lang & Light, 2010). Moreover, the LTAD framework is primarily a training tool (Ford et al., 2011) based on general principles from the literature on physical training, physiology, and motor learning (Holt, 2010). Many other athlete development frameworks emphasize different key characteristics or developmental stages of athlete development, depending on the disciplinary background (e.g., Bloom, 1985; Côté & Fraser-Thomas, 2007; Wylleman & Lavallee, 2004). Much of this framework starts from the athlete's perspective (i.e., micro-level). It identifies how factors such as training load, motor skill development, specialization, coach and parent involvement, and academic level change at different stages and transitions in athlete development. This framework does not provide knowledge from an organizational or managerial perspective (i.e., mid-level) that would explain how sports organizations develop or support different phases of sport development (Sotiriadou & Shilbury, 2009, 2013). Moreover, this framework neglects who is involved in sports development, how they are involved, and with what results (Sotiriadou & Shilbury, 2013, p. 144). Consequently, there is a gap between models of athlete development (i.e., micro-level) and the meaning of these models in practice at the organizational, club and other stakeholder levels (i.e., mid-level) (Greyson et al., 2010).

This also occurs in sports organizations in Indonesia, where national sports development by the national federation (PB) depends on athletes' success in international multi-event championships. As a policy and funding provider, the Ministry of Youth and Sports (KEMENPORA) evaluates the performance of sports organizations through the success of these sports in getting medals in multi-event championships or single international events. In line with the national policy, this also needs to be a review of the policies that occur in sports organizations in the regions/provinces. Nationally, the policy for achievement sports in Indonesia currently prioritizes the grand design of national sports



Vol 6 Number 1 + ISSN 2830-3342



(DBON), with 14 sports being prioritized. Rowing is among the 14 sports of concern to the government because of its success at the Southeast Asia, Asia and Olympic levels.

Responding to this gap, this study examines elite rowing coaching by the Se Indonesia Rowing Sports Management Organization (PODSI) and the role of various stakeholders in supporting the sports coaching process. Specifically, this study uses the attraction, retention, transition and nurturing (ARTN) framework (Sotiriadou et al., 2008) to explore the role of rowing stakeholders in initiating or delivering programs and strategies. The ARTN framework was chosen because it offers a managerial and organizational (i.e., meso level) approach to studying elite athlete development. The two research questions that guided this investigation were: (1) 'What is the role of sport development stakeholders in the elite player development pathway?' and (2) 'How is the elite path modeled in rowing?' the ARTN framework in sport-specific settings and adds an understanding of the role of stakeholders and their player support in shaping elite development pathways in rowing. West Java Rowing became the object of this research because of its success in becoming the overall champion at the 2016 and 2020 Pekan Olahraga Nasional (PON).

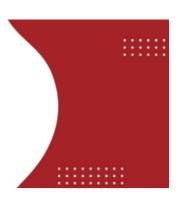
### **Sport Development Stakeholder**

The sports coaching strategy implemented by sports coaches allows athletes to be interested in or learn about the sport, to be consistent in continuing to practice and to be at a level of training with high competition (Green, 2005; Sotiriadou, 2013). Stakeholders in sports development range from governments and legal authorities to sports organizations and other key parties such as athletes, coaches and sponsors (Sotiriadou et al., 2008). The study results show that policymakers and actors implementing these policies will be different subjects. Governments and national federations usually act as strategists for the development of sports. Meanwhile, coaches, managers and sports development officers play a role in implementing this strategy (Sotiriadou, 2009).

In Indonesia, the main policy maker in national sports is the Ministry of Youth and Sports (KEMENPORA), stipulated in the sports system law number 3 of 2005 (UU SKN No.5 2005) and amended into law number 11 of 2022 concerning sports. This law states that sports are all activities that involve the mind, body and soul in an integrated and systematic manner to encourage, foster and develop physical, spiritual, social and cultural potential. The policy by the Ministry of Youth and Sports regarding funding to increase national sports achievement is contained in the Presidential Regulation of the Republic of Indonesia number 95 of 2017, which states that funding by the state through the Ministry of Youth and Sports is given directly and managed by the national sports federation (Pengurus Besar) without going through other organizations. Apart from the Ministry of Youth and Sport and the Executive Board (PB), other national sports organizations that have contributed to the process of implementing the policy are the Indonesian National Sports Committee (KONI) and the Indonesian Olympic Committee (KOI).



Vol 6 Number 1 • ISSN 2830-3342



The government agency at the provincial and regional levels as the driving force for national policies in the regions is the Youth and Sports Agency (DISPORA). In West Java, the West Java DISPORA implements the national policy to the regional sports federation (PENGDA) through the West Java KONI. Implementation at the regional level is certainly not in line with the policies provided by the Ministry of Youth and Sports based on Presidential Regulation Number 95 of 2017, where funding is provided and managed directly by sports federations without going through other parties or institutions. This, of course, needs to be harmonized so that regional policies, programs and contributions are aligned and in line with national sports goals.

### **Elite Athlete Development Strategies**

Sports development stakeholders want to produce elite athletes who are successful at national and international levels of multi-event sports. Therefore, a strategic approach is needed to develop elite athletes (De Bosscher, De Knop, & van Bottenburg, 2009). Consequently, researchers are focused on identifying elite development strategies, policies, services, or resources that contribute to the development of successful elite athletes (Böhlke & Robinson, 2009; De Bosscher, De Knop, van Bottenburg, & Shibli, 2006; De Bosscher, De Knop, van Bottenburg, Shibli, & Bingham, 2009; Digel et al., 2006; Truyens et al., 2014). Examples of sports development strategies that contribute to the development of elite athletes include coaching programs, facilities, training, promotions, competitions or events, talent identification, talent coaching and athlete support. Although there is agreement among sport policy researchers about the elements that must be provided to develop elite athletes, "very little is known about how sports systems should manage their elite services (Böhlke & Robinson, 2009) or how stakeholders convey their strategies to shape a roadmap. Elite athlete development.

The rowing coaching program in West Java is supported by rowing organizations at the city and district levels, as well as the involvement of other parties, such as academics at the Faculty of Sports and Health Education (FPOK) at the Indonesian University of Education (UPI) in the development of sports science. In addition, the West Java DISPORA also conducts training for potential young athletes in the Student Sports Education and Training Center (PPLP) program. Student-athletes and potential athletes at the city and district levels will be selected to become athletes at the regional training level (Pelatda) of West Java. Athletes who have the potential to experience a training center process for two years by Pengcab and two years by Pengda. Furthermore, athletes with potential at the provincial level will be selected and become elite athletes at the national level.

#### Theoretical Framework: The Attraction, Retention/Transition and Nurturing Process

Sotiriadou et al. (2008) developed the ARTN framework, which details three distinct but interrelated processes of sport development. These processes are attraction, retention/transition and



Vol 6 Number 1

ISSN 2830-3342



nurturing. The attraction process aims to increase public awareness of sports programs and the benefits of sports participation, encouraging them to join sports clubs and play sports. Often this process also aims to nurture a large number of young participants who have the potential to become elite players (Sotiriadou & Shilbury, 2013). Retention/transition is a process whereby a series of policies, including development programs and competitions/events, are implemented to identify talented junior athletes to the highest sporting level' (Sotiriadou & Shilbury, 2013, p. 146). As this definition implies, the retention/transition process includes the talent identification and development stages. It focuses primarily on helping the most talented junior athletes acquire the skills to succeed internationally. Finally, nurturing is 'the process by which development programs and practices are adapted to individual athletes, teams or sports to achieve the best performance on the national and international sporting stage' (Sotiriadou & Shilbury, 2013, p. 146). During the coaching process, stakeholders coordinate their efforts to adapt their strategy to achieve success at prestigious international events and competitions and maintain a culture of continuous success at the highest level.

#### **Method**

This study uses qualitative research methods to explore (a) the development paths of elite rowing athletes and (b) the role of stakeholders in initiating and delivering these pathways.

#### **Participant**

For this exploratory study, semi-structured in-depth interviews were conducted with national rowing experts. Participants consisted of trainers, heads of federations, and policymakers at the West Java province youth and sports service, a total of 10 people.

#### Result

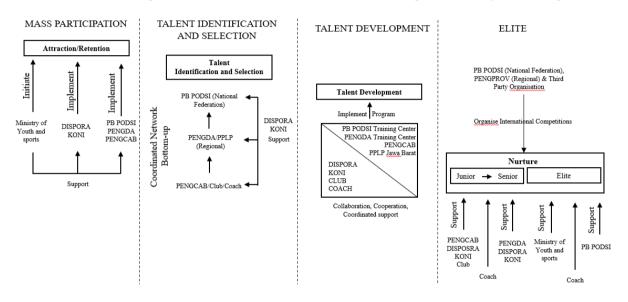
The higher-ranking categories reveal that stakeholders (i.e., the national federation, city/district administrators, provincial administrators, trainers, PPLP, and third-party organizations) are involved in the four development processes. This process is specific to rowing development and includes (1) attraction and retention, (2) talent identification and selection, (3) talent development, and (4) nurturing. National Federations and trainers emerged as stakeholders consistently involved in all four development processes. However, their roles manifest differently in each process. Figure 1 shows how stakeholder roles vary for each of the four processes. Figure 1 is presented by the researchers based on the conclusions from the results of interviews conducted with all participants.



Vol 6 Number 1 - ISSN 2830-3342



Figure 1. Stakeholder Involvement and Elite Development Pathways in Rowing



KEMENPORA, DISPORA, KONI, national federations and regional federations are the main stakeholders during the attraction and retention process in rowing sports. Specifically, KEMENPORA provides programs, facilities and other forms of support to PB PODSI, while DISPORA and KONI in the regions coordinate with PEMDA to implement the program. The role of federations in the regions in attraction and retention is to ensure that participants/prospective athletes have great first and ongoing experiences and meet the basic requirements to become prospective rowing athletes. The attraction and retention process in West Java is carried out by clubs or federations of cities and districts in two ways. The first is to carry out mass promotions in schools and communities, which the regional DISPORA finances through KONI. Second, prospective athletes are attracted because they are motivated by elite athletes who have excelled and can increase their income due to large achievement bonuses. Corresponding 3 summarizes the interaction between the national and regional federations: 'The regional federations implement all the programs, but the national federations provide information, training, support, programming support, much of the information that regional federations can implement and use in their programs.

In emphasizing the role of government in the regions, they are Corresponding two states that the municipal government or city government agencies mainly provide rowing facilities at the level of mass participation. Governments should ensure sufficient facilities that are affordable and accessible all year round. Corresponding 1 illustrates the relationship between facility accessibility (number of lakes), rowing availability, and development as follows: 'If you do not have enough [training facilities], or are not accessible enough, it is challenging to expand the talent of athletes and



Vol 6 Number 1 - ISSN 2830-3342



in turn, very difficult to offer sufficient training opportunities to help the athlete develop.' Concerning the cost or costs of facilities, experts have repeatedly stressed that regional federations need 'affordable facilities' (HPD 1) because 'access to facilities is crucial. Cost should not be too expensive to play (corresponding 1).

In the talent identification and selection process, nationally, KEMENPORA provides program support and funding to the national federation to carry out a selection of talented athletes throughout Indonesia. AS THE EXECUTOR, PB PODSI (National Federation) will coordinate with PEMDA and PENGCAB to select junior high school students as potential athletes with specific conditions set by PB PODSI. Children or students who are declared gifted according to criteria will receive further recommendations from KEMENPORA and PB PODSI to obtain training facilities under the regional federation or PPLP.

In West Java itself, the identification and selection process certainly involves third parties/government organizations as providers of financial support. In the policy process, the initiation must be carried out by the West Java PODSI federation to a third party, namely KONI. At the regional level, there are differences in policy from the national one, where the use of funds must go through KONI first. Therefore, each program, such as talent identification and selection carried out by the West Java PODSI regional federation, must be submitted in advance to KONI, which is different from the national level where KEMENPORA directly appoints and assigns programs to be implemented by the National Federation (PB PODSI). In addition to federations in the regions, the government has a student education and training center (PPLP) under the auspices of the West Java DISPORA. PPLP also selects students who will later become student-athletes and receive school facilities and training centers funded by the regional dispora.

In talent development, athletes in the city and district will receive facilities provided by the respective city and district councils. Training centers in cities and regencies throughout West Java province have different facilities because the funds from each city and district differ. Athletes in cities and regencies will be prepared to face the PORPROV multi event held every four years. Athletes who have good performance and achievements at PORPROV will be promoted to the Training Center at the regional/provincial level. The weakness of the talent development process carried out by cities and districts is that the process is only event preparation. So the training center process is not continuous but only a few months before facing the PORPROV event. This impacts athletes who do not get promotions to the regional/provincial level and will find it challenging to develop due to the lack of facilities for daily training. Corresponding 4 highlighted the need for stakeholders to coordinate talent identification and selection. For example, one correspondent stated that the process is firm in his city 'because of the coordination between the clubs, local officials, and the federation. That is because of the network established by local officials who know which sports



Vol 6 Number 1 - ISSN 2830-3342



work well with children (corresponding 5). Meanwhile, according to the expert (corresponding 1), during the talent development process, 'talented players must stay as long as possible in their training center' and 'they should not be kicked out of their training center until they are 14 years old, they should still live with their families (corresponding 6). At some point, 'When they [the athletes] develop too much, and the region cannot support them sufficiently, they need the possibility to go to the regional or national center' (corresponding 1). However, correspondent 2 suggested that it 'depends on the area. The kids can stay longer if it is a big area with many coaches, facilities, and talented players.

In addition to publicly available systems that support player development through national federations, national federation training centers, and regional federations, several experts highlight the importance of academia in elite player development. For example, Specialist 1 explains: 'In an ideal world, you need strong clubs and maybe a network of academics, and then, in addition, you need national federations to have their structure to allow players the flexibility to train through that system.' Specialist 7 claims that the success of rowing 'was a collaborative effort between the West Java regional federation and sports academics in West Java.' However, Specialist 2 admits: 'We [PODSI JABAR] have to work closely with academics and trainers. It is a tough job, but we have to do it.

Coaching elite players can be divided into two stages: (1) transitioning from junior to senior level and (2) maintaining or increasing the senior rank at the elite level. Although regional federation support to players during the first stage was significant, the results show that this support is moderate during the second stage when players are at the elite level at the national level. Nevertheless, national federations continue to provide international competition opportunities to all players in the coaching process in collaboration with other stakeholders. Experts indicate that the support of regional federations during the transition from junior to senior level is significant because of the complexity of this transition. Corresponding nine shows: When athletes commit to becoming elite players, it is the most challenging transition from junior to senior athletes. That is when they need the most support; the magic formula will differ for every player. However, regional federations generally give them much support when they transition to seniors.

Professional athletes receive coaching and support from regional-level federations in the Senior Process. The West Java Province Rowing Training Center, which is provided to meet all the needs of athletes, such as accommodation and training equipment, is supported and provided by the West Java PODSI Pengda. Professionally athletes are prepared to face the National Multievent (PON), and even in professional preparation, athletes get salaries and bonuses if they excel at the event. The experts note that in the nurturing process, it is essential that the 'federations host events in their own countries and provide players with the opportunity to compete and potentially earn money



Vol 6 Number 1

ISSN 2830-3342



in such events. That is a massive form of support for players (corresponding 9). In particular, Corresponding Ten shows that national federations need to provide entry-level pro-competitive opportunities that will help their players start on the rankings; they need a place to start. Experts emphasize that organizing international competitions requires national federations to cooperate with other stakeholders such as clubs and local governments.

#### Discussion

This study applies the ARTN framework (Sotiriadou et al., 2008) in the rowing of West Java province to examine the role played by stakeholders along the path of elite development. The study results show that national and regional federations, coaches, and third-party government organizations are involved in all athlete's coaching processes. However, the findings show that stakeholders' roles, influence, and involvement are specific to each development process. For example, during the attraction and retention process, Dispora was an organization that implemented national policies in the regions. Then, in the talent identification process, the role of the Dispora shifts to the budget provider in supporting activities in the region. During talent development, youth sports provide athlete support at national and regional training centers and opportunities for competition and sports science and sports medicine support to players. Furthermore, Dispora provides extensive support to players transitioning from junior to senior levels.

The theoretical contribution of this research lies in identifying stakeholders and their role in the initiation and implementation of support services that support various processes of the rowing elite development path in the province of West Java. The findings of this study offer organizational and managerial perspectives on the role of national and regional federations, coaches, academies, and third-party organizations during different sports development processes. By examining the path of elite players from an organizational perspective and identifying the stakeholders involved in the sports development process, this Meso-level analysis complements previous studies of talent development frameworks that have used a micro-level perspective (e.g., Bloom, 1985; Côté & Fraser Thomas, 2007; Wylleman & Lavallee, 2004). In addition, this research responds to sport-specific studies (e.g., Greyson et al., 2010; Sotiriadou et al., 2008) as it advances rowing-specific knowledge. Finally, this study extends the application of the ARTN framework (Sotiriadou et al., 2008) by (1) examining the process of development at the elite level in a particular sport, (2) applying it to an international context, and (3) using insights from the stakeholders involved, directly in the path of elite players.

The research results show that identifying and selecting talent occurs at the national and regional levels, where federations play an essential role in measuring talented players. In addition, the findings show that regional federations need professional, motivated, and equipped coaches to



Vol 6 Number 1

ISSN 2830-3342



work with children. Therefore, national federations can facilitate clubs to have coaches with a wide range of knowledge and expertise, from working with children to identifying and selecting talent (Pankhurst, 2013). Retaining talented players at the regional level for as long as possible requires well-resourced people with quality facilities, qualified coaches, and a talent pool matching their skill level during training. This finding aligns with the literature found in other sports, such as swimming (Greyson et al., 2010). Overall, clubs and their coaches are pressured to professionalize their services, reflecting findings from previous research on stress regarding clubs and similar personnel (e.g., Sotiriadou & Wicker, 2013). Research also shows that most local federations in cities and counties need more financial means, facilities, expertise, or coaches to support athletes through the development and nurturing process (Wicker & Breuer, 2011). Therefore, it is suggested that national federations invest further in quality, well-resourced local federations and well-educated club coaches. In addition, as Bayle and Robinson (2007) note, national federations can use quality certification systems for sports clubs and offer promotional materials and financial support to reward clubs in return for investment and commitment to quality. Additionally, experts highlight the complexity of talent identification and the need for clear guidelines used in the process. As a result, experts see talent identification as a new process that depends on clubs and coaches. Therefore, talent identification is seen as a process in which coaches suggest players with visible potential rather than a process of predicting inherent talent.

Finally, third-party organizations are emerging as essential stakeholders in the organization of international tournaments. Existing research shows that countries that want to be successful in sports aim to host all levels of competition because it allows players to participate in international-level tournaments without traveling abroad (Filipcic et al., 2013; Reid et al., 2007). This study shows that national federations and third-party organizations play a role in organizing the competition. Thus, this study confirms the emerging role of commercial third-party organizations in developing elite athletes (Newland & Kellett, 2012; Philipps & Newland, 2014).

#### **Conclusion**

This study demonstrates that sport-specific application of the ARTN framework is necessary for sports policymakers to draw practical implications for national, state, and local sports organizations and private sports organizations engaged with elite player development strategies and services. The standing and experience of the experts participating in this study lend strength to the depth of knowledge they contribute. However, because these experts work within different sports systems, the same terms (e.g., club, national sports association) likely have different meanings or connotations for them (e.g., Henry, Amara, Al-Tauqi, & Ping Chao, 2005). Therefore, future research is needed for a country-specific (and sport-specific) examination of the role of stakeholders in the development of elite athletes.



Vol 6 Number 1

· ISSN 2830-3342



One of the main stakeholders in developing elite athletes who were not involved in this study is the elite players themselves. The opinions and experiences of elite athletes on elite pathways can offer additional insights into the findings in this research that will enable sports policymakers, organizations, and regulatory bodies to better understand players' sports development needs. Additionally, elite players' opinions on elite player development will provide feedback on perceived barriers to elite player development.

Given the increasing role of clubs and the emergence of the private sector in developing rowing players, future research should include representatives from clubs, private academies, and other third-party organizations to explore their interactions further and investigate how they contribute to talent development. It is therefore suggested that future research takes an open systems perspective examining how sports organizations (e.g., national federations) interact with private organizations in an ever-changing environment (Chelladurai, 2014). Understand the critical role of the private sector in commercial sports where third-party organizations (e.g., commercial tournament organizers, management firms, private academies) operate alongside traditional and institutionalized sports development pathways (Newland & Kellett, 2012; Phillips & Newland, 2014). The possibility of private sector involvement leads to variations in how elite sport development is delivered within commercial sports. Furthermore, future research is needed to test emerging models of elite sport delivery in commercialized sports.

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Vol 6 Number 1

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Vol 6 Number 1 • ISSN 2830-3342



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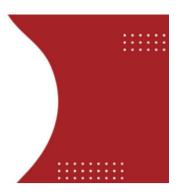
Vol 6 Number 1 + ISSN 2830-3342



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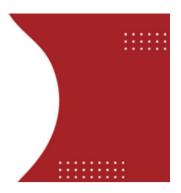
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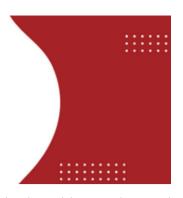
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