

**TRACKING
SPORTING EXCELLENCE
IN A
TRANSFORMING SOCIETY**

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TRANSFORMING SOCIETY**

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DECLARATION

I declare that this dissertation entitled *Tracking sporting excellence in a transforming society*, submitted by me for a Doctor of Philosophy, at the University of KwaZulu-Natal, is my own production, original in conception and execution, and has not been previously submitted heretofore for a degree at any other university for examination. Further, all the sources I have used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by means of a complete reference.

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Researcher

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Supervisor

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Co-supervisor

ABSTRACT

There was a time in South Africa's history when the majority of its citizens was deprived of their basic human rights and experienced extreme racial divisiveness. Today the South African society has transformed from a highly stratified society to one that is united in its diversity. It is against this context that this study explores how learners who come from diverse racial, socio-economic and cultural backgrounds are achieving sporting excellence in this transforming society.

This study reviewed data generated from three sets of participants: learners, provincial coaches and significant others. In-depth interviews were conducted with fifteen learners from the KwaZulu-Natal provincial sports teams, who were from differing and diverse backgrounds and represented the most common codes of sport, played in KwaZulu-Natal schools. Their stories were told in the form of narratives as they journeyed towards sporting excellence, providing detailed background of their life circumstances and experiences. Analysis of these narratives yielded five themes: self and identity; social context; schooling and the curriculum; team spirit and talent search; and race, class and culture, which emphasised the psychological and sociological perspectives of sporting excellence. Further, using the data generated from the provincial coaches and the significant others, the notions of the resolute self, reliance on people, the white school magnets and migration, unwavering nation building and social and racial diversity emerged from the themes.

In tracking sporting excellence the focus is shifted to the learners' journey within a transforming society, to theorise the social spaces which have been navigated by them to ensure sporting prowess. From the analysis of the data I put forward a thesis predicted on three concepts; the spatial movements, the spatial displacements and the spatial upheavals which the learners had to manage and navigate by travelling long distances, overcoming obstacles and making connections respectively. I argue that in a transforming society it is the filtration process of sporting excellence that has only benefitted a select few learners and has uniquely contributed to the achievement of sporting excellence.

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DEDICATION

MY LOVE

MY LIFE

PRIYANKA AND JESMIKA

CHAPTER ONE

Sporting Excellence in a Transforming Society

1.1 Introduction

South Africa is a land of extreme contrasts. With untold riches, abundant natural resources, breathtaking nature and a vibrant culture, there was a time in its history when the vast majority of its citizens were alienated from all of its riches. Living in abject poverty, they were deprived of their basic human rights and experienced extreme racial divisiveness. Under apartheid¹, sport was played separately by the different race groups and only persons from the white race group were recognised for their achievement in sport and allowed to represent their country at international events. The campaign by the majority of the citizens of South Africa through international boycotts led to the country's isolation from international sport. Sports boycott played a crucial and influential role in turning the course of politics in the country. Change was inevitable and 1994 heralded a new era in the history of South Africa.

South Africa's successful struggle for freedom and democracy began the process of transforming the once highly stratified society into one that is uniting in its diversity. The political landscape has changed. This study explores how learners from these diverse racial, socio-economic and cultural backgrounds are achieving sporting excellence in this transforming society. The opening up of opportunities to the diverse populations of South Africa did not mean that all learners would be provided with an opportunity to play or excel in sport, because the legacy of apartheid is still present in many of the black schools which lack resources and basic infrastructures. The sporting teams in KwaZulu-Natal² province comprise learners from diverse background who are

¹ Apartheid which means "separateness" in Afrikaans was a system of racial segregation enforced in South Africa from 1948 to 1994. South Africa had long been ruled by white people and apartheid was designed to form a legal framework for continued economic and political dominance by people of European descent. Under apartheid people were legally classified into racial groups: White, Black, Indian and Coloured, and were geographically and forcibly separated from each other on the basis of this legal classification. For more detailed explanation see Martin (1988), Irving (1981) and Louw (2004).

² KwaZulu-Natal is the third smallest province, making up 8% of the land in South Africa. The province is made up of 10 district councils (see Appendix 17), with Durban or the Ethekwini district council been the most populated.

representative of the racial complement of the country. It is almost impossible to imagine that excellence of any kind is possible, since many of these learners are still living in the disadvantaged³ areas of the country.

1.2 THE RATIONALE FOR THE STUDY

The changing education scenario from the 1980s to the 1990s, afforded me the opportunity to witness the shift in how sports and physical education was taught and administered in schools. My personal experiences as a teacher of physical education made me acutely aware of the injustices that learners in schools continued to experience post-apartheid, with wide-ranging disparities continuing to exist across South African schools. Access to sport and physical education, an intricate part of the school curriculum and seen as the ‘nursery’ for sporting excellence, still eluded many learners.

Much of the research in sport is dominated by a psychological perspective, where the focus is extensively on the mental and psychological aspects of athletes achieving sporting excellence, and a quantitative perspective that is driven by statistics. The research on sport from a sociological perspective is limited with regards to learners in school, and especially as to their achieving sporting excellence in a transforming society. Use was made of theories to facilitate analysis of the data. The rationale for this study is thus explained from five viewpoints: personal, contextual, educational, psychological and theoretical.

The first viewpoint derives from personal experience. Having been a physical education⁴ (PE) teacher since 1986, I was acutely aware of and deeply affected by the injustices learners in non-white schools were experiencing. As an educator during this period I did all I could to ensure that the learners received the best possible coaching and motivation in order to enable them to reach their personal best. During the period

³ The term “disadvantaged” in the South African context refers to those population groups (namely Blacks, Indians and Coloured), which were racially discriminated against during the apartheid regime.

⁴ The term *physical education* signifies education by means of experiences which involve activity and movement. The aim of PE is to teach learners TO move, to learn ABOUT movement and to learn THROUGH movement. Learn TO move relates to the physical and motor domains, learning ABOUT movement relates to the cognitive domain, whereas learning THROUGH movement relates to the affective and social domains (Van Deventer, 2002, p. 103).

1986-1994, 15 learners coached by me received their Natal⁵ school colours, 7 their South African school colours, 2 their President colours and 3 their National colours. All these awards were received in the codes of volleyball, netball or softball, under the banner of the Natal High Schools Sports Federation⁶ and the South African Senior Schools Sports Association⁷.

Many contributing factors helped learners in their quest for excellence, such as the school they attended, the coach who shaped their skills, the level of organization of sport in the zone, the determination of the learners, and the provision of resources. However, I did not know what and how the influences of the personal, social, political and cultural background of the learners impacted on their achieving excellence in sport. They were playing sport in an abnormal society at a time when the struggle to end apartheid was fuelled by the sports campaign to isolate South African sport globally. The call was for “no normal sport in an abnormal society⁸”.

The second viewpoint draws from a contextual one, as learners in this study are attending school. The legacy of apartheid created wide-ranging disparities across South African schools - and the poor infrastructure provision is a strong reminder of the neglect of this era. According to Chisholm (2005, p. 201), “it has been a decade in which the institutionalized injustices of apartheid were expunged and new directions were charted for a 12 million strong cohort of learners and approximately 350 000 teachers spread across nine provinces in a largely public school sector”. The 19 racially divided education departments, each with its own “educational system, administration and schools” (Behr, 1994, p. 163), were restructured into one national and 9 provincial education departments. The National Education Policy Act of 1995 was introduced,

⁵ The province of Natal which had existed between 1910 and 1994 was renamed KwaZulu-Natal after the end of Apartheid in 1994. The province is home to the Zulu monarchy, and the majority population and language of the province is Zulu.

⁶ Natal High Schools Sports Federation (NHSSF) was a provincial sporting body that afforded the Indian and Coloured learners at school to compete in sports at a provincial level in KwaZulu-Natal.

⁷ South African Senior Schools Sports Association (SASSSA) was a national sporting body that afforded the Indian and Coloured learners at school to compete in sports at a nation level in South Africa.

⁸ In 1973, the South African Council of Sport (SACOS) was formed within the country, and together with the South African Non-Racial Olympic Committee (SANROC) campaigned for the complete isolation of South African sport, using the slogan ‘no normal sport in an abnormal society’.

which established the foundations for an integrated system of education. The right of access to schooling thus formed the cornerstone of South Africa's education policy and an integral part of the State's general commitment "to redress imbalances generated through historical inequalities" (Department of Education (DoE), 1995)⁹.

As recently as 2008, South African education was, according to Milner & Khoza (2008), in a parlous state. The legacy of apartheid has contributed to the enormous diversity and heterogeneity of South Africa's schools, with the majority of the black schools having been beset by conflict for more than two decades, suffering not only from State-imposed deprivations but also from the collapse of a teaching and learning culture. In assessing the legacy of apartheid, Chisholm (2005) highlighted major inequalities between the white and black,¹⁰ the urban and rural areas and the departments of education. Apartheid education divided educational privilege and achievement by race - the inequalities made obvious in the differential spending which impacted on the access to education and the quantity and quality of education offered to black and white learners. The literacy levels, school completion rate, pupil-teacher ratios, number and qualifications of teachers and availability of different types of resources were typical indicators of the inequalities between black and white learners. According to Schools Register of Needs Survey¹¹ in 2000, 29% of schools in South Africa were without potable water, 45% of schools did not have access to electricity, and 9.2% of schools are without toilets (Wildeman, 2002).

⁹ In 2009, after the election of President Jacob Zuma, the Department of Education (DoE) was divided into two departments: Department of Basic Education (DBE) and the Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET). DBE has been tasked with overseeing primary and secondary education in South Africa while DHET has been tasked with the responsibility for the coordination of the education and training sub-systems of post-school education, including universities, Further Education and Training Colleges, Sector Education and Training Authorities, and Adult Basic Education.

¹⁰ According to Statistics South Africa (2010) the population of South Africa is 49.99 million with the province of KwaZulu-Natal having the second largest population at 10.65 million (21.3%). The population group with the highest population is the Blacks with 40 million (79.4%), followed by Whites with 5 million (9.2%), Coloureds with 4 million (8.8) and Indians with 1 million (2.6%). The Blacks are not culturally or linguistically homogeneous. The whites are not ethnically homogeneous and descend from many ethnic groups. The coloureds are people of mixed race who are descendants from slaves brought in from the East and Central Africa and the Indians are of Indian origin with many of them descendants from indentured workers brought in the nineteenth century to work on the sugar plantations of the eastern coastal area then known as Natal.

¹¹ The Schools Register of Needs Survey (SRNS) collects information from every school in South Africa on its exact geographic location, physical facilities, condition of school buildings, services provided, and equipment and resources available.

Democracy in South Africa in 1994 brought with it many challenges for the new Government, which was also saddled with the mammoth task of levelling the playing fields to ensure that every child in the country would be given access to education and sport. It is assumed that if learners have the necessary resources, skills and finances, the possibility of sporting excellence can be increased. However, with sports having been reserved for the white populous (South African Sports Council, 1980), it became a norm for sporting excellence to be viewed primarily as the product of the historically privileged institutions. These possibilities of success are evidenced by the achievements of learners in schools that are well endowed with resources, such as the former all-white schools in South Africa. However, this research intends to foreground learners from an array of diverse backgrounds. They will have one thing in common: the achievement of sporting excellence. This research explains sporting excellence from the context of schools and will provide valuable insight as to how learners have managed to achieve in sports despite contextual differences. It analyses what enables particular learners to excel in the code of sport they pursue, and in the context in which this excellence is achieved.

The third viewpoint is an educational one, where sport and PE in the school curriculum are seen as the nursery grounds for sporting excellence to be achieved. In this study the learners are located in the Further Education and Training¹² band of schooling. Tracing sport and PE in the schooling curriculum will provide insight into the role sport and PE has played from an educational viewpoint. Despite the vast disparities in the schooling system, learners still seem to excel in sport. In looking at schools, one can determine whether or not the school as an institution provides opportunities to the learners to excel in sport. Tracing the development of PE both globally and from an African perspective will indicate how PE as part of the school curriculum contributes to the learners excelling in sport.

As part of the curriculum, in the past, the subject of sport and PE was an instrument to further the ideological agenda of the apartheid Government. It was unevenly provided

¹² South Africa's National Qualifications Framework (NQF) recognises three broad bands of education: General Education and Training (GET), Further Education and Training (FET), and Higher Education and Training (HET). The Further Education and Training Phase of schooling covers grades 10 to 12 in schools.

for and almost non-existent in non-white schools during the apartheid era, and in post-apartheid era has been reduced in status in the curriculum. In fact it has been removed from the curriculum as a stand-alone subject and placed as one of the learning outcomes in the learning area Life Orientation.

Sport and PE in South Africa have a unique history, and this history and the role that apartheid played will be briefly discussed. This will give insight into the present-day sport and PE in post-apartheid South Africa. The changing South African curriculum will also be highlighted, as the participants of this research study are learners at school in the FET phase. They would have experienced the changing curriculum and are the product of the new education system that has emerged over the past seven years. School is one of the places where learners are introduced to sport, but given that PE is not present in many of the black schools, how then do learners achieve sporting excellence in these schools?

Fourthly, research in sport is dominated from a psychological perspective where the focus is extensively on the mental aspects of athletes achieving sporting excellence, and a quantitative perspective that is driven by statistics. Gould & Weinberg (2011, p. 4) define sport and exercise psychology as “the scientific study of people and their behaviour in sport and exercise activities and the practical application of that knowledge”. The focus is mainly on understanding how an individual’s physical performance is affected by psychological factors and how a person’s psychological development, health and well-being are affected by sport and exercise participation. There is a need to research sporting excellence from a dynamic qualitative and interpretive viewpoint. This research will fill this gap and foreground the hidden changes that occur in a social context that allowed for sporting excellence to be achieved.

Finally, from an analysis viewpoint, Figure 1: p 3, will be drawn on as an analytical tool to focus on the psychological perspective of the learners who excel in sport, and Figure 2: p 49, will be drawn on to focus on the sociological perspective of how sporting excellence is achieved by learners in a transforming society. Both these models are used extensively in research, one to demonstrate the influence of one’s mental and

psychological make-up on one's level of achievement, and the other to demonstrate the influence of one's social interaction on one's level of achievement.

Therefore, in order to get more learners to succeed, these five viewpoints will be interrogated so that a better understanding of what contributes to and enables sporting excellence can be found. This study will provide valuable insight into what support is required in order for many more learners to succeed, especially those learners from disadvantaged backgrounds. Through tracking sporting excellence will provide an understanding of what produces sporting excellence, and reveal how social spaces are navigated so as to provide opportunities for learners at school to achieve sporting excellence.

1.3 Research focus and questions

This study explains sporting excellence in a transforming society, and how learners in KZN have achieved sporting excellence. Sporting achievement in schools has a hierarchical structure. Learners at school initially get selected for the school team. The school team then plays other school teams at a district level. If a learner is selected for the district team, he or she then plays for the district team against other district teams at a provincial level. If the learner is selected here, he or she will play for the provincial team. It is with this selection process in mind that learners who have made it through to the provincial team were chosen for the study. The learners in this study have all been part of the post-apartheid education system¹³ and are in grades 10, 11 or 12 in secondary schools, which is the FET phase of schooling.

The primary aim of this study was to explore how the differing contextual backgrounds of the learners and the diverse range of sporting codes have influenced their achievement of excellence. The diversity of the codes of sport allowed for exploration of the dynamics of these, which comprised team or individual sports, male or female

¹³ Educational transformation and reform in South Africa since the 1994 elections has been a central part of the country's reconstruction and development project. It has been driven by two imperatives. First, the government had to overcome the devastation of apartheid, and provide a system of education that builds democracy, human dignity, equality and social justice. Second, a system of lifelong learning had to be established to enable South Africans to respond to the enormous economic and social challenges of the 21st century (Asmal, 2001)

sports, traditional or non-traditional sports, ball or non-ball sport and contact or non-contact sports. The learners were selected based on their differing contextual backgrounds, which included their schooling, family, gender, race and socio-economic status. This selection allowed for diversity of the learners in this study, which helped to gain an understanding of how learners, despite these differing background, have achieved excellence in sport. This selection of the learners will enable the study in its conceptual framing and the research design is largely constructed to respond to the three critical questions outlined below, which include identifying the learners, examining what contributes to excellence, and why these learners excel in sport.

Question 1

- Who are the learners excelling in school sport?

The objective of this question was to identify the learners who excel in sport and gain insight regarding the learners and the sport they played. It provided and painted a picture about the learners' identities as they journeyed towards sporting achievement. This included all aspects of the learners' life as it related to his or her sporting endeavours. The data provided developed an in-depth biographical profile of the learners.

Question 2

- What contributes to these learners' excellence in school sport?

The objective of this question was to establish what contributes to learners' excellence. It explored all those factors that have helped shape the learners' sporting career in one way or another, including the people, opportunities and conditions that made it possible for the learners to change in the direction towards achievement. It provided insight as to how the learners have negotiated their unique context in order to make the best of their situation and excel against all odds. These contributions will bring sharply into focus the world in which the learners who achieve in sport live.

Question 3

- Why do these learners excel in school sport in a transforming society?

The objective of this final question was to understand why learners excel in school sport by exploring and explaining the relationship between the learner and the transforming society in which sporting excellence is being achieved. This question brought into focus the dynamic nature of a transforming society as one began to understand the complex issues of societies and how learners need to engage their social spaces so as to create the opportunities to produce excellence.

1.4 Organisation of thesis

This thesis on sporting excellence in a transforming society comprises 7 chapters. Chapter One provided insight into the unique sports setting in the South African context. It situated the study historically, politically and contextually, providing an elaboration of the nature of the transforming South African society. It provided insight into my own experiences as a PE teacher in a school where learners achieved provincial and national colours. At this time society was segregated according to racial groupings but now with the changing landscape it would be interesting to know how learners are achieving in sport. The chapter therefore invites the reader to become acquainted with the aim of the study. It also foregrounds the rationale of the study which is interrogated from five viewpoints; the personal, contextual, educational, psychological and theoretical. The chapter also makes explicit the research questions of the study.

Chapter Two reviews literature researching sporting excellence. It provides a broad context in which sport is played in South Africa. The literature review begins with a tentative definition of sporting excellence. It then maps out and focuses on studies that highlight how the notion of excellence has been driven by psychology, socialisation, school curriculum, apartheid politics, biographies and transformation. The chapter concludes with the conceptual frameworks used in the analyses of the data.

Chapter Three outlines the research methodology of the study, providing a detailed data production plan and explains the reasoning that was crucial in comprehending why and

how the participants were selected for the study. It also makes explicit the stages of data analysis which was progressive in nature to enable the theorizing of the study.

Chapter four takes the readers through an exploration of the learners' stories and provides a detailed narrative of their sporting journey. In profiling the learners through these narratives, one begins to see the emerging themes.

Chapter Five is an integral component of the study, as it explains the emerging themes and assists in understanding the links between the learners' notions of the self, their environment and society and how they ultimately come to achieve sporting excellence. This analysis provides a holistic picture of the learners who are excelling in sport. The five emerging themes are self and identity; social context; schooling and the curriculum; team spirit and talent search; and race, class and culture.

Chapter Six builds on the themes, using data generated from the provincial coaches and significant others by foregrounding five salient notions that will be explored in a meaningful manner in order to mediate an in-depth understanding about the learners and what contributes to their achieving sporting excellence in a transforming society. The notions are the resolute self, people reliance, the white school magnets and migration, unwavering nation building and social and racial diversity. I also make connections with the themes as a whole to literature which will add to the richness and complexity of these salient notions.

Chapter Seven, the final chapter in the study, provides a theoretical explanation about why sporting excellence is achieved in a transforming society. Its focus is on theorizing how learners have navigated their social spaces in creating opportunities for themselves and to increase their chances of achievement. I argue for three concepts; spatial movements, spatial displacements and spatial upheaval, that emerged from the study, and use the analogy of the *filtration process* to show how the learners have navigated through these social spaces so that achieving sporting excellence in South Africa's unique transforming society becomes a reality.

1.5 Conclusion

This chapter is an overview and orientation to the study of learners excelling in sport in a transforming society. It provided insight into the unique sports setting in the South African context. It situated the study historically, politically and contextually. The focus of the study is the transforming South African society and how excellence is achieved within this dynamic setting. The study is set against a very fluid and changing environment, and selecting the learners based on their diverse background ensured representation of the multitudes of environment that make up South African society.

In the next chapter the literature on researching sporting excellence is reviewed. A tentative definition of sporting excellence begins the literature review. It then maps out and focuses on studies that have highlighted how excellence has been driven by psychology, socialisation, school curriculum, apartheid politics, biographies and transformation.

CHAPTER TWO

Excellence in sport researched

2.1 Introduction

This study focuses on learners' sporting achievements in the context of a transforming society. The learners, who are playing sport at provincial level, are representative of the country's racial complement as required by the policy of the quota system.¹⁴ They come from diverse backgrounds since the country's apartheid rule ensured racial segregation at all levels. Researching learners at this point in their lives will provide insight into how they have negotiated their unique context and help to identify those with talent who are capable of achieving sporting excellence, thus increasing the numbers of learners - especially those from disadvantaged backgrounds – who achieve in sport at school. In order to build our national competency and excellence in sport, there is a need to focus on learners at school and find those enabling factors that will assist learners to achieve excellence despite their diverse background.

The literature review begins with a tentative definition of sporting excellence. It will then map out and focus on studies that have highlighted how the notion of excellence is driven by psychology, socialisation, school curriculum, apartheid politics, biographies and transformation. The literature review will conclude with a detailed explanation of the two conceptual framings underpinning the study. The first conceptual framing focuses on the psychology of the learners who achieve sporting excellence, using Figure 1: p 44 and the second conceptual framing focuses on the context of the study which is society, more specifically the transforming society in which sporting excellence is achieved, using Figure 2: p 49. Although kept separate for the literature review, it must be noted that these aspects are inter-related and interwoven; this will become apparent during analysis of the data.

¹⁴ Cloete (2005, p. 156) states that quotas are fixed preferences that require a set number of historically disadvantaged individuals to participate. Louw (2004, p. 240) defines quotas as 'a number or percent of people, constituting a required or targeted minimum. In sport it translated into a set number of individuals from historically disadvantaged communities that must be on the field of play in the relevant sporting codes at all times.

There is a dearth of literature on learners at school achieving sporting excellence and the context in which they are achieving it. Research on sporting excellence focuses mainly on the psychological and mental aspects of athletes. Research by Orlick (2002), Jones (2002), Gould (2002b), Partington (2001), Kreiner-Phillips and Orlick (1992), Jones and Hardy (1990) and Loehr (1986) focuses extensively on the psychological and mental aspects of athletes achieving sporting excellence. World champions or Olympic champions who have achieved world-class status in their sport and who are at the peak of their career, both internationally and locally, have been researched by Burnett (2005), Brown, Cairns and Botterill (2001), Perry (2000) and Kreiner-Phillips and (1992).

The experiences of exceptional performers, according to Orlick (1996), suggest 7 critical elements of excellence: commitment, belief, full focus, positive images, mental readiness, distraction control and constructive evaluation. These elements combine to form a Wheel of Excellence, and Orlick (1996) states that human excellence is guided by mental factors in virtually all domains. The Wheel of Excellence provides a working framework to guide the pursuit of excellence. These elements help one to excel or become the best one can possibly be in a chosen pursuit. There seems to be an emphasis on the psychological and mental aspects of elite athletes and their trials and tribulations towards achieving sporting excellence. In the South African context where the social and environmental impact on learners in a divided society, is bound to play a critical role in achieving sporting excellence, is absent.

This study argues that in understanding how one develops in society, the contribution of context - that is, a transforming society - towards sporting excellence needs to be interrogated. Research by Bronfenbrenner (1979, 2005) theorises how an individual's development and growth is reflected by the influence of several environmental systems in society. More pertinent is the research on the role of sport and sporting achievement within divided and transforming societies. Mann (1986, p. 4) describes societies by stating that they "are much messier than our theories of them". For most of the 20th century sport was an institutionalised feature of South Africa's racialised political and social landscape, and reinforced and symbolised a white-dominated pattern of racial and ethnic stratification and power relations. Studies of sports-based community relations initiatives, highlighting use of sport as a vehicle to promote reconciliation, inter-racial

harmony and peace building in divided societies have been carried out by Sugden (2006, 2010), Hoglund and Sundberg (2008), Kidd (2008) and Keim (2003).

In the absence of research literature on learners at school who achieve in sport, especially in South African society, given its transforming nature, the study intends to track sporting excellence and demonstrate the uniqueness of the society in which the learners are situated and how they navigated themselves, in their quest to achieve sporting excellence.

2.2 Sporting excellence defined

Marckwardt, Cassidy and McMillan (1992) defined *sporting* as pertaining to, engaged in, or used in connection with athletic games or field sport and *excellence* as a possession of eminently good qualities, great merit, virtue or goodness or a superior trait. In its simplest form, excellence is the level for those performers who constitute the apex of the ubiquitous performance pyramid. The literature argues that physical talent alone is not enough to become a sports champion. The most successful athletes have a burning desire to be the very best. They have a special drive from within them to excel in competition (Clarkson, 1999).

Many coaches believe that an athlete's success depends on their physical ability, their physical and mental training and their desire or drive. It is this desire, passion and ambition that separate high achievers from other competitors. Berglas (1986) states that superstars have an over-ambition to succeed and this sets them apart from their fellow competitors.

Traditionally excellence was conceptualised in terms of performance outcome measures, which entailed receiving Olympic medals and breaking championship or world records. Miller and Kerr (2002) suggest that performance excellence is achieved only through optimum personal development, yet in practice it is found that personal excellence is often compromised or sacrificed in the pursuit of performance excellence. However, sports psychology leans very heavily on performance excellence in this

bifurcation. Personal excellence is described as excellence which is promoted outside of the elite sports setting. The ideal in addressing this disparity between personal excellence and performance excellence is to envision both as co-existing in prestigious sports competitions, where appropriate personal and athletic development occur within the sport experience. In this way sport is conceptualised as an experience where personal excellence takes place alongside performance excellence.

Orlick (2008, p.47) defines personal excellence as follows:

“... a contest with yourself to bring out the positives and the potential that lives within you. Excellence is a pursuit in which you must cooperate with yourself, drawing on the natural reserves within your mind and body to develop and stretch your capabilities to the fullest. Each of us begins this journey at a different point – mentally, physically, emotionally – and with respect to the support that we are given. Look for the opportunities within each situation that you enter. Develop your strengths. Make the most of what you have, whatever that may be. The true joy and challenge lies in pursuing on-going personal growth, loving the pursuit and living the various textures of your life”.

Very closely aligned to the notion of excellence is success. Marnewick (2010, p. 10) states that “glory or achievement can be defined by a simplified mathematical equation: Success = talent + opportunities + preparation + support”. The four key ingredients of talent, opportunities, preparation and support or the TOPS formula are the stepping stones on the route to success. The difference between average and accomplished is ones self-discipline, experience and self-confidence.

But where does it start? For some, participation in a national team is a mark of excellence. In this research sporting excellence is defined as learners who have achieved provincial colours in sport in KZN province. The literature review continues with research relating to the psychology of sporting excellence.

2.3 Psychology of sporting excellence

The psychology of sport is a wide and well researched area. Gould, Dieffenbach and Moffett (2002), Orlick and Partington (1988) and Loehr (1982) are some of the leading researchers in this field. Selected literature on the components of excellence that are

anticipated to be relevant to the learners in this study will be discussed. These components, which include commitment and belief, a strong work ethic, self-confidence, managed anxiety, stress and pressure, perspective, goal-setting, mental readiness and motivation, will help in profiling the psyche of the learners and provide a framework when analysing the first research question: *Who are the learners who excel in sport?*

Leading international researchers on excellence in sport, focus on athletes that have already attained their peak in sport. Orlick (1996) focuses on commitment and belief and Cooper and Goodenough (2007) focus on a strong work ethic. They believe that these components form the building blocks for athletes to achieve excellence. The importance of confidence in elite athletes is highlighted in studies by Jones and Hardy (1990), Hemery (1986) and Cooper and Goodenough (2007). Confidence is an emotion or state of mind associated with an athlete's success, and elite athletes have the extreme confidence that is needed to produce top performances. Confidence is usually a result of an athlete's anticipated success in their forthcoming event.

According to Kauss (1980), an athlete's anticipated outcome is the ultimate indicator of confidence. The expectation for success can be decided on by an athlete's confidence in themselves, in their team mates and their coach, emotional readiness, physical ability, knowledge of the opponent, goals, strategies or physical condition. De Venzio (1997) further extrapolates that elite athletes exude high confidence levels and that this could be a result of their being an elite athlete, and not necessarily a cause of it. He believes that "confidence level mirrors skill level".

Other components are anxiety, stress and pressure. Research by Orlick (1996) shows that the manner in which athletes cope with anxiety and stress significantly influences their performance. He refers to this as distraction control, which refers to one's ability to maintain and to regain a positive and effective focus when faced with potential interruptions or distractions, negative input or setbacks. Researchers Kreiner-Phillips and Orlick (1992) in their study explored the personal success experiences of high-profile athletes who had reached the highest level in their sport. These athletes felt that the most stressful demand they faced was the expectation of winning. These authors

found that the athlete's ability or inability to cope with these expectations led to them either continuing with success or struggling to maintain it. South African researcher Burnett (2003)¹⁵ focused her studies on "the rationale for the multifaceted development of the athlete-student in the African context", where she stated that in the high-profile competitive world of global sport, the athlete is from a relatively young age under exorbitant pressure to excel and compete successfully in the international arena and develop as a person as well as professionally.

Perspective is another important component in the quest for maintaining excellence. Brown et al. (2001) investigated the lives of 11 athletes (six males and five females) who transcended the demands and pressures of elite sport and maintained positive relationships with their families, friends and community. These athletes conducted themselves with humility and grace and performed admirably both in and out of their sport arenas. Emphasis was placed on the term 'perspective', which suggested some awareness of the *self* in relation to others. Perspective was seen as a process of keeping in focus the most basic and valuable aspects of one's life, thereby managing one's world in order to stay meaningfully engaged with one's sport, the important people in one's life and one's self as a whole. A related concept is 'balance', as examined by Amirault and Orlick (1998), where athletes defined this as being true to a vision or goal and pursuing it or as respecting different aspects of their lives.

Perry (2000)¹⁶ addresses the issue of goal-setting as a component of excellence. Six performers were interviewed as case studies and it was found that goal-setting was one of the skills that they felt necessary in order to maintain excellence. Locke (1991) states that goals that are easy to achieve generally lead to lower performance.

¹⁵ Burnett (2003) states that the South African athlete faces unique challenges and requires special nurturing and development to achieve personal, professional and sport-related success. Her research explores the unique social and competitive world of the athlete.

¹⁶ Perry (2000) states that although there has been considerable attention paid to goal-setting in the physical education and psychology literature, goal-setting amongst excellent performers in sport and the arts is an under researched field. Excellence and more specifically how to achieve it, has been an increasingly popular area of study. The participants in this study had all completed a substantial portion of their careers so that a retrospective examination of their experiences was possible. They were knowledgeable and articulate individuals who felt that they had something to say about excellence and their achievement of it. He found that there were certain skills these performers utilized in order to achieve excellence. Goal-setting was one of these skills.

Another component of sporting excellence is mental readiness, which Orlick (1996) refers to as a positive state one carries into learning and performance situations, stating that to have a realistic opportunity to excel one must be highly proficient at mentally preparing oneself. Loehr (1986) suggests that 50% of success is attributed to mental toughness in athletes during competitions. On similar lines Gould, Hodge and Petlichkoff (1987) indicated that coaches believe that being mentally tough is important in order to achieve success in sports. Further studies by Gould, Dieffenbach and Moffett (2002) on Olympic champions have identified mental toughness as a significant contributor to sports performance enhancements.

Finally, motivation is required for sporting excellence to be achieved. To become an elite athlete one requires hours of training that is often rigorous, painful or injurious. The athletes, who have reached the pinnacle of their sport, have spent many hours of training so as to achieve a high level of success. For athletes to spend this amount of time in training requires motivation for them to continually push their bodies or to recover from whatever struggles or setbacks they may have experienced. The motivation required by the athlete can be intrinsic or extrinsic. Research by Orlick and Partington (1988) has shown that there is a link between extreme motivation and the achievement levels of elite athletes.

From a psychological perspective, the mental component of sporting excellence according to literature may be summarised as athletes having commitment and belief, a strong work ethic, self-confidence, managed anxiety, stress and pressure, perspective, goal-setting, mental readiness and motivation. These components play a vital role in athletes attaining their peak in sport. However, these mental components cannot function without the social context in which athletes find themselves. The socialisation of athletes is an important aspect of their attaining sporting excellence and is discussed in the next part of the literature review.

2.4 Socialisation and sporting excellence

The literature review on socialisation will capture the elite athlete as part of a social context. Research lends itself to the role of ‘self’ in the life of the elite athlete as well as

the role played by ‘significant others’, be they parents, coaches or team mates. Selected literature will inform the study on the learners themselves, their understanding and interpretation of the world around them, the influences of others and their part in the socialisation process.

According to Coakley (2007), socialisation is an active process of learning and social development, when one interacts with another to become acquainted within the social world in which they live. Thus identity formation forms an integral part of this socialisation process, as athletes consciously and unconsciously acquire a set of dispositions that orientate them towards a particular understanding and interpretation of the role they are fulfilling in their social world.

In this study it is argued that the social worlds of the learners will differ markedly from each other. How they orientate themselves in this world to acquire excellence will provide valuable understanding in explaining how they have achieved sporting excellence. What or who in the learners’ unique context and background were the driving forces behind their successes? Research around socialisation provides insight into elite athletes’ socialisation processes, especially how athletes have managed themselves in the social world in order to bring out their best performances in the sport they play.

Many people play a pivotal role in the life of an elite athlete and in their journey to achieving success. South African sports researcher Burnett (2005) undertook a study on 123 South African elite athletes (69 males and 54 females) who competed in the 8th All Africa Games in Abuja in 2003, in order to reflect on their socialisation process and career pathways. Her focus was mainly on the identity formation as an integral part in the socialisation process of the athletes. Athletes had to complete a questionnaire to determine their psychosocial profiles. The researcher concluded that central to the socialisation and career development of South African elite athletes is their changing reliance on the support of and interaction with, significant others, in accordance with the phases of socialisation into the role of an elite athlete.

The change relates to human developmental phases and athletic role attainment, where athletes demonstrate dependency first on parents and family members and then on their coach and peers. They ultimately become relatively independent by depending mainly on the self. This self-reliance represents a gradual process of emancipation, through which athletes have internalised the work ethic of high-level sports competition that entails hard work, sacrifice and a continued striving for excellence and success. Further, Burnett (2006)¹⁷ argues that within the different phases of being socialised into the formation of an athletic identity, socialisation agents (including the self) make significant contributions to the athletes' achievements. White, Kavussanu, Tank and Wingate (2004) also found that parental belief in the athletes' ability results in success in sport.

Stevenson (1990) states that successful athletes identified the encouragement of peers as very important in motivating them to continue competitive participation in sport. According to Macphail, Gorely and Kirk (2003), young athletes around the age of 15 years who are increasingly entangled in sport establish friendships with co-players and are thus influenced by other athletes (peers within the athletic fraternity). James (2001) further extrapolates that children as young as 5 are ready to develop loyalties towards a team.

In the socialisation process the identity of the learner is developed and the person around them, such as parents, peers and significant others, become pivotal in enhancing their sporting achievements. The next aspect of the literature review focuses on another important socialising agent, namely the school. Research pertaining to schooling and the curriculum in South Africa will be interrogated.

¹⁷ The findings reflect the shifting nature and dominant role of significant others as socialising agents, the influence of environmental factors and socio-cultural and economic aspects. The social worlds and career paths of elite athletes is further constructed through ideological and subjective schemes, which translate into needs and perceptions that should be understood and addressed in the development of elite athletes in the South African context.

2.5 Schooling and the curriculum

The educational transformation in South Africa began in the early 1990s, bringing to an end the apartheid education system where education departments were divided according to race and education enhanced the divisions in society. It is this history of South African education that necessitated one national and 9 provincial education departments and the introduction of Curriculum 2005, sometimes referred to as outcomes based education (OBE). The OBE system has introduced new learning styles implying change from passive, rote learning to creative learning and problem solving through active participation in the learning process. Democracy, social justice, non-racism, equality and reconciliation are among the fundamental values of the South African education system.

As with all facets of South African life, sport was violated by the apartheid policy of the past Government. This policy was a racist, oppressive and repressive system set up to benefit privileged whites at the detriment of the rest of the civil population. Under apartheid, sports development and participation was a privilege for a section of the population, with the majority effectively ignored and relegated to the exterior of the world of sport. The educational system prepared children in many different ways for the roles they were expected to play in social, economic and political life. As a result, curriculum played a powerful and influential role in reinforcing inequality. According to Kloppers (1996), PE at schools was an instrument to supplement the ideological agenda of the apartheid government. PE encouraged a vigilant white militarism to ready white South African boys against the onslaught waged by blacks and ‘communists’.

Walter (1994) viewed PE and school sport¹⁸ in South Africa as a case of extremes and inequalities. Previously advantaged schools continue to be relatively problem-free, whereas previously disadvantaged schools have been adversely affected. While some schools had well-developed facilities and qualified PE teachers, the majority were under

¹⁸ Schools play an important role in the growth and development of the learner. PE and school sport are the responsibility of the schools and have a distinct definition. Gilliver (1999) makes this distinction clear and states that PE is part of the formal education curriculum while school sport is seen as an optional extra-curricular activity. School sport is often seen as the extended curriculum in that it relies on the skills, knowledge, understanding and attitudes developed in PE.

resourced, with unqualified PE teachers. PE programmes in advantaged schools offered content with an extensive and balanced variety of activities, while in disadvantaged schools they were restricted to very few movement activities. PE as a school subject was neglected, misunderstood, and seen as being of little importance. It was regarded as inferior when compared to other subjects in the school curriculum.

Van Deventer (1998) in his study found similar trends, and concluded that PE and organised school sports are mainly offered by previously advantaged schools and to a lesser extent by previously disadvantaged schools. According to the Department of Sport and Recreation (1998, p. 18), 90% of the 27 000 schools have inadequate or no sport facilities, and only one in every 10 South African learners takes part in some form of sporting activity. It is precisely this disparity that will be interrogated to understand how excellence is still produced at schools and how learners have overcome these obstacles and managed to be the best they can be in their chosen sport.

Prior to 1994 PE was a compulsory, non-examination subject in the school curriculum. The PE syllabus comprised set content that included dance, gymnastics, game and water activities, recreational activities, theory and evaluation. Curriculum change in post-apartheid South Africa began immediately after the 1994 election, when the National Education and Training Forum¹⁹ started a process of syllabus revision as well as subject rationalisation. The main purpose of this process was to create the foundations for a single national core syllabus. Thus the 1994 democratic elections were the turning point for education and curriculum development in South Africa, with the introduction of Curriculum 2005²⁰ in all schools. The advent of democracy in South Africa was

¹⁹ The National Education and Training Forum drafted the "White paper on Education and Training" which describes the first steps in policy formation by the Ministry of Education in the Government of National Unity (Department of Education (DoE), 2002b).

²⁰ In 1995 the South African government began the process of developing a new curriculum for the school system. There were two imperatives for this. First, the scale of change in the world, the growth and development of knowledge and technology and the demands of the 21st Century required learners to be exposed to different and higher level skills and knowledge than those required by the existing South African curricula. Second, South Africa had changed. The curricula for schools therefore required revision to reflect new values and principles, especially those of the Constitution of South Africa. The first version of the new curriculum for the General Education Band, known as Curriculum 2005, was introduced into the Foundation Phase in 1997. While there was much to commend the curriculum, the concerns of teachers led to a review of the Curriculum in 1999. The review of Curriculum 2005 provides the basis for the development of the National Curriculum Statement for General Education and Training (Grades R-9) and the National Curriculum Statement for Grades 10-12 (Department of Education (DoE), 2008).

accompanied by high expectations of undoing the injustices of the past. While this has materialised for some sectors, expectations for transformation in sports and the provisioning of PE at schools continues to be unsatisfactory.

Leading proponents of curriculum in South Africa, Walter (1994), Amusa (1999) and Van Deventer (2004), state that the low institutional priority of PE can be attributed to three problem areas. These are:

- The unavailability of qualified PE teachers, which is a major problem, especially in former black schools;
- The fact that in the past, facilities were allocated along racial lines, with the result that in former black schools, PE was taught irregularly or not at all due to a lack of the most basic educational facilities; and
- The non-examination status of PE made it much less of a priority when it came to provision of qualified teachers, materials and resources, and learners never took the subject seriously.

However, according to Van Deventer (2004), under the new dispensation of 1994 only sport is recognised as an important component for the overall development and upliftment of previously disadvantaged communities. Since 1995 there have been deliberations to ensure that PE and school sport had a place in South Africa's education system. With the implementation of the National Curriculum Statement²¹, which was adopted by the Government to normalise and transform teaching and learning in South Africa, PE as a school subject *disappeared* from the national curriculum. Once a subject on its own, PE together with five other topics, namely; Development of the self in society, Social and environmental responsibility, Democracy and human rights, Careers

²¹ The introduction of the National Curriculum Statement (NCS) in schools marked the end of a long process of restructuring the education system in South Africa. During the apartheid era, South Africa had 19 different education departments. The education system prepared children differently for the positions they were expected to occupy in the social, economic and political life. Before 1994, the education system sought to discriminate and differentiate between people. Since 1994, it has tried to bring people together, to provide quality education for all in a coherent, integrated education system. Over the past 10 years, we have built a new framework for education, with a curriculum designed to prepare all learners for the 21st century, in a democratic, just and caring society, based on the values of our Constitution (Department of Education (DoE), 2002a).

and career choices and Study skills became part of the subject Life Orientation²² in the FET phase of schooling.

According to Hardman and Marshall (2000), PE specialists were no longer appointed at schools. This meant that generalist teachers, who did not have the knowledge and understanding of PE, were required to teach Life Orientation. The Centre for Education Policy Development Evaluation and Management and the Education Policy Unit Natal (1999) indicated that although Life Orientation is a compulsory learning area, no implementation and monitoring strategies were in place to ensure delivery due to the low priority attached to PE. Since the lack of qualified teachers and facilities was not addressed, it has become difficult to teach PE in historically disadvantaged schools. Further, Rajput and Van Deventer (2010) state that delivery of PE and sport in schools has not benefited the learners in its new format in the curriculum, and the concern is whether school sport and PE will be made accessible to the masses of the country.

However, according to Jones (2011/12/30), the Department of Basic Education has plans to implement extramural sport at all schools by 2013. A Draft School Sport Policy, which will become effective from the date that it is signed by the Minister of Basic Education, will “regulate the delivery of school sport for all learners, irrespective of ability, across all schools in an age appropriate and/or grade appropriate way, based on the principle of equity and access” (Department of Basic Education (DBE), 2011b, p. 5). Such is the status of PE and sport at school at the present time - and it is against this backdrop that this study explored sporting excellence of learners.

From a global perspective, the World Summit on PE held in Berlin in 1999 voiced its concern that PE as a school subject was declining in stature. According to the President

²² “Life Orientation is the study of the self in relation to others and to society. It addresses skills, knowledge, and values about the self, the environment, responsible citizenship, a healthy and productive life, social engagement, recreation and physical activity, careers and career choices. These include opportunities to engage in the development and practice of a variety of life skills to solve problems, to make informed decisions and choices and to take appropriate actions to live meaningfully and successfully in a rapidly changing society. It therefore not only focuses on knowledge but also emphasises the importance of the application of skills and values in real-life situations, participation in physical activity, community organisations and initiatives”. The subject contains the following six topics: development of the self in society, social and environmental responsibility, democracy and human rights, careers and career choices, study skills and physical education which makes up 50% of the curriculum (Department of Basic Education (DBE), 2011a, p. 9)

of the International Council of Sport Science and Physical Education,²³ President Gudrun Doll-Tepper (2001), science has repeatedly proved the importance of PE for organised sports and nurturing talent. He reaffirmed that ICSSPE had been engaged in improving PE throughout the world to support the fight against non-communicable diseases and to involve more people in sport

This view of the ICSSPE is endorsed by Hardman and Marshall (2000), who believe that PE worldwide is being marginalised as well as undervalued by authorities. They maintain that an effective PE curriculum is influenced negatively by decreasing curriculum time allocation, budgetary controls with insufficient financial, material and personnel resources and low subject status and appreciation. According to Doll-Tepper (2001), in order to promote the value and importance of PE two critical focal points needs addressing: that PE is a right as well as a fundamental component of development and education for all children, and that strategies for action are essential to ensure that quality PE is supported and implemented worldwide. It is further indicated by Hardman and Marshall (2000) that in 37% of all countries worldwide, PE is a non-essential part of the school curriculum, which contrasts greatly with the 71% of the African countries where this is so.

From an African perspective Amusa (1999) states that Africa has a long history and tradition of sport participation when seen from a rich tradition of culture, sport, history and social institutions. Traditional games, dances, plays and the arts have been used for many purposes, such as initiation ceremonies, socialisation or recreation. There is unfortunately very little or no documentation on some of these traditional games, sports and culture and there is therefore a tendency to think that no formal PE and sport existed in African culture before the arrival of the Europeans. Ajisafe (1997) expands on this and states that through colonisation, Britain, France, Portugal, Belgium and Spain introduced Western PE and sport into the African countries. As a result of these

²³ International Council of Sport Science and Physical Education (ICSSPE) was founded in Paris, France, in 1958. The main purpose of the Council is to serve as an international "umbrella" organisation concerned with the promotion and dissemination of results and findings in the field of sport science and their practical application in cultural and educational contexts. Its aims are to contribute to the awareness of human values inherent in sport and physical activity, to improve health and physical well-being, and to develop physical activity, physical education and sport in all countries to a high level.

Western influences, PE and sport became noticeable in the African countries, especially in the curriculum of institutions of learning.

From the literature review it becomes clear that PE is not viewed seriously enough for it to have an impact on the PE curriculum at schools in South African. It stands to reason that schools with specialised PE teachers and an ethos of sports will continue to produce learners of sporting excellence, and learners at schools with no specialised PE teachers and no ethos of sports have little or no chance of excelling in sport.

In the next section, the literature review sets the scene of the changing political landscape of sport in South Africa, and this is followed by a selection of biographies of sporting heroes who excelled in sport in the different eras of South African history. This juxtaposition of political landscape and biographies will attempt to establish the trend in sporting excellence against the conditions that prevailed in a divided society over a period of time.

2.6 Apartheid politics and sporting excellence

South African politics has played a decisive role in who should and should not represent the country in sports. It also dictated the segregation of players according to the colour of their skin. Politics also impacted heavily on education, as privileged schools were given all the necessary resources and grounds to enhance sporting excellence whereas disadvantaged schools had no resources at all. The sports boycott played a crucial and influential role in turning the course of politics in the country. While it would be an over-statement to state that the sport boycott single-handedly led to the demise of apartheid and the Nationalist Government in South Africa, it is strongly agreed that it played a major part in the destabilisation of white rule (Black, 1999; Bose, 1994).

The development of sport and politics are traced in order to provide insight into the contextual setting of this study, as in South Africa, sport has historically played a crucial and critical role in the struggle for liberation. It became a major instrument in the liberation struggle to isolate the apartheid regime through the sports boycott campaign

that involved participation of many of the disadvantaged people of the country. Reference will be made to the campaigners for non-racial sport in South Africa, who played a pivotal role through sport in the reconstruction and development of our society towards a truly non-racial, non-sexist and democratic society.

Sports emphasised physical prowess, self-discipline, individual and collective effort, as well as team competitions, and was brought to South Africa in the 19th century by British immigrants. Sport was closely intertwined with British cultural values and its development reflected the emerging colonial society and sporting social structures. Organised sport developed rapidly from 1875, and the late 1880s saw establishment of national associations as the industrial and mineral transformation of South Africa began. With the intensification of racism and segregation that occurred after 1910, the contests between black and white teams declined. After 1948 the apartheid policies of the National Party infiltrated the sporting arena. The Government published its official sports policy based on racial differentiation in 1955, which saw to it that each race had its own sports amenities, emblems, controlling bodies and local and international competitions.

By the end of the 1950s the official policy of sport apartheid was entrenched in almost every sporting code, and between 1959 and 1962 several black federations of cricket, tennis, football and athletics made a transition towards non-racialism. In 1962 the most influential of these non-racial bodies was formed, South African Non-Racial Olympic Committee (SANROC), which established itself in exile in London in 1966 under the leadership of Sam Ramsamy,²⁴ and led campaigns to isolate South Africa in the sporting world. Thus began the campaign to mobilise the international isolation of apartheid sport (Ramsamy & Griffiths, 2004).

²⁴ Sam Ramsamy dedicated virtually his entire adult life not to the pursuit of personal gain or vanity but to the cause of securing equal opportunities in sport for all South Africans. In his words “it has been a just cause. Without seeming self-satisfied or smug, my conviction remains as strong today as it was 50 years ago. I honestly believed it then, and I honestly believe it now. Equal opportunity in South African sport: that has been the cause, the right of every South African to play sport and be eligible to represent their country, regardless of colour, race, religion, gender or wealth” (Ramsamy & Griffiths, 2004, p. 1).

The international boycott of South African sport, although not properly structured, increasingly began to impact on the white sports bodies. In 1964 South Africa was expelled from international football - and so began the expulsion of South Africa: in 1966 from the Olympic Games, in 1969 from the Olympic Movement, and in 1970 from international cricket. The unyielding attitude of the South African Government of the time was explicitly symbolised when it refused to grant permission to an England cricket players Basil D'Oliveira,²⁵ who was a coloured sportsman born in South Africa, to participate in a cricket test series between England and South Africa in 1966. In this very year the Department of Sport and Recreation was established to influence the practice of sport in the country.

In 1973 the South African Council of Sport (SACOS) was formed in the country and with SANROC it campaigned for the total isolation of South African sport. The slogan 'no normal sport in an abnormal society' became a catchphrase in the fight against non-racial sport. A policy of 'multinationalism'²⁶ was introduced in 1976, which led to 'sports autonomy' in 1979, whereby, in a vain attempt to depoliticise sport; the Government began to remove restrictions on the practice and organisation of sport. Individual sports bodies were now allowed to choose for themselves their own structure.

In 1975 the UN General Assembly adopted a resolution on apartheid in sport. It called on all sports organisations to espouse the Olympic principle of non-discrimination. In 1977 the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting adopted the Gleneagles Agreement, which accepted that each of their governments strongly opposed apartheid by withholding any form of support for, and by "taking every practical step to discourage contact or competition by their nationals with sporting organisations, teams or sportsmen from South Africa or from any other country where sports are organised on the basis of race, colour or ethnic origin" (Hutchinson & Jones, 1988, p. 263).

²⁵ Basil D'Oliveira was an outstanding South African all-rounder, who could never hope to play representative cricket for his country of birth because he was Coloured. He left South Africa in 1960 and played in English county cricket and he was first selected for English Test matches in 1966 (Corrigall, 1971).

²⁶ Multinationalism was a grand political scheme that divided South Africa into black 'nations', each with its own territory and responsibility for some of its own affairs, including sport. It allowed black sportspersons to compete against white South Africans in so-called 'open international events'. Multinational sport was a minimalist approach to apartheid reform (Booth, 2003).

Using sport as a means of isolating white South African players was an extremely effective psychological weapon in the anti-apartheid struggle, and terminating the rebel cricket tour was a significant landmark in showing opposition to apartheid. In November 1990 a broad coalition of opposition sporting organisations decided in Harare that the sports boycott must remain in place until apartheid was abolished. An interim body, the National Olympic Committee of South Africa²⁷, under the leadership of Sam Ramsamy, was responsible of managing the process for the readmission of South Africa to international competition. In July 1991 the International Olympic Committee recognised NOCSA as the only controlling body for Olympic Sport and readmitted South Africa to the Olympic Games.

The isolation of cricket ended in October 1991 when the national team visited India and played at the World Cup in Australia in March 1992. South African sports excelled in international competition, and the national team reached the semi-finals of the Cricket World Cup in 1992, was victorious in the Rugby World Cup in 1995 and 2007, and in the Soccer Africa Cup of Nations in 1996, and at the 1996 Atlanta Olympics where Josiah Thugwane won the Gold Medal in the men's marathon and Penny Heyns won Gold in the 100m and 200m breaststroke.

However, these successes achieved in sport have not concealed the many challenges facing sportspersons in the post-apartheid era. The allocation and lack of resources the vastly diverse sporting facilities and virtual absence of black players in many national teams are still some of the major issues confronting sports in South Africa today. The political struggle post-apartheid has been about the creation of equal opportunities in South African sport. Its message has been for the right of every South African to play sport and be eligible to represent their country, regardless of colour, race, religion, gender or wealth. Although this is the ideology of sport,²⁸ there are still many challenges and inequalities facing sport in South Africa today.

²⁷ The South African Sports Confederation and Olympic Committee (SASCOC) is the controlling body for all high performance sport and was formed as a Section 21 Company by representatives of all the sports bodies at a general meeting held on 27 November 2004. It now assumes the function of the National Olympic Committee of South Africa (NOCSA).

²⁸ See (Department of Sport and Recreation (DSR), 2005) and (Department of Sport and Recreation (DSR), 1998).

In order for South Africa to move forward in the post-Apartheid era, a new policy was needed to unify their sports structure. A quota system was introduced to South African sport as a way of combating racial inequality, whereby sporting teams were required to include a minimum number of black or white people in their team. Furthermore, sporting bodies were required to provide racial demographic data of their sport in order to receive national funding. These quotas were not always strictly followed and it brought about a number of contentious issues in sport, including whether it is fair to base selections on race and whether quotas undermine the basic fundamentals of sport.

Burnett (2002) states that these inequalities of South African sporting practices are contextualised when one takes into consideration the lack of resources, class inequalities, ethnocentric backgrounds and political controversies. Many learners still have to negotiate these challenges and inequalities in their pursuit of excellence. Further, in search of a national identity, participation in elite sports becomes a double-edged sword in challenging and preserving socio-cultural realities and creating new inequalities.

The impact of politics on sport in a divided society created interesting scenarios which challenge the sportsperson in attaining his or her desired goals. Setting the political landscape of sport then and now, provides a contextual grounding in which the biographies of feted sportspersons are now related. The biographies will provide insight regarding the life and identities of the sportspersons as they journey towards sporting achievement in the different eras in which they played sports. The contributing factors that have helped shape these sportspersons will be explored, with a focus on the significant persons, opportunities and conditions that made it possible for them to negotiate their unique social context in order to make the best of their situation and excel against all odds. The dynamic nature of a transforming society will help us to understand the complex issues of societies and how individuals need to engage their spaces to create the opportunities to produce excellence.

2.7 Biographies of South African sporting heroes

Biographies are written accounts of individual lives, a form of literature dealing with the facts of events of individual experiences (Marckwardt, et al., 1992). These accounts of a person's life are written, composed or produced by another. Biographies tell the story of an individual and in the process uncover their individual experiences, which enables researchers to explore and analyse. According to Goodson (1983), life histories or biographies have the potential to contribute to the problem of understanding the links between personal troubles and public issues, a task that is at the heart of sociological enterprise.

South Africa's past has resulted in segregation, diversities and compartmentalisation. These issues ran through every fibre of South African society. South African literature on selected biographies of sporting personalities will show how sporting excellence was achieved against the differing backgrounds of the sporting heroes, thus helping to understand how personal history and context are linked to sporting excellence. The biographies of three South African sporting heroes from 1950 to 2000 have been selected because their stories bring out the impact of context, race and opportunities in the achievement of sporting excellence. Biographies written on South African sporting heroes Papwa Sewgolum, Herschelle Gibbs and Jonty Rhodes provide the background on the diverse and adverse conditions in which these South African sportspersons played sport and help to capture their unique success stories.

2.7.1 Papwa Sewgolum

Papwa Sewgolum's biography is set during the apartheid era, in the 1950s and 1960s. Nicholson (2005, p. xi) recounts how South Africa's unsung golfing hero proved "that poverty, political and social oppression, discrimination and racial prejudice need not thwart a person who has sufficient drive to succeed in the world of sport". Papwa Sewsunker Sewgolum, who was the fourth of six children, lived in tin shanties and shacks less than a kilometre from Beachwood Golf Club where he had the opportunity to witness golf for the first time. Opportunity presented itself at his doorstep, in that the

resources required to excel in golf were made available to him and he made use of this opportunity.

Equipped with a unique grip that set Papwa Sewgolum apart from others, he won the Dutch Open in 1959, 1960 and 1964. He also won the Natal Open twice and on one occasion he dramatically beat Gary Player. Although politics and the injustices during the apartheid era of South African history were not a preoccupation with Papwa, these were the very factors that led to his downfall. Papwa's passion was his love for golf, and according to Nicholson (2005, p. 18) "being illiterate and with no access to information, political developments meant little" and "his preoccupations were with the golf bags he carried".

Wulff (Papwa's benefactor, who sponsored his international tournaments) felt that "Papwa was really cheated out of a livelihood by politics. He could have been a world champion if it wasn't for apartheid." In Gary Player's²⁹ opinion, Papwa was one of the greatest golfers in the world within 100 metres of the hole at chipping, putting and bunker shots (Nicholson, 2005). This demonstrates that Papwa, although having all the opportunities and skills necessary to become a world champion, was in the end deprived of his achievement because of the laws of the country in which he lived. He was banned from playing in tournaments with whites. Forcibly moved from his home under the Group Areas Act³⁰ and unable to sustain his career, he died a penniless alcoholic (Nicholson, 2005).

The biography of Papwa Sewgolum brings sharply into focus the chance opportunity he was afforded which he made use of by just being a caddie boy at an elite golf course close to his home, which was described as shanties and shacks. He was also fortunate to have a benefactor who sponsored him for the overseas tournaments which saw him become Dutch Open Champion three times. The role of a significant other in Papwa's

²⁹ Gary Jim Player, born November 1, 1935 is a South African professional golfer generally regarded as one of the greatest players in the game's history. Player is one of the most successful golfers in the history of the sport, ranking first in total professional wins, with at least a hundred and sixty-six, and tied fourth in major championship victories with nine. (Player, 2008)

³⁰ Until 1991, the Group Areas Act ensured that most of the land in South Africa belonged to the whites. This apartheid law took away the rights of Africans, coloureds, and Indians to own or rent their own land.

life thus was an enormous factor in ensuring the opportunities to participate internationally. Although opportunities were presented, it was not enough to allow him to reach his optimum goal of becoming world champion. It was ultimately the laws of the land that prevented him from any further glory, and he became the unsung hero of non-white sport and a wasted one at that. In Papwa's scenario the Group Areas Act forcibly moved him from his home, preventing him from having access to the golf course on which he played.

Thus poverty, political and social oppression, discrimination and social prejudice as well as the Group Areas Act, weighed heavily on Papwa's progress but he seized the opportunities, not letting political injustices become a preoccupation and his passion for golf allowed him to achieve world class ranking in golf.

Jonty Rhodes

In contrast to the above story, the biography of Jonty Rhodes,³¹ a white sportsman playing cricket in the apartheid era, was selected to bring into focus the distinct separateness in all spheres of the sportsman's lives. Jonty Rhodes was one of South Africa's greatest cricket fielders during the late 1980s and early 1990s. According to Griffiths (1998), he was the eager, positive and brave face of South African cricket through the 1990s. Being an epileptic child, Jonty did not let this deter him on his road to fame. In fact, it helped him to be focused and even more determined to excel. For the final analysis, Griffiths (1998, p. 173) states that Jonty's career cannot be measured by catches, runs and run-outs alone but "it must be measured in smiles, in sportsmanship and in a sheer zest for being decent, positive and honest".

Jonty's childhood afforded him the best opportunities to play sport. When building their own house in Pietermaritzburg, KZN, his father took care to construct a long corridor which stretched from one end to the other. This 20 metre corridor would become the multi-purpose cradle of the boy's sporting career. It served variously as a soccer field, a

³¹ Jonty Rhodes born in 1969 has been hailed as the finest fielders in the world. Most important of all, he has proved you don't have to be nasty to win. In a ruthless and rand-drenched age when professional sport has drifted far from its original ideals of decency, fair play and even temper, the consensus has emerged that "nice guys come last", that the only way to succeed is to be selfish, single-minded, to be tough and ruthless. Jonty Rhodes has emphatically proved otherwise. His story provides an example to all and offers hope that sport can continue to reflect the very best of human nature, rather than the worst (Griffiths, 1998).

tennis court, a hockey pitch, a long jump and triple jump pit and, most frequently of all, as an almost regulation size cricket net which offered pace and turn. “We played sport all the time, every sport, every day,” Rhodes recalls. “I can’t remember doing much else, and it was always team sports. My father was adamant that team sport represented a higher code than individual sport, and we were brought up along those lines” (Griffiths, 1998, pp. 2-3). By the age of 14 Jonty was heading for Maritzburg College, a famous school in KZN with a fine reputation for sport.

Although Jonty had lived the first years of his life in a country bitterly divided by one of the most oppressive regimes of the 20th century, he understood little of politics or apartheid. Pietermaritzburg was sometimes known as ‘sleepy hollow’, and he had been utterly sheltered and reared in a sealed white cocoon. Achieving in sport was an easy road for Jonty as the laws of the country sheltered him from politics and he was given the best opportunities at home and school. This scenario demonstrates the ease with which white sportspersons during apartheid achieved fame in sports.

Playing sport as a white boy during the apartheid era in South Africa provided Jonty with every opportunity to succeed at sport. He attended the most prestigious school in KwaZulu-Natal and he was introduced to sports from childhood where his home was the cradle for sport. He was utterly shielded from politics and apartheid and his only obstacle which he admirably overcame was his epilepsy.

2.7.2 Herschelle Gibbs

Post-apartheid, the new laws of the country made it possible for talented players of colour who were lucky enough to be spotted to excel in sport. One of South Africa’s legendary sportspersons post-apartheid is Herschelle Gibbs, South Africa’s opening batsman during the late 1990s and early 2000s. Herschelle’s biography begins with the impact of apartheid on this family. The Gibbs family experienced the harshness of apartheid when forcibly moved due to the Group Areas Act. However, Herschelle is remarkably sanguine about apartheid and says race has never been a big issue for him. It was different in his parents’ days. His father, Herman Gibbs who was a promising

athlete, had his athletic career³² thwarted by apartheid, and he was prevented from achieving. These factors drove Herschelle's father into ensuring that his children grew up in a good area, and sent Herschelle to Bishops, a private school in Cape Town.

Bryden (2003) in his book *Herschelle: A Biography*, relates the extraordinary steps that Herman Gibbs took to ensure that his son had a better start in life than him. In Herschelle's case his father played a huge role as the significant other in ensuring that his son soundly set up for achieving success. The emphasis placed on finding the best areas and schools endorses the impact of social spaces in creating opportunities for talented players of colour in a divided society.

Although apartheid affected the Gibbs family in that they experienced the harshness of the Group Areas Act and Herschelle's father was not able to realise his sporting dreams, post-apartheid brought renewed hope for talented non-white sportspersons. Herschelle was one on them and his father provided him with every opportunity to excel at sport by ensuring that he attended one of the most prestigious schools where his sporting talents were noticed and perfected.

Selecting the biographies of these three legends provides an understanding of how differing contexts and backgrounds impacted on the lives of sportspersons in South Africa at various times, thereby enabling or preventing them from succeeding in sport. The changes in South African society, brought their own uniqueness as to how all sportspersons, despite their race, could negotiate their social spaces from a racially divided country to a racially unified one, albeit if only in law. The next section interrogates transformation from apartheid to democracy, and how it unfolded and altered the course of sport in South African society.

³² Apartheid prevented whites and non-whites from competing on the same sports fields. Herman Gibbs' athletics career, while he was a student teacher at Hewat College of Education, was under the auspices of the South African Council on Sport (SACOS), a 'non-racial' organisation vehemently opposed to any form of collaboration with apartheid structures. When a 'multi-national' meeting was announced for the Green Point Stadium in 1972, to be run on a new synthetic track, he was keen to participate but he was asked by SACOS, "How can you even think of this?" In that year, he had clocked 10,6 on the cinder surface of the Green Point Track, across the road from the stadium. In a SACOS meeting on the 'tartan' track at the stadium he was given an official time of 10,6 again, but he is convinced he made better use of the faster surface. "Two of the three stopwatches had me at 10,2 but the third said 10,6. Normally, if two times out of the three are the same they took those two times but the referee didn't believe it so they gave me 10,6" The faster time was the qualifying standard for the 1972 Olympic Games in Munich. Even though South Africa was excluded from the Games because of apartheid, the achievement would have given him great satisfaction (Bryden, 2003, p. 10).

2.8 Transformation and sporting excellence

Sport played a vital role in changing the landscape of South African history. From being used as a tool to promote racial segregation, as ingrained in the Government's official sports policy in the late 1940s to being used as an enormously effective psychological weapon in the anti-apartheid struggle in the 1960s and finally as a nation-building tool from 1994, sport in South Africa has truly brought about transformation. This section will note the transformation of sport globally as well as its role in transforming South African society.

One of the most interesting attempts to comprehend the spread of sports internationally is made by Markovits and Hellerman (2001), who assert that there is a need to understand and appreciate a country's history and its sports history in order to grasp how its sports space is configured. This argues for various fields responsible for transformation, such as race and ethnicity, culture, gender and social class, as these may be relevant in this study. The Policy Co-ordination and Advisory Services (2006) of The Presidency describes South Africa as a land of intense social diversity, defined primarily around race, nationality and language, class and religion. What will the role of these various fields be in the context of sporting excellence? Will they co-exist in a variety of multiple combinations, with an overarching common identity emerging in the course of social integration, nation formation and nation-building?

Firstly, race and ethnicity has played a dominant role in South African history. South Africa's legacy of apartheid on sport according to Chappell (2005), displayed white male supremacy with blacks, coloured, Indians and women denied equal opportunities through segregationist practices and policies in sport. Capacity to participate in sport in South Africa is intrinsically and fundamentally linked to the political history of the country. Enormous racial imbalances existed in South African sports that were not directly related to sporting legislation but to Government policy, legislative acts and economic conditions. These apartheid policies were deep-rooted and entrenched for many years; their eradication did not imply replacement of one system with another. Morris and Hindson (1992) summarise the situation as where "old elements, ideologies

and strategies remain, and social forces committed to the previous order still operate, consciously and unconsciously alongside and clashing with the new elements". At present transformation is a site of contestation between whites and blacks around the struggle to shape a new hegemony. Whites have been forced into change because of the pressures exerted by black players, administrators and the Government.

In understanding transformation, one needs to have a deep insight into the past. For example, In the book *Blacks in Whites: A Century of Cricket Struggles in KwaZulu-Natal* by Desai, Padayachee, Reddy and Vahed (2002), the code of cricket and its journey in the transformation of sports in South Africa is captured. According to Desai et al. (2002, p. xiv), this book demonstrates that far from being insignificant, "the cricketers who played on the wrong side of the line in the bad old days were the ones sowing the seeds for the future, and that it is their energies and imaginations which will, in fact, largely influence and shape the way forward". Therefore, to understand where cricket is going there is a need to understand South African's past, which is rich with stories of courage, initiative, bravery and endeavour that have not become recorded history because these are those sportspersons who were excluded from power.

In charting developments in cricket from 1990-2000, Vahed (2001) explores issues which relate to social transformation and reparation in post-apartheid South Africa, focusing on who is benefiting from change. Change becomes questionable, as it could be driven or resisted by whites or cause tension among blacks regarding transformation. It is also noted that in 1997 the United Cricket Board (UCB) decided to place talented black players³³ in traditional white schools with an ethos and culture of cricket and a track record of developing high-quality cricketers. This was done because black youngsters had been disadvantaged by poverty and inadequate facilities and their parents were unable to attend matches or afford equipment. This also highlights the fact that these black youngster were not competing on equal terms with affluent white children.

³³ Black player like Paul Adams (Plumstead High), Herschelle Gibbs (Diocesan College), Makhaya Ntini (Dale College) and Victor Mpitsang (Greys High), who have represented South Africa over the past few years, are products of formerly White schools. Eight of the 14 members of the South African under 15 team that played in the world Cup in England in August 2000, including the captain Mandilakha Dipha, were Black. This illustrates the progress of Black Players as well as the elite character of transformation since all eight attended former White schools, where they were socialized into the ethos and philosophy that underpins the private education system (Vahed, 2001).

Burnett and Hollander (1999) state that the dawn of the new democratic South Africa brought 30 million South Africans into the emerging social system, and sport was widely acclaimed as an instrument of social re-engineering and a national priority. Providing 'sport for all' in the transition phase of South Africa was inevitably a time of great upheaval for institutions, organisations and people. Goslin (2002) states that change brings hope, but it also brings tension, fears and challenging new socio-economic conditions and opportunities. Goslin (2002) suggests that the five challenges facing provision of 'sport for all' are the democratisation of sport for all, access and equity, the juxtaposition of Africanisation and globalisation, empowerment and development and integrated and sustainable harnessing of resources.

Secondly, culture and its role in promoting sport are best shown by how soccer is viewed in Brazil. The growth of soccer in Brazil is related to the history of the people, where those from different parts of the world have contributed in building a unique Brazilian culture. Muller (2004) states that to understand Brazilian soccer, one has to understand Brazil and its people. The combination and mixture of race and culture have transformed soccer into a social phenomenon. The Brazilian soccer style is reflected in the culture of its people, who dance the samba and use creativity and swing to capture various rhythms and choreographies. Soccer is transformed into an art form, where the soccer players become soccer artists. Soccer in Brazil is not just a sport - it is an important social and cultural expression.

Davis, Roscoe, Roscoe and Bull (2005) state that a great deal depends on the status of sport in a society, and that where there is recognition of the cultural importance of sport at national, political and commercial level then the ideological and financial support will be greater. The status of the performer is also important. In a country where professionalism exists with high financial rewards and where the professionals are drawn from the middle class, there is high status. Where there is a strong amateur tradition involving the middle classes the same may apply, but in financial terms the performers may be left to their own resources and prestige may exist only at a personal level. However, where amateurism is strongly reinforced by State aid and political significance, the status of the performer will be high.

Soccer was first introduced in South Africa by British settlers in the late 19th century. Despite their oppression, black South Africans embraced football as their own and it became evident that they had a natural flair for the game. Soccer exploded the myth that white people held the monopoly on sport in the country. It was one of the activities that not even apartheid legislation could deny the people (Mazwai, 2003).

The late 1930s and 1940s saw an increase in the number of Africans migrating to cities to seek employment. For these workers soccer became an enjoyable and gratifying part of their daily lives providing greater social visibility, status and prestige than afforded in the segregated South African society. The game could reinforce and omit divisions based on race, ethnicity, class, religion, age and gender, and as a result served as a mobilising force for neighbourhood, township³⁴ and political organisations. Soccer humanised the lives of South African and brought joy and happiness to those with little to cheer about. In the new South Africa, with over 2 million registered players, soccer is a powerful economic, cultural and political force (Alegi, 2004).

Thirdly, research on gender and sport shows sport to be a social and cultural process where social constructions of masculinity and femininity occur. Sport is traditionally associated with masculinity, and in many societies participation of women is considered inappropriate. Worldwide, women are less frequently seen taking part in sports activities than men, and are also under-represented in the decision-making hierarchies of sporting institutions (Sever, 2005).

The role and position of women in South Africa has changed radically over the past decade. Women have been disadvantaged for many years and afforded relatively limited access to actively participate in physical activity, recreation and sport. According to Hargreaves (1997), there were huge gender inequalities in the sporting structures of the country. In 1996 the Women and Sport South Africa (WASSA) was constituted, and became the driving force for addressing gender equity. The purpose of WASSA was to determine the development of women in sport and recreation so as to empower them for

³⁴ In South Africa, the term township and location usually refers to the (often underdeveloped) urban living areas that, from the late 19th century until the end of apartheid, were reserved for non-whites (principally black Africans and Coloureds, but also working-class Indians). Townships were usually built on the periphery of towns and cities (Pettman, 1913, p. 298).

optimum active participation and role-playing. WASSA was dissolved in 2001, and in 2003 South African Women, Sport and Recreation was established.

A patriarchal society, poverty and lack of access to appropriate facilities are some of the reasons given by a study done by Rand Afrikaans University (Sport and Recreation South Africa, 2004) for the continuing inferior position of women in sport in South Africa. Patriarchal ideology, lack of time, cultural constraints and poverty negatively impact on female participation, especially in traditionally male sports. The lack of needs-appropriate facilities, safety measures and equipment, impacts on sustained participation and service delivery, especially in the rural areas. Women were also absent in decision-making roles in sport, such as in refereeing, coaching and administrative positions (Sport and Recreation South Africa, 2003).

Finally, social class and its influence on who plays sport and which sport, has been documented in research. Studies on social class by Baltzell (1995) have shown how tennis has transformed from an aristocratic sport to one that is professional. Similar studies by Washington and Karen (2001) explain how the African-American Williams sisters, from modest social origins, have dominated the sport of tennis which catered primarily for those who were white and from the upper middle class.

Level of achievement of sportspersons is also determined by the support role played by coaches, supporters and administrators. According to Davis et al. (2005), this can be elitist in the sense that certain privileged individuals are given opportunities not available to the majority. If the reward is sufficient, societies may accept this social inequality. If everyone has the opportunity in terms of selection, where the talented are given every opportunity to attain their optimum level of achievement, this is a form of meritocracy which is widely accepted. This justifies rewards given to a few as a result of open selection. There is an alternative, personalised notion that any enthusiast who achieves his or her optimum level of performance is on an excellence continuum. Where this view is individualised, we have a Western cultural analysis; where it is collectivised, as in communist cultures, the society is presumed to reap the rewards.

Thus social ranking is also a major factor that determines the opportunity to participate in sport – adequate access to provisions for sport and sufficient self-esteem and social acceptability to enter fully into a high-level sports programme. Davis et al. (2005) suggest that in an unequal society certain groups find it difficult to play a full part in sport, especially where that society is ranked according to status. This may be the consequence of restrictions put on these groups by dominant groups, or may reflect a lack of confidence or affluence among members of the minority group. In Britain the traditional influence of social class lies at the root of most discrimination, but gender bias is also the result of values cemented in Victorian tradition.

In post-apartheid South Africa there is an emerging changing pattern with regard to social spaces and racial contact. Swilling, Humphries and Shubane (1991) describe the apartheid policy of ‘separate development’ as where black homelands were clearly demarcated from the rest of (white) South African, creating an urban geography of wealthy and affluent white inner-cities and suburbs with poor and impoverished black townships and informal settlements on the outskirts. Foster & Finchilescu (1986) state that the white minority relied on the labour power of the black majority, thus bringing black labour into close contact with the white minority in the home as well as the workplace, and these relationships were hierarchical, displaying a master and servant relationship which was segregated and conflictual.

According to Maharaj & Mapungose (1994), the late 1980s witnessed the ‘greying’ of city centres, where integration on a small scale was tolerated in the context of so-called political reforms. When segregation was officially disbanded in the 1990s, it started the disintegration of the juridical edifice of apartheid. In order to undo centuries of segregation, the new democratic Government began the process of outlawing racial segregation and unfair discrimination, and passed legislation to ensure that change enabled swift participation of black people in public as well as economic life. According to Statistics South Africa (2010), blacks constitute 79.4% of the population and whites 9.2%. Political change has resulted in the transfer of political power from the hands of the minority to the majority. Durrheim and Dixon (2010) surmise that the power to implement change in South Africa now rests with those most likely to benefit from it.

During the final years of apartheid the distributional regime shifted once again with intra-racial inequality becoming more pronounced. In the post-apartheid years overall levels of inequality remained high, and Seekings and Nattrass (2006, p. 377) argue that, “race had given way to class”. This saw the emergence of the black middle class, who have moved from townships to suburbs and city centres and integrated significantly. According to Christopher (2001) there have been other urban pockets that have substantially diversified. However, a marginalised and increasingly destitute ‘racial underclass’ (Goldberg, 2001) remains ‘locked into’ (Goldberg, 1998) spaces of poverty, where many are still excluded from the fruits of desegregation (Saff, 1994). Similar patterns of integration and racial isolation are appearing in the schooling system. The historically better resourced white, Indian and coloured schools are becoming increasingly integrated, but poor black learners continue to attend under resourced and racially homogenous schools (Soudien, 2004).

Durrheim and Dixon (2010) suggest that the mixed pattern of racial interaction is matched by ambivalent attitudes toward social contact and change. Black people most strongly favour policies directed at transformation and integration; whites, on the other hand, are most opposed to policies such as land redistribution, affirmative action and racial quotas in sports teams, and Durrheim (2003) believes that this policy opposition is strongly related to racial prejudice and to perceptions of a threat. In a further study, Durrheim and Dixon (2005, p. 169) found that “black and white perceptions of desegregation were rooted in a sense of threat among whites. The form that desegregation has taken, with blacks entering previously exclusive white spaces, is experienced as loss by whites but as gain by blacks”.

Durrheim and Dixon (2004) have established that in South Africa there is socio-economic exclusion of a large percentage of the black population, who remain trapped by poverty, live in undesirable living spaces and have inferior-quality schools. There is an uncertainty regarding racial attitudes because on the one hand support is shown for the principles of equality and integration, but on the other there is opposition to the policies designed to implement and execute these.

Durrheim and Dixon (2010) bring specific facets of the South African situation into poignant relief, finding that segregation remains a *de facto* reality in post-apartheid South Africa, with the country remaining a non-contact society for a substantial percentage of the population. The quantity of contact among black people was associated with education status and income, indicating that the low-income black people are those having no contact with whites. The unequal nature of contact is still evident, since although blacks have contact with whites, it is typically with high-status whites; in contrast, whites indicated having interactions with black people of similar status to themselves.

The preceding crucial aspects pertaining to sporting excellence forms integral components of this study, signifying the uniqueness of South African sport. The conceptual framing underpinning the study will now be discussed in light of its use for the psychological, sociological and contextual analysis of data.

2.9 Conceptual framing

In explaining sporting excellence I argue for two frameworks. The first framework is Figure 1: p 44 that will be used as an analytical framework in understanding sporting excellence. The other analytical framework is Figure 2: p 49, which notes that development reflects the influence and impact of several environmental systems. Using these analytical frameworks provides a broader context for analysing the data on sporting excellence, as it provides a holistic base for analysis, taking into consideration not only psychological aspects but also important sociological and contextual aspects of this research.

Orlick's Wheel of Excellence provides the mental and psychological basis for achieving excellence; to a large extent research suggests the need for these elements in achieving excellence. One of the main reasons for choosing these model is that it captures many of the components of excellence which are also elaborated in studies by Kreiner-Phillips and Orlick (1992), Amirault and Orlick (1998), Mori (1999), Perry (2000), Brown et al. (2001) and Burnett (2005).

Using Orlick's Wheel of Excellence will help to foreground excellence as portrayed by these leading proponents of research on excellence. The focus of these researchers is on the individual, attributing the achievement of excellence to personal aspects such as mental and psychological readiness. However, this study aims to show a much broader perspective of the achievement of excellence, and takes into consideration the learner from a social aspect where those achieving excellence can be explained in terms of socialisation, school curriculum, apartheid politics and transformation. As stated by Washington and Karen (2001), sport is a relatively neglected and under-theorised area of sociological research despite its economic and cultural centrality.

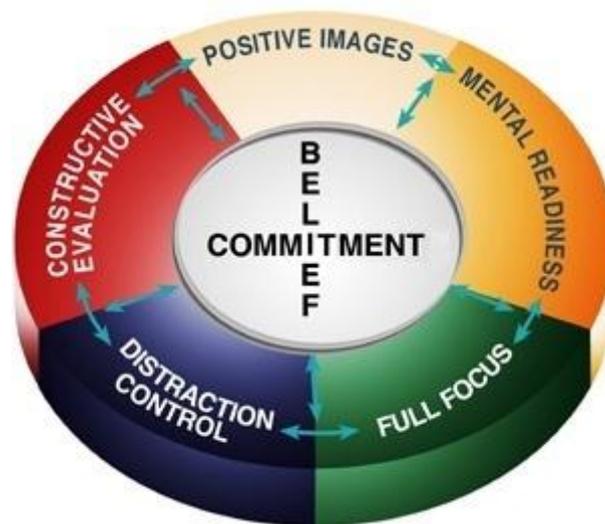


Figure 1: Wheel of Excellence (Orlick, 2005, p. 1)

Human excellence and brilliance in virtually all domains are guided by mental factors. The experiences of outstanding and exceptional performers, according to Orlick (2008, p. 11) centres around seven critical elements of excellence, which are “commitment, belief, full focus, positive images, mental readiness, distraction control and constructive evaluation”. These seven elements combine to form the Wheel of Excellence, and are the essential elements required to be the best in a chosen pursuit.

The first two elements are commitment and belief, which together form the core or heart of human excellence. These are central to the Wheel of Excellence and incorporate the overall perspective or orientation towards excellence, which includes one's desire and

will to be the best, one's views about oneself, one's ability and capacity, passion and aspiration to be the best. Commitment towards the pursuit, the drive to work hard, perseverance in the face of challenges and obstacles, and the degree to which one believes in oneself are critical components of excellence. The five remaining elements of excellence, presented as spokes on the Wheel of Excellence, are mental skills that channel commitment and belief into a series of positive actions that make the performance wheel run smoothly and efficiently.

According to Orlick (1996), commitment is the first essential ingredient guiding the pursuit of excellence. To excel at anything, one must have or develop an extremely high level of dedication, self-discipline, passion, joy or love for what one is doing. One must truly commit oneself to be the best and to unceasingly strive to make personal progresses and meaningful contributions. The second essential component in the pursuit of excellence is belief. Excellence is:

“guided by belief in one's potential, one's goal, the meaningfulness of one's goal, and trust in one's capacity to reach that goal. To excel, one must believe that one is investing in something worthwhile and that one has a good chance of making it happen. Belief in oneself, one's teammates, and one's mission will enhance commitment. Belief in oneself and confidence in one's capacity, allows one to extend one's limits, create one's own opportunities and push through performance barriers”. (Orlick, 2005, p. 3)

Focusing is the third essential ingredient and the single most important mental skill associated with performance excellence, and is described by Orlick (2005, p. 5) as the:

“ability to concentrate totally on what one is doing, seeing, reading, hearing, learning, feeling, observing or experiencing while one is engaged in the activity or performance. Focusing fully not only allows one to connect totally with what one is experiencing, but also frees one to perform without being disturbed by distracting thoughts. One's successful execution of all mental skills on the Wheel of Excellence is dependent upon one's ability to focus appropriately. The single most important mental goal for the successful execution of all performances is to train one's mind and body to the point that one can connect

fully for the duration of one's performance. One must focus in the present, the here and now for the duration of the action-oriented part of one's performance".

Positive imagery is the fourth essential ingredient, and Orlick (2005, p. 6) states it is:

“useful for guiding one's belief, focus, and performance, and for creating good feelings about oneself and one's capacity. Through positive imagery one can pre-experience and re-experience feelings, sensations, skills or actions that are important for the successful execution of one's task. High quality images of high quality performances allows one to experience oneself following desired courses of action and helps one to feel ready to perform to one's highest potential. These multi-sensory images take one to where one wants to go and often where one has not yet been”.

Positive imagery is described as mental imagery by Pillay (2010b, p. 23) who states that by imagining specific movement in sport, imagery can improve performance by enhancing the technical execution of movement as well as the intrinsic motivation of individuals. This mental imagery is like maps or blueprints that the action brain (when we move, we activate additional brain regions) refers to when trying to reach its goals.

The fifth essential ingredient is mental readiness which according to Orlick (2005, p. 7) refers to

“a positive state one carries into learning and performance situations. It is dependent upon the other mental skills on the Wheel of Excellence. To have a realistic chance of excelling, one must become highly proficient at mentally readying oneself to learn essential mental, physical and technical skills, practice essential skills to perfection, and effectively perform those skills under competitive conditions”.

Early works by Loehr (1982, 1986) emphasised that coaches and athletes felt that almost 50% of success is as a result of the psychological factors that reflect mental toughness. Similarly, Gould et al. (1987) emphasised that coaches felt that mental toughness was imperative in achieving success, while Lefebvre (1991) emphasised the importance of mental toughness in developing champion athletes.

Another viewpoint referring to the mental aspect of an individual as mental toughness is defined by Jones, et al (2002, p.209) as “having the natural or developed psychological edge that enables one to generally cope better than the opponents with the many demands such as competition, training and lifestyle, that sport places on a performer and specifically to be more consistent and better than the opponents in remaining determined, focused, confident and in control under pressure”.

Personal excellence, as stated by Orlick (2005, p. 7), requires that one becomes:

“proficient at getting the most out of one’s daily learning and living experiences. This begins with a commitment to make the most of each learning and performance opportunity. Excellence demands that one develops an effective way to enter a high-quality, focused, performance zone on a consistent basis. One needs an effective mental plan that is capable of bringing one to a heightened state of readiness for learning and performance. Positive images, positive thoughts, and specific reminders about what one wants to do and how one best can focus to do it are normally incorporated into this mental readying process”.

Distraction control is the sixth essential ingredient, and Orlick (2005, p. 8) refers to:

“one’s ability to maintain or regain a positive, effective focus when faced with potential distractions, negative input, or setbacks. These distractions may be external, arising from one’s environment, or internal, arising from one’s own thinking or expectations. Maintaining and regaining a constructive focus is a critical part of performing to one’s capacity on a consistent basis, whether distractions occur before, during, between or after events”.

Excellence requires that one develops an effective process for personal evaluation, and that one acts upon the lessons drawn from these evaluations. Constructive evaluation is the seventh essential ingredient, and as stated by Orlick (2005, p. 9):

“includes looking for the good things and targeting areas for improvement in oneself, one’s performance, one’s environment and one’s experiences. One can draw inspiration, confidence and joy from reflecting on positive experiences and personal highlights. Important lessons are gained by evaluating one’s overall

performance, critical portions of one's performance, and the role ones mental state played in performance, e.g. mental readiness, trust, distraction control and sustained focus. Constructive evaluation of mental and physical performance skills requires two things; reflecting on what went well, and targeting areas for continued improvement. Through experience, top performers have developed constructive evaluation procedures that are highly individualized and personally effective and this provides guidance for the continued pursuit of excellence”.

In research with athletes who excelled in different pursuits, what Orlick (1996) found most striking finding was the extent to which they had similar mental skills and perspectives, even though individual differences were noted in how these mental skills were combined, utilised, and orchestrated. The seven elements of the Wheel of Excellence are evident in most exceptional athletes, who may differ in the extent to which they utilise the elements or how spontaneous or systematic they are in preparation and application of these skills.

Irrespective of their individual inclinations, athletes perform at an optimum level when all the elements of the Wheel are utilised (in other words when the Wheel is fully functional). The combination of commitment and full focus are seen as the essential daily mental links to excellence. Commitment provides the determination and drive to do the extensive work required to excel, whereas focus directs and guides the quality of learning and performance in meaningful ways. Davis et al. (2005) argue that besides a high level of commitment, resources and expertise are also necessary for excellence to be achieved. Excellence is the objective assessment of quality. Thus, in conceptualising excellence it is evident that mental skills play an important part in the achievement of excellence.

Therefore the use of Orlick's Wheel of Excellence will provide a base for interrogating the data from a psychological angle. However, the purpose of this study is to understand how learners have negotiated the enabling and constraining factors in a social setting to achieve sporting excellence. The second framework, Figure 2: p 49 will provide an avenue for interrogating the data from a sociological and contextual angle, since it draws on the environment in which sporting excellence is achieved.



Figure 2: Ecological systems theory (Bronfenbrenner, 1979)

Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory (1979) explains how the development of a person reflects the influence of five types of nested environmental systems with bi-directional influences within and between the systems. The theory was developed by Urie Bronfenbrenner, regarded as one of the world's leading scholars in the field of developmental psychology. The five environmental systems are as follows:

- *Microsystem*: This comprises individual and interpersonal features as well as those of the groups that comprise the social identity (Gregson, 2001), which includes roles a person takes in society, such as mother, father, sister or brother. These social roles are developed in a face-to-face setting in a context that includes the person's family, peers, teachers, school or neighbourhood. The individual in the microsystem is constantly shaped not only by direct interactions with these social agents. The individual is not a passive recipient of experiences, but helps to construct the settings.
- *Mesosystem*: This refers to relations between microsystems or connections between contexts. The mesosystem comprises the linkages and processes between settings; examples are the relationship between home and school or school and the workplace. The mesosystem is the organisational or institutional

factors that shape or structure the environment within which the individual and interpersonal relations occur.

- *Exosystem*: This involves links between the social settings which affect the individual, although the individual is not required to be an active participant. For example, a husband's or child's experience at home may be influenced by a mother's experiences at work.
- *Macrosystem*: This consists of the overarching pattern of the micro-, meso-, and exosystems characteristic of a given culture or subculture, and refers to belief systems, bodies of knowledge, life-styles or customs.
- *Chronosystem*: This encompasses change or consistency over time in the environment in which the person lives. It refers to changes patterning to environmental events and transitions over the life course, as well as socio-historical circumstances.

The person's own biology may be considered part of the microsystem, and as such the theory is also called the 'bio-Ecological Systems Theory'. Bronfenbrenner's (1979) major statement of this theory, *The Ecology of Human Development*, has had an extensive influence on how psychologists approach the study of human beings and their environments. The influence of environmental systems from the family to economic and political structures is regarded as part of the life course from childhood through to adulthood. Bronfenbrenner identified Soviet developmental psychologist Lev Vygotsky and German-born psychologist Kurt Lewin as important influences.

This system model of human behaviour will be foregrounded to show how learners engage in their environment, and to what extent (if any) it contributed to their quest to achieve sporting excellence. In the selected biographies of South Africa's sportspersons highlighted in this study it becomes evident that the environment and its manipulation played a vital role in enabling sporting excellence. The biography of Papwa Sewgolum, set during apartheid, not only highlights the psychological tenacity of the hero but does so against a backdrop of deprivation and poverty. Living in tin shanties and shacks located less than a kilometre from Beachwood Golf Club provided Papwa with the opportunity to witness golf and make use of the resources required to excel in golf, and

he was fortunate enough to be spotted by a benefactor. It was this environment that catapulted him to the top - and also brought him crumbling down.

The biography of Jonty Rhodes, on the other hand, demonstrates the ideal environment for sporting excellence to thrive. As a white person growing up during apartheid, he was afforded the best opportunities to play sport, his home served as a multi-purpose sports field, and he attended the most prestigious school. He was completely sheltered in a country bitterly divided by one of the most oppressive regimes of the 20th century.

Change in the laws of South Africa opened up opportunities for the disadvantaged and created the much needed social spaces for talented players of colour to excel in sport. Herschelle Gibbs' story depicts how the changes in society from an apartheid-based to a democratic one brought with it a uniqueness in which sporting excellence could be negotiated.

2.10 Conclusion

In this chapter excellence in sport is researched and the literature outlined the broad context in which sport is played in South Africa and highlighted how the notion of sporting excellence has been examined from six different viewpoints, namely; psychology, socialisation, schooling and the curriculum, apartheid politics, biographies of South African sporting heroes and transformation. It concluded by introducing the two analytical frameworks used for analysis of the data in this study. The next chapter details the methodological orientation of this study and explains in detail the data production plan.

CHAPTER THREE

Research design for Sporting Excellence

3.1 Introduction

The paradigmatic orientation of this study may best be described as an interpretive inquiry which aims to characterise how learners experience their world, their interaction with each other, as well as the settings in which these interactions occur. The interpretive paradigm has its own assumptions about methodology (techniques of data generation and analysis), epistemology (what counts as knowledge) and ontology (what is real; what entities exist). This chapter outlines the research methodology of the study. The significance of the in-depth interview as a data-generating tool used in this study is outlined, and the selection of the three cohorts of participants - the provincial coaches, the learners and the significant others - is explained.

In the interpretive paradigm the researcher takes a participatory stance. The research involves the description of persons and communities through narrative articulation and interpretation. The epistemology of the interpretive paradigm assumes that interpretive schemes which people employ must be understood and the character of the local context articulated. The ontology of the interpretive paradigm locates the subjects and objects within inter-subjective social fields which structure and constrain activity. Subjects are actively involved in the reproduction of these fields.

This study is about learners who excel in sport in a transforming society, and in order to acquire data that provided a deeper understanding of what produced excellence, a qualitative research method which provides a rich source of data was used. In comparing qualitative and quantitative research, Goetz and LeCompte (1984) state that qualitative research is characterised as constructive, generative, inductive and subjective, whereas quantitative research is described as enumerative, verificative and deductive. According to Moon, Dillon and Sprenkle (1990), qualitative research endeavours to understand the meaning of naturally occurring complex events, actions and interactions in context, from the viewpoint of the participants involved. The

principal concern is to understand the way in which individuals create, modify and interpret the world they live in.

Kirk and Miller (1986) observe that in qualitative research the emphasis is on explaining and understanding the unique and particular individual case, rather than the general and the universal. The interest is in a subjective, relativistic social world rather than an absolutist, external reality. In its emphasis on the particular and individual, this approach to understanding individual behaviour may be termed idiographic.

The aim of the qualitative research approach is to understand the subjective world of the participants. The researcher enters an interpretative circle and must be faithful to the performance or subject, and must be both apart from and be rooted to the context (Cohen, Manion, & Morrison, 2007; Crabtree & Miller, 1992). To retain and preserve the integrity of the phenomenon of sporting excellence being investigated in this study, efforts are made to recognise and understand the learner from within.

In outlining the methodology, this chapter will discuss the data production plan, give a detailed explanation of the selection of the participants and outline data analysis, validity, reliability and limitations of the study.

3.2 Data production plan

In this section the important aspects of the research process that underpin the stages of data production, namely methodological approaches employed in the study is discussed. To investigate sporting excellence of learners in a transforming society and to understand how excellence was achieved, in-depth interviews were conducted with all of the participants (provincial coaches, learners and significant others). Cohen et al. (2007, p. 349) state that “interviews enable participants, be they interviewers or interviewees to discuss their interpretations of the world in which they live, and to express how they regard situations from their own point of view. In these senses the interview is not simply concerned with generating data about life: it is part of life itself, its human embeddedness is inescapable”.

The use of the interview in research, according to Cohen et al. (2007, p. 349) “marks a move away from seeing human subjects as simply manipulable and data as somehow external to individuals, and towards regarding knowledge as generated between humans, often through conversation”. Kvale (1996, p. 14) perceive “an interview as an interchange of views between two or more people on a topic of mutual interest, sees the centrality of human interaction for knowledge production, and emphasises the social situatedness of research data”.

Interviews are inherently social encounters (Rapley, 2001, p. 303), and according to Lofland and Lofland (1995) an in-depth interview is a dialogue between a skilled interviewer and an interviewee. The goal of the interview is to elicit rich, detailed data that can be used in analysis. Interviews are authentic when conducted face to face, although telephone interviewing in certain situations can be successful. In-depth interviews are characterised by extensive probing and open-ended questions. Typically, the researcher prepares an interview guide that includes a list of issues or questions that need to be explored and suggested probes are also noted for following up on key topics. This guide for interviewing helps the interviewer pace the interview, making the process of interviewing more systematic and comprehensive.

Patton (1990) states that it is the responsibility of the interviewer to be an attentive listener who shapes the process of the interview into a familiar and comfortable form of social engagement, becoming more of a conversation since the quality of the information obtained is largely dependent on the interviewer’s skills and personality. In contrast to a good conversation, however, an in-depth interview should not anticipate a two-way form of communication and sharing. Rather, the key to being a good interviewer is when he/she focuses on listening skills and questioning ability. It is not the role of the interviewer to provide personal opinions, perceptions or feelings. Interviewers should be trained and focused individuals who are sensitive, empathetic and able to establish a non-threatening environment in which participants feel comfortable.

Frechtling and Sharp (1997) suggest that in-depth interviews are appropriate when the subject matter is complex and highly sensitive, when detailed information is sought, and

when the participants are busy, high-status individuals. In-depth interviews do the following: permit face-to-face contact with participants, yield the richest data as they are detailed, provide new insight and an opportunity to explore topics in-depth, afford the ability to experience the affective and cognitive aspects of responses, allow the interviewer to explain or help clarify questions, increase the likelihood of useful responses, and allow the interviewer to be flexible in administering to particular individuals or in specific circumstances. On the other hand, in-depth interviews can be expensive and time-consuming, requiring well-qualified and highly trained interviewers. Also the interviewee may distort information through recall error, selective perceptions and a desire to please interviewer, flexibility can result in inconsistencies across interviews, and the volume of information can be enormous making transcribing and reducing the data difficult.

The interview is “a flexible tool for data generation, enabling multi-sensory channels to be used: verbal, non-verbal, spoken and heard” (Cohen, et al., 2007, p. 349). In this study informal unstructured interviews reminiscent of non-directive counselling approaches were used. The unstructured interview is an open situation which has greater flexibility and freedom. As Kerlinger (1970) notes, although the research purposes govern the questions asked, their content, sequence and wording are entirely in the hands of the interviewer. Although the interview is unstructured, it is carefully planned. This method of data generation was valuable in eliciting data from the learners, taking into account the susceptible nature of the learners, and also provided the flexibility required in interviewing the provincial coaches and significant others.

An in-depth interview as the principal method of inquiry involves the collection of qualitative data from participants. This data generation method allows interpersonal contact with participants and creates opportunities for follow-up questions and comments. According to Frechtling and Sharp (1997) this technique begins with the assumption that the participants’ perspectives are meaningful, knowable, and able to be made explicit, and these perspectives affect the success of the project. An interview is selected when interpersonal contact is imperative and when opportunities for follow-up of interesting and fascinating comments are desired. The two types of interviews used in evaluation research are structured interviews (in which a carefully worded questionnaire

is administered) and in-depth interviews (in which the interviewer does not follow a rigid form). In structured interviews the emphasis is on attaining answers to carefully phrased questions. Interviewers are trained to deviate only minimally from the question wording to ensure uniformity of interview administration. In the in-depth interview the interviewer encourages free and open responses, and there may be a trade-off between comprehensive coverage of topics and in-depth exploration of a further (limited) set of questions.

Both methods of interview were used in this study to elicit data from the learners. Structured interviews (Appendix 11) were used to generate standardised information on biographical data and in-depth interviews (Appendix 13) to generate data on learners' interpretations of the world in which they live and their personal point of view. The interviews helped to elicit data that encouraged capturing of the learners' perceptions in their own words, a very desirable strategy in qualitative data generation. This allowed the researcher to present the meaningfulness of the experience from the learners' perspective.

Adding to these two forms of data generation, learners also presented (not compulsory) a drawing of a portrait of themselves, depicting how they saw themselves as provincial athletes, and wrote an essay describing their journey towards sporting excellence (Appendix 7). Hence for the learners four sets of data generation were conducted. The research process is summarised in Table 1: p 57, which shows the research participants and the research instruments used for data generation.

CRITICAL QUESTIONS	MODE OF ENQUIRY	SOURCE OF INFORMATION	INSTRUMENTS	FREQUENCY
Critical question 1: Who are the learners excelling in school sport?	Qualitative (Denzin & Lincoln, 1994) (Cohen, et al., 2007) (Orlick, 2008) (Kvale, 1996)	Learners	Structured interview schedule (Appendix 11) In-depth interview schedule (Appendix 13) Drawing of a portrait and an essay (Appendix 7) analysed by Dr S. Pillay	Each learner was interviewed once and the structured interview schedule was filled in during this interview
		Provincial coaches	In-depth interview schedule (Appendix 12)	Each provincial coach was interviewed once
		Significant others	In-depth interview schedule (Appendix 14)	Each significant other was interviewed once
Critical question 2: What contributes to these learners' excellence in school sport?	Qualitative (Denzin & Lincoln, 1994) (Cohen, et al., 2007) (Bronfenbrenner, 1979) (Kvale, 1996)	Learners	In-depth interview schedule (Appendix 13)	Each learner was interviewed once
		Provincial coaches	In-depth interview schedule (Appendix 12)	Each provincial coach was interviewed once
		Significant others	In-depth interview schedule (Appendix 14)	Each significant other was interviewed once
Critical question 3: Why do these learners excel in school sports in a transforming society?	Qualitative (Denzin & Lincoln, 1994) (Cohen, et al., 2007)	Derived from data collected for critical questions 1 and 2	In-depth interview schedule (Appendices 12,13,14)	The information gleaned from data for critical questions 1 and 2 will inform the answer to critical question 3

Table 1: Methodological approaches used in the study

Data from the learners are presented as narratives from the stories told by the learners. Out of these stories emerged themes, thereafter elaborated on through the data yielded by the interviews with coaches (Appendix 12) and significant others (Appendix 14).

The interviews were planned according to Kvale's (1996) seven stages: thematising, designing, interviewing, transcribing, analysing, verifying and reporting. The two broad frameworks of the study were used as a guide to thematise the interview, focusing on the psychological and sociological perspectives of the study. This helped in preparing and designing the interview schedule (structured and in-depth) in a way to adequately reflect what the research was trying to find out. The first step in constructing interview questions is to specify the variable by name. According to Tuckman (1972), variables

are what is being measured in the study; in this study they related to who the learners are and what contributed to their sporting achievements.

The interviews were initiated once the participants were informed of the nature and purpose of the interview (letters to each appear in Appendices 1, 3, 5 and 8). The researcher strove to put the participants at ease by assuring them that she would be honest and that all information given would be in confidence. All participants signed a declaration (Appendices 2, 4, 6 and 9) stating that they understood the nature of the research project and that they consent to participating in the research project and consented to participate, with the understanding that they were free to withdraw from at any time should they desire to do so.

Transcribing of the data produced in the interviews is a crucial step in ensuring authenticity of the data. According to Cohen et al. (2007), transcription inevitably loses data from the original encounter. This problem is compounded since a transcription represents translation from one set of rule systems (oral and interpersonal) to another, very remote rule system (written language). All data from the three sets of participants were transcribed (further elaborated on in section 3.4).

With qualitative data the data analysis is inevitably interpretive and more of a reflexive, reactive interaction between the researcher and the decontextualised data that are already interpretations of a social encounter. In this study patterns and themes were noted from repeated explanations and constructs from the three cohorts of participants. Data analysis is further elaborated on in section 3.4.

Kvale (1996) states that validation must take place at all seven stages of interview-based investigations. In this study the interviews were more faithfully represented in words, and as such quotations are were made use of. Kvale (1996) suggests that direct quotations should illuminate and relate to the general text, be contextualised and accompanied by a commentary and interpretations, be particularly clear, useful and the best of the data, should include an indication of how they have been edited, and be incorporated into the natural written style of the report.

When interviewing and interacting with participants, especially the learners, I became acutely aware that the lives of these young participants were being exposed, in that some were from oppressed or poor backgrounds, while my life remained protected and not implicated in the text. This kind of disclosure and exposure is very often one-sided, and Fine (1994) defines it as a form of imperialism. As a result of this one-sidedness, I endeavoured each time to disclose my background, my standpoint as a researcher and the purpose of the research, fully cognizant that who I am affected the participants' responses.

There are many viewpoints in the literature concerning the disclosure and anonymity of research participants' identities. Yin (1994), on the one hand, is of the view that using individuals' real names allows for cross-checking by the reader, unless the issues are controversial in which case anonymity becomes necessary. On the other hand Ely, Anzul, Friedman, Garner and Steinmetz (1991) argue that even when research participants agree to have their names used, researchers should guard against this because participants in their naïve willingness need to be protected. Williams (1996) is of the opinion that omitting to refer to actual research participants reduces the opportunity for public acknowledgement or praise. Other researchers, such as Carter and McCarthy (1997), prefer to use pseudonyms when interpreting participants' comments, because when doing so the researcher is changing or appropriating something of that individual, but resort to using their real names for oral or written quotes, as is the case where participants speaks for themselves. In this study all of the learners as well as the schools they attended have been allocated pseudonyms to ensure anonymity.

3.3 Selection of participants

The participants in this study comprised the provincial coaches, learners and significant others. Although the learners are central to this study, with the main focus on learners who have excelled in different codes of sport in KZN and attained their provincial colours in their selected codes of sport, the in-depth interviews with the provincial coaches and significant others generated first-hand information about the learners.

In order to ensure that the learners selected for the study fulfilled the required criteria, that is, that they were from differing and diverse backgrounds, the first cohort of participants selected was the provincial coaches from the different codes of sport played most often at schools in KZN. According to research by Morar (2000), the most popular codes of sports played at school level are soccer, cricket, rugby, hockey, athletics, swimming, volleyball and netball. These eight codes together with gymnastics were selected for study; their diversity allowed for exploration of the dynamics of these various codes, which comprise team or individual, male or female, traditional or non-traditional, ball or non-ball and contact or non-contact sports.

The map in Figure 3: p 60 provides the context from which the participants in this study were selected, and insight into the overall racial population of KZN.

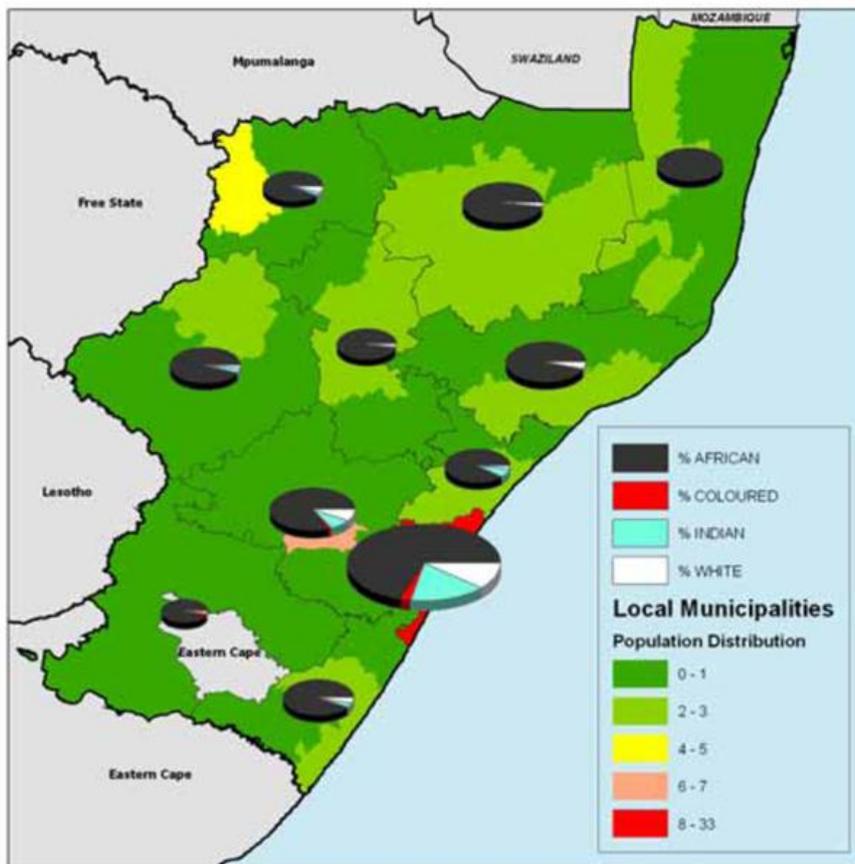


Figure 3: Demographic representation of the racial population of the 10 district councils of KZN (Brooks, 2004, p. 16)

Most of the participants were from the Ethekwini Council District, except for the swimming coach (DC22, Umgungundlovu Council District); three of the learners: Theola, a netball player (DC21, Ugu Council District), Samiya, a volleyball player (DC28, uThungulu Council District) and Tojan, an athlete (DC26, Ulundi Council District); and two of the significant others, Theola's school coach (DC21, Ugu Council District) and Trojan's mother (DC26, Ulundi Council District), (see Appendix 17).

The provincial coaches set the scene for their specific code of sport as it is organised in the province, providing first-hand information about all aspects of it. The provincial coaches identified three learners in their provincial team who excelled in their code of sport, providing the researcher with a total of 27 learners, three from each of the nine codes of sport. Table 2: p 61 provides a profile of the provincial coaches including the site where the interview took place.

SPORT	TYPE	GENDER	RACE³⁵	SITE OF INTERVIEW
Cricket	Team	Male	Indian	School
Swimming	Individual	Male	White	School
Rugby	Team	Male	White	School
Volleyball	Team	Male	Black	University
Soccer	Team	Male	Indian	School
Netball	Team	Female	Black	School
Athletics	Individual	Male	Indian	Coffee shop
Gymnastics	Individual	Female	White	Gymnasium
Hockey	Team	Female	White	Coffee shop

Table 2: Profile of provincial coaches

³⁵ Racial categories are used in this study as it is essential for the understanding of the South African society. According to Desai (2010, p. 12), race designations have no scientific validity. The categories white, coloured, Indian and African are used with an understanding that these are apartheid designations which, while not having any legislative basis that would permit apartheid-style discrimination in the post - 1994 era, have been carried over into post-apartheid South Africa in many social and policy contexts. Similarly, while there are no more racially defined "group areas", apartheid geographies continue to define much of South Africa's urban landscape.

The second and main cohort of participants, the learners, was selected using purposive sampling.³⁶ From the 27 learners identified by the provincial coaches, the final 15 were selected based on their differing and diverse backgrounds. In the education system, learners who excel in sport at schools progress from representing their school to representing their district, then their province and ultimately their country. Common to all learners in this study is that they are all products of the past decade and a half of the new schooling system, and would have experienced C2005 implemented by the Government. Learners selected for this study were in the FET phase of the school system (Grade 10-12). Table 3: p 63, show details of the 15 learners selected to take part in this study.

³⁶ In purposive sampling, researchers handpick the cases to be included in the sample on the basis of their judgment of their typicality or possession of the particular characteristic being sought. In this way, they build up a sample that is satisfactory to their specific needs. (Cohen, et al., 2007, p. 114)

NO	SPORT	TYPE OF SCHOOL ³⁷	GENDER	RACE	SOCIO-EC STATUS	SITE
1	Netball 1	Private	Female	White	Middle	School
2	Netball 2	Ex-Model C	Female	Black	Lower	School
3	Netball 3	Rural	Female	Black	Lower	School
4	Volleyball	Ex-Model C	Female	Indian	Middle	Home
5	Hockey	Ex-Model C	Female	Indian	Middle	Home
6	Soccer 1	Private	Male	White	Upper	Soccer field
7	Soccer 2	Ex-Model C	Male	Black	Middle	Soccer field
8	Soccer 3	Ex-HoD	Male	Black	Middle	Soccer field
9	Cricket 1	Private	Male	White	Upper	School
10	Cricket 2	Private	Male	White	Upper	School
11	Rugby	Ex-Model C	Male	Black	Middle	Coffee shop
12	Gymnastics	Ex-Model C	Female	Black	Lower	Home
13	Athletics 1	Private	Female	Coloured	Middle	Home
14	Athletics 2	Ex-Model C	Male	Black	Middle	School
15	Swimming	Ex-Model C	Male	Indian	Middle	Home

Table 3: Profile of learners selected in the study

Finally, the learners provided the third cohort of participants - the significant others. Based on interviews with the learners, each had to identify the most significant person (a coach, parents, mentor or team mate) who was most influential and played an important role in them achieving excellence. The differing relationships between the three cohorts of participants ensured three independent and different perspectives about the learners and about sporting excellence in a transforming society.

³⁷ The South African school and education system is very much still bound to its apartheid legacy. In the apartheid years, there was a separate government education department for whites, The House of Assembly (HoA), Indians, The House of Delegates (HoD), Coloureds, The House of Representatives (HoR) and Blacks, The Department of Education and Training (DET) schools. The four departments had different funding available, different resources at their disposal and issued different exams. To this day the ex-HoA schools or more commonly known as the ex-Model C schools still typically have the best facilities, best teachers and provided the best educational opportunities for children. The ex-HoR and ex-HoD schools, although not quite as side lined as the ex-DET schools, still have really poor infrastructure and facilities. Former DET schools are by far the worst off even today. Although the government spends almost 20% of its budget on education these days, there is a long way to go before the inequalities of the past will be fully redressed with regards to education. All schools receive government funding; however the ex-Model C schools are permitted to top up the funding with fees payable by the parents of the schools. Thus different ex-Model C schools can have different budgets, different teacher to learner ratio, and varying quality of facilities, all based on what the parents can afford. Over and above the government funded schools are the private or independent schools which receive no funding from the government and are funded entirely by fees paid by the parents.

This also ensured that thick description and triangulation were attained. According to Cohen et al. (2007, p. 141), “triangular techniques in the social sciences attempt to map out, or explain fully, the richness and complexity of human behaviour by studying it from more than one standpoint”. Triangulation is a powerful way of demonstrating concurrent validity in qualitative research.

Emerging themes from the learners’ stories, which are narrated in Chapter Four, are expanded on using data generated from learners in Chapter Five, and data generated from the provincial coaches and significant others in Chapter Six. In this way a three-way tabulation of data brings into focus the validity of triangulation used in this study. The significant others selected by the learners are shown in Table 4 below. The words in italics and bold, indicates the nine out of the fifteen significant others interviewed for the study.

SPORT	GENDER	RACE	SIGNIFICANT OTHER	SITE OF INTERVIEW
<i>Cricket 1</i>	<i>Male</i>	<i>White</i>	<i>Mentor</i>	<i>Coffee shop</i>
Cricket 2	Male	White	Private coach	
Swimming	Male	Indian	Mother	
Rugby	Male	White	School coach	
Volleyball	Female	Indian	Mother and father	
<i>Soccer 1</i>	<i>Female</i>	<i>White</i>	<i>Mother</i>	<i>Coffee shop</i>
<i>Soccer 2</i>	<i>Male</i>	<i>Black</i>	<i>Club coach</i>	<i>School</i>
<i>Soccer 3</i>	<i>Male</i>	<i>Black</i>	<i>Father</i>	<i>Office</i>
Netball 1	Female	White	Father	
<i>Netball 2</i>	<i>Female</i>	<i>Black</i>	<i>School coach</i>	<i>School</i>
<i>Netball 3</i>	<i>Female</i>	<i>Black</i>	<i>Club coach</i>	<i>School</i>
<i>Athletics 1</i>	<i>Female</i>	<i>Coloured</i>	<i>Mother</i>	<i>Home</i>
Athletics 2	Male	Black	Father	
<i>Gymnastics</i>	<i>Female</i>	<i>Black</i>	<i>Grandmother</i>	<i>Home</i>
<i>Hockey</i>	<i>Female</i>	<i>Indian</i>	<i>Mother</i>	<i>Home</i>

Table 4: Profile of significant others

3.4 Data analysis

According to Cohen, et al. (2007, p. 461), qualitative data analysis involves “organising, accounting for and explaining the data; in short, making sense of the data in terms of the participants’ definitions of the situation, noting patterns, themes, categories and regularities”. The different stages include generating natural units of meaning, classifying, categorising and ordering these, structuring narratives to describe the interview contents and interpreting the interview data.

Once the interview process was completed, each interview was transcribed from the spoken data (using a tape recorder) and written up as a transcript. In transcribing spoken data, one aims to produce as accurate a record of the speech as possible. In transcribing, the accompanying features of spoken interaction are significant in alerting the researcher to what is happening. Speech involves, among other phenomena, pauses, hesitations, and emphasis achieved by raising or lowering the voice or by lengthening certain syllables. Dialogic speech involves the interviewer and the interviewee taking turns at speaking, which may happen smoothly, with pauses between turns or overlapping. A number of events may also occur during an interaction: speakers may laugh, cough, the telephone may ring or a door may open. Anything that occurs during the speech event is potentially significant and all this was captured and recorded in the transcript.

Once the interviews were transcribed and read thoroughly, common themes and grouping across the three cohorts began to emerge. According to Henning, Van Rensburg and Smit (2004), this is done in order to get a global impression of the content and to highlight aspects of the lived experience. Next, possible groupings of the codes into categories were undertaken, to see how these themes related to each other and to the research question, and whether they cohered. I moved backwards and forwards between the raw data so as to note the emerging thematic patterns. The following tactics for generating meaning from transcribed and interviewed data were looked at: counting frequencies of occurrence (of ideas, themes, pieces of data, words), noting patterns and themes, which may stem from repeated themes, causes, explanations or constructs,

seeing plausibility - trying to make good sense of data, using informed intuition to reach a conclusion, clustering - setting items into categories, types, behaviours and classifications; and finally, making conceptual/theoretical coherence - moving from metaphors to constructs, to theories, and to explaining the phenomena.

According to Cohen et al. (2007, p. 461) “there is no one single or correct way to analyse and present qualitative data; how one does it should abide by the issue, fitness for purpose, that is, the researcher must be clear what he or she wants the data analysis to do as this will determine the kind of analysis that is undertaken”. This can include describing, discovering patterns or generating themes. The significance of deciding the purpose is that it will determine the kind of analysis performed on the data, and this will influence the way in which the analysis is written up.

In researching the learners, the focus was consistently on their diverse backgrounds and the impact this has or has not had on their sporting achievement. Further, it provided a deeper understanding of how these learners have negotiated the spaces in the transforming society to achieve their goals. After capturing the data of the learners from the in-depth interviews, portraits and essays, I presented the data by narrating their stories one at a time. Storytelling is integral to this research.

Narrative inquiry has been considered as a way of understanding, organising and communicating experiences as stories are lived and told. Within the inquiry field, stories are lived and the experiences related as stories. The stories are modified when retold and relived. McEwan and Egan (1995) state that narratives are important because stories form the intellectual and practical nourishment of oral cultures - to the extent that our modern literate culture retains oral practices. Through storytelling, individuals are able to learn to express themselves and make sense and logic of the external world. Narrative inquiry, as a way of making sense of human life and the world, has been studied through various approaches. Clandinin and Connelly (2000) refer to narrative inquiry as a research method where, because experience happens narratively, it should be studied narratively.

Storytelling as a particular form of narrative inquiry will bring with it special features of the individuals' thinking, as it is an important way of recognising, interpreting, and constructing interaction between people and society (Heo, 2004). As a method of knowing and understanding, narratives capture the richness and variety of meaning in humanity and effectively communicate who we are, what we do, how we feel, and why we ought to follow a certain course of action. A narrative involves facts, ideas, theories, and dreams from the perspectives and in the context of someone's life. Individuals think, interpret, perceive, imagine, interact and make some decisions according to narrative elements and structures. Within narrative inquiry, storytelling seeks to better understand the *why* behind human action. Story collecting as a form of narrative inquiry enables the research participants to express the data in their own words and reveal the latent *why* behind their declarations and assertions (Lyons & LaBoskey, 2002).

According to Dewey (1938), educative experience is liberating and uniting as it opens the continuous path of reconstructing and recreating the habituated meanings of the world and enduring attitudes of the self. An educative experience is built through an individual's continuous reconstruction by moving from past and present to future experience, and involves the tensional transaction between internal conditions of the individual and his social world. Each individual reconstructs the periods, phases, or levels of growth of human mentality. Storytelling as a characteristic of human experience of the world has a temporal context, a spatial context, and the context of other people. According to Bruner (1990), a story must simultaneously construct two landscapes: the outer landscape of action, and the inner one of thought and intention. The stories told in this study will endeavour to describe vividly each learner's thoughts and intentions, and succinctly indicate how they maneuver themselves within a divided landscape to excel in sport.

Narrative is a fundamental feature of meaning creation and construction, which is a negotiated activity that begins in early childhood and characterises the entire human life (Fusai, Saudelli, Marti, Decortis, & Rizzo, 2003). Human life is filled with narrative fragments, enacted in and reflected upon storied moments of time and space. Narrative thinking is a vital form of experience and a significant way of acting upon reality. Storytelling provides individuals with a means to understand narrative in a social

context, and to clarify and elucidate their own thinking. According to Packer (1991), narratives are a distinctive mode of reporting one's experiences of the world.

This thesis constitutes 15 learners' stories: patchwork quilts, with selected pieces of conversation sewn together to create narratives. These narratives are derivatives of a single interview with each learner. Verbatim responses, used in qualitative studies (Ball, 1990; Bowe, Ball, & Gold, 1992), were used extensively in narration of the learners' stories. It was important to be faithful to the exact words used by the learners in order to capture the essence of what they were saying. The learners in the study are the foundational informers, and to alleviate any form of distortion it was imperative to quote them verbatim. This also gave the sense of relating to the learner on a personal basis.

Four of the narrated stories of learners, together with their drawing and an essay written about themselves (Appendix 7) were assessed by Professor Srinivasan S. Pillay, Managing Director and Assistant Clinical Professor at the Harvard Medical School and Chief Executive Officer of NeuroBusiness Group. He is the author of the books *Life Unlocked: 7 Revolutionary Lessons to Overcome Fear, Your Brain and Business: The Neuroscience of Great Leaders*, and *The Science behind the Law of Attraction*. His professional assessment is given at the end of each of the four stories (of Yamka, Brendon, Nkosi and Jemma) in Chapter Four.

Narration of the learners' stories made possible the identification of emerging themes, which are analysed in Chapter Five. The following five themes emerged: sporting excellence, self and identity; sporting excellence and the social context; sporting excellence, schooling and the curriculum; sporting excellence, team spirit and talent search; and finally sporting excellence, race, class and culture. Using and then amalgamating key themes emerging across each of the learner's stories, the data generated through in-depth interviews with the provincial coaches and the significant others were analysed to inform the notions generated (Chapter Six). Structuring the themes for the study, Figure 1: p 44 was used to organise the psychological profiles of the learners and Figure 2: p 49, was used to organise the sociological aspects of sporting excellence. These two analytical frameworks in turn provided support for ordering of

the emerging themes of the study. The emerging themes set the platform for theorising sporting excellence in a transforming society in Chapter Seven.

3.5 Validity and reliability

According to Guba & Lincoln (1994), qualitative research, is an effective technique in addressing the problems of reliability, internal and external validity of measures and procedures. Use of qualitative research is therefore deemed appropriate to increase the quality of research outcomes. Data from different sources was needed to address the research questions, and these sources included provincial coaches, learners and significant others.

The purpose of “generating data from a variety of sources is not only to establish validity”, as purported by Yin (1994, p. 34), or to ensure methodological triangulation, as mentioned by Cohen et al. (2007), but to enhance and deepen the study by probing more aspects of the same question, state Denzin and Lincoln (1994). Research instruments used in the study included structured interviews, in-depth interviews, portraits and essays. Internal and external validity were addressed in this study. Internal validity - the extent to which findings are congruent with reality - was addressed by using triangulation and confirming interpretations with the participants. In this study, internal validity was evidenced by noting and reviewing responses from participants. In terms of external validity, a description of all aspects of the study, which includes the context and responses of participants, is provided to allow other researchers to decide on appropriateness, (Kinchelhoe & McLaren, 1994).

In qualitative data validity is addressed through the honesty, depth, richness and scope of data attained, the participants’ approach, extent of triangulation and objectivity of the researcher (Winter, 2000). Triangulation used in this study mapped out and explained the richness and complexity of human behaviour by studying it from more than one standpoint, using data from the learners, provincial coaches and significant others. Triangulation is a powerful way of demonstrating concurrent validity, particularly in qualitative research. These factors were taken into consideration when developing the stories of the learners, producing the themes of sporting excellence and theorising the

social spaces of sporting excellence. In this study validity was improved through careful sampling of the participants and ensuring that data from the learners, provincial coaches and significant others were appropriately transcribed and analysed.

3.6 Limitation of the study

Limitations are conditions that restrict or confine the scope of the study may affect the outcome and cannot be controlled by the researcher. In this study it is assumed that the participants responded truthfully to the interview questions. Some limitation may arise out of issues of language and articulation due to conditions and experiences of these participants from differing backgrounds. It could be possible that although some of the participants whose first language was the indigenous language of isiZulu preferred to speak English during the interview, they could easily have misunderstood or misinterpreted some of the questions.

The data generated from the learners, provincial coaches and significant others may not be generative of all the factors that contributed to sporting excellence. Selection limited the research study to nine codes of sport, and the learners chosen for this study were recommended by the provincial coaches of these nine codes.

3.7 Conclusion

A detailed account of the methodological approaches used in the research process is outlined in this chapter. Use of the qualitative approach was necessary to answer the critical questions of the study, and the choice of specific instruments for data generation was justified. The next three chapters focus on the analysis of the data generated from the structured, in-depth interviews with the learners and the in-depth interviews with the coaches and significant others.

CHAPTER FOUR

Learners' journey towards sporting excellence

4.1 Introduction

This chapter focuses on the first of the critical questions (*Who are the learners excelling in school sport?*). Each of the learners' stories will be related, providing a descriptive account of their sporting journeys. These provide an explanation of the learners' sporting lives and in the process of telling their story we uncover their individual experiences, which will facilitate exploration and analysis of the data. The learners' stories were grafted together from selected data, so that a holistic view of the learner was captured using his or her own words. In each of the learners' stories a salient or profound statement which they made during the interview is inserted at the beginning to set the tone.

Storytelling as a form of narrative inquiry allowed me to present the learners' data in their own words in order to reveal the latent *why* behind their assertions. This analysis constitutes 15 learners' stories, with selected pieces of data from the interview sewn together to create narratives which are thus derivatives of a single interview with each learner. Verbatim responses have been extensively quoted so as to keep the voice of the learners and their stories; the learners are the foundational informers, and use of verbatim responses will minimise distortion of their data. Storytelling therefore has been privileged in this study, as it was important to be faithful to the exact words used by the learners in order to capture the essence of their lives. Using these verbatim responses, each of the learners' stories is creatively narrated, giving a sense of relating to the learner on a more personal and intimate level.

4.2 The structure of the learners' stories

There were 8 boys (3 whites, 4 blacks and 1 Indian) and 7 girls (1 white, 3 blacks, 1 coloured and 2 Indians) in this research study. Of the 15 learners, 11 played a team sport

and four engaged in individual sports. The four white learners in the study lived in affluent white residential suburbs and all went to private schools. Three of the Indian learners lived in Indian residential suburbs, but two of the learners travelled to ex-Model C³⁸ schools and one learner attended an ex- House of Delegates³⁹ school. The coloured learner lived in a coloured suburb and went to a private school. Of the 7 black learners, 2 lived in the rural area and 3 in the township, 1 in a residence provided for the family at his father's workplace (located in a white residential area) and 1 lived in the central business district. Five of these learners attended former white schools, 1 a former Indian school and 1 a rural school, see Table 5: p 73.

The learners' stories are grouped into sections according to their gender (girls followed by boys) and type of sport they played (team followed by individual sports). These groupings structure the analysis of the learners' stories and draw out similarities and differences experienced based on gender and type of sport played. The four sections in this chapter are girls who play team sports, boys who play team sports, girls who play individual sports and boys who play individual sports (see Appendix 18). In each section the learners are introduced, a brief overview about them is presented, concluding with salient notions arising.

³⁸ The ex-HoA schools or the ex-Model C schools will now be referred to as the former White schools to help facilitate easy reading of the text.

³⁹ The ex-HoD schools will now be referred to as the former Indian schools to help facilitate easy reading of the text.

No.	CODE OF SPORT	BOY	GIRL	BLACK	COLOURED	INDIAN	WHITE
1	Netball		1				Yamka Our Lady of Farley
2	Netball		2	Nonthando Mowbray Secondary			
3	Netball		3	Theola Galileo High			
4	Volleyball		4			Samiya Glengarry Secondary	
5	Hockey		5			Drea Northanger Girls	
6	Soccer	1					Brendon Hikmat College
7	Soccer	2		Nkosi Kingsbury High			
8	Soccer	3		Tholethu Saskia College			
9	Cricket	4					Chayton Kerrellyn College
10	Cricket	5					Jarrett Kerrellyn College
11	Rugby	6		Sekani Durkheim High			
12	Gymnastics		6	Jemma Wedemeyer Park			
13	Athletics		7		Tojan Feluda College		
14	Athletics	7		Siani Northon Boys			
15	Swimming	8				Daryl Glengarry Boys	

Table 5: Schools attended by learners

	Private
	ex-Model C
	ex-HoD
	Rural

The stories of four of the learners (Yamka, Brendon, Nkosi and Jemma) conclude with the professional assessments by Professor Srinivasan S. Pillay (see section 3.4), which supplement and deepen the analysis of the data and provide expert insight.

In profiling the learners through their stories, one begins to see the emerging themes. The learners' journeys then help understand the links between their notions of the self, their environment and society and how they ultimately came to achieve sporting excellence. The chapter concludes with a summary of the emerging themes.

4.3 Girls' team sport

This section depicts the stories of five learners who play the team sports of netball, volleyball and hockey. The first is that of Yamka, a white girl from a private school. She is passionate about sport and although she has had setbacks as a result of the quota system and injuries, has shown determination and tenacity to ensure a place for herself in the provincial netball team.

The second story is that of Nonthando, who achieved provincial colours against all odds. With a family barely making ends meet, she ensured that she made the crucial training sessions to be kept in the provincial netball team. Living in the township but attending a former white school, she saved on every cent and minimised her transport costs by travelling by train (an unsafe mode of transport in South Africa, especially from the area in which she lives).

The third story is that of Theola, the only learner in the study who lived and schooled in the rural area. She was selected for the netball provincial netball team but due to financial constraints never played for it because she could not make it to the team's training sessions.

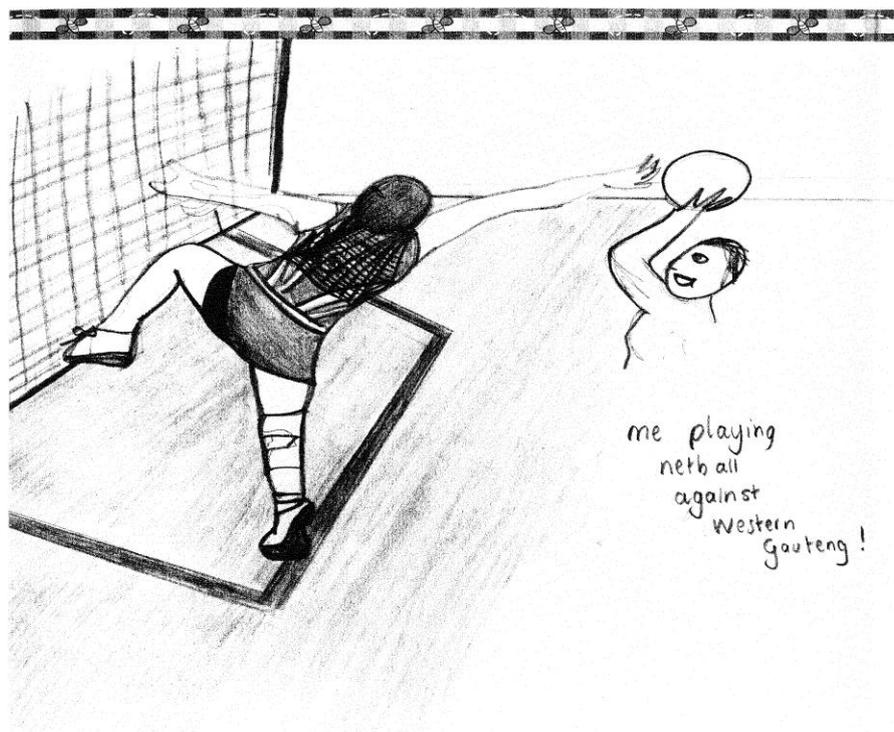
The fourth story is that of Samiya, a learner who has already planned her future down to the last detail. With a family making the ultimate sacrifice of uprooting and settling in

an area that promoted Samiya’s volleyball ambitions, she has set her sights of becoming a world-class player.

The final story is that of Drea, a hockey goalkeeper who immersed herself in her sport in order to cope with the emotional and psychological upheavals of a broken family. With these introductory remarks about the learners, storytelling as a form of narrative inquiry will allow the data to be put into the learners own words, so as to capture the essence of who they are, thus revealing the latent *who* behind their assertion.

4.3.1 Yamka – netball

“If you are white you do not have a chance to make the team.”



Yamka is an outstanding 16-year-old white netball player who has achieved many accolades. She was the only KZN player selected for the SA All Stars Team (comprising the top 10 positional players at a national tournament), and she is aiming for the South African national team. She is a goalkeeper, and being tall and well-built gives her the perfect physique to be an excellent defender. She therefore comes across as an overbearing netball player:

*Our netball team is often feared by all because we are really good. Sometimes it gets to me that many people do not like me because I am good. They automatically think that I am **aggressive on court**.⁴⁰ Y1⁴¹*

Yamka says that what makes her a good player is the way she sees herself as a goalkeeper:

*If the ball is in the circle it is mine. I personally think of it as a bomb, if it is in the circle for longer than I want it to be, it is going to explode. **I think of it literally as a life and death thing**. If the ball comes in here I have to get it out as soon as possible otherwise we are going to die and that means lose. Y2*

Injuries are very much part of Yamka's life. She vividly describes an injury she sustained at a young age, and how this helped to motivate her to continue with sport:

*We both went up for the rebound and she (opposition player) did not go for the ball, she decided she was going to knock me out instead and she jumps into me and my foot got caught in the net on my way down. I fell back and my leg snapped. I had a very bad injury, my shin, my ankle, and my toes. I broke my bones in my toe, my ligaments snapped, my calf I ripped; everything imaginable happened to me. And I was supposed to get pins in my leg and I remember **I was really distraught because they told me that I would not be able to do sports again** because once you get pins it will be the end of your sporting career. I was in Grade 8 and I was 13. Y3*

As a result of her injuries, Yamka did not play sport for almost a year. She used the opportunity to build her strength and fitness, and it allowed her to think about the way she played her game:

I am very paranoid when it comes to fitness**. When I broke my ankle they told me that I could not do any exercise until my bone fully healed, so I got into the habit of doing push-ups and sit-ups every night before I went to bed, and now I do it like routine. It works on your core muscles. Everyone now told me not to go back to action netball, because it is dangerous, but I think it is a good thing because now when I play I am more cautious and more aware of the other players on the court. Even my coach tells me that **my style of netball is very

⁴⁰ I have used some phrases (which are in bold) as the narratives are told in order to highlight important or essential utterance of the learners. These phrases will be expanded on in the next chapter to support the emerging themes from the data.

⁴¹ This represents a referencing code for analysis purposes. The code comprises of two to four alphanumeric symbols. The first capital letter indicates the initial letter of the learner's name and it may be followed by small letters, if the same capital letter is used more than once. The numeral indicates the paragraph and source of data in the text. This reference code will be used in the next chapter to validate the emerging themes.

unique, it is not me on the court, it is everyone else and I make them play my game. Y4

Yamka speaks frankly about how she has changed from a vain person to someone who was brought back to earth because of her achievements:

*Grade 9 was a horrible year, hormones and stuff; I was a very vain person. I know what I was like and I do not want to be like that anymore. I was in three Natal sports and people used to tell me that I was good. I was the best and for life-saving I was ranked number two in the country. I set a SA record that year and I got very air-headed. I was 14 and it was a year after I broke my ankle and I literally came back with a bang into sport. If I met people I will not feel shy to tell them about all my sport, I know it sounds weird by **my biggest achievement has brought me down to earth**. The All Stars was an amazing thing for me. It has always been one of my goals. I do not want to be known as the girl who boasts and thinks she is the best. I want other people to think I am the best. Y5*

She prefers to stay away from conflict, sees herself as a positive person and makes the best of what is offered to her:

***I hate conflict with my life** and I will do anything to avoid it. When people think Yamka, they think happy girl. I am not one to be pessimistic or depressed. I always see the bright side of life. I do not know how I do it or why I do it, it actually annoys me sometimes that **I am so positive**. Why is everyone so depressed and I am still smiling? People were crying on the tour because they did not have accommodation. I thought we are here for the experience, **we are not here for five-star luxuries and with our Government we are not going to get all this type of things**. On sports tour you should have food for instance and a bed. Y6*

When asked what motivates her to maintain such a high level in her sport, she says:

*When it comes to anything **I hate knowing that I have not given my best**. I love talking, not the centre of attention but just being myself. I like talking to people, getting into the psyche of people. I will talk to people and I am often known for my randomness. I start conversations with a question or something I am doing. Y7*

Yamka speaks fondly about her family. Her mom has a diploma and is an educator and her dad has a degree in Agricultural Science and is a senior manager at Rainbow Chickens. Her dad is the most influential person in her life, and when she wanted to

start life-saving as a code of sport at school, he did not stop her. He brought her a pair of flippers. Thus began her sporting achievements:

*He bought me these flippers and then I decided 'I got the flippers so let me do something with it'. I trained eight times a week, and that is when I became an asset to the school. Those flippers were my motivation, they are not cheap. **I thought I cannot let my dad down. If I did not train I would disappoint my dad. If you are given something, use it to the best of your ability. Y8***

She has an older brother who is studying cognitive science at university and it really matters to her what he thinks of her:

*I love showing him that I am good at something. It is not really so much competitive, **I love getting his approval**. It is the older brother thing; you always want to be cool. He is a discus thrower and competed at SA games. **Y9***

Yamka plays an important role in the lives of younger players. She is deemed fit by her coach to train the junior teams and has a positive influence on the younger players:

*The coach sometimes asks me to show the junior players different defence techniques. I am the friendliest person in my team, more like a netball sister. A lot of them talk to me about absolutely anything that goes on in their lives. They feel really comfortable with me, which I really like. **They trust me** and one girl, I call her "mini me", because she is always compared to me and my coach calls her my "mini Yamka" because she is also a goalkeeper. I quite like it that I am seen as an icon. **Y10***

Yamka's sporting hero is a senior player in the netball team. She sees herself in this player as this player has the same personality and character as she does:

*If I were to choose an icon or a sporting hero, it will be **Precious because she is always so positive and happy and similar to my character**. She was not well off but through sport she got a scholarship. She has made the SA basketball and SA outdoor and indoor netball teams. She used to be my action netball coach. She is 23 years old. **Y11***

Because the KZN team is racially black dominated, there exists a language barrier but Yamka says this is easily overcome and the players bond well, especially when on tour:

*In the beginning, it was awkward. The English girls spoke Afrikaans and English and the Zulu girls spoke Zulu and I could converse with them. I did Zulu Grade 4 to 7 so I have a basic understanding of Zulu. **I am not completely ignorant when it comes to Zulu.** We had a hell of a long bus ride and we bonded so well on that tour. I learnt so many Zulu things and I came home and I will speak to my dad mixing up all three languages. In one sentence I would be speaking English, Afrikaans and Zulu, something ridiculous like that. **These differences in language actually lead to a good team.** Y12*

Yamka has a strong Catholic faith and is in Grade 10 at Our Lady of Farley which is a private school. Her pre-primary schooling was at St Martin's, a private school, and her Grade 1-3 was at a former white school called Markham Primary. Although PE is offered in school, Yamka says that the girls (unlike her) really do not like it:

*It is PE but I have changed it to **Physical Entertainment**. It is the funniest thing. No one likes PE except me and another girl. When it comes to PE people will forget their kit, they will say, 'oh I have sprained my ankle,' and the thing is that I did PE when I was on crutches. I cannot watch people play, I have to be involved. I love swimming. I had to stop lifesaving because of netball. Y13*

Yamka comes from a middle socio-economic background and sport has run in the family as they are ardent Afrikaner rugby supporters. Yamka excels both in action netball and outdoor netball, but she is not fond of outdoor netball because of how she has been treated during selections.

*Netball is my life. Last year was my first year to make the outdoor netball team. Outdoor netball is quoted. I do not want to be a racist, but **if you are white you actually do not have a chance of making the team.** I have this All-Star team and because **I am tall and well-built**, I have been told by many people that I have got the best stretch in KZN and I am the best defence in KZN, never mind the age. I will go to trial and what happens is that if you are born in 1993, there is no quota system because they were not involved in apartheid. Personally I cannot see how I as a 2-year-old was taking over the country and shooting people, but that is the Government. Y14*

However, it is this very system that has driven her because she has been trying for provincial colours since the age of 14:

*The fact that they told me I am white, it is going to be hard for me to make it because of my race, actually **drives me to be better**, and I am not trying to be mean but it makes me feel good knowing they made a mistake. Y15*

She is very critical about the selection of the teams, and relates her personal experience of racism:

*In my age group there were four judges; I knew three of the four judges and I thought this was my chance to make the KZN team. However, one of the judges did not like me much because they came to our school once and we beat them like 54-0, it was a horrible loss for them, and obviously he has this bias against me, and he has the quota on his side. There were three goalkeepers and I thought I really got a really good chance this year; no offence but I am much better than the other two goalkeepers and they were both Africans, and the one girl was half my height and could not jump, and I thought she was literally there because she had nothing to do on a Saturday. The other girl was OK, not a KZN player, she **did not have the basic skills for netball**, and when it came to announcing the team they chose the other two girls. There was only one white girl in the U16 team. Y16*

The unfairness of the selection for the KZN team is obvious and Yamka is completely against it and very vocal about it. She quips that she would like to be president one day so that she can change the quota system:

*I really do not like it. If you are in the Natal team you should be there not because of your colour but because you can play, because you are good, because you are the best in the Province. I personally I could not care if the team is made up of 10 green people or 10 yellow people, or whatever colour they were. If they can play netball, they deserve to be there. I was actually considering stopping outdoor netball, because every year it is the same story – sorry, you are white. In Grade 7, I made it all the way to Jeffery's Bay, but in the last round I was told I cannot be in the team because I was not the right colour. One person told me that if I was willing to get a skin transplant like Michael Jackson or **paint yourself like an African next year then I will make it**. I thought that is a bit derogatory for me. I do not need to be told that I will make it only if I was an African. I personally think **if you are the best you should be in the team**. Y17*

Comment by Professor Srinivasen S. Pillay on Yamka's self-portrait:

Yamka's drawing shows her self-impression as tough, agile, dominant and determined. She emphasises both the significant racism that she has had to endure as well as her initial vanity, which might have been a defence to prop herself up. Eventually, it seems like she opted for positivity. She seems defensively positive as well, but this works for her. It makes her focus on what is possible rather than why she might not win - and she feels as though this opens up her world. Her injuries indicate that rather than focusing on her limitations she focuses on growth and is future-oriented. She appears to have a future-oriented psychology in general and her limitlessness in thinking is exemplified by her desire to be President. Rather than being a victim of circumstances, she sees herself as an agent of change. This shows in her drawing as well. She is strong, imposing, active and able to make things happen.

4.3.2 Nonthando – netball

“Oh I am a pretty strong girl, I do not care, and I am not scared. I just take the train.”

Nonthando is an outgoing 16-year-old black girl who lives in Umlazi Township⁴². She comes across as a very driven and determined young girl who has a realistic approach to life and strongly believes that the only person she can rely on is herself:

*If I tell myself I am going to do this, I go for it, I do not hesitate. If you say it is not for me you are not going to get anywhere. This world needs people to work. Your parents may be rich today but tomorrow they may not be there. You have to work for yourself. **The only person you are relying on is yourself. No1***

Nonthando's family life is difficult as only her dad, who graduated with a diploma, has a stable job. Her mom is a hawker and has no time to see to the needs of the family and the responsibility falls squarely on Nonthando:

*At home I am the oldest one, **I do everything**. If I was someone else I would have given up by now. I do a lot at home, I cook, wash, clean, but still I go for training. I do not miss my training unless there is a valid reason. I do not complain about things. I manage my time. **No2***

⁴² Umlazi is the second largest township in South Africa, the first being Soweto. It is a black township located southwest of Durban, on the east coast of KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa. The wider Umlazi area has a population of 750,000.

She is driven to succeed and has taken it upon herself to ensure that she makes all her training sessions, despite the many added responsibilities. She has to earn the money she requires to ensure that her sporting endeavours are realised. This mature and realistic approach to life spills over to the practical way in which she does things:

*I do not think anyone is driving me. It is just me and my background at home. Sometimes my mom says she does not have any money. So I tell myself 'since my mom does not have money **I must do something myself**'. Last year I used to sell sausage rolls and make a little bit of money and buy what I need. **No3***

In addition to the financial strain on the family to make ends meet, there is the added burden of the cost of Nonthando's playing netball:

My mom counts on me.** It is hard for my mom and she will complain. Since I am doing sport, most of the time we travel and some of the time she has to give me money. When she complains **I feel like I want to quit** because I cannot afford it. **No4

As a result of the home situation, there is not much family bonding taking place. As a young girl, Nonthando yearns to have a close bond with her mother but this is not possible:

*I do not get time to tell my mom how I really feel about things. Most girls sit down with their mom and talk about things. **I do not have a chance to do that with my mom** because she is always working. She is struggling. She wakes up early to go to work and she comes back late at night, so we do not get time to talk. I would want my mom to come and watch my match, like other kids bring their parents; I just go to matches by myself. I wish my parents were here to watch me play. They have never been to a single match. Sometimes my dad will take a car from the workplace and take me to a match. but he will drop me and go and do things, then I will go home myself. So most of the time, I do things myself. **No5***

Added to this financial drain, Nonthando's school fees have to be paid as she is not on a sports scholarship. Nonthando lives with her younger sister, and her elder sister who has a disability lives with her grandmother. Nonthando attended junior primary schools in the township and in senior primary and high school attended a former white school. She wanted to go to Mowbray secondary school as she felt it would open up opportunities for her to advance her education. She has to travel long distances to go to school,

commuting from the township to the former white school which is in a middle-income residential area:

*I take a bus from home. I leave home at 6 o'clock, so I get up at 4 o'clock and I get here at about 7 o'clock or quarter past 7. I am a prefect now, so I have to stay at school for about two hours after school, and **I only leave school at about 4 o'clock**⁴³ and I still have to go down and take a bus and that will take about an hour. **No6***

Her selection of the school has paid off as she not only advanced in education but was also afforded the opportunity to excel in sport. She made the top position when she was awarded the Sportswoman of the Year Trophy. She says:

*I was not expecting to win. I thought one of my friends will take it because she was always above me. I was actually shocked when they gave me an invite to come to the prize-giving but did not tell me what it was for. When they called out my name I was really happy about it. I do not even know how to describe it. When I got home **I was taking pictures, doing everything with my trophy. I just went crazy. No7***

Nonthando is looked upon as a role model at school. She is respected and admired by all at her school for the good qualities she possesses:

*I get along with everyone; even the Grade 8's who are new. They know me and greet me. If you are a disciplined person, **people tend to respect you**. They want to be like me, even though I have nothing. They do not want to be like the girls who are rich in the school, who have everything. They want to be like me because I am not scared of anything. If I want to say something, I say it. **No8***

Nonthando believes that if it was not for her coach, she would not be where she is today. Her coach at school has complete faith in Nonthando's ability and will do all in her power to ensure that she goes to all the trial selections and helps her with her transport needs:

*My coach always tells me when there is going to be trials and encourages me to go for it. She will always make sure that I have transport and she will tell me to call her if I do not have transport. **She has faith in me; she knows I can do it. No9***

⁴³ Social spaces of sporting excellence - Nonthando has to travel long distances every day to go to a former White school.

Nonthando is committed to her KZN team. She rarely misses her training session and in order to save money, she prefers taking the train to training sessions (in town) instead of taxis as it is cheaper, even though travelling by train is not a safe mode of transport:

*I go to training in North Beach. I take the train because it is much cheaper at R3. If I take the taxi I will have to pay R9 to go and then R9 back. I go on my own, **I am a pretty strong girl, I do not care, and I am not scared.**⁴⁴ **No10***

Nonthando firmly believes that the quota system is an unfair one and that the selections for the KZN team should be done purely on the basis of the talent of the players:

I do not think it is fair.** There are five white girls and there has to be five other races. Sometime there are white girls who really deserve to be in the team but are not chosen because of the quota system. I do not think they should be choosing according to race but according to how good you are. What is the point of me being there when someone who is better than me is sitting at home doing nothing? This is KZN, we all play for KZN. It is not KZN white team or black team. This is one team. At the end of the day we play for our province. **No11

Nonthando enjoys being part of the KZN team because the girls in the team are fun to be with:

*They are friendly nice people and we all get along. **When we are sitting together you cannot actually say this is a white group or this is a black group.** The first time I met them it was like I have known them for ages. That is the person I am. I like **socialising with people.** If I meet you today, tomorrow I will be your best friend. I have known you like for years but I only knew you the day before. That is just the person I am, I am an outgoing person. **No12***

Nonthando has already mapped out her goals for the years ahead, and she bases this on the fact that because she has done so much, she deserves it:

I want to be in the SA team** and I think I got a big chance of making it. I deserve to be there because I have done so much. I train, I am a good player, I have the potential to be in the KZN team and the SA team. I want a good life like everyone else. **No13

⁴⁴ Social spaces of sporting excellence - Nonthando has to travel long distances to make the provincial team training sessions.

She has a sporting hero who she aspires to be like, and is focused on doing well both in her sport as well as her school work:

Jessica Nkomo who used to play for our club and now she plays for SA. I always tell her that I am going to get there one day. People like her who are around you push you to do something. Even at schools when my friends get higher marks than me, I do not really tell them, but I tell myself, how can she get a higher mark than me, I know I can do better than her. I always drive myself and tell myself that I can do better than that. No14

4.3.3 Theola – netball

“I was selected and I said I cannot go there because of transport. I feel hurt and sad, but I got hope. I will achieve my goal.”

Theola is a quietly spoken individual who is shy and conservative. She stays in the rural township of Gamalakhe,⁴⁵ Margate, which is on the KZN south coast. She has two older brothers and one older sister. She stays with her parents who only had primary school education. Her mother stays at home and her father works for the Ugu⁴⁶ District Municipality. She comes from a low-income group, but she says:

We are not poor we are okay; my dad gives us love and anything we want. The1

Although selected for the KZN U18 team in 2006, she was unable to attend training sessions held in Pietermaritzburg due to financial constraints, so never made it to competing against other provinces:

I was selected but could not go there because of transport. I feel hurt and sad, but I got hope.⁴⁷ I will achieve my goal. It is love. When you do have ball and ground you can learn netball. The2

⁴⁵ Gamalakhe Township is in Port Shepstone, a town situated on the mouth of Umzimkulu River, the largest river on the south coast of KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa. It is 120 kilometres south of Durban and inhabited by the black race group.

⁴⁶ Port Shepstone is part of the Ugu District (DC21), which is a municipality district in KwaZulu-Natal (see Appendix17).

⁴⁷ Social spaces of sporting excellence – Due to financial constraints Theola could not make the provincial squad training sessions.

Theola attended schools in the township and it was in Grade 5 that her love for netball began because of her school coach, and this love has allowed her to excel in the sport. At present her netball is of a very high standard and she is excelling at club level. She hopes to make the senior South African team but still sees the transport issue as a problem:

Last year I achieved the Best Player Trophy for Sport and Recreation Tournament KZN, at Port Shepstone. The3

Netball is the only sport she has played and she speaks passionately about how sports can change the lives of the children in the township, as they are prone to drugs, smoking, drinking, pregnancy and crime. She is part of the Gamalakhe Active Community Club that keeps children in the township occupied through sports, cultural and social programmes:

Netball can help your family. If you do not have food, you come to the sport field. You feel comfortable and talk to others about the problems of your family and you get help. I always tell myself that I am the best in this area, I do not do drugs and I do not do anything funny that can disappoint my family, so I am in sport and I like sport. The4

Besides contributing to her excellence in sport, her coach has also been influential on her outlook on life and has provided her emotional support. She has also shown Theola the difference sport can make in the lives of children:

My coach always tells me that when you are in sport, it is the best thing, especially for girls. Boys like sport. In my area I am the only girl who likes sport and I try to tell the girls but they do not understand. They say that they are coming to the training session but they sit and walk around in the street, they have boyfriends, they do not like sport, they do not understand. You cannot change a person. The5

4.3.4 Samiya – volleyball

“When I was 10 I would plan my life and I always knew I will be an architect and a national player.”

Samiya is a lively and vibrant 15-year-old Indian girl originally from Richards Bay. She has a hunger to succeed. She believes that it is important to have a vision in life, no matter how young.

When I was 10, I would plan my life and I always knew I will be an architect and a national player. Sa1

Her family, which comprises her mother, father and little sister, have now moved to La Mercy so volleyball venues are closer to home. She is very grateful to both of her parents for the sacrifices they have made to promote her volleyball career. Her parents have completed their matriculation exams and her mother does part-time teaching and her dad is a panel beater. When asked whether she can say which of her parents had the most impact on her volleyball achievement, she says:

They are equal. I know finance is not supposed to be an issue but because I live far away from the action, a lot of money is put for travel and volleyball does not give back to you. But I have to travel to get the experience and be provided with the opportunity to train. Sa2

Samiya’s mother is also very involved with volleyball. She travels with and manages the volleyball side when they are on tour. For Samiya the involvement of parents in their children’s sport is very important:

My mom manages the team when we go on tour. My parents are very involved, which I think is very important for a scholar because I know so many young people have talent but have no one to look after them and push them in the right direction. Sa3

Samiya has moved schools in order to promote her volleyball career. She started her schooling at Bayes Primary and then went to Ritvlei High where she started volleyball in Grade 8. She remained there until Grade 9 and then went to a private school, Joval College, and did Grade 10 here. She excelled very quickly in volleyball:

*I got selected for SA and I was voted the best defence player in the whole country. This was just a year after I started playing at 13 years old. People said that it will take me four years before I would get selected. But I always take the negative things people say, so **I train and I use it to mould me and make me play better. Sa4***

Although she was young, she was playing in the senior teams and as a result she was noticed by clubs in the central Durban area. This meant that she had to travel long distances to get to training sessions:

*I was not playing for a club because I was living in Richards Bay. They heard I was playing for senior teams and so they wanted to know if I wanted the exposure of playing with seniors all the time. My parents agreed and it meant **travelling every weekend to Durban,**⁴⁸ which my parents did for a whole year before deciding to relocate. **Sa5***

It was because of the travelling that her parents decided to move the family to La Mercy, where Samiya attended Glengarry High School in Verulam,⁴⁹ where Donovan Nair one of the educators at the school, is part of Volleyball, Africa. Because of this move, Samiya excelled in her game:

*Last year when we went to Cape Town, our U19 team beat Western Province and I was voted the best attacker in SA and this year I will be the best blocker. That is the only thing now and I know I will do it. I am training hard and now **when it comes to training I have to juggle it with schoolwork and that is getting a bit hectic. Sa6***

Samiya is very positive about her volleyball team, which she affectionately calls her family:

***I would not call it a team, it is a family.** When you travel with people and spent time with them, there is a balance in the team. We know each other's weaknesses and we help each other out. There are different races but we do not see it like that, it is one team. We learn Zulu and we teach them Hindi. It is fun. Our team is very well grounded for our age but when we go for a tournament we know we*

⁴⁸ Social spaces of sporting excellence - Samiya's parents eventually decided to relocate so that her sporting obligations were easily met.

⁴⁹ Verulam is a town 27 kilometres north of Durban in KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa and is part of the eThekweni Metropolitan Area. Verulam is inhabited mainly by people of Indian descent. The population is over 63,000.

are there to win and we win. We understand the sacrifices our coaches put into training us. Sa7

When asked about the racial complement of the teams she said:

There are Coloureds, Indian and African. But in Natal there are no white players. They play beach volleyball. We do not like to play beach volleyball because of the sun and the heat is too much. We cannot take it. In our SA team there are all different races. Sa8

School does not seem to play a role in the development of sport for the learners:

Most schools do not offer sport and PE and you wonder why with overweight and diabetes there is no sport at school. If SA does not improve their development there would not be any good sportspeople coming out. Sa9

4.3.5 Drea – hockey

“Hockey has been a great help emotionally and physically.”

Drea is a very well-spoken 18-year-old Indian girl who has made it in the South African side of the predominately white sport of hockey. She described herself as follows:

I am straightforward. I can come across sometimes pretty harsh. I am a happy go lucky person. I like talking, I am kind of shy at first but you know you get used to me. I am very determined. I have a strong character. I would like to make the national team and attend the Olympics 2012, definitely that. It has been my motivation and my determination. Dr1

Drea comes from a single-parent family and lives in the elite suburb of Umhlanga⁵⁰ with her mother and older sister. Her mother completed her matriculation and is self-employed. Her father left the family when Drea was young, and she has coped well with this difficulty. For her:

Hockey has been a great help emotionally and physically. It has kept me in shape. Hockey offers me a kind of escapism to get away from the world and just to concentrate on myself and to have fun. Dr2

⁵⁰ Umhlanga is a white residential, commercial and resort town north of Durban on the coast of KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa. It is part of the eThekweni Metropolitan Municipality.

Drea's childhood was fun and she grew up playing sport. When asked about how her love for sports started, she said:

*At home definitely, **I probably grew up with a ball in my hand, stick and just playing. Dr3***

Her position as a goalkeeper was also a chance occurrence which gave her the opportunity to excel at hockey in this position:

*I was a midfielder then I went to a sweeper. One day our first team went to trials but the goalkeeper for that team was over-age, so she could not play. There was a spontaneous trial to get a goalkeeper, so I volunteered. **I thought it would be worth a try. Dr4***

Drea attended private schools from pre-primary to senior primary and former white schools in junior and senior secondary. She made history at Northanger Girls High when in Grade 12 she obtained, The Sportsperson of the Year award, the first black learner to achieve this prestigious award in the 100-year history of the school:

*It is a great feeling because my achievement has now motivated the Grade 8 and 9 girls, which is excellent because most Indian kids when they come to high school they think sports is not for them, it is a white domain. It is great seeing them looking at you and being proud of what you have done and knowing that **I have influenced their lives in one way or another. The achievement is a plus, but it is doing what you love, that is my motivation. Dr5***

Drea's sporting hero is the South African hockey captain and she is also aspiring to make the national team:

On the hockey scene it is Marcia Marescia. She is the captain of the team. I met her but I have not played with her. Hopefully when I go to Johannesburg I will probably join the club that she plays for and play with her. That is one of my dreams, to play with her. I admire her charisma, the way she plays hockey and the way she conducts herself on and off the field. She is dedicated to her sport. I would like to make the national team and attend the Olympics 2012, definitely that. Dr6

When asked about Life Orientation at school Drea said:

I think that is pathetic.** They do not educate you on the day-to-day living. They teach you on STDs (sexually transmitted diseases). Yes it is important to educate kids on it, but I do not place this huge emphasis on it because the kids just get totally different ideas. They bring condoms and blow it up and think it is a joke; they do not take it seriously. Teach them common stuff like how to sign a deposit slip and stuff like that. **Dr7

The quota system has not affected her personally, but being a learner of colour, she feels that she has to try much harder to prove her ability and for her place in the team. Drea has made the South African team as a goalkeeper:

*In hockey they look for quality players with talent, not just for the quota system, and there have been players left out due to the quota system. **There is a part of me that always reminds me that maybe I am just being selected on the quota system.** Proving is required. You cannot just be put up in a team because you are black or Indian. You have to work and have a mind-set to focus. I believe I have been selected on merit. **Dr8***

Trust and working together contributes to team spirit. Drea is a goalkeeper, and although she is on her own at one end of the field, she feels that her confidence is important to the team:

*When I am on the field I encourage my teammates. When I stand there in my box it is me. I have been given a duty. If I am confident, my teammates will acknowledge that. They will work hard as well. **There is trust and we work together. If there is a bad egg in the team, obviously the team suffers. There is a missing link. It is never going to work. Dr9***

4.3.6 Synopsis: Girls' team sports

In summary, the team sport dynamics bring with them certain degree of unity, despite the diversity of the KZN teams. Learners are very confident about themselves and are committed to their sport. They view challenges with a positive attitude and tend to avoid conflicts and fights. They have the tenacity to overcome any obstacles placed in their way. They bring this positivity with them into the team set-up and tend to manage socio-economic issues, race, language and cultural differences to their advantage. The learners set realistic and achievable goals for themselves. It is these goals that allow

them to progress to the next sporting level with the ultimate goal of playing for their country. Learners are conscious about themselves as role models to others. They themselves emulate senior players in the provincial teams and also South African sporting stars in the hope that one day they will be playing in the senior teams and representing their country.

The quota system has brought with it racial tensions in team sport, especially in the code of netball. It is evident that in netball it is difficult for the talented white players to get into the KZN team as a result of the quota system. This leads to racial tension when it comes to the selection of players for the provincial team. Volleyball has no white players in the team. This raises the issue of elitism in sport, where the emphasis on certain codes of sport such as cricket, rugby, soccer and netball is greater than in others.

The learners are aware of the quota system that has to be implemented, but use it to their advantage, in that it made them more determined to prove themselves and eventually make the provincial team. However, when it comes to promoting team spirit, the provincial team is united with the ultimate aim of winning. Language and cultural barriers do not exist as the players are focused on their game and support each other. Finally, sport is gendered in that the learners express concern on lack of participation of girls in sport. The reluctance of girls to participate in their PE lessons as well as in playing sport indicates their disinterest in sport.

4.4 Boys' team sport

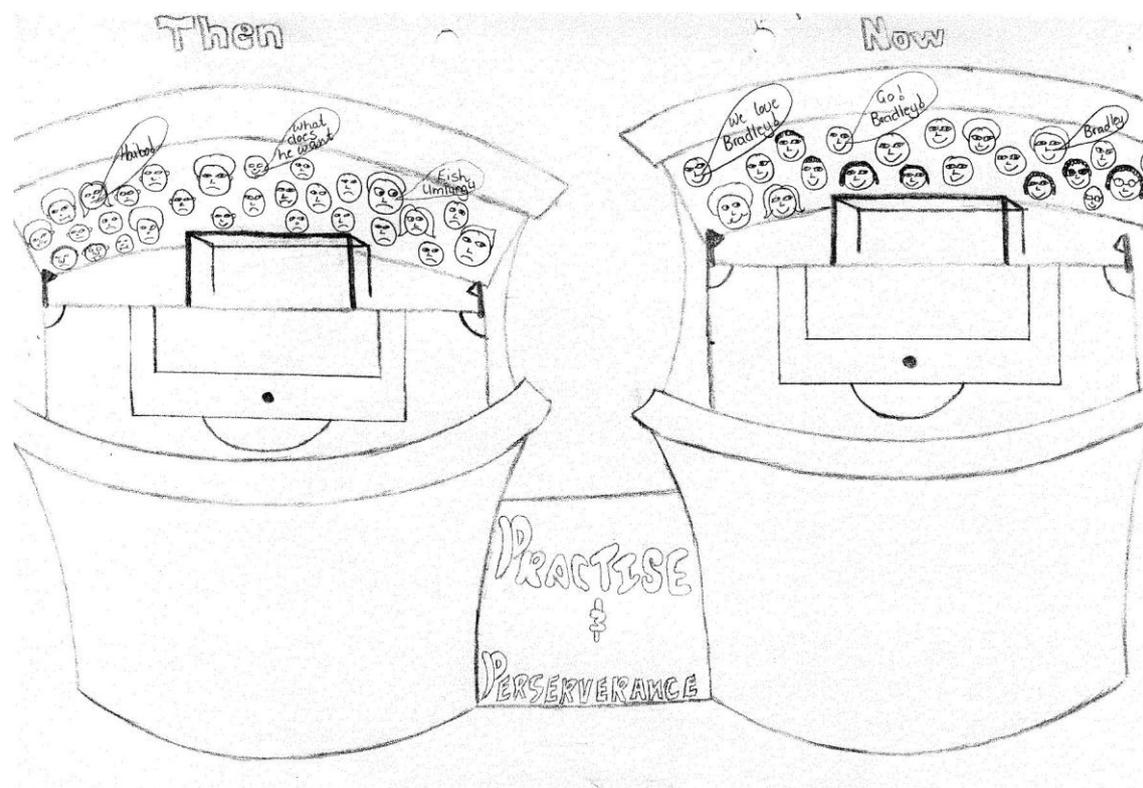
This section shares the stories of six learners who play the team sports of soccer, cricket and rugby. The first is that of Brendon, a white boy persevering to make his mark in the black-dominated sport of soccer. He is one of few (if not the only) white boys willing to go into the township and play soccer so that he can climb up the ranks to become a professional soccer player. The second story is that of Nkosi who is struggling within the two worlds he has created: the one world that of residing in a township and the other world his schooling in an affluent area. The third story is that of Tholethu, an excellent goalkeeper who believes he is the central figure in the team. He started playing soccer

in the township and believes that children in the township are really disadvantaged, because even though they have talent most of them are not noticed.

The fourth story is that of Chayton, who has had the best opportunities to excel in cricket. He gives most of the credit for this talent to his family genes. He attends one of the best private schools and is coached by one of KZN's finest past cricket players. The fifth story is that of Jarrett, who is of the opinion that if boys cannot stand up for themselves, then they deserve whatever comes their way. He believes boarding school is the best for one to become an independent individual. Our last story is that of Sekani, who from a rural upbringing has made it to become a top rugby player, through hard work and perseverance. He has the utmost allegiance to his school since it has provided him with opportunities he otherwise never would have had.

4.4.1 Brendon – soccer

“Nothing can stop me from playing soccer.”



Brendon is a passionate white soccer player from KZN. At the age of 10 he knew that he was going to become a soccer star, the ultimate aim being to make the sport of soccer his profession. Although he has his sights set on playing international soccer, he wants to play for his country first, but being white he is not sure what his chances are:

*I want to make soccer my profession to make it my career. I would like to play for Manchester or for Barcelona or for AC Milan. I would like to play for my country, but I am not too sure that I will make it. Soccer is going down a bit, not the way it used to be, but **I would like to play for my country. Get the caps. B1***

Brendon is a soft-spoken individual with a pleasant disposition:

*I am a very shy person but I am a different person when I play soccer. I just want to excel in everything I do. I play soccer, so I do not get to go to all the parties. **I am committed to my soccer.** I think I am having more fun than them (friends). They may think it is hard when I train and do the hurdles, but for me it is all about becoming the best player. **B2***

Brendon is in Grade 9 and is only 14 years old. He does well in school and has this to say about his achievements:

*My aggregate is 76% or something. But the subjects **I am really good at are Mathematics and EMS. I achieve 80% and 90%. B3***

When Brendon is not training, his favourite past-time is to relax and play his drums. He is an only child, but does not see himself as been spoilt by his parents:

I just lie around, watch TV and become a couch potato and I play the drums. Just recently I bought a set of drums just to try to relax and play them. I am not spoilt as I still have to work for the stuff that I need. If I want something, I have to achieve or do well or save up. B4

His mother and father completed their matriculation examinations and run a business. Brendon lives in an affluent suburb of Durban. Brendon's father is a South African but his mother is of Irish decent and believes that she needs to be there for him. She is also the secretary of the soccer club he plays for and very involved in her son's soccer life.

He related the involvement of his parents in his sport as follows:

*My dad played rugby, judo and hockey at school and my mom I think played softball. My dad and mom are not soccer people. **Only when I started to play soccer, they became more involved in soccer. B5***

Brendon is the only white boy playing in an all-African team. He started at a young age and plays with his team predominantly in the townships. He is therefore exposed to the African culture in an intimate way, and playing with the boys in the team his relationship with them goes further than just being on the field and training together:

I have made lots of friends through playing soccer.** One of my friends from the first team was the goalkeeper who was 12 years old. When he received a bad knock on his head and died, his funeral was **my first African funeral** I attended. I had to walk behind an open casket. I was representing the team and had to toyi-toyi in the streets chasing after his coffin and the hearse. It was a very sad funeral. He was so young. **B6

Being the only white boy playing soccer in the club, Brendon has endured many setbacks, because of this but even though the odds were stacked against him he persevered.

*It is the passion of the game I guess, I just love playing soccer and **nothing can stop me from playing soccer. B7***

Brendon attended former white schools when in primary school, and now that he is in high school he attends Hikmat High, a private school which caters for his soccer needs and allows him flexibility for his training and match schedules.

*I was supposed to go to Weston Boys but they are very strict as I could not leave when I needed to or when I had to play for my club. I had to be committed to the code I was playing for so I moved schools. It is not a sport school, but whenever I need to go they let me off and they are **very supportive of what I do. B8***

He plays for Barcelona Football Club in the U21 side which has predominately black soccer players in the team. As a white boy playing soccer he has weathered all sorts of hardships and insults from both black and white players and officials in his pursuit to be selected for the KZN team as well as for the soccer club. When he first started playing

soccer in the township as part of the club he was jeered at by the players and the spectators, but now he sees himself as being part of the township:

*When the head coach of the academy gave me a chance to play soccer I was told 'hey umlungu'⁵¹ what are you doing here, **you must go back to where you came from**'. But when they saw that I was really good at crossing the ball, they started cheering for me. When I first went there I was a bit nervous but now everyone knows me. **I feel very proud when people know who I am in the township. B9***

Brendon is the only white boy in the township and this gives him a different perspective of life in the township and the experiences of the people who live there:

*When I went to the township it really opened my eyes to see what the people go through and how some guys come to training. They have no boots or shin pads but they just want to play soccer. One boy I played with, he just loved soccer. His parents died and he lived in a dog house. This just opened my eyes to **see how they suffer**⁵² and how much they enjoy coming to training. B10*

Racism is an issue in soccer and besides himself having been a victim of it, his mother (who is the club secretary) has also experienced it:

*My mom was asked by the coach at one of the tournaments to register the team. One of the selectors wanted to know from my mom what she was doing there and told her to go back to where she came from. My mom already knew that I was not going to make it. So sometimes I have not been chosen because some of them **are really racist**, but now it is starting to get better as they know me and it is easier for me. Last year I played for Umlazi and I went for trials for KZN. This year I could not make the tournament and my coach told me that all the guys were asking where the white boy who plays soccer was. B11*

⁵¹ A Zulu word which means 'white person'. Originally 'umlungu' referred to the white foam that collects along the shore of the beach.

⁵² Social spaces of sporting excellence - Brendon is exposed to life in the township learners as he has to travel there for his club training.

Comment by Professor Srinivasen S. Pillay on Brendon's self-portrait:

Brendon's psychological profile is notable for his perseverance, independence and determination. Underlying this is his love for soccer, which motivates him in the face of the adversity he has to face. The adversity most faced is that he is part of an "out-group" because he is white. (You see this in his drawings that show how spectators have changed their attitudes toward him.) He has had to face unfair rejections to stay connected with the team and community. This suggests that he transcended the focus on prejudice and instead switched his focus to his love of soccer and achievement. Studies show that empathy promotes social behaviour, but that empathy is greatest for people within one's own group and that this reflects in EEG (brain-wave) patterns (Gutsell & Inzlicht, 2011). Brendon would have had to face the lack of empathy from most people he encountered, but he still succeeded. Thus I would say that Brendon's psychological profile illustrates that he has trained his brain to focus much more on the positive – and he has derived the strength to do this by connecting with his love of soccer. Love is one of the most powerful redirectors of attention (and stimulators of motivation), and is probably at the core of his ability to succeed despite the prejudice he has faced.

4.4.2 Nkosi - soccer

"It is my father, even if he does not have money for me to play soccer he will go borrow and make sure that I go and enjoy myself."



Nkosi is a black soccer player who lives in the township. He has a very colourful personality and as a result often finds himself in trouble. His dad would still give him a hiding when the school complained about his behaviour:

I am a humorous person.** In class I am a mischievous person and I like to make up jokes. My teachers scold but I do listen to them and do as they say. Most people love me at school and I am well known. **I am a bit short tempered** but I know how to control it. I do not know where it comes from but people say it is part of the family. I am well behaved and most people regard me as a disciplined learner or child. At home I am always greeting and willing to help when it comes to someone who needs help or needs to go to the shop, I volunteer to help. Most of the people at school are scared of me because I do not usually talk too much, but my facial expression tells them that I am a straight person. **Nk1

Nkosi started playing soccer in the township when he was eight years old. He was a gymnast before this and realised that he had no talent for it so he moved to soccer. He plays full-back position and is seen as a crucial player in his team. He contributes towards the training programme and the coach values his insight into the game. He is often asked by the coach for his opinion:

*The guys come up to me and tell me that I have played well and saved the team. I get involved when the coach discusses our game. **He always asks for my opinion** on where I see the weakness of the team and on how to improve. **Nk2***

Nkosi has been to former white schools only and he loves to tease the learners at school even though he does not mean to hurt them.

*I like to play a lot when it comes to my class mates and most of the time they do not like it. The one incident, I was playing with a boy and he was laughing with us and the next moment he went and told the teacher that I was mocking and making fun of him. He is kind of girlish. I do not like boys who are a little bit girlish. That is the word I used. I did not use the actual words. I did not even realise that he was getting angry. I only realised when he went to the teacher and complained, so I apologised and we are friends now. **I do not like to hurt anyone**, because if you had to do it to me I know how it will feel. **Nk3***

Nkosi has high hopes for his soccer career. It is what drives him to excel at the sport:

*I would like to make it overseas. **The lifestyle is inspiring.** You become famous, especially if they see you coming from SA, like Lucas Radebe and Mark Fish. The wages they get is very high. **Nk4***

Nkosi is a religious individual and both his parents are educators. His mother is an educator and his father is the principal of Durham School for the Hearing Impaired. His father has been very supportive of his soccer career:

*Even if **he does not have money** for me to play soccer, he will borrow and make sure that I go and enjoy myself. He encourages me to play and tells me where my mistakes are and how I can improve. My father use to play soccer and always tells me 'you never know where you can end up'. **Nk5***

Nkosi speaks fondly about his family, even though he sometimes gets hiding from his father when he misbehaves:

We are a loving family.** We like to joke with each other. If we do something wrong we either get a hiding or we sit down as a family and discuss what happened and find a solution to the problem. My father still hits me if I do something wrong and then I deserve it. I get detention at school for school-related issues. It is usually detention for making noise in the class. I always do my homework, except for the two incidents when I forgot my textbook and did not bring my PE kit. **Nk6

Nkosi's club coach plays an important role in him achieving his soccer ambitions, and he also drives Nkosi and the team to excel:

*Positive, he has big dreams for us. He just needs the players who are committed. I am one of them who are committed. **I want him to be proud of me.** He encourages us. Stop doing this [referring to alcohol and drugs] because he says once you start it is hard to stop. **Nk7***

Nkosi says that school is not very well organised as far soccer is concerned:

School does not do much for soccer.** We were supposed to go to East London for a tournament and we were told about it only two weeks before we were supposed to leave. We had to pay R2000 and my brother and I are in the first team. My brother is at Kingsbury High. We could not go. **Nk8

Nkosi belongs in two worlds and struggles with some of the issues that have arisen as a result of this. He lives in a township but has always schooled at former white schools located in affluent areas. He is, however, aware of the plight of the township children:

*I do not like people taking advantage of others⁵³ or taking advantage of me. In the township the guys like taking advantage of those who go to white schools because they say I am a Danone [refers to Black people who speak like white people] and we are weak in soccer. They do mock me but I do not care even though it really hurts me. It also makes me feel bad when I cannot help the person who is struggling. I see that most **children do have talent in the township but the facilities are a problem for them.** I would like to see better facilities and maybe this can help stop the drugs, smoking and drinking. I have never drunk, smoked or used drugs. **Nk9***

Nkosi does not believe in the quota system and feels that you should make the team because you are good enough to be in the team:

*I would say it is all about performance. If you are a good player then you deserve a chance. **It should not be about colour** because if that person is going to make the team lose then what is the point? It should be about how you play. I think the quota system will play on. **Nk10***

Comment by Professor Srinivasen S. Pillay on Nkosi's self-portrait:

Nkosi draws himself in a static way. Also, he draws himself alone. In his responses, it seems like he deals with his personal stresses with humour, but that he is more distraught than he appears to be. On the one hand, he talks about his loving father who hits him; on the other hand he talks about leaving South Africa. It may be that he sees his sporting excellence as a means of escape, and this motivates him. This illustrates that while some feel rooted to a transforming society, others may want to leave it. This ambivalence is also illustrated by the township-privilege dichotomy which he seems to be struggling with. Also, his dislike of boys whose faces are girlish makes one think of what within himself he may hate – it makes one wonder how emasculating his father's physical abuse is. (I do not think that he sees it as abuse at this point.) In his drawing and his dialogues, more than any of the other portraits, there is a strong sense of repression and alienation. This may drive him to seek more meaningful connections, and his dislike of the quota system indicates that he must have some guilt in being associated with it. His case shows that despite this level of ambivalence, excellence in sport can be a way of escape.

⁵³ Social spaces of sporting excellence - Attending a former White school has resulted in Nkosi been jeered by the township children.

4.4.3 Tholethu – soccer

“I like to be a leader and lead the team because I am the one who stands there.”

Tholethu is a small-framed goalkeeper who plays for the U17 KZN soccer team. Although he describes himself as a shy person, his personality on the field is completely different:

*I like to communicate to the players and I like to shout so they can listen to the instructions carefully. **I like to be a leader** and lead the team because I am the one who stands there [goalkeeper] and I have to communicate to the players and defender so we do not get punished. **Tho1***

Tholethu enjoys being with his friends and although he is shy he makes an effort to be a public figure:

*I like challenges and I dream about football. I like to go to parties and spend time with my friends. I am a very shy person. I cannot stand in front of people, only if I have to, I do. Last year I was the captain of my team and I had to give a speech in front of many people. I had to because I was the captain. I managed it and was relieved when I finished. **I was the youngest player and won the trophy for goalkeeper of the season. I worked very hard for it. Tho2***

His mother and father are both professionals; his mother is a nurse and his father is a correctional officer at Weston Prison. He has two older brothers, one older sister and a younger brother. Tholethu’s family have a home in the township of Chesterville,⁵⁴ but he lives with his father on the prison premises and travels to school from there.

Tholethu’s father is his stability and anchor in life, and he is the one who sent him to the former white and the former Indian schools to receive a good education:

I did my grade one and two at Bergey West and then I went to Starway College. I then went to Saskia from Grade 9.⁵⁵ **Tho3**

⁵⁴ Chesterville is a black township near Durban in KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa, which is situated 20 km inland from the Durban city centre. It forms part of the eThekweni Metropolitan Municipality.

⁵⁵ Social spaces of sporting excellence - Tholethu’s dad has ensured that his son attended good schools. As a result Tholethu had to travel long distances to these preferred schools.

He also comes from a very sporty family, with both his father and his brothers playing soccer. His father used to be a goalkeeper and his brothers play for Barcelona Football Club. Tholethu's love for sport first started in the township with his friends and then he played sport at school:

When I was 8 years old at Chesterville, I started playing sport and at school when I was in Grade 5. Sport was interesting and all my friends and I played and enjoyed it. Tho4

Tholethu's sporting hero is a senior soccer player who plays for the academy:

Sekani Mbyiwe is in the first team of Pirates. He is in the academy playing in the amateur team and he motivates me. Tho5

Tholethu does not feel as disadvantaged as the children in the township who are suffering. Although there is talent in the township, the children are not noticed:

*It is very sad in the townships. The guys are good and **the scouts that come into the township usually miss spotting them.** It is sad because I know they are good. I see people suffer in the township. I can organise for my friends something. I am also struggling but I am still better off than most of them. Tho6*

He has a lot of faith in the country's soccer talent, but feels that the players are not serious about their sport.

***I think our country has a lot of talent.** There are many players who are keen to play and represent the national team. But they are not serious about the sport. Players need to be more committed and discipline is the main thing that you need to have. Tho7*

Tholethu's coach was, up until recently, the most influential person in his life. His coach died, and this has created a void in his life:

*He used to push me to my limits. He was a specialist goalkeeper coach and he taught me the skills that were specific for goalkeeping. We used to work in speed and agility, usually with the focus on jumping for the high balls. We worked hard on this skill so that if the situation arose, it would become second nature. **His dream was to see me play national football. So I want to make it up to him.** Tho8*

4.4.4 Chayton – cricket

“It’s in the genes.”

Chayton is a well-mannered white boy who plays cricket as batter number four for the KZN team. He describes himself as an introvert, but not when he is at the crease:

*I am quiet and laid-back, but I like to engage with my friends. I am a Christian and my faith helps me through my life. I am not as rebellious as the other guys are. But when I am at the crease I do not care about anything. **I take control at the crease. My mind-set changes and I am a lot more confident** when I am batting. I can just be myself at the crease. **C1***

He has a close-knit family and both his parents are professionals, his mother a music teacher and his father a consultant. He has two sisters, one older than him and one younger. He says he is very lucky to have both sets of grandparents living close to his family, and that sport has been in his family forever:

It is in the genes.** My dad played soccer and so did my grandfather and my great grandfather played provincial cricket. When I was young I remember just playing around with my friends in the garden at home. **When I was five years old I told my dad I want to play cricket for SA.** My dad helped me a lot with my cricket. I then joined a club. I was brought up in a sporting family. **C2

Besides sports being in the family genes, Chayton relies a lot on his mentor who has played a significant role in him excelling in cricket:

*My mentor is Doug Watson⁵⁶ and he definitely plays a big role in my life and my cricketing life. He helps me through all the times that I need him. It is great to have him around. **Someone I can rely on.** **C3***

Chayton is driven because he believes that he has the potential to be the best:

*Just knowing that you can have the potential to be the best and when you do achieve, it is an amazing feeling. **You just do not want to be ordinary.** When you see people achieving at the highest position, then you want to be like them. So you push yourself harder to be a top performer and this is what drives you. **C4***

⁵⁶ Doug Watson is a South African cricketer who played cricket for KZN. He represented South Africa A, Derbyshire and Dolphins.

Being a role model to younger players is important to Chayton as it drives him to give of his best and he enjoys the attention from them:

*I want to be a good role model for younger players. It is a good feeling to have when they come to you and look up to you. If you look at your own role models and how you idolise them, and to have young players to idolise you is amazing so you really want to drive yourself to become the best. My role model was Jonty Rhodes. Jonty was an enthusiastic player and he always encouraged the guys. He did perform well. He is of Christian faith and I believe that that is an important part of his life. I have some of his personality, the Jack in the box personality, on the field definitely. **My current role model is Jacques Kallis. He is professional about everything he does. He tries to be the best and that is what I want to do in the future. C5***

Chayton spent his primary school years in Johannesburg and attended former white schools there, but when the family found life in Johannesburg too fast-paced and moved to an affluent suburb in Durban, where he attended Kerrelyn⁵⁷ College, a private school. He is 16-years-old and is in Grade 10. At present he does not attend boarding school but is keen to attend because he believes as a senior it will be easier for him to integrate his school life and will open up opportunities for him. Chayton excels in his academic studies as well, and believes that his sporting psyche helps him to focus in his academic work:

*It is quite hard to juggle academics with the amount of cricket that I get at the moment. I think if I did not have cricket I could push my academic up a level or two. I think when I am focusing for batting at cricket **I am in the same sort of zone as when I am studying for exams.** When you learn to do that in sport you can transfer it into academic performance as well. C6*

Being in a private school has afforded Chayton many opportunities. He has been exposed to both national and international school teams. He is an avid batter and has won many trophies at tournaments:

*Last year we played against King Edwin School which is in Johannesburg. I made 122 runs which helped us win the match. I really enjoyed the game. **My***

⁵⁷ Kerrelyn College is one of South Africa's finest schools which strive to empower young men to develop to their full potential, attaining the wisdom, values, character and self-confidence to thrive in the world. The school is located in Botha's Hill, an inland suburb in the greater Durban area of eThekweni in KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa.

short-term goal is to make the KZN U19 team and go to Coke week. I really would like to make the SA school team this year. C7

Chayton does not have much of a life outside his cricket:

I do not have a lot of spare time. On Mondays I have private coaching with Doug, Tuesday school training and then club practice at night. I play for Chatsworth Sporting Club. Wednesday I have a break and then Thursday is school practice and club practice in the night again. Saturday and Sunday are both full days of matches, and this is not even the start of provincial practice. C8

When he does find time, Chayton enjoys just relaxing:

I try and relax as much as possible. I do not do any exercise because I want my body to recuperate. I try and keep the balance in my life as well. You cannot do sport all the time. To relax, I watch TV or relax in the garden. I enjoy going to movies or having a braai with my mates. C9

Transformation and the quota system have not affected Chayton in his journey to the provincial team but he is very aware of it and its effect on players.

*Personally it has not affected me. Throughout my years of going to provincial trials I always got into the team, so it has not affected me as much as other people. When the system first started it did not work out that good. People did not make the team when they were meant to make the team because they needed people of colour in the team. But I think recently all the guys that are in the team deserve to be in the team which is a good sign. I think it is heading the right way. In the earlier stages they were trying to force people of colour who did not deserve it, just to make the ratio, but I think **people of colour have progressed probably due to the quota system**. They have been exposed and are now good cricketers and in the team because of merit. C10*

Chayton speaks very highly of the KZN cricket team and says that the camaraderie in the team is very good:

I think it is wonderful. I do not think there are any issues with players and we get along very well and we have lots of fun together, and that is good. C11

Chayton is also very positive about South Africa, and is sure that the country will continue to progress:

*There are a lot of topics that are not too great at the moment but I think as a whole **the country is slowly progressing into greater heights**, and I do not think we are going to fall back into a situation like say Zimbabwe is in at the moment.*

C12

4.4.5 Jarrett – cricket

“I believe that if you cannot stand up for yourself then maybe you deserve it.”

Jarrett is a typical South African white boy, with a rugged look. He is an extrovert and enjoys being the centre of attention, but on the cricket field he is a completely different person:

*I am not quiet. I am outspoken. I am a relaxed, outgoing person who likes to spend time with friends on a Friday or Saturday night just having braais and socialising. I like to take control and be the centre in a social event. Off the field and in the change rooms I am a loudmouth and I get my mind off the game. But I am a completely different person on the cricket field. **I am focused. Ja1***

Jarrett’s parents were both provincial players: his mother played netball and his father played badminton for South Africa. His mother is an accountant and his father a businessman even though he completed only his matriculation. He has a younger sister and also a half-sister who lives in Johannesburg. Sport has always been in the family and Jarrett’s love for cricket started when he was forced to go on a holiday camp:

From the time I was five years old I played in the garden at my old house where we had a tennis court which did not have a net, so we played everything; soccer, hockey, cricket. When I was in Grade 3 I played cricket for the B team and for me cricket used to be just another sport. Then my parents forced me to go to the holiday camps and at this camp I was selected to play for the A team. Ever since then cricket has been my passion. Ja2

Jarrett is the third batter in the KZN cricket team and is also a spinner. At the age of 17 he made history at his school by becoming the top scorer. With excellent performance in cricket, it is no surprise that Jarrett wants to pursue a career in the sport.

*Last year we played St Chevs School and they had beaten us. This year we gave them a hiding. **I made 169 not out and this is the top score in Kerrelyn College’s history.** I want to make the KZN U19 side and then go to Coke week.*

*My main goal is to make SA schools. I have two different plans, if I make it I want to go to the Academy in Cape Town and if I do not make it **I will stay in Natal and I will go to the Dolphin's Academy. Ja3***

Jarrett's private coach is Gareth Brown who runs an Academy in Kloof.⁵⁸

*I have been going to him since I was six years old. He is my personal coach. He has known me all my life and he really knows my strength, my weaknesses, my personality. **He knows everything about me.** It is good to have a different relationship with your coach. If I go out he is often there and we can hang out and not just focus on cricket. **Ja4***

Jarrett has always been in private schools and now attends Kerrelyn College which is one of the most prestigious private schools in KZN. He is in Grade 11 and has been boarding at school since Grade 6.

*I think it has helped me a lot because at an all-boys school you either fight for yourself or you get set aside completely. You cannot let people stand all over you. I have been away from home a lot and had to fend for myself. I think with a cricket psyche it has helped me a lot to stand up for myself on the cricket field and my coach told me two years ago that when you walk on the cricket field **you got to think and know that you are the best player on the field.** So since then I have always walked on the cricket field, some might say it is arrogance, but I have walked on **knowing and being confident in my ability. Ja5***

Although there are boys who are meek and weak at school, Jarrett has a very masculine approach to life and believes that although it is a hard stand to take, the weak boys must learn to stand up for themselves:

*I do not know that I will be a protector of them because I believe that if you cannot stand up for yourself then maybe you deserve it. That was quite harsh. But I have seen a lot of boys who were weak in Grade 8 and 9 but change after that. Often if someone does something to them they stand up for themselves, and I think as you go along in boarding life you realise **you have to stand up for yourself,** and a lot of boys have done that. **Ja6***

With regard to the KZN team, Jarrett believes that there is a huge improvement in the training regime and that this has brought the team closer:

⁵⁸ Kloof is a leafy, middle to upper class white suburb, located inland in the greater Durban area of eThekweni in KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa.

*There is a new outlook on training. A few years before I got there I was told that training was low, but from last year the training has become very intense. **The camaraderie is very strong** and the team building exercises have provided the team with an opportunity to know each other on a personal basis because a lot of us come from different schools and we are not in touch with everyone. **Ja7***

Jarrett is extremely disciplined when it come to the preparation of training and tournaments. He describes his routine before a match day:

I sleep early and everything is organised before the match day.** I pack my bag and the juices are put in the fridge. I do that for myself and in the mornings I like to sleep in, I do not want to be rushed in the morning. I want to know that when I wake up, all I need to do is eat breakfast, shower and get changed and go. I do not want to have any other stresses in the morning. **Ja8

4.4.6 Sekani – rugby

“It is very, very rural. That is why I am a captain with a mission.”

Sekani is a rural boy who was fortunate enough to be selected to attend a former white school. He was also accepted to board at school since he comes from a rural area. He says that moving to the former white school was a huge adjustment for him as most of the boys were already well grounded both in academics and sport. He really had to work hard:

*It is from the inside. **You just have to work, work and work.** You do not blame anyone if you do not do well. It is all you. You know where you come from. **Se1***

His father is a businessman and has obtained a degree and his mother is a nurse who is working overseas. He has an older brother and two sisters, one older than him and one younger. He had applied to Durkheim High because his cousin was schooling there, and after being placed on the waiting list he was accepted at the school at the start of the schooling year. At 18 and doing his matriculation, Sekani has achieved a lot since attending Durkheim High. He was introduced to sports at the school and had to work his way from the bottom teams of rugby to finally making the provincial team in his matriculation year. His most valued accolade is his jersey:

It is my jersey. It is the first time I made KZN. I started playing rugby in Grade 8 when I was 14 I played in the 14 D, E and F teams which are the last three teams. By the time I reached matriculation I achieved provincial colours. This shows that I improved as a player. Se2

Sekani lives in the rural area of Mkuze, Northern KZN, and from the age of 4 he attended former white primary schools in Mkuze. His secondary schooling was however at Durkheim High, a former white school in Durban:

*Pre-primary from four years old at the former white school, **I have always been in the former white School.** It helps in English a lot. When they interview on television and you speak broken English, it is embarrassing. Se3*

Sekani speaks very highly of his school as this environment provided him with the opportunity to progress both academically and in sport:

*I improved during my time at school. When I go back there I will thank them for actually helping start the foundation of my game. I will do anything for my school. When I play provincial rugby one day I will make a speech, I have a lot to say about that school. **Durkheim High helped me to become a better player. The best five years of my life,** ⁵⁹Grade 8 to 12 was insane. I loved it. I cannot believe it is over. Se4*

Sekani is determined to do well in life. Speaking about his home in the rural area he is driven to do well so that he can give back to his family:

*Home is Mkuze which is in an informal, rural area. Dad has a home there. We have a generator. It is a proper home. That is why **I am a captain with a mission.**⁶⁰ I have to go back as I am the youngest son. I am going to get my big house there and when I am successful I will build them [his parents] one as well. Se5*

4.4.7 Synopsis: Boys' team sorts

The stories in this category show learners to have general personalities and characteristics: what sets them apart is their drive to succeed in their sporting field. They show tremendous focus and commitment. They set themselves realistic goals that

⁵⁹ Sporting Social Space - Sekani applied to a former White school to gain access to good education and his dad paid for his tuition as well as his boarding fees.

⁶⁰ Social spaces of sporting excellence - Although Sekani consciously decided to find better education in the urban area, he one day wants to go back to his rural roots and make a better life for his family.

are within their reach, with the ultimate goal of playing for their country. They look up to the senior players in the team as well as South African sports stars. Accolades such as trophies drive them to perform better.

The family plays an important role in the life of the learners. They show great appreciation for the sacrifices their parents make in order for them to succeed in sport. They also look up to their coaches, who provide valuable skills development, who they do their best to impress. The learners attend former white or private schools, and for some the schools have provided them with the opportunity to become provincial players.

Diversity in the provincial teams has provided the learners with an opportunity to experience differing cultures and languages. They have become acutely aware of the life of the disadvantaged learner and show concern and compassion towards them. The learners have experienced racism, but this has not deterred them from their goals. They have used it to their advantage and have become even more driven to succeed. When it comes to promoting team spirit, the learners are united by the ultimate goal of winning as a team. There are no issues regarding their diversity – they are committed to the team.

4.5 Girls' individual sport

This section depicts the stories of two learners who are playing girls' individual sports. The first learner is a gymnast who was scouted by a gymnastic's coach. She found gymnastics to be a positive influence on her self-worth as she is not academically driven. She persevered and through sheer determination and guts, excelled to become a South African gymnast.

The second learner is a high jumper who had to make tremendous sacrifices in terms of travelling distances to be trained and coached. She finds that in her quest to become a national athlete she is a loner, having to isolate herself from everyone because of the nature of the sport she does.

4.5.1 Jemma – gymnastics

“My body can do whatever I want it to do. My body is made for sport. Sport is easy for me.”



Jemma is a petite 16-year-old black girl who has great ambitions for her gymnastics career. She was the Senior South African National Champion in 2008 and was placed second in the Africa Games in Egypt in 2009 where she received 6 medals for all the different apparatus. She now has her eyes set on the Commonwealth Games⁶¹ in New Delhi in 2010 and the Olympics in London in 2012.

Jemma describes herself as one of those talented gymnasts who is very much in synch with her body:

*My body can do whatever I want it to do. **My body is made for sport** and sport is easy for me and school work is a bit hard. I listen to what my heart says, so if I want to do something really good and I cannot do it, probably then I have to calm myself down. I then remember the technique and I just do it. But I have to be determined to do it. There is that little braveness in my heart that keeps on telling me that I can do this and I put everything into it and it works. **Je1***

Jemma is of a very small stature and this may be a result of childhood illness:

⁶¹Jemma has made it through to the Commonwealth Games in Delhi in 2010 and won a gold medal in the vaulting section. She is still on track with the goals she has set for herself for the Olympics in London in 2012.

When I was young I was very sick, I was born too early and I had asthma and since then my granny took care of all four of us because my mom worked. Je2

Jemma grew up in Umlazi Township and at the age of five moved to the Central Business District of Durban. She comes from a low socio-economic background with both her mother and grandmother working as domestic helpers. She is very grateful for the support she gets from coaches, and her grandmother who is 68 years old, has been the most important person in her life.

I get support from my coaches. Julie is my coach, so every time I go to Johannesburg for training camps or competition Gail and Julie pay for transport and where I stay, so I get a little bit of help from them. I also get sponsored for food, lotion and clothes. If I have a problem and need some help I would ask my granny and she will tell me what to do. Je3

Jemma has found it difficult to balance her life between gymnastics and academics, and her family has urged her to continue with her gymnastics. She is at present out of school taking a gap year:

My granny said I could not do gymnastics and school work at the same time. I had to choose what I am good at mostly. So it was gymnastics and I stopped school at Grade 10. There was one point I wanted to stop gymnastics but my granny said that I must just carry on for a few more years to see if maybe I could go to the Olympics one day. I finished school last year and this year I am just doing gymnastics full time. It is called a **gap year**, and only from next year I will start studying. Je4

She has no father and lives with her grandmother and two sisters. There are 11 of them living with her grandmother. Jemma is a friendly and quiet person who enjoys visiting friends, going to the library and shopping in town with her sisters. Besides her family, Jemma gets a lot of support from her teachers and friends:

My own friends treat me very well. They are very supportive and they say I must not stop. The principal and teachers are very encouraging, and I try to do my best at school. Je5

Jemma enjoys being part of the KZN gymnastics team. As a national gymnast she is exposed to a whole new world, as she travels both nationally and internationally for competitions which she enjoys:

I get to travel to a lot of places and meet new people and make new friends. This year I travelled to Egypt for the All African games and won six medals for the different apparatus. Je6

Even though gymnastics is an individual sport with gymnasts having their own coaches, the KZN gymnastics team is very supportive of each other. However, the coaches tend to focus on their gymnasts because of the competitive nature of the sport. Jemma finds it easy to communicate with the team because she is a Zulu speaker:

*The team comprises of coloured and blacks and a few white gymnasts. Because we are in the same team we get to know each other and **support each other during competitions**. Some of the coaches are willing to help but they help their own gymnast first because they want their gymnast to win. I am okay with that, because my coach is trying to help me and if she does not know how to teach a new movement then we go to Johannesburg and get help from one of the other coaches. Je7*

Jemma was noticed at her school during a gymnastics PE lesson by an external coach. She was recruited into the coach's gymnastics club:

*When I was nine years old and at Collingwood Primary, Gail used to take us for gym classes. She saw that **I was talented** and she brought me to train with the other kids. I trained very hard and I was placed in Julie's class where I started from level one and progressed to level ten. I made the junior section and I am now in the senior section. Je8*

Comment by Professor Srinivasen S. Pillay on Jemma's self-portrait:

Jemma's story is notable for the emphasis on the way in which her mind and body have become one. Her powerful self-representation in the moving images of herself suggests that imagery plays a powerful role in her success. While she too illustrates strong determination, she emphasises that one of her major challenges is accepting what she is good at. Rather than forcing herself to be distracted, she appears to get her self-esteem by focusing on what she is good at. She seems to have a powerful superego – to the point that she is even quite harsh toward herself. The toilet-paper (**JeG1**) incident illustrates her relentlessness. Also, her interest in switching roles to being a teacher indicates that she speaks to herself from the inside and outside as well. Her ability to see things from another person's perspective must contribute powerfully to her excellence. She also attributes positive meaning to punishment – she sees it as a stepping stone to success rather than traumatic. Her ability to do this may rely in part on her strong relationship with her grandmother who gave her the strength to build herself up by tapping into her own aggression. She appears to have sublimated her own aggression into peak performance.

4.5.2 Tojan – athletics

“I have no life, just high jump all the time.”

Tojan is a South African high jumper who comes across as a quiet, shy person who on the outside may seem as if she does not know what she wants, but she is quite a determined young girl who is very focused on her goals for high jump. Tojan attends the private school Feluda College in Zululand. She is on a 50% scholarship at the school and is in Grade 10. She has already mapped out with her coach a road to the Olympics. She describes herself as friendly person who likes to spend time with her friends:

I am really loud. I do not take things too seriously most of the time and I am friendly. I like to make people laugh. I do not like to see people sad. I like to go to the beach or movies with my friends. I do not care where I am as long as I am with my friends. To1

Tojan is a coloured, 15-year-old girl who comes from a single-parent home. She lives with her mother and three older sisters. Tojan’s mother has a diploma and is an information technology specialist. She played hockey for Swaziland in her young days and is very supportive of Tojan and her sporting life. Her oldest sister, who is a biokineticist, is a fitness freak and is always conducting fitness tests on her to see the type of improvement she is making. Tojan’s family moved from Durban to Zululand when she was in Grade 1.

She describes Zululand as follows:

It is so much smaller compared to Durban. It is small but not too many shops, like shopping centres but there are a lot of houses going up now. So I have grown up in a small town kind of and it is nice because you know everybody and everybody supports you. To2

She is an outstanding high jumper, but this being an individual sport she finds herself in a very lonely place. Because of the nature of the sport Tojan has no role model or someone to look up to. She does not depend on anyone:

It is a very individual sport. It is just you. It has nothing to do with being part of some team. It is you. That is what makes it harder. If you rely on others, they are

*not going to be there when you are jumping, it is not going to make you jump higher than what you are. I do not look up to anyone because **I am not trying to follow in anyone's footsteps.** To3*

Tojan travels to Durban every weekend with her mother for training. Her life as well as her mother's life is consumed with high jump training. Her mother is the most supportive person in her life:

***I have no life, just high jump all the time, just train. My mom gives up a lot to take me⁶² up and down from Durban to training sessions, so she has no life. She does not have to do it but she does it.** To4*

4.5.5 Synopsis: Girls' individual sport

The learners here had general personality and characteristics - what sets them apart is the individualism of their sport. They have to train on their own and at most times feel very isolated and alone.

4.6 Boys' individual sport

This section depicts the stories of two learners playing in boys' individual sports. The first is a black athlete who is very confident and believes he has natural talent to be the best. He is fortunate to get a scholarship from his school after years of attending former white schools, to further his sporting career. The second learner is an Indian swimmer and the only learner in this study who made the team as a result of affirmative action policy. He has, however, proven himself as a provincial swimmer and has made it into the South African team.

4.6.1 Siani – athletics

"I can jump further than anyone, throw further than anyone. I have a natural talent."

Siani is a 16-year-old black boy who is in Grade 11. He has tremendous leadership qualities and has been earmarked to be Head Boy.

⁶² Social spaces of sporting excellence - Tojan has to travel long distances from home to attend coaching sessions.

*I think I am a leader, **I know I am a leader, I am influential**; I can be hard on guys sometimes. I like people to remember me. Just know who I was. **Si1***

He has an extremely close family comprising of his father, mother and little brother. He comes from a middle-income family with both his parents having diplomas; his mother is a teller in a bank and his father runs a shuttle service. He lives in Intuzuma, but since Grade 8, after securing a sport scholarship at his school is boarding at the school:

*I was born in Intuzuma, which is in Kwa-Mashu.⁶³ It is a township that is quite developed and has proper houses. It is a bit of a rough neighbourhood. My friends there are very social. I can go to the next door neighbours by just jumping over the fence and ask for anything. It is not like the suburbs where there are gates everywhere. I get a lot of support from my friends and living in the township has benefited me so much. **I do not think that I would be so sociable if I did not come from the township. Si2***

His parents wanted the best education for him and he started school at a private pre-primary school in Glenashley and continued with his primary and secondary education at a former white school. He has been fortunate when compared to other people in the township:

*My parents were financially well off and able to pay for proper education, so coming here to the former white school, like Glenashley, I was able to pursue my sporting career. Having done well in sport has secured me a **scholarship at school**⁶⁴ and I am now able to board at the school as well. **Si3***

Siani is a multi-talented athlete who excels both in rugby and athletics. He throws the discus and the shot put and is very confident in his sporting ability. However, he leans more towards rugby and is part of the Sharks Academy:

*I am just a sportsman. **I can jump further than anyone, throw further than anyone. I have a natural talent.** Many South African boys say they want to play for the Springboks but my dream is to **play for the Sharks**. I feel there is no better team to play for than the Sharks. **Si4***

Rugby is the sport preferred by Siani as he enjoys been part of a team:

⁶³ Intuzuma is part of KwaMashu, a black township located about 12 kilometers from Durban.

⁶⁴ Social spaces of sporting excellence - Siani has travelled most of his schooling life from home to former white school. He has now received a sporting scholarship which entitled him to free tuition and boarding.

*I like the **physicality of rugby as there is no better feeling than to grab shoulder to shoulder**. The team bond is great while athletics is **an individual sport, where if you lose you lose by yourself**. If you did not throw enough that is all on you. In rugby we have 15 boys playing and they are all playing for one thing and that is the school badge. I think I chose rugby over athletics. It is the team bond. It is always nice. **Si5***

Siani comes from the township but does not feel disadvantaged in any way. He has felt the burden of travelling for many years from the township to the suburbs in which he has schooled:

*I am only **affected in terms of distance**. I had to travel 35 minutes every day. My day starts at 05h30 in the morning and I only get home at 18:45. **Si6***

4.6.2 Daryl – swimming

“With swimming so white-based, it is so weird to see an Indian guy or black guy or coloured guy swimming.”

Daryl is a 17-year-old Indian boy who is the only affirmative action appointee from all the learners in this study. Daryl has this to say about himself:

*I tend to get too competitive at times. I am friendly but it is hard for me to get to know someone overnight. **I need to really trust the person**. I have a lot of friends, but there are only a few people I trust. **Da1***

Both his parents have diplomas and his father runs a breakdown company where his mother is the secretary. They live in Shallcross,⁶⁵ which is a mid-level socio-economic area. His parents have played an integral part in his swimming career. It was his mother that started him off in swimming, and his father has been *the* person who has supported him:

My mother just wanted me to learn how to swim**. Parents put a lot of pressure but my **dad did not force me when I stopped swimming just after I started my Grade 12**. I could see he was a bit disappointed that I stopped because of my Grade 12, but it was something I wanted to do and he respected that. **Da2

⁶⁵ Shallcross is a town 29 kilometres west of Durban in KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa and is part of the eThekweni Metropolitan Area. It is inhabited mainly by people of Indian descent.

He has an elder brother who is also a swimmer and has been Daryl's role model for swimming. He always found himself competing against his brother's times, and this has driven him to excel in swimming.

*I used to always **compete with him** and get better than him and achieve his times. **Da3***

Daryl's parents have only sent him to former white schools. His brother was already on a sports scholarship at Glengarry Boys High, and when Daryl started showing potential in swimming he was offered a sporting scholarship there as well:

*I went to Glengarry Boys High. I was not meant to go there but **I got a full scholarship.**⁶⁶ I get to race against the club swimmers at school and take part in the swimming gala. **Da4***

Although PE is compulsory at this school, it has not contributed to his swimming achievements. The school has a preferred sport with rugby, *the sport at the school*:

*PE not really, **we did not do much swimming** but when we were in the pool we play water rugby. Our school is really into rugby. **Whenever there is a chance, we play rugby and touch rugby.** **Da5***

Many swimmers go overseas for professional coaching and to gain experience. Daryl feels that this is essential to have the best coach possible if you want to realise your goals:

*With swimming it is quite good compared to overseas countries, but you got to get your experience, like what Ryk and Roland did going overseas. I think it was good but some people think they betrayed SA. I was training with Kevin and then I needed more experience, better people to compete against, and I moved and I do not think there is anything wrong with that. It is just preparing yourself and achieving your goals. **End of the day you are representing SA and not like going over to America and staying there and swimming for them.** **Da6***

It is difficult to balance sport with school work, and Daryl had to make a crucial decision during his matriculation year. However, he regretted cutting back on his swimming:

⁶⁶ Social spaces of sporting excellence - Daryl was fortunate to be awarded a sporting scholarship to study at a former white school. He has to travel long distances from home to the school to attend school.

I think it was one of the worse decisions I made, I just made SA [team] and I stopped. I guess it was getting in the way of my studies. I felt I was focused when I was in swimming and then I felt that I was not that focused anymore. Something was missing in my life. Da7

Daryl looks up to the senior swimmer in the KZN team, but a South African swimmer is his main sporting hero:

It is Wesley Gilchrest; he was a youngster that also trained hectic. I always looked up to him; he was an all-rounder, an elder in the KZN team. Yes, he was three years older than me, but my main hero will be Ryk Neethling. Da8

As a swimmer Daryl has had his fair share of ups and downs, especially with regard to transformation and the fact that swimming has been predominately a white sport. He has been a target of racial discrimination:

Especially with swimming so white-based and it is so weird to see an Indian guy or black guy or coloured guy swimming but you will always get people, like I tell someone that I am an SA swimmer, they look at you weird, it does put you off but it also motivated you in a way. When I went for SA games, one of the rugby players told my friend in Afrikaans that I probably made it in swimming because of quota. He thought I did not understand him, but I did and I chose to ignore him. Da9

4.6.3 Synopsis: Boys' individual sports

The stories of the boys who played individual sports show these learners to have leadership qualities. They are very much on their own when it comes to training and competition. The individualist nature of their sport drives these learners to be the best. The quota system being in their favour, and affords them the opportunity to compete and opens these learners up to criticism, even though they have proved themselves and made it into the South African team.

4.7 Conclusion

The stories of the learners invite us into their personal spaces where we get a glimpse of their lives, revealing the joy, anger, frustration, opportunities and barriers they experienced in achieving excellence in their codes of sport. These stories provide a detailed description of the learners' sporting journeys as they achieve sporting

excellence. They show the importance of the family, coaches and significant others and also demonstrate the impact of team spirit in a diverse setting, bringing out the unique role of race, class and culture in each case. These learners' stories reveal the links between the learners' notion of the self; the people who support them; their environment and society; and the unique way in which diversity feeds itself in their quest to achieve sporting excellence in a transforming society.

In this study the emerging thematic patterns were noted by moving backwards and forwards between the raw data. Groupings of the codes into themes was undertaken to see how they related to each other and to the research question. A brief overview is given on each of the five themes generated from the learners' stories, which will be expanded on in detail in the next chapter.

THEME ONE – SPORTING EXCELLENCE, SELF AND IDENTITY

Preparing for the race

The learners' characters and personalities are many and varied and includes how learners see themselves both as individuals and sportspersons, what drives them to achieve, their goals and vision, kind of physique, how they view injuries to themselves, their role models and who looks up to them, roles they play, the incentives that drive them and their spare-time activities.

THEME TWO – SPORTING EXCELLENCE AND THE SOCIAL CONTEXT

The starting block

The learners' childhood grounding and immediate support structures are discussed in this theme. Many individuals within the learners' close-knit circle impact on their performance. The commitment and sacrifices of parents, coaches and significant others play a vital part in the learners' sporting journey.

THEME THREE – SPORTING EXCELLENCE, SCHOOLING AND THE CURRICULUM

Building up speed

The schools that learners attend seem to play an important part in their sports performance. Parents are aware of the importance of the school, especially in providing the best possible setting for the learners to excel in their chosen sport. Seeking the perfect school has resulted in many learners schooling outside of their home environment. The school's role in recruiting learners, providing coaching, emphasising PE in the curriculum and ensuring a balance between academic work and sports enhances the learners' chances of excelling in sport.

THEME FOUR – SPORTING EXCELLENCE, TEAM SPIRIT AND TALENT SEARCH

Accelerating the speed

Making it into the KZN team is determined and influenced by many factors. The selection process, talent search and elitist nature of some sports have a great impact on how learners make the team. The KZN team is made up of learners from different racial backgrounds, and how they interact with each other in the team and promotion of team spirit are very relevant to the success of the KZN provincial team.

THEME FIVE – SPORTING EXCELLENCE, RACE, CLASS AND CULTURE

Crossing the finishing line

The learners are from very diverse backgrounds, especially in this transforming society. Their socio-economic background, language, race, class and culture have to be negotiated. The effect of the quota system and the presence of racism have created an added burden for the learners.

In the next chapter the themes which were generated from the learners' stories are analysed in detail, using key phrases articulated by the learners. I present an analysis

and interpretation of these stories, and in so doing provide a complete picture of who these learners are and how they are achieving in a transforming society.

CHAPTER FIVE

Emergent themes of sporting excellence

5.1 Introduction

This chapter provides a detailed analysis of the learners' stories by capturing the relevant and significant matters arising from the learners' data, which have been generated into five themes. Each theme has been given an analogy to show its similarity with the different stages of running a race. Theme one, Sporting excellence, self and identity, is given the analogy 'preparing for the race'. In preparing for the race, it is up to the learners to establish for themselves the foundation for their sport, and this is the most important part of a race. Theme two, Sporting excellence and the social context, is given the analogy 'the starting block'. The people close to the learners afford them the opportunity and support to participate in sport.

Theme three, Sporting excellence, schooling and the curriculum, is given the analogy 'building up speed'. In order to do well in sport, the school provides the setting in which sporting prospects become a reality for the learners. Theme four, Sporting excellence, team spirit and talent search, is given the analogy 'accelerating the speed'. Having their talents noticed and being able to work as a team increases the learners' sporting prowess. Finally, theme five, Sporting excellence, race, class and culture is given the analogy 'crossing the finishing line'. In a changing society it is the learners' racial affiliations that contribute significantly towards their reaching their goals in sport (see Appendix 18).

The learners' stories are analysed using the analytical frameworks discussed in Chapter Two (see section 2.9 Conceptual framing). The first framework, Figure 1: p 44, which will be used to explore the learners' mental and psychological basis for achieving excellence, is elaborated on in theme one. The second framework, Figure 2: p 49 which will be used to explore how social and contextual aspects play a role in contributing towards excellence, is elaborated on in themes two, three, four and five. The analysis is therefore framed by five themes as well as sub-themes. Each theme is explored in

depth and supported by data from the learners' stories, which are indicated by phrases in bold italics and referenced in brackets.

The themes are discussed in three steps: introduction of themes and sub-themes; discussion of the themes and sub-themes from analysis of the learners' stories; concluding with an interpretation of each theme as it emerged in this research study.

5.2 Theme one – Sporting excellence, self and identity

Preparing for the race

This first theme discusses how learners identify themselves as individuals as well as sporting persons. In analysing the learners' stories, the following sub-themes emerged from theme one: personality, self-efficacy, physique and goal setting. These sub-themes will be discussed, with the focus on the self and identity providing an understanding about learners who excel in sport.

5.2.1 Personality

When one is asked to describe one's personality, one immediately will list adjectives like funny, outgoing, happy or stable. The personality of an individual is unique and refers to the characteristics or a mixture of characteristics or mixtures thereof that make a person unique. Personality is the individual's unique psychological make-up or, more formally, "the underlying, relatively stable, psychological structures and processes that organise human experience and shape a person's actions and reactions to the environment" (Lazarus & Monat, 1979). Thus personality symbolises characteristic or consistent individual differences in behaviour. According to Bandura (1977) psychological functioning is explained in terms of a continuous reciprocal interaction of personal and environmental determinants.

When Mead (1934) wrote about self-actualisation, he was referring to actualisation of a person's personality, which was integrated, non-defensive and optimally functioning. Psychology defines identity as a cognitive construct of the self, fundamentally relational and self-referential, that answers the question 'who am I?'. The typical psychological

concept of the self as a collection of personality traits primarily focuses on the individual (Turner & Onorato, 1999). Learners' personalities vary and reflect the kind of individuals that they are or are becoming. Their personalities and character differ in many respects and are dictated by what life has had to offer them.

The learners identified themselves as social beings. Nonthando enjoys *socialising with people* (No12) and makes friends very easily. She is outgoing and looks forward to social interaction. Tojan is a friendly person who makes everyone laugh and has a carefree attitude to life: *I do not take things too seriously most of the time and I am friendly* (To1). Similarly, Nkosi is always making others laugh (*I am a humorous person* (Nk1)) but this sometimes has its downside when in his jovial way he actually hurts people and then feels terrible because this was not his intention: *I do not like to hurt anyone* (Nk3). However, Nkosi concedes to his negative personality - *I am a bit short-tempered* (Nk1) - which he believes is a family trait that he has inherited, but he is quick to defend this negativity about himself as he is in control of this part of his personality. For Daryl making friends is easy, and he feels that *you need to really trust the person* (Da1), as the most important criteria for him is the trustworthiness of his friends.

The learners came across as confident individuals with unequivocal certainty concerning their abilities. Yamka will not let anything or anyone get her down (*I am so positive* (Y6)), and knowing this about herself sometimes annoys her. She is totally averse to fights and conflicts (*I hate it with my life* (Y6)) and will try her best to avoid such situations. When she reflects on herself, she admits that from being boisterous and vocal about her achievements, she is now humbled by them: *my biggest achievement has brought me down to earth* (Y5). Her sporting achievements have changed the way she now reacts to her fame.

Drea has had to face emotional upheavals at a tender age, and being involved in sport provided her with an avenue to become a determined individual able to face and meet challenges, and helped to build toughness within (*I have a strong character* (Dr1)). Siani prides himself as having potential and is confident about his ability: *I know I am a*

leader, I am influential (Si1). Besides his sporting feats, he has been earmarked to be Head Boy of his school, proving to be an all-round individual.

The learners shoulder huge responsibilities, showing tenacity in the face of adversity. Nonthando comes from a low socio-economic background, where she is the sole minder of the home (*I do everything (No2)*), while her parents spend long hours at work trying to make ends meet. She juggles her life to ensure her sport does not suffer and is determined to succeed. She believes that if someone had to shoulder all these responsibilities, they would have given up a long time ago. Jarrett developed a manly personality as a result of his being at an all-boys boarding school. His outlook on life is that *you have to stand up for yourself (Ja6)*, because boys must be able to fend for themselves in the world.

Having a hectic lifestyle due to the long hours spent on their sport, the learners look forward to when they can do just about nothing. Having a very tight schedule, Chayton relaxes whenever he finds time: *I try and relax as much as possible (C9)*. Brendon also finds that doing nothing (*I just lie around, watch TV and become a couch potato (B4)*) helps to balance his hectic sporting schedule and is the perfect way for him to relax.

5.2.2 Self-efficacy

When it comes to playing their sport, the learners' personalities are very different to their general characters. They are very much in the self-zone and nothing can come between this inner self and their sport. This sporting personality is in keeping with what is required to be the best and able to beat the opposition at whatever cost. The learners are driven and focused on their sport. They believe in themselves and play their sport with complete commitment and dedication.

The road to success is embedded in the notion of the self. What you think about yourself, your confidence in your ability and dependence on yourself are the foundations of your accomplishments. Life is tough, and to get through the toughness you must have faith in yourself: *the only person you are relying on is yourself (No1)*. At Nonthando's school many learners depend on their parents. She feels that they have to start relying on themselves because life can change so easily, and if they do not

depend on anyone they will survive. When the odds are stacked against her she takes charge, and if she wants to achieve she has to make it possible by doing whatever she has to do by herself: ***I must do something myself (No3)***. Sekani has the same ideology, for in pursuit of his dream it is hard work that pays off. Having made a huge change from a rural area to a former white school, he has had to work extra hard to fit into a demanding school (***you just have to work, work and work (Se1)***).

The learners' perceptions about their ability are a strong indicator as to how they ready themselves mentally to play competitively. Having this mental edge - ***you got to think and know that you are the best player on the field (Ja5)*** - is what ensures Jarrett's success on the sports field. Chayton is also in charge on the sports field (***I take control at the crease (C1)***), and it is this mind-set that keeps him focused on his game of cricket. Yamka changes from being a fun-loving individual into someone who is ***aggressive on court (Y1)***. This sporting personality is essential for her to create a fearless impression of herself to the opponents. She also wants to be superlative (***I hate knowing that I have not given my best (Y7)***) as she detests being second best, and this motivates her to excel in sport.

Brendon is dedicated to playing soccer in the hope of becoming a professional player; ***I am committed to my soccer (B2)***. He is, however, facing many challenges, the main challenge one being that he is a white boy trying to make his mark in the black dominated sport of soccer. However, he shows guts and determination to succeed (***nothing can stop me from playing soccer (B7)***), and to achieve his goal. He is one of the few white soccer players who play club soccer in the township.

The learners spend hours training, demonstrating their commitment and dedication to their sport. Most of Chayton's time is spent on the sports field; as a result he says ***I do not have a lot of spare time (C8)***. He makes tremendous sacrifices in order to achieve.

Another mental strategy that the learners employ is to be resolute on the sports field. Jarrett is decisive in his playing (***I am focused (Ja1)***), and to ensure this mental state he has to be prepared to avoid distractions: ***I sleep early and everything is organised before the match day (Ja8)***. To be the best also requires hours of training, and Samiya

has silenced her critics who told her it would take years for her to make the team, by doing just that: ***I train and I use it to mould me and make me play better (Sa4)***. She puts all her energy into her training session because she is of the view that what she puts into her training will result in a good performance during competition. She has received many accolades as a result of her conviction.

Being involved in sport contributes to the learners' self-worth. For Theola sport is more than playing for the provincial team, it is a means of overcoming her poor socio-economic status and doing what is right. She sees sport as an emotional stabiliser (***I am in sport and I like sport (The4)***) that adds meaning to her life amidst the poverty, violence and drugs that surround her. Similarly, Drea attributes her emotional and physical stability to her playing sport - ***hockey has been a great help emotionally and physically (Dr2)***. Her engagement in sport has kept her grounded in a period of emotional upheaval and being focused on her sport contributed to her excellent achievements as a goalkeeper in hockey.

The learners are also driven to do everything in their power to meet the demands of their sporting obligations. Attending training sessions is of paramount importance and not to be missed as this will jeopardise the learner's place in the team. For Nonthando transport is a huge problem, given her socio-economic background. In order to make the training sessions she uses of public transport and travels by train (an unsafe mode of transport, especially for girls). She, however, is quite confident in her ability to take care of herself and has no fear of travelling by train: ***I am a pretty strong girl. I do not care. I am not scared (No10)***.

At a very young age Chayton knew that he wanted to play cricket for his country ***when I was five years old I told my dad I want to play cricket for SA (C2)***. This kind of belief in himself has driven him to achieve in this sport. Pillay (2010a, p. 81) states that the greatest sadness one can burden oneself with is the vulgarity of mediocrity, for mediocrity is an unnatural and untenable condition, "to be mediocre is to deny the essence of the greatest offerings of which you are capable and to collude with the masses that tend to identify with the social ideal of 'normal'".

5.2.3 Physique

A sportsperson's physique determines the suitability of the sport he or she plays. Just being short, tall, well-built or stocky can determine one's level of excellence. The learners are conscious of their stature and they use it most effectively to their advantage. Yamka knows that her physique lends itself well to her position as a goal defence in netball (***I am tall and well built (Y14)***). A netball player who is tall is ideally suited for this position, and Yamka is known to have the best stretch for that position in KZN.

Gymnastics is a very demanding sport, and Jemma began life as a premature and sickly baby: ***when I was young I was very sick (Je2)***. She also suffered from asthma, but despite this she has become one of the best gymnasts in the country. She believes that ***my body is made for sport (Je1)***, as she can make her body do whatever she wants it to do. She finds being a gymnast easy compared to the work at school.

5.2.4 Goal setting

To make their way up the ladder of success, learners create for themselves a vision of what they want to accomplish, and are driven towards achieving their goals. Having goals and vision is important to the learners, as it keeps them focused and driven to attain those set goals. The journey to succeed and achieve in sport requires persistence and dedication. Achievement of milestones, accolades, trophies and awards is essential to keep the interest of the learners, and encourages them to attain the next level of sporting success. Receiving of these accolades⁶⁷ is an affirmation of the hard work and time they put into their training. The learners are knowledgeable about the hierarchy in sport, and with immediate and long-term goals already set, have placed in motion their ultimate goal of playing for their country.

The learners are driven to do their best for many reasons. To be different from the rest of the crowd and be noticed (***you just do not want to be ordinary (C4)***) is what drives Chayton to be the best batter in cricket. He has attained provincial colours for the junior cricket section and already has his sights set on the next level of achievement: ***my short term goal is to make the KZN U19 team (C7)***. Soccer stars live a life of luxury, and the

⁶⁷ Prior performance accomplishments are a major source of self-confidence, as "successful behavior increases confidence and leads to further successful behavior" (Weinberg & Gould, 2007).

world of soccer is very enticing to budding soccer players. Nkosi is driven to be a successful soccer player because *the lifestyle is inspiring (Nk4)*, and he wants to have a better life than the one he has at present. Jemma is also from a low socio-economic background and is driven to excel because *I get to travel (Je6)*. She has competed at one international championship and feels that excelling in gymnastics is the only opportunity she will get to travel the world.

Siani is driven by the knowledge that *I can jump further than anyone, throw further than anyone. I have a natural talent (Si4)*. Knowing that his athletic prowess is second to none gives him confidence that one day he will *play for the Sharks (Si5)*. Having an older sibling who is also a KZN swimmer to *compete with him (Da3)* has driven Daryl to excel in swimming. Daryl used his older brother's swimming times as a yardstick to better his own, and has done so successfully since he is now in the South African team.

When Nonthando was awarded the Sportswoman of the Year trophy at her school, she was beside herself: *I was taking pictures, doing everything with my trophy. I just went crazy (No7)*. Having had to sacrifice and struggle by herself to reach the level she has, receiving the trophy and being recognised for her hard work, meant the world to her. She now says *I want to be in the SA team (No13)* as her ultimate goal. Drea was the first black learner to be awarded the prestigious Sportswoman of the Year award in the 100-year history of her school: *The achievement is a plus, but it is doing what you love that is my motivation (Dr5)*. *I would like to make the national team and attend the Olympics 2012; definitely that (Dr6)* - are the goals she has now set for herself.

Being acknowledged for their achievements is a definite incentive that drives learners to achieve more. The fact that *I was the youngest and won the trophy for goalkeeper of the season (Tho2)* encouraged Tholethu to continue being the best goalkeeper for his club. Aiming to break records and having something tangible to work towards - *I made 169 not out and this is the top score in Kerrelyn College's history (Ja3)* - was the driving force behind Jarrett's road to fame. Despite being selected for the provincial netball team, Theola could not make the provincial training sessions due to financial constraints. However, this did not stop her from continuing to play netball at club level.

She **achieved the Best Player Trophy (The3)**, and this accolade fuelled her determination to move closer to her goal of playing for her country.

Learners who have experienced rural living and have been provided with an opportunity to succeed are driven to do their best so that they can give back to their family and community. ***I am a captain with a mission (Se5)*** is how Sekani sees himself. Having had to work his way from the bottom of the rugby team, his rugby jersey (***it is my jersey (Se2)***) is his prize possession for it denotes that he has improved in his rugby and achieved provincial colours through hard work and perseverance. Having a holistic approach to her life (***I always knew I will be an architect and a national player (Sa1)***) inspired Samiya to both set goals for her volleyball and be focused on what career path she wants to follow.

Yamka is driven to perform, and despite having had a major setback through injury, was adamant that she would not stop her training regime: ***I was really distraught because they told me that I would not be able to do sports again (Y3)***. Yamka willed herself to overcome the injury and get back to playing sport. Her leg injury prevented her from swimming and playing netball, so she got into a routine of strengthening her upper body (***I am very paranoid when it comes to fitness (Y4)***). She was driven to get back into sport, so kept her fitness level up. Once the rehabilitation phase was over she not only got back into playing sport but excelled in three codes of sport at provincial level, and was ranked number two for life-saving, also setting a South African record for this.

There are no hand-outs for Brendon, who says, ***if I want something I have to achieve or do well or save up (B4)***. Despite achieving and doing well in his soccer, Brendon has to work towards whatever he wants. He does not just get things. His parents firmly believe that their son must achieve or save up to buy the things he desires. This has driven him not only to perform well in soccer but he is determined to overcome the racial issues prevalent in soccer now that he has secured his provincial colours. He would like to attain his national colours: ***I would like to play for my country (B1)***.

The personalities of learners who excel in sport are general in nature. What sets them apart is their drive to succeed in their chosen sport. They show tremendous focus and

commitment, and are very confident about themselves. They view challenges with a positive attitude and tend to avoid conflict and fights. They have the tenacity to overcome any obstacles placed in their way. The learners see themselves as leaders.

Learners are driven by what they can attain if successful in their sport. They do not want to be ordinary, but want to stand out and be seen. As such, the learners set realistic and achievable goals for themselves. It is these goals that will allow them to progress to the next sporting level and help them to attain their ultimate goal - to play for their country. Receiving accolades such as trophies and awards drives the learners to perform better.

Learners who play an individual sport are in their own world when it comes to training and competition, and they feel very isolated. They train on their own most of the time, where it is only them and their coach at training sessions.

5.3 Theme two – Sporting excellence and the social context

The starting block

In a social environment the learners are surrounded by individuals who impact on their sporting achievements. In this theme I discuss the people who form the support structures for the learners, which includes family, friends, coaches and significant others⁶⁸ who form the learners' close-knit circle. This theme echoes Bronfenbrenner's microsystem, which is the setting in which the learners live and in which the most direct interactions with social agents take place. According to Scanlan & Lewthwaite (1988), the child, coach, and family environment constitute the social context influencing children's participation in sport. The learner is not a passive recipient of experiences in these settings, but someone who helps to construct the settings.

5.3.1 Family

The family is considered to be the essential element of a society where the relationship between parents and children is the most basic of all the interpersonal relationships that

⁶⁸ Studies in sport and socialisation indicate that people are socialised into sport and that the most important agents of socialisation are described as significant others and include parents, siblings, teachers, peers and role models (Coakley, 2007; Moore et al., 1991).

exist. The bond between parents and children is incredibly strong, and with learners who excel in sport it is no different. Family love, support and encouragement are crucial for these learners, even though in some instances the family is not as complete as it could be. Parents and children are linked because of their ties of blood, which distinguish the family from any other interpersonal relationships. Chayton believes that his achievement in cricket is because *it is in the genes (C2)*; he grew up in a family where sport was integral to their lifestyle, with members from his paternal side having represented KZN.

The environment the learners grow up in allows them learners to thrive at sport from a very tender age, as childhood impressions are lasting. Parents are initially responsible for providing opportunities that allow their children to enjoy sport. According to Cote (1999), children become interested in sport when parents allow them at a young age to sample a wide range of activities that they know will be enjoyable and fun for their children, without the focus being on intense training. The choice of sport is not important, as long as the children have fun. In this study the learners started playing sports at a young age, and fun and enjoyment were key ingredients to their wanting to play sport. Drea has always been involved in sport, saying *I probably grew up with a ball in my hand (Dr3)*. Jarrett feels that he has an advantage in sport because *from the time I was five years old I played in the garden (Ja2)*, and this was how his love for sport started. His road to cricketing fame started when *my parents forced me to go to the holiday camps (Ja2)*. He was glad that they did this because it was at the camps that he realised his potential for cricket.

Daryl is also grateful to his mother because *she just wanted me to learn how to swim. (Da2)*. Power and Woolger (1994) found that in swimming, maternal modelling related to both boys and girls showing enthusiasm, whereas paternal modelling was negatively associated with the enthusiasm of boys. Daryl's mother showed an interest in his swimming because she wanted to ensure the safety of her son in the water, and this provided him with the opportunity to become a swimmer for South Africa.

The love between parents and their children is special, growing for so many years without judgement and without limit. Parents simply love their children beyond all

bounds. For Theola *my dad gives us love (The1)* is what she most values despite the disappointments in her life. Living in a rural area and not been able to represent the province as a result of her low socio-economic background has not changed the way she feels about her family. She is content with the love provided by her father; for her that is enough.

Involvement and motivation in sport were not associated with parents' socio-economic status. Overman and Rao (1981) state that parents are committed to their child's involvement in sport, and will find the financial resources by making personal sacrifices, even though (according to Kay (2000)) the main burden on the family is the financial cost. Nkosi's father is very supportive of him and will go out of his way to provide for him, even if *he does not have money (Nk5)*. Family is very important to him; *we are a loving family (Nk6)*, especially when there are issues to be sorted out. Even though Nkosi knows that if he misbehaves his father will not hesitate to hit him, his allegiance to his family is very strong.

Learners are indebted to their parents for the s they have made. In order to promote and support their children in sport, Hellstedt (1987, 1995) states that parents will sacrifice their personal interests. This is endorsed by Tojan when she says *my mom gives up a lot to take me (To4)*. Tojan's mother has to take her daughter from Zululand to Durban almost every weekend in order to attend training sessions or athletics meetings. Yamka also feels indebted to her father: *I thought I cannot let my dad down. If I did not train I would disappoint my dad (Y8)*. Yamka looks up to father, as he has supported and encouraged her in her sporting choices. He has also gone out of his way to provide the best of equipment, and she feels indebted to him.

Samiya is very fortunate to have the support and love of both her parents: *They are equal (Sa2)* in their contribution to her achievements. She says *my parents are very involved (Sa3)*, and for Samiya the role of parents is important in guiding their children on the right path. She has witnessed many children who have talent, but because they have no parental support do not pursue their talent. Samiya's parents have made huge sacrifices *travelling every weekend to Durban (Sa5)* to make certain she attends all her training sessions. This means travelling long distances at huge financial costs.

Parents are seen as the primary factor of socialisation. They facilitate their children's entry into sport, and their influence on sport participation and achievement is very important. As children grow older they begin to rely on their parents for their financial needs, managing their time and transportation. According to Cote (1999) and Green and Chalip (1998), these become the parents' primary responsibility.

Not all parents are sports-orientated but when Brendon's parents noticed that he was showing talent and had great potential in soccer they ensured that their support made a difference: *when I started to play soccer they became more involved in soccer (B5)*. Playing soccer has created opportunities for Brendon to forge friendships: *I have made lot of friends through playing soccer (B6)*. Friends become important people in the lives of the learners: *I do not care where I am as long as I am with my friends (To3)*, and for Tojan provide the companionship she so desperately wants in her lonely world of high jump. Jemma depends on family, friends, teachers and coaches as, *they are very supportive (Je6)*. They have given her their unconditional support for the vital choices she has had to make with relation to her school work and gymnastics. Pillay (2010a, p. 84) states that becoming an expert requires practice, and practice requires spending time alone, "‘aleness' is different from 'loneliness', and that the reward for the initial sacrifice of being alone is what your expertise will eventually make you a people magnet."

Siblings also play an important role, especially older siblings. Learners set their standards based on the performances of their older sibling. Daryl achieved his level of performance by setting those of his older brother as his benchmark, which provided him with an opportunity to always *compete with him (Da3)*. Yamka looks up to her older brother and, is always striving to do her best because *I love getting his approval (Y9)*.

Strong family bonds and encouragement from parents and siblings is seen as a foundation for these learners. However, when there is a reversal of roles and the learner is the one who is depended on (*my mom counts on me (No4)*), then the drive to succeed is even more pronounced. Besides the pressures of being a sport achiever, Nonthando has to take care of household responsibilities. The socio-economic status of the family demands that the parents work long hours so her mother relies on her to maintain the

home and make sure that food is provided for the family when they get back from work. The family lifestyle does not leave much time for interaction: *I do not have a chance to do that with my mom (No5)*, and this saddens Nonthando when she sees other girls spending time with their mothers. She yearns for her mother to come and watch her play or even sit and talk about mother-daughter issues.

5.3.2 The coach

To perfect the art of coaching, a coach must master the capacity and ability to care, support, listen, respect, challenge and believe in their athletes. Orlick (2002, p. 12) describes great coaches as those who “help athletes to continue to love doing what they are doing, and therein make excellence a realistic goal and the journey enjoyable”. Coaches can make all the difference in the learners’ achievement and progress in sport. They show tremendous passion and commitment towards ensuring that the learners achieve their best. Besides this, coaches also provide psychological and emotional stability, which are essential to promote the high level of performance required. Intervention studies by Smith and Smoll (1999) show that the coach’s encouragement and praise results in positive outcomes in players.

The learners realised the value of their coaches and the efforts they put into their training. Samiya is aware of the *sacrifices our coaches put into training us (Sa7)*. Some coaches go beyond the call of duty to groom their prodigy. Jemma is fortunate (*I get support from my coaches (Je3)*), they not only give her the intense training required for a gymnast, but also support her financially, ensuring that she is able to compete in national and international competitions. Having a coach who *knows everything about me (Ja4)* is important to Jarrett, since his coach is able to have a holistic picture of him and coaching becomes more personal.

The learners’ performances are also based largely on affirmations they receive from their coaches. Coaches are relied on for skill mastery, but some learners value them because, for example, *he always asks for my opinion (Nk2)*. Asking learners’ opinion on various aspects of soccer has boosted Nkosi’s morale as he feels a sense of importance. He will do just about anything to impress his coach because *I want him to be proud of me (Nk7)*. Coaches leave an indelible mark on the lives of the learners, and

even when not around anymore learners want to do their best. Tholethu's coach had died, but he said *his dream was to see me play national football. So I want to make it up to him (Tho8)*.

5.3.3 Significant others

The learners were able to identify a person who played a pivotal role in their journey to achieve in sport. Having one person who has been instrumental in the learners' achievement provides them with sustained support, guidance and an anchor. For Chayton, his private coach and mentor is *someone I can rely on (C3)*, since as he not only provides outstanding coaching but stability in all aspects of his life. He is totally reliant on his private coach for support and guidance. Having total confidence in Nonthando's netball ability has made the school's netball coach an important icon in this learner's life: *She has faith in me; she knows I can do it (No9)*. To have someone believe in her potential gives her a sense of a positive aura from an external force.

Imparting sound moral and ethical advice has a profound effect on the learners' self-esteem. Theola says *my coach always tells me that when you are in sport, it is the best thing, especially for girls⁶⁹(The5)*; this has made her club coach the person that epitomises good living through playing sport, in an environment ravaged by abuse, drugs and violence. Her club coach has instilled in her the value of sport in one's life and this has propelled her to be the best she can be. Learners are also not immune to problems and upheavals in their lives and when these occur Jemma relies on her grandmother for advice on the demanding world of gymnastics: *I would ask my granny and she will tell me what to do (Je3)*.

Having to meet her training obligations, Tojan has to travel long distances to meet with her coach. The person who makes this possible for her is her mother (*she gives up a lot to take me (To6)*), and this sacrifice of her mother is what makes her the most important person in Tojan's life. When Daryl decided to focus on his studies during his matriculation year, his swimming was compromised. Although his father was disappointed, he said *my dad did not force me when I stopped swimming just after I*

⁶⁹ Walter and Du Randt (2011) in their study found that growing up in communities where exercise, particularly for women, was not seen as part of their Black culture and therefore not seen as important or encouraged.

started my Grade 12 (Da2). This trust and faith from his father makes him the most significant person in Daryl's life.

The family is the most important support structure for the learners and they look to the family for love and support. They appreciate the sacrifices that their parents make in order for them to succeed in sport. The family environment provides a crucial setting in which the learners grow up and where they are first introduced to sport, which leaves a lasting impact. Having friends to spend time with and socialise with is important in creating a balanced lifestyle for the learners. Being with friends constitutes a relaxing environment in which the learners can be themselves. The learners value the commitment shown by the coach to their training, and want to make them proud by succeeding. They look up to their coaches, who provide valuable skills development, and do their best to impress them. The learners feel that their coach is more than a coach and knows everything about them.

Having a significant person in their life provides the learner with the assurance that there is someone out there upon whom they can rely and who believes in them. The significant other is someone that knows the learners well and offers them complete support in everything they do. In this study the significant others that the learners identified were their mother, father, grandmother, coach or mentor.

5.4 Theme three – Sporting excellence, schooling and the curriculum *Building up speed*

The school is the context in which sport is made possible for the learners, and here pertinent issues relating to the role of the school, the PE curriculum and sports versus academics are discussed. This theme echoes Bronfenbrenner's mesosystem, which refers to relations between microsystems or connections between contexts. These refer to the relation of the learner or the learners' families' experiences to school experiences. In this study the school is the context, and the extent to which the school experience contributes to the learners' sporting development will be analysed.

5.4.1 Role of the school

Schools are sites at which the education of learners unfolds, both academic and sporting. For the learner, the role of the school in promoting their sporting endeavours deviates a bit from this traditional role, in that they see school as an opportunity to promote their sporting agenda. The selection of schools becomes imperative in how best their sporting needs are being met.

All of the learners in this study except one have at one time in their schooling life attended former white schools. Selection of school has been a conscious decision, to allow them to realise dreams that would not have been possible at the schools in their residential area. Learners from the rural and township areas have moved to former white schools. Tholethu's father sent his son to schools that he thought provided him with sound education as well as sporting opportunities: ***I did my Grade 1 and 2 at Bergey West, which is a former white school (Tho3)***. His formative years were spent at former white schools, with the last phase of his schooling at a former Indian school. Similarly, Sekani, although living in a rural area, starting his schooling by attending the former white school near his home: ***I have always been in the former white schools (Se3)***. Fortunate to be financially secure, his father was able to send him to a prestigious school in Durban, which he also boarded at. For him the time spent at school was ***the best five years of my life (Se4)***. Moving to a former white school, and from a rural to an urban area, proved to be of great advantage to Sekani as he excelled in rugby through sheer determination and hard work and made it into the provincial rugby team.

Having the opportunity to attend the school of their choice has meant added burdens for the learners and their families in terms of time and finance. For Siani the only disadvantage he experienced being a black boy was in terms of travelling to his school: ***I am only affected in terms of distance (Si6)***. Siani's parents have only sent him to former white schools from Grade 1, and as a result he had to travel long distances from his home in the township. Although not so much of a financial strain on the family (since his dad runs a shuttle service), it did mean spending long hours travelling to school. This was alleviated when he went to high school and because of his excellent performance in sports not only received ***a scholarship at school (Si3)*** but also free boarding at the school, which meant no more travelling.

Nonthando has not been that fortunate. With no scholarship, and a desire to attend a better school, her father has had to pay school fees as well as travelling expenses, since her school is quite a distance from her home in the township. With the added responsibility of being a prefect at the school, her hours are also much longer: ***I only leave school at about 4 o'clock (No6)***. However, the school has a dedicated netball coach who took Nonthando under her wing, providing her with the chance to excel in netball.

The learners have also been fortunate in that they have been recruited by schools because their sporting talents were noticed. Daryl's swimming talent was noticed by his coach, who happened also to coach at a prestigious former white school. As a result, Daryl ***got a full scholarship (Da4)*** to this school. Being recruited by this school provided Daryl with a means of furthering his swimming career.

Schools have also been selected for the role they play in enhancing the learners' sporting requirements. Playing soccer and wanting to further his soccer achievements required Brendon to compete all over the province, throughout the year. This meant he had to compete during school time, so being in a school that is ***very supportive of what I do (B8)*** meant that he could do just that. Brendon had to change schools since his previous school did not afford him this flexibility. Some schools do not contribute at all to the learners' sporting endeavours. Nkosi says ***school does not do much for soccer (Nk8)***. He relies on his club to further his soccer ambitions, since playing soccer for the school is not a positive experience because the school is unorganised and not able to provide the stability that he needs.

5.4.2 PE curriculum

In the schooling system PE is compulsory for all learners, and as part of the curriculum its focus is on skill development. It is through this skill development process that learners can deduce the code of sports they are best suited for. However, according to the learners PE as a learning area is not taken seriously, is not properly implemented, and has not contributed to advancing their sport.

Yamka looks forward to her PE lesson and is always properly attired for it. However, she describes the PE lesson as *Physical Entertainment (Y13)*, because she has to observe the other learners in the class conjuring up every excuse possible as to why they are unable to do the lesson. She is quite amused by it, even though she would grab every opportunity to exercise. While for Yamka PE lessons provide a source of amusement, for Drea it is a period she does not look forward to since the PE lesson is not implemented properly, with the emphasis on theory rather than practical. The lessons are taught in a feeble way as most of the learners are not serious about learning issues pertaining to sexually transmitted diseases. They mock the lesson being taught and blow up condoms, and Drea does not see the value of it (*I think that is pathetic (Dr7)*).

Although PE is a compulsory subject at Daryl's school, it has not contributed towards his performance in swimming - *we did not do much swimming (Da5)*. Being at a school where rugby and cricket are the dominant sports, the PE lesson is used to supplement the playing and promotion of these sports. On the other hand, having been exposed to many schools has made Samiya observant about the way schools implement PE and sport. She is of the opinion that most *schools do not offer sport and PE (Sa9)*. In his study Kirk (2005) found that the PE programmes in secondary schools are ineffective in promoting lifelong physical activity.

5.4.3 Sport versus academics

Learners have to engage in long hours of training and competition in order to be the best in their chosen sport. They also travel quite a lot to participate in provincial and national tournaments which take them all over the country. Sport is a time-consuming activity, and the learners need to manage their time to ensure there is balance in their life. Learners who achieve in sport apply the same commitment they have for their sport to their school work. They excel in their school work, and sport helps them to focus academically.

An excellent soccer player, with his ambitions of becoming a professional player already being realised, Brendon has no problem juggling his sport and his school work: *I am really good at mathematics and EMS [Economic Management Science]. I achieve 80% and 90% (B3)*. Chayton is also a learner who is a high achiever, excelling

both in his academic work and cricket. He applies the same focus that he does in sport to his academic work: *I am in the same sort of zone when I am studying for exam (C6)*, but admits that he could do much better at academics if he did not spend so much time on sport.

The sporting lifestyle is daunting for some learners, as they try to cope with the demands of their sporting and academic obligations. Samiya's biggest challenge is managing her time: *when it comes to training I have to juggle it with schoolwork and that is getting a bit hectic (Sa6)*. When their sporting commitments start to affect their school work, hard decisions have to be taken. Daryl achieved his South African colours prior to his final year at school, but decided he needed to focus on his school work for that year, so gave up swimming: *I guess it was getting in the way of my studies (Da7)*. He admits that it was a decision he regretted making.

School and academic work has always been a challenge for Jemma, even though she is in a class of her own in one of the most difficult and dangerous sports, gymnastics: *I had to choose what I am good at mostly (Je4)*. Having completed her Grade 10 she therefore exited the schooling system to focus on gymnastics: *a gap year and only from next year I will start studying (Je4)*. Her reason for this is that she wanted to focus on the Commonwealth Games and the Olympic Games.

The schooling context provides the learners with numerous possibilities to excel in sport. While some learners consciously seek out appropriate schools, others are actively recruited into schools because their talents have been noticed. It is evident that the schools which are well-resourced, such as the former white schools, are those schools chosen by the learners.

The PE curriculum promotes skill progression, which provides the grounding required to play sports. The learners feel that the PE curriculum has not contributed much to their achievements. It is not deemed an imperative subject since it is either not done or, if it is done, it is not seen as important. This low institutional priority given to PE makes it impossible for curriculum to impact on the growth of sport at school level.

There are challenges facing learners who excel in sport with regard to their academic work, and they have to manage their time effectively. Although some learners do well in their academic work, they feel that if they did not spend so much time on sport, they could produce better results.

5.5 Theme four – Sporting excellence, team spirit and talent search

Accelerating the speed

Here sport is discussed from a provincial perspective. The issues that arise in this theme are talent search and selection, promoting team spirit, role models and elitism in sport. This theme echoes Bronfenbrenner's exosystem, which involves links between a social setting in which the learner does not have an active role and the learners' immediate context. Learners have no control on the talent search process or even on the dynamics of the sport they play. Yet these aspects have a profound effect on their attaining excellence. The learners' talents, their views of the provincial teams, role models and impact of their preferred codes of sport are discussed here.

5.5.1 Talent search and selection

The need to talent search is a result of the discrepancies that exist in South African society. A large percentage of learners living in the outlying areas are without facilities and resources. Being talent spotted provides the learners with an opportunity to grow their talents within a conducive environment.

A vacancy for a goalkeeper position during a tournament set the stage for Drea to become a South African hockey goalkeeper: ***I thought it would be worth a try (Dr4)***. Even though she was a sweeper, she tried out for the position of goalkeeper on a whim and was successful. If this opportunity had not become available, Drea would not have realised where her true potential lay. Jemma also would not have known about her potential as a gymnast if her coach, who was employed by the school to do PE, had not spotted her. The coach saw that ***I was talented (Je8)*** and took her into her gymnastics club for further training at no cost to Jemma.

However, talent searches are not full-proof as many talented players go unnoticed according to Tholethu: *the scouts that come into the township usually miss spotting them (Tho6)*. He is of the opinion that no matter what is done for the township players, they will always be at a disadvantage.

5.5.2 Promoting team spirit

Playing in team sports requires learners to have sound social and group skills. For a team to succeed, it is vital for all those who are part of that team to work in harmony. Being part of a KZN team promotes unity; the learners are committed to the team and all work together to win.

Samiya viewed the KZN volleyball team as a family, for they have not only bonded as players but became an integral part of each other's lives (*I would not call it a team; it is a family (Sa7)*). Jarrett feels that the cricket team, where *the camaraderie is very strong (Ja7)*, allows the players to focus on their game plan. Chayton says his team is united and *I do not think there are any issues with players (C11)*; because of this the players get along really well.

With the issue of race a prevalent one in South African society, Nonthando says that *when we are sitting together you cannot actually say this is a white group or this is a black group (No12)*, indicating that they are equal and not judged according to their race. It is imperative that all the players are seen as one unit where *there is trust and we work together. If there is a bad egg in the team, obviously the team suffers (Dr9)*. In Drea's hockey team all the players work together in an environment where trust is an important ingredient for team play. In soccer, Tholethu, who is the goalkeeper, believes he is in an ideal position to control the team; *I like to be a leader (Tho1)*. If he does not do his job properly, then the team will most definitely lose. The players regard him as a pivotal member of the team.

The goalkeeper for netball also believes her position is crucial for the team: *I think of it literally as a life and death thing (Y2)*. Yamka sees the ball as a bomb where she has to ensure that it does not come into the circle, or if it does, she has to get it out as quickly as possible, otherwise the opposition will score a goal and she will have let the team

down.⁷⁰ Her injuries mean she has become cautious of her playing tactics: *my style of netball is very unique, it is not me on the court, it is everyone else and I make them play my game (Y4)*. She has worked out a way in which she can make the opposition play her game, and this is for the betterment of the team.

Siani excels in both athletics and rugby, but prefers the *physicality of rugby as there is no better feeling than to grab shoulder to shoulder*. He describes athletics as *an individual sport where if you lose you lose by yourself (Si5)*. Rugby creates a team bond that brings all 15 players together, with the one goal of winning. Although gymnastics is an individual sport, Jemma says she values the fact that all the gymnasts *support each other in competition (Je7)*. Every gymnast in the KZN team has their own coach, but during championships the team is very supportive of each other. For Tojan, however, high jump *is a very individual sport (To3)*. She describes her chosen sport as a very lonely one, and although the athletics team competes as a team, for her she is on her own and there is really no team support.

5.5.3 Role models

Role models keep the learners focused and create an invisible standard of responsibility. The learners in turn are aware of the influence they have on others, especially the younger learners that they come into contact with, and they therefore ensure that their behaviour is impeccable.⁷¹ Reciprocally, these younger learners have an unintentional influence on the learners, by making them feel good and proud of themselves. Learners also have their own role models whom they emulate, the provincial and national sports heroes that they aspire to be like in the hope of becoming provincial and national players themselves.

The junior players and learners at school look up to the provincial players, who know this: *I have influenced their lives in one way or another (Dr5)*. Drea was one of the few Indian girls playing sport at her school, as the other Indian girls believed that sport

⁷⁰ Netball is the most important team game for women in South Africa (Venter & Potgieter, 2003).

⁷¹ Agyemang, Singer, & DeLorme, (2010, p. 429) in their study found that athletes see themselves as role models for children. The athletes claim that leading by example is more important than anything else and conducting themselves in a way that is honourable, shows class and character.

was for the white girls only. She believes that she was influential in changing the mindset of the girls, who slowly began to play sport. Similarly, junior players idolise the senior players because *they trust me (Y10)*. Yamka coaches the junior teams, the members of which trust her. Some junior players who play in the same position as her, model themselves to become just like her. Yamka also has an older brother who is her role model that she wants to do everything in her power to impress (*I love getting his approval (Y9)*).

As a provincial player the learner gets to wear their colours, usually in the form of a green blazer, at school, and *people tend to respect you (No8)*. Nonthando is easily identifiable and is treated differently from the other learners, who show respect to her and tell her that they want to be like her. It is not the material value that draws the learners at school to the provincial player, it is her strong character that is admired.

Chayton is of the belief that *everyone wants to be a good role model for younger players (C5)*. Because of this he tends to be conscious of the manner in which he conducts himself. *My current role model is Jacques Kallis.⁷² He is professional about everything he does (C5)*. Chayton selected a legendary South African cricket player as his role model because of the enthusiasm with which he plays and how he is always motivating and encouraging his team. Chayton wants to be just like that. Daryl emulates a senior swimmer because of his dedication to his training, as well as a South African swimmer: *It is Wesley Gilchrest; he was a youngster that also trained hectic. My main hero will be Ryk Neethling (Da8)*.

Many of the learners have selected senior players as their role models: *Jessica Nkomo who used to play for our club and now she plays for SA. I always tell her that I am going to get there one day (No14)*. Nonthando aspires to be like her sporting hero; and having someone like her hero close by to emulate drives her to believe that she can play for her country. Yamka's role model is *Precious because she is always so positive and happy and similar to my character (Y11)*. Precious is in the senior netball team, and although not well off obtained a sport scholarship and made the South African

⁷² Jacques Kallis is a South African cricketer who made his test debut in 1995. He is one of the greatest all-rounders of all time been a formidable right-handed batsman and fast-medium swing bowler.

basketball as well as the outdoor and indoor netball teams. She was also Yamka's action netball coach. Drea's role model *on the hockey scene it is Marcia Marescia (Dr6)*, the South African hockey captain whose good qualities Drea admires. Finally, Tholethu selected his role model from one of the leading soccer clubs in the country: *Sekani Mbyiwe is in the first team of Pirates (Tho5)*.

Tojan, who is a high jumper, does not believe in having a role model, because *I am not trying to follow in any one's footsteps (To5)*. Since high jump is an individual sport, she feels she cannot rely on anyone, and believing in herself helps her to jump her own way.

5.5.4 Elitism in sport

Certain codes of sport dominate at school level. In the former white schools rugby and cricket are the dominating codes of sport: *Whenever there is a chance, we play rugby and touch rugby (Da5)*. At Daryl's school, rugby is *the* sport, to the extent that all the other codes of sport are side-lined. This phenomenon is prevalent in most former white schools as well as private schools, and manifests itself in the racial composition at provincial team level. According to Samiya, *in Natal there are no white players (Sa8)* in the provincial volleyball teams.

Talent searches have provided the platform, albeit not consistent, for learners to be noticed and groomed in their sporting field. If they were not noticed, these learners would have been lost to sport. Many talented learners in the disadvantaged areas are going unnoticed by the talent scouts, and thus miss the opportunity to further their talents.

The most poignant aspect of being in the provincial team is that despite all the negativity that surrounds the learners in terms of selection, the quota system, racism, language barriers or socio-economic background, the learners are committed to their team. Being part of the team brings about a unity that is strengthened through their diversity. The provincial team is united by the ultimate aim of winning. Language and cultural barriers are managed as the players are focused on their game and support each other.

The learners are conscious of the influence they have on the junior players as well as learners at school. They themselves emulate senior players in the provincial teams and also South African sporting stars, in the hope that one day they will play in the senior team and represent their country. With some codes of sport dominating over others, elitism in sport dictates which codes of sport are played at a school and which race groups are playing those sports.

5.6 Theme five – Sporting excellence, race, class and culture

Crossing the finishing line

In this final theme I discuss the effects of social influences on the learners in terms of their socio-economic background, language and culture, race and racism, and the quota system and transformation, and how these impact on the learners' sporting achievements. This theme echoes Bronfenbrenner's macrosystem, which consists of the overarching pattern of the micro-, meso-, and exosystems' characteristics, describing the dynamic nature of the different lifestyles, customs and cultures of society.

5.6.1 Learners' socio-economic background

Learners in the KZN provincial teams come from diverse socio-economic backgrounds. How they negotiate their environment will either create opportunities or become a constraint to their quest to achieve. Tholethu started out playing sport in a township: *when I was 8-years-old at Chesterville; I started playing sport (Tho4)*. It was in the township environment that his love for sport grew, and he started to play soccer. It is not only sport that is promoted in this environment; Siani says that although he has been schooled all his life at a former white school, he still values the township lifestyle and attributes his convivial personality to it: *I do not think that I would be so sociable if I did not come from the township (Si2)*.

Learners experience emotional upheavals when they find difficulty in maintaining their sporting lifestyle due to their low socio-economic status. Kirk, Carlson, O'Connor, Burke, Davis and Glover (1997), demonstrated that family income was one of the key factors in determining the likelihood of a child's involvement in sport. Nonthando feels

that she is a burden to her family, and says *I feel like I want to quit (No4)*. However, she is driven by this negativity and manages her time and effort to make things work for her. Theola finds herself in a similar dilemma. Despite being selected for the KZN team, this learner did not play against other provinces because she could not afford the transport costs to get to squad training sessions: *I feel hurt and sad, but I got hope (The2)*. Although disappointed, she continued playing netball in her rural area and is now excelling at club level.

Living in the township and schooling at a former white school creates a peculiar scenario for the learners. Nkosi notices disparities between the two social environments and acknowledges that there is a lot of talent in the township but their progress is hindered due to lack of facilities: *people do have talent in the township but the facility is a problem for them (Nk9)*. He feels that there are drug-, violence- and abuse-related problems as a result of this absence of facilities. Being fortunate to realise his talents in a former white school has also made him a victim of mockery and insult, as many of the township learners pick on his accent and ridicule him (*I do not like people taking advantage of others (Nk9)*).

Learners' places of abode are not ideally situated for them to attend training sessions at their clubs as or the KZN team: *I live far away from the action; a lot of money is put for travel (Sa2)*. Samiya's parents incurred huge financial costs travelling long distances between home and training. Eventually the family decided to move to a home closer to the sporting club and training. Tojan also experienced similar travel constraints, but living in an outlying area and in a small community where everyone knows each other provides her with support and encouragement that she feels is important: *you know everybody and everybody supports you. (To2)*.

Learners are becoming aware of how people live in the differing socio-economic environments now made accessible to them. Playing sport provided Brendon with the opportunity of experiencing township life: *it just opened my eyes to see how they suffer (B10)*. He has experienced first-hand how people in the township live, and he has seen the suffering and poverty they endure.

5.6.2 Language and culture

Players in the KZN team are exposed to diverse cultural and language⁷³ backgrounds. The manner in which learners embrace their diversity is essential to promoting team spirit and camaraderie. Yamka has been exposed to Zulu at school: *I am not completely ignorant when it comes to Zulu (Y12)*. This has helped her to partially understand what is being said by the black learners in the team, and provides for some bonding between the players. She feels that diversity is a good thing (*these differences in language actually lead to a good team (Y12)*), as it brings them closer and they are involved in and aware of each other's differences. Keim (2003) affirms this, and suggests that intercultural friendships are easily developed when learners are involved in team sports.

Having been exposed to the township and playing club soccer there, afforded Brendon the opportunity to experience and be part of African culture. The death of one of the soccer players required him to be part of the funeral entourage, and he had to toyi-toyi behind the coffin: *my first African funeral (B6)*. He has also learnt to be tolerant and respectful of other cultures and languages.

5.6.3 Race and racism

Race and racism has very different connotations for learners, depending on the race group to which they belong and code of sport which they play. Learners who are affected by its injustices are vocal about its impact on their place in the team. Although they have experienced racism, they have used it to their advantage and have persevered in achieving their goals. Yamka, who is an outstanding goal defence with the best stretch in KZN, has been left out of the netball team for a number of years because of racial tensions and the quota system, but says this is what *drives me to be better (Y15)*. She had something to prove and did not relent until she made the KZN team. (This despite being told that she had to *paint yourself like an African next year then you will make it (Y17)*). It is quite glaring that in netball colour is an issue, and intolerance and racial prejudices are being experienced by the players. (Broeder, et al., 2002)

⁷³ The most widely spoken home language among the almost 8 million inhabitants of KZN is Zulu (80%), followed by English (16%), Afrikaans (2%), Xhosa (1%), and other languages (1%) (Broeder, Extra, & Maartens, 2002).

White soccer players have a similar fate when they are told *you must go back to where you came from* (B9). Brendon had to play club soccer in the township if his dream of becoming a professional soccer player was to be realised. At first he was not welcomed into the township, but he soon established himself as a valuable player in the team and was acknowledged for his outstanding playing ability. He became a familiar figure in the township: *I feel very proud when people know who I am* (B9). Brendon and his mother have also been victims of racial attacks. These incidents have involved officials at tournaments who *are really racist* (B11). When his mother who manages the team, went to register the team for a tournament, she was verbally abused by one of the selectors and Brendon knew at that stage that he would not make the team. However, through perseverance he has been able to overcome such injustices and make it into the KZN soccer team.

Some codes of sport are identifiable by the races that dominate them. Swimming has always been seen as a sport for the elite white group. Therefore, as Daryl put it *with swimming so white based and it is so weird to see an Indian guy or black guy or coloured guy swimming* (Da9). When swimmers of colour make it to provincial level it is therefore a strange sight. Daryl was selected into the provincial team because of the quota system. He proved himself and was selected for the South African team, but this does not deter people from commenting that *I probably made it in swimming because of quota* (Da10), lending itself to becoming a racial issue which signifies that people of colour cannot swim.

5.6.4 Quota system and transformation

Sport in the country is in the process of transformation, and to address inequalities in sport, the quota system was introduced. Implementation of the quota system brought with it many differing viewpoints; those of the learners in this study bring to light how learners in post-apartheid South Africa perceive implementation of the quota system.

For Yamka, being a white netball player has proven to her that *if you are white you actually do not have a chance of making the team* (Y14). These strong sentiments resulted in her striving to prove to all that *if you are the best you should be in the team* (Y17). Through sheer determination and after years of perseverance, she made the

provincial team. She has witnessed how players who ***did not have the basic skills for netball (Y16)*** were selected for the provincial teams as a result of the quota system. It made her a keen critic of the system, and she learnt to become critical of other players, comparing them and seeing for herself who are the best players in the team. More often than not, she concluded that being the best becomes relative in light of the colour issues. She also has a realistic approach as what to expect when on tournament: ***We are not here for five star luxuries and with our Government we are not going to get all this type of things (Y6)***. (Because of poor organisation of the netball tournament in question, when the learners arrived in another province no provision had been made for accommodation. Yamka resigned herself to the fact that one should accept this, while other learners showed distress at not having been provided with accommodation.)

Chayton, a white cricket player, is of the opinion that ***people of colour have progressed probably due to the quota system (C10)***. For him the quota system has had a part to play in transformation, allowing those learners who had been disadvantaged a chance to prove their talent. He is confident that ***the country is slowly progressing into greater heights (C12)***. Chayton believes that the country has a lot to offer and that things are slowly changing for the better.

Players of colour who are advantaged by the quota system are themselves strongly opposed to the quota system: ***I do not think it is fair (No11)***. Nonthando has seen how white players have been left out of the team to make way for players selected as a result of the quota system. Nkosi, a black soccer player believes that selection of players should be based on merit and ***it should not be about colour (Nk10)***. There are also those learners who feel that because they are not white, they are in the team as a result of the quota system: ***there is a part of me that always reminds me that maybe I am just being selected on the quota system (Dr8)***. Although Drea has made it into the U21 South African team, she cannot help but wonder if she was selected because of the quota system.

Tholethu is of the firm belief that despite stark disparities, ***I think our country has a lot of talent (Tho7)***. Learners have the potential to excel in sport. Many sportspersons who do excel in their code of sport leave the country to obtain expert training and coaching.

Daryl sees nothing wrong with that, because at the *end of the day you are representing SA and not like going over to America and staying there and swimming for them (Da6)*.

In this theme the learners from different socio-economic backgrounds experienced sport differently. While some were endowed with, good schools, no financial woes, the best resources and individualised coaching, for others sport placed a huge financial strain on their family. However, learners created opportunities for themselves to make their dreams possible.

The diversity in the provincial teams has provided the learners with an opportunity to experience differing cultures and languages. Being forced into the township to play soccer, learners were exposed to the African culture and embraced it with lasting friendships being forged. The learners became acutely aware of the life of the disadvantaged learner, and showing concern and compassion for them.

There seems to be a greater degree of racial tension in team sports than in individual sports. White players in soccer and netball found it difficult to make the team due to the quota policy, and experienced the harshness of people who believed they should not be in these traditionally black codes of sport. On the other hand, players of colour in sports such as hockey, rugby, swimming and cricket felt racial tension as people saw them as ‘quota players’ and not players selected on merit. However, players in the volleyball team did not experience racial tension, as the team is made up of predominately Indian, coloured and black players.

The learners who experienced racism used it to their advantage, in that they became more determined to prove themselves and eventually make the provincial team. Learners viewed the quota system as an unfair way in which to select players for provincial teams. They firmly believed that the selection for the team should be on merit. For a few, the quota system is seen as an opportunity for players of colour to progress and become valued members of provincial team.

Sports transformation has created unique settings, and this is evident in the organisation and administration of the various codes of sport. Changes brought about as a result of transformation are viewed in a positive light, and learners are optimistic about the future of the country. Team sport dynamics bring with them a certain degree of unity despite the diversity of the KZN teams. The learners are positive amidst the differences they have to deal with, and manage issues of differences to their advantage.

5.7 Conclusion

This chapter concludes the analysis of the themes that emerged from the learners' stories. The analysis of theme one, self and identity, indicates that although learners possess personality (that is common to all individuals), it is their 'sporting personality' that sets them apart. The goals that learners set for achieving the different stages of their success are what keep them focused and driven. This is reflected in how they conduct themselves in the sporting environment, and contributes to 'preparing for the race' for them as they journey towards sporting excellence.

Theme two, the social context, indicates the importance of the role of the family, coaches and significant others in the lives of the learners. They constitute the social context that influences the learners and provide 'the starting block', which ensures that the learners do not slip and fall assists in fast-tracking their sporting endeavours. Theme three, schooling and the curriculum, demonstrates the importance of schools, which provides the setting in which sporting prospects become a reality for the learners, thus 'building up speed' in their endeavour to achieve sporting excellence.

The analysis of theme four, team spirit and talent search demonstrates the importance of the learners being talent spotted, their ability to work in a team, and role models they have chosen, which are responsible for 'accelerating the speed' of their achieving sporting excellence. Finally, theme five, race, class and culture, provides insight into the racial issues experienced by the learners, since in a transforming society the negotiation of matters relating to socio-economic background, culture, racism and the quota system

is what enables ‘crossing the finishing line’, the final hurdle of achieving sporting excellence in a divided society.

The emergent themes of sporting excellence in this chapter have provided the foundation from which to distil and create salient notions pertinent to this study in the next chapter. The data generated by provincial coaches and significant others will be used to supplement and intensify the relevance of these salient notions to the study. It is through these salient notions that the links will begin to form around what contributes to sporting excellence in a transforming society. These salient notions are essential in that they qualify the imminent theorising in the final chapter.

CHAPTER SIX

Sporting excellence, uncovered, explored and redefined

6.1 Introduction

The learners' stories in Chapter Four provide a descriptive narrative of their sporting endeavours and journeys. The learner's world, especially their sporting world, is given attention in their stories. In Chapter Five the learners' stories were analysed in a comprehensive manner, and the themes that emerged allowed for the learner's world to be broadened to the society in which they play their sport. In this chapter five salient notions that presented from each of the themes, which uniquely contributed to sporting excellence in a transforming society, are presented: the resolute self, reliance on people, the white school magnet and migration, unwavering nation building, and social and racial diversity. These notions will be elaborated upon using data from the coaches and significant others. This triangulation technique (described in section 3.5 Validity and reliability) highlights the intricate nature of the selected notions, which will be presented in a meaning-making endeavour and thus answer the second of the critical questions: *what contributes to the learners' excelling in school sport?*

In this chapter the themes from the previous chapter will be connected to the two conceptual frameworks used in this study as well to the literature, adding to the richness and complexity of the salient notions which explain what contributes to learners' excelling in sport in a transforming society. The learners', coaches' and significant others' data have been purposively selected to argue the salient notions in this chapter. The learners' data are shown in italics and will be supplemented by the data from the coaches and significant others, which is shown in bold italics. This chapter provides the setting for the theorising of the study which takes place in Chapter Seven.

6.2 The resolute self

This section begins with the first salient notion of 'the resolute self', which demonstrates that learners who excel in sport have a particular approach to performance

which is embedded in their identities. This is linked to theme one (self and identity), and demonstrates the learners' determination which becomes a distinctive feature in their excelling in sport. An individual is the arbiter of his or her own behaviour, and Wicklund and Eckert (1992, p. 3) equate self with one's "behavioural potentials". Tesser (2002, p. 185), on the other hand, suggests that the self is "a collection of abilities, temperament, goals, values and preferences that distinguish one individual from another...". A more defined and sports-specific identity seems to emerge when learners engage in sport that emanates from the self, which drives them, the incentives and goals they set. A person has an identity, which Stryker (1980, p. 60) describes as "an internalized positional designation for each of the different positions or role relationships the person holds in society".

In locating the sporting identity of the learners, reference is first made to personality, which can be divided into three separate but related levels, which Martens (1975, p. 146) describes starting with the first level which is the "psychological core which is the deepest component that includes one's attitudes and values, interests and motives and beliefs about oneself and one's self-worth. It represents the centerpiece of one's personality and is the real you. The second level is the typical responses which are the ways one learns to adjust to the environment or how one responds to the world and the final level is the role-related behaviour which is how one perceives one's social situation to be. This behaviour is the most changeable aspect of personality. One's behaviour changes as one's perceptions of the environment changes".

The three levels of personality encompass a continuum from internally driven (psychological core) to externally driven (role-related behaviour) behaviour. The psychological core is not only the hardest to get to know and most internal of the three levels, it is also the most stable and steady part of one's personality. It remains fairly constant over time. The most external, role-related behaviours are subjected to the greatest influence from the external social environment. Both stability and change are desirable in personality since while it provides the structure one needs to function effectively in society, the dynamic or changing aspect allows for learning.

It is the role-related behaviour that dominates in the learners' sporting identities, and is a distinctive characteristic of learners who excel in sport. In their quest to succeed, the learners' mind-set changes and they are in a zone in which they exude self-confidence or self-efficacy. The learners' description of their sporting identities is very definitive and closely aligned to the key elements Orlick (1996) describes in the Wheel of Excellence (see Chapter Two, section 2.9), referring to commitment, belief, full focus, positive imagery, mental readiness, distraction control and constructive evaluation, which will be discussed. The learners' description of their sporting identities describes and demonstrates these key elements in a succinct and precise manner (see Appendix 16) and provides the mental and psychological basis for achieving excellence. Each of the seven elements of excellence will be discussed below.

The first element of excellence is commitment, which is reflected in the learners' data: *you just have to work, work and work (Se1); the only person you are relying on is yourself (No1) I am committed to my soccer (B2); nothing can stop me from playing soccer (B8); cricket has been my passion (Ja2); I have no life, just high jump all the time, just train (To4).*

The learners have developed an extremely high level of dedication to their sport. Sekani shows commitment by focusing on devoting all his time to work in order to achieve his goals (Se1). Nonthando does not rely on anyone but herself and is self-disciplined in her quest to excel (No1). The netball coach describes her as a player who is ***disciplined on and off the field and shows respect (NC1).***

Passion for sport has driven Brendon to overcome all obstacles as he commits himself to playing soccer (B2, B8). His is a unique case in that soccer is a black-dominated sport, and to get into its fold is almost impossible for a white boy. Brendon's belief in his capabilities and ability to succeed played a critical role in breaking through racial boundaries. For him "practice" and "perseverance" were important for success. This belief and commitment in himself is closely intertwined with the way he understood, embraced and accepted the differences he was confronted with in his social world. It appears that his thinking and mind-set are essential for breaking racial boundaries.

Commitment highlights the importance of personal attributes for sporting success in marginalised individuals (Rajput, 2010a).

Brendon's soccer describes him as been very ***dedicated, very enthusiastic to learn, very passionate about the game (SoC1)***. For Jarrett, his obsession for cricket has kept him committed to playing (Ja2). Tojan's quest to achieve forced her into a lonely lifestyle of training for high-jump (T06). Tojan's athletics coach has tremendous faith in her high-jumping ability, and with her having been placed second in the South African championship, he believes that ***she has so much potential that I am grooming her to be a world champion one day. She is absolutely dedicated. She has the passion and it is a God-given passion that she has (AC1)***.

The second element of excellence is belief, is reflected in the learner data as follows: *you got to think and know that you are the best player on the field (Ja5); I can jump further than anyone, throw further than anyone. I have a natural talent (Si4); I really would like to make the SA school team this year (C7); when I was five years old I told my dad I want to play cricket for SA (C2); I always knew I will be an architect and a national player (Sa1)*.

The learners are confident in their ability and are driven to achieving because they know they have the potential to be the best. They do not want to be ordinary and want to achieve the highest position in their sport. Jarrett's belief in himself allows him to extend his limits (Ja5). Similarly, Siani's belief in his ability enhances his capabilities and pushes his performance to the next level (Si4). The learners' belief in their sporting abilities is an enabling factor towards their making it into the provincial and national teams. Their investing in sport is indicative of their self-belief and drive. Chayton always knew that he wanted to play for the national team (C2), and reaching provincial level has enforced his belief in his ability to make the South African school team (C7). Samiya also had childhood dreams of making the national team, and this has allowed her to obtain many milestones in her volleyball career (Sa1). Jemma's coach admires her belief in her capabilities as well her persistence at training sessions: ***she would just keep doing sit-ups until somebody went and stopped her. That is how diligent she is, that is exceptional (GC1)***.

The first two elements of commitment and belief can be seen as what Bandura (1997, p. 3) defines as self-efficacy, which is “belief in one’s capabilities to organise and execute the courses of action required to produce given attainments”. He proposed the model of self-efficacy and behaviour and stated that self-efficacy is a situation-specific form of self-confidence or the belief that one is competent and able to react whenever necessary in a specific situation. Bandura (1986) also developed a social cognitive theory positing reciprocal interrelationships among cognitions (self-efficacy), the environment and behaviour, thus offering a more dynamic and social approach.

The theory of self-efficacy was developed within the framework of social cognitive theory where individuals are seen as proactive agents in the regulation of their cognition, motivation, actions and emotions rather than as passive reactors to their environment. Bandura (1986) refers to this view as an ‘agentic perspective’ of social cognitive functioning. As agents, people use forethought, self-reflection and self-regulation to influence their own functioning. Social cognitive theory also posits a network of causal structures that depend on people’s own agentic behaviour (e.g. persistence), personal factors (e.g. knowledge and beliefs) and environmental conditions (e.g. interactions with others). This network represents a reciprocal process in which the triadic factors all operate as interacting determinants of one another to explain motivation and behaviour.

The ability to focus on one’s performance is the third element of excellence, and relates to the learners’ concentration and confidence on the sports field. It is reflected in the learner data as: *I am focused (Ja1); knowing and being confident in my ability (Ja5); my mind-set changes and I am a lot more confident (C1)*.

Jarrett is fully focused on his game (Ja1) and he has the added advantage of complete confidence in his capabilities (Ja5). When Chayton is on the cricket field his mental strength is in his ability to control his performance at the crease (C1). Jemma’s grandmother describes her granddaughter as being irritable and anxious before a competition. However, during the competition she is completely different: ***she does not want anything that interferes with her thoughts; she is fully focused on her gymnastics, she blocks everyone out (JeG3)***. According to Gill (2000), self-confidence

and self-efficacy are considered the most critical self-perceptions in sport and exercise psychology, and top athletes exude confidence. They recognise the value of a positive attitude and think like winners and believe in themselves.

Pioneering research on personality profiles of athletes by Griffith (1926, 1928) identified the following characteristics of great athletes: ruggedness, courage, intelligence, exuberance, buoyancy, emotional adjustment, optimism, conscientiousness, alertness, loyalty and respect for authority. Ogilvie (1968) endorses this, and states that certain traits are associated with successful athletes. The Athletic Motivation Inventory (Ogilvie, 1968; Tutko, Lyon, & Ogilvie, 1969) identifies the following traits common to successful athletes: drive, determination, leadership, aggressiveness, emotional control, guilt proneness, self-confidence, conscientiousness, mental toughness, trust and coachability. These personality traits are in keeping with those of the learners in this study.

When playing sport, it is important for the learners to be able to imagine themselves experiencing the skills. The fourth element of excellence is that of positive imagery, which helps the learner to feel ready to perform to their highest potential: as *I am aggressive on court* (Y1); *I think of it [ball] literally as a life and death thing* (Y2); *the physicality of rugby as there is no better feeling than to grab shoulder to shoulder* (Si5).

For Yamka, being forceful on the netball field (Y1) conjures up the image of the ball been a bomb, which she has to get rid of in the ring otherwise the other team will score (Y2). Siani enjoys seeing himself as part of team, as the images of bodily contact and togetherness provide a desired setting for successful execution of his tasks (Si5). One of the most striking features of the learners who excel in sport is their positivity and optimistic approach not only to their sport but to life in general.

The fifth element of excellence is mental readiness, reflected in the learners' data as: *I am so positive* (Y6); *I hate knowing that I have not given my best* (Y7); *I am very competitive* (Da1); *I take control at the crease* (C1).

Being positive all the time (Y6) is how Yamka describes her mental readiness towards playing netball. She does not let anything get her down and is always striving to give of her best (Y7). Similarly, Daryl's hunger to win provides him with the mental toughness to succeed in swimming (Da1), developing him into a champion swimmer. Chayton mentally readies himself at the cricket crease (C1) to enable him a realistic chance of performing to the best of his ability. Gymnastics is a relatively high-risk sport, and the gymnastics coach describes Jemma as: *just so eager, full of energy and just vibrant, she has no inhibition, very little fear and the willingness to try anything; she just does not hold back (GC2).*

The sixth element of excellence is distraction control reflected in the learners' data as: *hockey has been a great help emotionally and physically (Dr2); I feel like I want to quit (No3); I was really distraught because they told me that I would not be able to do sports again (Y3).*

The learners are able to maintain and regain a positive focus when they are confronted with a setback. Sustaining injuries is a huge setback in the life of a sportsperson, and the learners in this study are no exception to this. Sustaining serious injuries while playing competitive netball almost ended Yamka's sporting career. She was advised not to play sport (Y3). Instead of resting, which is of paramount importance to ensure quick and maximum recovery, Yamka (who now faced a long period of inactivity) found a way to keep herself in peak physical condition. This setback also allowed her to regain a constructive focus on changing her way of playing netball. Being injured allowed her to become more cautious as a player and set her on a winning course.

Emotional upheaval in her family afforded Drea the opportunity of turning to sport (Dr2), and she was able to convert this situation of disruption into a goal-achieving one. Being at constant threat of not being able to fulfil her sporting agenda has at times been a setback for Nonthando (No3), but she has used financial hardship to drive herself and ensure all her obligations are met. The demands of gymnastics are immense and being injured on numerous occasions has been a critical part of Jemma's performances. Her grandmother affirms that *she is strong and has a very high pain threshold. She has the tenacity to overcome stressful situations and she has the power to control it (JeG4).*

The learners are consistently evaluating their performance against their achievements. This constructive evaluation - the seventh and final element of excellence - provides them with the incentive to target areas of continued improvement, as is reflected in the learners' data: *I made 169 not out and this is the top score in Kerrelyn College's history (Ja3); I was the youngest and won the trophy for goalkeeper of the season (To2); All African games and won six medals for the different apparatus (Je6).*

Receiving recognition for outstanding performances as a top scorer for cricket (Ja3) and the best goalkeeper for the season (Tho2) motivated Jarrett and Tholethu respectively to achieve even greater heights. The learners spoke passionately about and held in high esteem the trophies and medals they won at the various tournaments. Jemma was overjoyed at receiving six medals for her performance in gymnastics at the All African Games (Je6). For the learners receiving these awards is an affirmation of their hard work, providing constructive evaluation as they are urged to improve on their performance and to do better next time. This is also a stepping stone to their next level of achievement. It is important to them to have tangible references for their achievements, and receiving medals and trophies is one of them.

In contextualising the learners' self, the focus has been on their sporting identities which provided a detailed description of the learners' psychology from a personal perspective. The seven elements above provided an analytical framework for analysis of the learners' sporting traits.

In the next four sections an analytical framework is provided for analysis of the learners from a social perspective, focusing on how the environment and individuals within that environment contributed to the sporting achievements of the learners.

6.3 Reliance on people

The family (parents, siblings and peers), coaches and significant others are the key role players responsible for socially influencing the learners in sport. Their role is described in theme two (the social context), and the learners' dependence on them for support and

provision creates this second salient notion termed 'reliance on people'. Lewin (1934) conceptualised behaviour as being the consequence of interaction between the personal characteristics of the individual and the environment. As humans, the people who are involved in our lives are the most important components of our social environment and evidently shape our attitudes, beliefs and values.

Bronfenbrenner (1979) proposed through the ecological systems theory a more developmentally sensitive extension of Lewin's conceptual framework, in which he considers behaviour to be a function of the developmental status of a particular individual in interaction with the environment. The individual is not a stable entity but rather one who is engaged in a dynamic process of developmental change and the role of social influence needs to be considered in relation to developmental status. In sport the learner is part of a much larger network of influences that is dynamic in the sense that the system is constantly undergoing change. From this perspective, which is at the core of family systems theory, Carter and McGoldrick (1989) state that any change in one member of the system will influence other members and this influence is reciprocal because just as parents influence children, so to do children influence their parents through their interests, experiences and aptitudes (Cote, 1999; Weiss & Hayashi, 1995).

According to Horn (2008), sports involvement of children can extend from early or middle childhood to late adolescence or beyond, so sports involvement transcends many important developmental phases. In this study the learners speak fondly about their childhood. They had fun growing up and their love for sport started when they were very young. Family seems to be the first port of call to engender the love for sport, as they provide the support, facilities and environment in which sport is nurtured and promoted. These learners were active and played sport from the age of five or six. The environment in which the learners grew up influenced their sporting involvement from a tender age. This is indicative of Bronfenbrenner's (1979) microsystem, because in this environmental system the learner is constantly shaped not only by the environment but by having direct interactions with social agents such as parents, family, peers or teachers.

The learner is not a passive recipient of experiences in these settings, but someone who helps to construct the settings. The data suggest that the home environment of the learners helped to enforce a love for sport as they played in the garden at home or with their fathers or friends: *from the time I was five years old I played in the garden. We had at my old house with a tennis court which did not have a net, so we played everything, soccer, hockey, cricket (Ja2); when I was young I remember just playing around with my friends in the garden at home (C2); at home definitely, I probably grew up with a ball in my hand, stick and just playing (Dr3).*

According to Kanter and Tebbutt (2001), parents play the largest role in the development of their children. Further, Orlick and Botterill (1975) state that learning in children is dependent on parental examples as well as how parents respond to the actions of their children. They add that value, attitudes and behaviours are also learned from parents; thus parents are the most important behaviour models, particularly during their early years. Parents introduce children to sport and enrol them in sport programmes (Green & Chalip, 1997; Greendorfer, Lewko, & Rosengren, 1996). This is seen in the learner data: *my parents forced me to go to the holiday camps and at this camp I was selected to play for the A team. Ever since then cricket has been my passion (Ja2).*

According to Scanlan (1996), parents are likely to be present at their children's games, and given the highly public nature of competitive sports they have ample opportunities to communicate their values and beliefs about sport to their children. The learner data reflect this: *when I was five years old I told my dad I want to play cricket for SA. My dad helped me a lot with my cricket. I then joined a club. I was brought up in a sporting family (C2).*

Smith and Smoll (1999) propose that the role of parents is widely accepted and is often expressed as the sport triangle, comprising the child, parent and coach. Parents and significant others have been responsible for the initial exposure, motivation, encouragement, support and guidance required by their children to be successful at sport. They have also fulfilled the diverse roles of taxi driver, chauffeur, registrar, refreshment provider, co-ordinator, coach, official and administrator, among others.

The learner data show the importance of the parents in providing the transport required in order to fulfil sporting commitments: *my mom gives up a lot to take me up and down from Durban to training sessions, so she has no life. She does not have to do it but she does it (To4); I was not playing for a club because I was living in Richards Bay. They heard I was playing for senior teams and so they wanted to know if I wanted the exposure to play with seniors all the time. My parents agreed and it meant travelling every weekend to Durban, which my parents did for a whole year before deciding to relocate (Sa5).*

Brendon is an only child and his mother describes the way in which she brought him up: *Ever since he was little, he liked structure, I disciplined him that way. There are two things in a child's life that are non-negotiable, one is education and the other one is learning to swim (BM2).* Brendon's mother has sacrificed and given up a lot to be there for her son: *a mom should be at home if she can. I just love being a mom. Brad went to pre-school for only a year (BM3).* She instilled in him that *nothing comes without hard work and sacrifice (BM4).* The data in this study show strong parental love, which is a pure and exquisite emotion exposing parents as individuals who will do just about anything for their children. They give completely selfless devotion to their children. It can be said that the family is special because of its constancy and staying power.

Parental involvement is of the utmost importance and the key to learners' swimming achievements and according to the provincial swimming coach is *probably the greatest influence (SwC1).* They drive the initial role of enrolling their child at a swimming club and identifying their child's swimming ability. On the other hand, the gymnastics coach finds that getting help from parents is difficult. The main reason for this is that most of her gymnasts are from an informal settlement in Cato Crest, and *they do not pay fees so they are not very involved and mostly they do not watch the competition because they do not have transport (GC3).* Socio-economic status impacts on the degree to which parents are involved in the sporting endeavours of their children. There seems to be a change in the attitude of parents of the learners who play netball. The netball coach says: *especially now the blacks are starting to adopt the culture of the white parents' attendance. The parents are going with their daughters to the selection and training.*

They are playing an important role as they are giving the child the money and encouraging them (NC2).

The types of sport played by learners are influenced by their parents. The sport of rugby, which is seen as a predominantly white sport, is changing as it has started to grow among different race groups: ***it started in a small way and it has grown and the Indian boys did not realise it was so much fun. Their moms would not let them play because of the roughness of the game and they did not quite understand what it was all about (RC1).***

Learners do not have much spare time over and above their sporting and schooling life. They find it difficult to juggle the two. However, when they are not playing sport or studying they love to relax, watch TV, have a braai, go to movies and socialise with their friends. The learner data reflect this: *I just lie around, watch TV and become a couch potato and I play the drum. Just recently I bought a set of drums just to try to relax and play them (B4).* Friends are important in the social lives of the learners, and they look forward to spending time with them when are not engaged in sport. According to Laursen and Hartup (2002), friends and peers become increasingly important to children as they grow and mature into young adults. These non-family members form an essential role in developing the social relationships of young adults, who use their friends and peers to compare their skill in various achievement domains. The learner data reflect this: *I am a relaxed, outgoing person who likes to spend time with friends on a Friday or Saturday night just having braais and socialising. I like to take control and be the centre in a social event (Ja1); my own friends treat me very well. They are very supportive and they say I must not stop (Je5); I like to go to the beach or movies with my friends. I do not care where I am as long as I am with my friends (To1).*

Besides being dependent on their parents, the learners are also dependent on their coaches. The coaching of sport is a complex task, and coaches are at the centre of all sporting activities: “the men and women who form the nucleus, giving life to the sport experience” (Vernacchia, McGuire, & Cook, 1996, p. 3). They play the most important role in the success or failure, satisfaction or frustration, joy or disappointment of the sporting experience for the athletes. Jemma is coached by a mother and daughter team

who have managed to sustain their club through pure perseverance. Having a gymnast of the calibre of Jemma, who they predict will make the Olympics, has motivated them to continue their coaching: *I have a passion for the sport otherwise I would have closed down a long time ago, but now I cannot close down because of her (Jemma). It is the beginning of a four-year cycle to develop her (GC4).*

Despite financial constraints due to the locality of their club and the gymnasts being from the informal settlement, the coaches have remained devoted to the club and their coaching: *I have poor white children as well, not only the disadvantaged black children. It is my belief that you should not stop playing sport because you haven't got money. My daughter shares my passion, she coaches as well for free, which is a big help (GC5).*

Jemma is so in tuned with her coaches that her grandmother believes that Jemma can read her coach's mind: *she knows what Julie wants her to do. She can feel Julie, she can feel the vibe, Julie is just like her brain. She even walks like Julie now. Everything is like Julie (JeG5).* Jemma's coaches are more than just coaches, they take care of her personally, and for this her grandmother is very grateful: *I have no money for petrol but Gail takes my child everywhere, she picks her up and she even picks us up. She is wonderful to me. When it comes to competition we do not like to miss it. We want to see Jemma. The Adamson's support is 100%. They are working very hard to see Jemma succeed, we trust them (JeG6).*

The experiences of successful coaches have consistently shown that the attention they were prepared to give their athletes was the key to unlocking their athletes' talent. Cratty (1983), Vernacchia et al. (1996) and Morris and Summers (2002) firmly believe that the forming of relationships with the athletes is critically important to the coaching process. The learner data shows a strong bond between the learners and their coaches: *my coach always tells me when there is going to be trials and encourages me to go for it. She will always make sure that I have transport and she will tell me to call her if I do not have transport. She has faith in me; she knows I can do it (No9); I have been going to him since I was six years old. He is my personal coach. He has known me all my life and he really knows my strength, my weaknesses, my personality. He knows everything*

about me. It is good to have a different relationship with your coach. If I go out he is often there and we can hang out and not just focus on cricket (Ja4).

Coaches also improve their status and qualifications and the athletics coach is determined to provide his athletes with the best coaching: ***over the years I produced SA champs. But the standard of the championships became higher and higher and I had to be a better coach to produce SA champs. I am one of the two IAAF⁷⁴ coaches in the country*** (AC2). Alongside the coaching he gives, the athletics coach strongly believes in the role of the family and is cautious about not pushing his athletes too fast: ***Tojan's whole family is behind her. But she is only 14 and does not have the maturity to understand all this. But as a coach I need to make sure that she is groomed to become a champion later*** (AC3). Pillay (2011) states that for coaches, focusing on future positive events has the most powerful effects on the brain's ability to focus on its goals. Hence the coach' role in planning the athletes future is crucial. The coach is guarded about how he plans Tojan's athletics progress because she is so young, and he does not want to cause harm and damage to her: ***I do not want to rush this. She could have set the SA record this year but her body is not ready for it. The passion is there but you have to stem that passion, you need to nurture them*** (AC4).

Coaches are committed to their athletes, and it is the athletics coach's philosophy not to charge a fee for his coaching: ***I just get the parents to cover my petrol bills. We came from that background where we never charged. We work from six to six so imagine if we got paid, we would have been billionaires*** (AC5). The netball coach is of the opinion that learners from disadvantaged communities have reached this high level of performance because of the commitment of the teachers at school who coach them in netball: ***it is because of the commitment of the teachers. Most of the teachers love netball and they play it so they are encouraging their learners*** (NC3). Affording the learners the opportunity to play sport prevents them from ***doing crime, becoming***

⁷⁴ The International Association of Athletics Federations (IAAF) is the international governing body for the sport of athletics. It was founded in 1912 at its first congress in Stockholm, Sweden by representatives from 17 national athletics federations as the International Amateur Athletics Federation. Since October 1993 it has been headquartered in Monaco.

pregnant, been with boys, because most of the time they will be practicing for netball (NC4).

The club coach believes in the potential of all children, and the soccer players who are in his club are cherished by him for he wants to unleash their hidden talents: *for me any boy or girl is special and has unique talents and you nurture this talent carefully. As you nurture you open up something special inside of them. I think that drives the player to reach his potential goals and we more or less activate something that is lying dormant and then the sky is the limit (NkCC1).*

The learners in the study acknowledged the influence of one individual who they felt had made a huge impact on their sporting career, see Table 4: p 64. Nkosi identified his club coach as an individual who has influenced his life. It is his club coach's mission to ensure that all the boys in the club are fully occupied with soccer, giving them no time to engage in "unsavoury" activities: *in the area of Wentworth the youngsters were exposed to crime and gangsterism and it was my passion to keep them away from this (NkCC2).* The club coach started his coaching at grassroots level and promoted the philosophy of the 'three D's' in his club: *determination, discipline and dedication (NkCC3).* The club coach is also very mindful of the fact that if the boys make it through the ranks, they could command a lot of money when they become professional soccer players. He ensures that all aspects of the boys are moulded in this regard: *you can become a millionaire through the sport you love, but without your education you are nothing (NkCC4).*

The people who surround the learners and the people with whom they interact play a significant role in their sporting life. From this microsystem, the focus now falls on the organisational or institutional factors responsible for shaping the learners within the environment. The school as an institution is the focus of the next salient notion.

6.4 The White school magnets and migration

The school as an educational institution plays an important role in the learners' dynamic process of developmental changes, and Bronfenbrenner (1979) refers to the relation or connection between the learner and their context as the mesosystem. Although much has changed in schools in South Africa since 1994, change is relative when taking into consideration the enormous diversity and heterogeneity of schools (Hofmeyr, 2000). The dynamics that play out in the promotion of sport at school are diverse and complicated. When discussing the role of the school as viewed by the participants in the study, the data show that its contribution towards the learners' sporting feats can best be described as 'the white school magnets and migration', the third notion, distilled from theme three (schooling and the curriculum).

Learners started playing sport at an early age and some knew before they started school which code of sport they were going to excel in. The data in this study suggest that the school as an institution provided the opportunity for the learners to play the sport that they excelled in, either during their senior primary (Grade 4 to 6) or junior secondary (Grade 7 to 9) phase of schooling. The schools therefore provided the learners not only with the opportunity to engage in the sport but also to further the development of it. This drew the learners like a magnet towards the former white schools. The learners selected the code of sport they excelled in: *when I was in Grade 3 I played cricket for the B team and for me cricket used to be just another sport. Then my parents forced me to go to the holiday camps and at this camp I was selected to play for the A team. Ever since then cricket has been my passion (Ja2)*; *when I was eight years old at Chesterville, I started playing sport and at school when I was in Grade 5. Sport was interesting and all my friends played and I enjoyed it (Tho4)*; *when I was nine years and at Carrington heights, Gail used to take us for gym classes. She saw that I was talented and she brought me to train with the other kids (Je8)*; *I started playing rugby in Grade 8 when I was 14 I played in the 14 D, E and F teams which are the last three teams. By the time I reached matriculation I achieved provincial colours. This shows that I improved as a player (Se2)*.

Although the learners excelled at sport at the school they were in, closer examination revealed that there were many reasons why the learners attended these schools. For the learners from disadvantaged areas, it was in search of a better education, and the former white schools they attended provided not only this but also had provision for sport. As a result, learners from the disadvantaged areas had to travel long distances to go to the former white schools, which are based in affluent suburbs. Some of the learners from the disadvantaged areas were talent searched and offered scholarships and boarding to attend the former white schools. Of the 7 black learners in this study, 6 are originally from the township and one from a rural area. Theola, who is from the rural area studied at a rural school. Of the 6 learners from the township, Jemma has moved to the city centre and goes to a former white school, and Tholethu stays at the residence at the Weston Prison where his father works and goes to a former Indian school. Of the remaining four learners, Nkosi and Nonthando stay in the township and travel to former white schools and Sekani and Siani are boarding at the former white schools they attend.

Tojan, the coloured learner, stayed in a suburb in Zululand and attends a private school. Of the three Indian learners, two attend former white schools and one the former Indian school. Drea stays in a business area, and Daryl in an Indian township. Samiya moved from Richards Bay to La Mercy so that she could be nearer to the volleyball centre, and she attends the former Indian school. All four of the white learners who attend private schools stay in white suburbs, with one of the learners boarding at a private school, see Table 5: p 73.

Learners are either in private (5), former white (8), former Indian (1) or rural (1) schools. No learner excelling in sport and representing the KZN team attends a township school. The learners migrate to the former white schools, which are chosen because they provide better education or sporting possibilities. In establishing that learners migrate to former white schools, the focus now falls on the coaches' and significant others' perceptions about the contribution schools make to sporting excellence.

According to the netball coach, the school creates an environment for the learners' talent to be acknowledged (*show off their talent (NC5)*). The provincial players who wear their blazers are appreciated by the school as they not only bring honour to the school but also promote sport at the school. Contrary to the netball coach's belief about schools, Nkosi's soccer club coach believes that talent should be identified at school, but since *schools are not doing it (NkCC5)*, he has started an initiative called 'Kick Poverty' where he goes to every community in KZN looking for and identifying potential soccer players to join his soccer club.

Similarly, KZN athletics is not supported by schools - the *schools do not have the culture of athletics (AC6)*. The athletics coach believes that the reason for this could lie in the administration of sport at school. The Department of Education has taken over school sport with each district having a school sports official who is not only in charge of school sport but also culture and youth affairs. To manage all this *is very difficult and there are not enough people in the province to do school sport. The only people that can do something are Department and they do not have a vision (AC7)*. The rugby coach also voiced his disappointment about the non-existence of athletics in schools, saying it is a *huge tragedy because in years gone by term three would be the massive athletics term. Now there is no athletics in Natal and it is really sad (RC2)*.

The rugby coach firmly believes that the former white schools are playing a huge role in providing opportunities for talented rugby players from disadvantaged backgrounds to excel in sports. He boasts that his school is one of the top former white schools in KZN, and they have a well-structured sports department. The school has initiated a programme to educate learners from the disadvantaged areas who show talent both academically and in the sporting field: *we have a budget set aside from the old boys' club or donors to educate and to board learners at a cost of about R40 000 per learner. We have about 12 learners (RC3)*. In sport, the movement of learners out of their once all-black townships and rural areas is the only way to promote and attain their sporting goals. These microscopic few who are fortunate enough to break away from their undesirable living areas are contributing to the integration of the provincial and national teams. This is providing a skewed sense of racial representation of the teams.

Schools also provide the learners with opportunities by employing experts who are able to identify talented learners. The gymnastics coach recruits most of her black gymnasts from the school, and Jemma was spotted in this way. Others who come in from the squatter camp are found by *word of mouth and the white gymnasts find the club by surfing the Internet or by calling the gymnastics union (GC6)*. Schools also employ experts to conduct coaching courses for the teachers at schools. The soccer coach declares that *there is a constant upliftment in terms of passing down knowledge to school coaches and as a result school soccer has improved tremendous (SoC2)*. He states that *Free State and Gauteng⁷⁵ schools are way above us because they play soccer for four terms a year; we just have one term dedicated to soccer. KZN has a long way to go but we are getting there (SoC3)*. He is also excited about the liaison his school has established with a soccer club. Their intention is *in terms of development, to create an academy at school so that the learners who are playing for the club will be educated and attend the club to uplift their soccer standard (SoC4)*.

As far as curriculum at school is concerned, most of the learners feel that PE at school has not helped in their sporting achievement. At PE lessons they are not taught skills, they just play. It is more their coach and the club they are affiliated to that has played an important role. The soccer coach believes that the change in the PE curriculum has affected the skill and fitness levels of the learners: *I am an advocate of PE being brought back. The lack of PE in primary schools is hampering the skill level. We have got boys here who are hyperactive but have no way to release their energy. They have no coordination what so ever. They actually got to tell themselves to put one foot in front of the other in order to walk. They lack hand-eye coordination and skills. We did PE at school and we played volleyball or did gymnastics or played with the hula hoop, we did things and we were exposed to a wide variety of sport. Not the kids of today (SoC5)*. PE at schools is given low institutional priority (Van Deventer, 2004) and its effects on the learners at schools as articulated by the soccer coach is a cause for concern.

⁷⁵South Africa is made up of nine provinces. Free State and Gauteng are two of the provinces.

Gymnastics is an important component of the PE curriculum, according to the gymnastics coach, and should be definitely taught *from Grade 1 to 7. There should also be ball skills and swimming. Swimming is a life skill and ball skills should be taught because gymnastics does not give you hand-eye coordination. It gives you balance, core strength, speed and stamina (GC7)*. Ever since the gymnastics coach has started coaching at the school, the principal has complimented her on the change gymnastics has brought to the learners, who are *doing things here that he never thought they would achieve. They were battling to put one foot in front of the other when they walked in the door (GC8)*.

The netball coach also believes that talent in netball and in all codes of sport should be detected early in the learners' schooling. This can only be done through the PE lesson by qualified PE teachers: *if the learners can start at Grade 1 doing PE the teacher can begin to identify talent and this will help develop skills, soccer or netball or all the other codes of sport. (NC6)*. About the PE curriculum the cricket coach states: *in your traditionally well-resourced schools PE has not fallen away. In our school there are two PE teachers, qualified in that area, who run the LO part of it. In the Indian and black schools PE has just died off (CC2)*.

The rugby coach's philosophy on the benefits of PE is that: *if you look at the bigger problem we have learners on the street between 2:15 to 4:30 and it is those 2-3 hours that the kids get up to mischief. School should offer compulsory extracurricular activities such as cultural studies, chess, debating, public speaking, drama. Would we not be solving so many problems, keeping our kids out of the street till half past four? Would we not be keeping our kids fitter and getting more understanding? It has always shocked me that no one has come out with this. I have never heard it being mentioned at any level. I believe you will drop the crime rate and make the parents happy. But at the moment the whole curriculum it is really not working (RC4)*.

Closely aligned to the success of the curriculum are the personnel who teach it. The change in the curriculum has created a large vacuum in the teaching of PE. The soccer coach describes how PE is taught at his school: *the PE teachers, the guidance teachers are done away with. The person who does LO in our school is a lady on the verge of*

retirement and it is an effort for her to go to the ground. By the time she walks there and gets back the period is over. So PE takes the form of, here is the ball, make two sides and go kick around. There are no skills being taught how to trap a ball (SoC6).

The cricket coach also states that there are *not enough qualified PE teachers. Most of the qualified PE teachers switched to teaching examinable subjects to secure their jobs when there was a threat of redeployment during the late 1990's so the aims and purposes of PE are not being fulfilled (CC3)*. The rugby coach voices concern about the decreasing number of rugby coaches coaching at schools. He states that *many of the male teachers are leaving the teaching profession and moving to either the top former white schools or going overseas. As a result, most of the ex-traditional rugby schools are not playing rugby because there is no one to coach them (RC5)*.

Although the learners' sporting achievements are not influenced by the teaching of PE at school, they excel academically and this is because managing their time is to them one of the most important aspects of playing sport and studying at school. Some of the parents believe that sports training should continue throughout the year, even during examinations. The athletics coach changed his attitude about not training the athletes during examinations when one of the mothers *scolded me because her son was bored at home and was not studying. So I continued training him and he obtained six A's in his matriculation examinations (AC8)*. The athletics coach describes the parents and their views about training during the examinations: *the white parents are much more passionate and the Indian and black parents are catching up. Of course the coloured parents have always been passionate to make the national team. They have a drive that you cannot explain (AC9)*. There is a positive relationship between physical activity and academic performance (Dwyer, Sallis, Blizzard, Lazarus, & Dean, 2001; Linder, 2002; Shephard, 1997; Tremblay, Inman, & Willms, 2000).

Although the former white schools identify learners with talent in disadvantaged areas, they also ensure that the learners are academically sound. So the school will: *try to get them in as early as Grade 8, when they are 13 years and put them through a five-year programme. It is however difficult to recruit a talented player in Grade 10 because he is not going to cope academically. The learners have to have some academic standard*

when he comes to school and know that we are not going to use him to play rugby only. He has to pass Grade 12 and hopefully go to university (RC6).

Parents are aware of the importance of the school, especially in providing the best possible setting for the learners to excel in both their academic work and their chosen sport. As stated, seeking the perfect school has resulted in many learners schooling outside of their home environment. The sports programme at these schools has made it possible for the learners to engage in sport and excel in their selected code. Generally, there is a trend in South African schools for learners from previously disadvantaged schools to pursue education at former Indian, coloured and white schools (Hofmeyr, 2000). Some schools talent search and recruit learners to their schools providing them with bursaries to study because of their sporting talent. Desai and Nabbi (2010, p. 71) describe this as learners being “plucked from their homes and deposited in a foreign environment, removed from family and friends”. Nonetheless, learners from disadvantaged areas who are fortunate enough to be ‘plucked’ are those who are excelling in sport. With the history of race and segregation in South Africa as it is, it is interesting to note how in the quest to achieve learners and their parents move from the areas they stay in or attend schools that will nurture and grow the potential of the learners. It would seem that private and former white schools provide the sporting edge required to succeed in sport.

The data suggest that the PE curriculum has very little or no effect on the learners’ sporting achievements or in identifying their sporting skills, as the teaching of PE is of a very low standard, with non-specialist teachers appointed to teach the subject. According to Rajput (2010b), non-specialist teachers who teach PE do not have the knowledge or skill to teach the PE curriculum. However, it is the school’s sporting ethos that provides the avenue for sport to be played at school, and it is the affiliation of the sporting teams to the various levels that affords the learners the chance to show their talent and move up the ranks. The learners ensure that there is a balance between their academic work and sports, and many of the learners excel in both.

Finally, the changing role of the schools, especially the private and former white schools, gives the impression that these are the only schools that can provide for

excellence to take place. The talent which is found in the rural and township schools is not nurtured and grown, and ownership of these talented learners does not belong to these schools. Talent is depleted from the township and rural areas, and the learners are drawn towards the private and former white schools which act like magnets. The migration of learners to the private and former white schools has enabled sporting excellence to become a phenomenon of the privileged and well-resourced schools. In the former white schools this also promotes racial integration and racial balance within the school, which enables them to transform.

Thus, schooling in the South African context demonstrates a uniqueness as to how school as an institution shapes the learners within the transforming environment, providing not only better education but also an avenue to promote their sporting agendas.

The next salient notion will provide an understanding of how being involved in the KZN sporting teams provides a catalyst for learners to unite as a team and identify with national entities.

6.5 Unwavering nation building

The learners have attained the highest level in their sporting hierarchy in the province. They now are required to spend many hours training with the KZN teams in preparation for the next level of competition, which is at the national competition or championships. The learners are placed in a context where they are in contact with learners who come from diverse racial and ethnic backgrounds, but the learners in the team have to work together with the sole aim of winning these national competitions. This context is described by Bronfenbrenner (1979) as the exosystem, a close, intimate system of relations that are psychological rather than physical in nature. The learners in the KZN teams form a close relationship with team members, but at the same time are psychologically negotiating their diverse backgrounds so as to ensure cohesion in the team. The fourth salient notion, 'unwavering nation building', is distilled from theme four (team spirit and talent search), which emphasises issues related to national pride.

In order to win the learners have to work as a team, and this means putting aside all their differences and prejudices. The social diversity of South Africa presents excellent opportunities for investigating the psychological and sociological perspectives of the learners and how they contribute to nation building. 'Nation' is defined as a civic community, rooted in values that can be shared by all ethnic components of the national society, offering the most durable framework for accommodating diversity. According to Smith (1996, p. 453), "a nation must possess its own individuality, its peculiar history and identity, and thereby reveal its unique contribution, its irreplaceable culture values to the world".

The sociological approach to self and identity begins with the notion that there is a reciprocal relationship between the self and society (Stryker, 1980), where the self, influences society through the actions of individuals, thereby creating groups. In return, society influences the self through its shared language and meanings that enable a person to take the role of the other engaged in social interaction, and reflect upon oneself as an object. Individuals identify with and behave as part of social groups, adopting shared attitudes (Tajfel & Turner, 1979). Being part of the KZN team and the sense of belonging it creates spills into many aspects of the learners' lives that indicate the importance placed on nation building. Aspects such as team spirit, quotas, role models and goal setting (which will be elaborated on) have resulted in the changing social identities of learners. This has fostered a new social identity that has galvanised the learners towards nation building.

As part of the KZN provincial team, the data reveal that learners see themselves as part of a team. Despite the teams being racially and culturally diverse, learners tend to set aside these diversities when in the team. To them the KZN team allows them to gain a sense of positive self-esteem and a sense of belonging to a team with the unified goal of winning. Learners spoke very highly of their KZN team, and this group seems to have the strongest influence on them because through their belonging to the team they are creating their sporting identity. They function as a family, and when together they do not notice the differences between them. Being part of the team is fun and the camaraderie is strong. Sport is what unites them.

The coaches in the study affirmed the important of team spirit and according to the cricket coach the KZN cricket team is conscientiously promoting this: *I must say that most of them know one another from the primary school where they are competing with each other on a regular basis, but when you get a boy from the township who does not know anybody, then we encourage the boys get to know each other properly. This year for the first time we are organising a camp, not to discuss cricket but to get to know each other and develop a team spirit (CC4)*. Being part of a sports team is an excellent crucible (Sugden, 2010) to will away the negative effects of a place or set of circumstances, where people or things are subjected to forces that test them and often make them change.

Although the quota system is applied and both learners and coaches experience it, the KZN provincial teams are very united. This can be seen as role efficacy within sports teams. Beauchamp (2007, p. 182) refers to roles as “sets of expectations about behaviours for a position in a social structure”. They typically involve interdependent behaviours and are a defining feature of teams. Within sport teams athletes perform both informal as well as formal roles. Informal roles develop through intragroup development and interaction and may include the team joker or the spokesperson. Formal roles relate to responsibilities prescribed to athletes for the specific purpose of meeting the group’s performance objectives.

When it comes to the formal roles played by learners in the KZN team, they seem to portray a very united team. The soccer coach describes his KZN team as one that does not look at colour or race but is based totally on the skill level of the players. He says that the white soccer players are described by their black counterparts as *black boys who are just white because of the skill. They gel as a team. It is not a case of let’s stick to our kind (SoC7)*. The netball coach has the same views: *if you are a netball player or a netball coach you need to be someone who loves the sport. If you love the sport you forget about race, you forget about everything that is not in line with that sport (NC7)*.

Sport provides people with a social context where encounters with other people take place in a non-threatening way and the social context provides an environment in which

they can get rid of harmful emotions. Irush and Broere (1999, p. 311) purport that through sport, values such as respect for others and keeping to the rules are learned. The diverse backgrounds of the learners can lend themselves to conflict and tension, but the findings of the study indicate that learners use this diversity to forge unity and oneness.

The cricket coach is also very positive about the way learners interact with each other in the provincial teams: *we have never had any racist kind of issues. The boys actually interact wonderfully. I used to pair the boys myself but now they pick themselves, and you will be amazed how many of them mix, it is amazing and I honestly believe that we would not see to transformation but our children will* (CC5). In the South African context this sense of identity provides a valuable vehicle in nation building. Sport is also regarded as a possible tool of social interaction because it occasions collective experiences as well as direct physical contact between the participants. According to Harms (1984, p. 7), “people jointly participating in active sport, especially in team sports, enter into direct physical contact with one another which practically provokes the emergence of intensive interpersonal relationships”.

Brendon is the only white boy that plays for his club in the township. When his club coach was asked about how he handles this situation he said: *the first thing is that when a player comes in we welcome him. We do not look at colour because we believe that when you cut your hand the blood is red, so every hand is the same. We give every boy an opportunity. When Brendon goes to the township there is a stir because he is an Umlungu. He is from a different race so people receive him differently but it is a building block* (NkCC6).

Having Brendon in his club provides the club coach with an opportunity to use him as a role model to strengthen the other boys: *he is more mature, grounded and responsible. To be responsible at the age of 14 tells you that you have a great destiny. We believe that every boy is the captain, but you have to earn it to wear the band, and you earn it through small events. Like Brad can run a warm-up programme because he has been trained, so that is leadership* (NkCC7).

It would seem that in the KZN teams, as far as the learners are concerned, diversity has bonded them as a team. Dupper (2008, p. 444) also believes that affirmative action measures should “weaken rather than reinforce stereotypical and prejudicial views”. If the quota system is on its way out, surely this must be right, despite the injustices of the past. Sport is the ultimate meritocracy, and the sporting field a place where background, colour, creed and class, at least of the social kind, are irrelevant (Atherton, 2007; Martens, 1975; Tajfel & Turner, 1979). Mwirigi (2010, p. 73) believes that in the South African context the Government is not trying to exclude talented sportsmen and women, but simply trying to create opportunities for the many equally talented sportspeople who were never given the chance and who were never going to get a chance without some of these controversial policies.

The learners have a very practical and realistic approach to who they select to emulate as their role model. They admire the players from their senior provincial teams and the South African national teams, an aspect that strongly affirms the learners’ national pride. The learners look up to these sporting heroes who inspire them and who have become their role models in life. In their selection the learners chose sportspersons from their country who were in the senior provincial teams or played in the South African national teams. These sportspersons are *Precious Mthembu*⁷⁶ (Y11); *Jessica Nkomo*⁷⁷ (No14); *Marcia Marescia*⁷⁸ (Dr6); *Sekani Mbyiwe*⁷⁹ (Tho5); *Jonty Rhodes*³¹, *Jacque Kallis*⁷² (C5); *Wesley Gilchrest*⁸⁰ and *Ryk Neethling*⁸¹ (Da8). Most of the learners indicated that they see their role models in action, especially those in the senior

⁷⁶ Precious Mthembu is a South African netball player. She plays in the positions of centre and wing defence. She participated in the 2011 World Netball Series in Liverpool, UK.

⁷⁷ Jessica Nkomo is a South African netball player.

⁷⁸ Marsha Marescia is a field hockey player from South Africa, who was a member of the national squad that finished 9th at the 2004 Summer Olympics in Athens. The midfielder comes from Durban, and is nicknamed *Nator*. She plays for the provincial team Southern Gauteng.

⁷⁹ Sekani Mbyiwe is in the first team of Orlando Pirates which is a South African soccer club based in Parktown, Johannesburg that plays in the Premier Soccer League.

⁸⁰ Wesley Gilchrest is a swimmer in the KwaZulu-Natal senior swimming squad and he achieved gold in the World Junior Championship in Brazil in 2007.

⁸¹ Ryk Neethling (born 17 November 1977) is a South African swimmer. He won an Olympic gold medal in the 4×100 m freestyle relay at the 2004 Summer Olympics. He is the former joint owner of the 4×100 m freestyle relay world record and holds several South African records. He also is the first South African to compete in four successive Olympic Games.

provincial teams and this inspires them to achieve. The social diversity of South Africa presents these learners with an excellent opportunity to select role models from all spheres of life. The learners have tremendous admiration for their South African role models, who are from all racial backgrounds, affirming their loyalty and allegiance to their country.

South Africa's nation building takes place on "the foundations of ethno nationalism, racial identity and the cultural politics of ethnic solidarity" (Bekker & Prinsloo, 1999, p. 25). What, then, is the attachment to the nation? According to Billing (1995) and Reicher, Hopkins and Condor (1997), there are two motives that may be specific to national identity construction: the desire for a sense of historical destiny of the group, and for the land of one's birth. Learners in the KZN team differ in many ways - in race, class, culture and socio-economic status - but their choice of role models and goal setting reflect their strong national identity. The learners' behaviour concurs with Mattes (1999) who points out the importance of the link between identity processes with behaviours in national identity.

The learners show similar characteristics of national pride when they set themselves goals. Their goal setting initiatives begin with aspiring to attain the next level of achievement within the sporting structures that enable them to progress towards national colours. According to Orlick (2008), people often set long-term, far-off goals without focusing enough on the present. But it is the present that gets one to the future in the way that one wishes to get there. Long-term goals can help motivate and guide, but one also needs lots of modest or achievable daily goals that take one progressively closer to the desired destination. The concreteness of progress in sport is readily obvious: better techniques, improved times, jump higher, play better and improve rankings. The learners in the study set themselves short-term goals in terms of their next level of achievement, which were realistic and achievable, and they were focused and driven towards them.

The learner data reveal their aspirations to progress to the next level of sporting achievements: *I have the potential to be in the KZN team and the SA team. I want a good life like everyone else (No13); I would like to make the national team and attend*

the Olympics 2012 (Dr6); I would like to play for my country. Get the caps (B1); my short-term goal is to make the KZN U19 team and go to Coke week. I really would like to make the SA school team this year (C7); I want to make the KZN U19 side and then go to Coke week. My main goal is to make SA school. I have two different plans, if I make it I want to go to Cape Town and go to the Academy in Cape Town and if I do not make it I will stay in Natal and I will go to the Dolphin's Academy (Ja3).

Learners carefully mapped their goals so as to make their way to represent their country. They want to move up the ranks in their province before setting their sights on national glory. It is evident that the learners display an eagerness to continue to represent their province so that they can be selected for the national squad one day. Their aspirations seem firmly entrenched towards achieving national accolades. Nation building takes on a new dimension, as the learners' ultimate goal is to represent their country where the teams are made up of players who although from diverse backgrounds, work together as a team. It is evident then that being with the KZN team provides the learners with a social context where they can encounter other players in a non-threatening way, and gain a sense of positive self-esteem and a sense of belonging to a team with the unified goal of winning. In the South African context, this sense of identity provides a valuable vehicle in nation building.

The creation of a new social identity finds its roots in national imperatives; since the learners value their identification with the team, they see themselves very much as South Africans, despite the quota and affirmative systems. They select as their role models those who are in the senior or national teams, and their goal setting for the next level of achievement is the stepping stone towards them representing their country. The learners are inspired by the fact that they can represent their country, and the quota system actually provides a catalyst for them to excel and be the best (Rajput, 2010c). Thus sport becomes a catalyst to draw individuals together with the common goal of winning. As Sugden (2005, p. 251) reminds us, sport "is a social construct and its role and function depends largely on what we make of it and how it is consumed". In a transforming society then, sports can be seen as a powerful tool to drive the youth towards nation building: "Sport exerts an immeasurable influence as a unifying force for reconciliation and for the process of nation building" (Keim, 2003, p. 171).

National pride is an acute reason for the learners in the study to overcome diversity and ensure team spirit. Their identity as members of the provincial team and accepting all the players as equal, their choice of role models who are players from the senior teams or national players, and their ultimate goal of achieving their national colours demonstrate a strong sense of allegiance towards national pride. Eaton (2002) believes that for South Africa to succeed, the construction of nationhood will play an important role in enhancing a healthy democracy.

The focus in the final salient notion addresses how racial diversity plays itself out within the provincial teams.

6.6 Social and racial diversity

Race is understood as a socio-historical and political construct (Agyemang, et al., 2010; Erasmus, 2005) that creates privileges for some racial groups and disadvantages others. This challenges the idea that race has any biological and/or cultural basis. The data suggest that race is not a fixed and tangible thing that we can find in our blood or DNA; nor is it something we are born with because of our culture. Instead, race understood as a social construct draws our attention to the meanings we attach to real and/or imagined biological and/or cultural markers. We learn these meanings and teach them to our children. Consequently, we can (although not easily) unlearn them and teach our children differently. Furthermore, when race is understood in this way one is able to recognise the hierarchies of power and privilege embedded within racialised structures of meaning.

In this fifth and final salient notion, racial concerns are examined in the context of the provincial sports teams demonstrating how racially related setbacks are manipulated and marginalised in the learners' quest to achieve in sports; hence the notion of 'social and racial diversity' which is distilled from theme five (race, class and culture).

In analysing the racially related setbacks, the impact of the learners' socio-economic background on their sporting endeavours and the influence of their culture, language,

race and class on sport and their negotiated management of the quota system and transformation are questioned. The learners in this study were from differing socio-economic backgrounds which impacted on achievement in their sport in diverse ways. The athletics coach relates how an athlete he thought had no talent to excel in athletics was able to do so because of his affluent socio-economic standing: *he had no talent as far as I was concerned but he will train from morning and he will be last boy to leave. His father was rich and bought him starting blocks and spikes. This guy was useless but three years later he became the SA champion for 100m and 200m (AC10).*

Socio-economic standing can also be a catalyst in those from low socio-economic backgrounds, for them to succeed in sport. The soccer coach sums up the background of his players: *there are guys from the township and elite areas, but their background does not reflect their ability, it is the effort they put into their soccer. I have a soccer player in Grade 11, he has got no parents and has got to take two buses to get to school and if there is soccer training, he will stay and do the extra hour and take the bus home after every one's left. That is the passion that he has for the game. I think the kids who come from the townships were born with soccer in them (SoC8).*

The gymnastics coach describes the gymnasts from low socio-economic backgrounds as being of a different calibre: *they are the nicest children and they are making colours [provincial colours] more than the others. They are much easier to work with. I think because they got nothing else, they are very grateful. They live in the one-bedroom houses and they have nowhere to play and nothing to play with. They come here and enjoy gymnastics. They love it and they get into the team very easily, it has not been difficult at all. Every talented child I have picked has made colours (GC9).*

The athletics coach voices his opinion about the differences between the athletes from the rural and city areas: *The children from the rural areas are not confident enough to come to the city and participate. They believe that they will always lose. I also spoke to some soccer players and they say they are never good enough in the eyes of selectors. As a result the children have an inferior complex about themselves (AC10).* The athletes from the rural areas feel intimidated by those from the city, compounded by the

fact that the selectors do not see the rural athletes as potential provincial athletes simply because of their social background.

The rugby coach is also weary of the fact that people will never fully understand the plight and hardships of the learners who come from disadvantaged backgrounds. He relates a story of a learner who fainted in class: *He hadn't eaten in three days and he was too proud to tell us that. We do not know what some of our kids go through to get here. Firstly they take three or four buses to get here and secondly they are disliked and frowned upon in the township for attending a privileged school. We finished practice at 5:30 and we go home at 5:45. These kids have to walk to the rank and have to catch one or two buses to go home. But they never ever moan, complain or demand and I think it is a lot about their culture that you do not do that (RC7).*

Highlighting the paradox of learners who are from the township but studying in former white schools, the rugby coach profoundly exposed the extremes that learners have to face. They attend the former white schools to better their opportunity to succeed, but are frowned upon by their own in the township. They make huge sacrifices to travel to the schools, and the financial burden sometimes means having no money to buy food.

However, it is the township environment that facilitates Brendon's chances of excelling in soccer. When Brendon's mother spoke about some of the places in the township that they had to take Brendon to in order for him to play soccer, she said: *we go to places that we have never been to. I do not know that I would have been able to take a baby or a younger child into the township [indicating that if she had another baby]. We were able to have everything in that respect and when he decided that professional soccer is what he wanted to do at 10 years old, he gave up most of his sport because he needed to focus (BM5).*

The data suggest that in the context of the South African landscape, the political and social history has contributed towards racial stratification. The divide in this racial stratification still manifests itself, but is configured differently. Unique sets of scenarios are created as learners have to cross the racial barriers in search of better opportunities. The socio-economic statuses of the learners pan out in various ways. Learners displaying limited talent but fortunate to have financial backing are able to overcome

shortcomings, being able to obtain the best resources to help to build their talents. Learners from the disadvantaged areas who have tremendous talent have to make sacrifice in terms of travelling to schools which are far from home. They stay after school to fulfil their sporting obligations. The passion for their sport drives them and they are able to set aside their hardships. Engaging in sport provides the learners with an opportunity to escape their otherwise dreary lifestyle, and they are grateful for the chance to prove their ability in sport. The learners' socio-economic background serves at a block for selectors, who are reluctant to select learners from the disadvantaged areas, and the learners begin to feel that they are not good enough to make provincial colours. In the South African context, the socio-historical past has created a huge divide for acquiring fairness in terms of sporting opportunities and provisions.

According to Andrews and Loy (1993), sport and culture can be viewed as a site of ideological struggle where individual lives and experiences are involved in a process of interpretive negotiation with the surrounding social structures. With the sport of rugby never having been a black man's sport, racial integration has brought with it a positive spin-off in that learners are introduced to this sport which has never been traditionally and culturally associated with their race group. The soccer coach has seen the changes in the codes of rugby and soccer: *my squad has a majority of white boys, which is quite strange, but then you take into account that more black boys are playing rugby instead of soccer, you see the strange anomaly that now exists in term of boys wanting to play rugby instead of soccer (SoC9)*. If this trend in rugby is to continue, then the concerns raised by De Vos (2007) about the mono-cultural and mono-racial provincial and national teams will be a phenomenon of the past. Integration in sport will begin to bring about real and deep transformation of rugby, albeit acknowledging its slow process.

According to the netball coach, there is a language barrier between the players in the KZN team, but the players seem to overcome it and interact with each other: *most of them are coming from schools where even English is not fluent to them and they are meeting with the whites, because there must be five whites in the team, Indians are also calculated as blacks. Sometimes the black learners are shy mainly because of the language, but they are not isolating themselves, they are part of the team and try to*

talk to the others, it is so amazing (NC8). The volleyball coach also speaks about the language barriers within the team, attributing this to the learners' backgrounds: ***when the learners start the conversation it stems from their background and you find that the other learners now have nothing to comment about and they become isolated from the conversation as they cannot identify with the group, and he seeks the group that he feels comfortable with in terms of general conversation (VC1).*** According to Dixon, Tredoux, Durrheim, Finchilescu, & Clack (2008), people of different races tend to cluster together in homogenous groups in the so-called integrated places. Pettigrew (1998) states that a racial divide is apparent in intimate, equal status interactions - those that according to contact theory⁸² are essential for positive change.

However, when the learners engage in a game situation, there is no communication problem because: ***on the court there is only one language and that is the game that you are playing, whether it is volleyball or cricket. The language barrier disappears as the language of the game is the same, it is not English. The players use a lot of hand signals to communicate to the other players what they want to do (VC2).***

A poignant occurrence in the South African context is that the learners who are attending the former white schools are being exposed to English only because their mother tongue is not the language of instruction in most former white schools. So although Zulu is offered as a learning area to the learners, they find it difficult. Jemma's grandmother says that language is becoming a problem with the Zulu-speaking learners, as they are now studying in a former white school and speak English: ***when it comes to Zulu and they have a project we have to help these young ones (JeG7).*** Bisschoff and Koebem (2005) found that learners want to move to the former white schools so that they can improve their command of the English language.

Learners in the team experience barriers in terms of language, culture and ethnicity, but use it to positively affect team spirit. Stuwe (1984, p. 303) states that "sport is marked

⁸² The premise of Allport's theory (1954) states that under appropriate conditions interpersonal contact is one of the most effective ways to reduce prejudice between majority and minority group members. If one has the opportunity to communicate with others, they are able to understand and appreciate different points of views involving their way of life. As a result of new appreciation and understanding, prejudice should diminish. Issues of stereotyping, prejudice, and discrimination are commonly occurring issues between rival groups. Allport's proposal was that properly managed contact between the groups should reduce these problems and lead to better interactions.

by a simple and easily comprehensible form of symbolism, which makes it possible to eliminate linguistic barriers and other obstacles to interaction. Sport, with its primarily non-verbal and immediately comprehensible interactions, is therefore particularly suited as a medium for overcoming feelings of socio-cultural unfamiliarity and otherness”. There is a widespread conception that linguistic and cultural barriers are more easily overcome in sport than in other areas of social life. For this reason, sport is often referred to as the “conveyor of culture of the most accessible symbolism” (Giebenhain, 1995, p. 167).

Race is neither an essence nor an illusion, but is described by Haney-Lopez (2000, p. 65) as “an on-going contradictory, self-reinforcing plastic process, subject to the macro forces of social and political struggle and the micro effects of daily decision. Terms like black and white are social groups, not genetically distinct branches of humankind”. The rugby coach believes that the ethos of rugby is different according to race: *Western Cape has the coloured community and the Xhosa community which is very strong and they grew up with a rugby ethos. Their development is absolutely fantastic. But in KZN, our Indian population has no culture for rugby although we have a tremendous success with our little Indian development here, and the Zulus have never really taken to it. I think that before you even attempt to start on the basics of how to play rugby you have to sell the concept of the sport not only to the kid but to the parent, to the school and to everyone, because rugby is regarded as a game where you can get hurt and die (RC8).*

The rugby coach makes profound and controversial statements when describing the differences between white and black learners. He is convinced that because: *the black kids have to strive for everything they ever got, they are so grateful and they will die and work their absolute guts out to achieve both in sports and academics because they do not want to let their mom and dad down who are probably scraping every cent to send them here (RC9).* He also articulates strongly that the *white kids are surrounded by everything negative, their parents complain about crime, people are telling them they are not going to get a job and that their country sucks. They are becoming very negative, bitter and angry young boys. This is showing in their performances on the sports field in rugby, so I lean more on my black kids to perform now because I know*

they will die for their school (RC10). He sums up: I am battling to motivate the white kids whose apathy is hugely disappointing, but the black kids who has been given an opportunity that not many black kids have ever had in their community, will do anything for their school (RC11).

The code of soccer has a very different race issue, which occurs among the black players in the team. This is unfortunate, and the soccer coach is of the opinion that *the dynamics at the higher level are very complicated. The Bafana camp in terms of racial ethnicity is so diversified that it is hard to get a unified team. The Zulu-speaking players will tend to pass to each other to the detriment of the team and the Xhosa-speaking players will play together and the white boys are left on one hand and the coloured boys are left on one hand. The game of soccer is flawed and we have that in high school soccer as well (SoC10).* Soccer, which is very much a black-dominated sport, still has cultural racism embedded in it.

The data suggest that the type of sport selected by the learners depend to a large degree on their cultural and ethnic beliefs. However, with integration this is changing as the learners become exposed to sports at their racially integrated former white schools. Although the players in the senior teams are still steeped in their cultural preferences and bias, the younger players are more amenable to integration. Perhaps being afforded the opportunity by their school makes them feel indebted to the school to perform in the sport they excel in.

The failure of black players to feature at provincial and national levels led to introduction of the quota system or affirmative action. According to Bacchi (1996, p. 15), affirmative action refers to “a range of programmes directed towards targeted groups in order to redress inequalities due to discriminatory practices”. In exploring sporting excellence in a transforming society, this research found that through their belief in their capabilities, learners produce excellence as a result of their conscious actions to effectively use the adversities or privileges in an environment that is socially transforming to achieve their goals. The learners in the study were aware of the quota system in sport and have experienced it in a variety of ways. Some have been affected by it - but it just caused them to excel further. They are sympathetic to players who have

been selected on quota and who feel uncomfortable with the fact that they may not be as good as other members of the team who were selected on merit. However, some learners who were selected on the quota system and given an opportunity to be in the KZN team have proved their worth, and went on to make it into the South African team.

The quota in netball is 50%, according to the coach, but the school has homogeneous teams: *you cannot put the 50/50 at school level but there is 50/50 at the district level (NC9)*. Schools in the township and rural areas are homogeneous, with only black learners attending, whereas schools in the urban areas and the previously white, Indian and coloured areas are integrated. As a result the school teams will depict the racial complements of these schools.

Vahed (2001) states that in South African sport whites have been forced into change by pressure from black players, administrators and the Government. Similarly, in business, tertiary institutions, the civil service and media are being forced to include blacks in meaningful, decision-making positions. Vahed (2001, p. 332) further reflects that in cricket the trajectory for the transition has been “from acceptance of all-White teams (1990-1995) to calls for inclusion of some players of colour (1996-1997) to demands for selection quotas (1997-1999) and finally demands of African control (post 2000). These changes parallel the wider society and mirror the changing face of post-apartheid South African society”.

Regarding the quota system in cricket, the coach voices his concern that there are not enough players of colour to field: *During 1996, 1997 when integration started happening in schools a lot of black sportsmen were being drafted in the predominantly white schools, and those boys were getting expert coaching and representing their schools and their province. A classic example is Ntini,⁸³ who was*

⁸³ Ntini comes through the United Cricket Board's development program. Raymond Booi, a cricket development officer noticed Ntini's talent while travelling around the Eastern Cape area introducing the game to rural boys. Ntini was given a pair of boots and packed off to Dale College in King William's Town, one of the country's best regarded cricketing nurseries. Ntini was 14 and couldn't speak English, but soon excelled. Ntini became popular amongst national selectors as a talented Black player. Ntini went on to become the first South African to take ten wickets at Lord's in 2003 before devastating the West Indies in Trinidad in 2005 with 13 for 132, the best-ever match figures by a South African bowler. Ntini kept up his excellent bowling figures and in June 2006, he was awarded a benefit by Border for his ten years' service to the game.

taken to Dale College. It became easy to meet these standards because of that. Lately that has not been happening and we are actually straining to find proper black African cricket players who are of a standard to take (CC6).

One of the problems experienced by cricket as far as transformation of its team is concerned is the type of games that are being played as well as the amount of time spent training. The cricket coach identifies the huge gap between the playing of cricket in the different areas: *In the township, the scouts go in and have camps and then they identify talent at the 20/20 tournament. Similarly the learners in the Indian schools are also playing 20/20 on a Saturday. But these boys need to be playing 50 overs of cricket every Saturday during the cricket season. That is where the white boys have an advantage. At a school like this you are involved three times a week and then on a Saturday. So we are really, really on the ball (CC7).*

The cricket coach believes that rugby has met the quota system because of the “code of silence” around what he calls “poaching”: *The unions are under pressure to get black players into their team but they are not getting them from their province, they are getting them from other provinces. At the rugby festival the scouts who come to the festival are poaching the players. There is a code of silence that operates; people know that is what happens (CC8).*

Since swimming is not a team sport, the quota system applied is different from in the other codes of sport, *because in swimming we have a whole lot of events and age groups as well, there would usually be two swimmers on merit and one quota swimmer. That is the agreement with the KZN team (SwC2).* Although the quota system is applied in the KZN teams, it is still to the detriment of players of merit who should be in the team. This phenomenon, whereby the quota system promotes mediocre black players at the expense of players of merit who are predominately white players, is validated by Sekar (2009). The netball coach also concurs that learners are left out because of colour: *you may find that the black girl or white girl playing much better than the other only to find that because of colour she will be left out. This 50/50 does have a disadvantage, although it gives everyone a chance, in that someone who is stronger will end up being left out (NC10).*

The soccer coach speaks very personally of white learners who have been side-lined because of their race and had to seek alternatives in order to pursue their soccer ambitions: ***I hate to discuss the race factor, but it is a factor. One of my white soccer players was the best under-17 player in SA but he never made any national side simply because he was a white boy, and that is the honest truth. He is now playing in Italy. Players like him would have walked into the national side (SoC11).***

The issue with quota is the balance between the system and merit-based selection. According to Cloete (2005, p. 156), those that argue for the quota system would contend that “it is a way of forcing change, provided that it is applied honestly”. Those that disagree with the quota system will contend that the very essence of competitive sport is negated.

Durrheim (2003) states that black people strongly favour policies which are directed at transformation and integration, whereas whites are opposed to policies such as land redistribution, affirmative action and racial quotas in sports teams, and this policy opposition is strongly related to racial prejudice and to perceptions of a threat. Durrheim (2005, p. 169) found that “Black and White perceptions of desegregation were rooted in a sense of threat among Whites and the form that desegregation has taken, with Blacks entering previously exclusive White spaces, is experienced as loss by Whites but as gain by Blacks”.

Transformation is a site of contestation around the struggle to shape a new hegemony. One of the uniting calls during the struggle for liberation in South Africa was the struggle for a non-racial sports environment. Sport in every part of the world reflects the society in which it is practised. According to Desai (2010), transformation and reformation were the two approaches that emerged around policy formation for a new South Africa. While reformation prioritised reconciliation and cooperative governance, in the interest of economic growth, transformation sought to change the way society was structured, and in sport the emphasis was on a bottom-up, mass-based approach.

The provincial coaches provided some information on transformation and the degree to which it has taken place in their code of sport. The gymnastics coach consciously

changed the demographics of her gymnastics club: *In 2000 I became aware of the transformation in sport so I set about looking for black children. I knew we had to do it. It was on the cards, the writing was on the wall. If you did not have black kids, you sank. So I went to the school up the road, which used to be a white school and now has many black learners, and was given permission to coach PE at the school. I selected most of my black learners from this school (GC11).*

The netball coach sees the transformation taking place and relates how it has impacted on the lives of the learners: *During apartheid the learners only played at school, they did not go anywhere. But now they are going places and they love that. This is the rainbow nation. We love the 50/50 ratio because it shows transformation. It shows that SA is going somewhere. And that mixing of different cultures it makes them learn more. Everyone is engaged in sport and they love sport. (NC11).*

Nkosi's soccer club coach speaks about the stark differences between the opportunities for black and white soccer players and the disadvantages as far as the age at which they start playing soccer is concerned: *At the white clubs there the under-sixes and -fours are playing football but in the black township football starts at 10 years old, and a whole gap of players are being destroyed. And those are the boys that we have to get for the future. We are going to specialise from the under-6 to 10 brackets, and our drive is to go to the townships (NkCC8).*

The athletics coach has very strong views about transformation: *fortunately athletics has no barrier as far as race and colour is concerned. I think if a person has a barrier it is within the person, it is not outside. When the transformation came in 1994 there was no transformation as far as I was concerned. The only difference was that we had more access to African children and white children. When the parents saw that you had a passion for athletics they did not say that you are an Indian coach. They just came across and sent the athletes (AC12).*

The game of rugby has seen major shifts in terms of its racial composition, the change in the status of the game from amateur to professional, and the way the game is now coached and the players are conditioned: *Rugby is totally a different game since I*

started 25 years ago, in all aspects. When I started at the University of Natal, coaching in 1984 it was all white players. Players of colour started playing around 1986 and 1987 and we saw the emergence of talent from a new set of players. In 1985 rugby was an amateur sport but today it is a professional sport where players can earn millions with an option to make a career out of rugby. The way the game is played and coached and the players conditioned is very intense. Before after a match there used to be a huge party, but now the players are in the gym for warm down and are drinking Powerade. Now there is so much more at stake (RC12).

The rugby coach states that when transformation first started, many mistakes were made: *millions were lost unnecessarily in the wrong track with transformation. People thought that buying clothes and buying nice jerseys for all the development players is what transformation was all about, but it was window dressing (RC14).* Now that the racial composition of rugby has changed, especially at school level: *rugby should not be seen as an exclusively white or privileged sport. At the inter-school matches on a Saturday almost 50% are players of colour (RC13).* For the rugby coach transformation means bringing children who have never had the opportunity and *exposing them to former white school type of education. That to me is true development and for many young boys who have tremendous talent we make a huge difference in their lives (RC14).*

In a transforming society like South Africa, sport and recreation unavoidably contribute to the country's transformation agenda. Sport illuminates and transforms a society. De Vos (2007) believes that the enforcement of significant quotas on provincial rugby will ensure a critical mass of black players in the rugby teams. If the rugby teams are going to remain essentially mono-cultural and mono-racial, real and deep transformation of rugby is not going to materialise.

The cricket coach believes that much of the controversy surrounding transformation could have been avoided: *There must be a 10-year plan so that we could get our house in order before we go into international sport. We should actually do all the development first and then enter international sport after 10 years, so you will be*

picking everyone on merit. Proper transformation and development would have taken place and money would have been spent in the proper way (CC9).

According to Sing (1995), a ‘minimalist’ position refers to the advancement of some individuals within existing structures and relations, and a ‘maximalist’ position advocates comprehensive restructuring that will fundamentally alter power relations in the political and economic spheres. Boloka and Krabil (2000, p. 76) take a maximalist position when they point out that transformation is not only about replacement of colours. Successful transformation is achieved “when it reflects, in its ownership, staffing and product, the society within which it operates, not only in terms of race, but also socio-economic status, gender, religion, sexual orientation, region and language. This is only possible if access is opened not only to the emerging black elite, but also to grassroots communities of all colours”.

6.7 Conclusion

This chapter elaborated on the themes that emerged from the learners’ stories and five salient notions where analysis of the data revealed how sporting excellence is being achieved from a personal perspective using Figure 1: p 44 and from an environmental perspective using Figure 2: p 49.

A summary of the analysis process (see Appendix 18) shows graphically the progression of analysis of the data from Chapter Four to Chapter Six. The analysis began with narration of the learners’ stories, and these stories provided the data from which the themes for this study were generated. These themes elaborated on the psychological and sociological perspectives that contributed to sporting excellence. From these themes, five salient notions were distilled and explained. This concluded the answering of the first two critical questions and the focus now shifts to the third and final critical question: *why do these learners excel in school sport in a transforming society?*

The final chapter, Chapter Seven explores the navigation of social spaces in a transforming society which makes it possible for learners to achieve sporting excellence. In tracking the learners' journeys in the social spaces of a divided society, one begins to understand the complex navigation process that learners engage in so that they can be filtered out of their social spaces and into the spaces that provide the opportunity for sporting excellence to be achieved.

CHAPTER SEVEN

Navigating social spaces for sporting excellence in a transforming society

7.1 Introduction

This study began with an interpretive inquiry which aimed to explain how learners have achieved sporting excellence in the context of a transforming society. The purpose throughout this endeavour has been to explore who these learners are and what contributes to their achieving excellence in sport. The Wheel of Excellence (Orlick, 2005) provided an in-depth understanding of how learners have achieved sporting excellence from a psychological perspective, and ecological systems theory (Bronfenbrenner, 1979) provided an in-depth understanding of what contributed to the learners' sporting excellence from a sociological perspective.

The established literature on sporting excellence maintains that there is a notable dominance of the psychological perspective. This study focusing on a transforming society also exposed an emerging literature from a sociological perspective, captured in the themes relating to the social context; schooling and the curriculum; team spirit and talent search; and race, class and culture. Although these psychological and sociological contributions are imperative, this study supplements an additional dimension to the sociological perspective, suggesting that in the South African context it is the navigation of the social spaces in a transforming society that becomes a critical contributor for sporting excellence to be achieved.

In this changing society there is an entire dimension of 'social spaces' that explains why sporting excellence is produced and it is this dimension that will be theorised using concepts related to spatiality. The journeys of the learners, which at first seemed to be normal activities within the social spaces, are actually a complex set of spatial movements, spatial displacements and spatial upheavals that the learners have to journey through in their quest to achieve excellence in sport.

Thus, in order to closely monitor the learners' journey within these social spaces as they achieve provincial colours, the metaphor of 'tracking' is introduced. Pickett (2009) defines tracking as the act or process of following something or someone. This can be in the pursuit of a person or animal, by following tracks or marks they have left behind; it is seen as a mark or succession of marks left by something that has passed, or a path along which something moves. Synonyms for tracking are chasing, following, pursuing, shadowing, tagging, tailing, tracing or trailing. In tracking these learners, their journeys within the social spaces are traced and this provides insights into how the social spaces were navigated for opportunities to be created for sporting excellence to be achieved.

This study will now address the third critical question: *why do these learners excel in school sport in a transforming society?* In tracking the learners within the divided society - where they stay, where they school, and how they negotiate space in order to advance in their sport - a unique pattern of movement emerges that is playing out in the spaces in which the learners engage. To understand these movements, the theory of social spaces of Lefebvre (1991) and Soja (1997) is examined, as it provides a meaningful understanding about space and the notion of spatiality. The social spaces of sporting excellence are then investigated against the changing spatial configuration of the spaces of a once divided society, and of a society which is now integrated.

This final chapter concludes by theorising the "filtration process of sporting excellence", that analyses how the social spaces of sporting excellence are being navigated by the learners to create opportunities for themselves to be "filtered" out of the social spaces, and it is this filtration process that contributes to and produces sporting excellence in a transforming society.

7.2 Social spaces examined

When one talks about space the related concepts that compose and comprise the inherent spatiality of human life, according to Soja (1997), are place, locality, location, landscape, environment, home, city, region, territory and geography. With growing issues in our contemporary world such as poverty, racism, sexual discrimination and

environmental degradation, as well as geopolitical conflicts, one is becoming increasingly aware that we are intrinsically spatial beings and active participants in the social construction of our spatiality. Soja (1997, p. 1) states that it is therefore necessary to have “a strategic awareness of this collectively created spatiality and its social consequences as this becomes a vital part of making both theoretical and practical sense of our contemporary life worlds at all scales, from the most intimate to the most global”.

Borrowing from Lefebvre (1991) and Soja’s (1997) understandings on space and social spatiality will provide valuable insight into the shifting and changing nature of space and spatiality in a divided society. The study of space, as declared by Lefebvre (1991), examines how the social relations of production have a social existence which becomes inscribed into a space, and in the process produces the space itself. As such then, social relations become real and concrete and part of our lived social existence. Therefore, Soja (1997) extrapolates that social reality is not just coincidentally spatial, existing in space, but is presuppositionally and ontologically spatial. Everything occurs in time and is inherently historical and our actions always play a part in constructing sequential temporality and making histories in the construction of individual and societal biographies. There is a strong leaning towards this in this study, which is located at a specific historical time which is presenting spatial movement of the different race groups in a specific way. One such spatial movement is that of learners who navigate the social spaces in a transforming society for sporting excellence to be achieved.

Lefebvre (1991), in describing three moments of social spaces, insists that each mode of thinking about space (the physical, mental and social) be seen as simultaneously real and imagined, concrete and abstract, or material and metaphorical. The physical or perceived space, which Soja (1997) refers to as Firstspace, is a process of producing the material form of social spatiality, and is thus presented as both a medium and an outcome of human activity, behaviour and experience. The mental or conceived space, which Soja (1997) refers to as Secondspace, is described as the dominant space in any society. It is the store house of epistemological (knowledge) power.

Finally, the social or lived space, which Soja (1997) refers to as Thirdspace, is space as directly lived, with all its intractability intact, a space that stretches across the images

and symbols that accompany it. It is the space of inhabitants and users, and this space is described as a radically different way of looking at, interpreting and acting to change the embracing spatiality of human life. It is the third space or the lived space that this study will apply, to make sense of how the social spaces within a transforming society are navigated for sporting excellence to be achieved.

7.3 Social spaces of sporting excellence

Lefebvre (1991) argues that when things occur in space, it is not incidental but a vital part of the lived experience, part of the social production of social space and the construction of individual and societal spatiality. The notion of space is explained by drawing on the morphology of space of a transforming society. To understand social spaces in the context of this study, the focus is redirected to the social spaces during the apartheid era in South Africa, where the Nationalist Government established racially segregated areas called townships as a residence for people of colour. Black people were evicted from properties that were now in areas designated for whites only, and the Government made their move into townships legally compulsory through the Group Areas Act.³⁰

Forced removal from city centres to townships has continued in post-apartheid South Africa. The difference is that under apartheid all black people faced forced removal to townships, while now it is only the poor living in shack settlements that face eviction to townships on the peripheries of cities. In South Africa a ‘township’ originally meant a segregated town; under apartheid it came to mean a residential development restricting ‘non-whites’ (blacks, coloureds and Indians) who lived near or worked in whites-only communities.

Similarly, Maharaj (2005) is of the opinion that the Group Areas Act was one of the key instruments used to reinforce the ideology of apartheid, with considerable spatial implications for the residential restructuring of South African cities. The spatial navigation by learners brings to light the impact of this divided society. In tracking sporting excellence within these social spaces, the analysis of data is explained using

three concepts: spatial movements, spatial displacements and spatial upheavals. The opportunities created by the changes in the social spaces are of paramount importance for learners to achieve excellence in their sporting code. These three concepts derived from the data analysis⁸⁴ will track the learners' journeys and explain how in navigating their spaces they have had to negotiate different social spaces, be they educational, cultural, linguistic, financial, political, sporting or physical spaces, which enabled sporting excellence to become a reality for them. These concepts which explain spatiality are also described metaphorically using terminology from athletics, since this aptly represents movement and spatial matters.

7.3.1 Spatial movements: The long-distance race

The first concept that explains the social space is spatial movements, which draw on the notion of the long-distance race, describing the distances that learners have to travel from home to create opportunities for sporting success. With the changes brought by democracy - one of which was the freedom of movement - the data reveal that there is a tendency for blacks, Indian and coloured learners, who were once confined to the peripheral spaces of the township or rural areas, to travel long distances from their homes in the township to attend the former white schools which are situated in the affluent spaces previously occupied only by whites. Research by Gorard, Taylor and Fitz (2003) and Bisschoff and Koebem (2005) showed similar movements, where learners move from schools close to their residences to others outside their area.

Learners move into affluent areas because the schools here provide better education, promote their sport talents and offer better sporting resources, facilities and coaching. The learners who show talent in sport are navigating their social space in order to reap the benefits provided by these areas. The movement of learners into these social spaces pan out in different ways and for different reasons, and in this study the lengthy and time-consuming physical distances travelled from home to school, to provincial training and to club training is postulated on, together with its impact on the financial, educational, cultural and linguistic spaces. The spatial movements of the learners are

⁸⁴ The phrases in bold italics are taken from the learners stories and the footnote at the end of the phrases is cross reference with the data in the learners' stories.

evident in the long distances they have to travel to attend schools that provide them with the opportunity for better education and sporting prospects.

The locality of the school becomes the focal point of their spatial movement, and it is this locality that Soja (1997) states is an essential criterion related to space and spatiality. In the changing South African society the learners occupy the outlying spaces of the township and rural areas, and have to travel varying distances to attend schools in the affluent areas. They make informed decisions before seeking admission to these schools, which are predominately the former white schools. The learners therefore spend the better part of the day travelling long distances to these schools, which are far from their home: *I only leave school at about 4 o'clock and I still have to go down and take a bus and that will take about an hour.*⁴³

These intentional decisions to attend schools in the well-resourced areas adds to the families' financial woes, since besides travelling costs they also have to ensure that school fees are paid. Generally the former white schools' fee structure is much more expensive compared to schools in the township and rural areas. The learners find themselves in a different financial space, since attending the former white schools also demands additional financial contributions from the parents, as these schools are not reliant on Government funding. However, the commitment is made by the families to ensure that learners who are talented have the best of facilities, resources and coaching to secure a better chance of excelling in their sport. The educational spaces of the learners are also secured, since vast differences in the quality of education still exist in the schooling system in South Africa. The spatial movements of the learners, which necessitates action because of the changing society, is what Soja (1997, p. 2) sums up as "every life, every event, every activity we engage in is usually unquestionably assumed to have a pertinent and revealing historical and social dimension".

Learners who have talent and whose talents are noticed are awarded sporting scholarships to schools that wish to promote the learners' talents: *I got a full scholarship. I get to race against the club swimmers at school and take part in the swimming gala.*⁶⁶ Parents now have to make the effort of ensuring that the learners are able to attend these former white schools, which requires travelling far from their home.

The learner's sporting potential becomes a vital conduit for facilitating access to a superior educational space, as the learner now also reaps the benefit of the good quality education offered by the former white schools.

Although in post-apartheid South Africa patterns of integration and racial isolation are apparent in the schooling system, it is only the historically better-resourced schools - mainly the white, followed by the Indian and coloured schools - that have become increasingly integrated, whereas the black learners continue to attend under-resourced and racially homogenous schools (Soudien, 2004). This is relevant in the context of this study, in that the learners have prioritised their schooling and attend the historically better-resourced schools, since it is here that the social spaces provide an enabling environment for sporting excellence to be achieved.

Attending the former white schools exposes the learners to different cultures and languages, and this can result in tensions between the two social spaces of the township and the affluent areas. The learners who are now interacting with predominantly white learners tend to adopt their style of speaking. This is a cause of mockery in the township, since the township children pick on the learners' change in accent: ***In the township the guys like taking advantage of those who go to white schools because they say I am a Danone [refers to black people who speak like white people].***⁵³ One of the outcomes of spatial movement is the integration of culture and language. According to Soja (1997) space influences behaviour, and the cultural and linguistic behaviours of the learners are altered as they journey through space. In their quest to achieve in sport the learners have to negotiate and manage their cultural and linguistic spaces, because in navigating their social spaces they are being exposed to diverse social and cultural environments.

The spatial movements of the learners are evident in the long distances they have to travel to attend provincial training. As part of the provincial teams, the learners also have to travel long distances into urban or affluent areas in order to attend the training sessions which are crucial to ensure their place in the provincial team. It is in these urban or affluent areas that the best sporting facilities and resources are found. Due to their low economic status learners make use of public transport, and some travel by

train in order to save on transport costs, even though it is an unsafe mode of transport. The learners' commitment is unwavering and they are not afraid to use the public transport: *I go on my own, I am a pretty strong girl, I do not care, and I am not scared*⁴⁴.

On the other hand, some learners who were selected as part of the KZN team were unable to attend training sessions and play for the province because of the disparity in the distribution of resources and access between the social spaces. Learners from the township or rural areas have to travel great distances to the affluent areas, where provincial training takes place because of the facilities found there. There exist what Soja (2010, p. 8) calls "social injustices", arguing that justice has a geography, and that the equitable distribution of resources, services, and access is a basic human right. Not having this places huge financial constraints on the learners. However, it is this very setback that motivates the learners who initially felt disappointed, to continue in their own spaces to further their sporting career: *I was selected but could not go there because of transport. I feel hurt and sad, but I got hope*.⁴⁷ To ensure their place in the provincial team, the management of the financial space of the learners becomes a crucial aspect in ensuring they make the provincial training sessions.

The spatial movements of the learners are also evident in the long distances they have to travel to attend club training, a vital aspect of the learners' achievement since it supplements their skill development. Spaces play themselves out ironically in the life of the white soccer player who has to play for a black soccer club in the township to further his ambitions of playing provincial and national soccer. This learner has to travel long distances from his affluent home to play in the outlying township areas. This was the only scenario in this study where there was "an inversion of spatial movements" to facilitate sporting success. Travelling from the affluent area into the township area has provided this learner with the opportunity to experience first-hand the cultural spaces of the people in the township: *This just opened my eyes to see how they suffer and how much they enjoy coming to training*.⁵² In pursuing his dream to play soccer, the learner is exposed to differing cultural spaces which he has to embrace and negotiate in his quest to achieve sporting success.

The lived spaces purported by Lefebvre (1991) show how spatial configurations are panning out in the transforming society. The first concept of spatial movement demonstrates the long distances travelled within the various social spaces of a changing society, and this physical distance travelled becomes imperative if learners want to advance in their sport. These spatial movements contribute to different types of spaces that have to be navigated by learners. They have to navigate the educational spaces of the affluent schools they attend, the cultural and linguistic spaces they make contact with and the financial spaces as the burden of monetary demands becomes a concern in their quest to achieve sporting excellence.

7.3.2 Spatial displacements: Clearing the high bar

The second concept on the social space is spatial displacements, which draws on the notion of clearing the high bar and describes obstacles that learners have to overcome so as to create opportunities for sporting success. Living in the townships is an obstacle that prevents opportunities for the learners to achieve sporting excellence. This research alludes to the notion that one needs to think differently about social spaces and spatiality in a society that was once forcibly divided on racial lines, where people were restricted to specific spaces based on their race as a result of political ideology, and which is now open, unrestricted and free. Seekings and Natrass (2006) state that a minority of the black population are beginning to move into areas previously dominated by whites, as a result of their moving up in social class or improving on their income ranking. The change that is now brought about through spatial displacements expands our understanding of the new spaces and social spatiality that is been established, and the impact of this on financial and physical spaces.

The spatial displacements of the learners become evident when they have to clear the high bar in terms of relocating from the townships to the affluent areas in order to meet the demands and needs of their sport and attain success. The learners and their families therefore physically move to help facilitate the learners' achievement. As the economic status of the family improves, parents seek viable alternatives to better their social standing, and by occupying the spaces of the affluent suburbs they displace the social spaces. Thus, in clearing the high bar, the obstacles of living in the township are overcome as learners move or displace their social spaces to those spaces that provide

them with opportunities to further their sporting achievements: *It meant travelling every weekend to Durban, which my parents did for a whole year before deciding to relocate.*⁴⁸

The relocation alleviates the cost of travelling to schools, to provincial team and club training, as all these occurs in the social space of the urban area; hence the relocation changes the financial spaces of the learners and their families. The geographic patterning of the social spaces of a changing society demonstrates the materially superior spaces of the affluent areas, which were once designed for black alienation and are now sought out so as to ensure that the learners have the best facilities. This spatial relocation has two tendencies, leading to the dissolution of old relations and generation of new ones (Soja, 1997).

The spatial displacements of the learners are also evident in their having to relocate so as to facilitate their club and provincial training. Attending training in an urban area is very difficult for learners living in the outlying areas, since they have to travel long distances. As a result, the learners commute between homes - where the weekends are spent in the urban areas for coaching and competition - and the learners and their families have no free time as their entire life is based on the learners' sporting commitments: *My mom gives up a lot to take me up and down from Durban to training sessions.*⁶² Training and coaching are crucial to the learners attaining optimum skills prominence and they have to manage their financial space as they negotiate the costs of long-distance travel.

The spatial displacements of the learners are also evident in learners having to relocate between their homes in the township to homes at their parents' work. Depending on their job profile, parents have to move from their home in the township to work and stay on their work premises. As a result, some of the learners are brought to their parents' work residence in order to provide them with better schooling and sporting opportunities. The learners therefore attend the former white and Indian schools which now become accessible to them: *I then went to Saskia from grade nine.*⁵⁵

In pursuing their sporting endeavours, the learners have to overcome obstacles (their physical space) by moving from one social space to another so as to provide access to their sporting commitments. This second concept, spatial displacement, demonstrates how living in townships is an obstacle for the learners, in that it prevents them from being in the social spaces that provides the necessary opportunities. The locality of the homes becomes the focal point of the learners' spatial displacement and it is this locality that Soja (1997) states is an essential criterion related to space and spatiality.

7.3.3 Spatial upheaval: Relay exchange zone

The final concept, spatial upheaval, is the most profound as it involves the physical uprooting of the learners from their homes in the township or rural areas to affluent areas, either in search of better education and sporting opportunities or if they have been talent searched and provided with sporting scholarships covering boarding, schooling and coaching at the former white schools. The learners are in a relay exchange zone, as they have to make a connection between the two social spaces - one in the township which is familiar to them and which they have to leave behind, and the other at the new school, which is unfamiliar and which they now have to occupy. The spatial upheaval between the two social spaces has to be mediated by the learners, and it also impacts on the educational, political and sporting spaces.

The spatial upheaval of the learners becomes evident when they find themselves in a relay exchange zone where they have to trade homes. The learners whose families are able to provide for good-quality education have sent their children to the former white schools, despite living in township or rural areas. To find a good secondary school in the township or rural area is difficult, so they select schools in the urban areas. Boarding at these schools becomes a necessity, as it is impossible for them to commute the great distances from their homes in the township or rural areas to the affluent areas. This spatial upheaval has resulted in the learners' growth, both in their education and their sporting endeavours, and they are indebted to the former white schools for providing them with the opportunity to become someone: *Durheim High helped me to become a better player. The best five years of my life.*⁵⁹

The learners have managed their educational space as they make the best of the opportunities afforded to them to study in the urban areas. They show a sense of allegiance both to the schools as well as to their families, who still stay in the township or rural areas and want them to have a better life when they are successful later on: ***That is why I am a captain with a mission. I have to go back as I am the youngest son. I am going to get my big house there and when I am successful I will built them [his parents] one as well.***⁶⁰

In pursuing a better educational space, there is a spatial upheaval as learners trade their homes in the township for schools that not only provide better education but where they are able to board: ***Having done well in sport has secured me a scholarship at school and I am now able to board at the school as well.***⁶⁴ Thus learners seek out the former white schools which are located in the former white areas. Christopher (2005, p. 2317) affirms that “it is within the former white areas that most of the development leading to racial reintegration are taking place”, but that the pace of desegregation is slow in most South African towns and cities. Opportunities for the learners to achieve in sport are greater in the former white areas and this is one way in which the former white schools are able to develop racial integration.

The sporting talents of the learners has secured them free education and sports coaching thus the learners’ sporting space is being promoted as they are now able to spend more time on their education and sport rather than travelling between social spaces. “The appropriation and use of space are political acts” (Palmer, 1991, p. 101), and making available bursaries to disadvantaged learners to promote the racial complement at their schools can be seen as a political act by the former white schools. The learners become assets in the political space of the school as they bring prestige and recognition to the schools because of their sporting achievements.

The last concept, spatial upheaval, shows a profound impact in the social spaces in which the learners engage. The learners are still bound to their home environment in the township, but are uprooted in the sense that they spend the major part of their time in the school environment where they are boarding. There is a disjuncture or upheaval in their social spaces as they have to make a connection between the two. The learners can

only enter the social spaces of the affluent areas through “subjection” (Foucault, 1983), as they are subject to control by and dependent on being talent searched by external authorities who are instrumental in paving the way for them to enter the social spaces of the affluent areas.

From these three concepts it becomes obvious that the social spaces which once were racially homogeneous are beginning to blur with the migration of learners to social spaces that, although foreign to them, are essential for the progress of their sport. Soja (1997, p. 127) terms this ‘borderlands’, and states that it becomes “physically present wherever two or more cultures edge each other, where people of different races occupy the same territory, where the lower middle and upper classes touch and where the spaces between two individuals shrinks with intimacy”. Using this comparison and relating it to sport, what is emerging in post-apartheid society is that social spaces are being renegotiated, and learners are seeking opportunities in these social spaces that will help them to excel in sport. There is movement across the once defined lines of separation to spaces that were a forbidden zone, which now provide the setting for sporting excellence to occur.

In the apartheid era sport was played according to racial groupings, where teams formed were only allowed to play against their own racial groups. The resources and facilities in the townships and rural areas were virtually non-existent and the inhabitants had to make do with what was available. With the change in Government the social spaces are no longer segregated and have become spaces for all to enjoy. This brought about the migration of people into spaces that provide improved facilities and resources, opening up much larger spaces of choice in post-apartheid South Africa. This is similar to many developing countries, which are experiencing mass migration of people seeking a better life. Bandura (1995, p. 21) states that “migrants are uprooted from their culture and thrust into a foreign one where they have to learn new languages, social norms, values, world views and unfamiliar ways of life, many of which may clash with their native culture”. These migratory pressures will persist or intensify as long as large economic disparities exist between nations. Rich nations pick out the most skilled and talented members of poorer nations, which only exacerbate the disparities.

Life in the societies of today is undergoing accelerated and extraordinary social, informational and technological change as well as growing global interdependence. Although spiralling social changes over the course of history are not new, it is the magnitude and accelerated pace that is different. These rapid cycles of drastic changes require unceasing personal and social renewals (Bandura, 1995). These challenging realities place a premium on people's sense of efficacy to shape their future. Modern-day theorising describes people as on-looking hosts of internal mechanisms orchestrated by environmental events. They are stripped of any sense of agency. However, Bandura (1997, p. vii) states that "people are proactive, aspiring organisms who have a hand in shaping their own lives and the social systems that organise, guide and regulate the affairs of their society". Peoples' proactiveness in shaping their lives is an essential ingredient in a divided society, as it leads to spatial navigating which creates a unique context for excellence to be achieved.

The many social space configurations produced in order to promote sporting excellence - be it spatial movement, spatial displacement or spatial upheaval - have created and reshaped the way social spaces are navigated to create opportunities for learners at school to achieve sporting excellence in a transforming society. In analysing these three concepts, space and social relations to spatiality have been theorised, providing an understanding of spatiality in a transforming society, which has redefined how sporting excellence is been achieved.

In ensuring the contemporary consciousness of spatiality with regard to sporting excellence, this study is now able to expand on the constantly shifting and changing space and social spatiality of sporting excellence in a transforming society, which is theorised as the "filtration process of sporting excellence" (Rajput, Sookrajh, & Vithal, 2011). A new model for achieving sporting excellence is developed that explains social spaces as a facilitator of learners' excellence in sport in a divided society.

7.4 Concluding insights: The filtration process of sporting excellence

The term “filtration” illustrates the analogy of the filtration process to that of the movement of sporting excellence in the transforming society. Filtration is defined as a “treatment process that involves the use of porous material through which liquid or gas is passed in order to separate it from suspended particulate matter especially to extract impurities” (Pickett, 2009). In the tracking of sporting excellence, only learners who are talented and create opportunities for themselves, are “filtered” out of their environment, with the majority of the learners being left behind as “impurities”. The learners move into social spaces that provide them with the chance to be “filtered” into excelling in sport.

In analysing the social spaces of sporting excellence, we are reminded that desegregation in the South African context has been a limited and a very uneven process. Chisholm and Sujee (2006, p. 141) affirm that in schools there has generally been “more movement from and integration of Black learners into former Indian and former coloured schools than the former white schools” but in sport there is a minority of the black, Indian or coloured learners who are beginning to move into areas previously dominated by whites in their quest to achieve in their provincial sporting colours. In tracking the learners’ journey, the social spaces of sporting excellence were described using three concepts of spatial movements, spatial displacements and spatial upheavals that the learners had to navigate in their quest to achieve excellence in sport. How the learners have managed and navigated these three concepts, by travelling long distances, overcoming obstacles and making connections within the social spaces has enabled them to get filtered out of the social spaces, thus ensuring that they are in the correct social spaces for sporting excellence.

In this study the psychological perspective (self and identity) and sociological perspectives (social context, schooling and the curriculum, team spirit and talent search, and race, class and culture) are imperative and form the foundation for sporting excellence to be achieved. But there is a pattern of spatial restructuring emerging, which is showing a suburban concentration of affluent spaces.

The racially segregated social spaces that are unique to the South African context are shown in Figure 4: p 214. Blacks make up 86% of the population of KZN, followed by Indians (8.1%), whites (4.4%) and coloureds (1.5%). These social spaces are graphically represented, showing that within these segregated social spaces learners from the Indian, coloured and black areas who manage and navigate the social spaces are being filtered out into the previously white affluent areas.

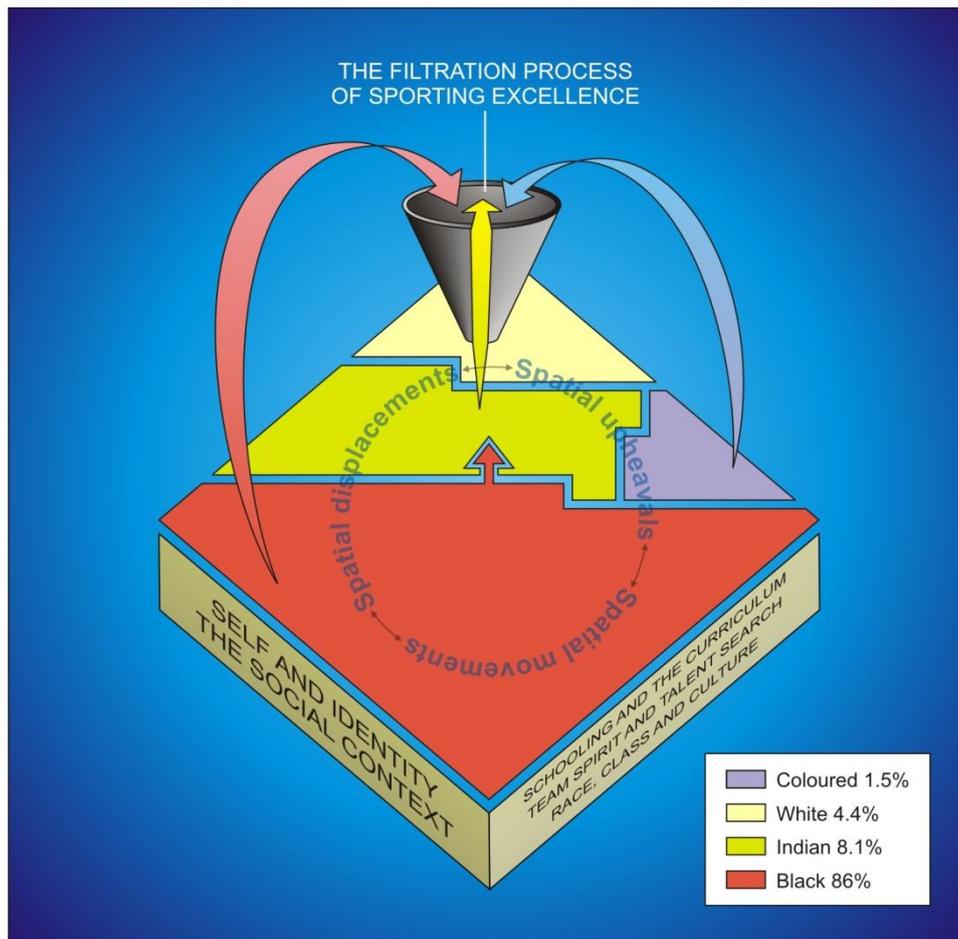


Figure 4: The social spaces of sporting excellence

Sporting excellence is thus being filtered, and only a select few learners are reaping the benefits. In tracking sporting excellence, the filtration process brings into focus that movement in the social spaces of sporting excellence are by learners from the previously disadvantaged racial groupings, so is unidirectional and towards spaces that are seen as beneficial and having a positive impact on learners who excel in sport. This filtration process highlights what Hooks (1992) terms “marginality”, which can be

viewed as an oppressive process as it marginalises the majority of the learners from journeying into the social spaces where opportunities to achieve in sports are greater.

Talented sporting individuals should be able to thrive in their own social spaces, since democracy in South Africa promised the levelling of the playing fields. But the filtration of sporting excellence shows that the affluent social spaces become the custodians of the very best sporting talents from the disadvantaged social spaces, and the impression is created that sporting excellence is a feature of affluent social spaces and of the former white and private schools.

The movement within these social spaces, argued as spatial movement, spatial displacement or spatial upheaval in this study, provides access to sporting opportunities but is confined to a privileged few. In a transforming society then, talented learners, in spite of their social adversities are able to insert themselves into the filtration process and benefit from the social spaces they are drawn towards to achieve excellence in sport. The navigation within the social spaces is imperative for sporting excellence to be achieved in a transforming society.

This study has provided a detailed description of who these learners are and what contributes to their achieving in sport. The emerging themes brought into focus the learners' self and identity, which provided an in-depth account of them from a personal and psychological perspective. The remaining themes provided an in-depth account of the learners from a sociological perspective. The roles of key players such as the family, coaches and significant others who are responsible for socially influencing the learners in sport were analysed. The extent to which the school experience contributes to the learners' sporting development was examined. The relationship of the learners with members of the provincial team was investigated, and finally how the learners negotiated social and racial diversity was analysed.

The focus of the study then shifted to the transforming society, portraying three concepts of spatiality that described how learners have navigated the social spaces to create opportunities for sporting excellence to be achievement. The tracking of the learners' navigation of the social spaces contributed to the theorising of the filtration

process, which is seen as a unique contributor to the achievement of sporting excellence. It is through this filtration process that a select few of the learners are able to negotiate their social spaces. In tracking the learners' journey, the social spaces of sporting excellence were described using three concepts of spatial movements, spatial displacements and spatial upheavals that the learners had to navigate in their quest to achieve excellence in sport. How the learners have managed and navigated these three concepts, by travelling long distances, overcoming obstacles and making connections within the social spaces has enabled them to get filtered out of the social spaces, thus ensuring that they are in the correct social spaces for sporting excellence to be achieved. However, for the majority of the learners from previously disadvantaged racial groupings, achieving sporting excellence will not become a possibility as they will not make it through the filtration process.

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1 : Letter to the provincial coach



Postal Address: Private Bag X03, Ashwood 3605 KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa

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18 March 2008

The Provincial Coach

RESEARCH STUDY

I, Ms Daxita Ishwarlal Rajput, am currently registered for a PhD in Education at the University of KwaZulu-Natal, Edgewood Campus, Faculty of Education. My supervisors are Professor Reshma Sookrajh (031 2607259) and Professor Renuka Vithal (031 2607587), who are at the University of Kwa-Zulu. The title of my dissertation is *Achieving Sporting Excellence in a Transforming Society*.

The purpose of the study is to understand how learners achieve sporting excellence in a transforming society. Your role in this study is to help identify learners who have excelled in your code of sport. The learners selected for this study will be those learners who are in the FET phase of the school system, which is grade 10, 11 and 112.

I therefore wish to meet with you for about half an hour to identify the top three learners in your team. Data collected for this research will be kept in the possession of the researcher and destroyed five years after the completion of the study. Please be assured that participation in this study is voluntary and all responses will be treated in a confidential manner and anonymity will be ensured at all times. Your decision not to participate will not result in any form of disadvantage. You are free to withdraw from the research at any time without any explanation to me.

Your participation will ensure the success of my study. Thanking you in anticipation.

Yours faithfully

Ms Daxita Ishwarlal Rajput
Lecturer Sport Science
Edgewood Campus

Appendix 2: Declaration by the provincial coach



Postal Address: Private Bag X03, Ashwood 3605 KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa
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ACHIEVING SPORTING EXCELLENCE IN A TRANSFORMING SOCIETY

DECLARATION

PROVINCIAL COACH INTERVIEW

I, _____ (Full name of sports personnel) hereby confirm that I have read and fully understand the contents of this document and the nature of the research project and I consent to participating in the research project. I understand that I am at liberty to withdraw from the project at any time, should I so desire.

Signature of Provincial Coach

Date

Appendix 3: Letter to the parent



Postal Address: Private Bag X03, Ashwood 3605 KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa

Telephone: +27 (0)31 2603681 Fax: +27 (0)31 2603595

Email: rajput@ukzn.ac.za

Website: www.ukzn.ac.za

6 September 2008

Dear Parent

RESEARCH STUDY

I, Ms Daxita Ishwarlal Rajput, am currently registered for a PhD in Education at the University of KwaZulu-Natal, Edgewood Campus, Faculty of Education. My supervisors are Professor Reshma Sookrajh (031 2607259) and Professor Renuka Vithal (031 2607587), who are at the University of KwaZulu-Natal. The title of my dissertation is *Achieving Sporting Excellence in a Transforming Society*.

The purpose of the study is to understand how learners achieve sporting excellence in a transforming society. Your child has been selected by their provincial coach as a participant for this study. I wish to conduct an in-depth interview (about one and a half to two hours) with your child about his or her sporting achievement. There may be more than one in-depth interview and all interviews will be tape recorded. Data collected for this research will be kept in the possession of the researcher and destroyed five years after the completion of the study.

Please be assured that participation in this study is voluntary and all responses will be treated in a confidential manner and anonymity will be ensured at all times unless written permission is given by you. Your child's decision not to participate will not result in any form of disadvantage. Your child is free to withdraw from the research at any time without any explanation to me.

Your child's participation will ensure the success of my study. Thanking you in anticipation.

Yours faithfully

Ms Daxita Ishwarlal Rajput
Lecturer
Sport Science
Edgewood Campus

Appendix 4: Declaration by the parent



Postal Address: Private Bag X03, Ashwood 3605 KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa

Telephone: +27 (0)31 2603681 Fax: +27 (0)31 2603595

Email: rajput@ukzn.ac.za

Website: www.ukzn.ac.za

ACHIEVING SPORTING EXCELLENCE IN A TRANSFORMING SOCIETY

DECLARATION

PARENT

I, _____ (Full name of parent), hereby confirm that I have read and fully understand the contents of this document and the nature of the research project and I consent to my child participating in the research project. I understand that my child is at liberty to withdraw from the project at any time, should he or she so desire. I also give the researcher permission to identify my child to the person he or she has named as been influential in my child's sporting career.

Signature of Parent

Date

Appendix 5: Letter to the learner



Postal Address: Private Bag X03, Ashwood 3605 KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa

Telephone: +27 (0)31 2603681 Fax: +27 (0)31 2603595

Email: rajput@ukzn.ac.za

Website: www.ukzn.ac.za

21 November 2008

Dear _____ (Learner)

RESEARCH STUDY

I, Ms Daxita Ishwarlal Rajput, am currently registered for a PhD in Education at the University of KwaZulu-Natal, Edgewood Campus, Faculty of Education. My supervisors are Professor Reshma Sookrajh (031 2607259) and Professor Renuka Vithal (031 2607587), who are at the University of KwaZulu-Natal. The title of my dissertation is *Achieving Sporting Excellence in a Transforming Society*.

The purpose of the study is to understand how learners achieve sporting excellence in a transforming society. You have been selected by your provincial coach as a participant for this study. I wish to conduct an in-depth interview (about one and a half to two hours) with you about your sporting achievement. There may be more than one in-depth interview and all interviews will be tape recorded. Data collected for this research will be kept in the possession of the researcher and destroyed five years after the completion of the study.

Please be assured that participation in this study is voluntary and all responses will be treated in a confidential manner and anonymity will be ensured at all times unless written permission is given by you. Your decision not to participate will not result in any form of disadvantage. You are free to withdraw from the research at any time without any explanation to me.

Your participation will ensure the success of my study. Thanking you in anticipation.

Yours faithfully

Ms Daxita Ishwarlal Rajput
Lecturer
Sport Science
Edgewood Campus

Appendix 6: Assent form for informed consent



Postal Address: Private Bag X03, Ashwood 3605 KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa
Telephone: +27 (0)31 2603681 Fax: +27 (0)31 2603595
Email: rajput@ukzn.ac.za
Website: www.ukzn.ac.za

ACHIEVING SPORTING EXCELLENCE IN A TRANSFORMING SOCIETY

ASSENT FORMS FOR INFORMED CONSENT

LEARNERS IN-DEPTH INTERVIEW

I, _____ (Full name of learner), hereby confirm that I have read and fully understand the contents of this document and the nature of the research project and I consent to participating in the research project. I understand that I am at liberty to withdraw from the project at any time, should I so desire. I also give the researcher permission to identify me to the person I have named as been influential in my sporting career.

Signature of Learner

Date

Signature of parent/Guardian

Date

Appendix 7: Letter to the learner for the interview



Postal Address: Private Bag X03, Ashwood 3605 KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa

Telephone: +27 (0)31 2603681 Fax: +27 (0)31 2603595

Email: rajput@ukzn.ac.za

Website: www.ukzn.ac.za

21 November 2008

Dear Learner

RESEARCH STUDY

Thank you for agreeing to participate in my research study. For the interview will you bring with you things that you can talk about that relates to your sporting achievements. It can be things like (photographs, medals, trophies, special item of clothing, autographs, lucky charms, certificates, sports equipment or memorabilia).

I will appreciate it if you could:

- Present a drawing depicting yourself as a sportsperson (showing who you are and the stumbling blocks or highlights in your sporting career). You can give your drawing a suitable title.
- Write about yourself in relation to the journey you have travelled towards achieving sporting excellence (\pm four pages). You can give your writing a suitable title.

Thank you once again for being part of my research study.

Yours faithfully

Ms Daxita Ishwarlal Rajput
Lecturer
Sport Science
Edgewood Campus

Appendix 8: Letter to significant others



Postal Address: Private Bag X03, Ashwood 3605 KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa

Telephone: +27 (0)31 2603681 Fax: +27 (0)31 2603595

Email: rajput@ukzn.ac.za

Website: www.ukzn.ac.za

13 January 2009

Sir/Madam

RESEARCH STUDY

I, Ms Daxita Ishwarlal Rajput, am currently registered for a PhD in Education at the University of KwaZulu-Natal, Edgewood Campus, Faculty of Education. My supervisors are Professor Reshma Sookrajh (031 2607259) and Professor Renuka Vithal (031 2607587), who are at the University of KwaZulu-Natal. The title of my dissertation is *Achieving Sporting Excellence in a Transforming Society*.

The purpose of the study is to understand how learners achieve sporting excellence in a transforming society. You have been identified by _____ (permission given by learner to be identified), who is a participant in this research study, as being a catalyst in their road to achieving excellence and have had an influential effect on their achieving sporting excellence.

I therefore wish to conduct two or three interviews with you (about one and a half to two hours). Data collected for this research will be kept in the possession of the researcher and destroyed five years after the completion of the study. Please be assured that participation in this study is voluntary and all responses will be treated in a confidential manner and anonymity will be ensured at all times. Your decision not to participate will not result in any form of disadvantage. You are free to withdraw from the research at any time without any explanation to me.

Your participation will ensure the success of my study. Thanking you in anticipation.

Yours faithfully

Ms Daxita Ishwarlal Rajput
Lecturer
Sport Science
Edgewood Campus

Appendix 9: Declaration by the significant others



Postal Address: Private Bag X03, Ashwood 3605 KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa
Telephone: +27 (0)31 2603681 Fax: +27 (0)31 2603595
Email: rajput@ukzn.ac.za
Website: www.ukzn.ac.za

ACHIEVING SPORTING EXCELLENCE IN A TRANSFORMING SOCIETY

DECLARATION

SIGNIFICANT PERSON

I, _____ (Full name of significant person) hereby confirm that I have read and fully understand the contents of this document and the nature of the research project and I consent to participating in the research project. I understand that I am at liberty to withdraw from the project at any time, should I so desire.

Signature of Significant Person

Date

Appendix 10: Ethical clearance form



RESEARCH OFFICE (GOVAN MBEKI CENTRE)
WESTVILLE CAMPUS
TELEPHONE NO.: 031 – 2603587
EMAIL : sshrec@ukzn.ac.za

12 FEBRUARY 2010

MS. D I RAJPUT (8116597)
SCHOOL OF SOCIAL SCIENCES

Dear Ms. Rajput

PROTOCOL REFERENCE NUMBER: HSS/0189/09D
PROJECT TITLE: "ACHIEVING SPORTING EXCELLENCE OF LEARNERS IN A TRANSFORMING SOCIETY"

EXPEDITED APPROVAL

This letter serves to notify you that your application in connection with the above has been granted full approval through an expedited review process.

Any alterations to the approved research protocol i.e. Questionnaire/Interview Schedule, Informed Consent Form, Title of the Project, Location of the Study, Research Approach/Methods must be reviewed and approved through the amendment/modification prior to its implementation. Please quote the above reference number for all queries relating to this study.

PLEASE NOTE: Research data should be securely stored in the school/department for a period of 5 years

Best wishes for the successful completion of your research protocol.

Yours faithfully


.....
PROFESSOR STEVEN COLLINGS (CHAIR)
SOCIAL SCIENCES & HUMANITIES RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE

cc. Supervisor (Prof. R Sookrajh)
cc. Prof. R Vilthai
cc. Mrs. R Govender / Ms. T Khumalo

Appendix 11: Structured interview schedule for learners

LEARNER'S DETAILS

NAME OF LEARNER

CODE OF SPORT

POSITION

LEADERSHIP ROLE

SECTION A: PERSONAL DETAILS

1. What is your date of birth and age?

Day	Month	Year	Age (years)

2. Gender

Male	Female
------	--------

3. Grade

Grade	10	11	12
-------	----	----	----

4. Religion

Christianity	Hinduism	Islam	Other (specify)

5. Home language

English	Zulu	Afrikaans	other-specify

6. What race group do you belong to?

White	Black	Indian	Coloured	other-specify

7. What is the highest educational level of?

	Mother	Father
No formal education		
Primary school education		
Secondary school only		
Grade 12		
Diploma		
Degree		

8. What is your parent's occupation/job?

Mother	Father	Guardian

9. How would describe your families socio-economic status?

low socio-economic	middle socio-economic	high socio-economic

10. Do you live in a:

Township	City centre	Industrial area	Informal settlement	Suburb	Other Specify

11. How many biological brothers do you have who are:

11.1 Older than you?

0		1		2		3		4		More than 4	
---	--	---	--	---	--	---	--	---	--	-------------	--

11.2 Younger than you?

0		1		2		3		4		More than 4	
---	--	---	--	---	--	---	--	---	--	-------------	--

12. How many biological sisters do you have who are:

12.1 Older than you?

0		1		2		3		4		More than 4	
---	--	---	--	---	--	---	--	---	--	-------------	--

12.2 Younger than you?

0		1		2		3		4		More than 4	
---	--	---	--	---	--	---	--	---	--	-------------	--

13. Name of school attending.

14. Type of school attended in your schooling career.

	Rural	Town ship	Former DET	Former HOD	Former HOR	Ex- Model C	Private	Other Specify
Pre primary								
Junior Primary								
Senior Primary								
Junior Secondary								
Senior secondary								

SECTION B: SPORTING HISTORY

15. When did your interest in sports begin?

At home	Primary School	Secondary School	Club	Other/Specify

16. For which of the following reasons did you start participating in sport? (Please tick all applicable reasons.

POSSIBLE REASONS	TICK
Health, fitness or body aesthetics (eg. Lose weight, build muscles)	
Psychological well-being	
Achievement and success in sport	
My talent	
Enjoyment	
External rewards (eg. Prizes, money)	
Influence of others	
Accessibility	
Availability of facilities and equipment	
Influence of media	

17. When did you start playing the code of sport you are excelling in?

At home	Primary School	Secondary School	Club

18. Which of the following reasons motivated you to specialise in this code of sport?

MOTIVATORS	TICK
Your success in sport (achieving school/provincial or national colours)	
Financial rewards (money)	
Career opportunities	
Travel opportunities and experience	
Recognition	
Status/prestige	
Your talent	
Your desire to win	
Personal development	
Self-actualization and belief	
Your religious beliefs	
Others / specify	

19. How would you rate the influence of the following people/groups of people on you achieving sporting excellence?

	Positive Influence	Negative Influence	No Influence
Family member (mom, dad, sibling)			
Spouse/boyfriend/girlfriend			
Coach			
Representative of sporting bodies			
Team mates			
Yourself			
Educator			
Sports hero			
Others / specify			

20. Who has been the most influential person in you achieving sporting excellence?

21. Rate the contribution of the following institutions in you excelling in sports.

	Contributed the most	Average	Contributed the least
Your school			
A local sports club			
A regional sports club			
The local gymnasium			
A sports academy			
Others / specify			

22. Are you part of a sports development programme?

Yes	No

23. If yes, give the name of the programme.

SECTION C: SPORT AT SCHOOL

24. When did you start to participate in sport at school?

Junior Primary Grade 0 to 3	Senior Primary Grade 4 to 6	Junior Secondary Grade 7 to 9	Senior Secondary Grade 10 to 12

25. Which of these sports did you participate in at school?

	Yes	No		Yes	No
Soccer			Badminton		
Netball			Swimming		
Volleyball			Dance		
Athletics			Squash		
Tennis			Hockey		
Table tennis			Gymnastics		
Tenniquoit			Cricket		
Softball			Rugby		
Basketball			Cross country		
Boxing			Other-specify		

26. Did you do Physical Education in school?

Yes	No

27. How beneficial was your Physical Education lessons at school in you achieving in sport?

Very beneficial	Slightly beneficial	Not beneficial at all

Appendix 12: Interview schedule for provincial coaches

GUIDELINES

NAME OF PROVINCIAL COACH

CODE OF SPORT

POSITION HELD

SECTION A: SPORT IN GENERAL

Tell me about athletics in KZN.

How long have you been provincial coach?

What do you feel about sport transformation and where does your team fit in this?

SECTION B: LEARNERS WHO EXCELL

Tell me about learners in your provincial team.

Identify outstanding learners who play school sport.

What can you tell me about these learners?

Who strikes out most as being a beacon of hope and why?

What drives the learners' to achieve?

SECTION C: FACTORS THAT CONTRIBUTE TO EXCELLENCE IN SPORT

What backgrounds do these learners come from and how does this contribute to the achievement of the learners?

Do learners have the best support structure to ensure excellence?

What factors contribute to the learners' excellence in sport?

What can you say about the role of the stakeholders in ensuring that all learners have a fair chance of achieving?

Does the school influence their achievement in sport?

Comment on the role of parents/family in learners achieving excellence?

How has transformation affected your code of sport?

What policies have you put in place to "level the playing fields"?

What will be your vision for this code of sport?

Appendix 13: Interview schedule for learners

GUIDELINES

- Who are the learners who excel in sport?
- Why do these learners excel in sport?

How would you describe yourself as a person?

How do you see yourself as a sports personality?

How do you motivate and keep yourself focused at achieving?

What drives you to achieve?

What are some of the difficulties you had to overcome in order to excel in sport?

Who has been your sporting hero and why?

Tell me about yourself and your family.

What was your childhood like?

Did you enjoy school?

When did you start playing sport?

Who or what kept you motivated to continue playing sport?

What do you feel about sport in your country?

- What contributes to the learners' excellence in sport?
- How does it contribute to the learners' excellence in sport?

Tell me about your success story in sport.

Who and what has influenced your achievement in sport?

What are some of the sacrifices you have made to achieve success?

Can you mention any incident that has tarnished your sporting career?

Comment on the role of parents/family in you achieving excellence.

Tell me about your support structure to ensure excellence.

Tell me about transformation and its relevance to you.

SEVEN ELEMENTS OF EXCELLENCE

1. Commitment

Do you love what you do?

What kind of preparation goes into you giving of your best?

Are you self-disciplined?

2. Belief

Do you believe in your potential?

Do you believe in your team mates?

3. Full Focus

How focused are you in your performance?

Do you feel connected to your sport?

4. Positive Image

Do you go after your dreams?

Do you pursue specific targets or goals?

5. Mental Readiness

How do you prepare mentally for your performance?

Are you the best in what you do?

6. Distraction Control

What are some of the setbacks you have experienced?

How did you overcome them?

7. Constructive Evaluation

From whom do you draw your inspiration?

Do you evaluate your performance and change or strategise for the next performance?

Appendix 14: Interview schedule for significant others

GUIDELINES

NAME OF SIGNIFICANT PERSONS

PORTFOLIO

SECTION A: LEARNERS WHO EXCEL

What can you tell me about this learner?

What strikes you most about this learner and why?

What drives the learners to achieve?

SECTION B: FACTORS THAT CONTRIBUTE TO EXCELLENCE IN SPORT

How of you think you influenced this learner?

Tell me about the background of this learner?

Tell me about the learners support structure to ensure excellence?

What factors contribute to the learners' excellence in sport?

Does the school influence their achievement in sport?

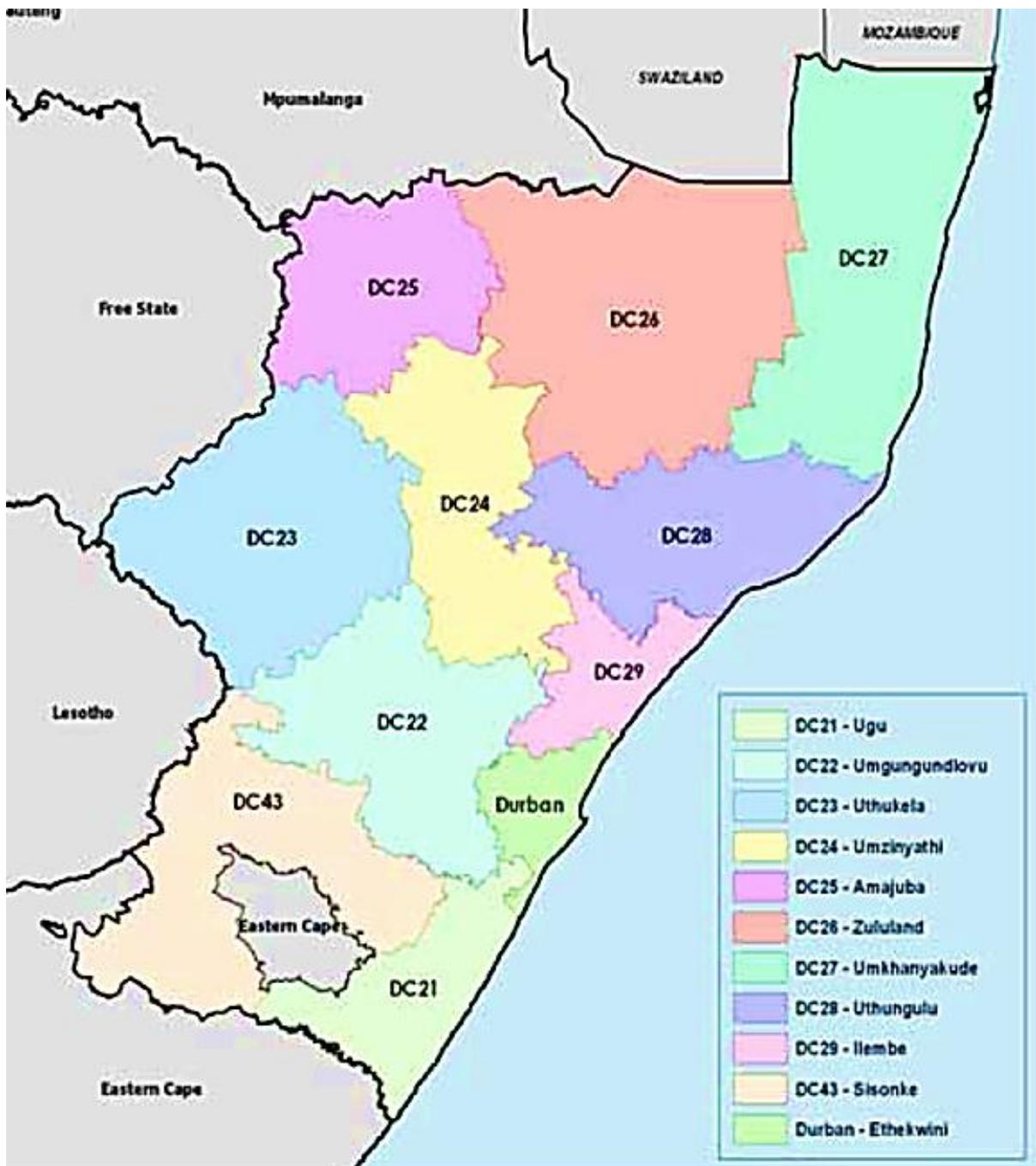
Appendix 15: Coding of participants in the study

NO	LEARNER	CODE	COACH	CODE	SIG OTHER	CODE	SPORT
1	Brendon	B	Neil	SoC	Mom	BM	Soccer
2	Jemma	Je	Gail	GC	Granny	JeG	Gym
3	Yamka	Y	Liziwe	NC	Dad	-	Netball
4	Nkosi	Nk	Neil	SoC	Club Coach	NkCC	Soccer
5	Tojan	To	Lux	AC	Mom	ToM	Athletics
6	Chayton	C	Dean	CC	Mentor	CM	Cricket
7	Nonthando	No	Liziwe	NC	School Coach	NoSC	Netball
8	Drea	Dr	Emma	HC	Mom	DrM	Hockey
9	Theola	The	Liziwe	NC	Club Coach	TheCC	Netball
10	Sam	Sa	Desmond	VC	Dad and mom	-	Volleyball
11	Daryl	Da	Tony	SwC	Dad	-	Swimming
12	Jarrett	Ja	Dean	CC	Private Coach	-	Cricket
13	Sekani	Se	Ray	RC	School coach	-	Rugby
14	Siani	Si	Lux	AC	Dad	-	Athletics
15	Tholethu	Tho	Neil	SoC	Dad	ThoD	Soccer
	15		9		9		9

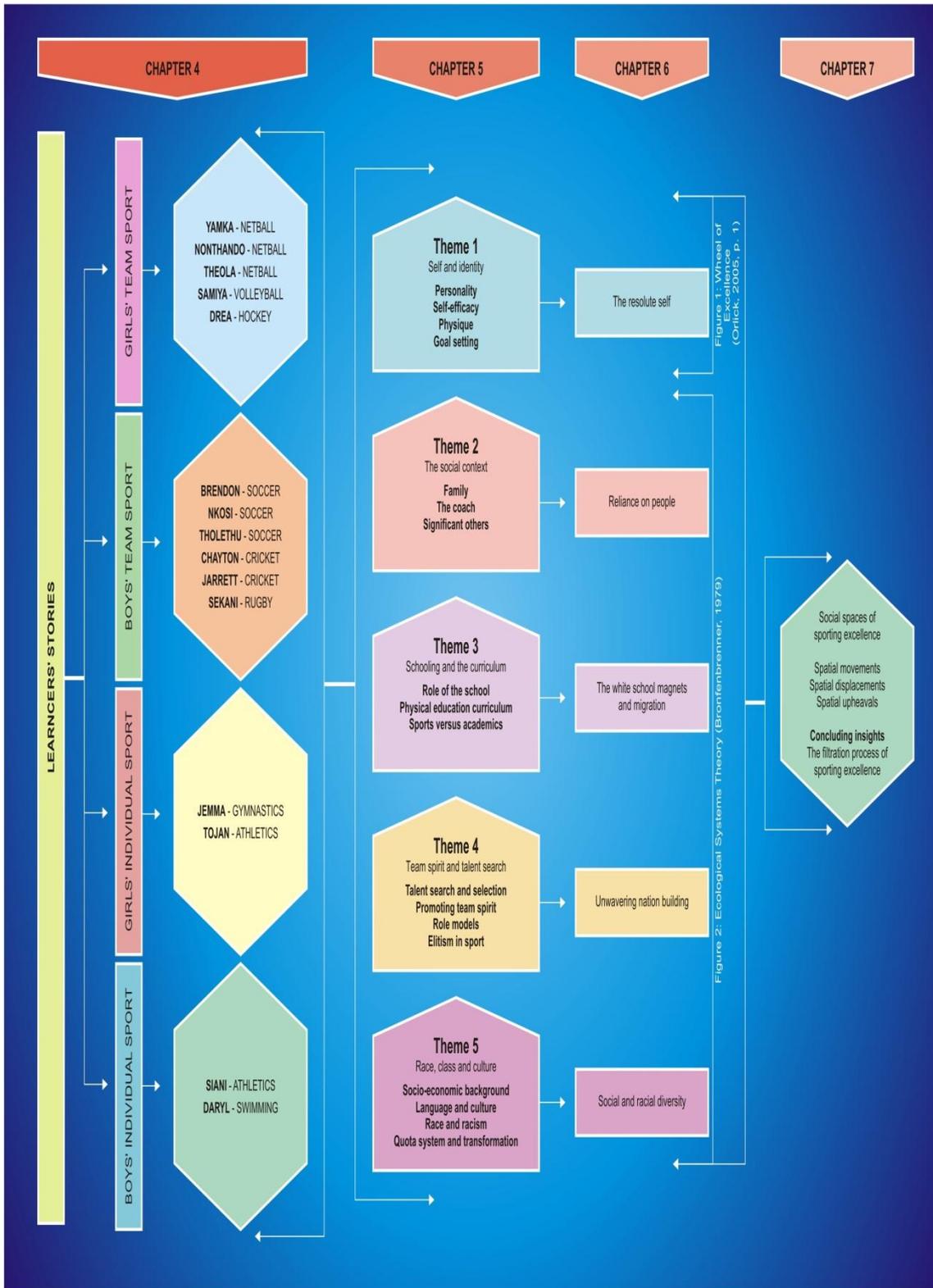
Appendix 16: Sporting traits of learners

<p>6. Distraction control <i>Hockey has been a great help emotionally and physically (Dr2)</i> <i>I feel like I want to quit (No3)</i> <i>I was really distraught because they told me that I would not be able to do sports again (Y3)</i></p>	<p>7. Constructive evaluation <i>I made 169 not out and this is the top score in Kerrelyn College's history. (Ja3)</i> <i>I was the youngest and won the trophy for goalkeeper of the season (To2)</i> <i>All African games and won six medals for the different apparatus. (Je6)</i></p>	
<p>3. Full focus <i>I am focused (Ja1)</i> <i>Knowing and been confident in my ability (Ja5)</i> <i>My mind-set changes and I am a lot more confident (C1)</i></p>	<p>4. Positive imagery <i>I am aggressive on court (Y1)</i> <i>I think of it (ball) literally as a life and death thing (Y2)</i> <i>The physicality of rugby as there is no better feeling than to grab shoulder to shoulder (Si5)</i></p>	<p>5. Mental readiness <i>I am so positive (Y6)</i> <i>I hate knowing that I have not given my best (Y7)</i> <i>I am very competitive (Da1)</i> <i>I take control at the crease (C1)</i></p>
<p>1. Commitment <i>You just have to work, work and work (Se1)</i> <i>The only person you are relying on is yourself (No1)</i> <i>I am committed to my soccer (B2)</i> <i>Nothing can stop me from playing soccer (B8)</i> <i>Cricket has been my passion (Ja2)</i> <i>I have no life, just high jump all the time, just train (To4)</i></p>	<p>2. Belief <i>You got to think and know that you are the best player on the field (Ja5)</i> <i>I can jump further than anyone, throw further than anyone. I have a natural talent. (Si4)</i> <i>I really would like to make the SA school team this year (C7)</i> <i>When I was five years old I told my dad I want to play cricket for SA (C2)</i> <i>I always knew I will be an architect and a national player (Sa1).</i></p>	

Appendix 17: KwaZulu-Natal's district councils (Brooks, 2004, p. 7)



Appendix 18: Conceptual framing showing analysis development



Appendix 19: Turnitin report

TRACKING SPORTING EXCELLENCE IN A TRANSFORMING SOCIETY

ORIGINALITY REPORT

	13%	10%	4%	7%
	SIMILARITY INDEX	INTERNET SOURCES	PUBLICATIONS	STUDENT PAPERS
PRIMARY SOURCES				
1	Submitted to University of KwaZulu-Natal <i>Student Paper</i>			1%
2	edstudies.ukzn.ac.za <i>Internet Source</i>			1%
3	Kevin Durrheim. "Racial Contact and Change in South Africa : Racial Contact..." <i>Publication</i>			1%
4	about-south-africa.com <i>Internet Source</i>			< 1%
5	www.zoneofexcellence.ca <i>Internet Source</i>			< 1%
6	ascilite.org.au <i>Internet Source</i>			< 1%
7	en.wikipedia.org <i>Internet Source</i>			< 1%
8	G. Vahed. "WHAT DO THEY KNOW OF CRICKET WHO ONLY CRICKE..." <i>Publication</i>			< 1%
9	www.school.za <i>Internet Source</i>			< 1%
10	www.thesportjournal.org <i>Internet Source</i>			< 1%
11	www.enotes.com <i>Internet Source</i>			< 1%
12	Submitted to Grand Canyon University <i>Student Paper</i>			< 1%
13	medlibrary.org <i>Internet Source</i>			< 1%
14	www.sateacher.co.za <i>Internet Source</i>			< 1%
15	Submitted to University of Stellenbosch, South Africa <i>Student Paper</i>			< 1%

Appendix 20: Editor's report

L. Gething, M.Phil. (Science & Technology Journalism) (*cum laude*)

WHIZZ@WORDS

PO Box 1155, Milnerton 7435 Cape Town, South Africa; cell 072 212 5417
leverne@eject.co.za

15 February 2012

DECLARATION OF EDITING OF PHD THESIS to be submitted to the School of Education, University of KwaZulu-Natal

TRACKING SPORTING EXCELLENCE IN A TRANSFORMING SOCIETY

By Daxita Ishwarlal Rajput

I hereby declare that I carried out language editing of the above paper by Daxita Rajput.

I am a professional writer and editor with many years of experience (e.g. 5 years on *SA Medical Journal*, 10 years heading the corporate communication division at the SA Medical Research Council), who specialises in Science and Technology editing - but am adept at editing in many different subject areas. I am a full member of the South African Freelancers' Association as well as of the Professional Editors' Association.

Yours sincerely

LEVERNE GETHING
leverne@eject.co.za