



**UNIVERSIDADE DE COIMBRA**

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Faculdade de Desporto e Educação Física

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**ECOLOGIES OF PRACTICE IN TWO DIFFERENT CLUB  
SETTINGS AND ITS INFLUENCE ON ADOLESCENT SOCCER  
PLAYERS**

**COIMBRA**

**2013**

**MÁRCIO LUIS PINTO DOMINGUES**

**ECOLOGIES OF PRACTICE IN TWO DIFFERENT CLUB SETTINGS AND ITS  
INFLUENCE ON ADOLESCENT SOCCER PLAYERS**

Doctoral thesis submitted to the Faculty of Sport Sciences and Physical Education, University of Coimbra in conformity with the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy on Sport Science.

**COIMBRA**

**2013**

## DEDICATED TO

...my little "penguin" Santiago, a little  
force of nature!

## Acknowledgements

Just as there is ecology of youth sport participation, so there is an “ecology” of writing a PhD. Regarding athletes in isolation from their context is a narrow outlook that fails to do justice to the various environments within which they function. In the same way writing a PhD involves a supportive environment comprising many people.

When I first started to encounter the long path that took me to this point where I am now, all the way back to secondary school, I had one thing in mind: willingness and determination in securing this road. Of course lots of ups and downs, bumps and crannies alongside. These moments only happen if you have well-structured support around you and I wish to say that...my parents are a blessing from God and it really isn't an overemphasized statement. I also dedicate this to my geek brother, another restless spirit...and of course my “second” mother, my grandmother, for her endless nurturing.

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## Resumo

Através de uma abordagem ecológica o aspecto inovador do estudo examinou os processos de desenvolvimento, características pessoais e sociais, factores contextuais, e elementos de tempo que podem estar ligados à participação desportiva em clubes de futebol contrastantes. Os objectivos e principais resultados estão divididos por estudo:

Estudo 1 tentou identificar o comportamento de jovens atletas num clube de orientação social que pode ser influenciado pela participação desportiva. O estudo contribuiu para caracterizar como outros significativos (pai, treinador, director) determinam o desenvolvimento e participação dos jovens e tentou estabelecer uma ligação entre o contexto social e as relações dominantes.

Estudo 2 teve como objetivo determinar como as práticas ambientais e outras pessoas significativas (pais, diretores, treinadores), operam na formação de experiências desportivas em atletas jovens imersos em ambientes sociais desfavorecidos. De igual forma determinaram os factores facilitadores e/ou disruptivos na participação desportiva dos jovens.

Estudo 3 examinou as influências contextuais e atitudes e comportamentos sociais de jovens atletas da sua participação desportiva num clube profissional. Os jovens reconhecem que os pais são importantes agentes de socialização desportiva e que a relação diádica com o treinador revela-se importante na percepção do clima bem como na estrutura de treino.

Estudo 4 determinou percursos à participação desportiva, relações dominantes e influências contextuais num ambiente orientado para o profissionalismo através da perspectiva dos seus actores sociais (pais, treinadores e directores). O estudo reforça a importância do clima de treino criado pelo treinador na participação desportiva dos jovens.

Estudo 5 procurou descrever o efeito do contexto de prática desportiva nas atitudes e percepção do clima motivacional analisando as atitudes pró-sociais e racíono moral bem como clima de treino num ambiente de orientação profissional e social. Os resultados evidenciam aspectos chave quando se pretende um bom clima de treino e o desenvolvimento futuro do atleta jovem.

**Palavras-Chave:** Jovem Atleta – Ecologia – Bronfenbrenner – Participação Desportiva – Contexto Prática

## **Abstract**

Through an ecological approach the innovative aspect of the study examined developmental processes, personal and social characteristics, contextual factors, and time elements that may be linked to youth sport participation in contrasting soccer clubs. Objectives and main conclusions are divided by the underlying studies:

Study 1 attempted to identify the behavior of young athletes in a social oriented club in sport that can be influenced by sport participation. The study contributed to characterize how significant others (father, coach, manager) determine youth development and tried to establish a link between the social context and dominant relationships.

Study 2 aimed at determining how environmental practices and significant others (parents, directors, coaches) alongside operate in shaping sport experiences in young athletes immersed in deprived social surroundings. Researchers tried to determine which factors were conducive and/or disrupted to sport participation.

Study 3 examined contextual influences and social attitudes and behaviors of young athletes in their sports participation in a professional oriented club. Youngsters recognize that parents are important sport socializing agents that and the dyadic relationship with the coach proved influential in the motivational climate perceived by them as well as the training structure.

Study 4 determined pathways sport participation, dominant relationships and contextual influences in a professional-oriented environment through clubs social actors' perspective (parents, coaches, and directors). The study reinforces the importance of coach created climate on youth sport participation.

Study 5 attempted to describe the effects of two sport contexts on attitudes and perceived motivational climate analyzing pro social attitudes and moral reasoning, as well as training climate in a professional and social setting. Results showed that the club's sporting environment provided key features to establish and foster good training climate and young athlete's future development.

**Keywords:** Youth Athlete – Ecology – Bronfenbrenner - Sport Participation – Sporting Context

## **Co-Authorship**

Prof. Dr. Carlos Gonçalves is co-author of the five manuscripts (Chapter 2-6) and Prof. Dr. Fernando Cavichioli is co-author of three manuscripts presented in this thesis (Chapter 2, 4, 5 and 6).



## Table of Contents

<b>Dedicated to</b> .....	ii
<b>Acknowledgements</b> .....	iii
<b>Resumo</b> .....	v
<b>Abstract</b> .....	vi
<b>Co-Authorship</b> .....	vii
<b>Table of Contents</b> .....	viii
<b>List of Tables</b> .....	xiv
<b>CHAPTER 1: GENERAL INTRODUCTION</b> .....	1
Ecological Framework .....	1
Linking the Ecological Framework to Youth Sport.....	1
Youth Sport and Current Issues .....	2
Study 1: Social Dimension and Construction in a Deprived Sport Club .....	3
Study 2: Significant Others in a Social Oriented Club.....	4
Study 3: Talent Youth in a Professional Oriented Club.....	4
Study 4: Interpersonal relations in a Professional Oriented Club .....	4
Study 5: Context and Time Effect in two Contrasting Football Clubs.....	5
<b>CHAPTER 2: A DIMENSÃO SOCIAL DE UM CLUBE DESPORTIVO DE BAIRRO NOS SUBÚRBIOS DO PORTO E PERCEÇÃO DOS OUTROS SIGNIFICANTES NA SUA CONSTRUÇÃO</b> .....	6
Abstract .....	6
Metodologia.....	8
Amostra.....	8
Procedimentos .....	9
Recolha de Dados .....	10
Análise de Dados .....	10

Desenho da Pesquisa.....	11
Informação Demográfica e Biográfica .....	11
Apresentação dos Resultados.....	12
Identidade, Iniciativa e experiências .....	12
Relações Sociais .....	13
Skills Sociais e comportamento .....	15
Integração social e network de adultos .....	17
Outros Significantes e Experiências .....	18
Discussão.....	18
Desenvolvimento pessoal e auto melhoramento .....	18
Processos Proximais e Interações Sociais .....	19
Contexto Desportivo e Realização .....	21
Conclusão .....	23
Referências .....	25
<b>CHAPTER 3: VOLUNTARY SOCIAL SPORT CLUB AND YOUTH SPORT EXPECTATIONS: A QUALITATIVE STUDY .....</b>	<b>36</b>
Abstract .....	36
Methods .....	38
Participation .....	38
Data Collection.....	39
Procedures.....	39
Data Analysis .....	39
Reliability and Validity.....	40
Results .....	41
Personal Development and Self-Improvement .....	41
Proximal Processes and Social Interactions .....	41

Sport Context and Achievement .....	42
Discussion .....	43
Conclusion .....	47
References.....	48
<b>CHAPTER 4: PERSPECTIVAS ECOLÓGICAS NA DETERMINAÇÃO DE PERCURSOS DESPORTIVOS CONTRASTANTES EM JOVENS FUTEBOLISTAS EM CONTEXTO PROFISSIONAL.....</b>	<b>55</b>
Abstract.....	55
Metodologia.....	57
Amostra.....	57
Recolha de Dados.....	58
Análise de Dados.....	59
Fiabilidade.....	60
Apresentação dos Resultados.....	61
Dados sócio-desportivos do Futebol Federado em Portugal e Ligas Profissionais .....	61
Identidade, Iniciativa e Experiências.....	62
Relações Sociais.....	62
Aptidões Sociais e Comportamento.....	63
Integração Social e Network Adultos.....	64
Outros Significantes e Experiências.....	65
Discussão.....	66
Conclusão.....	70
Referências Bibliográficas.....	72
<b>CHAPTER 5: TALENT DEVELOPMENT AND ECOLOGY OF PRACTICE IN A PROFESSIONAL CLUB.....</b>	<b>82</b>

Abstract.....	82
Methodology.....	86
Participants.....	86
Data Collection.....	86
Procedures.....	87
Data Analysis.....	87
Validity.....	88
Results.....	89
Parent’s Socio-Demographic Data and Sport Competitive Structure.....	89
Semi-Structured Interviews from Significant Others.....	90
Personal Development and Self-Improvement.....	90
Opportunities for life enduring skill construction through sport.....	90
Relationship with the club, family and support efficacy.....	91
School integration and expectations toward sport.....	92
Proximal Processes and Social Interactions.....	93
Climate in the club through significant others’ importance and inherent values.....	93
Nature of relations, possible outcomes and supported efficacy.....	94
Sport Context and Achievement.....	94
Clubs’ mesosystem defined and its larger social influence.....	95
Clubs’ identity and experiences through their historical path and community proximity.....	95
The clubs’ sustainable structure and internal organization.....	96
Discussion.....	97
Conclusion.....	99

References.....	101
<b>CHAPTER 6: ECOLOGICAL DETERMINANTS OF PERCEIVED CLIMATE AND SPORT ATTITUDES AMONG YOUNG SOCCER PLAYERS.....</b>	<b>112</b>
Abstract.....	112
Methodology.....	115
Participants.....	115
Measures.....	115
Perceived Motivational Climate in Sport Questionnaire – 2 (PMCSQ-2)	
.....	115
Sports Attitude Questionnaire/SAQ.....	115
Procedures.....	116
Data Analysis.....	116
Results.....	117
Attitudes toward Sport.....	117
Perceived Motivational Climate.....	117
Discussion.....	118
Conclusion.....	122
References.....	124
<b>CHAPTER 7: GENERAL DISCUSSION, SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS</b>	
.....	<b>137</b>
Contextual Factors.....	137
Personal Development.....	138
Proximal Processes.....	139
Time.....	140
Future Directions.....	140
Implications.....	141

References.....	142
<b>APPENDIX A.....</b>	<b>145</b>
<b>APPENDIX B.....</b>	<b>147</b>
<b>APPENDIX C.....</b>	<b>150</b>
<b>APPENDIX D.....</b>	<b>152</b>
<b>APPENDIX E.....</b>	<b>154</b>
<b>APPENDIX F.....</b>	<b>156</b>
<b>APPENDIX G.....</b>	<b>158</b>
<b>APPENDIX H .....</b>	<b>160</b>

## LIST OF TABLES

### CHAPTER 2

Table 1	Categorias Principais e grupos de respostas COS.....	33
Table 2	Dados relativos à prática desportiva no COS.....	34
Table 3	Estrutura familiar dos grupos desportivos do COS.....	35

### CHAPTER 3

Table 1	Major categories and groups of responses.....	54
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### CHAPTER 4

Table 1	Categorias Principais e grupos de respostas COP.....	79
Table 2	Atletas Formação em Clubes com Equipas Sêniores Profissionais .....	80
Table 3	Dados Sócio-Desportivos dos Jovens do COP.....	81

### CHAPTER 5

Table 1	Field Descriptive Analysis.....	107
Table 2	POC Biographical and Socio-Demographic Data.....	108
Table 3	Portugal Professional Leagues. Season 11/12.....	109
Table 4	Dimensions, Categories and Group of Responses.....	110
Table 5	Labels of Interviewed Others.....	111

### CHAPTER 6

Table 1	Multivariate Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) on SAQp extracted dimensions.....	130
Table 2	ANOVA analysis over two sub-scales of SAQ.....	131
Table 3	Multivariate Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) on PMCSQ-2p extracted dimensions .....	132
Table 4	ANOVA analysis over two sub-scales of PMCSQ-2 .....	133
Table 5	Correlations Matrix between PMC and SAQ Factors.....	134

Table 6	Mean changes and chances that the true difference in the changes is substantial .....	135
Table 7	Multilevel Regression Analysis.....	136



## **Section 1: General Introduction**

Three main outcomes have been suggested to emerge from youth sport participation, namely physical health, improved motor skills, and the development of psychosocial skills (Côté & Fraser-Thomas, 2007). As competitive youth sport becomes increasingly professionalized (Gould & Carson, 2004), it is crucial to look at this particular sport context in order to correctly understand mediated mechanisms through which youth sport evolves. An ecological approach has been suggested as a framework to study processes through sport, the person within a sport context, as well as the context itself.

### **Ecological Framework**

The ecological theory refers to the notion that human development and human behavior are the materialization of person-context interactions (Bronfenbrenner, 1995). For Bronfenbrenner, the ecological environment, unique to each individual's situation, is seen as a series of nested and interconnected structures. The innermost structure is the individual. He suggests that individuals possess developmentally instigative or personal attribute characteristics that invite, inhibit, or prevent engagement in sustained, progressively more complex interaction with and activity in the immediate environment (Bronfenbrenner, 2005). The remaining four nested structures range from the immediate face-to-face setting to the more remote setting of the larger culture. From an ecological perspective, a multi-disciplinary approach to studying youth development, e.g. who participates, how an activity is carried out and why an activity is undertaken, is an important element with implications for development.

### **Linking the Ecological Framework to Youth Sport**

The ecological constraints of sport are distinguished by constraints of each individual performer and physical characteristics of participation locations for athletic activities, but also by social and cultural factors surrounding performance (Araújo et al., 2004, 2005). Important is the acknowledgement that, as Bronfenbrenner suggests, supporting processes within these overlapping environments are “engines” for development. As well,

Bronfenbrenner (2005) proposes that these engines are context-, time-, and process-dependent.

The delivery of positive sport programs rests squarely on the shoulders of those who lead, namely coaches, parents, and other adults in the setting. Most of the studies in the field of sport sciences that described personal characteristics of athletes have used analytical designs, in which one dependent variable (e.g., motivation, anxiety) is investigated at a time (Kavussanu & Roberts, 1996, Vlachopoulos & Biddle, 1996, Papaioannou, 1998, Dunn et al., 2000). García Bengoechea and Johnson (2001) used the PPCT model to explain interactions and outcomes within youth sport.

### Youth Sport and Current Issues

This current investigation was divided into two great blocks of information each of which regarding specific and important fields of interest, underlying important considerations that ultimately consume researchers' worries and time.

Sport participation in social deprived communities point several questions that the researchers attempted to answer. Sport gained a new dimension in modern society due to social concerns about health, economy, pro-social values, and personal and community development. In fact, new urban form interventions in modern societies have the potential to result in lasting influences on the behavior of large populations of youth as they can either serve to constrain or promote physical activity (van Loon, & Frank, 2011).

The study's implied meaning is that framing the club's climate in a deprived context with different social backgrounds and meanings may contribute to enhance positive social desired skills in underserved youth; these opportunities will markedly attempt to depart young athletes from anti-social and delinquent behaviors. The ecological framework used provides an opportunity to develop consistent applied research in sensible social environments as well as to discriminate and foster positive relations that can be consistent through sport developmental programs. Meeting the concerns of institutions and educators about youth participation in deprived areas has direct implications for physical and psychological well-being, social inclusion and the development of community bonding.

Similarly, talent development programs are a very hot topic and sometimes misunderstood in the way they are developed. This research made noticeable the interaction of different sports actors in young talent development. This appropriation reflects how an interdependent talent development sport program depends upon a set of contextual favorable characteristics. Research highlights the role of sporting experiences in promoting positive development in a markedly performance climate. There is a need to further understand organizational influences at a micro level (practice settings, success factors in sport, parents and coach's influence, perception of roles) focusing on proximal relationships that are key in specialization.

Research on talent youth highlights that the road to excellence in sport is a long term endeavor that comprises several ever growing concerns. In the promotion of young talent's holistic development they need the joint action of several conditions including appropriate environmental factors and social atmosphere that can foster a pronounced mastery climate conducive to performance development.

Context plays an important role in the growth of youth in sport. Coaches hold an important status in the sporting environment but other extended contextual factors, namely parents and peers as well as the effect of other social networks and community influences affect the developing athlete as well (García Bengoechea and Johnson, 2001). As talented young people are motivated to pursue sport at an elite level, others are enrolling in sport as a social mean that needs to be further analyzed and understood, especially when they come from contexts and backgrounds with different social meanings. Therefore, the study was divided into five interconnected and interrelated studies:

#### Study 1: Underserved Youth in Social Oriented Club

The study attempted to identify young athlete's perceptions of sport participation in a social oriented club. It was discussed how influences of interpersonal context in a deprived social club determine the development of attitudes and behaviors of youth athletes. Clarifying the contributions on how significant others (father, coach, manager) are able to develop youth participation this study highlights the potential importance of sport in the lives of

young people. The perspective on which a sports club has a social meaning is discussed as public politics need to address the roots within these structural forces in youth sport as pointed in the study. After analyzing young athlete's perception of their involvement the study 2 will highlight how significant other in that particular deprived milieu understands the significance of sport.

#### Study 2: Significant Others in a Social Oriented Club

This second study demonstrated how environmental practices and significant others shape sport experiences, building and clarifying related social assets of community living economically and socially underserved milieu. It attempted to describe the physical and organizational structure of voluntary social sport club and also inquire about the individual and collective responsibilities of other significant as they relate intimately to the youngsters perceptions. The way interpersonal relations in a social sport environment influences the development of youth athletes convey important pathways to sport development. This sporting context in a specific social deprived milieu launches the seed to study 3 where a differentiated ecological context develops a more professional sport career orientation.

#### Study 3: Talented Youth in a Professional Oriented Club

At this point, contextual influences of young athletes in their sports participation in a professional oriented club were analyzed. Interpersonal and intrapersonal dimensions of sport participation were discussed and three important actors were identified, parents, coaches and peers. In this sense, young athletes reinforce the need to develop a mastery oriented climate as a key factor in their path towards professional sport. Professionalism and recognition were two important assets present in young athletes' perceptions. Social significance of sport with its inherent social mobility heavily determines the athletes' sporting lives. These perspectives are conducive to different conditions, more competitive behaviors and a more perceived mastery oriented climate with positive effects on their social life. The results suggest the need to better understand organizational influences at a micro level (practice settings, success factors in sport, parents and coach's influence, perception of roles).

#### Study 4: Interpersonal relations in a Professional Oriented Club

This study focus on significant others perceptions of young athletes sport participation. It combines talent and the idea of professional sport career with the definition of what a professional context should be. The study also comprises social-educational perspectives of sport participation and life learning skills. Young athletes' environment needs to be changed accordingly to encourage change. These results suggest new avenues of research in the way of youth sport talent management and the look for sport contextual determinants. Implications for applied practitioners and researchers are explored. The appropriation reflects how an interdependent talent development sport program depends upon a set of contextual favorable characteristics as this research highlights the role of sporting experiences in promoting positive development in a markedly performance climate. The study points to specific aspects of adolescents' participation in sport talent environment that can be used to realize the educational potential of organized youth sport.

#### Study 5: Context Effect on Training Climate

This study investigated context effect on the relationship between perceived motivational climate and social–moral functioning. The findings illustrate the importance of studying motivational climate in contrasting sporting environments as it is important for coaches, parents, and sport policy makers to understand the benefit of sport and its potential to assist in youth development. The study also stresses that motivational climate is itself a multifaceted phenomenon with an interplay between social and personal determinants. Perceptions of a mastery-involving coaching climate emphasis would be a positive predictor of a more narrow focus on athletes' growth and development as well as to influence athletes' sport experiences. Establishing key determinants in interpersonal relationships and environmental characteristics can both foster youngsters' development inside sport and help them gain skills to be successful outside this specific arena.

**Chapter 2: A Dimensão Social de um Clube Desportivo de Bairro nos  
Subúrbios do Porto e Percepção dos Outros Significantes na sua  
Construção**

*Artigo publicado no Annals of Research in Sport and Physical Education*

**Abstract**

O desporto tem sido amplamente usado como instrumento social. O estudo foca as experiências desportivas e 12 atletas sub-16 e sub-14, num clube social e tenta examinar as percepções e expectativas dos jovens atletas. Procura entender os factores contextuais que influenciam a participação desportiva e tenta determinar a direcção, forma e qualidade das relações interpessoais estabelecidas. A perspectiva segundo o qual um clube desportivo tem um significado social é discutido. Usando observações, entrevistas de grupo e análise documental com jovens atletas na organização desportiva ao longo de um ano, a equipa de pesquisa obteve resultados positivos na procura de determinantes do contexto em ambiente desportivo de equipa. As políticas públicas para o desenvolvimento destes resultados nos jovens precisam de endereçar a raiz situada dentro destas forças estruturais, como apontadas no estudo.

A participação desportiva dos jovens tem sido alvo de intenso estudo tanto por grupos de pesquisadores (De Knop, Wylleman, Theeboom, De Martelaer, Van Hoecke & Van Heddegem, 1999; Scheerder, Thomis, Vanreusel, Lefevre, Renson, Vanden Eynde & Beunen, 2006; Casey, Eime, Payne and Harvey, 2009); Jakobsson, Lundvall, Redelius & Magnus Engstrom, 2012) como por instituições governamentais (Sport Canada, 2003; Sport for Social Change Network Southern Africa, 2012). Diversos estudos têm relacionado o desporto jovem organizado numa variedade de contextos sociais e programas desportivos (Skille & Waddington, 2006), bem como programas de intervenção comportamental (Smith, Smoll & Christensen, 1996) e organizações governamentais (NCYS, 2008) e através de um sem número de instituições sociais cuja legitimização se encontra nos potenciais benefícios educacionais do desporto jovem.

Segundo dados recentes de Portugal (2011) o desporto federado tem vindo a perder atletas nos últimos anos. Em 2010 eram 518.968 atletas sensivelmente metade de 2006. Relativamente aos escalões de formação existem em Portugal e até ao escalão de Juniores 290.169 atletas em todas as modalidades, sendo que existe o triplo de atletas masculinos em relação ao sexo feminino. Em relação ao futebol o número total de atletas inscritos tem aumentado e ronda os 148.000 actualmente.

O movimento de programas de desporto organizado para crianças e jovens tenha tido a sua génese no fim do séc. XVIII e início do séc. XIX (Shields & Bredemeier, 1995), o tempo livre dos jovens é altamente estruturado sob várias formas organizacionais e as comunidades têm estabelecido diferentes programas para o envolvimento dos jovens em programas desportivos (Podilchak, 1983). O desporto pode promover o desenvolvimento pessoal e social positivo em jovens (Côté, Strachan e Fraser-Thomas, 2009) e presumivelmente actua como forma de desenvolvimento e mudança social em alguns *clusters* sociais pertencentes a sub culturas fixas Giddens (1991).

A partir deste pano de fundo torna-se importante determinar a sua envolvência, comprometimento e investimento no desporto federado e consequentemente as reciprocidades nesta relação do desporto como local de prática e edificação de costumes e práticas sociais. Com efeito, nos últimos anos tem sido alvo de atenção o ênfase no desporto jovem com relação à

participação e adesão e a sua ligação a um estilo de vida activo na adultície (Vanreusel, Renson, Beunen, Claessens, Lefevre, Lysens & Vanden Eynde, 1997; Perkins, Jacobs, Barber & Eccles, 2004; Scheerder et al. 2006; Gonçalves, Carvalho & Light, 2011) como contributo para desenvolvimento dos jovens (Lau, Fox & Cheung, 2004; Bengoechea & Streat, 2007; Coakley, 2011).

Sendo este um processo eminentemente cultural (Rogoff, 2003), pesquisadores veêm o desenvolvimento dos jovens como função da interacção entre os indivíduos e características do seu ambiente e contexto social (Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 1998). A dinâmica da relação entre o indivíduo e os contextos sociais formam, por conseguinte, a base do comportamento e mudança no desenvolvimento (Lerner, 2002).

Torna-se então importante determinar a importância do contexto (De Knop, Wylleman, Theeboom, De Martelaer, Van Hoecke & Van Heddegem, 1999) na análise determinantes sócio-ambientais de performance e mais especificamente o contexto de bairro social como preditivo de comportamentos correlativos de suposta função social do desporto. O estudo pretende também verificar o conjunto de relações interpessoais determinantes para a prática desportiva e equacionar a participação desportiva com o desenvolvimento na perspectiva dos jovens em comunidades desfavorecidas.

## **Metodologia**

### **Amostra**

Participaram no estudo 12 jovens constituindo dois grupos iguais de intervenção experimental nos dois escalões referenciados, Juniores B (sub17) e Juniores C (sub 15) do Clube de Orientação Social (COS). Os dados foram recolhidos e analisados a partir de um clube de bairro social durante um período de um ano desportivo de 2010/2011.

Os 12 participantes foram entrevistados em grupo por escalão e foram seleccionados pelo treinador de acordo com os papéis que ocupam no seio da equipa, ou seja, mais disciplinado, mais irreverente, capitão, sub-capitão, melhor jogador e jogador com maiores necessidades. Esta escolha serve o propósito do trabalho de investigação porque serão os casos extremos que



melhor irão explicar as categorias que estão em análise no guião de entrevista pré-estabelecido. Os escalões foram igualmente observados ao longo da época desportiva através da participação observante e recolha documental num total de mais de 60 horas de observação dividido em dois períodos, início e fim de época desportiva.

#### Procedimentos

O questionário sobre a informação demográfica foi cruzado com a informação do pai ou guardião. Como algumas perguntas eram retrospectivas pela sua natureza, este procedimento aumentou a fiabilidade da informação providenciada (Law, Côté, & Ericsson, 2007).

A comissão de ética da Universidade dos pesquisadores aprovou o estudo. Para aceder à comunidade foi utilizada uma abordagem de contacto via e-mail a explicar em sùmula o trabalho a desenvolver e posteriormente foi feita uma aproximação aos elementos-chave da organização desportiva. Foi agendada uma reunião introdutória para servir de explicação do propósito, procedimentos e detalhes do estudo. Depois de conseguido um consentimento informado do COS prévio à realização do estudo e depois da observação de campo de forma a perceber a mecânica do clube procedeu-se às entrevistas de grupo.

Antes de começar as entrevistas de grupo com os participantes, certificou-se que os mesmos percebiam na íntegra o propósito e a natureza do estudo e como os resultados podiam ser utilizados. As entrevistas decorreram numa sala nas instalações do clube devidamente equipada e com conhecimento dos dias das entrevistas ao vice-presidente, coordenador do futebol juvenil do clube e treinador respectivo. Todas as entrevistas foram gravadas em áudio por equipamento especializado da marca Olympus VN-8600PC. No final do dia as entrevistas eram transcritas *verbatim* e confirmadas novamente através do gravador para actualizar a transcrição. Os entrevistados são identificados pelo escalão a que pertencem e numerados pela disposição na mesa.

As considerações éticas como o anonimato e a confidencialidade foram explicadas aos participantes antes da entrevista, sendo que os investigadores continuamente procuraram a empatia com os entrevistados e evitaram quaisquer formas de comportamento pouco ético.

## Recolha de Dados

A Abordagem Ecológica do Desenvolvimento privilegia estudos longitudinais, com destaque para instrumentos que viabilizem a descrição e compreensão dos sistemas da maneira mais contextualizada possível. Para a recolha de dados foi utilizada a triangulação de métodos, nomeadamente, participação observante, recolha documental e entrevistas de grupo (Miles & Huberman, 1994; Silverman, 2010). A combinação de métodos permitiu proceder a uma validação cruzada e adicionar descrições emergentes (Lessard-Hérbert, Goyette, Boutin, 2008). Cada grupo respondeu às mesmas questões, contudo e devido à dinâmica das próprias entrevistas o fluxo das mesmas não foi igual. Estas incluíram as condições organizativas e estruturais do clube, clima gerado no COS, relação com a comunidade e poder político, relações interpessoais com os adultos e perspectivas de participação desportiva.

Para aprofundar os conceitos em causa, os entrevistados eram convidados a partilhar as suas experiências de uma forma flexível e oportunamente o entrevistador conduzia a entrevista para o confronto de ideias. As entrevistas de grupo foram estandardizadas e houve a preocupação de manter certas invariantes como o espaço, tempo da entrevista em relação ao treino, gravador, respeito pela confidencialidade e anonimato.

## Análise de Dados

As entrevistas transcritas foram traduzidas verbatim e a análise de conteúdo foi utilizada como procedimento para organizar e codificar as entrevistas em blocos representando um tema em comum. A análise iniciou-se codificando as frases dos entrevistados, comparando-as com os códigos definido a priori e com a exposição flexível das experiências dos entrevistados e posterior codificação de dados emergentes. Esta análise foi guiada pelo conteúdo dos dados recolhidos e apoiado em códigos antecipadamente determinados (Miles & Huberman, 1994; Atkinson & Hammersley, 2007) e *memos* colocados ao longo dos códigos (Lofland, 2002) que serviram de balizas à pesquisa subsequente.

Depois da identificação dos temas procedeu-se a uma análise indutiva através da categorização e na parte final do trabalho a construção de dimensões tendo por base as categorias definidas. Esta análise foi elaborada

em separado pelos investigadores e procedeu-se à discussão dos resultados até se atingir um consenso. É importante referir que um pesquisador externo com uma extensa experiência na análise de conteúdo validou o processo de codificação.

A revisão das notas diárias e outros dados recolhidos ao final do dia ajudaram a estabelecer o plano para a próxima etapa através da análise temática e os dados do diário de campo. No final do tratamento dos resultados foram criados três grandes dimensões críticas que ilustram e englobam as 6 categorias delineadas e que têm em conta três esferas de intervenção: Desenvolvimento do jovem, relações interpessoais e contexto de prática (Ver Tabela 1).

#### Desenho da Pesquisa

O estratégia de cariz etnográfico permitiu obter uma perspectiva aprofundada e uma interpretação do significado e funções das acções humanas (Hammersley, 1992; Atkinson & Hammersley, 2007; Silverman, 2010) e de sentidos (Sparkes, 2009) presentes na vida diária do clube desportivo; bem como a experiência e comportamento da maioria dos membros de uma determinada cultura desportiva (Sands, 2002).

O viés está inerente à pesquisa qualitativa (Miles & Huberman, 1984; Maxwell, 2002; Sadler, 2002 & Neuman, 2003), em particular, porque o pesquisador é o instrumento, o passado pessoal, os interesses e pontos de vista tornam-se parte da análise e na linha de Polkinghorne (2003) resulta a necessidade de medidas de qualidade na definição da pesquisa etnográfica (Lutzhof, Nyce & Petersen, 2010)

Neste estudo, o pesquisador procurou entender a ecologia particular de um clube desportivo de bairro e os comportamentos e atitudes associados através da perspectiva dos seus actores principais. A validade interna foi conseguida através de repetidas observações, múltiplas formas de recolha de dados e posterior triangulação no seguimento dos quatro diferentes tipos de validade proporcionados na leitura de Maxwell (2002).

#### Informação Demográfica e biográfica

A tabela 2 representa alguns indicadores sociométricos sobre a prática desportiva dos jovens atletas. Os dados aparecem referenciados por idade de prática ou por escalão consoante a utilidade na apresentação dos resultados e

posterior discussão. Os dois escalões analisados revelam que em termos de iniciação desportiva, os jovens Junior C (sub-15) começaram entre os 10 e os 11 anos de idade enquanto que o Junior B (sub-17) começaram entre os 8 e os 10 anos de idade.

Em relação aos anos de prática desportiva, o primeiro grupo apresenta valores entre os 3 e os 4 anos de idade enquanto que o escalão de Junior B naturalmente apresenta valores mais elevados entre os 6 e os 7 anos de prática. Quando se fala de mobilidade de jogadores, ou seja, jogadores que representaram um outro clube no seu percurso além do actual constatamos que os escalões apresentam valores diametralmente opostos, 13% no escalão de Junior C e 71% no escalão de Junior B.

Como demonstra a tabela 3, ao analisar a estrutura familiar dos jovens dos dois escalões, o escalão dos Junior C apresenta uma percentagem elevada de pais separados (34,78%) enquanto que no escalão de Junior B o valor ronda os 28,57%. Do dados referentes à estrutura familiar dos jovens dos referidos escalões percebe-se uma desagregação familiar acentuada, sendo que grande parte dos jovens vive em situação de monoparentalidade ou com os avós.

### **Apresentação dos Resultados**

A análise de dados resultou a emergência de 3 dimensões críticas, 6 categorias de análise e 16 grupos de respostas. As categorias escolhidas foram guiadas a partir das discussões iniciadas pelas perguntas das entrevistas semi-estruturadas e do diário de campo que foi elaborado e constituíram o esquema adoptado na apresentação dos resultados.

Identidade, Iniciativa e experiências

A literatura é vasta quando se retratam as orientações para realizar objectivos no desporto de jovens (Gill; Gross; Huddleston (1983); Serpa, 1992; Roberts, 1995; Dias, 1995; Costa, Diniz, Pereira (1997); Pereira, 1997). Os jovens encaram o desporto com o objectivo de se constituir como uma busca de relações sociais, a procura de novas amizades e divertimento, sendo este prazer pela actividade é um das principais razões pelo engajamento no futebol. Os jovens referem que é a família, pais, irmão ou tio, a mola impulsionadora da

adesão ao futebol. *“Também já jogo futebol desde os escolinhas e por isso gosto mais do futebol do que outras modalidades.”* (JB3).

Das entrevistas com os atletas do COS compreende-se vários benefícios relacionados com a prática desportiva. Os jovens demonstram desenvolvimento pessoal referindo o prazer e carácter lúdico que o desporto lhes proporciona. Refrem igualmente que a prática desportiva proporciona-lhes a possibilidade de melhorar a forma física e o desenvolvimento do seu corpo.

*“O desporto obriga-nos a fazer actividades físicas, um desenvolvimento harmonioso do corpo e somos saudáveis.”* (JC4).

### Relações Sociais

Neste sentido, as relações que se estabelecem entre os diversos actores desportivos determinam a partilha de um espaço comum. Estas relações são habilmente designadas de processos proximais (Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 1998) e determinam três orientações no COS: relação dual pai-clube, relação atleta-clube e relação entre pares. Lorimer e Jowett (2009) afirmam que as percepções mútuas dos treinadores e atletas da relação entre si joga um papel chave tanto no desenvolvimento do sentido de compromisso como na própria satisfação ao fazê-lo.

Neste sentido, segundo os jovens as relações vividas no clube revelam companheirismo e amizade e englobam todos os dirigentes responsáveis que contribuem para o funcionamento da estrutura do clube. Referem ainda relacionar-se positivamente com toda a gente: amigos da escola, futebol, jovens de raças diferentes e/ou jovens de estratos sociais diferentes.

*“...tenho tanto os meus amigos que tinha como tenho do futebol, são diferentes claro, mas eu continuo a dar-me bem com os dois. E até junto uns com os outros, (...) pode ser preto, branco, dou-me bem com toda a gente.”* (JB3)

Na relação entre os pares os jovens percebem dois pontos a ressaltar: por um lado, a existência de uma hierarquia por parte dos mais velhos, a integração dos mais novos e/ou recém chegados e gestão de conflitos. Esta percepção é menos notória no escalão de junior C. De igual forma, os jovens especialmente o escalão de junior B, mais estruturado afirmam não existir acessos de superioridade o que revela segundo eles, união de grupo, *“Somos*

*todos, somos todos grandes jogadores(...). Não há ninguém que chegue ali e diga : Eu sou o melhor, ninguém me ganha, ninguém me supera...” (JB4).*

A entreatada e apoio nos jogadores Junior B é maior relativamente ao escalão de Junior C e essa superior capacidade de comunicação revela-se tanto nos treinos como nos jogos: “...apoiaram-me muito, levantei a cabeça (...)e dei estabilidade à equipa. Isso acontece, nós apoiamos-nos muito uns aos outros quando um falha” (JB1). Em sequência, a integração no seio da equipa segundo as palavras dos jovens é feita automaticamente, transmitem confiança e, segundo eles, enturmam facilmente os colegas novos:

“Passado uma semana é como se ele tivesse connosco para aí há três, quatro anos (...).Os jogadores que vêm de fora e que entram na equipa tentam sempre olhar para os jogadores que já estão aqui há mais tempo” (JB2)

O papel específico de capitão de equipa apresenta certas características que segundo os jovens definem o papel que representa no balneário e nos jogos. Os colegas falaram em frente ao capitão (exposição directa) as qualidades que pensam ser distintivas para o cargo que ocupa. Características do desenrolar do jogo como o saber estar e imposição dentro do campo, qualidades nas relações sociais que mantêm, a prontidão para ajudar os colegas, um comportamento mais calmo e assertivo na condução da equipa e as qualidades técnicas que evidenciam são apontadas como características distintivas dos jovens escolhidos. Este papel específico dentro da equipa no escalão de Junior B é mais consensual relativamente ao escalão de Junior C onde a posição torna-se mais ambígua.

“Ou quando se perde qualquer um jogador, mas o capitão ainda é pior (...) os jogadores têm que respeitar porque se ele foi eleito capitão, (...) e a equipa vai muito abaixo, quando ele é expulso.” (JB2)

O envolvimento no desporto pelos jovens jogadores é realizado no âmbito de um nível de recrutamento realizado de uma forma casuística, sem grande rigor e planeamento por parte do clube. Os jovens aparecem no clube para jogar vindo de esquemas de selecção em que foram excluídos mas também impulsionado pelo círculo próximo dos jovens e bastante específico de cada jogador, ou seja, amigo, treinador ou família são responsáveis por esta mobilidade. Ela é não direccionada e com uma estruturação débil, em que predominam razões negativas como não terem clube, a iminência de não jogar

no clube anterior, desprezo por parte de antigos treinador e também a localização geográfica: *“Não me punham a jogar e então esse amigo meu falou-me do (clube), é perto da minha casa também. Vim para aqui e desde que vim comecei logo a jogar e desde aí joguei sempre”* (JB2).

#### *Skills Sociais e comportamento*

Predominam a emergência de certos valores inerentes à sua prática desportiva e em valores orientados para uma maior construção identitária. A projecção interior da construção da identidade em comportamento em jogo manifesta-se na capacidade de resiliência e na facilidade com que o jovem percebe o erro e tenta ultrapasá-lo, *“Eu fico chateado comigo mesmo mas tento reagir positivamente e tento na próxima fazer melhor, tentar aprender com os meus erros.”* (JC2)

Ao falar dos benefícios sociais decorrentes da prática desportiva, os jovens salientam a capacidade demonstrada em se relacionar e integrar socialmente, sentido de união e confiança colectiva que os interliga em torno uns dos outros na construção de uma identidade. Este comportamento de unidade é mais visível no escalão mais velho, junior B em relação ao escalão junior C. Os jovens desportistas manifestam responsabilidade através do cumprimento de horários de treino e de jogo e aproveitamento do tempo livre para relacionar os estudos com a prática desportiva:

*“...Nós aprendemos a conciliar melhor o nosso tempo, a ter mais responsabilidades para as coisas...”* (JB5)

A coesão de grupo é importante para o êxito da equipa de futebol (Sayles, Strauss, 1975). Ela deve caracterizar-se segundo Gould & Weinberg (2001), por um processo dinâmico refletido na tendência do grupo em unir-se na busca de metas e objetivos e a falta de coesão interna dificulta a luta pelo objetivo comum, como se algo dificultasse a percepção motivacional ou se o grupo se dividisse para buscar, cada fração, seu próprio objetivo. Os dois grupos encaram a relação entre si como a de uma família.

*“...as relações entre o grupo, o nosso grupo de pessoal é muito boa, conhecemos já há alguns anos, sempre que estamos juntos é boa(...)Atletas que vêm de fora para entrar no nosso grupo (...)socializamos muito bem. Somos amigos uns dos outros tanto fora de campo como dentro de campo também...”* (JB2)

As percepções de coesão de grupo de uma equipa desportiva podem influenciar o bom desempenho dos atletas e o sucesso da equipa na busca dos objetivos (Carron Et Al., 2002; Carron, Bray & Eys, 2002; Sénécal, Loughead & Bloom, 2008).

“...ajudo mais a compreender as falhas que eles têm dentro do campo (...) eles vão corrigindo. Tenho sorte que tenho um plantel que respeita mais ou menos o guarda redes...” (JB1)

A experiência competitiva revelada pelos dois escalões é forte, apesar de um clube ter sido campeão distrital da 2ª divisão e o outro ter descido da 1ª divisão distrital, ou seja experiências diametralmente opostas também pela forma como os jovens dos dois escalões retratam a presença da equipa em campo. Existe maior incidência disruptiva para o escalão de junior C, ao passo que os jogadores do escalão junior B conseguem fazer distinção entre o treino e a competição de fim de semana.

“Nos treinos é verdade que muitas vezes entramos muito menos nervosos, brincamos muito mais. Mas quando entramos dentro do campo para os jogos é muito mais sério e jogamos todos em conjunto” (JB4)

Da análise dos treinos e jogos dos respectivos escalões e entrevistas de grupo os jovens reconhecem existe pouca concentração e rigor nos treinos ao contrário do carácter competitivo implícito do jogo. Os jogadores referem que nos treinos a brincadeira é maior e com a maior parte do plantel incluída, o que representa uma separação entre o que é o jogo e o treino.

“...Há jogadores que, como jogam nos treinos sérios depois também vão para os jogos sérios. E há outros, que é quase metade do plantel, que no treino brincamos claro, fazemos coisas que não fazemos nos jogos. “ (JB3)

Os jovens junior C admitem que recorrem a faltas e comportamentos no limite da moralidade para impedir os adversários ou apenas para os destabilizar. Este comportamento é retratado sob a forma de dilema moral em ambiente desportivo por Lee (2008), cuja consequência mais evidente é o agravamento do comportamento disciplinar. Existe um demarcado comportamento desviante nos grupos do COS, com mais incidência nos grupos que apresentaram mais destruturação e perturbações no seu funcionamento ao longo da época desportiva, ou seja, juniore A e C.



## Integração social e network de adultos

Concomitantemente, existem algumas relações cuja direccionalidade é negativa. Principalmente a relação treinador-clube demonstra ligações frágeis de consentimento em mais do que um grupo dentro do clube. Os escalões de junior A e C manifestaram durante grande parte do ano convulsões internas e turbulência derivado de problemas organizacionais do clube e de relacionamento entre treinadores e clube, que os comprometeu também em termos desportivos. A importância desta relação dual está referenciada na literatura (Smith, Smoll & Cumming, 2007).

“A coisa do despedimento, a equipa não chegou a saber , não soube de nada. Só disseram que o treinador ia embora (...)Há pessoas dentro do grupo que sabem, porque...pronto....sabem...” (JC4)

Os jovens junior C percebem as dificuldades e os interesses que se instalaram no interior do clube, reconhecem ainda a participação negativa de um dirigismo interesseiro. Ambos os grupos desportivos revelam consciência das dificuldades de sobrevivência do clube, esta percepção dos acontecimentos torna-os inseparáveis dos problemas: *“Há problemas internos dentro do grupo...acho que há aqui mais gente (...) Chuchar (...) Há gente interesseira dentro dos clubes que não devia de existir.”* (JC3)

Dentro daquilo que são as relações positivas que se estabelecem no microsistema do clube, o Clube de Orientação Social (COS) vive bastante dependente da capacidade dos pais em providenciar apoio para as camadas de formação. Os jovens têm a percepção de que a relação pai-clube tornou suportável as dificuldades de várias ordens, uma relação definida pela necessidade de suprir dificuldades do momento. *“...se não fosse a ajuda dos pais do futebol juvenil eu acho que o Progresso já tinha acabado porque não tem mesmo condições para entrar nas competições.”* (JB1)

Em relação às condições e estrutura, o apoio municipal é visto como um ponto importante na melhoria das infra estruturas mas inexistente. Na óptica dos jovens, este exossistema aqui compreendido, devia ser mais interventivo na resolução dos problemas do clube e percebem esta relação com inconformismo.

“...se fossem filhos deles claro que eles apostavam num sintético aqui e melhores instalações (...)há dois clubes no Porto que têm pelado(...)sempre que joga fora vamos jogar ao sintético.” (JB1)

### Outros Significantes e Experiências

As dificuldades físicas e económicas do clube são pontos importantes e são um problema estruturante na vida desportiva do clube. Os jovens reconhecem que direcções anteriores tornaram este microsistema desportivo desagregado e com um destino incerto:“...*Pessoas que apareciam aí que eram todas amigas do Progresso (...)se calhar aproveitaram-se do clube (...) viram que o clube está numa má posição puseram-se a andar.*” (JC3). Contudo, a relação atletas-clube (o processo proximal mais importante) apresenta aspectos positivos onde os jovens procuram ajudar o clube e percebem o seu papel na comunidade (mesosistema).

“...muitos deles daqui são rapazes que moram em bairros (...) estivessem aqui não quer dizer que estavam a fazer asneiras (...) se calhar ao virem para aqui, se calhar acaba por distraí-los e mudar o comportamento deles.” (JB5)

## Discussão

Nesta secção propomos dividir o texto segundo as três dimensões que surgiram através de uma aproximação indutiva. Esta abordagem baseia-se na teoria de Bronfenbrenner e procura agrupar os blocos de informação segundo três parâmetros teóricos, primeiro a perspectiva da pessoa e do seu processo de desenvolvimento; segundo o processo de interacção social que se desenrola entre os vários actores sociais e o contexto e, por fim, o contexto de realização desportiva.

### Desenvolvimento pessoal e auto melhoramento

A literatura é vasta quando se retratam as motivações dos jovens para a participação no desporto (Serpa, 1992; Roberts, 1995; Dias, 1995; Costa, Diniz, Pereira 1997; Pereira, 1997; Coelho e Silva, Sobral e Malina, 2009). Em linha com a literatura, predominam factores como estar em forma, fazer amizades. Os benefícios do desporto para estes jovens a par da necessidade em quebrar barreiras torna-se uma realização importante (Holt, Kingsley, Tink & Scherer, 2011).

De igual forma, a participação desportiva tem sido considerada um recurso forte dos jovens na sua relação com o ambiente (Mueller, Lewin-Bizan, Urban, 2011) e resultado de experiências positivas nas dimensões estrutura treino, comunicação treinador, suporte pais e relação com os pares (Fraser-Thomas, Coté & Deakin, 2008).

Num estudo interessante, MacPhail, Kirk e Eley (2003), utilizaram como método de recolha de dados Técnica de Grupo Nominal em 600 jovens dos 14 aos 18 anos de idade responderam à pergunta: “O que pode ser feito para facilitar a participação desportiva dos jovens?”. O estudo devolveu 5 categorias principais e 19 grupos de respostas. A categoria mais importante assinalada pelos jovens foi “Condições” onde predominou como grupo de resposta a “oferta de condições da escola e/ou do clube”; a segunda categoria mais importante foi a do “Clima” em que o grupo de resposta dominante foi “Inclusividade”. O treinador revelou-se a pessoa mais importante e os recursos físicos do clube, o ponto mais saliente, ou seja, percebe-se a influência e importância das variáveis socio-ambientais na capacidade de modelagem das experiências dos jovens envolvidos em prática desportiva.

Variáveis que, segundo Bengoechea e Streat (2007) enfatizam a importância de várias influências motivacionais do contexto interpessoal da prática desportiva dos jovens. Na determinação da participação desportiva os factores ambientais são um tópico de preocupação actual na sua relação com a actividade física, apesar de não se constituírem um tópico tão bem estudado como as variáveis psico-sociais (Lau, Fox & Cheung, 2006).

#### Processos Proximais e Interações Sociais

É pouco conhecida a influência da natureza e clima motivacional promovida pelos pares no comportamento e experiências apesar de ser reconhecida a importância de um clima orientado para os pares criado pelos jovens e treinadores (Vazou et al, 2006), dimensões específicas no clima entre os pares com importantes implicações teóricas Vazou, Ntoumanis e Duda (2005). Esta dimensões vão de encontro com os resultados do COS, onde emergem os valores da cooperação e esforço, igualdade de tratamento e suporte. O presente estudo não verificou, contudo, as dimensões de habilidade normativa, melhoria, competição intraequipa, avaliação da competência e sentido de autonomia. As equipas não apresentaram um clima com uma forte

orientação para a tarefa, ou seja, revelando apenas o comprometimento e esforço como relevante.

Por exemplo, Gould, Flett e Lauer (2012) num estudo em jovens de bairro descobriram que quanto mais um clima é orientado para a mestria promovido pelos treinadores, maiores são os ganhos em desenvolvimento do jovem. Ou seja, deve ser dada particular atenção não só a mediadores cognitivos e orientação motivacional dos jovens que se encontram fora do âmbito deste artigo mas também a mecanismos contextuais e factores sociais na criação de relações interpessoais próximas (Wilson, 2006) em combinação com um suporte parental forte (Wilson, Lawman, Segal, & Chappell, 2011).

No clima específico intra-equipa surge o papel do capitão de equipa. Apresenta certas características que segundo os jovens definem a sua representação no balneário e nos jogos, tais como, a responsabilidade intra-equipa e na sua relação com o exterior, a capacidade de liderança e em manter a calma, a capacidade em ser mais responsável nos comportamentos desviantes.

Porquanto as acções e clima criado pelo treinador tenham um importante influência no desenvolvimento pessoal e social dos jovens atletas (Smith, Smoll & Cumming, 2007) os treinadores e outros significativos devem examinar e testar os seus próprios valores com clara percepção da significância do papel do desporto na sociedade e dos jovens que comungam dessa participação (Lee, 2009).

Um estudo de Shields, Bredemeier, LaVoi & Power (2005) compara as percepções dos jovens relativamente ao comportamento anti-social dos colegas na construção de normas colectivas com a interiorização do seu próprio comportamento e verificam que existe um comprometimento desta normas e da atmosfera moral no desporto jovem. Por seu turno, Bortoli, Messina, Zorba & Robazza (2012) referem que os factores situacionais, clima de performance e a atmosfera moral onde os comportamentos agressivos são encorajados determinam provavelmente comportamento antisocial por parte dos jovens atletas. De facto, o registo disciplinar evidencia comportamentos disruptivos importantes, nitidamente nos escalões menos estruturados (Juniões A e Juniões C) com um clima mais propenso ao anti-desportivismo, também com maior convulsão interna enquanto que o escalão menos

indisciplinado (junior B) foi o que alcançou êxito desportivo o que supõe alguma ligação entre o comportamento desportivo e disciplinar do escalão com a qualidade nas relações interpessoais veiculadas.

O ensino de *skills* cooperativos dentro de um contexto competitivo de clube social são difíceis de quantificar. A análise adoptada explorou em que extensão o conhecimento e *skills* adquiridos no programa de participação desportiva se transfere para outros contextos e sistemas, expressão designada de validade de desenvolvimento por Bronfenbrenner (1979). Os resultados fazem emergir uma percepção de sentido de autonomia (Wilson et al., 2006) nas repostas dos jovens onde os valores sociais predominantes foram o cumprimento de horários, a capacidade de resiliência e responsabilidade especialmente na conciliação com o tempo de estudo dedicado à escola. Do estudo não é perceptível a influência positiva do treinador na criação destes valores ao invés de algum comportamento disfuncional criado (Bronfenbrenner & Evans, 2000).

Os jovens do escalão junior B estão mais implicados no processo de manutenção do grupo, no sentido de fortalecer cada vez mais a coesão da equipa e obter bons resultados (Rúbio, 2003). Nos dois grupos de análise existe um consenso generalizado de que grande percepção de coesão de grupo de uma equipa desportiva podem influenciar e ser benéfico para o bom desempenho dos atletas e o sucesso da equipa (Paskevich, Estabrooks, Brawley, and Carron, 2001; Carron, Colman, Wheeler, Stevens, 2002; Carron, Bray & Eys, 2002; Rúbio, 2003; Sénécal, Loughhead & Bloom, 2008) contudo a literatura afirma igualmente que a grande coesão pode ter efeitos negativos com consequências em 2 categorias: grupais e pessoais (Hardy, Eys & Carron, 2005). A diferença entre o comportamento no treino e o carácter competitivo dos jogos dos jovens revela pouca estruturação na condução do treino e fraca atitude orientada para a tarefa, especialmente no escalão mais novo.

#### Contexto Desportivo e Realização

Os bairros sociais como fenómeno urbano têm sido estudados como significado do espaço urbano na explicação da vida social e os seus efeitos diferenciados (Gonçalves, 1988; Matos, 1994). No campo da participação desportiva ela é maior quando disponível em bairros desfavorecidos (Quane & Rankin, 2006) e o engajamento dos jovens em programas desportivos requer

um acordo de equilíbrio entre as normas e valores dos grupos (Yancey, Ory & Davis, 2006) na tentativa de ultrapassar barreiras socialmente criadas (Hellison, 2000).

A pesquisa no terreno examinando a associação entre atributos ambientais e actividade física entre os jovens está a crescer (Ding, Sallis, Kerr, Lee & Rosenberg, 2011; Wilson, Lawman, Segal & Chappell, 2011). A mobilidade descendente dos jovens pressupõe trajectórias e padrões de participação desportiva negativas. Este facto resulta provavelmente dos poucos recursos no ambiente onde se inserem, ou seja, existem variáveis sócio-ambientais como apoio social dos pares, pouca acessibilidade e oportunidades de prática que limitam a participação dos jovens (Hohepa, Schofield & Kolt, 2006). A ausência de objectivos competitivos e de carreira desportiva deste jovens pressupõe que as condições estruturais e organizacionais do clube têm um grande impacto nas percepções das experiências desportivas por parte dos jovens.

Vários estudos reconhecem a importância da influência parental na participação desportiva dos filhos, na sua relação de suporte e apoio (Wuerth, Lee & Alfermann, 2004; Holt, Tamminen, Black, Sehn, Wall, 2008; Ullrich-French & Smith, 2009) e na influência da actividade física dos filhos a longo termo (Yang, Telama & Laakso, 1996). Dentro daquilo que são as relações sociais que se estabelecem no microsistema do clube, os jovens percebem a importância dos pais em providenciar apoio social (Wilson et al., 2006) e se envolverem na experiência desportiva dos filhos e capacidade interventiva na vida do clube. Este construto é referenciado por autores como Power e Woogler (1995); Van Yperen (1995); Babkes e Weiss (1999); Welk, Babkes e Schaben (2009) e Visscher, Elferink-Gemser e Lemmink (2009).

São poucos os estudos que relacionem o baixo estatuto sócioeconómico (ESE) com acessibilidade no desporto por parte dos jovens (Coakley, 1992; Walters, Barr-Anderson, Wall, Neumark-Sztainer, 2009; Dollman & Lewis, 2010). Torna-se fora do âmbito deste artigo explorar mais aprofundadamente o real impacto desta variável em específico no acesso e participação desportiva dos mais desfavorecidos.

A par do ESE e ainda que os registos biográficos demonstrem que a estrutura familiar tradicional está comprometida, a maioria dos jovens vive em

situação de monoparentalidade e os pais apresentem níveis de escolaridade baixos, quando analisada a perspectiva dos pais verificamos mecanismos chave que contribuem para resultados positivos em programas de desenvolvimento em jovens desfavorecidos. A qualidade dos tutores, incorporação de lições para o desporto e para a vida (*life social skills*), oportunidade para a interacção jovem-família, estrutura do programa e o providenciar de recursos (Riley & Butcher, 2012) mas também a importância do voluntariado dos pais na comunidade (Coulton & Irwin, 2009) são activos importantes na vida dos jovens.

Em relação às condições e estrutura, o apoio municipal (exossistema) é visto como importante na melhoria das infra estruturas. Esta relação torna-se ainda mais importante quando os jovens percebem com alguma indignação o divórcio em relação ao clube no contexto desportivo da região. As dificuldades físicas e económicas são um problema estruturante na vida desportiva do clube e representam um factor aglutinador em algumas relações interpessoais que se estabelecem, nomeadamente pais e atletas com o clube. Inquestionavelmente, as oportunidades de prática física nos jovens estão dependentes das influências ambientais (Tucker, Irwin, Gilliland, He, Larsen & Hess, 2009).

## **Conclusão**

Neste artigo tentou-se descrever as condições de prática dos jovens atletas num clube de orientação social de uma zona periférica da região do Porto. Discutiu-se de que forma o contexto interpessoal em ambiente de bairro influi no desenvolvimento de atitudes e comportamentos dos jovens atletas covariando com a posição social do clube.

A mobilidade descendente do COS tem evidências de percursos desportivos alienados e jovens vítimas de rotulagem negativa, quer seja por proveniência de bairro social, abandono do futebol ou fraco nível competitivo (sangria competitiva de outros clubes). A organização fraca do clube e estrutura social aparentemente débil dos pais não parece paradoxalmente impedir a criação de um microsistema de experiências humanas.

É do conhecimento que as experiências desportivas apropriadas dependem largamente da interacção e envolvimento dos pais, treinadores e

pares. O estudo abre caminhos para perceber as relações proximais na reequação da função social de um clube predominantemente de formação. Os valores sociais podem emergir mesmo em contextos ecológicos desfavorecidos de prática desportiva sendo que os jovens apenas experimentam a actividade desportiva se os locais onde treinam e jogam proporcionam consegue catalisar as suas habilidades individuais e interesses. O ênfase deve ser colocado na qualidade das relações interpessoais (clima) e em termos gerais o contexto de prática (condições).

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Tabela 1 Categorias Principais e grupos de respostas COS

Dimensões	Categorias Principais	Grupo de Respostas
Críticas		
Desenvolvimento Pessoal e Auto Melhoramento	Identidade e Experiências	Envolvimento Desportivo
		Adesão Desporto
	Iniciativa e Experiências	Benefícios Físicos
		Benefícios Pessoais
Processos Proximais e Interações Sociais	Relações Sociais	Relações Interpessoais
		Papel Intra-Equipa
	Skills Sociais e Comportamento	Clima de Grupo
		Benefícios Sociais
Contexto Desportivo e Realização	Integração Social e Network Adultos	Eficácia Treinador
		Integração Comunidade
	Outros Significantes e Experiências	Suporte Outros significantes
		Relações Escola
		Suporte e Logística
		Estrutura Clube
Papel Adultos		



Tabela 2 Dados relativos à prática desportiva no COS

	Clube Orientação Social			
	INIC 1º ano(n=15)	INIC B (n=8)	JUV A (n=10)	JUVB (n=10)
Anos de Prática Desportiva (Anos)	3,11	4	5,9	6,6
Início de Prática Desportiva (Anos)	10,89	9,63	10,1	8,4
Mobilidade Clube (%)	13		71,4	

Tabela 3 Estrutura familiar dos grupos desportivos do COS

Estrutura Familiar (%) <sup>1</sup>	Juniores C	Juniores B
Pais Juntos	65,22% (15)	71,43% (15)
Pais Separados	34,78% (8)	28,57% (6)

<sup>1</sup> No COS houve 3 casos de respostas indefinida. A percentagem que falta no apuramento dos resultados deve-se a este facto não exposto aqui.

## **Chapter 3: Voluntary Social Sport Club and Youth Sport Expectations: A Qualitative Study**

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### **Abstract**

This study aimed at determining how environmental practices and significant others alongside operate in shaping sport experiences. Recent research brought evidences that different ecologies of practice produce different personal outcomes for the athletes who engage in competitive settings for long periods of time. The purpose of the study was to explore how significant others perceive football sport environment in an economically and socially underserved milieu, to clarify the effects of sport engagement and to highlight the factors that can optimize the positive influences associated with sport participation. Field diary, document analysis and semi-structured interviews were conducted to 12 significant others with an active role in the club, participant observation along with field diary were also completed during this longitudinal study in the 2010/2011 sport season. Significant others displayed an unexpected sense of community in the social club and they perceive as being strong influences on athlete's perceptions of the environment and motivation exerted. Also the social and psychological developmental perspective was considered one of the main goals for the engagement in organized sport. Despite the conditions, adults in social clubs see sport as having an important social positive role justifying overall convictions about the importance of sport practice for underserved youth and the more profound study of reality in these environments.

Human development should be understood as a cultural process and this understanding requires a historical perspective of individual contributions in community dynamics (Rogoff, 2003), it will always be in function of the meanings events acquire, the comprehension of different levels of social organization and the necessity to comprehend particular situations (Erikson, 1986).

Sport gained a new dimension in modern society due to social concerns about health, economy, pro-social values, and personal and community development. In fact, new urban form interventions in modern societies have the potential to result in lasting influences on the behavior of large populations of youth as they can either serve to constrain or promote physical activity (van Loon, & Frank, 2011).

In fact, human development study model has suffered successive changes since its first design over half a century ago (Bronfenbrenner, 1951; Bronfenbrenner, 1960), with first systematic expositions only occurring 20 years later (Bronfenbrenner, 1970; Bronfenbrenner, 1979); followed by two successive reformulations edited in 1983 (Bronfenbrenner, 1983) and 1998 (Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 1998); his fifth effort occurred in 2000 (Bronfenbrenner & Evans, 2000). In fact, recent studies have pointed out multiple level organizational recognitions as well as contextual influences in adolescent development (Holt, Spence, Sehn & Cutumisu, 2008; Holt, Cunningham, Sehn, Spence, Newton, Ball, 2009; Urban, Lewin-Bizan & Lerner, 2009).

His conceptualist and interactionism theory breaks the classic division between subject and object of investigation, as depicted by Comte's positivism. Grounded on the phenomenological conceptions of the environment and group dynamics of Kurt Lewin (1948), the theory emphasizes naturalistic observation as a philosophical orientation (Bronfenbrenner, 1979). The rising of qualitative methods in the 60's (Hammersley, 2002), namely, Lewin (1948), Mead (1934), Blumer (1937) and Dilthey (1959) have influenced ecological theory namely, in the role that the individual has as an active agent of his own development, revealing a rationalist, humanistic and phenomenological tradition.

In consequence, Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Theory is a suitable theoretical framework to study contextual influences in sport clubs. This

paradigm focus its attention on molar activities and behaviors that have the potential to instigate proximal processes (Krebs, 2009a) and are considered a significant phenomenon of development (Krebs 2009b). This study discloses an important gap existing in the sport literature as previous studies reveal a great amount of knowledge about settings without development, contrasting with studies involving development out of context (Bronfenbrenner, 1979, 1986, 1992, 1998). This partial imbalance puts in evidence the need of integration of the two domains, personality and environment, to enhance human developmental research.

In social deprived communities underserved youth face enormous barriers in their emotional, social, and intellectual development. Recent research have stimulated a reconceptualization of the field of youth development as well as the identification of specific guidelines for extended day programs in underserved communities (Hellison, 2002; Wilson et al., 2006; Yancey, Ory & Davis, 2006); but also in school- based interventions (Britto, Klostermann, Bonny, Altum & Hornung, 2001; Spengler, Connaughton & Maddock, 2011).

The existing studies reveal a great amount of knowledge about settings without development contrasting with prior studies involving development out of context (Bronfenbrenner, 1986, 1992, 1998). Studies in sport context are rare and today we are witnessing a growing dialogue between nature and individual (Mota, 1997). Therefore, the purpose of the study is threefold: to explore how significant others perceive football sport environment in an economically and socially underserved milieu; to clarify the effects of sport engagement and to highlight the factors that can optimize the positive influences associated with sport participation.

## **Methodology**

### **Participants**

Twelve significant others with an active role in the club (3 coaches, 7 parents and 2 directors) were interviewed. Note that some significant others accumulated more than one role in the club, for example, parent and director or coach and parent). The respondents were asked about economic and social

conditions of the club, changes over time in the club, community and politic power relation and interpersonal relations.

#### Data Collection

Various methods were used for data collection purposes such as participant observation, camp diary and semi-structured interviews. This combination of methods permitted a cross validation and emerging descriptions (Lessard-Hérbert, Goyette, Boutin, 2008). Despite the same questions and due to the dynamics of the interview structure, questions weren't always in the same order. In order to deepen some ideas, the respondents were asked to share their experiences in a flexible manner, which originated sometimes parallel questions that enriched the interview.

#### Procedures

Previous to the semi-structured interview, it was certified that they understood entirely the purpose and nature of the study and how the results could be applied. Participants were recruited through the clubs gatekeeper and through on-site recruitment opportunities at training and, in some cases, competitions. Data collection took place only after two months of contact and familiarization of the clubs organization. The interviews were held in a room duly equipped and with the vice-president and youth coordinator full knowledge. The project was approved by the Faculty of Sport Sciences Ethics Committee of University of Coimbra.

#### Data analysis

Content analysis was used along with field diary and observational grill during the 2010/2011 sport season. Document analysis were used and demographic and biographic information were also collected, which allowed to obtain some social data such as age, years of experience in football, scholar year, ethnic origin of the players and parents.

All the interviews were recorded in audio with specialized equipment. At the end of the day, the interviews were transcribed *verbatim* and confirmed again with the recorder. Further the transcribed texts were confirmed with the respondents and they were identified by the role they play in the club (director, coach and parent).

Content analysis was elaborated according to procedures suggested by specialist in qualitative methodology in various contexts, including sport (Gould, Eklund & Jackson, 1992; Dugdale, Eklund & Gordon, 2002).

Groups of statements were formed when the researchers considered there were sufficient statements to saturate a category (Glaser, 1978). It is important to refer that dimensions emerged through thorough reflexions and posterior consensus between researchers and participants. Some groups of statements and some major categories contained more statements than others, providing a measure of the strength of significant other's views on particular issues. Eight groups of statements were generated by the sessions in response to the questionnaire. The groupings and major categories are outlined in Table 1.

#### Reliability and Validity

To acquire valid and reliable multiple and diverse realities, multiple methods of searching or gathering data were in researchers permanent agenda, including using both quantitative and qualitative approaches. The researchers proceeded with a thorough job of describing the research context and the assumptions that were central to the research in order to understand the voluntary social sport club and youth participation alongside, providing the research with credibility and transferability. Researchers took very seriously the task to describe the changes that occurred in the setting (p.e. changing days of practice and several issues related to the lack of logistic accommodations such as hot water and light) and how these changes affected the way the research approached the study. In order for checking and rechecking the data throughout the study, an independent researcher specialized in qualitative study with many hours of field practice assumed the "devil's advocate" role with respect to the results. Ecological validity (Brooks & Baumeister, 1977) was assessed using observational grids' as well as a thoroughly descriptive diary that allowed a very good resemblance in experienced contexts to the participant.

## Results

Data analysis promptly delivered three major dimensions that would fit Bronfenbrenner's Bio Ecological Theory and explained three areas of action: Person Development, Proximal Processes and Sport Context.

### *Personal Development and Self-Improvement*

Also the social and psychological development was considered one of the main goals for youth engagement in organized sport. This social investment is clear in this parent's view:

"...exactly we incentive people to have...good behavior. Athletes who don't demonstrate good behavior, we try everything so that they can accomplish to stay here, although a fact is that sometimes it's difficult to deal with them as we don't pact with a lot of things they do..."

Despite difficult connections with the community, the respondents refer the social acceptance of the role of sport. Furthermore, the differences of generations reflect different outcomes and the impact it has on social resilience, goal pursuit, rule fulfillment and self-commitment, *"For now, they learn how to live in group. They learn the hierarchy inside the group and learn to fight for a common objective, victory..." (Under14Parent)*. Football is seen by parents as a mean to social adaptation to a community, enhancing the sense of belonging:

"I am from a different generation (...)they have things very easily and, well...it's a little bit complicated for me to compare...they don't really have the notion of effort, having to take an effort for something that working a little bit harder we can accomplish." *(Under16 Parent2)*

In fact, youngsters have contrasting familiar structures in accordance with their parents' social status which, in turn, will determine their notion of life, resilience and the impact it has on them: *"...they really don't have the notion(...)the fight, having to put the effort for something that working a bit harder you'll just might get it."* *(Under16Parent3)*.

### *Proximal Processes and Social Interactions*

Significant others displayed an unexpected sense of community in the voluntary social sport club and they perceive themselves as strong influences on athlete's perceptions of the environment exerted. This voluntary social sport club is seen as having an important socially positive role justifying overall convictions about the importance of sport practice for underserved youth and



the more profound study of reality, as put in evidence by the coach and coordinator:

“...most of the time the irreverence, simplicity and humility of a social neighborhood youngster helps the one that has it all and, sometimes, shows him the part of life that, perhaps he doesn’t know in his day to day!” (*Youth Coordinator*)

The results suggest that parents are the main socializers influencing children’s sport involvement. The adults perceive the club as a nested web of interpersonal relationships similar to a family structure. Consequently, youth sport programs should be critically examined with regard to their contribution to culturally cherished skills and social values in youth. The club coordinator alerts for the unstructured families:

“There are families that in general don’t have rules but they exist here...we have a lot of divorced parents...some live with their grandfathers, that are their tutors...and they tend to abuse, but here we have rules.” (*Junior Director*)

The clubs directors and managers highlight the importance of outfield work, outside of the sport domain, “*we have a work outside the field much more intense than in the field...*” (*Youth Coordinator*). The interviewed see the interrelationships and group climate as positive and they claim the youngsters don’t make distinctions between socioeconomic status and social provenience of teammates.

“it doesn’t matter if they come or don’t come from the neighborhood, we have sons of medical doctors, sons of graphic technicians like me, we have sons of blacksmiths(...)sons of everything(...)they don’t make those kind of distinctions. Here, they are players and friends...” (*Under16 Parent1*)

### Sport Context and Achievement

The club is situated in an impoverished urban area and although it constitutes a historical reference and an emblematic club in the city, it possesses a strong structural and organizational deficit with overall poor conditions for youth practice. The scale of turbulence of the club is high with management based on few resources, accounted risks and unpredictable future.

Parents share the belief that the club has a capacity to socially embrace youngsters and help them avoid anti-social and delinquent behavior from the deprived area where the club sits.

“...it is a reality a bit deteriorated, neighborhood X and Y, where a lot of drugs are handled and the club here, has a social function, that is to call the kids, take them from that reality and insert them in another one. Most of them with familiar deprivation, a lot of them, that’s the reality of this club.” (*Under14 Parent*)

Hence, despite the impoverished club and potentially delinquency behavior environment the results indicate the presence of some social values such as responsibility, obedience to rules, resilience and group experience as life span benefits. And although adults’ perceptions of youth social differences with different social backgrounds they tend to deemphasize the fact, as pointed out by coach and parents.

“...gratifying for us to acknowledge that we will benefit with a kid that gets A’s in school helping the most simple and most humble and that often the neighborhood’s kid simplicity and irreverence helps the kid that has it all...” (*Youth Coordinator*)

Alongside, significant others, especially parents don’t hesitate in claiming priority of the school educational system over the sport structure, emphasizing a social structured predominance of the first over the latter and trying to conceive sport as an instrument of completion and distraction.

“...he saw soccer more as a getaway from school and school oriented life that he has and soccer is a way to free energy and recharge batteries for the next day but nevertheless I think he sees things that way too.” (*Under16 Parent1*)

## **Discussion**

BioEcological Theory approach provides a theoretical structure from which emerged the above relational dimensions. Main findings show that significant others not only see sport and specifically football as a social mechanism of change, contributing to avoid anti-social and delinquent behaviors but also highlight the importance of closeness relationships between the clubs several actors with particular emphasis on coach and parents’ role.

In fact, recent research (Fraser-Thomas & Côté, 2009; Martin, McCaughy, Murphy & Kimberlydawn, 2011) suggest that different ecologies of

practice produce different personal outcomes for the athletes who engage in competitive settings for long periods of time. In this manner, the individuals' involvement in sport happens through sport organizations, mainly through clubs, each one with their own characteristics, goals, and cultures (Atherley, 2006; Gaskin, 2008) and the interpersonal climate that stands beside it.

Regarding Bronfenbrenner's theory as a systems theory of child development, the concept of developmental transitions is viewed as a product of a developmental system which involves a person's biological predispositions and the environmental influences she/he experiences (Lerner, 2002). In fact, the definition of voluntary social sport club demonstrates the appreciation of sport as an aggregation surrounding community identity, social interaction and space conscience (Tonts, 2005), as it generates relational patterns between social units and institutions (Schuller, Baron & Field, 2000) and is consubstantiated in its form, localization, and type of sport of a community club in the production of different type of "social capital" (Okayasu, Kawahara & Nogawa, 2010).

Research on participation in neighborhood based organizations refer to social development of urban adolescents (Quane & Rankin, 2006) and several researches point out positive social community related outcomes (Auld, 2008; Skinner, Zakus & Cowell, 2008), relating it to a wide scale of indices of positive development (Rose-Krasnor, 2009). Acknowledging the clubs simple organizational structure, with its intuitive and casuistic approach with a predominant volunteer community activity, helps understand clarify that in poor clubs, parents and volunteers play a main role in promoting children engagement in sport and also an influential role in the clubs' functioning.

Recognizing this important framework, Bronfenbrenners' notion of ecological transition (1979, 1992 & 1998), that young athletes can effectively be heavily influenced by other microsystems, finds echoes when one compares' youngsters fragile family structure and relate it to the clubs own limitations in providing some other form of support. Therefore, development is influenced not only by biological variables, but also life context, such as family, school, neighborhood, community, society, and surrounding culture. The context can be more objective (e.g., income level) or more subjective, which involves people's

perceptions and experiences of the context in which they live (Bronfenbrenner, 2001).

Findings from Quane and Rankin (2006) suggest that when available, youth participation in locally based organizations is greater in more disadvantaged neighborhoods and that participation has important and positive implications for youth's self-concept as well as their academic commitment and educational expectations. Furthermore, when assessing sports participation developmental outcomes of underserved youth and coaches sports climate perceptions one can measure the relationships between participants reported gains and perceptions of the psychosocial sports climate.

Research shows that coaching actions and climates can effectively have an important influence on personal and social development of young people in these environments (Gould, Flett & Lauer, 2012). In fact, the interaction between maturation and experience and changes that occur over time (Araújo & Davis, 2009) and the necessity to pay attention to individual differences (Abernethy, 2009) play an important role.

Significant others displayed an unexpected sense of community in the social club and they perceive as being strong influences on athlete's perceptions of the environment and motivation exerted. Interviewed coaches show they acknowledge having influence on young people experiences with whom they interact (Greendorfer, 2002), nevertheless, the study could not confirm that coaches offer support and guidance to athletes ultimately building of strong bonds (Jowett & Poczwardowski, 2007) nor foster enjoyment, motivation and competence (Côté & Fraser-Thomas, 2007).

Furthermore, literature is consensual regarding the importance of parental involvement and influence in their son sporting life through growth (Sage, 1980; Yang, Telama, & Laakso, 1996; Beets, Cardinal & Alderman, 2010; Trost & Loprinzi, 2011), although few studies relate youngster's physical activity to tipology of parental control and familiar cohesion (Trost & Loprinzi, 2011) and it's relation to parent's socio-economic status (Yang, Telama, & Laakso, 1996). The study is limited in assessing youth's family context, although it clearly demonstrates the importance of family in youth sport environment and how it impacts the club functioning.

In fact, analyzing parents' perception of low income youth participation in a summer sport-based positive youth development (PYD) program, Riley and Anderson-Butcher (2012) highlighted some key outcomes that were identified by parents, namely biopsychosocial development and community interaction and support that are similar to the study presented here. In the study, significant others, specially, parents and coaches underpin the importance of key mechanisms such as qualities and roles of managers, clubs' structure, and the provision of resources contributing to such outcomes.

On the other hand, literature confirms that family socialization also appears to be a central part on youngster's perception of meanings in the sport club (Kay, 2000; Visschler, Elferink-Gemser & Lemmink, 2009; Welk, Babkes & Schaben, 2009). In this sense, Kay (2000) refers that families' abilities to accommodate the activity patterns required by the sport are critical to children's participation. These expectancies and ideological values that parents enclosure are powerful tools in the acceptance and sport commitment of their sons sporting life (Dunn, Kinney & Hofferth, 2003) as the relation parent-athlete constitutes one of the key elements for youth sport development (Welk et al. 2009).

There exists an international consensus regarding the idea that sport can contribute to strategies of social inclusion namely in the area of youth sports (Kelly, 2011) despite the fact that not always personal dispositions of the person *per se* and instigating forces follow the same pathway (Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 1998). Considering the fact, Holt and colleagues (2008) demonstrate the urgency to understand the way sport context interacts and frames in the social milieu with diverse youth contexts (colleagues, parents) and contradict the emphasis of the educational politics in the assertion of the benefits of sport in school or, in other way, the impact that sport has in personal development and its relation to youth sport (Coakley, 2011).

Following parent's concerns for the implications sport has on health, social rules and responsibility acceptance and diminished deviant behavior, several studies indicate that physically active and fit children tend to have positive outcomes such as better academic achievement (Sallis, McKenzie, Kolody, Lewis, Marshall & Rosengard, 1999; Coe, Pivarnik, Womack, Reeves, Malina, 2006; Nelson & Gordon-Larson, 2006; Ahamed, MacDonald, Reed, Naylor, Liu-

Ambrose & McKay, 2007). Sport can be characterized as a social educational space that follows the important context of familiar structure and in doing so its independence and interrelated role to school may contribute incisively to youth social development.

### **Conclusion**

The study's implied meaning is that framing the club's climate in a deprived context with different social backgrounds and meanings may contribute to enhance positive social desired skills in underserved youth; these opportunities will markedly attempt to deviate young athletes from anti-social and delinquent behaviors. The ecological framework used provides an opportunity to develop consistent applied research in sensible social areas as well as to discriminate and foster positive relations that can be consistent through sport developmental programs.

It attempted to describe the physical and organizational structure of voluntary social sport club and also inquire about the individual and collective responsibilities of other significant as they relate intimately to the youngsters perceptions. It was discussed the way interpersonal relations in a determined social sport environment influences the development of youth athletes and some pathways to sport development.

Therefore, public policies need to address the roots within these structural forces in youth sport as pointed in the study. There is a need to understand the structure and processes on the social function equation in a club situated in a social melting pot. This research meets the concerns of institutions and educators about youth participation in deprived areas with implications for physical and psychological well-being, social inclusion and the development of community bonding.

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Table 1 Major categories and groups of responses

Dimensions	Major Category	Statement group label
Personal Development and Self-Improvement	Climate and Values	Group Cohesion Youth Sport Role Adult's Significance
	Skills Construction Opportunity	Group Cohesion Time Management and Responsibility Sport Goal's Social Integration Youth Identity Personal Development
Sport Context and Achievement	School Integration	Social Importance Sport Adequacy
	Family Integration	Parental Support Parental Conflicts Family Structure
	Communtiy belonging	Sport Culture Social Context
	Organization and Structure	Structure and Resources Practice Conditions Internal Organization Adaptation to changes Youth Mobility
	Club's Identity	Club's Social Goal's Social Reality Sport History
Proximal Processes and Social Interactions	Support Relations and Efficacy	Coach Efficacy Youth's Community role Interpersonal Relations

## **Chapter 4: Perspectivas Ecológicas na Determinação de Percursos**

### **Desportivos Contrastantes em Jovens Futebolistas em Contexto**

#### **Profissional**

*Manuscrito Submetido Revista Brasileira Educação Física e Esporte*

#### **Abstract**

Pretendeu-se examinar as influências contextuais e sócio-ambientais nas atitudes e comportamentos dos jovens na sua participação desportiva. Os participantes foram 24 jovens jogadores de futebol de um Clube de Orientação Profissional (COP), sub-14 a sub-17. Participaram em entrevistas de grupo sobre a sua participação desportiva, caracterização do contexto de prática e relações interpessoais. O clima de grupo entre os pares foi positivamente referido pelos jovens como importante, a procura de estatuto e reconhecimento a par da aspiração ao profissionalismo foi referido. Os pais são importantes agentes na participação desportiva. A relação do jovem com o treinador mostrou-se influente no clima motivacional percebido pelos jovens. Os resultados determinam importantes activos a ter em consideração na construção da estrutura de treino em jovens inseridos em clubes profissionais. A participação desportiva dos jovens atletas precisa de ter em consideração o contexto de prática de forma a promover desenvolvimento positivo.

O desporto jovem tem um grande impacto no desenvolvimento pessoal e social (Smith & Smoll, 2002; Tofler & Butterbaugh, 2005; Lau, Fox & Cheung, 2006; Spaaij, 2010; Checkoway, 2011), este envolvimento e participação desportiva produz comportamentos positivos como percepção de habilidade física, desenvolvimento do carácter, desenvolvimento de skills, auto-estima, sentido de autonomia (Weiss & Chaumeton, 1992; Coelho e Silva, Figueiredo & Gonçalves, 2005; Gillet, Vallerand, Amoura & Valdes, 2010; Joessar, Hein & Hagger, 2011).

O contexto social é saliente para a motivação dos jovens e contribuem para a qualidade das experiências desportivas (Smith, 2003) e começa agora a ser estudada a orientação dos jovens para objectivos sociais, ou seja, a conceptualização da competência em termos das relações sociais com os outros (Hodge, Allen & Smellie, 2008; Stuntz & Weiss, 2009). Os estudos têm referido que as principais razões para participação desportiva são a afiliação, fazer parte de uma equipa, melhoria das relações interpessoais entre pares e estatuto social (Allen, 2003; Bengoechea & Strean, 2007; Jõesaar, Hein & Hagger, 2012)

Tendo como pano de fundo a ideia substantiva de que poderá existir uma ligação causal entre o desporto de elite e o desporto de massa o campo da pesquisa no desenvolvimento de desporto de elite tem focado na significância de factores culturais e económicos (estudos macro) e no papel da ciência do desporto e do ambiente próximo dos atletas (estudos micro) na procura do sucesso (Sotiriadou & Shilbury, 2009). O desporto de elite tem sido enquadrado na perspectiva da formação especializada e desenvolvimento do talento desportivo (Emrich, Fröhlich, Klein & Pitsch, 2009) ou na perspectiva da construção e importância dos outros significantes como o treinador e o pai (Stornes, 2001; Oliver, Hardy & Markland, 2010; Adie, Duda & Ntoumanis, 2012).

Não existem muitos estudos comparativos entre o desporto de elite jovem e o caminho para a profissionalização (Ford & Williams, 2012), apesar de se começar a ter em consideração a importância sócio-ambiental nessa construção (Stornes, 2001; Taylor & Bruner, 2012), numa perspectiva desenvolvimentista, ecológica e holística (Henriksen, Stambulova & Roessler, 2010).

A ideia do desenvolvimento ocorrer tendo em consideração os formatos históricos e culturais onde o indivíduo se adapta (Hundeide, 2005) encontra semelhanças com a ideia genuína de desenvolvimento humano que Bronfenbrenner profetizou ao longo da sua vida, uma das teorias de desenvolvimento que melhor retrata a equação social no contexto (Bronfenbrenner, 1979; Bronfenbrenner, 1992; Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 1998; Bronfenbrenner, 2000). O desenvolvimento humano deve ser entendido como um processo cultural e este entendimento requer uma perspectiva histórica das contribuições dos indivíduos na dinâmica das comunidades (Rogoff, 2003; Zastrow & Kurst-Ashman, 2010).

Com efeito, nos anos 90 a teoria incluiu os processos proximais como o aspeto principal de desenvolvimento (Krebs 2009b). O modelo pessoa-processo proximal-contexto-tempo (modelo PPCT) tenta explicar a natureza, poder, conteúdo e dos processos proximais. Estes variam em função das características pessoais em desenvolvimento, contexto onde os processos ocorrem e mudanças que ocorrem durante um período de tempo onde esses processos têm lugar (Krebs, 2009a; Krebs, 2009b). O modelo PPCT tem sido pouco utilizado no estudo do contexto e relações pessoais em ciências do desporto em todo o mundo com destaque para os estudos inovadores de Krebs no Brasil, na área do talento desportivo.

O propósito do estudo é inovador na medida em que explora as condicionantes sócio-ambientais e as definições contextuais que determinam as diferentes trajetórias desportivas, na perspectiva dos jovens em fase de afirmação desportiva e na expectativa carreira profissional. O estudo explora ainda o peso relativo dos fatores contextuais na moldura comportamental e atitudes na criação do clima motivacional no grupo.

## **Metodologia**

### *Amostra*

O presente estudo foi conduzido num clube de futebol de orientação profissional (COP) com níveis competitivos contrastantes em jovens jogadores dos 13 aos 17 anos de idade, durante uma época desportiva. Foram realizadas 4 entrevistas de grupo, uma por cada escalão (considerando os escalões sub-



17, sub-16, sub-15 e sub-14) com 6 elementos em cada sessão (n= 24). Os grupos desportivos do COP foram divididos por ano e segundo o nível competitivo..

#### *Recolha de Dados*

O estudo foi apresentado previamente e aprovado pelo comitê de ética da Faculdade de Desporto e Educação Física da Universidade de Coimbra. O anonimato e confidencialidade foram assegurados pelos investigadores bem como o consentimento informado dos pais e dos jovens. Para aumentar a credibilidade do estudo utilizou-se a triangulação (Denzin, 1989; Banister, Burman, Parker, Taylor & Tindall, 1994; Greene, 2006) como a participação observante, entrevistas de grupo e recolha documental. De igual forma os atletas do clube preencheram uma ficha de caracterização demográfica e desportiva. Cada grupo de participantes (6 por grupo) participou numa sessão de entrevistas de grupo, conduzidas pelo primeiro autor. As entrevistas duraram entre 30 a 70 minutos. Todas as entrevistas foram gravadas com equipamento especializado e transcritas textualmente. As entrevistas começaram com 2 a 3 perguntas que providenciaram um contexto, facilitaram a comunicabilidade com os participantes e permitiu conhecê-los melhor de um ponto de vista da sua prática desportiva em contexto (p.e. “O que acham da modalidade que praticam?” e “Qual a vossa opinião sobre o clube?”).

Depois das questões iniciais a entrevista começou com a pergunta: “Quais as razões para te envolveres no desporto? Ele melhorou quem tu és?” As questões seguintes e a ordem pelo qual eram feitas variaram entre cada grupo pois dependia da dinâmica específica criada entre o pesquisador e o grupo de jovens. Procedeu-se desta forma para possibilitar o menor constrangimento possível aos entrevistados e fazer emergir a percepção da importância do contexto e relações nele criadas. De igual forma, este procedimento permitiu explorar e manter o foco em alguns temas e questões de interesse que surgiram de entrevistas anteriores (Ver secção de análise de dados). No final da entrevista de grupo era feita uma pergunta geral de reflexão sobre os aspectos positivos e negativos do clube e das suas participações desportivas.

### *Análise de Dados*

O processo de análise de dados iniciou-se logo após a primeira entrevista de grupo. Como resultado deste processo, a informação recolhida, enquanto ainda reflexo do sentido evocativo das relações interpessoais em contexto de prática desportiva, focaram-se à volta dos temas e questões emergentes. Um exemplo foi a questão sobre o papel específico do capitão de equipa na construção da coesão grupal.

As categorias foram desenvolvidas a partir de segmentos de informação ou unidades potencialmente importantes identificadas nas grelhas de análise criadas (Miles & Huberman, 1984; Marvasti, 2004; Silverman, 2010). O primeiro grande passo consistiu em codificar a informação (Weber, 1990; Patton, 2002). Os códigos iniciais foram usados como primeira forma de quebrar a informação em unidades significantes, os códigos com maior sentido analítico e que capturavam com maior precisão e mais abrangente foram usados para percorrer maiores quantidade de informação (Creswell, 2009). Um exemplo foi o código inicial “Papel adultos”, aplicado a fragmentos de informação que indicava as relações que os outros significantes têm na prática desportiva dos jovens. Este código inicial foi englobado num código mais focado e abrangente “Outros significantes e experiências”, que se tornou, por seu turno, na dimensão crítica “Ambiente desportivo e realização”

Em alguns casos, os códigos foram elaborados a partir de palavras dos próprios entrevistados; noutros casos os códigos emergiram de conceitos já existentes na literatura. Tanto os primeiros como os segundos ajudaram na organização da informação sendo que os códigos emergentes e categorias principais estavam imbutidas nas entrevistas e não foram forçadas de uma forma convencional mas também direccionada de uma teoria de base inicial (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005). Uma revisão extensa permitiu reduzir o viés nas interpretações e, por conseguinte, evitar o perigo de forçar códigos pré-existentes na informação recolhida. O resultado final do processo de codificação foi um sistema coerente de categorias e dimensões críticas. (Ver Tabela I)

O processo de preenchimento de categorias emergentes foi assistido através de constantes processos de comparação, onde a experiência e percepções de um entrevistado foram comparadas com outro jovem

entrevistado num processo iterativo usando o critério de semelhança e proximidade visual de Lincoln e Guba (1985) e Shenton (2004). Esta uniformidade não implica que mesmas unidades de texto entrem em mais do que uma categoria simultaneamente (Tesch, 1990; Creswell, 2009).

No decorrer do processo unidades subsequentes foram comparadas com unidades já codificadas e integradas em categorias emergentes ou eventualmente desenvolvidas em novas categorias até se atingir a saturação, isto é, até mais nenhuma informação relativamente a essa categoria (propriedades, processos, emergisse durante o processo de codificação (Weber, 1990; Schilling, 2006).

#### Fiabilidade

Vários passos foram seguidos para assegurar que a análise era rigorosa e credível (Shenton, 2004; Denzin & Lincoln, 2011). Primeiro, a estratégia de cruzamento de opiniões e verificação entre os pares (Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Shenton, 2004) foi utilizada durante o processo. Por outras palavras, ao colocar questões críticas e encorajando o primeiro autor a reflectir durante diversas etapas da entrevista, o segundo autor (pesquisador sénior) tornou-se instrumental no sucesso desta estratégia. Segundo, o procedimento de utilização de constantes comparações assegurou que as diferentes partes de informação que se revelavam tinham sido verificadas (Patton, 1990). Terceiro, os participantes no estudo tinham oportunidade de interagir às interpretações do pesquisador à medida que os jovens do grupo iam respondendo. Quarto, depois de completa a análise, o grupo de pesquisadores assegurou que a integração de segmentos de informação significativos em categorias particulares fazia sentido analítico. Quinto, ao leitor é fornecido uma completa descrição dos diferentes passos de forma aos resultados poderem ser aplicáveis e transferidos para outros contextos (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Finalmente, a credibilidade e coerência dos resultados foi assegurada através da imersão do primeiro autor no contexto específico durante um ano desportivo com especial incidência no início e no fim da época desportiva.

## **Apresentação de Resultados**

A partir da análise de conteúdo emergiram indutivamente 17 grupos de respostas, posteriormente e através de um procedimento dedutivo emergiram 6 categorias de análise e após leitura e re-leitura dos códigos de análise, 3 dimensões foram criadas.

Dados sócio-desportivos do Futebol Federado em Portugal e Ligas Profissionais

Em 2007 em Portugal, existiam 100.533 praticantes de futebol federado em todos os escalões, dos quais 60.509 praticantes eram de futebol de 11 sub 14 a sub19. Partindo do pressuposto que o desporto profissional de elite é cada vez mais visto como um ramo independente de negócio (Renson, 2001), a quantidade de jogadores de formação que jogam em clubes com séniores profissionais são 4094 jovens, onde os portugueses representam 95,85%, ou seja, 3922. Relativamente aos jovens estrangeiros a percentagem ronda os 4,20% ou seja, 172 jogadores jovens. Os três maiores clubes de futebol de Portugal contabilizam 43,8% dos jovens estrangeiros dos 5,59% (n=121) a jogar na formação dos clubes das 1ª Liga Profissional. (Ver Tabela II)

Os jovens do COP iniciaram a sua prática desportiva relativamente cedo. Quando analisada a mobilidade desportiva percebe-se que o clube movimenta jogadores na região com percentagens elevadas de mudanças internas dentro de cada grupo desportivo. Relativamente à estrutura familiar esta apresenta-se com traços de estabilidade apesar de se verificar maior percentagem de pais divorciados no escalão de Juvenis B. Apresentam ainda comportamento disciplinar desviante que tende a acentuar-se nos escalões mais velhos e nos campeonatos mais competitivos (Ver Tabela III).

Os escalões foram diferenciados por idade com a atribuição de letras para cada escalão que correspondem à categorização oficial dos campeonatos jovens regulamentados pela Federação Portuguesa de Futebol. Assim sendo, o escalão Juvenis C1 corresponde aos sub15, Juvenis C2 (sub14), Juvenis B1 (sub 17) e Juvenis B2 (sub16). As entrevistas de grupo seguiram este esquema de raciocínio e foram divididos e numerados por letras dos grupos dos escalões alvos do estudo (B ou C). O número (1 ou 2) identifica se o atleta é do segundo ou do primeiro ano (mais novo).

## Identidade, Iniciativa e Experiências

Os jovens referem que o envolvimento e participação no desporto e mais concretamente no futebol deriva de duas perspectivas bem salientes: o prazer e divertimento na prática do futebol e os benefícios físicos, uma perspectiva de corpo saudável, *“Eu pelo menos desde sempre que gosto do desporto e principalmente do futebol, e isso é uma coisas que nasceu comigo.”* B1<sup>1</sup>. O início da prática desportiva é feito em idades precoces entre os 5 e os 7 anos e a participação no desporto e principais influências na adesão ao futebol deve-se sobretudo à estrutura familiar do jovem atleta, especialmente pais. Os benefícios físicos apontados na perspectiva de auto-aperfeiçoamento dos jovens atletas do COP consubstancia-se no aumento da capacidade muscular e resistência.

## Relações Sociais

O papel que os outros jovens dentro da equipa atribuem ao capitão é unânime entre os jovens entrevistados e este papel representa um conjunto de características consistente: responsabilidade, prontidão para ajudar, capacidade de comunicação, capacidade de liderança e maturidade, *“...um capitão deve ter é, essencialmente, ser um bom líder de grupo”* (C1); respeito: *“Metete respeito, não é respeito, é respeita os outros e nós respeitamo-lo.”* (B2), coesão de grupo e capacidade de trabalho.

“...os capitães têm essa função de organizar a equipa, de comandar a equipa, de lutar sempre pela equipa. Eu acho que pronto é essa a minha função adicional de jogador, pronto está no campo a divertir-se e a dar o máximo.” (B1)

Os capitães de equipa referem a responsabilidade, *“Eu sou o capitão, tento sempre...tenho mais responsabilidade, tento sempre pôr mais ordem quando as coisas...”* (B2), prontidão para ajudar, capacidade de liderança, maturidade e capacidade de trabalho como características que os distingue no papel específico que desempenham.

“...Eu acho que sou humilde mas tenho que admitir que realmente dou tudo nos treinos e sou uma voz de comando dentro da equipa e por isso acho que me atribuíram este papel dentro da equipa...” (B1)

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<sup>1</sup> Ver Tabela 3 para descrição dos grupos desportivos

A relação intragrupo é encarada pelos jovens como muito boa, especialmente na capacidade em criar e fortalecer amizades. Em termos de relação inter-grupal existe boa comunicação entre eles.

“Às vezes levamos a brincadeira do balneário para o treino mas a meio do treino nota-se completamente a diferença, mete-se tudo a trabalhar, mais sério a trabalhar”(C2)

Os jovens descrevem um relacionamento positivo apoiado na união de grupo e apoio mútuo onde destacam a capacidade de sociabilização “...*nós criamos laços aqui neste balneário, nesta equipa, neste campo.*” (B1). Existe uma capacidade demarcada em todos os escalões de distinguir divertimento e trabalho, com enfoque na capacidade de produção e concentração como qualidades fundamentais “...*Claro que temos os nossos objectivos e temos sempre objectivo de ganhar e ou de lutar, jogar melhor e sempre evoluir.*” (C1), apesar dos jovens dos escalões Junior B referirem de forma mais clara a presença desta qualidades.

“É brincalhão, nós temos momentos de lazer mas ao mesmo tempo somos um grupo trabalhador e quando é para trabalhar costumamos estar assim todos bem assentes...”(B2)

O papel dos adultos na óptica dos jovens é fundamental e principalmente realizado através dos pais sob a forma de suporte e apoio, além disso o suporte dos vários dirigentes relacionados com os grupos desportivos, “*São pessoas que têm muita competência e que nos transmitem todos esses valores que são essenciais para formar uma boa equipa*” (C1). Os jovens sentem proximidade destas diferentes relações que se interiorizam no clube a relação de união com os elementos da academia comporta estabilidade que os jovens referem.

“Acho que também o grupo, pronto, o clube fazer aqui uma certa família, não ser cada um por si, acho que sinto isso e isso nos ajuda a evoluir é só isso.” (B2)

#### Aptidões Sociais e Comportamento

Os jovens apontam vários benefícios sociais como gestão do tempo, resiliência, sentido de autonomia, cumprimento de regras e disciplina, responsabilidade e maturidade: “...*estando no futebol, amadurecemos de tal maneira que saímos da adolescência mais cedo para a fase adulta.*”(C2). Esta

sensação de maturidade advém também da decorrência desportiva que o clube em si encerra, o reconhecimento da sua importância feito pelos jovens: *“...tento mostrar uma maior maturidade perante os outros porque tento diferenciar-me dos outros. É orgulho de jogar no clube X, tentamos mostrar maturidade.”*(C2). Os jovens fazem uma ligação com a vida deles na comunidade, na avaliação do impacto positivo que o desporto lhes pode proporcionar.

“Na escola também temos de estar concentrados para os testes, para os trabalhos que temos que realizar, acho que a concentração deve-se a um pouco de tudo na vida” (C1)

Os jovens atletas na caracterização da relação treinador-atleta reconhecem a sua importância na capacidade em moldar comportamentos, a liderança e gestão dos recursos humanos do grupo, neste âmbito reforçam a importância da igualdade de tratamentos por ele veiculada.

“...sabíamos que tinham valor mas não mostravam qualidade e este ano estão a jogar muito melhor. Com a motivação do treinador este ano estão a jogar muito melhor.” (C2)

#### Integração Social e Network Adultos

Os jovens têm a percepção que estão num clube que apresenta superioridade no plano desportivo na região, clube que aposta na selecção desportiva e captação dos jovens mais aptos com distinta qualidade, *“nós estamos aqui porque os treinadores e as pessoas aqui que mandam no clube X acham que nós temos qualidade suficiente para estar aqui”*(C2).

Reconhecem igualmente o estatuto e projecção do clube pela sua imagem no panorama do futebol especialmente a nível distrital, *“Nós gostávamos de estar sempre mais no clube X. A camisola pesa mais que as outras.”*(C2) e manifestam orgulho no clube que representam assim como a responsabilidade perante os outros em ser os melhores;

“se posso estar a jogar num grande clube não vou estar a jogar se calhar num clube de uma terriola(...)nós temos objectivos e queremos estar sempre melhor, e pronto sinto-me melhor em estar em clubes cada vez melhores.” (B2)

Os jovens reconhecem maior qualidade, nomeadamente superior habilidade técnica dos jovens no clube e têm percepção da importância que o clube tem quando jogam com os adversários,

“...tinhamos objectivos e tinhamos essas responsabilidades de ser melhor do que os adversários que ao princípio são inferiores e mesmo quando são superiores temos que, olha, somos do clube X, temos que dar mais, temos que ser responsáveis e ganhar.”(B2)

Segundo os jovens a aspiração ao profissionalismo está bem presente nas suas consciências. *“Acho que toda a gente tem no fundo esse sonho de poder tornar-se profissional.” (C1)*. Percebem esta ligação como fruto do trabalho e rigor, ou seja, intensa ligação à tarefa.

“...uma grande parte é porque tenho o sonho de ser profissional e acho que tenho aquela vontade de trabalhar sempre mais e acho que se continuar assim posso um dia chegar à primeira liga.” (B1)

#### Outros Significantes e Experiências

Referem igualmente a importância das relações veiculadas no seio dos grupos desportivos e entre os pares com ligações e benefícios à vida deles na comunidade. Os jovens atletas consideram a estrutura formativa do clube onde reconhecem a presença dos outros significantes (dirigentes, directores, coordenador) como positiva e estável, assumindo a proximidade e convivência como principais características desta relação.

“...esta família é uma maneira de nos divertirmos, de escaparmos aos problemas que nós temos sem ser no futebol e é muito importante esta relação que nós temos com os nossos companheiros” (B1)

Dentro daquilo que é o suporte dos outros significantes, os jovens demonstram satisfação na percepção que têm do suporte dos pais. Os pais proporcionam apoio logístico, mais nos grupos a partir dos 14 anos e principalmente nas equipas que jogam nos campeonatos distritais, são o principal apoio no acompanhamento que fazem à competição dos filhos.

Os jovens, por sua vez, atletas partilham e têm percepção da importância que os outros significantes principalmente os pais mas também treinadores atribuem à escola. Revelam a necessidade e importância em conciliar os dois sistemas, *“Os meus treinadores todos sempre disseram que a escola estava sempre em 1º lugar, porque mais cedo ou mais tarde o futebol*



*teria de acabar.*”(C2). O sistema escolar tem importância na percepção dos pais e é facilmente percebido pelos jovens.

“Quando levo recados e mostro a minha mãe ela deixa vir, chateia-se mas deixa. Fui honesto, fiquei mais uma semana de castigo” (C2)

O clube apresenta pouca remodelação infra-estrutural e condições insuficientes de prática desportiva, “*Neste clube ainda não há assim grandes recursos.*” (B1). Recursos deficitários para a estrutura formativa com impacto na preparação desportiva dos jovens atletas do clube, sendo um dos pontos mais negativos apontado pelos jovens com repercussões na captação e desportiva de jovens para o clube.

“... faltar jogadores, acho que podíamos investir um bocado mais mas também se calhar não existe assim tantos recursos para conseguir jogadores.”B1

As relações positivas desenvolvidas no clube têm continuidade fora do futebol, “*...cria a amizades...sentimentos para além de jogar à bola*” (B1), na comunidade não só na relação entre atletas como na relação com os adultos, treinadores e dirigentes, “*...com o futebol eu tive uma convivência muito alargada com várias pessoas, não só a nível desportivo mas a convivência fora do desporto*”(C1)

## **Discussão**

O estudo revela que, em consonância com os resultados apresentados, o factor contexto revela-se importante na determinação dos percursos desportivos dos jovens inseridos em contexto profissionalizante. Os jovens percebem as interações entre os diversos actores e o clima competitivo presente no clube como importantes na aceitação e afirmação do seu espaço dentro do desporto.

Estudos orientados para perceber o determinismo dos objectivos sociais não têm sido tão estudados como as motivações psico-sociais na orientação na conceptualização da competência na relação com os outros (Stuntz & Weiss, 2009).

Este entendimento do padrão de participação desportiva invariavelmente aponta para a estruturação de programas desportivos também na especificidade das relações que os jovens têm com os outros significantes (Fraser-Thomas, Côté & Deakin, 2008). Aliás, tem sido um tema central no

modelo bioecológico de Bronfenbrenner desde 1979 e ao qual apelidou de processos proximais (Bronfenbrenner & Crouter, 1983; Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 1998).

A este respeito a literatura refere que uma percepção positiva por parte dos jovens das relações sociais (pai, amigos e pares) está associado a melhores comportamentos e clima motivacional, maior autonomia percebida e divertimento (Ullrich-French & Smith, 2006; Papaioannou et al. 2008). De facto, conceptualizando as díades preconizadas por Bronfenbrenner (1979) e posteriormente, num constructo mais elaborado de processos proximais (Bronfenbrenner & Ceci, 1993; Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 1998), ajudam a explicar a natureza destas interações no contexto do clube e a presença da estrutura familiar como sistema exterior(mesosistema) com impacto na vida desportiva do jovem.

Carr (2009) a este respeito providencia evidência de que a relação pai-adolescente influencia a forma como o jovem constrói as suas amizades em contexto desportivo, partindo como pressuposto da importância da unidade familiar (Bronfenbrenner, 2005).

De igual forma, Wuerth, Lee & Alfermann (2004) perspectivam o padrão de envolvimento dos pais na perspectiva tanto dos pais como dos atletas sendo que estes percebem o envolvimento com baixo níveis de pressão e altos níveis de compreensão e louvor. Com efeito, o pai e treinador revelam-se como os agentes desportivos que mais influência têm no comportamento desportivo dos jovens e no clima motivacional criado no COP (Keegan, Harwood, Spray & Lavalley, 2009; Oliver, Hardy & Markland, 2010). O estudo de Taylor & Bruner (2012) revela a influência dos outros significantes, comportamentos relevantes em dimensões como o papel de instrução e controlo por parte do treinador e suporte e aprendizagem por parte dos pais.

Esta relação do clube com os jovens atletas revela mormente, a relação entre recursos ambientais promovidos pelo treinador (autonomia, feedback performance) e performance desportiva (Bakker, Oerlemans, Demerouti, Slot & Ali, 2001).

A literatura é abundante com relação à percepção da importância do treinador na satisfação, motivação intrínseca e persistência no desporto (Gillet, Vallerand, Amoura & Valdes, 2010; Joessar, Hein & Hagger, 2011). Os jovens

atletas do COP reconhecem a presença dos outros significantes (dirigentes, directores, coordenador) como ponto importante na definição e própria gestão das suas carreiras desportivas.. Salientam a interacção treinador-atleta com aspectos como a correcção técnica, reforço positivo e sequenciação de comportamentos (Eriksson, Côté, Hollenstein & Deakin, 2011).

A aspiração ao profissionalismo presente na grande maioria dos jovens, condiciona e promove comportamentos diferenciados e mais competitivos, maior capacidade de trabalho e um clima percebido com orientação para a tarefa. Também o papel dos pares revela-se importante na satisfação realizada, persistência no desporto e motivação criada (Ullrich-French & Smith, 2009; Jõesaar, Hein & Hagger, 2011).

Portanto, a percepção da importância de cada um, a posição de capitão, que resulta de expectativas do papel e mudanças de comportamento e desenvolvimento associados (Bronfenbrenner, 1999), a noção de grupo de trabalho contribui para a construção de uma consciência colectiva na relação entre os pares (Bosselut, McLaren, Eys, & Heuzé, 2012), que se estende para fora do futebol é considerada um dos pontos mais positivos do clube. Os principais benefícios sociais apontados pelos jovens vão ao encontro de estudos existentes na literatura sobre a influência dos pares (Vazou, Ntoumanis & Duda, 2005; Joessar, Hein & Hagger, 2011), onde predominam a cooperação, sentido de autonomia, perseguição de objectivos e eficácia.

Apesar do facto reconhecem que um clima de treino orientado não só para a performance mas também para a mestria são um ponto importante no seu desenvolvimento como jogadores. Os jovens percebem que os factores contextuais (estrutura física do clube e estrutura da formação), a imprevisibilidade e instabilidade para as suas necessidades desportivas constituem um grande impedimento o desenvolvimento dos processos proximais (Bronfenbrenner, 1999).

À maior visibilidade na procura de reconhecimento social e com diferenças demarcadas na escolha de um percurso desportivo (Ford & Williams, 2012), a projecção inerente do COP proporciona uma perspectiva diferente de percurso desportivo. A grande trajectória de mobilidade ascendente dos jovens com objectivo superior de carreira desportiva expone certos valores sociais, entre eles, uma percepção de habilidade

maior, capacidade de esforço e maior sentido de autonomia. Este processo exclusivo e excludente é contrastante com e muitas vezes complementar com a mobilidade desportiva descendente que se verifica em clubes comunitários de bairro.

O futebol de rua é o principal espaço de iniciação ao futebol no Brasil, (Salmela, Marques & Machado, 2003) e contrasta claramente com a realidade portuguesa, onde há muito que se verificou uma transição em que o jogo deliberado (Côté, 1999) cedeu definitivamente espaço para a prática deliberada (Ericsson, Krampe & Tesche-Römer, 1993). Relativamente ao padrão de especialização, este varia bastante entre as modalidades desportivas (Leite, Sampaio & Baker, 2009), sendo que o contacto dos jovens com o treino específico no COP acontece antes da idade sugerida pela literatura, que é dos 13 aos 15 anos (Côté, Baker & Abernethy, 2003; Drubsky, 2003). De forma peremptória, a partir dos 13 anos acentuam-se os mecanismos de exclusão e seleção desportiva onde o mais apto continua o processo rumo ao profissionalismo.

A representatividade social do futebol a nível macrossistémico é de grande importância no funcionamento das sociedades uma vez que determina comportamentos em larga escala, nomeadamente, construção de comunidade sensação de pertença e identificação identitária. Por exemplo, a afiliação clubística intensa transforma profundamente o indivíduo, adepto nos seus comportamentos e crenças em relação ao seu quotidiano (Gibson, Willming & Holdnak, 2002).

Os resultados relativos à presença do sistema escolar na vida desportiva dos jovens não apresentaram uma ligação negativa (Papioannou, 2008) e não corroboram as afirmações de Wyllemann, Alfermann e Lavallee (2004) e Wyllemann e Lavallee (2004) de que jovens atletas envolvidos no desporto de competição têm dificuldade de conciliar estudos e vida desportiva, também em contexto europeu (De Knop, Wyllemann, Van Houcke & Bollaert, 1999; Boiché & Sarrazin, 2007). Em contraste com estudos anteriores que associam os clubes sociais de bairro com pouco incentivo ao estudo, os jovens do COP percebem a importância que os outros (pais, directores, treinadores) atribuem à escola, verificando-se um maior comprometimento com a escola.

Não só o macrosistema como outros contextos onde o jovem não está presente (exosistema no modelo de Bronfenbrenner) podem determinar decisivamente esta aceitação desportiva. A percepção do futebol como um espaço de ascensão social e marcado pendor económico, algo bastante evidente em países de grande expressão futebolística tem revelado ser um mecanismo importante de engajamento dos jovens no desporto rumo a um pretensão profissionalismo.

Quando se analisa as aspirações sociais, o rendimento escolar e o estatuto social de determinados “ethos”, nomeadamente culturas afro-americanas, verifica-se como o desporto pode, de facto servir de posicionamento social e perspectiva de uma carreira profissional no desporto. Os pais estão entre os agentes socializadores mais importantes na manutenção destas crenças na ênfase desportiva (Beamon & Bell, 2004; 2006). Esta importância dos pais para se chegar ao alto nível de desempenho desportivo identificada em estudos realizados em países desenvolvidos (Durand-Bush, Salmela & Thompson, 2005; Wylleman, De Knop, Ewing & Cumming, 2000) é diferenciadora das duas ecologias de prática estudadas. Comparando os resultados com estudos anteriormente realizados em clubes sociais de bairro, a percepção da existência de uma carreira desportiva na óptica dos jovens no clube profissional é notória e relevante quando comparada com a percepção da prática desportiva condicionada sem perspectiva de carreira.

Aliás, a perspectiva do desenvolvimento pelo desporto onde surjem variáveis importantes como a estrutura do clube, organização na formação e estrutura familiar tem sido referenciado em estudo em comunidades desfavorecidas (Skinner, Zakus & Cowell, 2008), contrasta duramente com o grupo de interesses envolvidos na estimulação de atletas de elite através de programas e estratégias que cultivam o sucesso naquilo que pretendem que seja um perfil público do desporto (Sotiriadou & Shilbury, 2009).

### **Conclusão**

Da construção da carreira desportiva em jovens na rota do profissionalismo foram identificados três actores sociais importantes na

percepção da participação desportiva dos jovens atletas com cargas de ponderação diferentes: pais, treinadores e pares.

A percepção dos jovens da sua participação desportiva revela a importância dos factores contextuais, nomeadamente, da capacidade de trabalho de quem dirige a formação e do nível de exigência e competitividade que o clube oferece. A nível interpessoal a percepção e construção do clima competitivo no COP depende de três conexões: Primeiro, do tipo de suporte parental praticado na sua relação de suporte; segundo, do desenvolvimento de um clima de mestria criado pelo treinador e, por fim, das relações de cooperação e suporte criado pelos pares.

Os resultados apontam ainda para benefícios intrapessoais que os jovens percebem do seu envolvimento desportivo, ou seja, a importância de relações sociais próximas positivas no comprometimento e participação desportiva e na construção de aptidões sociais como autonomia, disciplina e maturidade. A escolaridade, a formação desportiva inicial, o tipo de suporte familiar e social e os mecanismos de planeamento da carreira utilizados pelo atleta revelam-se importantes para que o jovem possa lidar com possibilidades negativas e/ou possibilidades positivas no seu percurso para o profissionalismo. Foram descritas aptidões sociais benéficas não só a nível desportivo como para a vida adulta em comunidade destes jovens. O estudo levanta importantes considerações relativamente aos benefícios da prática desportiva em contextos de formação marcadamente competitivos bem como salienta características essenciais para o jovem no caminho do profissionalismo.

Uma das limitações do estudo a ser explorado em estudos posteriores prende-se com os mecanismos de desenvolvimento das aptidões sociais, ou seja, será pertinente perceber a estrutura familiar dos jovens que se destacam no desporto. De igual forma, será importante perceber a constância destes valores ligados ao desporto numa diferente fase de formação desportiva, ou seja, conferir ao estudo um carácter longitudinal e em diferentes contextos de performance (situação de bairro).

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Tabela 1 Categorias Principais e grupos de respostas COP

Dimensões Críticas	Categorias Principais	Grupo de Respostas
Desenvolvimento Pessoal e Auto Melhoramento	Identidade e Experiências	Envolvimento Desportivo
		Adesão Desporto
	Iniciativa e Experiências	Benefícios Físicos
		Benefícios Pessoais
Processos Proximais e Interações Sociais	Relações Sociais	Relações Interpessoais
		Papel Intra-Equipa
	Aptidões Sociais e Comportamento	Clima de Grupo
		Benefícios Sociais
Ambiente Desportivo e Realização	Integração Social e Network Adultos	Eficácia Treinador
		Integração Comunidade
		Profissionalismo
		Estatuto e reconhecimento
	Outros Significantes e Experiências	Suporte Outros significantes
		Relações Escola
		Suporte e Logística
		Estrutura CLube
		Papel Adultos

Tabela 2 Atletas Formação em Clubes com Equipas Séniores Profissionais

	FED	PFED	EFED	EFED
Liga I	2165	2044	121	5,59
Liga II	1929	1878	51	2,64
TOTAL	4094	3922	172	4,2

**Fonte: Pordata e INE 2012**

FED - Federados

PFED- Portugueses Federados

EFED - Estrangeiros Federados

%EFEDESP - % Estrangeiros Federados

Tabela 3 Dados Sócio-Desportivos dos Jovens do COP

<b>Dados Desportivos</b>	<b>Clube Orientação Profissional</b>				
	JunC Nacional (C1) (n=21)	JunC Distrital (C2) (n=22)	JunBNacional (B1) (n=18)	JunBDistrital (B2)(n=15)	
Anos de Prática Desportiva	6,71	6,68	7,78	7,73	
Início de Prática Desportiva (Anos)	7,29	6,32	8,11	7,27	
Mobilidade Clube (%)	47,62	68,19	55,56	80	
Nº Atletas Mobilidade	10	15	10	12	
<b>Comportamento Disciplinar</b>					
Expulsão Directa	<b>1ª FASE</b>	2	0	1(T)	1
Expulsão Acumulação		2	1	2	3
Amarelos		36	8	36	25
Expulsão Directa	<b>2ª FASE</b>		1 (T)	0	1
Expulsão Acumulação		–	2	0	0
Amarelos			20	18	8
<b>Estrutura Familiar (%)</b>					
Pais Juntos	93,02		81,82		
Pais Separados	4,65		12,12		

## Chapter 5: Talent Development and Ecology of Practice In A Professional Club



## **ABSTRACT**

This study attempts to determine sport participation, dominant relationships and contextual influences in a professionalizing environment through the perspective of social 'actors' within the club. Participant observations, semi-structured interviews alongside with field diary were the instruments used to describe interpersonal context, exploring dominant relations; oriented climate by others and consequences on youth sport participation. It is demonstrated that developing weak organization and coach created climate have direct impact on youth sport participation; although recognized as the most important, difficult school relations exist; youth specific competitive climate acknowledgement and differentiated status recognition, desire and uncertainty of professionalization are main characteristics of this environment. Therefore, individuals' environment needs to be changed accordingly to encourage change. These results suggest new avenues of research in the way of youth sport talent management and the look for sport contextual determinants. Implications for applied practitioners and researchers are explored.

Sport at the elite level is a hard pathway to endure and maximizing effectiveness of the talent development pathway is crucial. There is very little discussion over social ground of talent development, although talent is always socially situated and constructed (Gagné, 2004), it is primarily the result of practice and experience (Howe, 2001).

The ultimate achievement for any coach or organization interested in high level performance is to nurture effectively, enabling them to realize their full potential and succeed at professional level. In this type of excellence orientation, identification and development of talent are both an integral and intertwined part of a successful process (Abbott et al 2002; Bloom 1985; Martindale et al 2005).

The academic literature on talent has tended to focus on the individual athlete (Henriksen, Stambulova & Roessler, 2010), research into the discovery and development of athletic talent either on psychological (Domingues & Gonçalves, 2012; MacNamara, 2011; Oliver, Hardy & Markland, 2010; Taylor & Bruner, 2012); biological data (Gall, Carling, Williams & Reilly, 2010; Hardman & Jones, 2011; Keogh, 1999; Pearson, Naughton & Torode, 2006) or organizational perspective (Collings & Mellahi, 2009; Sotiriadou & Shilbury, 2009)

In the 1980's there were epistemological and methodological shifts in some of the research on the development of talent and expertise. Research moved from focusing on cognitive determinants of elite performance to better understanding of contextual influences (Fletcher, Wagstaff, 2009).

More recently, some models have been particularly influential in recent discussions of sports participation and development. Istvan Balyi's (2001) Long-Term Athlete Development; Côté & Hay's (2002) Developmental Model of Sport Participation (DMSP); Abbott et al's (2002) Psychological Characteristics of Developing Excellence; Bailey and Morley's (2006) Model of Talent Development in Physical Education (MTDPE). All of these models have different aims and research methods and although they provide descriptions of participant development in sport only Côté's DSMP and Bailey and Morley's MTDPE elaborate on psychosocial influences as well as environmental factors as a way of sport involvement (DSMP) or discuss the character of the talent development process.

The latest research in talent development show that more varied psychological and especially social and cultural circumstances play an important role. The growing number of qualitative studies (Domingues & Gonçalves, 2013; Henriksen, Stambulova & Roessler, 2010a; Henriksen, Stambulova & Roessler, 2010b; Larsen, Alfermann & Christensen, 2012;

Martindale, Collins, Wang, McNeill, Lee, Sproule & Westbury, 2010; Oliver, Hardy & Markland, 2010) highlight the need in setting the right ethos in youth practice: 'arduous' change and development through the environment (Martindale & Mortimore, 2011).

Within this reasoning Harwood (2008) argues that external assets are characterized by the quality of the environment shaping the young athlete, including access to positive role models, social support, and positive peer influence. Recently, Martindale, Collins, Wang, McNeill, Lee, Sproule, and Westbury (2010) have examined the key features of an effective talent development environment specific to sport, developing the Talent Development Environment Questionnaire. Providing a detail picture of effective goals and systems within the talent development environments Martindale, Collins and Abraham (2007) provided a clear picture of an effective Talent Development Environment (TDE): long term aims and methods, strong support background, emphasis on development and a holistic approach.

From an ecological perspective it makes little sense to perceive young athletes as independent and stable personalities (Larsen, Alfermann & Christensen, 2012). Instead, personal attributes have to be perceived as socially constructed and highly dependent on the specific environmental conditions. An ecological perspective shifts the perspective away from the individual athlete to the context in which the athlete is developing.

Interestingly, research has shown that potential champions are often brought up in environments where close support networks make efforts to de-emphasize the importance of success through developmental periods (Gould et al 2002) however; literature continues to show some potential pitfalls that arise when operationalizing long term focus. Furthermore, some findings have pinpointed its attention to the relationship between environmental resources (autonomy, social support from the coach, and performance feedback) and performance among young players (Bakker, Oerlemans, Demerouti, Slot, & Ali, 2011).

In studying the main relationships and processes conducive to talent development Lauer, Gould, Roman and Pierce (2010) extended the role parents played in developing professional tennis players and, specifically, the full array

of positive and negative attitudes and behaviors that influenced talent development.

For instance, studies are consensual when referring to the importance of coaches created climate. Taylor & Bruner (2012) used strong theoretical foundations to highlight the role of the coach and team environment in facilitating positive youth outcomes. Durand-Bush & Salmela (2002) highlighted that an ethos derived through coaches, team mates and other athletes is an important influence and driver of the required psychological development. It is clear that a professional ethos is required to promote the attainment of excellence and coaches are strongly recommended in promoting positive learning environments.

This article falls under the umbrella of social constructivism paradigm drawing upon these issues and focusing on the 'social' variables that can affect and invigorate talent development in sport. The study also determines the interpersonal climate (dominant social relationships) and processes that undergo in youth sporting contexts. Researchers adopted an ethnographic approach which allowed significant interpretation of human function actions (Atkinson & Hammersley, 2007; Hammersley, 1992), i.e. to study the enduring relationships that dictate contextual outcomes in these talented high performance settings. Being high performance settings, competitive, focused environment with emphasis on results.

This inductive research used Bronfenbrenners' Bioecological theory (BET) to stress the importance of contextual cues and interrelationships called by definition proximal processes and determine the perceptions of sport participation in youth adolescent athletes. Lev Vigotsky was a precursor of Bronfenbrenners' work and his assumption that learning always occurs and cannot be separated from a social context on many levels is in line with Bronfenbrenner and Morris (1998) and Bronfenbrenner and Evans (2000) writings.

They identified the need to understand individuals' development within their environments. In this sense, Bronfenbrenner's (1979) theory and successive reformulations (Bronfenbrenner & Evans, 2000) (Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 1998) claims nature, power, content of proximal processes vary systematically in function of personal characteristics in development, context

where processes meet, under consideration developmental outcomes, and changes that occur over a period of time where processes are occurring (Krebs, 2009a; Krebs, 2009b).

In fact, several studies using this model have been carried out in youth sport field, focusing on important relationships in sport participation (Bengoechea & Johnson, 2001; Domingues & Gonçalves, 2012; Domingues & Gonçalves, 2013; Mueller, Phelps, Bowers, Agans, Urban & Lerner, 2011; Holt, Tamminen, Black, Sehn, Z.L. & Wall, 2008). This study addresses these issues and tries to describe and explain mutually influential relations that exist between the developing talent athlete and his complex and changing context. It offers a qualitative longitudinal design, an innovative approach to explore contextual high performance environments identified with a professional organization and main interrelations that foster youth talent development.

## **Methodology**

### **Participants**

Data was collected from people who were easily available and heavily immersed to support the researcher's study. Participants (n=9) were selected according to their representativeness and importance in a football Professional Oriented Club (POC), such as parents with managerial roles, directors, coaches with a rich past serving the club, former senior players and youth coordinator. The term POC refers to a club with a senior professional squad with wide history in the Portuguese first division. The club is located in the center area of Portugal and has sixteen youth teams competing at a national and regional level.

### **Data Collection**

Data was collected and analyzed during one sport year. Several methods of data collection were used, namely, semi-structured interviews, participant observation (accounted for more than 80 hours of direct observation, with the construction of a field diary and completion of observation grills which served the purpose of cross checking the interviewers statement) were employed to provide a thick description of a reality of a professional club. Parents' biographic and demographic information sheet were used, this data was obtained through

under U-17, U16, U15 and U14 athletes. This multi method approach allowed a cross validation and added emergent descriptions (Lessard-Hérbert, Goyette & Boutin, 2008).

### Procedures

Various meetings were held prior to data collection to introduce procedures and establish further visits. Participant observation was partially co-organized on a weekly timetable with the youth coordinator in order to observe training sessions and arrange the interview meetings with the coaches. The scheduled observations were distributed in different competitive phases throughout the sport season in order to apprehend diverse informational cues.

Data was consistently analyzed throughout with BET and Social Constructivism theory as it helped to organize observational cues from the field work. Daily notes and observational grids were reviewed at the end of each day. Interviews were transcribed *verbatim* and tape recorder confirmation followed the procedure. This study was approved by the ethic board committee of the Faculty of Sports and Physical Education in Coimbra. In fact, ethical guidelines followed the work towards protecting the individuals, communities and environments involved in the studies against any form of harm, manipulation or malpractice.

### Data Analysis

Data was analyzed through standardized interpretative techniques (Miles & Huberman, 1994; Ryan & Bernard, 2000; Patton, 2002) as it is the most pragmatic way of conducting interpretative content analysis (Vazou, Ntoumanis, & Duda, 2005) in order to understand meanings and actions. Researchers used conceptual analysis in the study to check for concepts and its occurrences, and relational analysis by examining the relationships among concepts in the gathered information provided by the semi-structured interviews as well as the field diary. Content analysis was employed with four successive and interdependent steps (Bardin, 1988; Moraes, 1999; Krippendorff, 2012). First, interview transcription (discourse reproduction); second step, careful reading and analysis (including second and third reading) from both the main researchers and senior researcher. In the third phase, identification and

description of specific themes through deductive analysis, and lastly, inductive analysis with the identified themes and creation of categories.

All of the categories were reviewed and ascertain whether some categories could be merged or if some needed to be sub-categorised against pre-determined codes (Miles & Huberman, 1994; Atkinson & Hammersley, 2007) and memos were put alongside the codes (Lofland, 2002). Finally researchers returned to the original transcripts and ensure that all the information that needed to be categorised had been so. After complete interpretation, emerged data was delivered to the athletes for feedback check and cross validation. Similarly, field diary and observational grills were analyzed sequentially to semi-structured interviews which allowed crossing data and statement verification.

#### Validity

Qualitative analysis searches primarily for understanding particular and non-generalizable situations (Erikson, 1986). Validity is dependent upon chosen researchers' paradigm Creswell and Miller (2000). Internal validity was achieved through repeated hours of observation, multi-method data collection, as triangulation constituted a mean of strengthening data (Patton, 2002) during one sport season. Peer review was assured by an external research specialist in content analysis and with extensive experience in conducting qualitative studies and a way to generalize the findings to other professional contexts. Researchers also critically examined the gathered information to detect any potential bias and inclination that may influence the conclusions about the data.

Researchers asked themselves whether the data was plausible, credible and reliable, and could be defended when challenged. Although this is a debatable topic researchers secured different validity types to confirm the results (Maxwell, 2002). In-depth and accurate descriptions of sporting context provided applicability (descriptive validity). Researchers acknowledged the fact that a second moment of group interviews would provide a better interpretation of feelings, intentions and experiences of young athletes thus allowing for a more accurate interpretative validity. Theoretical validity proposed by Maxwell was accomplished by the BET and social constructivism assumptions as they provided a solid framework from which results did derive.

Due to a lack of measurement in natural settings and noticeable registered changes in this professional oriented club (change in sport directors, sport facilities, nature of the management) replicability couldn't be assessed.

## Results

It is important to consider the wider social context (exosystem) of what represents the professional environment in Portugal. Analyzing the young athlete's involvement in high competitive sport it is important three related aspects: mobility rates from the clubs; rate between foreign players and Portuguese players and, finally, the percentage of junior players in the forthcoming season.

In order to ascertain the importance of the first and most important microsystem, the family structure parents' socio-demographic data was also obtained determining fathers professional activity and academic background.

### Parent's Socio-Demographic Data and Sport Competitive Structure

Table 2 shows data from young athletes parents', the groups analyzed were U-17, U-16 U-15 and U-14. Data shows that parents, in general, have more academic background when compared to less structured and professionalized clubs. Analyzing the four groups, only Junior B (U-17) showed low levels of scholar attainment, being 3<sup>rd</sup> cycle the main academic level of their parents, while, on the other side, Junior C (U-15) registered some university level. Analyzing parent's professional occupation third sector was dominant between four groups.

Results (see Table 3) demonstrate a higher mobility rate in League 1 teams (Main Professionalized Competition) and higher presence of Portuguese in League 2 (Second Professionalized Competition). Inversely, League 1 has higher presence of foreign players in average 13 players per team (n=24); 53, 89% of foreign players play in league 1 against 34, 34% in League 2. Internationalization of senior professional squad represents a large tendency spectrum of Portuguese football that intentionally difficult youth pathway and represents a great mobility consistency over each season. Data collected in the following pre-season showed little difference of new incomers between two



leagues, despite the fact that league 2 showed more players leaving and more ex-junior players entering each squad, although in statistical terms it represents merely 1%.

#### Semi-Structured Interviews from Significant Others

The interpretive approach to content analysis from significant others interviews (coaches, parents, directors) revealed three critical dimensions and eight primary categories in accordance with PPCT model (Personal Development and Self Improvement, Proximal processes and Social Interactions and Sport Context and Achievement). The adopted BET background emphasized aspects like club's identity and its representativeness in community, organization and structure, clubs climate and values, predominant social relations, perspectives and influences of club's relation with family and school. Table 4 provides an overlook of the themes generated and inductive analysis obtained and Table 5 provides the labels for each statement.

#### Personal Development and Self-Improvement

It is a fact of youngster's potential benefits in their regular engagement in sport. Although dispute continues surrounding this dimension, literature unravels some insight on how talented athletes perceive their sport environment. Others regard some particular assets such as life learning skills as opportunities for identity construction, on one side, support efficacy provided by the close environment such as the family and school as an important microsystem and avenue to life identity.

#### *Opportunities for life enduring skill construction through sport*

The role of sport is set to provide a regulated practice, under supervision where skills, behaviors and values reveal a vehicle of sporting activity transmission on youngsters daily lives, "...*team spirit, discipline, rigor, setting goals, objectives that have to be achieved, solidarity ...* (JU18D). The perception of young athletes sporting context and clubs' dimension carries social behaviors different from those previously charged in other clubs.

"... (Entered the club) that completely change your way of being, and become super athletes dedicated, committed, with very high levels of attendance, with great dedication and commitment in training." (JU15C)

Significant others involved in the club refer a set of values and transfer of important community learning skills to other microsystems, "*... sport itself leads us to prepare them for society, not only the fulfillment of rules as well as the adversity factor ...*" (JU17C). Actors point out a set of personal and social values, more specifically values such as building personality, loyalty, resilience to adversity and sense of belonging and balance, "*... knowing being, coping, often learn to accept the joke from a colleague, or as I say, being in a group.*" (JU16C).

Alongside to respect and discipline significant others refer to some eminently social values related to the notion of belonging, "*... playing football, playing music, playing ballet...Kids are much more social, more interactive*" (JU17C) notion of responsibility: "*... whoever has more ambition to go further and beyond, creates a greater sense of responsibility, the need to evolve to be more effective, to work harder ...*" (JU16D); time management training/school and compliance with rules.

#### *Relationship with the club, family and support efficacy*

Despite recognizing their important role in sports, the others support and consider the need for an optimum distance to parents. There is, therefore, the need to measure the distance to parental intervention in group dynamics in order to better define each other's roles.

"... they are very critical, have a very typical view of what is happening, but they are fundamental, in transportation, training, games, many times, especially the little ones, without them this would not work." (JU18D)

There are two forms of potential parent negative influence on children's' sporting life, a certain ambivalence and interference on sporting groups decisions, "*... we do not have the capacity to do so (parents away) in terms of structure ...*" (JU17C). Coaches realize that expected professional recognition and pressure can exert group behaviors and it is present in parents' overall perspective and assumes an unavoidable reality in youth lives, "*... a significant number of parents have expectation that their son might one day be one of*

*those famous players...*"(JU15C). Nonetheless, several directors have the idea that family context is conducive to unfold youth attitudes and behavior as an indicator of this particular microsystem importance.

"... Education must be given at home and supplemented in school, but football is essential to have the athletes feel they have the support of parents and not feel that they also put too much pressure." (JU18D)

### *School integration and expectations toward sport*

Significant others in the club recognize the importance of school and primacy given to school system, as sport is considered a complement, "*... particularly football (club) is important but the level of importance is behind two things: family and studies ...*"(JU14C). Therefore, the club's relationship with school is based solely in actions mainly concerned with school grades and some follow up of their behavior in the club. Coaches perspective of school system is often with regard to its influence on young groups functioning level, "*... he is harming himself and ends up directly harming the teammates and the people who work ...*" (JU16D); but also recognizing that change of sport context carries competitive changes and routines to be assimilated by the young athlete.

"... But I believe that reproving has nothing to do directly with change, the athlete may not have changed their routines and their rhythms to adapt to this new reality" (JU15C)

They recognize the family's instrumental use of football as a punishment tool for bad school results: "*... many parents do it when they begin to see their first school results (...) just take the ball*"(JU16C) and recognize the complementarity importance between football and studies. In fact, they realize that it is difficult to reconcile school system with youth's sporting life, with a conspicuous lack of mechanisms and structural link between them, "*Our society does not allow a good school-cultural activity / sport relationship....*"(JU17C), as it proves to be relevant and mandatory for higher sport performance achievements.

"... We go to more developed societies and everything that relates to culture, sport, they have everything organized and all kids have an education in sport ..." (JU17C)

## Proximal Processes and Social Interactions

This dimension follows BET framework. Bronfenbrenner & Morris (1998) and Bronfenbrenner & Evans (2000) clearly highlight proximal processes with two propositions; first, as enduring and complex reciprocal interactions in a particular sport climate with others inherent values and importance. Secondly, the force and direction of these proximal processes depend on both the developing athlete (group interactions) and the environment (adult's role and support efficacy, namely, club-athletes relationship).

### *Climate in the club through significant others' importance and inherent values*

Adults consider youth important pieces in all sport process, the dynamics created by youth teams which consider football a common space to create some social values useful in community life: *"Team spirit, spirit of sacrifice, humility, knowledge, sharing, I think they're values that they take out there ..."* (JU14C).

In turn, coaches say that young people involvement generates intrinsic motivation with different purposes comparing to previous clubs where they played *"...athletes automatically are highly motivated for training (...) for the championship they dispute (...) they come to train super-motivated"* (JU15C), and reinforce the need for the existence of demanding and availability climate according to clubs rules and objectives.

"I think it has much to do with the involvement that is created around the teams, groups and also with the requirement that they know they will be placed in competitive terms ..." (JU14C)

The various academy directors relate positively with the club and reflect the created group dynamics between athletes, with allusive friendship bonding and community outreach, *"... even with different backgrounds, even with different implications, (...) group dynamics can overlap to the differences."* (JU15C). They perceive the club's community recognition and status and emphasis given to the club represents a different attitude towards game, *"... reach a top club in the region and if they want achieve something more in football, I think they have to face it with another spirit of sacrifice and another attitude"* (JU16D). There is a pride in respondent's statement referring a latent sense of belonging, *"We are, like it or not, the CLUB (...) but we will not be like them, we have to have that distinctive character of maintaining our position ..."* (JU14C). The representatives

of the club recognize the will of the vast majority of young athletes to embark for professionalism and also the resources needed to get there; they believe in youngsters' ability to recognize this capacity, "... everyone dreams if all goes well, dream in entering the professional squad "(JU16D).

#### *Nature of relations, possible outcomes and supported efficacy*

Coaches are primarily responsible for group cohesiveness and motivational climate created, as well as links of affection and commitment among young athletes. The relationship between athlete and coach assumes forms of respect, where coaches seek to instill responsibility, "... I find it perfectly natural that they respect me more now and listen to me more like a coach than sometimes parents and teachers. "(JU14C). Interpersonal relationships among significant others are considered good: "... people who directly on field experience with the athletes a great complicity establishing ties of friendship ..." (JU15C), with an impact on their social life determining a voluntary structure that results from semi-professional dedication.

"Some people in whom the club has a great impact (...) I notice that in a group of people, the club has a big impact on your social life" (JU15C)

There is a concern and commitment to respect each athletes' individuality and insert them in the group with an emphasis on discipline and educational values, values they consider important that come primarily from youngster's family context.

#### Sport Context and Achievement

Context as Bronfenbrenner (Bronfenbrenner, 1979) defines it is a starting point to fully describe the first parameter, the clubs' identity and immersion in the community, their history through time. The second parameter focus on the clubs' recognition and status and the professionalized side follow its nature as a sport institution with a specific social characterization and support in and from the society. Finally, the last parameter to the discussion data from the clubs' structure and organization, human resources, youth sport mobility and physical conditions for training and games.

### *Clubs' identity and experiences through their historical path and community proximity*

The respondents refer the clubs difficulty in two particular resources that interconnect profoundly: financial difficulty "...the club during some years lived over public funding and hasn't established its own revenues..." (JU17C), and infra-structural difficulties to accomplish some sporting goals, *In the present reality of football in which teams are completely bankrupt (...) now the club, if not in the premier league (...) has a brutal difficulty in surviving.*" (JU18P). It is consensual the club's national representativeness, its district level importance and the others possess a wide recognition of its importance.

"I only talk of the importance that this club has in the district and the importance that each time we go play with another club outside, the view that other clubs have about us and how they view the game." (JU14C)

The club has stagnated over time and the many demands of modern society contributed to the club's loss of identity, *"The club was very representative in many ways, this eclecticism was lost over the years"* (JU15C). Concomitantly, significant others reported that the club will inevitably have to strive in building their identity through strong investment in youth formation.

### *Clubs' mesosystem defined and its larger social influence*

Over time, the club's relationship with people and city gained different characteristics, the city gathers individuals with no direct identification to both city and club, although they recognize an attempt to mobilize community and reinforce intervention in society.

"The city is no more a city typically of natives who value what's in the region, what is from the city, there are many outside references in people who currently live here" (JU15C)

The remoteness of the community and a weak link between club and city is a generalized statement. For a long time there has been a dependency with city hall with grants that guaranteed immediate organization in each sports season, *"... had a grant that gave more or less in financial terms to ensure (...) grant ended, the liability of the club increased tremendously."* (JU17C).

### *The clubs' sustainable structure and internal organization*

This category of analysis highlights three big ideas. First, there is a general agreement that infrastructure deficit leads to difficulties in organizing youth structure, with greater sense of availability of all people around the club *"We have teams competing in nationals and training in dirt ..."* (JU17C), namely, logistical, youth mobilization and conditions of practice, that hinders the creation of deeply opportunities to put the club in another level

"... it is the issue of infrastructures. The club that hasn't, at this time, a support that allows levels of training, organization, equipment available, to do a job ..." (JU15C)

Second, the club at organizational level presents a clear distance between youth structure and professional football club, so there is a set of structural barriers that prevent profitability, *"For me the club has a youth formation because it looks good, because youth structure exists for many years ... "* (JU16C), although they consider the new reality a mean to improve training and general conditions of the club especially at organizational standpoint.

"(Last year) ... there wasn't this organization, each one with its role, disorganization passed around here. Because we wanted something, we didn't know whom to turn. "(JU14C)

Respondents, especially coaches say there's wide recognition that professional football has primacy *"in professional football, whether we like it or not, is the top of the hierarchy..."* (JU15C), and is reflected in a greater number of choices in the clubs' structure relegating youth academy to second place.

"... Is still a club, as I said, restructuring, but is, I think overall organization is bad, bad, because there are still many things that are channeled into professional football and there is a large distance between professional football and the academy "(JU14C)

The structure of professional football should be based on youth formation, respondents are aware of the club as having uncertain future with difficulties hard to overcome, *"... every year you walk the talk if the club will survive if it will not survive, if the club is a bet for the future or if the club isn't a bet for the future ... "* (JU18P)

With respect to mobility within youth sports framework, the region provides players to POC, as coaches in particular refer to the difficulty in recruiting young people due to protection rights surrounding young players in Portugal.

"... Situations that sometimes help the young Portuguese getting there, to that transition to professionalism and has no chance, because there are many

charges and most of the times come players sometimes with unknown quality ..."  
(YC)

## **Discussion**

Results demonstrate that development of talent in professional club guidance is predominantly dependent on environmental features, i.e. organizational influences at a micro level of immediate settings (practice settings, success factors in sport, parents and coach's influence, perception of roles). Results also show the importance of reciprocal interactions between the talented athletes and significant others involved in this specific environments.

Portugal's high sport mobility rate in the professional leagues, excessive number of foreign players and few opportunities for youngsters in the professional squads result in few opportunities for young talented athletes to develop. In order to deal with different developments influencing organized sport (Knop, Wylleman, Theeboom, Martelaer, Hoecke Heddegem & 1999). One also needs to reflect upon the changes of the macrosystem, the larger society that influence the development of young athletes (demographic, socioeconomic and psychosocial).

Results demonstrated that POC incorporates a "professional ethos" with the emergence specific behaviors. Observational data shows that professional appeal and status and recognition in playing at competitive national championships with a clear competitive stroll produce a specific social environment that is transversal to the findings and statements. The lack of resources was compensated by a strong organizational culture, characterized by values of open co-operation, individual responsibility and a focus on performance process and by a whole-person approach in the person of the Youth Coordinator (Henriksen, Stambulova & Roessler, 2010a). Findings also point to high degree of cohesion and by the important role given to talent athletes (Henriksen, Stambulova & Roessler, 2010b).

POC directors and coaches perceived some main contextual developing skills and behaviors in training and competition such as commitment, respect and discipline, whilst parents tended to focus more on social support and group climate (Spink, Wilson & Odnokon, 2010). These skills were identified by Holt and Dunn (2004) as essential for success in youth football elite.



Participant observation shows that although parents from POC have more educational background than parents from social deprived community clubs (Domingues, Cavichioli & Gonçalves, in press) they tend not to participate and be heavily involved in the clubs' activities. Moreover, the nature of supportive role parents' and coaches have, tend to be more accurate, informed and possessing more contextual relevant information with more performance feedback.

Framing Harwood's (2008) internal assets (by definition attributes of the individual) such as commitment to learning, or goal setting this research highlights the possibility that not only youth athletes bring a set of positive personal psychological characteristics to the training field but the external assets (quality of the sporting context) can, in fact, increment and develop these internal assets. In fact, these personal and situational dispositions are dictated not only by the professional sporting context in which they are immersed but by reciprocal interactions that take place in that environment (Bronfenbrenner & Evans, 2000; Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 1998).

Reporting on Jackson and Beauchamp's (2010) relational commitment between coaches and athletes, Carron et al 2005 also highlighted the powerful impact that the environment can have on shaping individual behavior within a sport group, particularly when it is done through informal and formal group norms. It seems likely that a significant number of children never fulfill their early promise besides other maturational aspects due to inadequate or inappropriate social environment (Perleth et al. 2000).

Literature reports that one of the main roles of the coach is to promote the development of social skills (Côté, 2002). Framing on the years of specialization stated in the literature (Côté, Lidor & Hackfort, 2009; Ericsson, Krampe and Tesch-Römer, 1993) POC significant others support coach-athlete interaction in a more reciprocal style and coach is more technical-oriented than other sport environments (Domingues & Gonçalves 2013; Domingues, Cavichioli & Gonçalves, in press).

POC coaches dully emphasize their proximal relations, close control and feedback with young athletes, with most information oriented to social skills development and sport performance outcomes. Regarding this issue and following on Bronfenbrenner and Evans's (2000) definition of competence

(development of knowledge skill and ability across developmental domains), proximal processes can in fact enhance positive behaviors. POC coaches believe informal, emerging roles and norms within a group and the communication of clear expectations (again either formally or informally) can exert a very powerful pressure on attitudes and behavior.

One aspect that has witnessed a considerable amount of research in sport experiences and talented young person's environment is the family. What impact do differences on family education and background have in young talented athletes' behavior in football? Findings from the study show parents as key drivers of a quest for a fast sporting success and reliable results (Ferry, 2008; Gould, 2009). Resembling Côté's (1999) study with families of successful individuals, parents make a financial and time commitment to their child-athlete, they had numerous opportunities to demonstrate and provide tangible support. In all the interviewed families, it was acknowledged that school achievement was more important than sport achievement.

It seems redundant to claim that schools influence the development of talent in youth sport: in most countries schools are the primary formal contexts for the introduction and development of sporting abilities (Hardman & Jones, 2011). One might argue that in order to develop a consistent talent sport program there is a need to convey sport interests with school organization and commitment in modern society. Henriksen, Stambulova, & Roessler, (2010a) found that talented athletes are able to effectively balance sport and school in the process when have well developed skills besides their athletic skills. Findings tell us that parents see young athletes who are very committed to sport show greater compliance with rules and discipline in school which they see as primordial to young athletes.

### **Conclusion**

The study made noticeable the interaction of different sports actors in young talent development. The appropriation reflects how an interdependent talent development sport program depends upon a set of contextual favorable characteristics as this research highlights the role of sporting experiences in promoting positive development in a markedly performance climate.

The results suggest the need to better understand organizational influences at a micro level (practice settings, success factors in sport, parents and coach's influence, perception of roles). Coach and parent's assume themselves as important avenues in talent development but most important is the process that undergoes these relationships, direction, nature and force. The study highlighted one particular football environment with social organization that enhanced talent development. The study also acknowledged others perception of a clear competitive disposition from the athletes to train, to compete and in constant search for sport performance.

Further studies should focus on proximal relationships that are key in specialization as it is athlete-coach relationship and father-athlete in talented athletic performance context. Regarding parents there's a need to another type of approach in order to understand how they deal with professional aspiration of their children and what load and intensity they put in this aspiration.

Some questions arise for further research. Does sporting environment conveyed by the club itself provide the adoption of new social behaviors, skills and values on part of athletes? And what is the scope of this difference of young athletes' attitudes in the promotion of pro-social values in other contexts?

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Table1 Field Descriptive Analysis

Denomination		Time	Reference
Pysical Time	Month	Day	Hour
Context (Mycrosystem)	Structure	Physical Characteristics	Internal Organization
			Planned
			Not Planned
Person in context	Race	Sex	Age
Individual Behavior (Person)	Competence	Dysfunction	
Interaction Patterns and Group Activities (Proximal Processes)			
Communication	Content	Intensity	
	Time and language routine	Function	
Non verbal behavior and lingusitic propoerties	Young athletes	Adults	
Motivation and Goal Achievement	Individual	Group	
Influence of other social systems in context	Proximal (Mesosystem)	Non Proximal (Exosystem)	

Note. Based on Bronfenbrenner (1999), Bronfenbrenner & Morris (1998) amd Bronfenbrenner & Evans (2000)

Table 2 POC Biographical and Socio-Demographic Data

TEAM	Under 14			Under 15			Under 16			Under 17		
	FATHER	MOTHER	% TOTAL	FATHER	MOTHER	% TOTAL	FATHER	MOTHER	% TOTAL	FATHER	MOTHER	% TOTAL
1st Cicle	—	1	2,63	1	3	9,52	—	2	5,71	1	2	10,71
2nd Cicle	2	2	10,52	4	3	16,67	2	2	11,43	5	2	25
3rd Cicle	6	2	21,05	2	4	14,29	5	5	<b>28,57</b>	1	3	14,29
Secondary	6	6	<b>31,58</b>	6	4	23,81	7	2	25,71	6	6	<b>42,86</b>
College	4	4	21,05	6	6	<b>28,57</b>	3	2	14,29	—	2	7,14
Masters	—	2	5,26	1	1	4,76	—	3	8,57	—	—	—
Doctoral	2	1	7,89	—	1	2,38	—	—	—	—	—	—
Doesn't have	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	1	5,71	—	—	—
TOTAL	20	18	100	20	22	100	18	17	100	13	15	100

**Professional Activity Sector**

PARENTS	Under 14			Under 15			Under 16			Under 17		
	FATHER	MOTHER	% TOTAL	FATHER	MOTHER	% TOTAL	FATHER	MOTHER	% TOTAL	FATHER	MOTHER	% TOTAL
UNE	—	—	—	—	1	2,27	1	1	5,56	—	1	3,33
SEC	4	2	19,05	6	3	20,45	5	7	33,33	4	1	16,67
THI	14	12	<b>61,9</b>	12	15	<b>61,36</b>	10	7	<b>47,22</b>	7	12	<b>63,33</b>
FOR*	2	5	16,67	—	2	4,55	1	2	8,33	2	1	10
NR	1	2	7,14	3	1	9,09	1	1	5,56	2	—	6,67
RET	—	—	—	1	—	2,27	—	—	—	—	—	—
TOTAL	21	21	100	22	22	100	18	18	100	15	15	100

**Summary**

UNE	Unemployed	THI	Third	NR	No Response
SEC	Secondary	FOR	Forth	RET	Retired

\* Forth Sector- This sector includes health professionals and professors

Table 3 Portugal Professional Leagues. Season 11/12

Portugal Professional Leagues 11/12										Pre-Season 12/13		
Season Mobility and Professional Leagues		Players finishing in the club				Transfers during season			Pre-Season Mobility			
		Players Start Season (n)	Squads	Portuguese	Foreign	Foreign (%)	Port.	Foreign	% Port	In	Out	In Junior
<b>LIGUE 1</b>	<i>Mean</i>	37	24	11	13	53.89	6	8	43.18	9	10	1*
	<i>Total</i>	588	377	173	204	—	88	121	—	139	157	7
<b>LIGUE 2</b>	<i>Mean</i>	30	24	16	8	34.34	2	3	41.19	10	17	1
	<i>Total</i>	472	382	252	130	—	38	52	—	156	278	22

\* Note: 6 teams posse B squads, therefore, they weren't accountable, from an initial number of 16 teams only 10 were considered

Table 4 Dimensions, Categories and Group of Responses

Critical Dimensions	Categories	Groups Responses
Personal Development and Self-Improvement	Opportunities for life enduring skill construction through sport	Social Skills Sport Identity Construction
	Relationship with the club, family and support efficacy	Support Relations Family Structure and Support
	School integration and expectations toward sport	School Expectations School-Club Integration
Proximal Processes and Social Interactions	Climate in the club through significant others' importance and inherent values	Group Interaction Sport Recognition Significant Club Relations
	Nature of relations, possible outcomes and supported efficacy	Club-Athlete Relation Adults Role
Sport Context and Achievement	Clubs' identity and experiences through their historical path and community proximity	Club History and Community Professional Sport Clubs Status
	Clubs' mesosystem defined and its larger social influence	Social Characterization Subsidies and Support Structure and Human Resources
	The clubs' sustainable structure and internal organization	Physical Structure and Conditions Sport Mobility Logistic and Organization

Table 5 Labels of Interviewed Others

Description	Label
Junior U-18 Director	JU18D
Junior U-15 Coach	JU15C
Junior U-17 Coach	JU17C
Junior U-16 Coach	JU16C
Junior U-16 Director	JU16D
Junior U-14 Coach	JU14C
Junior U-18 Parent	JU18P
Youth Coordinator	YC

## **Chapter 6: Ecological Determinants of Perceived Climate and Sport Attitudes among Young Soccer Players**

Manuscript Submitted to Journal of Science and Medicine in sport

### **ABSTRACT**

*Aim:* To investigate the context effect on the relationship between perceived motivational climate and social–moral functioning in a sample of young male Portuguese football players from two contrasting clubs, a professional and a social one.

*Design:* It was expected that motivational climate in the social club would be associated with lower levels of social–moral functioning, sportspersonship and approve more illegitimate behaviors in football. Alongside this, a more mastery-oriented climate by the professional oriented club (POC) was hypothesized to be beneficial with respect to social–moral functioning, sportspersonship and morally constructive team norm perceptions.

*Method:* A cross-sectional quantitative study of 125 male football players (aged 13–17 years) was conducted. The youngsters responded to a questionnaire measuring different dimensions of social–moral functioning namely sportspersonship behaviors and moral reasoning. The players also responded to a questionnaire evaluating their perception of coaches' motivational climate. A correlation matrix and multilevel analysis was also conducted.

*Results:* Results show significant higher scores both in moral attitudes and perceived motivational climate for POC youth athletes with clear task orientation and a more pro-social acceptance of sport, importance of personal improvement. Social oriented club (SOC) and POC showed similar results in ego orientation which could be conducive of different intricate ego orientations expressed in different sporting contexts. No time effect differences were found between these two clubs.

*Conclusion:* Findings illustrate the importance of studying contextual cues in order to determine motivational climate in contrasting environments and provide an understanding of social–moral functioning and perceived coach created climate in youth football. The mechanisms that lead to a mastery oriented

climate should be thoroughly examined as it poses as an imperative on youth sports development.

Sport is particularly important as a mean to promote social engagement and social cohesion among human beings (Hargreaves, 1986; MacPherson, Curtis & Loy, 1989; Elling and De Knop, 1997). In 2010 Portugal had a total of 518.968 participants in sport, 329.887 of them, 66,93%, with less than 16 years of age (INE, 2010). Soccer, in its turn, represents the instance of a sport where existing community-level structures, supports and resources need to be better understood with a view to developing their evident potential for a stronger contribution to the social benefits of sport in the future (Dyreson, 2001; Wagg, 1995).

Recent literature examined the effects of the perceived motivational climate and goal perspectives on sportspersonship, relating significant interaction between task and ego orientation and involving climate among competitive football players (Gano-Overway, Guivernau, Magyar, Waldron & Ewing, 2005; Kavussanu, 2006; Miller, Roberts & Ommundsen, 2005). In this particular, a task-involving climate has been the decisive link to a variety of positive outcomes such as personal effort, persistence, a more task-oriented goal perspective, and perceptions of sport competence (Chi, 2004; Gano-Overway et al, 2005; Newton et al, 2000; Seifriz, Duda, & Chi, 1992).

Ames (1992) argued that two main types of motivational climates are likely found within a competitive context, namely mastery and performance motivational climate. In a team sport setting, for example, a mastery motivational climate is likely to be perceived by athletes when the coach encourages learning from past mistakes, cooperation, and individual as well as group skill development. Conversely, a performance motivational climate is likely to be perceived when the coach emphasizes success by normative standards (i.e. winning), encourages interpersonal rivalries among teammates, and treats players differently based on their athletic ability.

These states of involvement are believed to derive from a combination of both dispositional and situational factors in relation to individual beliefs about sport participation and outcomes. Research is conclusive when comparing competitive and performance oriented social contexts to moral functioning climate (Anderson & Morrow, 1995; Bredemeier, 1994; Kleiber & Roberts, 1981;

Miller, Roberts & Ommundsen, 2005; Ommundsen *et al.*, 2003; Rutten *et al.*, 2007; Bortoli, Messina, Zorba & Robazza, 2012).

Regarding sport morality, recent research has shown that the way players perceive the coach-created motivational climate may relate to how they understand what constitutes appropriate or inappropriate sport behavior (Miller *et al.*, 2005; Ommundsen *et al.*, 2003). In regard to these perspectives, what remains clear is that moral issues in competitive sport warrant continued attention. The empirical evidence for an association between organized youth sport and juvenile antisocial behavior, however, remains equivocal (Begg *et al.*, 1996; Duncan *et al.*, 2002; Vazsonyi *et al.*, 2002), other research suggest that competitive youth sport may have the potential to facilitate pro-social, moral behavior (Evans & Roberts, 1987; Fox, 1988).

The literature is sparse when relating situational cues in different sporting context (van de Pol & Kavussanu, 2011; van de Pol, Kavussanu & Ring, 2012; Williams, 1998). The present study focuses upon the influence of perceived situational cues within competitive youth sport and uses Bioecological theory, Bronfenbrenner's model is prominent in considering context's social equation (Bronfenbrenner, 1979; Bronfenbrenner, 1992; Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 1998; Bronfenbrenner & Evans, 2000).

POC is located in the Centre of Portugal in a city with low sport participation rate. The club has a senior professional squad and a heavy focus on competitive outcomes with a total of 16 youth teams divided by age and playing both at a national and regional level.

SOC is located in the north in a city with a heavy football atmosphere. The club has a regional competitive orientation and a total of 11 youth teams. The club is surrounded by social neighborhoods with marked delinquency and at risk behavior. POC had a total of four teams under study while SOC had two youth teams.

Given the natural difference between these contrasting sport environments, results on perceived motivational climate and sport attitudes will be markedly different in size and nature. As a first assumption, the overall training climate will be markedly different in these two clubs; secondly, researchers hypothesized that SOC, more performance orientated and a bigger emphasis on results; as a third hypothesis, sporting context in the social club



will reveal more disrupted behavior with weak social-moral functioning and more performance oriented climate; POC, more mastery oriented side will show more compliance to rules and collective norm acceptance; finally, group effect will markedly influence individual differences longitudinally determining context as a compound factor.

Acknowledging that positive development is a main asset on youngsters' investment in sport, this study has a twofold purpose: a) to describe the effects of two sport contexts on attitudes, goal orientations and perceived motivational climate; b) to analyze the effects of time on attitudes, goal orientations and perceived motivational climate in the two different settings.

## Methods

### Participants

Participants were male football players (n= 74) from two contrasting football clubs in the north and center region of Portugal. A professional oriented club (POC, n=53  $M_{age}=14.43$  yrs, age range: 13-17 years,  $SD=1.076$ ) and a social oriented club (SOC, n=21  $M_{age}=14.26$  yrs, 13-17 years,  $SD=1.129$ ).

### Measures

*Perceived Motivational Climate in Sport Questionnaire – 2 (PMCSQ-2)* - Seifriz, Duda, and Chi (1992) developed the Perceived Motivational Climate in Sport Questionnaire (PMCSQ) to measure the athletes' perceptions of the type of motivational climate coaches created in practices and in games. The objectives of PMCSQ-2 (Newton, Duda, & Yin, 2000) were to expand the original questionnaire and to develop a hierarchical measure of the motivational climate in sport. The PMCSQ-2 consisted of 33 items which asked athletes to indicate the degree to which their team climate was characterized by a task-involving or an ego-involving goal perspective. The stem for each item is: "On my football team...." And responses were indicated on a 5-point Likert scale anchored by strongly agree (1) and strongly disagree (5). Previous studies that have employed the PMCSQ have demonstrated satisfactory construct validity and internal consistency (Kavussanu & Roberts, 1996; Seifriz, Duda & Chi, 1992; Walling, Duda, & Chi, 1993).

*Sports Attitude Questionnaire/SAQ*, (Lee, Whitehead, Ntoumanis & Hatzigeorgiadis, 2002) translated and validated to Portugal by Gonçalves et al. (2006). SAQ has 23 items and reveals a model of four factors: *Convention*,

*Commitment, Cheating and Gamesmanship*, and responses were indicated on a 5-point Likert scale anchored by strongly agree (1) and strongly disagree (5).

#### Procedures

Prior to data collection, ethical approval for human subject research was acquired from the ethic committee of the Faculty of Sports and Physical Education. The main researcher contacted the youth coordinators of each club in order to explain all the research procedures to be undertaken and relevant information. At the end of the day all information was compiled into the ongoing field diary alongside with the observation grids.

All questionnaires were administered to the players with approximately one third of the regular season already under way, which gave them proper time to correctly express their perceptions of coaches' behaviors and team's motivational climate. The second moment was before the end of the competitive season. Parent sport consent form was arranged prior to data collection. These sessions were always scheduled prior to training in order for the athletes to better acknowledge the nature of the questionnaires and so that they could concentrate better on the answers.

Youth athletes were previously informed of the study's structure and questionnaires were administered in a proper room, they lasted approximately half an hour. Coaches were not present when the questionnaires were administered and anonymity and confidentiality were assured by the researchers.

#### Data Analysis

To analyze the effects of context on dependent variables ANOVA was used. To analyze the associations among variables, Pearson correlation was performed. Time effect on the changes of responses was measured through multilevel analysis. Differences in response change between groups of individuals were examined (level 2). The 95% confidence limit for each effect was calculated to make inferences about the true (population) values of the effect of training (Batterham & Hopkins, 2006). The between-subject standard deviation for each dependent variable was used to convert the absolute changes' values in responses into standardized (Cohen) changes in the mean. The smallest standardized change was assumed to be 0.20 (Cohen, 1988).

## Results

### Attitudes

ANOVA analysis showed higher results in the Professional Oriented Club (POC) in all analyzed factors of Sports Attitude Questionnaire (SAQ). Statistically significant results appear on factors such as “gamesmanship” ( $F= 6,117, p \leq 0.05$ ); “convention to rules”, ( $F= 8.724, p \leq 0.01$ ). On the other hand, “commitment” factor ( $F= .161, p \leq 0.05$ ) shows closest results between the clubs (Table 1). Second order factor analysis, ANOVA showed that POC has higher values in both task and ego orientation (Table 2).

Although results aren't statistically significant, all factors show an average age-effect in both clubs when considering competitive level, i.e. teams competing at a national level tend to have higher scores on pro-social behavior and less anti-social behaviors when compared to teams competing at a regional level.

### Perceived Motivational Climate

The Portuguese version doesn't consider two high order scales, “Intra-team rivalry” and “Cooperative learning”. Statistical analysis revealed that the context explained significant variation in goals and climate perceptions beyond the athlete and team levels: participants reported higher task orientation and perceptions of mastery climate in POC than in SOC, whereas ego orientation and perceived performance climate did not differ between the two contexts.

Two statistically significant dimensions arose with ANOVA on Perceived Motivational Climate Sports Questionnaire (PMCSQ-2), “Important role” ( $F= 11.405, p \leq 0.01$ ) and “Effort/Improvement” ( $F= 9.344, p \leq 0.01$ ) (Table 3). Differences in task orientation are statistically significant ( $F= 12,969, p \leq 0.01$ ) and results show that POC has higher values, whereas ego orientation sub-scale doesn't show significant differences between the two clubs (Table 4). This fact is probably due to different sporting context, being the POC more structured and norm regulated.

The, correlation analysis revealed moderate statistically significant relations between perceived motivational climate sub scales and attitudes toward sport. That is to say factors representing a mastery climate such as “Important Role” are moderately related to factors representing pro-social

behavior such as “Convention” ( $r = .218, p \leq 0.01$ ). Inversely, a factors related to a more ego climate “Punishment for Mistakes” were moderately related to anti-social behaviors “Cheating” ( $r = .107, p \leq 0.01$ ) (Table 5).

Multilevel analysis (see Table 6 and 7) measuring time effect on the changes of responses between the two clubs revealed significant statistical differences on three high order scales. Mean changes pre to post season reveal differences in context in two scales related to attitudes toward sport “Cheating” (-0.67, 95% CL), “Sportsmanship” (-0.45, 95% CL,) and one related to motivational climate, “Effo/Imp” (-0.17, 95% CL). Although these differences, the values presented for the slope and slope x club in the aforementioned scales indicate that both clubs don’t present differences over time, developing in a parallel way, i.e. with no accountable differences in time effect.

## **Discussion**

There is a context effect that determines the way young athletes perceive sport. Findings from the cross sectional analysis contradicts the initial assumption regarding SOC, results show no difference in terms of performance oriented climate between the two clubs with significant differences in mastery involving climate. These higher values from the POC demonstrate a better internal organization and sport motivational climate. Having better scores means better understanding of moral functioning and social behavior understanding. It seems that the way the club is structured and in this regard, coaches’ influence on the team has a positive effect on their perceived motivational climate.

The context involves people’s perceptions and experiences in which they live (Bronfenbrenner, 2001). In a recent past, several studies attempted to clarify causal relations between environmental factors and behaviors in physical activity domain (Bengoechea & Johnson, 2001; Pikora, Giles-Corti, Bull, Jamrozik & Donovan, 2003; Spence & Lee, 2003). In sport related studies, it is known that task constraints in certain context shape individual and team performance and coaches must identify limiting key performance factors in order to manipulate constraints and facilitate changes in performance (Krebs, 2009a, 2009b).

Shields and Bredemeier (1995) suggest that organized youth sport may promote antisocial behavior, as sport is a context of moral release, being based on competition, self-interest and a suspension of relational responsibility, while moral deliberation is reduced by formal and informal rules. Whereby, performance oriented social context can promote antisocial behavior and although this association in youth sport remains equivocal (Duncan *et al.*, 2002; Vazsonyi *et al.*, 2002), it can help explain, in part, SOC scores in moral reasoning with leveled results when compared to their professional counterparts.

In fact, two situational factors of the social context that have been the focus of empirical investigation in recent years and examined in the present study in relation to moral functioning in sport are the moral atmosphere of the team and perceived performance motivational climate. In this study, as previously hypothesized POC youth athletes show consistently higher scores at all dimensions of moral functioning revealing significant differences on positive attitudes towards sport, specifically more sociomoral reasoning and pro-social values (Bortoli, Messina, Zorba & Robazza, 2012; Miller, Roberts & Ommundsen, 2005; Ommundsen *et al.*, 2003). The big finding relates absence of statistical differences on anti-social behaviors scores (Duda, 2001; Domingues & Gonçalves, 2012b; Van Yperen & Duda, 1999).

Correlation matrix showed only moderate relations between factors comprising perceived climate with factors related to attitudes towards sport, i.e. mastery climate found some associations with prosocial behavior and factors related to ego oriented climate with anti-social behavior. These associations however aren't sufficient to realize how athletes' attitudes toward sport can be dictated by how they perceive their coaches' sport climate. Although providing some clues in that direction they aren't strong enough to predict and construct a model that can effectively represent these relationships.

There aren't many studies relating perceived motivational climate influences on indices of social-moral functioning (Kavussanu, Roberts & Ntoumanis, 2002; Lemyre, Roberts, & Ommundsen, 2002; Ommundsen, Roberts, Lemyre & Treasure, 2003; Miller, Roberts & Ommundsen, 2000). Notably they are even rarer when adding sporting context as a variable, for example, professional vs. social oriented club; other studies have related other

contexts of practice, namely, training versus competition contexts (van de Pol, Kavussanu, 2011; van de Pol, Kavussanu & Ring, 2012).

Moreover, situational cues, such as competitive level, also indicate a level of effect on differences towards motivational climate. That is to say, playing on national or regional levels seems to be influential on positive attitudes and anti-social behavior. POC teams competing in national levels, show better records of social adequacy than regional level counterparts; inter team differences can be found accounting for competitive level. Regarding this fact, multilevel analysis confirms differences in sporting context in both attitudes and perceived motivational climate. Researchers were expecting that SOC would present higher values in ego orientation through time and this was not the case, no significant time effect was found between these two clubs.

The perceived motivational climate created by the coach is one important social environmental factor assumed to nurture the fundamental needs of young athletes (Gould, Flett & Lauer, 2012; Ntoumanis, 2001; Reinboth, Duda, & Ntoumanis, 2004; Sarrazin, Guillet, & Cury, 2001). In this way coach-athlete dyads constitute what Bronfenbrenner & Morris (1998), Bronfenbrenner and Evans (2000) and Krebs (2009b) call proximal processes. Coaches design practice sessions, group athletes, give recognition, evaluate performance, share their authority and shape the sport setting and have an influential role on athletes perceptions of the training climate and dispositions. To properly understand the way proximal processes operate, youth football teams must be considered a unit of analysis (Krebs, 2009a).

It is the interaction between these factors (person, process, context and time) that constitute the difference in sporting context. This research reinforces Rutten *et al.* (2007) study when he suggests that coaches who maintain good relationships with their athletes reduce antisocial behavior and that exposure to relatively high levels of sociomoral reasoning within the immediate context of sporting activities promotes prosocial behavior.

Research on perceived motivational climate in youth sport has clearly demonstrated the positive outcomes associated with a mastery-oriented climate. In fact, the sporting environment should be marked in its mastery-involving features giving consistency to the notion that the coach-athlete

relationship has implications for the motivation of athletes participating in team sports (Olympiou, Jowett & Duda, 2008).

Perceived coach orientations that emerged as significant in the study focused on two predominant behaviors such as coaches' fair treatment and recognition of equal value among youth athletes and intra-team collective sense and team commitment in line with Bronfenbrenner & Evans' (2000) call competence outcomes. POC higher results in obedience to rules and commitment to sport can be linked to coaches' mastery-oriented climate in the promotion of skill development, effort, and cooperation with teammates, along with emphasizing the important contributions that all players make to the team (McArdle & Duda, 2002; Smoll & Smith, 2006).

In line with previous research (Sarrazin et al., 2001; Standage, et al., 2003; Reinboth & Duda, 2006), perceptions of a mastery-involving coaching climate emphasis would be a positive predictor of changes in the athletes' needs for competence and relatedness over the course of a sport season and a more narrow focus on athletes' growth and development (Cumming et al., 2007) as well as the importance of sport practice and more profound study of reality in these environments (Domingues & Gonçalves, 2012a). This relationship needs to be addressed in further longitudinal studies. Also of notice is that group effect doesn't show significant results in time; only in two sub scales "Effort-Improvement" and "Sportsmanship" can we find significant differences between the two clubs.

All interactions that derive from this interrelationship must be considered in a way that these processes can contribute to building character and growth in sports. Consistent with previous research on elite athletes POC youth athletes display a clear task orientation. (Domingues & Gonçalves, 2012b; Duda, 2001; Pensgaard & Roberts, 2002). Regarding this, Domingues and Gonçalves (2012b) in a study exploring contextual cues such as contrasting competitive levels (elite versus formative club) analysed context effects in sportsmanship and goal orientation. The results clearly point out a difference in coaches' goal attainment and a context effect on social behaviour and moral reasoning.

Surprisingly, following on Domingues and Gonçalves study in 2012 it was expected that SOC athletes would have more disrupted behavior (Bronfenbrenner & Evans, 2000), whilst the two clubs have similar performance-

oriented climate considering the context of practice. Different competitive levels and marked differences in sport organization did not seem to be determinant on the results around performance climate. Other contextual cues are in need of research in order to further comprehend these findings.

While some literature advocates this orientation as being part of elite world (Newton & Duda, 1993; Weiss & Ferre-Caja, 2002), other studies report elite youth athletes as having both higher ego and task orientation (Duda, 2001; Pensgaard & Roberts, 2002; Roberts & Ommundsen, 1996; Van-Yperen & Duda, 1999). In this sense, the present study extended this reasoning determining coaches' influence in creating specific sporting climates.

### **Conclusion**

The findings highlight the importance of distinguishing between competitive contexts when examining ecological variables. It is also important to study the impact motivational climate has on moral functioning in youth football. Involving motivational climates created by coaches will provide an insight opportunity to assess youth sport and other motivational relations operating in specific environments.

It should also be noted that perceived motivational climate is itself a multifaceted phenomenon and research is needed to establish how its various components influence athletes' sport experiences in sporting contexts. The study also reinforces past studies when it considers that values such as important role and effort/improvement have been associated with elite youth teams and the construction of a mastery climate, in other hand, performance climate was associated with cheating and gamesmanship with no marked differences between the two clubs. Therefore, the literature examining athletes' perceptions of motivational climate has provided consistent support for a task-involving team climate.

These results point to specific aspects of adolescents' participation in sport that can be used to realize the educational potential of organized youth sport. Although apparently no significant results arose from the study, the overall importance can't be denied, as it reinforces the assumption that sport participation carries positive effects between sporting contexts and that youngsters assume their commitment towards sport in universal fashion.



It would be interesting to assess the reason whether other social clubs have these scores in performance motivational climate and try to explore similar organizational sport structures to compare results and explore possible patterns. From an applied perspective, another potential area for future research would be to conduct case or multi-case studies on coaches who do create a highly task-involving climate on their teams in order to closely examine the strategies they use and the behaviors they engage in to foster that climate.

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Table 1 Multivariate Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) on SAQp extracted dimensions

	POC (n=76)		SOC (n=49)		F	Sig.
	Mean	S.D.	Mean	S.D.		
Cheating	2.96	1.17	2.73	1.18	1.063	.31
<b>Gamesmanship</b>	<b>3.60</b>	<b>.78</b>	<b>3.21</b>	<b>.99</b>	<b>6.117</b>	<b>.02</b>
<b>Convention</b>	<b>4.20</b>	<b>.63</b>	<b>3.81</b>	<b>0.85</b>	<b>8.724</b>	<b>.00</b>
Commitment	4.56	.47	4.52	0.54	.161	.69



Table 2 ANOVA analysis over two sub-scales of SAQ

	POC(n=76)		SOC (n=42)		F	Sig.
	Mean	S.D.	Mean	S.D.		
<b>Task Orientation</b>	<b>4.36</b>	<b>.43</b>	<b>4.17</b>	<b>.53</b>	<b>8.387</b>	<b>.004</b>
Ego Orientation	3.26	.87	2.93	.94	5.975	.015

Table 3 Multivariate Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) on PMCSQ-2p extracted

dimensions

	POC (n=76)		SOC (n=42)		F	Sig.
	Mean	S.D.	Mean	S.D.		
<b>Important Role</b>	<b>4.19</b>	<b>.65</b>	<b>3.81</b>	<b>.87</b>	<b>11.405</b>	<b>.00</b>
<b>Effort/Improvement</b>	<b>4.15</b>	<b>.59</b>	<b>3.84</b>	<b>.75</b>	<b>9.344</b>	<b>.00</b>
Punishment for Mistakes	2.84	.71	2.71	.64	1.445	.23
Unequal Recognition	2.60	.87	2.36	.81	3.201	.08

Table 4 ANOVA analysis over two sub-scales of PMCSQ-2

	POC(n=76)		SOC (n=42)		F	Sig.
	Mean	S.D.	Mean	S.D.		
<b>Task Orientation</b>	<b>4.17</b>	<b>.56</b>	<b>3.82</b>	<b>.74</b>	<b>12.539</b>	<b>.001</b>
Ego Orientation	2.72	.73	2.53	.65	2.785	.097

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Table 5 Correlations Matrix between PMC and SAQ Factors

	Cheating	Gamesmanship	Convention	Commitment
Important Role	.106	.105	.218	.132
Effort/Improvement	.059	-.009	.112	.444**
Punishment for Mistakes	.107	-.035	.030	-.142
Unequal Recognition	-.116	-.119	-.029	-.330**

Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

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

Table 6 Mean changes and chances that the true difference in the changes is substantial

	Pre-season	Post-season	Changes in mean (95% CL)	<i>p</i>	Practical inference
Cheating	3.29 (1.09)	2.61 (1.13)	-0.67 (-1.05 – -0.30)		<b>Benefit likely</b>
Sportsmanship	3.71 (0.81)	3.27 (0.96)	-0.45 (-0.71 – -0.18)		<b>Benefit/Harmful possible</b>
Convention	4.10 (0.70)	3.99 (0.70)	-0.10 (-0.33 – 0.12)		Probably trivial
Commitment	4.46 (0.55)	4.38 (0.52)	-0.09 (-0.26 – 0.08)		Probably trivial
ImpRol	4.05 (0.80)	3.96 (0.72)	-0.09 (-0.35 – 0.17)		Probably trivial
Effolmp	4.24 (0.52)	4.07 (0.54)	-0.17 (-0.33 – -0.01)		<b>Benefit/Harmful possible</b>
PunishMis	2.90 (0.70)	2.91 (0.79)	0.01 (-0.22 – 0.24)		Probably trivial
UneqRecog	2.58 (0.89)	2.74 (0.86)	0.16 (-0.09 – 0.42)		Probably trivial

Table 7 Multilevel regression analysis

	Cheating	Sportsmanshi p	Convention	Commitment	ImpRol	Effolmp	PunishMis	UneqRecog
Fixed Explanatory Variables								
<i>Exponent value (standard error)</i>								
Constant	3.07 (0.24)**	3.45 (0.18)**	3.90 (0.15)**	4.45 (0.12)**	3.74 (0.16)**	4.19**	2.94 (0.15)**	2.62 (0.19)**
Slope	-0.49 (0.34)	-0.32 (0.24)	-0.01 (0.21)	-0.15 (0.16)	0.15 (0.23)	-0.16	-0.06 (0.22)	0.02 (0.26)
Club	0.35 (0.31)	0.42 (0.23)	0.31 (0.19)	0.02 (0.15)	0.50 (0.20)*	0.08	-0.06 (0.20)	-0.07 (0.24)
Slope x Club	-0.30 (0.43)	-0.20 (0.31)	-0.13 (0.27)	0.11 (0.21)	-0.39 (0.29)	-0.02	0.12 (0.28)	0.23 (0.33)
Variance-Covariance Matrix of Random Variables								
<i>Level 1 (within individuals)</i>								
Repeated measures variance	1.23 (0.17)**	0.58 (0.14)**	0.48 (0.07)**	0.29 (0.04)**	0.55 (0.08)**	0.24 (0.06)**	0.48 (0.12)**	0.66 (0.15)**
<i>Level 2 (between individuals)</i>								
Variance	0.00 (0.00)	0.13 (0.09)	0.00 (0.00)	0.00 (0.00)	0.00 (0.00)	0.02 (0.03)	0.06 (0.41)	0.08 (0.09)
-2 Restricted Log Likelihood	336.346	285.255	234.403	183.006	251.630	179.157	252.908	285.720
Akaike's Information Criterion	340.346	289.255	238.403	187.006	255.630	183.157	256.908	289.720

\*\* p < 0.01; \* p < 0.05

## **Chapter 7: General Discussion, Summary and Conclusions**

The use of an ecological approach to study youth sport participation is an important framework to consider as it encompasses the examination of proximal processes, developmental personal characteristics and outcomes, contextual factors (García Bengoechea, 2002; García Bengoechea & Johnson, 2001; Côté, Strachan, & Fraser-Thomas, 2007). In fact, as stated earlier, some studies using this model have been carried out in youth sport field, focusing on important interaction in youth and focusing on coach and parent relationships (Bengoechea & Johnson, 2001); and parents contextual competitive sport involvement (Holt, Tamminen, Black, Sehn & Wall, 2008). That is, conceptually, in youth sport, the linkage between sport participation and personal characteristics has been established (expectancies, leadership and motivational ability) as well as with contextual factors (Mueller, Phelps, Bowers, Agans, Urban & Lerner, 2011).

Following the analysis of interviews and observations, three main characteristics were suggested in order to promote youth development and engagement within youth sport. These characteristics include: 1) an appropriate training environment, 2) opportunities for personal and social development, and 4) the presence of supportive interactions. Due to the interactive nature of these characteristics, each one would need to be present within the setting for positive development to occur. In using this framework, links between the research in sport social psychology, social science and developmental studies along with were extended and elaborated upon in Studies 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5.

### **Contextual Factors**

The influence of context is apparent not only in the actual physical environment but also in the bonds the developing person forms with others (Bronfenbrenner, 1999). As an ecological approach would dictate, personal development must occur within the proper context. Therefore, study 4 emphasizes that individuals needs need to be assessed and then the environment changed accordingly to encourage change, perhaps alongside more explicit help, communication and support. The “professional ethos” (study 4 and 5) incorporates certain attitudes and relationships as well as a clear and deliberate notion of competition and more focused practices. The social

oriented club (study 1) on the other hand, with their structural and organizational deficit compromise sport trajectories and opportunities of development. In this deprived context sport is seen as an opportunity to belong to something and an opportunity to play sport.

Study 2 and 4 give a clear notion of how significant others see sport involvement. Significant others displayed an unexpected sense of community in the social club and they perceive as being strong influences on athlete's perceptions of the environment and motivation exerted, although the SOC (study 2) revealed more relatedness and a more important parental role. Considering the fact, Holt et al. (2008) demonstrate the urgency to understand the way sport context interacts and frames in the social milieu with diverse youth contexts (colleagues, parents).

#### Personal Development

Findings from study 1 and 3 (athlete's perceptions of sport engagement and participation) highlighted the development of positive peer-peer interactions, positive social norms, support of efficacy, and the growth of personal and social skills such as responsibility and teamwork within youth sport. The specific personal assets of positive identity and social competencies, found to be linked to sport contexts especially in professional oriented athletes (Study 3), may assist with not only personal developmental characteristics but social adequacy in the community.

The studies conducted refer that sport participation also has the potential to augment personal and social skills. The development of these important life skills will not only help youth within a sport setting but may also transfer to other domains in their lives (Danish, Forneris, Hodge, & Heke, 2004). By using and developing life skills in a sport setting, young people may have more confidence to use these skills outside of a sport setting and this transferability will allow them to be successful people in their homes and communities (Petitpas et al., 2005). Literature refers that youngster's positive perception of interpersonal relationships is associated with better behavior, fun and perceived autonomy (Ullrich-French & Smith, 2006; Papaioannou, 2008).

On the other hand, study 5 by highlighting differences in the athletes perceived motivational climate and sport attitudes points out the need to better understand how a mastery climate can be developed in order to enhance sport



experiences and promote sporting excellence. To explain positive or negative effects of these dispositions Bronfenbrenner & Evans (2000) created the terms developmentally-generative (for the positive ones) and developmentally disruptive (for the negative ones). The study shows that young athletes that enroll in a professional climate have more positive development and a more nurturing mastery climate. The study also stresses some interesting features relating performance climate with impoverished social clubs in line with previous findings (Domingues & Gonçalves, 2012) and confirming results from other studies (study 2 and 3).

In fact, the absence of goals in competitive sporting career of underserved young athletes (study 2) shows that the clubs' structural and organizational conditions have a big impact on perceptions of sport experiences.

#### Proximal Processes

The second and fourth study specifically examined two trajectories youth athletes may follow in sport. Integrating families and communities in sport programs may help to reinforce correct behaviors ultimately leading to positive youth feeling supported and empowered, as concluded in study 2.

In the third study, proximal processes in the talent sporting climate of the professional oriented club were found to support healthy development (i.e., presence of supporting interactions). Furthermore, young athletes perceive these relations as positive in both sporting contexts (study 1 and 3) with a clearer coach-athlete relationship in the professional club. The coach-athlete interactions were found to be extremely important in both sporting contexts. Nonetheless, coaches from the POC provide more technical instruction and feedback but also are supportive of all athletes and provide psychologically safe interactions and environments. Parent-club interactions are more important on the social oriented club as the clubs structure depends heavily on parents' contribution to the overall organization.

Interpersonal relationships can largely determine sport participation in professional oriented clubs (Bakker, Oerlemans, Demerouti, Slot & Ali, 2001), specially positive environments created by the coach (Erikson, Côté, Hollenstein & Deakin, 2011). Noticeably, study 3 highlights that athlete-coach relationship reveals more profound behaviors such as feedback performance, autonomy

and positive reinforcement. These behaviors ultimately influence athletes' investment and persistence in sport (Gillet, Vallerand, Amoura & Valdes, 2010; Joessar, Hein & Hagger, 2011).

The aforementioned studies highlighted three main points. Structured activities, such as sport, are important in developing proximal processes for young people (Fredricks & Eccles, 2006). Secondly, Study 2 highlighted the importance of considering experiences within different processes and social backgrounds providing different meanings to sport, study 4 extended these results by focusing on experiences within different sport trajectories. Results suggested that experiences between sport trajectories may be distinct. Lastly, as coaching behaviors are a key factor to providing enduring interactions within a sport environment (García Bengoechea & Johnson, 2001), Study 3 and 4 were acutely beneficial to establishing the presence of these processes within youth sport programs.

#### Time

Bronfenbrenner discussed time according to two criteria, historical period upon which a person lives and social and biological timing transition related to culturally defined age, role expectancies and overall opportunities (Krebs, 2009b). In order to properly ascertain if these positive behaviors are occurring as youth develop an element of time is important to consider. Human development can only be properly understood if it is studied over a period of time (García Bengoechea & Johnson, 2001). Further longitudinal studies need to be conducted in order to properly address the element of time throughout development in sport. These dispositions may be viewed as motivational forces, negative or positive, that can activate proximal processes in a particular developmental sporting environment (Bronfenbrenner & Evans, 2000).

Study 5 provided an important framework to study specific aspects of adolescents' participation in sport that can be used to realize the educational potential of organized youth sport. Although no significant differences arose in group effect, sport environment proved to be determinant in establishing different directions on how sport is experienced. These contrasting realities have proven to have positive and negative features, different proximal processes that underpin youth development and can have either positive or negative effects through time depending largely on how sport participation is

experienced. These processes arise from different points of view, both the athletes personal dispositions (study 2 and 4) and significant others perceptions of youth engagement (study 3 and 5); and different sport meanings and experiences in contrasting environments of practice, social and professional one.

#### Future Directions

The studies in this dissertation provide a unique contribution to the literature regarding youth development in sport in contrasting ecological practices. However further research is required to extend these findings.

It would be pertinent to examine these contrasting contexts in countries with different organizational structure, sport policies and political views, which, in turn, may offer other developmental approaches to examining youth sport experiences. Another interesting avenue of research is to assess talented youth athletes in top sport club academies, regarding not only sport investment but also familiar dispositions and the construction of sport meanings.

Finally, specific methodologies (i.e., hierarchical linear modeling) could be used to discuss the interactions between the individual and contextual factors present within youth sport.

#### Implications

In sum, from an ecological perspective:

Social and professional sport environments have different weighs regarding the overall importance of the main relationships that are undertaken, the particular contribution of each significant other and sport environment as fostering positive development. In fact, sporting context are both causes and consequences of development. With whom, how, and why youth engage in activities will have implications for development. The social/psychological processes (e.g., skills, social ties, closeness) linking daily activities to youth development should be a focus of study. Personal dispositions have important impact on the athletes' development and their influence is dependent of the sport context. Activities are likely to be linked to development in different ways for youth with different characteristics and in different settings. Studying youth activities in context implies movement beyond social address variables to study the role of ecological processes in activity participation.

These environments, from the family to economic and political structures, have come to be viewed as part of the life course from childhood through adulthood. The "bioecological" approach to human development broke down barriers among the social sciences. It also built bridges between the disciplines that have allowed findings to emerge about which key elements in the larger social structure, and across societies, are vital for optimal human development.

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**Appendix A**  
**Sport Attitude Questionnaire**



Faculdade de Ciências de Desporto e Educação Física  
Universidade de Coimbra

QUESTIONÁRIO DE ATITUDES FACE AO DESPORTO

IDADE	
ANO DE ESCOLARIDADE	
MODALIDADE QUE PRATICAS/ESCALÃO	
ANOS DE PRÁTICA DESPORTIVA	
MODALIDADES QUE PRATICASTE	

**Como eu pratico desporto**

Por favor, assinala cada frase com um círculo para mostrar como é que praticas a tua modalidade desportiva. O significado dos algarismos é o seguinte

1=Discordo totalmente	DT
2=Discordo	D
3=Não tenho a certeza	N
4=Concordo	C
5=Concordo totalmente	CT

Exemplo	DT	D	N	C	CT
Costumo jogar "jogos de computador"	1	2	3	4	5

Por favor responde às seguintes questões, relativas ao teu **desporto principal**

	DT	D	N	C	CT
1 Vou a todos os treinos	1	2	3	4	5
2 Às vezes perco tempo a perturbar o adversário	1	2	3	4	5
3 Era capaz de fazer batota se isso me ajudasse a ganhar	1	2	3	4	5
4 Cumprimento os adversários depois de uma derrota	1	2	3	4	5
5 Se os outros fazem batota, penso que também o posso fazer	1	2	3	4	5
6 Dou sempre o meu melhor	1	2	3	4	5
7 Como não é contra as regras pressionar psicologicamente os adversários, posso fazê-lo	1	2	3	4	5
8 Cumprimento o treinador adversário	1	2	3	4	5
9 Faço batota se ninguém der por isso	1	2	3	4	5
10 Por vezes tento enganar os meus adversários	1	2	3	4	5
11 Estou sempre a pensar em como posso melhorar	1	2	3	4	5
12 Felicito os adversários por um bom jogo ou por um bom desempenho	1	2	3	4	5
13 Por vezes é preciso fazer batota	1	2	3	4	5
14 Penso que posso perturbar os adversários desde que não viole as regras	1	2	3	4	5



15	Esforço-me sempre, mesmo que saiba que vou perder	1	2	3	4	5
16	Não há problemas em fazer batota se ninguém notar	1	2	3	4	5
17	Seja qual for o resultado, cumprimento os meus adversários	1	2	3	4	5
18	Se não quiser que alguém jogue bem, tento perturbá-lo um pouco	1	2	3	4	5
19	Por vezes faço batota para obter vantagem	1	2	3	4	5
20	É uma boa ideia irritar os meus adversários	1	2	3	4	5
21	Não desisto mesmo depois de ter cometido erros	1	2	3	4	5
22	Depois de ganhar cumprimento os meus adversários	1	2	3	4	5
23	Tento que os árbitros decidam a meu favor, mesmo que não seja verdade	1	2	3	4	5

OBRIGADO....

## Appendix B

### Perceived Motivational Climate Sports Questionnaire-2



**Faculdade de Ciências de Desporto e Educação Física  
Universidade de Coimbra**

**QUESTIONÁRIO DE CLIMA MOTIVACIONAL PERCEPCIONADO NO DESPORTO – 2**

Por favor, pensa no que sentes ao jogar na tua equipa durante esta época. É assim habitualmente na tua equipa?

Lê as frases seguintes com cuidado e responde de acordo com a tua opinião sobre o ambiente na tua equipa. Portanto, leva o tempo que quiseres e responde o mais honestamente possível. Assinala o algarismo que melhor representa aquilo que sentes.

1=Discordo totalmente	DT
2=Discordo	D
3=Não tenho a certeza	N
4=Concordo	C
5=Concordo totalmente	CT

1	Nesta equipa, o treinador quer que nós experimentemos novas técnicas	1	2	3	4	5
2	Nesta equipa, o treinador zanga-se quando um jogador comete um erro	1	2	3	4	5
3	Nesta equipa, o treinador presta a maior parte da atenção aos melhores jogadores	1	2	3	4	5
4	Nesta equipa, todos os jogadores contribuem de forma importante	1	2	3	4	5
5	Nesta equipa, o treinador acredita que todos somos vitais para o sucesso da equipa	1	2	3	4	5
6	Nesta equipa, o treinador felicita os jogadores apenas quando jogam melhor do que os companheiros de equipa	1	2	3	4	5
7	Nesta equipa, o treinador pensa que só os titulares contribuem para o sucesso da equipa	1	2	3	4	5
8	Nesta equipa, os jogadores sentem-se bem quando dão o seu melhor	1	2	3	4	5
9	Nesta equipa, os jogadores são substituídos por cometerem erros	1	2	3	4	5
10	Nesta equipa, todos os jogadores desempenham um papel importante, seja qual for o seu nível técnico	1	2	3	4	5
11	Nesta equipa, os jogadores ajudam-se uns aos outros para melhorar	1	2	3	4	5
12	Nesta equipa, os jogadores são encorajados a serem melhores do que os outros	1	2	3	4	5
13	Nesta equipa, o treinador tem os seus jogadores favoritos	1	2	3	4	5

14	Nesta equipa, o treinador preocupa-se com o aperfeiçoamento das técnicas em que os jogadores não são bons	1	2	3	4	5
15	Nesta equipa, o treinador grita aos jogadores que não se portam bem	1	2	3	4	5
16	Nesta equipa, os jogadores sentem-se bem sucedidos quando melhoram o seu jogo	1	2	3	4	5
17	Nesta equipa, só os jogadores com as melhores “estatísticas” são elogiados	1	2	3	4	5
18	Nesta equipa, os jogadores são castigados quando cometem erros	1	2	3	4	5
19	Nesta equipa, todos os jogadores têm um papel importante	1	2	3	4	5
20	Nesta equipa, treinar a sério é recompensado	1	2	3	4	5
21	Nesta equipa, o treinador encoraja os jogadores a ajudarem-se uns aos outros	1	2	3	4	5
22	Nesta equipa, o treinador torna claro quem é que ele pensa que são os melhores jogadores	1	2	3	4	5
23	Nesta equipa, os jogadores ficam “malucos” quando jogam melhor do que os companheiros	1	2	3	4	5
24	Nesta equipa, quem quiser jogar tem de ser um dos melhores jogadores	1	2	3	4	5
25	Nesta equipa, o treinador confere sempre importância a quem dá o seu melhor	1	2	3	4	5
26	Nesta equipa, só os melhores jogadores merecem a atenção do treinador	1	2	3	4	5
27	Nesta equipa, os jogadores têm medo de cometer erros	1	2	3	4	5
28	Nesta equipa, os jogadores são encorajados a trabalhar os seus pontos fracos	1	2	3	4	5
29	Nesta equipa, o treinador favorece alguns jogadores mais do que outros	1	2	3	4	5
30	Nesta equipa, o essencial é melhorar em cada treino e em cada jogo	1	2	3	4	5
31	Nesta equipa, os jogadores trabalham realmente juntos, como uma equipa	1	2	3	4	5
32	Nesta equipa, cada jogador sente-se um membro importante da equipa	1	2	3	4	5
33	Nesta equipa, os jogadores ajudam-se uns aos outros para melhorarem e se superarem	1	2	3	4	5

OBRIGADO PELA COLABORAÇÃO....

## **Appendix C**

### **Athletes' Biographic and Demographic Information**



**Faculdade de Ciências do Desporto e Educação Física  
Universidade de Coimbra**

**Informação Demográfica e Biográfica Atletas**

**Clube**

**Clube anterior ao actual**

**Sexo**

**Idade**

**Raça**

**Escolaridade**

**Anos de prática**

**Profissão Pai**

**Idade Pai**

**Profissão Mãe**

**Idade Mãe**

**Estudos Pai**

**Estudos Mãe**

**Número de irmãos**

**Elementos família**

**Passado Desportivo na  
Família (elemento e anos  
prática)**

**Appendix D**  
**Other Significant Interview**



**Faculdade de Ciências do Desporto e Educação Física  
Universidade de Coimbra**

*Data:*

*Entrevistado:*

*Local:*

*Entrevistador:*

**Entrevista aos outros significantes**

***Qual o clima desportivo proporcionado pela instituição?***

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1. Como vê o clube no panorama actual do futebol português? **(CLUBE E IDENTIDADE)**
  2. Que papel social tem o clube na comunidade? **(INTEGRAÇÃO COMUNIDADE)**
  3. Qual o elemento mais importante na organização do clube? Porquê? **(ORGANIZAÇÃO E ESTRUTURA)**
  4. Que papel têm os atletas numa sessão de treino? **(SUPORTE E EFICÁCIA)**
  5. Descreva a organização do clube. O que sente em relação a ela? **(ESTRUTURA APROPRIADA)**
  6. Como define o clima no clube? Como encoraja à participação e incentiva as boas práticas? **(CLIMA E VALORES)**
  7. Qual o tipo de relação que o clube tem com os jogadores durante o tempo que permanecem no clube? **(RELAÇÃO DE SUPORTE)**
  8. Descreva os tipos de skills sociais que pensa o clube ajuda a desenvolver nos atletas, Como planeiam o desenvolvimento destes skills? Como mede o seu desenvolvimento? **(OPORTUNIDADE PARA A CONSTRUÇÃO DE SKILLS)**
  9. Consegue descrever as interacções que decorrem entre os atletas? (Exemplos positivos e/ou negativos). Existem reprimendas para aqueles que não têm uma conduta apropriada? **(SEGURANÇA PSICOLÓGICA)**
  10. Descreva o papel dos pais no seu programa **(INTEGRAÇÃO DA FAMÍLIA)**
  11. Como é que o envolvimento da escola é integrado no clima de equipa atleta? (quaisquer protocolos estabelecidos relacionados com a comunicação com a escola e professores; regras relacionadas com a ausência dos atletas e trabalho de casa; notas) **(INTEGRAÇÃO DA ESCOLA)**
  12. O programa encoraja os seus atletas a participar na comunidade em geral) Se sim, como? (actividades intencionais) **(INTEGRAÇÃO COMUNIDADE)**
- 

Em nome da Ciência., obrigado pela colaboração...

## **Appendix E**

### **Youth Athletes' Interview**





**Faculdade de Ciências do Desporto e Educação Física  
Universidade de Coimbra**

*Data:* \_\_\_\_\_ *Entrevistado:* \_\_\_\_\_

*Local:* \_\_\_\_\_ *Entrevistador:* \_\_\_\_\_

**Não** existem respostas incorrectas

As respostas são anónimas e **exclusivamente** para uso académico

Breve descrição das actividades do dia-a-dia

**Entrevista aos jovens atletas (Guia de tópicos)**

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***Quais as experiências que o desporto que praticas te proporciona?***

---

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| 1. Quais as razões para te envolveres no desporto? Ele melhorou quem tu és?  | <b>EXPERIÊNCIAS E IDENTIDADE</b>           |
| 2. O que pensas que a modalidade trouxe nas tuas capacidades de esforço, objectivos, gestão do tempo e capacidade de resolução de problemas? | <b>EXPERIÊNCIAS E INICATIVA</b>            |
| 3. Descreve as relações com os teus pares fora da modalidade que praticas  | <b>RELAÇÕES POSITIVAS</b>                  |
| 4. Depois de teres entrado na modalidade, qual a tua atitude em relação aos outros?  | <b>RELAÇÕES POSITIVAS</b>                  |
| 5. Como descreves o clima de grupo? Qual a tua influência no grupo ?   | <b>SKILLS SOCIAIS E TRABALHO DE EQUIPA</b> |
| 6. Quem consideras ter sido importante para a tua vinda para esta modalidade?  | <b>INTEGRAÇÃO SOCIAL E NETWORK ADULTOS</b> |
| 7. Qual o apoio da comunidade ao clube? As relações das pessoas contigo mudou?   | <b>INTEGRAÇÃO SOCIAL E NETWORK ADULTOS</b> |
| 8. Em relação ao clima de equipa, como são tratados? Existe diferença?   | <b>ADULTOS E EXPERIÊNCIAS</b>              |
| 9. Como se comportam os adultos dentro do clube? Dirigentes, sócios, treinadores?  | <b>ADULTOS E EXPERIÊNCIAS</b>              |

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Em nome da Ciência., obrigado pela colaboração...

**Appendix F**  
**Director Form**



**Faculdade de Ciências de Desporto e Educação Física  
Universidade de Coimbra**

### **FICHA DE IDENTIFICAÇÃO DIRECTOR**

Nome:

Idade:

Nível Instrução:

Anos Experiência no  
Cargo:

Clubes anteriores:

## **Appendix G**

### **Coach Form**



**Faculdade de Ciências de Desporto e Educação Física  
Universidade de Coimbra**

## **FICHA DE IDENTIFICAÇÃO DO TREINADOR**

Nome:

Idade:

Habilitações académicas:

Habilitações desportivas (curso de  
treinador e nível):

Anos de carreira como jogador:

Nível máximo atingido como  
jogador:

Anos de experiência como  
treinador:

Nível máximo atingido como  
treinador:

Anos de experiência no actual  
escalão:

**APPENDIX H**  
**Field Descriptive Analysis**

**Field Descriptive Analysis**

Denomination			Time	Reference	
Physical Time	Month	Day	Hour	Temperature	
Context (Mycrosystem)	Structure		Physical Characteristics		Internal Organization
					Planned
					Not Planned
Person in context	Race		Sex	Age	
Individual Behavior (Person)	Competence			Dysfunction	
Interaction Patterns and Group Activities (Proximal Processes)					
Communication	Content			Intensity	
	Time and language routine			Function	
Non verbal behavior and lingusitic propoerties	Young athletes			Adults	
Motivation and Goal Achievement	Individual			Group	
Influence of other social systems in context	Proximal (Mesosystem)			Non Proximal (Exosystem)	

*Note. Based on Bronfenbrenner & Morris (1998) amd Bronfenbrenner & Evans (2000)*

