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A Configurational Evaluation of Elite Sport Policy in South Africa: A Realist Perspective



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Doctoral dissertation submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the joint degree of PhD in Sport Science from Stellenbosch University & Doctor in Movement and Sport Sciences from Vrije Universiteit Brussel

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‘Instituting solutions to complex problems are challenging and requires deeper insights into the nature of policy programs, specific contexts, and the overall outcomes’

- Wong *et al.* 2016

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Declaration

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Declaration by the candidate

With regard to the whole dissertation, the nature and scope of my contribution were as follows: I have contributed to every part of this PhD project, and was involved in the research design, data collection and analyses, formulation of tables and figures, and the write up of all the scientific articles and chapters in this dissertation. The extent of my contribution to this thesis is 75%. The nature and extent (%) of the co-author contributions are illustrated below.

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The undersigned hereby confirm that:

1. The declaration above accurately reflects the nature and extent of the contributions of the candidate and the co-authors to the dissertation,
2. No other authors contributed to dissertation besides those specified above, and
3. No potential conflicts of interest have been revealed by the interested parties, and the necessary arrangements have been made to use the material in this dissertation.

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ABSTRACT

Over the years, the attainment of international sporting success has become a critical important focus of the South African government. In this regard, specific elite sport policies have been introduced by policymakers in order to ensure that sport persons can perform internationally. Elite sport policies and the implementation thereof have been identified to be quite complex in reality, and differ considerably from one country to another. The overall aim of the current study was to assess what facilitates and/or inhibits the elite sport policies of South Africa through the configurational lens of a 'realist perspective', in the case of the Western Cape Province. In this regard, a configuration of several approaches was utilised in the 'realist evaluation'. The current study made use of a multi-method research design by involving primary sport stakeholders, namely: athletes; coaches; administrators; expert sport management academics; and government partners. Data was collected and analysed in terms of the 'realist perspective' configurational elements, which comprise the components of context and mechanism in order to provide a basis for the outcome elements.

The influence of various macro-level contextual factors was examined through the lens of systems theory. This was executed to determine how and to what extent contextual factors may or may not influence an elite sporting system in a nation characterised as an "emerging country". Furthermore, the effectiveness of the elite sport policies was measured using a multidimensional approach (input-throughput-output and feedback cycles). Furthermore, the emerging issues concerning the inter-organisational relationships between government stakeholders were explored by means of juxtaposing two theoretical frameworks, specifically the resource dependency theory and the inter-organisational theory. Research on inter-organisational relationships aided in the understanding on why dyadic government partnerships are formed, how they are managed, what the outcomes are, and how financial resources play a role in the dynamics of these relationships in the current study.

The current study on elite South African sport policies produced the following results: (1) the organisation of sport in the country is quite complex; (2) ineffectiveness was established for the sporting performance (output), input and throughput cycles in the Western Cape Province; (3) the nation-specific context was identified to influence the elite sporting system quite extensively; and (4) the inter-organisational relationships between government stakeholders were reported to be challenging due to the variety of barriers that were identified. Firstly, the

current study implemented a configurational assessment of the elite sport policies of South Africa, specifically in the Western Cape Province, herewith advancing the field of sport management by adding to the limited number of available studies on elite sport policies of ‘emerging’ countries. Secondly, this study should provide empirical evidence for when policymakers review the (elite) sport policies of South Africa.

Keywords: elite sport policies, realist perspective, effectiveness, contextual factors, inter-organisational relationships.

SAMENVATTING (Nederlands)

In de loop der jaren is het bereiken van internationaal sportsucces een belangrijke focus van de overheid geworden. Als zodanig hebben landen in toenemende mate een specifiek topsportbeleid gevoerd gericht op het behalen van medailles op internationale sportevenementen. Het voeren van een succesvol topsportbeleid en de implementatie ervan wordt echter beschouwd als complex fenomeen dat aanzienlijk kan verschillen van land tot land. Het overkoelende doel van dit Ph.D. project was om door de configurerende lens van een ‘realistisch perspectief’ te evalueren wat het topsportbeleid van Zuid-Afrika, in het bijzonder de provincie West Kaap, versterkt en / of verzwakt. Om dit te bereiken werd een samenstelling van verschillende benaderingen gebruikt in de ‘realistische evaluatie’. In deze studie werd gebruik gemaakt van een multimethode analyse door de belangrijkste stakeholders van de sport te betrekken, namelijk: atleten, coaches, sport managers, academic experts en overheidspartners. Gegevens werden verzameld, geclusterd en geanalyseerd op de configuratie-elementen uit het realistisch perspectief, bestaande uit context- en mechanismecomponenten om een basis te vormen voor het uitkomstelement.

De invloed van verschillende contextuele factoren op macroniveau werd onderzocht en ondersteund door systeemtheorie. Dit werd uitgevoerd om te evalueren hoe en in hoe verre contextuele factoren al dan niet invloed hebben op een topsportsysteem van een land in ontwikkeling. Bovendien werd de effectiviteit van het topsportbeleid geëvalueerd met behulp van een multidimensionale benadering (input-throughput-output en feedback cycli). De opkomende problemen met betrekking tot de interorganisatorische relaties tussen belanghebbenden van de overheid werden onderzocht door twee theoretische kaders naast elkaar te zetten, namelijk de theorie van de afhankelijkheid van hulpbronnen en de interorganisatorische theorie. Het onderzoek naar interorganisatorische relaties hielp bij het begrijpen waarom dyadische overheidspartnerschappen worden gevormd, hoe deze worden beheerd, wat de resultaten waren, en hoe financiële middelen een rol speelde in de dynamiek van deze relaties in deze specifieke casus.

Deze Ph.D. studie over het topsportbeleid van Zuid-Afrika illustreerde de volgende resultaten: (1) de organisatie van topsport in het land is vrij complex, (2) ineffectiviteit werd vastgesteld voor de sportprestaties (output), de invoer- en doorvoercycli van de provincie West-Kaap, (3) de landspecifieke context werd geïdentificeerd dat het topsportsysteem kan beïnvloeden, en (4) de interorganisatorische relaties tussen belanghebbenden van de overheid werd benoemd als een uitdaging vanwege de verschillende barrières die werden vastgesteld. Dit Ph.D. project,

eerstens, implementeerde een configuratie-evaluatie van het topsportbeleid van Zuid-Afrika, in het specifieke geval van de provincie West-Kaap, en hierdoor op het gebied van sportmanagement bij te dragen aan de nauwelijks beschikbare studies over het topsportbeleid van landen in ontwikkeling. Ten tweede beoogde dit onderzoek empirische inzichten te leveren in het geval de beleidsmakers het (elite) sportbeleid van Zuid-Afrika herzien.

Sleutelwoorden: topsportbeleid, realistisch perspectief, effectiviteit, contextuele factoren, interorganisatorische relaties

OPSOMMING (Afrikaans)

Internasionale sukses in sport het oor die jare heen 'n krities belangrike fokuspunt vir die Suid-Afrikaanse regering geword. Spesifieke hoëvlak beleidstukke oor sport is geïmplementeer in 'n poging om te verseker dat sportlui internasionaal kan meeding. Beleidstukke vir en die toepassing hiervan op hoëvlak sport is kompleks en verskil in 'n groot mate internasionaal. Die oorkoepelende doel van die huidige studie was om te bepaal wat fasiliteer en/of inhibeer hoëvlak sport beleidstukke vanuit 'n 'realistiese perspektief' deur 'n konfigurasie- of ordeningslens in Suid-Afrika en meer spesifiek in die Wes-Kaapprovinsie. In hierdie verband is 'n konfigurasie van verskeie benaderings in die 'realistiese werklikheidsevaluering' gebruik. Die studie het van 'n multi-metode navorsingsontwerp gebruik gemaak deur die primêre belanghebbendes, naamlik: atlete; afrigters; administrateurs; kundige sportbestuur-akademici; en regeringsvennote te betrek. Data is volgens die 'realistiese werklikheidsperspektief' konfigurasie elemente ingesamel en ontleed, wat bestaan het uit konteks en meganisme as komponente wat as basis vir die uitkoms elemente dien.

Die invloed van verskeie makro-vlak kontekstuele faktore is deur die lens van die sisteemteorie bestudeer. Dit is aangewend om te bepaal hoe en in watter mate kontekstuele faktore 'n hoëvlak sportsisteem, in 'n 'ontluikende' land beïnvloed. Die effektiwiteit van die hoëvlak sport beleidstukke is verder deur 'n multi-dimensionele benadering (inset-deurvoer-uitset en terugvoer siklusse) bepaal. Kwessies wat verband hou met die inter-organisatoriese verhoudings tussen regeringsvennote is deur middel van twee afwisselende teoretiese raamwerke, spesifiek die bronafhanklikheids- en inter-organisatoriese teorieë ondersoek. Die navorsing in verband met die inter-organisatoriese verhoudings het bygedra tot begrip waarom tweeledige regeringsvennootskappe gevorm word, hoe dit bestuur word, wat die uitkomst is, en hoe finansiële bronne 'n rol speel in die dinamika van hierdie verhoudings binne die huidige studie.

Die huidige studie oor hoëvlak sport beleidstukke in Suid-Afrika het die volgende resultate opgelewer: (1) die organisasie van sport in Suid-Afrika is kompleks; (2) sportprestasie (uitset), inset- en deurvoersiklusse in die Wes-Kaapprovinsie was oneffektief; (3) die nasie-spesifieke konteks het die hoëvlak sportsisteem beduidend beïnvloed; en (4) die inter-organisatoriese verhoudings tussen regeringsvennote is aangedui as uitdagend as gevolg van die verskeidenheid hindernisse wat geïdentifiseer is. Eerstens, het die huidige studie 'n konfigurasie assessering

van hoëvlak sport beleidstukke in Suid-Afrika gedoen met die Wes-Kaapprovinsie as spesifieke geval, waardeur die veld van sportbestuur bevorder is deur 'n toevoeging tot die beperkte aantal studies oor hoëvlak sport beleidstukke in 'ontluikende' lande. Tweedens, kan hierdie studie empiriese resultate lewer aan beleidmakers wanneer (hoëvlak) sport beleidstukke in Suid-Afrika hersien word.

Sleutelwoorde: hoëvlak sport beleidstukke, werklikheidsperspektief, effektiwiteit, kontekstuele faktore, inter-organisatoriese verhoudings.

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I have cherished the ideal of a democratic and free society in which all persons live together in harmony with equal opportunities. Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world. The power of education extends beyond the development of skills that we need for economic success. It can contribute to nation-building and reconciliation. Young people must take it upon themselves to ensure that they receive the highest education possible so that they can represent us well in the future, as future leaders.

– Nelson Rolihlahla Mandela

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APPENDIX L: Proof of ethics approval

APPENDIX M: Proof of language proof- read by Language Center of Stellenbosch University

List of abbreviations

AFR	Afrikaans questionnaires used
ENG	English questionnaires used
GDP	Gross Domestic Product per capita
GNI	Gross National Income per capita
HPS	High-Performance Sport
IOC	International Olympic Committee
IORT	Inter-organisational Relationships Theory
ISS	International Sporting Success
MTT	Ministerial Task team
NDLTF	National Lottery Distribution Trust Fund
NF	National Federations
NGO's	Non-Governmental Organisations
NSO's	Non-profit Sporting Organisations / National Sporting Organisations
NSRP	National Sport and Recreation Plan
OG	Olympic Games
PE	Physical Education
RDT	Resource Dependency Theory
SA	South Africa
SASCOC	South African Confederation Olympic Committee
SPLISS	Sport Policy Leading to International Sporting Success
SRSA	Sport and Recreation South Africa
ST	Systems Theory
WC	Western Cape

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Chapter One

Introduction

1.1 Background

Over the years, countries' aspirations to win medals at the Olympic Games and World Championships have intensified. This aspiration has been attributed to the so-called 'global sporting arms race', which refers to the production of success by strategically investing in elite sport (De Bosscher *et al.* 2008, Oakley and Green 2001). Grix and Carmichael (2011) specify that it has become an unquestionable given for countries to participate in this 'global sporting arms race', as diverse governmental motives have been identified, justifying why investing in elite sport is important. These motives include: international prestige, feel-good factors, social benefits, the economic impacts associated with the hosting of mega-events, role modelling and the increase in sport participation (De Bosscher *et al.* 2015, De Rycke and De Bosscher, 2019, Grix and Carmichael 2011 Houlihan and Green 2008, Weed *et al.* 2016). In this regard, elite sport became viewed as a 'worthy cause' in which to invest taxpayers' money. This study, however, did not analyse the aforementioned impact(s) of elite sporting success on the broader society. The desire to attain international sporting success has led to various implications for the national elite sport policies of countries (Houlihan and Zheng 2013). The involvement of government in sport started increasing through policy programme interventions (e.g., elite sporting systems) and funding, which mutually introduced the development of the global change in elite sport policy (De Bosscher *et al.* 2015, Houlihan and Green 2008). As the interest of government grew for the attainment of international sporting success, elite sport studies in sport management expanded. Scholars started evaluating the various aspects of elite sport policies, including: (1) country-comparative studies focused on the determinants of success (Bergsgard *et al.* 2007, De Bosscher *et al.* 2008 2015, Digel *et al.* 2006, Green and Houlihan 2005, Houlihan and Green 2008), (2) sport policy learning (Green and Houlihan 2005, Green and Collins 2008), (3) effectiveness of elite sport policies (De Bosscher *et al.* 2011), and (4) the convergence of elite sport policies (Green and Oakley 2010, Houlihan 2005, 2012). Conversely, very little research has studied how elite sport policies work in reality in terms of identifying, developing and supporting athletes and teams (Andersen *et al.* 2015), in particular those of categorised 'emerging' countries.

South Africa (SA) is defined as an 'emerging country' based on two economic measurements, namely; GDP per capita (gross domestic product) and the GNI per capita (gross national income) (OECD 2012). Even though the country is categorised as an 'emerging' country, the importance of supporting sport is undisputable as it is used as a means to bring about reconciliation and promote development in SA (SRSA 2002). When the Apartheid regime

ended in 1994, sport policy in SA changed dramatically in order to be inclusive of all South Africans. The first critically important policy document produced by the post-apartheid government was the White Paper on Sport and Recreation, which explained ‘what’ needs to be implemented regarding sport in the country (SRSA 2012). The second important policy document is the National Sport and Recreation Plan (NSRP), which is the implementation proposal based on ‘how’ the aforementioned White Paper should be operationalised (SRSA NSRP 2012). Two key challenges were identified in the literature regarding the sport policies of SA. The first challenge is with reference to the constant flux in policy, institutions, strategies and plans, as all the sport policies were developed after 1996, and concurrently had to address the legacies of the Apartheid regime and promote international sporting success (Keim and De Coning 2011). Secondly, scholars have identified the need for the alignment of the policy processes and outcomes of the NSRP to consider the changes in institutional mechanisms that shape the sporting environment (Keim and De Coning 2011).

Accordingly, the previous Apartheid regime did not leave the country unmarked, as the regime brought about a specific context that influences all (public) policy areas, including that of sport. The specific context of SA refers to the tension and division between ethnic groups, high levels of social and economic inequality, unequal opportunities, and mass poverty (Kakabadse and Kakabadse 2006, Lambrecht and Fourie 2017, Sanders *et al.* 2014, Seekings 2014), which largely impacts upon the sporting environment. The South African nation aims to perform on the global sporting platform, however, due to the unique context and the historical consequences of Apartheid, the nation cannot be compared to any other country in comparative studies. Therefore, it was identified in the literature that detailed, multi-level assessments need to be executed on the sport policy processes in SA (Keim and De Coning 2011). Multi-level assessments can encapsulate a holistic depiction of sport in the country, which can be applied through a configurational evaluation that includes an arrangement of inter-connected explanatory elements (Alvarado *et al.* 2017, Dalkin *et al.* 2015, De Souza 2014, Mason 2010, Pawson and Tilley 1997, 2004). Elite sport in SA is complicated due to the aforementioned contextual environment. Similarly, it has been noted within the international literature that to achieve the goal of international sporting success is not easy, as this endeavour has been recognised as complex, multifaceted and far from straightforward (Andersen *et al.* 2015, De Bosscher *et al.* 2015). This current study intends to take a configurational ‘realist perspective’ in order to evaluate the elite sport policies of SA, specifically in the Western Cape Province.

A policy is defined as a statement of intent, or an action plan (strategic framework) which has been created in order to transform a perceived problem into a future solution (Cloete and De Coning 2011). Houlihan (2012) provides two descriptions with regard to policy; policy can either be seen as ‘an action’, which means that there is a realistic expectation that the policy will have an impact on the problem(s) identified. Alternatively, a policy can be perceived as ‘an activity’, which means that there is some commitment of resources, but a less influential policy design is in place to attain the identified goal (Houlihan 2012). An analysis of governmental sport policy documents can provide unparalleled insight into the dynamics of the policies (Grix *et al.* 2018), in order to identify whether the policies are considered as ‘activities’ or ‘action’. Merely researching parts of sport policies will lead to an unclear understanding of the comprehensive picture (Andersen *et al.* 2015); therefore, an interacting whole utilising an arrangement of elite sport policy explanatory elements (e.g., a configurational evaluation) should be studied. In this regard, evaluations of sport policies would provide retrospective information based on what worked and what was unsuccessful (Chen 2018). Additionally, strategic inputs into an elite sporting system can affect the capacity of government to influence, and also determine the direction of the policy strategies going forward (Houlihan 2012). The overall aim of this PhD project was to evaluate what facilitates and/or inhibits the elite sport policies of SA through the configurational lens of a ‘realist perspective’, in the case of the Western Cape.

1.2 Research gaps and questions

Elite sporting success is very important for the South African nation, yet very few studies have evaluated the policies and structures of elite sport in the country. In addition, most international elite sport research is based on ‘developed’ nations, and very few have focused on the contexts of ‘developing’ or ‘emerging’ countries (Bergsgard *et al.* 2007, De Bosscher *et al.* 2015, Green and Oakley 2010). Three core challenges relating to the complexity of elite sport policies have been identified within the literature. The first challenge is with reference to the effectiveness of elite sport policies, which is due to the dynamic of the varying finances provided in order to enable what has been set out as objectives. Policy evaluations have been noted to stem mostly from the pressure to illustrate the return on investment of countries, but these do not provide an understanding of how government interventions (policy programmes) work, and what the effects are in reality (Chen 2018).

The second challenge identified within the literature is with reference to the lack of the systematic ‘embeddedness of sport’ within national policy systems (Houlihan 2005). In the international literature, it has been identified that nation’s elite sporting systems and policies are increasingly converging (Houlihan 2012). However, a barrier has been noted in terms of the execution of sport policies due to the translation of strategies from one context to another (De Bosscher *et al.* 2015). Sport operates in an ‘open system’ and is influenced by the social, cultural, political and economic conditions of a country (Chelladurai 2014). De Bosscher *et al.* (2015) acknowledge that country-specific contexts are becoming important considerations, as these may provide the underlying reasons relating to why an elite sporting system is successful or not. In addition, the priority given to elite sport in a given country will vary considerably due to variations in culture, traditions, political and administrative differences (Bergsgard *et al.* 2007). As a result, elite sporting systems of countries are similar in nature, yet portray slight variations due to the differences in national contexts (De Bosscher *et al.* 2015). Fifty percent of international sporting success can be explained by population size, the GDP per capita and former communism; however, the other fifty percent can be attributed to contextual factors (De Bosscher *et al.* 2008). This emphasises the necessity to study nation-specific contexts, as macro-level contextual factors have been identified to shape the development of systems (Gulbin *et al.* 2013). The critical importance of taking into consideration institutional history, context and resources within evaluations are important (Houlihan 2005).

Lastly, the third challenge is with reference to stakeholders, as Green (2004) highlights that the ‘real struggles’ are the stakeholders involved in the development of elite sport. Maximising the development of athletes is a complex challenge, especially for stakeholders working at the frontline of sport (Gulbin *et al.* 2013). The complexity of stakeholders cannot be attributed only to the number of constituents involved in elite sport, but also refers to the different roles that are executed on the different levels. In sport management studies, the research has assessed sport stakeholder relationships in different contexts, however, very few studies have examined relationships in elite sport (Digel *et al.* 2006, Lucidarme *et al.* 2017). Evaluations of relationships between elite sport stakeholders are critically important due to the acknowledged lack of synergy in sport partnerships (Nicholson *et al.* 2011), existing power relations (Green 2004), and the variety of challenges because of a scarcity of resources (Babiak and Thibault 2009, Misener and Doherty 2014). In addition, Zheng *et al.* (2018) stated that stakeholders in sport are heuristic in forming power relationships. Analysing the relationships between stakeholders in elite sport may facilitate the development of strategies that support and improve partnerships (Harris and Houlihan 2015).

This PhD research intends to contribute towards the academic scholarship by providing an understanding of what facilitates and/or inhibits the elite sport policies of SA through the configurational lens of a ‘realist perspective’, in the case of the Western Cape.

Four general research questions guided this study:

- 1 *What are the structures and policies that develop elite sport in South Africa?*
- 2 *Are the elite sport policies of South Africa effective?*
- 3 *How do contextual factors influence the elite sporting system of South Africa, and to what extent?*
- 4 *How do inter-organisational relationships between sport governmental stakeholders influence the effectiveness of elite sport policies in South Africa?*

1.3 Aims of this study

The overall aim of this PhD project was to evaluate what facilitates and/or inhibits the elite sport policies of SA through the configurational lens of a ‘realist perspective’, in the case of the Western Cape.

Furthermore, this study identified four specific sub-aims:

1. To generally review the (elite) sport systems and policies in South Africa with regard to mass sport for recreation, and the elite sporting system created to develop high-performance athletes.
2. To evaluate the effectiveness of the (elite) sport policy in the case of the Western Cape, South Africa.
3. To contribute to the understanding of how and to what extent contextual factors can influence the elite sporting system of South Africa.
4. To evaluate the inter-organisational relationships (partnerships) between governmental stakeholders on provincial and national levels in South Africa, to identify whether these contribute to or inhibit the effectiveness of elite sport policies of the country.

1.4 Philosophical orientation of this study

The philosophical orientation of this study utilised the pragmatism paradigm in order to address the aforementioned aims. The pragmatist worldview focuses on: (1) identifying the

consequences of actions, (2) is problem centred, (3) is pluralistic, and (4) is real-world practise orientated (Cresswell and Plano Clark 2019, p. 37). Various elements pertaining to the pragmatism worldview has implications for practise (Cresswell and Plano Clark 2019). In the first instance, ontology refers to what is considered ‘real’ in the world, and also denotes what the nature of the reality is (Cresswell and Plano Clark 2019). Pragmatist’s view reality as both singular (using theory to explain a phenomena of study), and multiple (observing the importance of accessing varied individual input [multiple perspectives] into the nature of the phenomena) (Cresswell and Plano Clark 2019, p. 37). In order to address the singular realities, this study utilised various theories within the separate articles within an over-arching framework namely the ‘realist perspective’, which is discussed in the next section. In addition, the inclusion of multiple realities was addressed by incorporating the multiple perspectives of athletes, coaches, administrators, governmental stakeholders and sport management academics. The second element of the pragmatist’s worldview which has implications for practise is with reference to epistemology. Epistemology evaluates how researchers gain knowledge on what they know in order to identify ‘what works’ with the purpose of addressing the identified problem (Cresswell and Plano Clark 2019). This was ensued in this study by utilising an over-arching theoretical framework in order to evaluate what facilitates and / or inhibits the elite sport policies of SA through the configurational lens of a ‘realist perspective’, in the case of the Western Cape.

The third element of pragmatist’s relates to axiology which describes the role of values by utilising multiple stances (Cresswell and Plano Clark 2019). This was applied to this study by reporting all data as was presented by the perspectives of the various participants. The fourth element situates around methodologies, as pragmatists encourages a combination of utilising both quantitative and qualitative strategies, as well as the inclusion of inductive and deductive thinking (Cresswell and Plano Clark 2019). These aspects were considered in this study with the application of the various theories, and the employment of a multi-method research design, which is further discoursed in the subsequent sections. Lastly, an implication for practise regarding pragmatism is with reference to the rhetoric. This entails the method in how scholars present the findings of their research, which may be executed either formally or informally (Cresswell and Plano Clark 2019). Due to the results of this research forming part of a Ph.D. dissertation, a formal style of writing was applied.

The decision to use the pragmatism paradigm as the philosophical orientation of this study was based on the conception that ‘pragmatism draws on many ideas, including *what works*, using

diverse approaches, and valuing both objective and subjective knowledge' (Cresswell and Plano Clark 2019, p. 39). Pragmatist's use various research approaches available in order to understand the research problem identified (Cresswell 2014, p. 10). In addition, a framework is needed to further the thinking around how the pragmatism philosophy fits into a research design. In this regard, the next section illustrates the theoretical underpinning of the overarching theoretical lens namely the 'realist perspective', and how it has been used in combination with the pragmatism worldview which both informed the methodologies used in this study.

1.5 Theoretical underpinning: A 'realist perspective'

A realist perspective is a theory-driven lens used to explain the complexity of the 'reality' of policy programmes (Pawson and Manzano-Santaella 2012, Pawson and Tilley 2004). Policy programmes are products of policymakers, and in the end depends on the insightfulness of the practitioners and participants in 'reality' (Pawson and Tilley 2004). Realism entails a pragmatic approach, as the prominent feature is placed upon perspectives (Pawson and Tilley 2004). Westhorp *et al.* (2011) define realist evaluations as a method crediting both the material and social worlds, as they have an equal effect on change. However, it has to be noted that realist evaluations are not research techniques, but rather a logic of inquiry that engenders research strategies and designs (Pawson and Tilley 2004). Realist evaluations seek to theorise and explain how the resources of the policy programme are utilised, and in what manner they are acted upon by different stakeholders in dissimilar positions (Pawson and Manzano-Santaella 2012). Evaluations of this nature require robust solutions to complex problems, thereby providing deeper insights into policy programmes, implementation in different contexts, and the overall outcomes (Wong *et al.* 2016). In this regard, it is important for evaluations to consider what works for whom, and in what circumstances (Pawson and Tilley 1997, 2004).

Evaluating isolated pieces of a system would consider the overall understanding of the evaluation to be provisional (Pawson and Tilley 2004). Therefore, the realist perspective functions at a middle-range theory (MRT), which focuses mainly on the big policy 'ideas', but evaluates these in the actual reality of the implementation (Marchal *et al.* 2012; Pawson and Tilley 2004). Realist evaluations have been identified to be applicable to any form of programme in social public policies (Pawson and Tilley 2004). However, realist evaluations recommend a multi-method approach (Quan and Qual methods), as well as the utilisation of different stakeholders when trying to understand the complexity of a particular policy

programme (Pawson and Manzano-Santaella 2012, Wong *et al.* 2016). In this regard, this PhD study used a multi-method study design (Quan and Qual methods), and included the perspectives of athletes, coaches, administrators, expert sport management academics and government stakeholders in order to understand the complexity of the policies on elite sport in SA. Realist evaluations are derived from a configuration of inter-connected explanatory elements (Alvarado *et al.* 2017, Dalkin *et al.* 2015, De Souza 2014, Mason 2010, Pawson and Tilley 1997). These elements include three conceptual tools identified by Pawson and Tilley (1997): **C**ontext, **M**echanism, and **O**utcome in *configuration* (CMOc). These configurational conceptual tools were used in this study to evaluate what facilitates and/or inhibits the elite sport policies of SA by means of a ‘realist perspective’, in the case of the Western Cape.

In terms of **context** in realist evaluations, it has been identified that choice making is either enabled or constrained at two levels, namely: (1) the micro-level, referring to people’s beliefs, resource availability, expectations, experiences and/or attitudes; and (2) the macro-level of society, which denotes the social environments, culture and norms, etc. (Westhorp *et al.* 2011). Context may refer to many layers, which can be inclusive of political, social, organisational and individual influences (Alvarado *et al.* 2017, Blamey and Mackenzie 2007), and geography, community setting, national culture, religion, attributes of work and historical periods (Westhorp *et al.* 2011). Policy programmes are embedded within the prevailing social contexts, hence, contextual factors may explain the reasons for a programme’s success and/or failure (Mason 2010, Pawson and Tilley 1997, 2004, Westhorp *et al.* 2011, Wong *et al.* 2016). Alvarado *et al.* (2017) assert that contextual factors can be either supportive, or may constrain individual’s responses to policy programmes that have been created to obtain specific policy objective(s). In this regard, evaluations of context lie in the realist panacea to the problem (Pawson and Tilley 2004). Accordingly, this current study evaluated contextual factors at the macro-level. This was executed through the lens of systems theory with the aid of the following contextual factors, as identified by Certo and Certo (2009): economic, social, political, technological and legal components. These contextual factors provide an understanding on how and to what extent the context of SA influences the elite sporting system of the country.

Mechanisms in realist evaluations try to explain how particular measures work within policy programmes (Pawson and Manzano-Santaella 2012, Pawson and Tilley 2004). Policy programme mechanisms encapsulate the vastly different ways in which the resources offered may affect the stakeholders’ reasoning or behaviour (mechanisms and reasoning) (Alvarado *et al.* 2017, Dalkin *et al.* 2015, Mason 2010, Pawson and Tilley 1997, 2004, Westhorp *et al.*

2011). In this regard, Dalkin *et al.* (2015) note the importance of trying to understand an entire system, especially the elements connecting the inputs and outputs. Furthermore, mechanisms highlight the aspects of power and processes, which can generate certain events or patterns (Westhorp *et al.* 2011). In this current study, mechanisms were evaluated by examining the elite sport policies of SA and how they attempt to facilitate and/or inhibit the policy programmes that were created to achieve international sporting success. This study firstly describes the mechanisms pertaining to the three main (elite) sport policies of SA by identifying the respective policy processes and funding, and the organisation of sport in the country. This was ensued in order to provide an understanding on what the structures and policies are which develop elite sport in SA. Secondly, this study assessed the effectiveness of an elite sport policy of SA, namely the Sports Academy Framework (2013) in the specific case of the Western Cape province, through a multidimensional approach (input-throughput-output and feedback cycles). This article was executed to assess whether the elite sport policies of SA are effective. Lastly, this study evaluated the inter-organisational relationships (partnerships) between governmental stakeholders in the elite sport portfolio on both the provincial and national levels through the theoretical perspectives of the resource dependency and inter-organisational relationships theories. This current study was implemented to review whether the inter-organisational relationships between sport governmental stakeholders influence the effectiveness of elite sport policies in SA.

The **outcome** element in realist evaluations comprises the intended or unintended consequences of policy programmes due to the prevailing mechanisms and contexts (Pawson and Tilley 2004). In addition, outcome also alludes to the occurrence of an uneven pattern of success or failure, because of the underlying dynamics (Pawson and Manzano-Santaella 2012), which may include many forms in realist evaluations (Pawson and Tilley 2004). The outcomes in this current study are represented by the collective configurational findings relating to the context and mechanism conceptual tools of the ‘realist perspective’ in order to illustrate what facilitates and/or inhibits the elite sport policies of SA. These aspects are presented in the general discussion in this manuscript.

The aforementioned realist perspective theory elements are represented in a causal diagram formula (Pawson and Manzano-Santaella 2012), as:

$$C + M = O$$

This causal diagram illustrates that the action of a particular mechanism, functioning within a certain context, will generate a particular outcome pattern (Alvarado *et al.* 2017, De Souza

2014, Pawson and Manzano-Santaella 2012, Westhorp *et al.* 2011). Utilising the realist perspective in a configurational evaluation of the elite sport policy of SA would aid in understanding how the policy programmes activate the mechanisms, amongst whom (stakeholders), and in what circumstances (context), in order to bring about change to government regulations (Pawson and Tilley 2004). This study applied a realist perspective because of the significant emphasis on the understanding of mechanisms of change, and also the relationship it has with the contextual environment within an ‘open system’. Furthermore, the ‘realist perspective’ has been described in the literature as coherent, sound and a consistent theoretical underpinning to use when aiming to evaluate a programme within the policy cycle (Pawson and Tilley 2004). The realist perspective in combination with the philosophical orientation of the pragmatism worldview was used retrospectively in this study (in the synthesis of the research). Table 1 provides an overview of the overarching theoretical lens used in this study to evaluate the elite sport policies of SA.

Table 1. An overview of the over-arching theoretical underpinning of this PhD study as posited by Pawson and Tilley (1997)

A configurational evaluation of elite sport policy in South Africa: A realist perspective		
CONTEXT	MECHANISM	OUTCOME
How do contextual factors influence the elite sporting system of South Africa, and to what extent?	What are the structures and policies that are used to develop elite sport in South Africa?	Synthesis of results and outcomes of the respective articles illustrated in the general discussion.
	Are the elite sport policies of South Africa effective?	Consequences of the policy programmes due to the prevailing mechanisms and contexts (Pawson and Tilley 2004).
	How do inter-organisational relationships between sport governmental stakeholders influence the effectiveness of elite sport policies in South Africa?	Interpretation of the findings of the configurational analysis (Pawson and Tilley 2004).
<p>CMOc in order to provide an understanding of what facilitates and/or inhibits the elite sport policies of South Africa, in the case of the Western Cape</p>		

1.6 Study design

This study followed a multi-method research design, which included both quantitative and qualitative methods. The multi-method research design entail that the research sections used in this study remain relatively independent until the interpretation stage in the general discussion, whereof the outcomes of the results pertaining to the respective articles are discussed collectively. The purpose of using a multi-method research design was to develop a rich understanding of the analysis in order to enhance the findings (Kara 2015). Multi-method research can vary in terms of its reliance on one method over the other. In this regard, this PhD study has emphasised the ‘dominant-less-dominant design’, with a stronger emphasis on qualitative research (QUAL + quan) (Cresswell 1995). The rationale for emphasising qualitative research was due to the capacity of this research method to inform the understanding of the policy context by providing a wider and more well-informed perspective on the phenomena of inquiry (Plowright 2011). In addition, qualitative research indicates why and how interactions, events and processes work (Kara 2015). Figure 1 provides a summary of the multi-method design used in this study to implement a configurational evaluation of the elite sport policies of SA.

MULTI-METHOD RESEARCH DESIGN

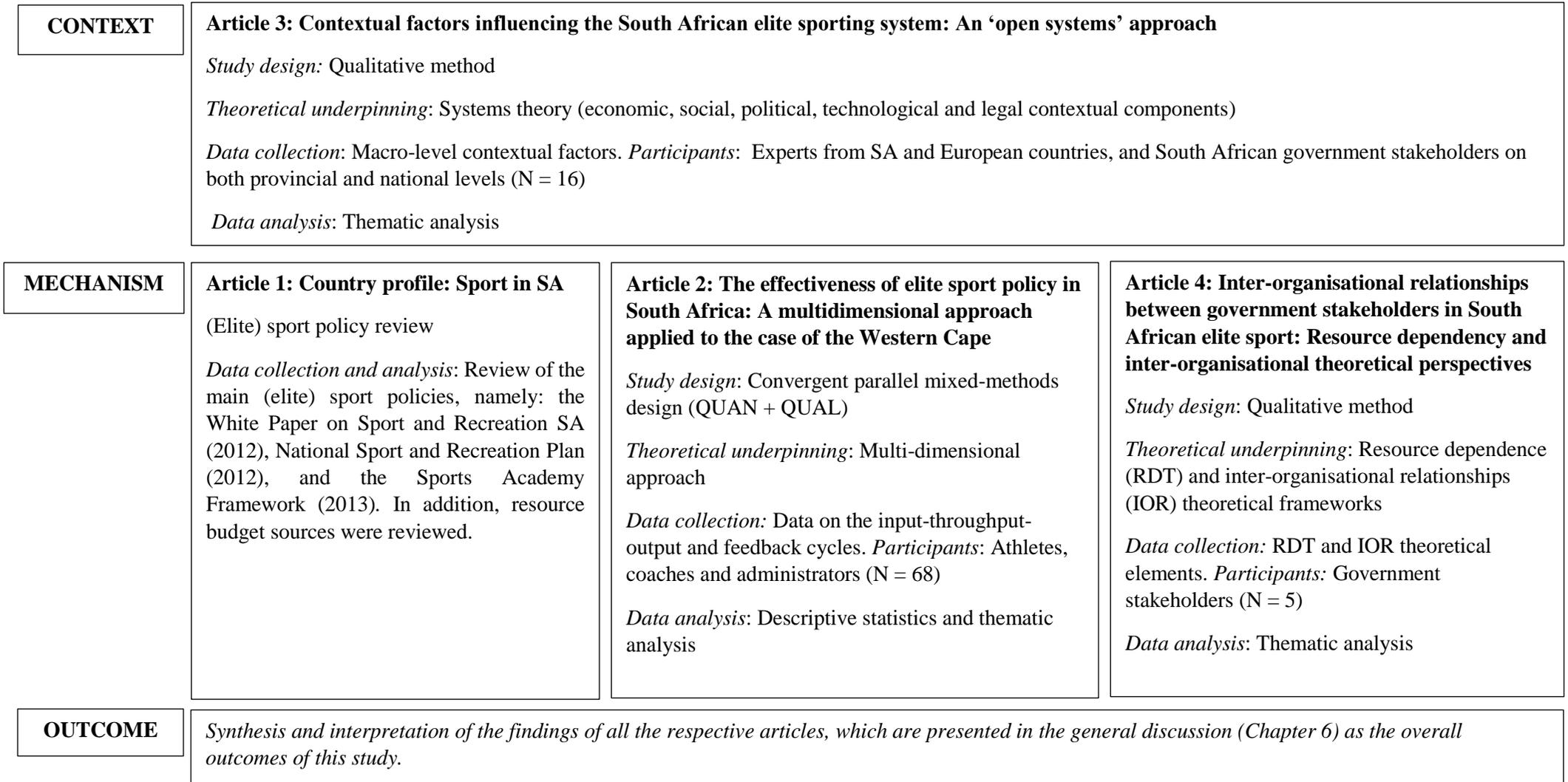


Figure 1. A summary of the multi-method research design used to implement a configurational evaluation on the elite sport policies in South Africa.

1.7 Preview

1.7.1 Format of dissertation

This PhD study utilises an article-format dissertation. The overall aim and four sub-aims as previously described are pursued through four complementary studies (i.e., separate research sections). The sequence of these independent research sections, follows in Chapter's two to five. Four articles in total were used to provide a configurational evaluation of the elite sport policies of SA. These independent articles were either published or submitted to academic journals for a double-blind peer-review process. The articles were compiled according to the author guidelines of the specific journals, added as Appendices.

The first article, which is presented in Chapter 2, illustrates a 'Country profile: Sport in South Africa'. The country profile entailed a policy review that explained the main (elite) sport policies and the organisation of sport in SA (policy analysis). The second article, in Chapter 3, investigated 'The effectiveness of elite sport policy in South Africa: A multidimensional approach applied to the case of the Western Cape'. Article two made use of a convergent, parallel, mixed-methods approach that gave equal weighting to both quantitative and qualitative methods in order to comprehensively evaluate the effectiveness of the elite sport policy in the case of the Western Cape (QUAN + QUAL). Participants in article two included athletes, coaches and administrators at the Western Cape sport academy (N = 68). Article three, illustrated in Chapter 4, focuses on the 'Contextual factors influencing the South African elite sporting system: An 'open system' approach'. Article three utilised a qualitative method in order to identify the influence of contextual factors on the elite sporting system of SA (QUAL). In this article, a maximum variation strategy was utilised by interviewing experts from SA and European countries, as well as South African government stakeholders on both the provincial and national levels (N = 16). Article four in Chapter 5 examines the 'Inter-organisational relationships between government stakeholders in South African elite sport: Resource dependency and inter-organisational theoretical perspectives'. This article used a qualitative method in order to gain an understanding of the inter-organisational relationships between government stakeholders in elite sport (QUAL). Government stakeholders in the elite

sport portfolio from both the provincial (Western Cape Province) and national government departments were interviewed in this study (N = 5).

Chapter six provides a general discussion and interpretation of the outcomes of the configurational evaluation by synthesising the findings of all the preceding chapters. The synthesis was executed in order to evaluate the outcomes of what facilitates and/or inhibits the elite sport policies of SA, in the case of the Western Cape. The overarching conclusions and the relevance of this research are then discussed, followed by the methodological considerations and an agenda for future research. The referencing format for Chapters one and six follows the Harvard referencing style. The articles in chapters 1-5 follows the guidelines of the different journals specified.

1.7.2 Study setting

As this is a joint PhD, both the Stellenbosch University (SU) and Vrije Universiteit Brussels (VUB) were identified as the research settings of this study, with SU recognised as the home university. The data collection for the varying articles took place in different locations. The data for article two were collected at various sites in the Western Cape province in SA, namely Oudtshoorn, Saldana, Vredenburg, George, Stellenbosch and Cape Town. In addition, the data for article three were collected in various cities in SA, namely: Johannesburg, Cape Town and Stellenbosch, and then internationally in Belgium and the Netherlands (other international interviews took place by means of Skype calls). The data for article four were collected at the national Department of Sport and Recreation SA (SRSA) in Johannesburg, and at the provincial Department of Cultural Affairs and Sport (DCAS) in Cape Town. In the following segment, the definitions of the key terminology used in this dissertation is presented, in order clarify the meanings and how it has been interpreted in this study.

Table 2. Definitions of key terminology used in this study

Concept/term	Definition	Reference
Elite sporting system 'winning nation pillar'	Emphasis placed on talent identification, development programmes, recognition system to reward athletes and coaches, organisation of inter-(national) competitions, and athlete- and coach-support programmes	SRSA NSRP, 2012
Policy	Statement of intent or an action plan (strategic framework) to transform a perceived problem into future solutions	Cloete and De Coning 2011
Configuration	An arrangement of interconnected explanatory elements	Alvarado <i>et al.</i> 2017, Dalkin <i>et al.</i> 2015, De Souza 2014, Mason 2010, Pawson and Tilley 1997, 2004
Realist perspective evaluations	Logic of inquiry that engenders research strategies and designs	Pawson and Tilley 2004
Mechanisms in realist evaluations	Policy programme mechanisms encapsulate the vastly different ways in which the resources offered may impinge on the stakeholders' reasoning or behaviour (mechanisms and reasoning), the elements connecting the inputs and outputs and, in addition, highlight the aspects around power and processes that can generate certain events or patterns	Alvarado <i>et al.</i> 2017, Dalkin <i>et al.</i> 2015, Mason 2010, Pawson and Tilley 1997, 2004, Westhorp <i>et al.</i> 2011
Context in realist evaluations	Context may refer to many layers, which can include political, social, organisational and individual influences, and geography, community setting, national culture, religion, attributes of work and historical periods	Alvarado <i>et al.</i> 2017, Blamey and Mackenzie 2007, Westhorp <i>et al.</i> 2011
Outcomes in realist evaluations	The intended or unintended consequences of policy programmes due to the prevailing mechanisms and contexts	Pawson and Tilley 2004

Emerging country	Two economic scales are used to classify South Africa as an ‘emerging country’, namely the gross domestic product per capita (GDP) and the gross national income per capita (GNI)	OECD 2012
Stakeholders	A group or an individual who can affect and is affected by the actions, decisions, policies, practices and goals of the organisation itself	Sotiriadou 2009, p. 848
Apartheid regime	System of racial discrimination and segregation	Lambrecht and Fourie 2017, Mapadimeng 2012
Power issues	Dominance or control due to the hierarchical arrangement	Carney 2012
Inter-organisational relationships	Inter-organisational relationships between stakeholders in an organisation	Oliver 1990
Elite sport	Evocative of the top level of sport promoting international sporting success	SRSA NSRP 2012
Mass sport ‘Active nation pillar’	Increased sport participation and recreational activities with the aim of building an active nation	SRSA 2012, SRSA NSRP 2012
White Paper on Sport and Recreation South Africa	Sport policy of SA, explaining <i>what</i> needs to be done regarding sport in the country	SRSA 2012
National Sport and Recreational Plan	Implementation plan of both elite and mass sport in SA	SRSA NSRP 2012
Sport Academy Framework	Key strategic objective in order to develop talent and assist athletes to perform at higher levels to achieve excellence in high-performance sport in SA	SRSA 2012, SRSA NSRP 2012

‘Open system’	Boundaries of an organisation that are permeable in relation to the broader distal environment	Certo and Certo 2009, Chelladurai 2014, Kast and Rosenzweig 1972
Broader distal environment	Factors at the macro-level, inclusive of the social, cultural, political and economic conditions of a country	Chelladurai 2009, 2014
Multidimensional approach	Using more than one method to evaluate the effectiveness of an organisation (e.g., inputs-throughputs-outputs and feedback cycles)	Chelladurai 2009, 2014
Inputs into the multidimensional approach	Financial support	De Bosscher <i>et al.</i> 2006
Throughputs in the multidimensional approach	Policy processes (how the input was managed to achieve the outputs)	De Bosscher <i>et al.</i> 2011, De Bosscher <i>et al.</i> 2015
Outputs from the multidimensional approach	Absolute/relative success of countries by focusing on international competitions (e.g. medals won at Olympic Games or other international events, or the top eight places in the finals)	De Bosscher <i>et al.</i> 2015
Feedback in the multidimensional approach	Feedback provided from all data sources and stakeholders	De Bosscher <i>et al.</i> , 2015
Systems theory	Macro-paradigm for the study of social organisations (theoretical lens)	Kast and Rosenzweig 1972, p. 459
NVivo version 11/12	Software to analyse qualitative data	Welsh 2002
Elite sport index	Calculated weighted points for top eight places in finals (relative success of countries)	De Bosscher <i>et al.</i> 2011

Effectiveness of policies	Extent to which objectives specified by government are met	Kuehnhanss 2018, Productivity Commission 2013, Shah 2007
	To determine if something (policies/policy programmes) works as intended	Sadler 1996
	The effects of a programme or policy under real-world conditions	Flay <i>et al.</i> 2005
Resource dependence theory	Theoretical framework used to explain inter-organisational relationships by examining the dynamics of resources	Hillman <i>et al.</i> 2009, Jones <i>et al.</i> 2017, Wicker <i>et al.</i> 2013
Inter-organisational theory	Examines inter-organisational relationships between organisations in order to assess the transactions, flows and linkages	Wicker <i>et al.</i> 2013
Global sporting arms race	The production of success by strategically investing in elite sport	De Bosscher <i>et al.</i> 2008, Oakley and Green 2001

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Chapter Two

Article 1

Country profile: Sport in South Africa

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Abstract

The aim of this paper is to provide a comprehensive understanding of the sport policies in South Africa (SA) with regard to mass sport for recreation involvement, and the elite sporting system created to develop high performance athletes. In the subsequent sections, various specific contextual factors will firstly be defined which may influence the sport policy implementation in SA. Furthermore, a synopsis is presented on the post-apartheid sport policies and the imperative emphases outlined in each. A description will be provided on the organisation of the stakeholders in both mass and elite sport, and the sport-funding stream allocations to both portfolios are illustrated. Lastly, the article ends with a discourse on the emerging issues and concerns of sport policy and sport in SA.

Key words: South Africa, elite sport, mass sport, governmental policy, contextual factors.

Introduction

The late South African president Nelson Mandela stated that ‘Sport has the power to change the world, [...] sport can create hope where once there was only despair.’ (Mandela 2000). The despair president Mandela was referring to was the dark era of Apartheid. Prior to the 1994 democracy, the former South African government lawfully institutionalised a system of racial discrimination and segregation since 1948, labelled ‘Apartheid’ (Mapadimeng 2012, Lambrecht and Fourie 2017). The apartheid system concentrated on the systematic marginalisation and exclusion of non-white South Africans, which included ‘African’, ‘coloured’, ‘Indian’ and ‘Asian’ people (Government Gazette 2004, Lambrecht and Fourie 2017). Concerning the specification of these ethnic groups within SA, ‘black’ people were and still are considered as ‘black’ people of African descent inclusive of various African tribes (James 2009, Magaisa 2015). The classification ‘Coloured’ was a term used during the Apartheid regime and still in effect today, to categorize people of mixed heritage (Magaisa 2015). Lastly, Indian and Asian citizens were referred to as persons of Asiatic origin (James 2009). Subsequently, the rights and opportunities of these marginalised ethnic groups were reduced in all spheres including that of sport (Archer and Bouillon 1982, Lambrecht and Fourie 2017).

The oppressive years of separation deliberately introduced unequal ethnic power relationships, unequal power structures, unequal development and lack of equal access to resources, affecting both civil society and sport in the country (Nixon 1992, Labushagne 2016). The regime received criticism from all over the world and the persisted institutionalisation of inequality in South Africa (SA) led to the gradual exclusion of the country by all major international sporting bodies (Booth 1998, Labushagne 2016). Consequently, this steered towards the banishment of SA from the respective sporting events by the International Olympic Committee (IOC) in 1970 (Archer and Bouillon 1982). Nixon (1992, p.70) describes the international boycott as ‘the most prominent extended anti-racist campaign in the history of world sports’. The prohibition to participate in the Olympic Games imposed by international sporting bodies and the IOC seemed to affect the South African society gravely (Nixon 1992). During a survey in 1977, the South Africans described the lack of participation in international sport as one of the three most damaging consequences of the Apartheid regime (Nixon 1992).

Up to this present day, the Apartheid regime has not left the country unscathed. Despite the removal of institutional segregation, the regime has not released its effect

over the everyday life of South African citizens. The effect of the Apartheid regime contributed towards the occurrence of a specific context that influenced the development of many policy areas, including that of sport. In addition, as in many other African countries, SA is confronted with high levels of socio-economic inequality, mass poverty, and cultural and ethnic division (Huntington 1996, Kakabadse and Kakabadse 2006, Transformation Charter 2012, Sanders *et al.* 2014, Seekings 2014, Lambrecht and Fourie 2017). Despite the contextual factors aforementioned, sport is still viewed as important to the South African society.

Public (sport) policy regards elite sport as a means to inspire unity in a country when athletes perform as ‘one team and one nation’, with particular reference to the Olympic Games (Steenveld and Strelitz 1998, SRSA 2012). After being excluded by the International Olympic Committee as aforementioned due to the Apartheid regime, SA was only allowed to re-enter the Olympic Games in 1992, Barcelona. Conversely, evident in the international performance of SA over the last few years is that the country went from attaining two medals at the Barcelona Olympic Games in 1992, to achieving ten in 2016, at the Rio Olympic Games. While, undoubtedly, this advancement in sporting performance at the prestigious Olympic Games is an achievement for a less developed country, many challenges exist concerning the growth of mass sport and the system to develop elite sport policies. This enquiry has prompted numerous debates concerning the quality and efficiency of the entire sporting system, and whether or not it is effective as stipulated in the detailed sport policies of SA. In addition, Digel (2005) argued that the specific conditions of a country independently influence the high performance sporting structures, these include the private sector, the military, education systems, inclusion of science in sport, politics, and mass media. Furthermore, Chelladurai (2009) accentuates this point by asserting that sport operates in a vastly open system and that it is effected by a country's social, cultural and economic environments. The aim of this paper is to provide an understanding of the sport policies in SA with regard to both mass sport for recreation involvement, as well as the elite sporting system created to develop high performance athletes in light of all the acknowledged contextual factors. These factors will be further elaborated upon in the subsequent section.

Specific context of SA

The specific macro level context of SA when compared to other African countries, is that SA is ranked amongst the richest in sub Saharan Africa, yet poverty remains one of the nation's biggest challenges (Elbers *et al.* 2003, Transformation Charter 2012, Sanders *et al.* 2014, Lambrecht and Fourie 2017). In 2016, the population was documented at 54, 8 million, whereof 50% of the South African inhabitants were recorded to be living below the poverty line (Transformation Charter 2012, Sanders *et al.* 2014). The prevailing poverty rates are projected to be the result of high unemployment rates, poor quality of life, widespread infection of HIV/AIDS and the lack of skilled workers within industry (Mentan 2004, Allix 2012, Transformation Charter 2012, Sanders *et al.* 2014, Seekings 2014, Lambrecht and Fourie 2017). In light of these findings, a large gap currently exists between the rich and the poor in SA. Despite the progresses which have been made in the nation's economic conditions over the past few years (Transformation Charter 2014), socio-economic inequalities continue to persist, and even increase in terms of the distribution of resources, noted particularly between the racial groups (Transformation Charter 2014, Lambrecht and Fourie 2017).

In addition, on a more global scale, it has been acknowledged that SA has overtaken Brazil as the most consistently unequal country in the world (Bohorat *et al.* 2009, Du Toit and Kotze 2011). In order to address the specific contextual factors mentioned, policy priorities have been identified, whereof the majority of governmental funding is strategically allocated to: (1) Education, (2) health, (3) local development and infrastructure, (4) social assistance and welfare programmes because of poverty, (5) economic affairs and agriculture, (6) defence and public safety, (7) debt service costs and public service delivery (Budget review, 2017). The inequality existent in the country is further translated into the sporting environment because of the introduction of the 'quota system', which was deemed important in order to focus on redress and transformation within sport teams. The target or 'quota' classification is a system introduced in South African sport by national government to fast track as many athletes of the previously marginalized groups into the sport system in order to address the injustices of the past. An example of the necessity for transformation is provided upon looking at the make-up of national teams in SA, whereby the clear racial differences is apparent, as the majority of players in rugby are predominantly 'white', and in football there are more 'black' players present (Bolsman and Burnett, 2009). This representation in rugby is, however, in conflict to the study of Nongogo and Toriola (2014) who explains that rugby has been

played in ‘black’ communities for many years and served as a popular culture and an outlet for personal achievements. Cloete and De Coning (2011) explained that these variables have direct influences on public policies of similar countries like SA, and these include socio-political, socio-cultural and socio-economic variables. Furthermore, Carney (2012), stated that studies on public policy are not complete if they do not consider these type of factors when making important decisions. In light of these specific contextual factors facing the country, two questions often remain unanswered in the literature: (1) how does national government position the portfolio of sport in the presence of the aforementioned factors?, And (2) How does a country effectively organise sport in these prevailing circumstances in order to pursue success on the international sporting platforms?

Historical development of national sport policy

As presented, contextual factors may vastly influence the society it is imbedded in, but in addition the sporting environment as well. The institutionalism of sport has occurred in many countries over the past few years; with sport policies incorporated in governmental responsibilities (Green 2004, Bergsgard *et al.* 2007, Sotiriadou 2009, Green and Oakley 2010, De Bosscher *et al.* 2011, Gulbin and Weissensteiner 2013). National sport departments started developing specific sport policies and organisations for the purpose of developing elite sport systems and mass sport participation programs (Green 2004, Bergsgard *et al.* 2007, Green and Collins 2008, Sotiriadou 2009, Green and Oakley 2010, De Bosscher *et al.* 2011, Rees *et al.* 2016). In SA, a similar trend occurred, wherein the White Paper on Sport and Recreation (1996) was the first official legislation on sport designed by the new ministry post-Apartheid (SRSA 2012). The white paper document introduces more broadly, ‘what’ actively needs to be executed concerning elite and mass sport in the country (SRSA 2012). Three versions emerged since the first white paper document in 1996 (SRSA 2012, SRSA NSRP 2012). The reasons for the document’s changes over the years was due to various research on sport, namely the findings of ‘cases for sport’, and the ministerial task team findings (MTT) on the improvement of high performance sport in the country (SRSA MTT 2002, SRSA 2012, SRSA NSRP 2012).

The White Paper on Sport and Recreation was used as the foundation for the creation of the National Sport and Recreation Plan (NSRP), which serves as an implementation proposal on both elite and mass sport (SRSA NSRP 2012). Underlying the core of the NSRP is the Transformation Charter (2014), as it seeks to provide equal

opportunities, promote fairness and just behavior in sport, equitable resource distribution, and encourage empowerment and affirmation (SRSA NSRP 2012; Transformation Charter 2014). Various organisations fought against the discriminatory laws of the Apartheid regime in order to realise the opportunities mentioned in the previously mentioned Transformation Charter. The following organizations were determined to create a democratic sport system for all in SA during the Apartheid years, they included; the South African Council of Sport (SACOS), the South African Non-racial Olympic Committee (SANROC), the National Olympic Committee of SA (NOCSA) and the National Sport Council (NSC) (NSRP 2012). The NSRP is founded on three core pillars of implementation, namely: (1) An active nation by means of increasing citizens' access to sport and recreational activities, (2) a winning nation to be able to support athletes in achieving international sporting success, and lastly, (3) providing an enabling environment in achieving both aforementioned pillars (SRSA 2012). The National Department of Sport and Recreation receives a clean audit each year for the financials allocated to the spend on the three pillars aforementioned, however, the monitoring and evaluation compliance was considered a recurring issue (Parliamentary Monitoring Group 2017 b, 2018).

Structure of mass participation and elite sport system in SA

In SA, the mass and elite sporting system is under the auspices of the government regarding the management of the two focal sport policy portfolios and the funding support provided to both (NSRP 2012). The reasons therefore, is stated in the sport policy, in that sport is identified as a tool to achieve national and global priorities; which include the following acknowledged objectives, namely: Sports tourism, sport for peace and development, sport environment and lastly, sport and national government priorities (SRSA 2012, p.57). Public authorities and constituent groups of people are involved in the execution of the sporting system in SA, who are termed 'stakeholders', which are defined as 'a group or an individual who can affect, and is affected by the actions, decisions, policies, practises or goals of the organisation itself' (Sotiriadou 2009, p.848). These stakeholders within sport enter into what is termed in the literature as an 'inter organisational relationship' with other stakeholders in the sporting environment (Babiak 2003, 2007, 2009, Alexander *et al.* 2008, Babiak and Thibault 2009). In *Figure 1*, a visualisation of the responsible stakeholders of the various entities in South African sport is explained by means of a depiction of the various stages of sporting performance,

whereof club and school sport forms the base. In addition, Table 1 clarifies the responsibilities and the directives of these stakeholders in South African sport.

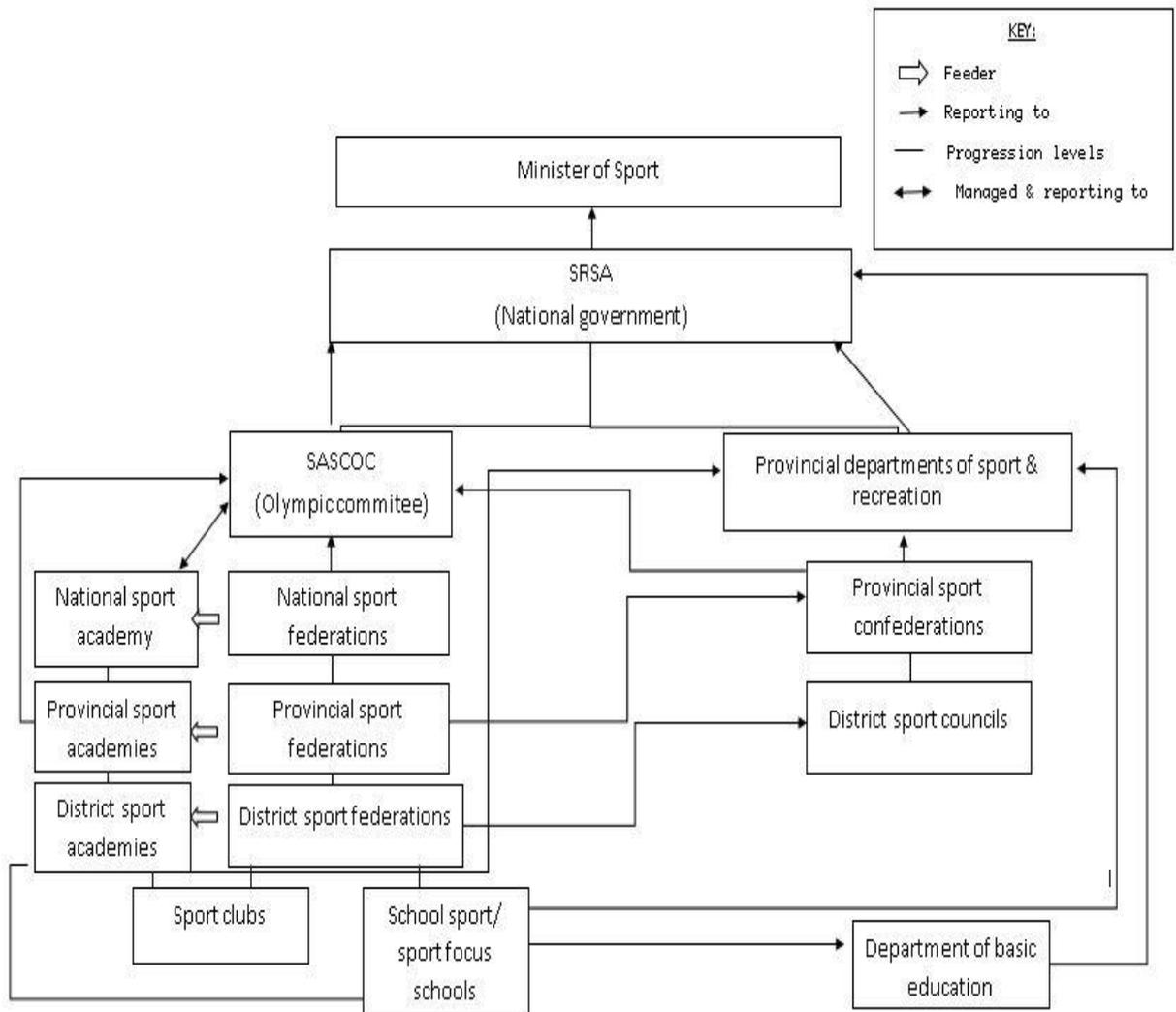


Figure 1. Organogram depicting the organisation of the critical stakeholders in South African sport.

Note: SRSA, Sport & Recreation South Africa; SASCOC, South African Sport Confederation and Olympic Committee; MEC, Member of executive council.

Table 1. Roles and responsibilities of critical stakeholders in South African Sport.

STAKEHOLDER:	SRSA Sport and Recreation SA	SASCOC South African Sport Confederation & Olympic Committee	National sporting federations	PDSR Provincial Departments on Sport & Recreation	PSC Provincial Sport Confederations	Provincial sporting federations	Local government
RESPONSIBILITY:	Responsible for the provision of support for all the structures by means of :	Provide strategic direction and guidelines on:	Co-owners of programs provided by SASCOC	Support provincial federations by PAS, DAS, & sport focus schools as follows:	Responsible to SASCOC on the operations of PAS	Primary role in provision of the following:	Policy development at local level
MANDATE:	1. Legislative and regulatory framework	1. Implementation of Academy system	1. Provide guidelines on sport specific expertise	1. Monitor progress of support for talented athletes	1. Members nominated to serve provincial academy commission give relevant feedback on implementation programmes	1. Talent scouts and coaches	1. Implementation and monitoring of sport and recreation policies
	2. Policy formulation	2. Accreditation & recognition guidelines for academies	2. Provide guidelines on sport specific protocols	2. Funding of PAS and DAS	2. PAS follows proper governance as outlined by academy framework	2. Federation specific technical expertise	2. Funding of its principle agencies, clubs, and individuals
	3. Funding	3. Coaching systems and structures	3. Provide guidelines on selection of athletes, directed by SASCOC	3. Funding & logistical support for sport focus schools		3. Channelling talented identified athletes to receive support from PA	3. Building, upgrading, maintenance and management of infrastructure for sport and recreation in municipalities, metros and districts

	4. Assist SASCOC in the development and standardisation of PAS, DAS and sport focus schools. (Feeder system)	4. Sports scientific, medical assessment & intervention systems	4. Work closely with SASCOC, SRSA, PSC, PDSR on monitoring the improvement of the academy system	4. Ensuring that provincial academies have a strong DAS by means of infrastructure provided by local municipalities		4. Work with NF on coordination of plans / goals	
	5. Monitoring and evaluation of programs	5. Sports technology with identified service providers	5. Liaise with provincial federations and sport specific programs implemented	5. System sustainability			
		6. Life skills & career opportunities	6. Ensure NF operated sport specific academy is in line with academy framework				
		7. Career opportunities					
		8. Talent identification , selection & development					
		9. Source & provide funds for PAS					

		10. Oversee & monitor implementation programs					
		11. Sign agreements with relevant providers					

Adapted source: As illustrated in NSRP (2012) and SRSA (2013).

Note: PAS: Provincial Academy System; PA: Provincial Academy; DAS, district Academy System;

SASCOC: South African Sport Confederation and Olympic Committee; NF: national federations; PDSR: Provincial Departments of Sport & Recreation;

SRSA: Sport & Recreation South Africa.

In both portfolios (mass participation and elite sport), the minister of sport within national government known as SRSA (Sport and Recreation South Africa), holds the legislative power and the management authority over both elite and mass sport (Keim and De Coning 2014). National government is situated at the top of the sporting system as they are accountable to act on behalf of the national minister to implement the sport policies created, through developing, coordinating and monitoring the entire sport system of the country, which is inclusive of mass and elite sport (SRSA 2012, Keim and De Coning 2014, Lambrecht and Fourie 2017). At provincial level, the provincial departments of sport and recreation, the provincial confederation and the Member of Executive Council (MEC) are responsible for the system as instructed by SRSA (SRSA 2012). Authorities in local government execute the sport system on the local level guided by the Provincial Sport Departments and the District Sport Councils (SRSA 2012).

The South African Sports Confederation Olympic Committee (SASCOC) has been identified by SRSA as the only non-governmental macro body serving as a multi-sports organisation, providing service delivery to the elite sporting system, which includes athletes, coaches and federations of the system (SRSA 2012). Working closely alongside SASCOC are the National Federations (NF's) who are the main custodians for the development of their respective sports with the assistance of Provincial and Local Federations (SRSA 2012). The schematic illustration of the organisation of stakeholders in Figure 1 may seem complex. This complexity may be prevalent in other countries as well, mainly because of the amount of stakeholders involved in sport, paired with the different reporting lines which exists. Consequently, these dynamics may expose itself to various challenges concerning the implementation of the sporting policies. In the next section, both mass and elite sport will be explained, in order to gain a complete understanding of sport stakeholders and governance of sport in the country.

Mass sport and recreation

Mass sport in SA includes two aspects namely, increased sport participation and recreational activities with the explicit aim of building an 'active nation' (SRSA 2012; SRSA NSRP 2012). Various methods have been acknowledged in the specified sport policies as to how this goal can be achieved, these include: Introducing modified sport with basic rules, presenting grass roots sports for poor disadvantaged areas, and lastly, implementing recreational activities (SRSA 2012). Crucially, school sport is included in these methods in order to access as many school children as possible in order to achieve

the policy objectives set out in the mass sport portfolio. It is however important to note, that physical education (PE) no longer forms part of the schooling curriculum as a separate subject, but is integrated as an element in the life orientation (LO) subject, of which a smaller percentage is spent on PE. This is contrast to the SRSA White Paper (2012) wherein it is stated that PE would be used as a means to commit to lifelong participation (SRSA 2012, p.23), which ultimately has an impact on the development of ‘an active nation’. It is however important to note that SA has a culture of organised school sports in combination with club sports, which is especially prevalent in the categorised better resourced settings. Furthermore, sport is used simultaneously as a medium to promote sport development, as well as peace, which is an imperative aspect specified by the UN (United Nations) in 2000 as one of the millennium goals (SRSA 2012). Various perceived benefits are highlighted with the association of increased participation in mass sport and recreation, these include: Increasing the social and economic value of a country, stimulate long term health in the population, stabilise fragile communities, encourage social cohesion, reduce crime, contribute towards psychological well-being, instill productivity and create employment prospects by providing numerous skills (Grix and Carmichael 2012, SRSA 2012). However, these perceived benefits associated with participating in mass sport and recreational activities are still widely debated within the sport management literature and, herewith, empirical evidence is needed in order to support these related social claims.

Coalter (2007) further explains that the ability of mass sport to address these wider social issues came about due to the historical changes and the direction of social policies over the years. In addition, researchers further emphasised that participation in mass sport claimed to enhance community cohesion by means of social capital and networks, which essentially leads to the wide spread inclusion of the socially marginal and the ‘under participating’ groups (Coalter 2007, Spaaij 2009, Grix and Carmichael 2011). In declaring the imperative vision of the country concerning mass sport, it is of importance to understand the accountability partners concerning the responsible stakeholders at the various levels of participation regarding the implementation of programs in school sport, recreation and participation promotion campaigns demonstrated in Table 2.

Table 2: Accountability illustration of the stakeholders responsible for the implementation of mass sport programs in South Africa.

	Local level	Provincial level	National level	Final accountability
School sport	Departments of Basic Education and Provincial Department of Sport & Recreation	Provincial Federations, Provincial Department of Sport & Recreation & SASCOC	National Federations & SASCOC	} Minister of sport
Recreational activities	Local government & NGO's	Provincial Department of Sport & Recreation and NGO's	SASCOC & National government	
Participation promotion campaigns	Local government, and Public & private sectors	Public & private sectors and Provincial Department of Sport & Recreation	Public & private sectors and National government	

Adapted source: NSRP plan (2012) and white paper on sport and recreation South Africa (2012)

Note: SRSA, Sport & Recreation South Africa; SASCOC, South African Sport Confederation and Olympic Committee;

MEC, Member of executive council; NGO, Non-governmental organization.

Elite sporting system

It has been acknowledged in the literature that elite sport has become well embedded in the portfolios of ministerial responsibilities in various countries (Bergsgard *et al.* 2007, Houlihan and Green 2007). In SA, a similar trend has occurred wherein elite sport is referred to as the ‘winning nation’ pillar in the sport policies, herewith, evocative of the top level of sport promoting for international sporting success (SRSA MTT 2012). The elite sport portfolio provides government with the opportunity to influence high performance sport significantly in terms of governance, financial support and implementing various sport promotion strategies (Scheerder *et al.* 2017). Whilst aspiring to become a ‘winning nation’, the performance of SA at the Olympic Games in 2000 was perceived by authorities as poor when compared to other countries of similar GDP (SRSA MTT 2002). This created a growing interest from both researchers and policy makers alike in determining what is required for international sporting success. The outcome of the games in 2000 steered the Minister of Sport at that time, to appoint a MTT as mentioned earlier in the article, to investigate and research high performance sport in the country (SRSA MTT 2002). The directive of the MTT were to identify and examine the factors which negatively influences the South African sport performance, and suggest recommendations as to how these issues can be addressed (SRSA 2002).

The ‘winning nation’ pillar emphasises four imperative areas in order to achieve success internationally, these comprise, talent identification and development programs, rewarding athletes and coaches with a recognition system, organisation of domestic and international competitions, and lastly, initiating athlete and coach support programs (SRSA 2012, SRSA NSRP 2012). In the elite sport policies, various methods have been highlighted in order to realise the four critical areas mentioned earlier, in order to achieve the overall goal of attaining international sporting success. These methods include, broadcasting and sponsorships, financial relations with regards to funding for sport, international networks, volunteers within sport, education and training of athletes, coaches, and administrators in the sporting environment; sports information center, sports house, facilities for training and competition, sport clubs, sport councils, an academy system, and athletes, coaches, administrators and technical officials commission (SRSA 2012).

All the above-mentioned factors are clear concerning their definition; the only factor needing further interpretation is the Sport Academy System. The results of the MTT investigation as stated previously, led to the creation of the Sport Academy Strategic

Framework, which is the only policy guideline founded on both the aforementioned main policy documents, but with specific reference to creating an enabling environment in order to attain the objective of a ‘winning nation’ (SRSA 2013). The Sport Academy System has been acknowledged as a key strategic objective in order to develop talent, assist athletes to perform at higher levels, and to achieve excellence in high performance sport (SRSA NSRP 2012, SRSA 2013). The Sport Academy System is executed nationwide in the country with one national sport academy, provincial sport academies wherein each province accommodates one equalling to nine in total in the country, and then various district academies have been initiated in the vast regions of the provinces (SRSA 2013). A feasibility study led to the establishment of the nine provincial academies before the establishment of the Sport Academy Framework in 2013 (SRSA 2013). The primary focus of the provincial academy was to support provincial athletes, and to ensure that they are fast tracked to the national level (SRSA 2013). In an audit conducted by SASCO, several positives were highlighted concerning the impact of the provincial academies on the development of sport (SRSA 2013). The benefits of the provincial academy were described as making a vast impact on the development of sport in the provinces, by providing specialised sport services to talented athletes, capacitating coaches, technical officials and administrators, and then lastly, they built their own identity in terms of their existence (SRSA 2013). However, the audit did not stipulate if all nine provincial academies in SA achieved the acknowledged results. In the audit there were, however, many challenges identified whereof the provincial academy was indicted of functioning differently in terms of the delivery of support services, presented poor monitoring and evaluation programs, boards were not functioning properly, and then additionally, ‘double dipping’ took place with regards to the responsibilities of federations and the provincial academy (SRSA 2013).

The district academy has been recognised as the foundational platform to the provincial academy and serves as a direct pathway for athletes to excel by ensuring that academy support services reach as many talented athletes as possible in the various regions (SRSA 2013). The number of district academies each province has is stipulated in the Sport Academy Framework, and is based on the demographics and population size of that particular province (SRSA 2013). In contrast, very little is mentioned regarding the national academy (NA) (OPEX Program) within the Sport Academy Framework. In Table 3, a comprehensive description is provided regarding the different focuses in elite sport at the various advancement levels inclusive of the academy system. Additionally,

the table explains the responsible stakeholders and the accountability partners in the sporting environment. This illustration will aid in the understanding of the holistic administration of high performance sport in SA.

Table 3: Accountability illustration of the stakeholders responsible for the implementation of the elite sporting system in SA.

	Focus	Responsible stakeholders	Accountability partners	Final accountability
National level	National sport teams (Schools and clubs), NF and NAS	SASCOC	→ SRSA	} Minister of sport
Provincial level	Provincial teams (Schools and clubs) and PF	PF	Provincial sport confederation → NF → SASCOC → SRSA	
	PAS	PAS management	Provincial sport confederation → SASCOC → SRSA	
Regional level	DAS	DAS management	→ District sport council → PDSR and Provincial sport confederation → MEC → SRSA	
	School sport	School sport bodies, DBE and PDSR	→ DF → PF	
Local level	Sport Clubs	DF	→ PF	
	School sport	Schools and School sport bodies	DBE and PDSR	

Adapted source: NSRP plan (2012) and white paper on sport and recreation South Africa (2012)

Note: SRSA, Sport & Recreation South Africa; SASCOC, South African Sport Confederation and Olympic Committee; MEC, Member of executive council; DAS, District Academy System; PAS, Provincial Academy System; NAS, National Academy System; PF, Provincial Federations; NF, National Federations; DF, District Federation; DBE, Department of basic Education; PDSR, Provincial Department of Sport and Recreation.

As illustrated, there are various forms of opportunities identified by national government, whereof sport can be used as a vehicle of transformation especially for the disadvantaged groups, through assisting athletes and their coaches to the top level. Disadvantaged groups refers to the South Africans who were excluded from participating in the country's economy during the years of the Apartheid policies (IRR 2018, p. 1). This categorisation mostly includes the classified 'black' citizens of SA, who were denied opportunities in the past – and today remain the economic 'outsiders' (IRR 2018, p. 1).

Furthermore, additional descriptions of the 'winning nation' pillar impact is emphasised in the more recent White Paper of Sport, wherein the 'trickle-down effect' of elite sport on the South African society is highlighted (SRSA 2012, De Bosscher *et al.* 2013). The perceived positive effects of elite sport mentioned in the NSRP were as follows: (1) informs national unity by producing pride and loyalty, (2) creates a sense of belonging, (3) extends all boundaries of race, gender, language, religion, colour, creed, ability or disability herewith, promoting national reconciliation which is imperative for the South African nation due to the preceding historical landscape of Apartheid (SRSA 2012, p. 28). The pursued interest in elite sport demonstrates its importance and more prominently, indicates the significance of elite sport for national government by providing the country with an opportunity to be visible internationally which is difficult to be attained in any of the other public sectors (SRSA 2012). Additionally, despite all the deeply rooted issues discoursed earlier in the paper, elite sport remains meaningful to the South African population.

Funding trends

As it has been shown, mass and elite sport are recognised in SA as the two crucial areas concerning the directive described in the sport policies. The interest in sport is further demonstrated in the expenditure of state funds, whereof national government has dedicated resources to supporting both elite and mass sport, respectively (Budget speech 2017). The financial support provided by SRSA is paramount to the functioning of the various stakeholders, particularly concerning the execution of their roles and responsibilities as is illustrated in Table 1. This statement is substantiated by the work of Sotiriadou (2009) who highlights that sport entities recognise that they have a substantial dependence on government funding to maintain their level of operations in the sporting environment due to the expectations illustrated in the sporting policies. An evaluation of

the amount of funds provided by the SA national government over the last five financial years is illustrated in Table 4, to compare the monetary support provided to both pillars, which is inclusive of all sports.

Table 4. Illustration of the audited funding outcome on the expenditure for sport and recreation in SA by national government (2013/2014-2017/2018)

Financial year	Total budget	Active nation (AN)	Winning nation (WN)	% difference AN / WN	Administration (Service delivery)	Sport support	Sport infrastructure support
2013/2014	R1 073.5 bil	R606.7 mil	R231.4 mil	56.52 % / 21.56%	R114.6 mil	R115.8 mil	R4.6 mil
2014/2015	R966.8 mil	R624.8 mil	R83.1 mil	64.63% / 8.60%	R105.2 mil	R148.9 mil	R4.9 mil
2015/2016	R979.9 mil	R652.2 mil	R56.5 mil	66.56% / 5.77%	R114.4 mil	R153.9 mil	R2.8 mil
2016/2017	R1 023.6 bil	R684.0 mil	R62.7 mil	66.82% / 6.13%	R117.3 mil	R147.1 mil	R12.5 mil
2017/2018	*R1 066.4 bil	*R704.0 mil	*R71.4 mil	66.02% / 6.70%	*R129.2 mil	*R149.6 mil	* R12.0 mil

Adapted source: Budget 2017, Estimates of national expenditure (2017) (SRSA National treasury); Budget 2018, Estimates of national expenditure (2018)

Note: The table does not exhibit the transfer costs & subsidies, and payments for capital assets, which are inclusive in the total budget allocated for each financial year. The 2017/2018 expenditures (*) are estimates and not audited outcomes. The % difference between AN and WN illustrates the % of the total budget allocated to each pillar in the different financial years. Interpretation of terms: Administration: provide strategic leadership and support services to the department (SRSA); Sport Support: develop and support an integrated system to enhance the delivery of sport and recreation; and Sport Infrastructure: regulate and manage the provision of sport and recreation facilities. Translation of funds classification: One million South African rands = € 61 486.68 (14 September 2019, 09:34 UTC).

To place in perspective the description concerning the complete budget dispersion with regards to all departments in SA, the previous Minister of Sport in 2015 stated that sport and recreation received amongst the smallest budgets overall when compared to the other National Departments in the country, which is likely the occurrence in other countries as well (Mbalula 2015). More specifically, the budget towards elite and mass sport in Table 4 indicates a gradual overall increase in finances provided to the ‘active nation pillar’ and presents a fluctuation in the ‘winning nation pillar’ over the last few years. In observing the quantities, it is clear that mass participation is regarded as imperative to national government due to the portfolio receiving incrementally more money during each financial year. The reason for this, is with specific reference to the SA context, whereby mass sport participation has been tasked with a significant role as is illustrated in the sport policy by means of creating stronger communities and addressing issues of community safety, anti-social behaviour, decrease the predisposition to wanting to commit crimes, overcome social barriers, fostering physical and mental health, teaching life skills and education on HIV/AIDS and lastly, empower and promote the inclusion of marginalised groups (SRSA 2012).

The South African nation, when compared to the wealthier developed nations, faces dissimilar critical issues needing urgent governmental assistance. Additionally, it is important to note that mass participation includes school sport, which has been identified by the previous minister of sport as the ‘bedrock’ of the sporting system, as it was previously considered the ‘Achilles heel’ (Nxesi 2017). Herewith, school sport received an increase of 21% of the budget allocated to mass participation equaling R224.5 million for the 2017/2018 financial year (Nxesi 2017). The previous minister further emphasised that the new positioning of school sport will be used as an approach to develop community and school sport, so that transformation can be addressed due injustice of the previous Apartheid regime (Nxesi 2017). In the study by Swart et al. (2014), the reasoning behind support for school sport was agreed, but an additional statement was made regarding the lack of investment in school sport previously, which decreased SA potential to produce high quality talented athletes, in return influencing the countries chances at attaining international sporting success. Both talent identification structures and funding support are important factors for elite sport, which needs to be reflected upon, when desiring to attain international sporting success.

This desire for international sporting prestige can be reflected upon in the first ever mega event hosted on African soil, namely, the FIFA (Federation Internationale de Football Association) 2010 World cup hosted in SA (Pillay and Bass 2008, Bohlmann and Van Heerden 2010). The hosting of these events are socio-politically driven by means of aspirations for an increase in pride and happiness amongst residents for their nation, and international profiling of the country by means of a substantial marketing campaign through elite sport (Cornellisen and Swart 2006, Pillay and Bass 2008, Bohlmann and Van Heerden 2010, Grix 2012). A great amount of resources needs to be invested by hosting countries for these mega events, which is often contested in the literature due to the various contextual

factors facing different nations (Pillay and Bass 2008). This ties into the bid withdrawal of SA in hosting the Commonwealth Games in Durban 2022. The mega event was negated due to the associated exorbitant operational costs in the hosting of the Games, which in turn could have compromised the South African economy (Parliamentary Monitoring Group 2017a). Similarly, when looking at the economy, an analysis was executed on the financials by Baloyi and Bekker (2011), who found that the two main problems in the build up towards the World Cup 2010 occurred which was due to cost overruns and delays in the build of the stadia. Certain economic benefits like the pro poor agendas, and increase in employment has always been associated with the hosting of the FIFA World Cup, and similar mega events, this however, is suggested in the literature as short term aids and the long term impact is often questioned (Pillay and Bass 2008, Bohlmann and Van Heerden 2010). The example of SA is with regards to the Gau train which was designed as a legacy plan of the 2010 World Cup (Pillay and Bass 2008). This high-speed train, however, does not benefit the poor, as it is centralised thus, the marginal and rural citizens do not profit from this project (Pillay and Bass 2008). Similarly, the city of Cape Town applied for the bid to host the Olympic Games in 2004. One of the reasons stated in the literature as to why the bid was rejected was due to Olympic planners failing to cogitate and deliver on two elements namely; on how the Games could improve the life conditions of the historically disadvantaged, and also they could not produce a redesign of the city which could create functional linkages on how it could be actioned in benefit of all within the city (Pillay and Bass 2008).

From a monetary perspective, the Sport Policy Leading to International Sporting Success (SPLISS 2.0 2015) project, indicated that countries who invest more resources into elite sport create more opportunities for athletes to achieve success (De Bosscher *et al.* 2015). In addition to the funding received from national and provincial government and municipalities, the ‘winning nation pillar’ correspondingly receives funding from the National lottery distribution trust fund (NLDTF) (SRSA 2013). The NLDTF is a non-profit organisation, which raises funds from the public for beneficiaries, with the goal of doing good causes (NLCSA 2017). Over the years, the NLDTF has allocated almost four billion SA rands (1 billion SA rands equals € 61 486.68 [14 September 2019 09:34 UTC]) to both the development of sport and recreation in SA ranging from mass sport to elite sporting levels (NLCSA 2017). Furthermore, in relation to elite sport there are NGOs who help deliver public policy objectives, namely, SASCOC. As previously mentioned SASCOC has been identified by SRSA as the only non-governmental organisation assisting with the attainment of policy objectives set out for elite sport, whereto the funds for the ‘winning nation pillar’ is distributed (SRSA NSRP 2012). However, various other smaller NGO’s and private sport academies additionally assist with the development of sport and recreation in the various regions of the provinces, and are provided with the prospect of aligning themselves to SASCOC for the ‘winning nation pillar’, and SRSA for the ‘active nation pillar’. In SA the private sector, businesses and international donors also invest in elite/ mass sport on their own account in the form of direct sponsorships in terms of clubs, federations or individual athletes

themselves (SRSA 2013). These private companies, however, do not have a direct influence on public policy.

In considering the funding depiction in Table 4 it is important to note the differences between the two sport focuses regarding the available resources allocated to both. Table 4 illustrates the calculated percentage difference of the allocated total budget to both the ‘active nation pillar’, and the ‘winning nation pillar’, wherein it is clear that mass sport participation receives significantly more funds in comparison to elite sport over the duration of the five financial years (2013/2014-2017/2018). This funding distribution is in contrast to the findings of the SPLISS (2015) country analysis (De Bosscher *et al.* 2015). SPLISS researchers in the aforementioned study have established that grass roots sport (Mass sport participation) funding by national governments and lotteries are relatively low in successful sporting nations, which in turn leads to them performing better internationally in high performance sport (De Bosscher *et al.* 2015, p.113). This is in contrast to countries who invest more in grass roots sport who tend to be less successful at World Championships and Olympic Games, respectively (De Bosscher *et al.* 2015, p.113). The results of a linear regression analysis in the SPLISS study indicated that substantial investments in elite sport lead to 68% success in summer sports and 21% in winter sports (De Bosscher *et al.* 2015, p.113).

Discussion on key emerging issues and concerns

In reviewing the evidence presented in this paper, the clear debate is not whether, one portfolio is more important than the other. In turn, the illustrations show that both portfolios elicits significant importance to the South African nation in vastly different ways, which may or may not be prevalent in developed countries. The discourse is rather focused on whether the expectations stated in the sport policies regarding both portfolios realistically can be achieved with quality due to, (1) the resources made available to both focuses, (2) the specific context of SA, and lastly, (3) the dynamics of the sporting environment in which the sport policies are implemented. In support of this statement, SRSA (2012) has acknowledged that the ‘current white paper on sport and recreation is no longer a true reflection of the new dispensation, and that there is no synergy between the current White Paper and the key strategic directions of the new sporting structures’ (SRSA 2012, p.10). In addition, several core challenges has been highlighted by the respondents in the African Sport Index (ASI) study which indicated four crucial problem areas regarding sport policies in SA, namely: (1) the high turnover of senior political and administrative leadership leading to continuous changes to policy strategies, (2) decrease in the effectiveness in implementing policy strategies, (3) changes to policies, strategies and plans which do not allow for the maturation of the strategies to occur, and lastly (4) politics within sport from government and civil society which has led to the restrained growth of sport as a whole (Keim and De Coning 2014). Subsequently, due to these findings, the ASI study has strongly emphasised the need for the evaluation of the created strategies and plans, in order to improve SA policy analysis and the policy content, in return to effect the implementation (Keim and De Coning 2014).

The evaluation of all the sport policies regarding the implementation is key to governance, and it examines whether the actions by stakeholders are focused at achieving the set directive, which has been set by national government (Cloete and Wissink 2000). The implementation process of public policy is openly related to the interactions of the various stakeholders within a particular environment (Cloete and Wissink 2000). These same stakeholders all display diverse interests, aims and approaches in attaining the directive established within the policy guidelines provided (Cloete and Wissink 2000). Dissimilarly, stakeholders in the sporting environment could also influence the implementation process, due to the multi-actors involved, which introduces the complexity and dynamics of the entire procedure (Cloete and Wissink 2000, Lucidarme *et al.* 2017). Another barrier noted in conjunction with the implementation process of sport policies is that all the stakeholders operate on different levels as illustrated in the South African sporting system (Cloete and Wissink 2000). This barrier could introduce specific issues of power, which Carney (2012) describes as *diffuse*, because policy occurs for the reason of interactions between stakeholders, but competition between the groups exists, which may lead to a wide range of variable conduct such as autonomy, possession of authority, resistance of others etc. Correspondingly, some stakeholders may exert more power over others due to the fact that

they exercise control over the needed resources (Sotiriadou 2009, p. 849). In this instance this may refer to national government, as they manage and distribute all the funds for both mass and elite sport and, hereby, exerting power over the other stakeholders e.g., the national federations who need the funds for their daily operations. This concept of the power illustration by government introduces the Resource Dependency Theory (RDT), which explains the interdependency which exists between organisations or stakeholders due to the latter stakeholders need to acquire the available resources (Chelladurai and Chang 2000, Chelladurai 2009, 2014, Sotiriadou 2009, Lucidarme *et al.* 2017). Furthermore, by investigating the different types of inter-organisational sporting relationships between the involved stakeholders in South African sport, could assist in the holistic understanding pertaining to the dynamics of the sporting environment (Cloete and Wissink 2000, Chelladurai 2009, 2014). A systematic perspective is required when analysing sport as an interdependent system, in order to understand the numerous hindering variables, especially the specific contextual factors facing a country such as SA, and how that may or may not influence the mass and elite sporting system.

In conclusion, the discussion points illustrated emphasises the need for future empirical studies to investigate the quality of the implementation of the sport policies of SA, in order to address the various challenges highlighted. Difficulties with regards to sport policy implementation will occur, however, these factors should be managed in a controllable manner to ensure that the best attainable standard is achieved in the entire sporting system of SA, which includes both mass and elite sport (Chelladurai and Chang 2000, Ko and Pastore 2004, Lucidarme *et al.* 2017). In conjunction to a systematic approach, the RDT may assist in the understanding of environmental dynamics of mass and elite sport specifically in SA (Chelladurai and Chang 2000, Chelladurai 2009, 2014, Lucidarme *et al.* 2017). In addition, the power relationships at the various levels in both mass and elite sport needs to be evaluated to understand the dispersion of power, and how it may or may not influence the sporting system as a whole (Babiak 2003, 2009, Babiak and Thibault 2009, Sotiriadou 2009, Scheerder *et al.* 2017). Collectively, these type of theoretical approaches could inform both academics, sport stakeholders and policy makers on how they could better respond to the dynamic environment they operate in, and provide them with pertinent input concerning the different types of methods on how to frame current strategies concerning the South African sport policies.

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Chapter Three

Article 2

The Effectiveness of Elite Sport

Policy in South Africa:

A multi-dimensional approach

applied to the case of the Western

Cape Province.

Chapter Three

Article 2

The Effectiveness of Elite Sport Policy in South Africa: A multi-dimensional approach applied to the case of the Western Cape Province.

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Abstract

Assessments on (elite) sport policy effectiveness are critically important during the policy evaluation phase. Currently, elite sport policy effectiveness is measured in terms of governmental target indicators, or the number of medals won internationally. This, however, is a one-sided approach, as evaluations on effectiveness require multiple measurements due to the multi-faceted nature of elite sport policies. Utilising multiple measurements will provide a comprehensive picture of effectiveness, and identify the associated areas of concern. This study evaluated the effectiveness of the national elite sport policy in the case of the Western Cape Province (South Africa), as is perceived by its key stakeholders through a multi-dimensional approach. Data on the effectiveness of the elite sport policy were collected at multiple points of the input-throughput-output and feedback cycles. Results of this study revealed that the Western Cape was ineffective in terms of the outputs overtime at the Olympic Games due an uneven pattern of sporting performances. In addition, challenges were identified concerning the inputs due to the perceived lack of funds in order to achieve the policy objectives. Furthermore, throughput ineffectiveness was identified due to the unclear roles and responsibilities in the policy, no clear athlete pathway, and support services provided to athletes were not being used. The findings of this study recommends that policymakers review the Sports Academy Framework (2013), to ensure that effectiveness is attained in all cycles in order to achieve sustainable international sporting success.

Keywords: multi-dimensional approach; elite sport; mixed methods; policy; effectiveness.

Introduction

Participating in international sporting competitions has implicated a ‘global sporting arms race’; which is described in the literature as the production of success by strategically investing in elite sport (Oakley and Green 2001, De Bosscher *et al.* 2008). Herewith, the price of Olympic medals increases. National governments in various countries intervened in sport through the institutionalisation of elite sporting systems and the funds allocated to the elite sport policy domain (De Bosscher *et al.* 2015). In this regard, sporting nations are pursuing various ways to determine success factors in elite sport, intending to gain a competitive advantage on global sporting platforms (Green and Oakley 2001, De Bosscher *et al.* 2015). Since the turn of the century, country-comparative studies emerged focusing on policy change and evolving trends relating to ‘why’ some nations are more successful in international sport than others (Green and Oakley 2001, Green and Houlihan 2005, Bergsgard *et al.* 2007, Andersen *et al.* 2015, De Bosscher 2009). An important feature of policy change is the evaluation of policy proficiency in terms of its processes to achieve objectives, and to provide explanations on how the resources were used to attain policy aims (Pradhan *et al.* 2017). This statement introduces the concept of policy effectiveness evaluations, which was identified as critically important in answering the following questions: Are policies effective? And what needs to be improved? (Pradhan *et al.* 2017).

Over the past 23 years, elite sport policy had become more institutionalised and governed in South Africa (SA). Since the end of Apartheid (the former regime based on the ideology of ethnic group segregation), two turning points occurred which resulted in major changes to the elite sport policies. The first was the establishment of the official post-Apartheid White Paper on Sport and Recreation in 1996 (NSRP SRSA 2012). In the second instance, a ministerial task team (MTT) was formulated following the perceived ‘poor’ performance of SA at the 2000 Sydney Olympic Games (OG). The focus of the MTT was to “investigate factors which negatively impacted upon the High-performance sport (HPS) of the country” (NSRP SRSA 2012, p. 9). Since then, specific sport policies have been created with the vision of producing a ‘winning nation’ (NSRP SRSA 2012), and to “create a conducive environment for the South African sport fraternity to develop talent and perform at higher levels” (SRSA 2013, p. 11). In terms of the operational development of the (elite) sport policies in SA, the implementation is delegated to the provincial governmental departments in the nine provinces of the country, which is guided by the national government namely, Sport and Recreation SA (SRSA). In the literature, it has been highlighted that a single country with different

observations can also be useful for comparative research (Dowling *et al.* 2018). In this regard, the Western Cape (WC) is a province situated on the south-western coast of SA which hosts a population of 6.2 million (50.7% females and 49.3% males) (Statistics SA 2016, Wazimap 2019). The province is divided into six district councils namely, Cape Winelands, Central Karoo, Eden district, Overberg, West Coast and the City of Cape Town which is the only metropolitan municipality (Statistics SA 2016). The household languages predominantly spoken in the province were Afrikaans (46.6%), isiXhosa (31.1%) and English (19.6%) (Statistics SA 2016). Furthermore, the province is the fourth largest in the country by both size and population (Statistics SA 2016). The majority of the population in the WC resides in Cape Town, followed by the second highest who live the Cape Winelands district (Statistics SA 2016). The majority of the population falls between working ages, which constitutes 60% of the total provincial population (Statistics SA 2016). In addition, between the ages of 5-24 years the majority of the population were identified to be attending an educational institution (Statistics SA 2016). It has been recorded that 12.7 % of the WC residents has obtained a higher education (Statistics SA 2016). The WC is the third highest province in the country where most of its households were recorded to be living in informal dwellings (82.4% of WC inhabitants) (Statistics SA 2016). In terms of safety, 18.4% of the provincial inhabitants stated that they felt safe to walk in their area when it is dark (Statistics SA 2016).

Herewith, the social and demographic factors of the WC presents an interesting case to utilise in the evaluation of SA's national elite sport policies on the provincial level. It has been recognised within the literature that detailed multi-faceted evaluations need to be executed on the sport policy processes in SA (Keim and De Coning 2011). Subsequently, the sport policies of SA have been acknowledged to be good on paper, however, little is known regarding its effectiveness as viewed from the perspectives of its key stakeholders on the provincial level. The aim of this study was to evaluate the effectiveness of the national elite sport policy in the case of the WC (SA), as is perceived by its key stakeholders, through the application of a multi-dimensional approach.

Elite sport policy effectiveness is measured by policymakers through the number of medals won internationally (Andersen *et al.* 2015, De Bosscher *et al.* 2015). This, however, has been identified in the literature as a one-sided approach to policy evaluation (De Bosscher *et al.* 2011). Elite sport policies are multi-faceted as they operate on different levels, using variably accessible funds, and interacting with different stakeholders in order to achieve an identified sport performance goal. The intricacy surrounding policy evaluations indicates the importance of using multiple measurements on different perspectives to draw on the

effectiveness of policies (Pulles and Van Harmelen 2004). The aim of this study was to evaluate the effectiveness of the elite sport policy, by using a multi-dimensional approach. The multi-dimensional approach in this specific case study was evaluated by assessing: (1) the inputs (financial resources allocated to the Sports Academy Framework 2013 in the WC), (2) the throughputs (policy processes of the Sports Academy Framework 2013 in the WC), (3) the outputs (number of participants from the WC province making the South African Olympic teams over time), and (4) the feedback from all data sources (inputs and outputs) and the perspectives from all the stakeholders in order to evaluate the effectiveness of the elite sport policy. A pragmatism paradigm served as the philosophical foundation guiding the mixed methodology used (Creswell and Plano Clark 2018). Through the evaluation of the elite sport policy framework and by involving the sports academy stakeholders through a bottom-up approach, will provide policymakers with in-depth empirical evidence on the elite sport policies in one province, which can be utilised as a case study when the sport policies are reviewed, in order to inform the conclusions of the elite sporting system in SA.

Literature review

Mainstream Policy Literature Review on Effectiveness

Within the mainstream policy literature, a primary problem was identified regarding the definition of the term ‘policy effectiveness’ (Productivity commission 2013) as various authors defined the term differently. Firstly, policy effectiveness has been defined as the extent to which set policy objectives specified by the government were met (Shah 2007, Productivity commission 2013, Kuehnhanss 2018). Furthermore, Sadler (1996) described policy effectiveness as an evaluation to determine whether something ‘works’ as intended, and whether it meets the purpose for what it is designed to do. Similarly, Flay *et al.* (2005) uses an analogous conception by asserting policy effectiveness to the effects of a program or policy, however, a specific emphasis is placed on the evaluation of the effects under real-world conditions (context-specific).

In addition to the varying definitions of policy effectiveness, the conception is also measured differently in the various mainstream policy sectors, which contributes to the complexity. A short overview is provided to illustrate the various ways in how policy effectiveness is measured across the different mainstream policy studies. Firstly, in economic policy studies, policy effectiveness is measured in terms of the stability of national income, employment and fixed exchange rates (Munday *et al.* 2010, Makin 2013). Additionally, in environmental studies, the effectiveness triangle of Sadler (1996) was used by using three

criteria in combination with an expanded framework of Baker and McLelland (2003) cited by Pradhan *et al.* 2017. The previously mentioned environmental policy effectiveness measurements included: (1) evaluating procedural practices, (2) examining the performances, (3) assessing the proficiency of the procedures (Sadler 1996), (4) identifying if the goals were realised by the policies, and (5) the feedback loop (Baker and McLelland 2003). Furthermore, in Australia, the productivity commission (2013) evaluated policy programs with the report of government services framework in order to understand the overall policy program effectiveness, in terms of: (1) program service and objectives, (2) input, (3) processes, (4) output, and (5) outcomes (in relation to external influences). Lastly, in other supplementary mainstream policy studies, policy effectiveness was evaluated with simplified indicators to answer the policy questions (Pulles and Van Harmelen 2004). However, a challenge was identified relating to evaluations of policy effectiveness with the sole use of simplified indicators, in that they are subjected to unclear interpretations, as it excludes the complexity of the real-world applications (Pulles and Van Harmelen 2004).

(Elite) Sport Policy Effectiveness Evaluations

In addition to the aforementioned mainstream policy studies on ‘policy effectiveness’, assessments in sport on this concept formerly focused on the extent to which sport policy interventions achieved their intended goals (Sanderson 2000). However, in the literature, it was highlighted that this measurement of policy effectiveness instituted an evaluation of sport policy outcomes, rather than the sport policy processes guiding it (Chen 2018). Furthermore, Chen (2018) referred to varying studies evaluating sport policy programs, yet, it was identified that sport policy evaluations are still within its infancy phase in sport. Herewith, this finding by Chen (2018) introduces a research gap which could be fulfilled by future studies. Similar to the definition of policy effectiveness identified by Flay *et al.* (2005) in the mainstream policy literature, Weed (2016, p.5), stressed the importance of evaluating sport policy effectiveness to “understand the performance of sport as an intervention under real-world conditions”. In this regard, it was identified that sport policy studies should combine evaluations on policy processes and outcomes by utilising multiple measurements (Chen 2018) to evaluate sport policy effectiveness.

Grix *et al.* (2018) referred to Houlihan’s (2005) statement, in that very few sport policy studies utilised models from other areas, and it remains the case thirteen years later. In this regard, it has been specified that within non-profit sport organisations (NSO’s) studies, numerous theoretical models have been used to evaluate the effectiveness of organisations

(Steers 1975, Frisby 1986, Wolfe and Putler 2002). One of these models includes the multi-dimensional approach which views organisations as ‘systems of inputs-throughputs-outputs and feedback’ (Chelladurai 2014, p. 81). Herewith, this approach illustrates the importance of utilising multiple measurements in effectiveness evaluations (Chen 2018), as was proposed by Chelladurai (2001, 2014) at levels of input-output-throughput and feedback. The multi-dimensional approach used to evaluate organisational effectiveness of NSO’s defined these acknowledged levels as inputs, e.g., resources pertaining to material [financial], human, values, and expectations; throughputs relating to structural and human variables; outputs regarding the products and maintenance; and feedback from internal and environmental factors (Chelladurai 2014, p.400).

With specific reference to elite sport policies, the realisation and coordination of elite sports development has been identified to be quite complex (Digel *et al.* 2006, Gulbin and Weissensteiner 2013, Andersen *et al.* 2015), and, therefore, robust empirical studies are required using multiple measurements in order to fully understand the associated intricacies of the execution of elite sport policies (De Bosscher *et al.* 2015, Dowling *et al.* 2018). In this regard, the Sport Policy Leading to International Success (SPLISS) framework evaluates the effectiveness of national elite sport policies (De Bosscher *et al.* 2006), with the utilisation of the multi-dimensional approach used in NSO’s research at the levels of inputs- throughputs-outputs, and feedback cycles as proposed by Chelladurai (2001). Firstly, the inputs in the multi-dimensional approach used in the SPLISS framework focuses on financial support (De Bosscher *et al.* 2015, p. 43). This is due to financial resources being considered as the best forecaster of output because of the absolute amount of funding allocated to elite sport (De Bosscher *et al.* 2006). The throughputs in the multi-dimensional approach used in the SPLISS framework evaluated how the input was managed to achieve the outputs (policy processes) (De Bosscher *et al.* 2011, De Bosscher *et al.* 2015). The outputs in the multi-dimensional approach used in the SPLISS framework were measured in terms of the absolute and relative success of nations in elite sport competitions by focusing on medals won during the Olympic Games or other events, number of top eight places in the finals (elite sport index), and the number of participants qualifying to take part in these sporting events (De Bosscher *et al.* 2015, p. 43). Lastly, feedback represented the findings from the various data sources and the results from all the stakeholders (De Bosscher *et al.* 2015), which when combined provided a comprehensive depiction of the elite sport policy effectiveness.

The SPLISS framework is regarded in international literature as one of the most comprehensive theoretical models used to evaluate elite sport policy effectiveness, due to the

application of a multi-dimensional approach. In this regard, as policy effectiveness has been documented to be multi-faceted; the multi-dimensional approach used in the SPLISS framework, which was originally proposed by Chelladurai in NSO's research (2001) is paralleled to this study. However, in this case study the specific policy context of the WC, a province in SA will be evaluated, which is categorised as an 'emerging country'.

Methods

Study design

A convergent parallel mixed method design was used in this case study, which involved the concurrent collection of quantitative and qualitative data (Creswell and Plano Clark 2018). This research design constitutes separate analyses of the two data sets and then compares the results to discern whether the findings confirm or disconfirm each other (Cresswell 2014). In terms of priority, both methodological instruments carried equal weighting (QUAN + QUAL) (Morse 1991). The rationale for using a mixed-methods design was to triangulate the data to provide stronger inferences on the understanding of the effectiveness of the elite sport policy in the WC. This was executed by comparing the different perspectives drawn from both quantitative and qualitative data (Cresswell 2014). Also, the mixed methods design served as a means to validate and /or corroborate the quantitative scales (Kara 2015, Creswell and Plano Clark 2018). Multiple data were collected and analysed in the various stages of the input-throughput-output cycles to provide feedback on the elite sport policy in the case of the WC.

Participants

To gain feedback on the throughputs in the multi-dimensional approach utilised, a purposive sample with a maximum variation strategy was used in this study. The maximum variation strategy was applied by including the perspectives of the stakeholders in the WC sport academy system, namely: the athletes, coaches, and administrators. These stakeholders were included in this study as they have been identified as the 'primary users' of the system and, therefore, are best-suited to evaluate the quality of the program (Chelladurai and Chang 2000). Furthermore, it was highlighted that organisational effectiveness in NSO's studies was measured through "the ability to satisfy the key strategic constituencies in the environment" (Sowa *et al.* 2004, p. 713). The profile of the sports academy participants of the WC are illustrated in Table 1.

Table 1. Profile of Western Cape sport academy athletes, coaches and administrators.

Sample	Age	Sex	Level of education	Level of sport and coaching qualifications	Sport code dispersion
Athletes (n=46)	Median: 17.0 Mean: 17.65 Range: 9.0-34.0	Women: 26% Men: 74%	Primary school: 16% Secondary School: 71% College certificate: 2% Tertiary Degree: 11%	<u>Level of sport:</u> Regional: 22% Provincial: 48% (Inter) national: 39%	Athletics: 24% Baseball: 33% Beach volleyball: 7% Canoeing/kayaking: 4% Cycling: 26% Swimming: 4% Table tennis: 2%
Coaches (n=17)	Median: 44.0 Mean: 44.52 Range: 24.0-67.0	Women: 18% Men: 82%	Secondary school: 38% College certificate: 38% Tertiary degree: 25%	<u>Level of coaching qualifications:</u> x1 Fina level 3 x1 Athletics level 2 x1 International canoeing level 1 x3 Baseball level 2 x2 Rugby IRB level 2 x1 Cycling level 1 x8 Others did not specify	Athletics: 12% Baseball: 29% Canoeing: 6% Cycling: 18% Netball: 12% Rugby: 12% Swimming: 6% Tennis: 6%
Administrators (n=5)	Median: 29 Mean: 40.2 Range: 24.0-67.0	Women: 60% Men: 40%	Secondary school: 20% College certificate: 20% Tertiary degree: 60%	/	/

The questionnaire, which will be discussed in the following section, was completed by 17 coaches, 46 athletes, and 5 administrators. Additionally, interviews were held with a smaller sample of sport academy stakeholders (coaches n=4, athletes n=5, and administrators n=5). To guarantee the ‘safeguarding’ of all identities, the confidentiality of participants was maintained by providing code names to each participant (e.g. AFR / ENG Athlete 1; AFR / ENG Coach 1; or AFR / ENG Administrator 1) (Anney 2004). The abbreviations AFR / ENG refers to the separate databases which were used to distinguish between Afrikaans and English questionnaires in the quantitative data collection. Ethics approval was granted for the research project by the research ethics committee (REC) (SU-HSD-003768).

Data collection and analysis - Inputs

The elite sport policy input data were collected with the analysis of various sport budget sources (financial resources). The data analysis included the evaluation of the overall budgets from SRSA, which included the elite sport budget appropriations and the allocations to the sport academy system in the WC during the last seven financial years (2013/2014-2019/2020).

Data collection and analysis – Throughputs

The content sections of the throughputs of the WC was assessed solely through the evaluation of the ‘success dimensions’ identified within the Sports Academy framework (2013), by utilising both quantitative and qualitative methods. This enabled this case study to be explicit to the context of SA, as it specifically evaluated the elements identified within the SA elite sport policy. The Sports Academy Framework (2013) focused on the following ‘success dimensions’ which served as the ‘core ingredients’ in the examination of the throughputs, namely: (1) talent identification, selection and development, (2) athletes support, (3) training facilities, (4) finances for support services, (5) coaching, and (6) organisation, governance and administration. In the next section, data collection and analysis of the throughput phase is discussed and illustrated in Table 2.

Quantitative data were collected from all sport academy stakeholders on the ‘success dimensions’ identified in the Sport Academy Framework (2013) as aforementioned. The questionnaire instrument was explicitly designed for the data collection of this research due to the specificity of the elite sport policy under inquiry within the SA context. Examples of the closed-ended questions in the questionnaire included: ‘Does the sport academy use a talent identification process to recruit athletes?’, ‘Does the sport academy provide training camps?’, ‘Does the sport academy provide sport specific academy coaching?’, ‘Does the sport academy

have training facilities?'. Content validity of the sport policy success dimensions was established through each question on the 'success dimensions' having adequate representation within the questionnaire (Thomas *et al.* 2011). Also, 14 semi-structured interviews were held with a select sample of the sport academy stakeholders focusing on the same success dimensions as presented in the quantitative data. The qualitative approach made use of a randomised selection method by including all participants who formed part of the quantitative phase and placed them into a 'proverbial hat' (Edwards and Skinner 2009). The selected persons within each participant group were invited to participate in this study. Those participants who made themselves available to assist were then included in the qualitative data collection phase. An interview guide was used during the qualitative data collection; examples relating to the type of questions asked included: 'Describe the training facilities made available by the Sports Academy?', 'Elaborate upon the access to and quality of training facilities made available by the Sports Academy?'.

In terms of the data analyses, quantitative data from the questionnaires were placed into Microsoft Excel and categorized into columns. The data was then transferred into Statistica (v.13), which is an advanced analytics software package for statistical analysis. All responses from the questionnaires were structured into histograms to illustrate the frequencies of participant's responses. The descriptive statistics used in this study is further explained in Table 2. In the qualitative data analysis phase, recordings attained from the semi-structured interviews were transcribed verbatim and then verified to confirm the accuracy of the transcripts. These transcriptions were placed in Nvivo (v.12) software to sort and organise the qualitative data, and for the leading author to inductively apply codes and identify themes. The five steps by Miles and Huberman (1994) which were followed in the qualitative data analysis phase is further explained in Table 2. Concurrently, an 'iterative' process was undertaken by utilising a codebook to document themes, validate the data, and to 'bracket' the researcher from their world-view (Creswell and Miller 2000, Macqueen *et al.* 2008). Trustworthiness was established through providing a rich-thick description of the phenomena of inquiry (Thompson *et al.* 2011). To ensure credibility, the 'peer debriefing strategy' was used which entailed utilising 'critical friends' (the other authors and a group of Ph.D. candidates) to enhance the accuracy of the accounts. These 'critical friends' discussed and reviewed the processes which the main researcher wanted to ensue, and asked questions regarding certain concerns or discrepancies. The main researcher and the critical friends, met on multiple occasions in the form of 'member checking' to discuss the coding phase and to evaluate the processes utilised. This ensured that the processes remained the same and were consistent throughout the data analysis phase which

enhanced the credibility of procedures (Cresswell 2014). In this convergent parallel mixed method design study, both the quantitative and qualitative data were ‘mixed’ through the execution of the side-by-side comparison method (Cresswell 2014). The side-by-side method entailed that the leading researcher presented the first set of findings and then the other (quantitative and then qualitative data on the success dimensions) in comparison, with the utilisation of a discussion format (Cresswell 2014). At the point of interface, the side-by-side method used to compare throughput findings of this study aided in the determination of whether the results confirmed or disconfirmed each other (Cresswell 2014, Cresswell and Plano Clark 2018). This method permitted the comprehension of relationships and/or contradictions in terms of the approaches used to evaluate the effectiveness of the elite sports policy throughput processes, in the specific case of the WC.

Table 2. Mixed methodological steps used to evaluate the throughputs of the Western Cape.

Study design	Convergent parallel mixed methods design (QUAN + QUAL)	
	Quantitative methods	Qualitative methods
Step 1	Data collection	
	-Closed-ended data: Questionnaires	-Open-ended data: Face-to-face, semi-structured interviews
	<u>Types of questions:</u>	<u>Interview guide:</u>
	1 Dichotomous questions (Yes / No)	1. Introduction and explanation of the purpose of the study
<u>Locations:</u>		2. Funnel principle applied: Starting with broad open question
Cape Town		3. Then the progression into specific questions occurred
George	<u>Response rate of questionnaire:</u>	4. Within each specific question, various sub probes were prearranged in a topical sequence in the occurrence that the sub-sections of each question were not fully responded to within the emphasised success dimensions
Langebaan	Sport academy athletes (46) (56%)	
Oudtshoorn	Sport academy coaches (17) (71%)	
Vredenburg	Sport academy administrators (5) (100%)	
Step 2	Data analysis	
	1. <i>Descriptive statistics :</i>	<u>Five steps of qualitative data analysis:</u>
	(a) Measurements of central tendency were calculated (median, mean and range for participants ages)	1. Familiarization of the data by an ‘indwelling’ process (Reading and re-reading each transcript)
	(b) Frequencies / percentages were calculated for sex, sports code, level of sport, level of coaching qualification and education to evaluate the dispersion of the sample	2. Identification of themes and concepts to create a coding index
	(c) Histograms were created to illustrate the responses of the various stakeholders perceptions on the ‘success dimensions’	3. Interpreting the textual data with the identified index
		4. Identified themes and codes and then grouped them into applicable charts
		5. Charts used to map responses, create typologies, identify associations and relationships to explain findings

- Step 3 Data identification phase**
- a) Identified content areas & looked for comparisons, and indicated differences represented in both data sets
 - b) Statistical analyses took into account thematic data
- Step 4 Integration of data phase**
- a) Summarised and interpreted the merged results
 - b) Discussed how results converge or diverge
 - c) Explained the relationships and combinations
- } Triangulation (side-by-side comparison method)

Miles and Huberman 1994, Creswell and Miller 2000, Thomas *et al.* 2011, Patton 2015, Creswell and Plano Clark 2018.

Data collection and analysis - Outputs

The vision of elite sport within the main sport policies of SA stipulates that the country should become a ‘*winning nation*’ (SRSA NSRP 2012). A ‘*Winning nation*’ is a term used in the (elite) sport policies of SA to describe the aspirations of the country in becoming a contender on the international sporting platforms. However, the aforementioned goal is not clear in terms of success regarding quantifiable measurements. The relative elite sporting success of the WC province was evaluated based on the number of athletes selected from SA to participate in the respective Olympic Games (OG) (1996-2016) by evaluating the number of athletes in those teams originating from the WC.

Feedback cycle

The feedback cycle was used as a method to collectively synthesise the budgets (inputs), the internal processes of the Sport Academy Framework 2013 as is perceived by the stakeholders (throughputs), and the number of athletes in the South African team originating from the WC (outputs) which are presented in the discussion section.

Results

Elite Sport Policy Results- Outputs

As outputs are one of the main reasons for the creation of elite sport policies, these findings are firstly discussed. In terms of the relative success of the WC at the OG, the distribution of athletes originating from the province selected to represent SA at the various OG is illustrated in Table 2. The most WC athletes were represented in Sydney 2000 at 21%, the least were reported for both Atlanta 1996 and Beijing 2008 at 11%, but an increase occurred in Rio 2016 with 20% accounted for, which illustrates an uneven pattern in sporting performances in the outputs of the WC province.

Table 3. Relative success of the Western Cape compared to the other nine provinces of SA at the Olympic Games (1996-2016)

Olympic Games	SA total medals	SA medal tallies			WC athletes who won medals at Olympic Games	Final standings of SA at the Olympic Games	Number of SA athletes at the Olympic Games	% athletes originating from the WC
		Gold	Silver	Bronze				
1996 Atlanta	5	3	1	1	1 / 5 (Bronze)	27 th / 197 nations	84	11%
2000 Sydney	5	0	2	3	0	55 th / 199 nations	127	21%
2004 Athens	6	1	3	2	1 / 6 (Silver)	43 rd / 201 nations	106	14%
2008 Beijing	1	0	1	0	0	70 th / 204 nations	136	11%
2012 London	6	4	1	1	1 / 6 (Gold)	23 rd / 204 nations	125	15%
2016 Rio de Janeiro	10	2	6	2	2 / 10 (Silver & Bronze)	30 th /206 nations	138	20%

Elite Sport Policy Results -Inputs

In terms of the overall budget allocated to sport in the country by SRSA, fluctuations were evident and refers to the content in Table 4. Also, the elite sport funding allocations varied as well, in receiving 21.56% of the total budget in 2013/2014, and the least of 5.77% in 2015/2016. Funds for the Sport Academy System in the WC are provided by a conditional grant from SRSA. In Table 4, an increase in terms of funds provided to the Sports Academy System in the WC is illustrated, however, a similar trend of inconsistency is evident in terms of the total amount of funds provided from year to year. In the next section, the results of the financial allocation for support services from the throughput processes are illustrated as this also denotes inputs.

Table 4. Financial inputs (2013/2014 -2019/2020)

Financial year	Total budget of SRSA in rands	Total SRSA budget in €	Total elite sport budget in rands	Total budget of elite sport in €	Total WC Sports Academy budget in rands	Total budget of the WC Sports Academy in €
2013/2014	R1 073.5 bil	±17 203 166 520.40 €	R231.4 mil	± 14 392 270.10 €	R1.95 mil	± 1 21 285.53 €
2014/2015	R966.8 mil	± 60 131 576.20 €	R83.1 mil	± 5 170 153.97 €	R2.62 mil	± 1 62 974.62 €
2015/2016	R979.9 mil	± 60 946 350.35 €	R56.5 mil	± 3 514 780. 5 €	R6.36 mil	± 3 95 671.50 €
2016/2017	R1 023.6 bil	± 16 396 940 813.40 €	R62.7 mil	± 3 899 0723.06 €	R4.99 mil	± 3 10 490.85 €
2017/2018	R1066.6 bil	± 17 045 476 672.20 €	R65.8 mil	± 4 092 532.33 €	R5.82 mil	± 3 61 966.77 €
2018/2019	R1090.8 bil	± 17 518 502 650.20 €	R79.8 mil	± 4 962 479.09 €	R5.72 mil	± 3 55 747.41 €
2019/2020	R1153.8 bil	± 18 482 823 897.0 €	R84.4 mil	± 5 249 300.20 €	R6.16 mil	± 3 83 176.98 €

Adapted sources: National treasury budget review (2017); National treasury budget review (2018), Department of Sport and Recreation South Africa budget (2018/2019) and the Western Cape Sports Academy budget provided by Western Cape Department of Cultural Affairs Sport (Jacobs 2019). SRSA: Sport and Recreation South Africa (National government); WC: Western Cape (Provincial government).

Note: The table does not exhibit the transfer costs & subsidies, active nation budget (mass participation), administration costs, sport support, sport infrastructure support or payments for capital assets, which are inclusive in the total budget of sport and recreation SA. Exchange rate used to calculate euros : € 1 = R16.1291 (February 2019). Note that exchange rates do fluctuate constantly and therefore the exchange rate in Table 4 should be compared with caution.

Finances for support services

In terms of supporting academy athletes and coaches financially for national championships, the following results were obtained: athletes reported (yes 40% and no 60%) and coaches stated (44% yes and 56% no). It was mentioned by administrators, ‘in the beginning, we gave support from the academies side to support teams to national championships, but federations began asking too much’ (AFR Admin 3). As a consequence, ‘it’s been instructed from head office that we don’t pay for competitions’ (AFR Admin 1). An administrator mentioned that, ‘some federations will apply for really disadvantaged athletes that can’t afford anything, then we try and pay for entry fees to nationals or provincials or pro’ (AFR Admin 1). Herewith, in some cases, funding was provided to athletes and coaches and in other cases not. It was highlighted that ‘if we want high-performance coaches, they need to get paid as high-performance coaches’ (AFR Admin 1). However, 80% of the coaches stated that they do not receive funds for academy coaching. Moreover, it was mentioned that ‘a qualified South African coach, to get a stipend of R2000.00 a month (€126.92 pm), and he is producing Olympic athletes and world champions, there is a problem here’ (AFR Admin 1). A coach explained, ‘we must go on the road with petrol, and my other coach is always driving behind the athletes to support them, if they could help us, we would be grateful (AFR Coach 4). Also, 80% of the academy administrators reported that they receive financial remuneration for their work, but all five administrators perceived the payment not equivalent to their workload. In addition to inputs and outputs, the evaluation of throughputs is equally important. In this respect, the next segment will provide the throughput results of the Sports Academy framework in the case of the WC.

Elite Sport Policy Results – Throughputs

The results of the throughputs of the success dimensions of the Sport Academy Framework (2013) in the case of the WC will be illustrated. The mixed-method findings are jointly presented and compared side-by-side on the following success dimensions, namely: (1) talent identification, selection, and development, (2) athletes support, (3) training facilities, (4) coaching, and the (5) organization, governance and administration.

Talent identification, selection, and development

Relating to the question about the presence of a talent identification process in the Sport Academy System in the WC, 78% of stakeholders stated yes and 22% indicated no. In the qualitative findings, it was identified that the academies in the WC used, ‘player profiles,

medical forms, athlete participation form, testing with standards, and the federations requirements' (AFR Admin 3). Furthermore, the variation in how the athletes were recruited into the academies was reported as: through competition (41%), by fitness testing (22%), through scouting (11%) or trials (26%). Regarding the question about the perceived effectiveness of the talent identification processes of the sports academies, 82% stated yes, and 18% indicated it was ineffective. However, even though a talent identification process was identified and deemed effective by the stakeholders, a coach emphasised that 'there's no real TID from a sport-specific perspective, it's more in terms of who has made a WC team (...) and that might not be your best TID mode' (ENG Coach 3). Consequently, 'we failed many times with the TID programmes, because the most important part is the matching, putting in place a systematic programme to allow for talents to develop' (ENG Admin 2).

In terms of the selection processes of the sports academies, the 'criteria are you need to have WC or district colors' (AFR Admin 1). At a meeting, 'the academy together with the sport federations makes a decision (selection)' (AFR Admin 3). The challenge of biased selections was identified by an administrator who stated 'I am sitting at a selection table, and everyone is there for their team or school' (AFR Admin 1). Furthermore, concerning the presence of an athlete pathway within the sports academy system in the WC, the following results were reported by stakeholders as 31% said yes and 69% indicated that no clear athlete pathway existed. In this regard, the qualitative findings identified that there has to be 'very good links between the district, provincial and the national academy' (AFR Admin 3). Currently, 'there isn't a pathway right now' (ENG Admin 1). The challenge is, 'we as a region struggle to get athletes into the provincial academy. The criteria are given to us, and then the process takes years (...) and then finally when the athletes get to the provincial academy, they don't get support' (AFR Admin 1). An athlete commented on the pathway within the academy by stating, 'things are very much slow, the development is very slow here' (ENG Athlete 7). A pathway was identified from school/ club onto the district level, but from the district to provincial, and provincial to national level this progression was not observed due to the aforementioned stumbling block. Hereby, 'talent is disappearing in the gaps of the structures' (AFR Admin 3).

Athlete support

The sports academy framework (2013) identifies that the following athlete support services need to be rendered within the sport academies: (1) scientific support inclusive of medical physician support, physiotherapy, fitness training, biokinethesists, sports psychology, video analysis and nutrition support; (2) technological support; (3) life lessons; (4) career

support, counselling and guidance; (5) information services; (6) sport exchange programs; (7) anti-doping and HI/AIDS workshops or courses; and (8) training camps (SRSA 2013). In terms of the scientific support services provided to the athletes, the following descriptive statistics were identified in this study: *medical physician services* (73% no and 27% yes); *physiotherapy services* (73% no and 27% yes); *fitness training services* (71% no and 29% yes); *sport-specific support* (76% no and 24% yes); *biokinetics services* (79% no and 21% yes); *sport psychology services* (78% no and 22% yes); *video analysis services* (92% no and 8% yes) and *nutrition advice* (80% no and 20% yes).

In the results of the athlete support services, the following findings were identified: *technological support* (regional athletes: 100% no; provincial athletes: 36% no and 64% yes; national athletes: 92% no and 8% yes); *life lessons* (regional athletes: 50% no and 50% yes; provincial athletes: 64% no and 36% yes; national athletes: 100% no); *career counselling and guidance* (regional athletes: 100% no; provincial athletes: 33% no and 67% yes; national athletes: 83% no and 7% yes); *information services* (regional athletes: 100% no; provincial athletes: 70% no and 30% yes; national athletes: 92% no and 8% yes); *sport exchange opportunities* (regional athletes: 100% no; provincial athletes: 36% no and 64% yes; national athletes: 100% no); *anti-doping and HIV/AIDS workshops* (regional athletes: 100% no; provincial athletes: 70% no and 30% yes; national athletes: 92% no and 8% yes); and *training camps* (53% no and 47% yes). As is depicted, the majority of athlete scientific support services and the athlete support services were not provided or were not used. In the qualitative findings, a coach highlighted: ‘I think the support system is very good’ (AFR Coach 4). Also, ‘the academy provides a new platform to athletes that previously would not have had the opportunities they receive now’ (ENG Coach 1). It was identified that ‘policy makes it seem easy, if you use these five things you will go from third place to second place. The services, the support, it can make a difference to an athletes performance but they (athletes and coaches) don't know how to use it’ (ENG Admin 1). Herewith, ‘we mostly use the physiotherapist’ (ENG Admin 1). Another challenge indicated by administrators was that ‘in terms of athlete support, we have limited services in our region’ (AFR Admin 4). Alternatively, an athlete mentioned ‘I have been to the biokinethesist a few times for my knee injuries, but that usually takes some time before they give you the go-ahead, because there are a lot of procedures to follow and claims to be made. If this cannot be provided, then the players eventually make their own plan’ (ENG Athlete 7).

Training facilities

In terms of training facilities present at the academies in the WC, 57% reported yes and 43% identified that there were no training facilities. This illustrates that some sport academies had facilities whilst others did not. An administrator mentioned ‘we try to get all our federation athletes here (at the gym). It’s not always possible, because there are lots of kids from different towns who can’t travel every single day’ (AFR Admin 1). A coach re-emphasised this by explaining ‘90% of athletes come from George, Mossel Bay, or Knysna. If you come from Knysna, its 70km here, then 60km over the mountain, just to go to a gym session. So the only people benefitting from it (gym), is cycling, because they are based in Oudtshoorn’ (ENG Coach 1). Moreover, a coach eluded to an emerging theme by stating that ‘the main concern is traveling, we are too far from each other’ (AFR Coach 4). Similarly, ‘they (the academy) support us very much in transport as I have players in Mossel Bay, Grootbrak, and Knysna’ (ENG Coach 1). Yet the support for travel has been removed as ‘SRSA said that we are not going to cover transport costs anymore’ (ENG Admin 1). The gym of the academy was described by one of the coaches as: ‘it’s got all the necessary equipment to improve the kid’s skills and fitness. The academy is up to standard. The fields are good’ (AFR Coach 4). An Athlete commented by stating ‘I think the gym is very good, but it needs a little more tools’ (AFR Athlete 26). Another academy stated that ‘most of the coaches utilise the facilities at schools, but when they need different facilities we make sure they get access to the venues they need’ (ENG Admin 1). Furthermore, they identify, ‘we don’t have tartan tracks, and we don’t have proper playing fields. The municipal facilities are up to standard, the only problem is getting access to it, because club sport is there’ (ENG Admin 1). A big challenge was identified by an administrator in stating that ‘the WC is complicated with the metro having a huge concentration of overdeveloped facilities, and in the rural areas we find that the picture changes quite acutely’ (ENG Admin 2).

Coaching

The results of the sport-specific coaching provided by the sports academy system revealed the following: regional athletes (80% yes and 20% no), provincial athletes (63% yes and 37% no) and national athletes (67% yes and 33% no). The reason for this was that not all academy coaches coached academy athletes. Some of the coaches merely served as the administrator between the actual coach of the athlete and the academy. The coaching aspect is important as the academy ‘is athlete-centered, coach driven, academy supported’ (AFR Admin 4). An administrator mentioned ‘coming from a small region, it’s problematic, as the coaches are not qualified’ (AFR Admin 1). A challenge identified is ‘they (coaches) must be level 2,

but because we are from a small area with very few coaching qualification opportunities in this region, it becomes very difficult (...). If the coaches would like to get a qualification, they will need to go to Cape Town, Potchefstroom, or Port Elizabeth, which has a financial implication on the academy' (AFR Admin 1). The academies, 'try and send them (coaches) to as many conferences and workshops as we can' (ENG Admin 1). However, an administrator mentioned 'there are not enough opportunities supplied for them (coaches) to upskill themselves. We are sending them, but from the academy side, we are not consistent' (AFR Admin 4). A coach mentioned that there is a 'slow education in terms of the professionalization of coaches' (AFR Coach 2). Subsequently, coaches felt 'all the focus is on the athletes and not the coaches' (AFR Coach 8). In contrast, it has been mentioned 'the services are there for the coaches to upskill themselves, but they (coaches) never want to go, so I don't think they are nurtured here' (ENG Admin 1). An athlete indicated that the academy coaching 'could improve by appointing consistent coaches that would be at the training more regularly' (ENG Athlete 5). Similarly, a coach highlighted an emerging theme by mentioning that 'there's not enough commitment from the coaches' (ENG Coach 1). The problem could be identified by the fact that the coaches 'are part-time coaching because they all work' (ENG Admin 1).

The organisation, governance, and administration

Administratively, in terms of the sports academies communication to the stakeholders, 68% reported yes that communication does take place, whilst 32% stated no. This was due to the administrators communicating with the coaches who in turn had to communicate with the athletes. In some cases, this occurred and in other instances not, thus the administrators had to communicate with the athletes themselves in certain cases. The communication frequency of the administrative staff with the stakeholders was illustrated as: none (19%), monthly (13%), every second week (5%), twice a week (25%) once a week (25%) or every day (13%). Furthermore, coaches reported that 'the administration is very good, we get informed every time something is happening' (AFR Coach 4). Regarding the communication with the provincial government, it was stated 'on a day to day basis we communicate with the head office, communication from their side is not good (...) so through the various channels, we are always stagnating by head office' (AFR Admin 4). An administrator mentioned 'we have a different relationship with head office, no response, and if they respond, it's months later, or not getting feedback on anything' (AFR Admin 1).

Organisationally, it was stated that 'with the academy system, a lot of it relies on different stakeholders for it to work' (ENG Admin 1). A coach referred to this by stating, 'there

is a place for everyone to work together, but I just don't see it as a joint venture, cause everyone just works in their own silos' (ENG Coach 3). It was also noted that 'we have separate entities working on their own, and not making maximum use of this structure (academies)' (AFR Admin 3). Also, 'school sport, club level, and the federations all need to be linked up, but by being different entities, they run everything as if the athletes are theirs' (AFR Admin 1). As a whole, 'the acceptance of the academy as a leading contributor to the development of sport in the area is still a matter of discussion' (AFR Admin 3). In terms of processes it was highlighted that 'we send information from our administrator to head office, the head office sends through the sport confederation and the sport, then back to head office and then the academy, which takes a lot of time' (AFR Admin 3). Respondents reported 'we don't get answers back in time, so the regional academies are blocked in certain areas to function 100% with the red tape or being stopped every single time we apply to render services to athletes, as we are supposed to do' (AFR Admin 1). This elicits challenges in terms of 'if something is not paid, then we are under pressure' (AFR Admin 4). Coaches also identify these processes as a challenge by mentioning 'I will do the paperwork, get quotations from doctor's and physios and then send it through to them (the academy) and they will take a week to ten days, but what if it is a pulled muscle or knee injury, something like that can't wait for ten days' (ENG Coach 1).

Through a top-down approach, a previous 'mistake was that they thought they could take a square thing and plug it into an oval shape, because there was a one-size-fits-all approach' (ENG Admin 2). Currently, 'the academy system and the support that it offers is an amazing idea and many of our athletes can benefit from it within the region, but it's not realistic' (ENG Admin 1). It was mentioned that 'we as a district are struggling with the implementation process' (ENG Admin 1). In the end, 'it's an amazing program, I wish I could do better, I just don't know how' (ENG Admin 1). Correspondingly, in terms of guidelines, 'the sport policy is there, but the implementation always changes' (AFR Admin 4). An administrator stated 'it's a case of if the policy is there, just follow it. Don't do your own thing, because in the end we are all so confused and don't know what to do anymore' (AFR Admin 4). An emerging theme was identified in that respondents mentioned that there is a huge problem with reference to the provincial academy, in that 'we are stagnating, we are not moving forward in terms of service delivery, because the next level which is the provincial academy is not cooperative' (AFR Admin 4). A coach highlighted that 'you would have meetings with the provincial academy, send emails, and that's where it starts and that's where it stops (...) everything just hangs in the air' (ENG Coach 3). Consequently, 'there are WC athletes, but they are not in the provincial academy' (ENG Coach 3). A coach highlighted that 'the provincial academy is non-existent,

no support for athletes, no monitoring at all, no funding, no equipment and no reality check' (ENG Coach 1).

Discussion

Policy effectiveness was identified as critically important measurements in the policy evaluation stage (Pradhan *et al.* 2017). In SA, little is known regarding the effectiveness of the sport policies, namely; the Sport academy framework (2013), as viewed from the perspectives of the key stakeholders (in one province). This article aimed to evaluate the effectiveness of the national elite sport policy in the case of the WC (SA). As effectiveness is documented to be multi-faceted (Chelladurai 2001), a multi-dimensional approach (inputs-throughputs-outputs and feedback) were used in this study and evaluated through the perceptions of the primary users (the athletes, coaches, and administrators) of the sports academy system. These stakeholders were utilised in this study as they were identified as best suited to provide an account of the quality (Chelladurai and Chang 2000) and understanding of the implementation of the elite sport policy (Sports Academy Framework 2013). In this specific case study on the WC the major findings identified that: (1) There is a perceived lack of funds provided to the Sports Academy System, (2) athletes don't make use of or did not receive the support services provided by the academies, (3) challenges were acknowledged in terms of the athlete pathway in the academy system, and (4) ineffective output performances at the OG of the WC athletes were illustrated over time. In the next section, the feedback relating to the input, throughput, and outputs are discussed as provided by the data sources used and the perceptions of the stakeholders in this study.

In terms of the financial inputs, SRSA provides funding to the Provincial Departments of Sport. In the WC, the Department of Cultural Affairs and Sport (DCAS), receives funding from SRSA for the sport academies, who in turn manage the funds and the coordination of the sports academies in the province. All the budget sources used in this study depicted resource fluctuations across the six financial years. This indicated a lack of stability in terms of the appropriated funds to the elite sport sector as well as the sport academy system in the WC. The support and scientific services in the framework need to be provided to all sport academy athletes and coaches and supplied within the vast regions of the province, which is recorded at 129,462 square kilometers (49, 986 sq. mi) approximately 10.6% of the total land of SA. Notably, the budget allocated to the academy system in the WC was perceived by participants as insufficient. This statement was made concerning the funds which did not match the elite sport policy objectives outlined in the Sports Academy Framework. The mismatch between

funds and the policy expectations led to varying challenges, which ultimately impacted the effectiveness of the throughputs in this study.

Additional resources can be provided, but extra funding does not necessarily guarantee that the implementation of the academy framework will improve. This was identified in the finding on sport academy athletes not using the support services provided to them. From this result, it was recognised that there was a lack of knowledge and understanding of the support services, and how to use it to enhance the training and performance of athletes. In relation, this ties into the findings which highlighted that the sport academy system in the WC is more focused on providing support to the athletes, and a lesser amount on the coach's training and qualifications. If coaches are not receiving sufficient support from the sport academies, then it is highly improbable that they are driving the processes as is indicated by the slogan of the policy: 'athlete-centered, and coach driven'. Another complicated matter which further contributed to the lack in use of the support and scientific services is the supply chain management (SCM) of government. The processes in the SCM was identified to cause huge delays in the providing of services, which was deemed as problematic by all stakeholders as it impeded upon the effectiveness of the delivery of throughputs.

Furthermore, it was acknowledged that the lack of progress in the athlete pathway was due to the stumbling block caused by the provincial sport academy, which coherently lead to the stagnation of the sport academy athletes. The findings alluded to certain power dynamics which were depicted in the sports academy system. Issues of the athlete pathway can be traced back to the Sports Academy Framework (2013) which does not clearly state what the athlete pathway is and how it should be managed on the district, provincial or national levels. In the Sports Academy Framework (2013, p. 18) it is highlighted that the provincial academies of sport should "ensure the nurturing of talented athletes and accelerate the development of the sport through proper developmental pathways". A figure in the Sports Academy Framework (2013, p. 24) illustrates that a 'handover-strategy' has to take place in terms of the athlete pathway. However, no explanation is provided in the policy on what the 'hand-over strategy' is, who the stakeholders responsible for these decisions are, or what the long term markers will be to enable the pathway. This grey area makes things quite difficult for administrators who have to implement the sport policy, as they need to be transparent regarding the expectations to progress within the sports academy system within the province. This finding is important as the lack in clarity on the athlete pathway in the sport policy gives room for self-interpretation by stakeholders, which leads to power dynamics and influences the effectiveness of the system as a whole. These type of dynamics within elite sporting environments illustrates what De

Bosscher et al. (2011) mentioned, in that elite sporting success can be significantly influenced by human impact.

In terms of the WC, the relative number of athletes being selected for Olympic teams from the region indicates an uneven pattern over time. The uneven pattern of outputs coincides with the observed fluctuations in terms of the amount of funds allocated to the elite sporting sectors. As finances were decreased quite substantially to the elite sport portfolio towards the build-up of Rio 2016, the observed success may be attributed to alternate reasons. In this regard, within the literature, it was identified that some athlete's success cannot be explained by an elite sporting system (De Bosscher *et al.* 2011).

Four key drivers of an effective sporting system have been identified in the literature, namely: (1) Funding for national sport, (2) coaching provision, (3) athlete and post-career support and (4) training facilities (De Bosscher *et al.* 2009). Similarly, the top four sporting nations focused on these identified 'ingredients' (Houlihan and Green 2008). In comparison to the findings of this study, it has been depicted that all four areas need improvement in the case of the sport academy system in the WC context. Furthermore, it has been acknowledged that within high-performance sporting environments, the rules of the game are dictated by what rival nations are doing (De Bosscher *et al.* 2011). However, in the case of SA, it has been indicated that the existing elite sport policy research which has been applied to western industrialised countries needs to be adapted to countries of differing contexts. This is also a reason why the SPLISS model would be very challenging to apply in the case of SA, due to the very specific context of the country. In this regard, the SPLISS study identifies that high-performance sport development is characterised by the prevailing context, and influenced by the local politics and political system of a country (De Bosscher *et al.* 2015), which may ultimately steer the focus of the development of certain 'ingredients' in order to improve success, as was presented in the throughput findings of this study.

In this regard, in a country like SA, the specific context variables (social, cultural, political and economic conditions) (Chelladurai 2014) may influence the sporting system in various ways. These aspects have been referred to in the literature as confounding variables influencing sporting success (De Bosscher *et al.* 2011). An example of context influencing elite sport policy in this study was presented wherein support services to athletes worked differently in the various regions due to the prevailing differences in contexts. [e.g., rural vs metropolitan areas] (geography), transport challenges [vast landscape] (infrastructure), power issues (political), and the perceived lack of funds allocated to the elite sport portfolio (economic). In this regard, it has been acknowledged that research needs to recognise the complexity involved

in implementing ambitious elite sport policies effectively (Andersen *et al.* 2015), as contextual factors could constrain policy development (Houlihan 2012), and have an impact on the inputs and the implementation of the throughputs.

The limitations of the study include that this paper did not take into account contextual variables within the multi-dimensional approach used, which could have influenced the effectiveness of the elite sport policies. In addition, this study focused on measuring the throughput effectiveness of the Sports Academy Framework (2013) success dimensions and not the nine pillars or the 750 critical success factors identified in the SPLISS study, as the focus of this article was to be context-specific to South African elite sport policies, in the WC province. The effectiveness was only evaluated on one province in SA, therefore, the findings may only be ascribed to the WC, as solely this provinces' sport academy system was evaluated. Even though other provinces may learn from the findings of this study, the results cannot be generalised to the other sport academy systems in the rest of the country. It can be concluded that the Sports Academy Framework is not effective in the case of the WC, due to all the complexities highlighted. The Sports Academy Framework is an amazing 'idea', but it is pragmatically not realistic, and cannot be implemented as a one-size-fits-all approach. Future studies should endeavor to evaluate the effectiveness of the sport academies in the rest of the country, and compare them to one another to gain a comprehensive view of the differences. Also, the identified issues relating to the effectiveness of elite sport policies might be attributed to macro-economic factors in a country categorised as 'emerging'. Herewith, it is also recommended that country-specific contextual factors are included in elite sport policy evaluations to assess the influence it has on an elite sporting system. Lastly, inter-organisational relationships should be analysed by utilising inter-organisational relationship theoretical frameworks, to understand the relationship dynamics and power struggles between stakeholders in elite sport.

Conclusion

The multi-dimensional approach used in this study provided empirical evidence on the effectiveness of the (elite) sport policy framework in the case of the WC. Utilising an approach mostly used in NSO's research has provided significant insight into the multi-faceted nature of measuring effectiveness in elite sport studies, which may contribute to pertinent discussions in the field of sport management and sport policy. In comparing the results of this study to the literature, it is clear that elite sport policy effectiveness is quite complex and cannot solely be measured in terms of the number of medals won or even through governmental indicators. The

complications in using these simplified methods in measuring policy effectiveness, include that it disregards the pragmatic applications to the sporting environment, and implicates unclear interpretations of the sport policies. An example of such a complication was witnessed in the current findings, wherein various problems were identified concerning the ineffectiveness of the inputs, throughputs and outputs. These concerns need to be considered and addressed by policymakers in order to attain long-term international sporting success. Elite sport environments are constantly changing and require substantial support to attain success within a highly pressurised environment (Gulbin and Weissensteiner 2013).

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Chapter Four

Article 3

Contextual Factors influencing the South African Elite Sporting System: An ‘open system’ approach

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Contextual Factors influencing the South African Elite Sporting System: An ‘open system’ approach

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Abstract

Elite sporting systems are often descriptions of established practices with little regard for national contexts. This paper examined the influence of contextual factors on the elite sporting system of South Africa. The contextual factors were evaluated through the lens of systems theory (Components: Economic, social, political, legal, and technology). A maximum variation strategy was used to select experts from South Africa and varied European countries, and South African governmental stakeholders. Data were collected through semi-structured in-depth interviews. Deductive and inductive methods were utilised during the thematic analysis. The preceding Apartheid regime, the complexity of the 'quota system', and the prevailing social and economic environment were identified as the major contextual aspects penetrating the elite sporting system of SA. This study emphasised the importance of understanding the national contexts of elite sporting systems, as this information can provide input when revising policies differently in order to achieve international sporting success.

Keywords: Open system; Elite sport; Contextual factors; South Africa; Systems theory.

1. Introduction

Worldwide changes in elite sport organisation over the past decade, created a growing interest from both researchers and policymakers alike, in evaluating how elite sport policies and systems were developed in different countries (Andersen, Houlihan, & Ronglan, 2015; Bergsgard, Houlihan, Mangset, Ingeve, Rommetveldt, & Rommetveldt, 2007; De Bosscher, Sotiriadou, & Van Bottenburg, 2013; De Bosscher, Shibli, Westerbeek, & Van Bottenburg, 2015). Some of these studies focused on examining the determinant factors of successful elite sporting systems (De Bosscher et al., 2015; Digel, Burk, & Farhner, 2006; Green & Oakley, 2010). Complementary research focused on the historical, social, cultural and political perspectives concerning elite sports (Andersen et al., 2015; Bergsgard et al., 2007; Green, 2004; Houlihan & Green, 2008). The majority of these studies have recognised that sport operates within an ‘open system’, which refers to the permeable boundaries of elite sport with the *broader distal* environment (Kast & Rosenzweig, 1972; Certo & Certo, 2009; Chelladurai, 2014). The *broader distal* environment represents contextual factors at the macro level, which are inclusive of the social, cultural, political and economic conditions of a country (Digel, 2005; Chelladurai, 2009; 2014). Even though the literature on elite sport acknowledges that elite sporting systems are influenced by these conditions of a country, very few investigations further analysed the intricacies about what context is.

The context in South Africa (SA) is very specific, mainly due to the multi-cultural society, which is apparent from the vast amount of traditions, languages spoken (eleven official languages), and cultures existent in the country (Mokgoro, 1998). Also, the country is faced with varying challenges ranging from high unemployment rates, poverty and persisting inequalities between racial groups (Jacobs, De Bosscher, Venter & Scheerder, 2018). Nongogo and Toriola (2014) further clarified that the South African country is thus multi-layered, and consists of a mixture of rival cultures, perplexing identities, and ideologies,

which may sometimes be perceived as perilous. Studies should aim to understand specific national contexts, as the contexts of varying countries will either be supportive of an elite sporting system, whilst others may enforce limitations on individual actions (De Souza, 2014; Ivarado, Honey, Greenhalgh, Pearman, Dowding, Cope, Long, Jayne, Gill, Kotze, & Randell, 2017; Pawson & Tilley, 1997). An investigation of an elite sporting system has to consider its surrounding context, as disregarding it would lead to a restricted and provisional depiction of the effectiveness of the system in its entirety when policies are reviewed (Pawson & Tilley, 1997, 2004). In addition, the effectiveness of policies will vary according to the dynamic interaction with the social and economic factors (Stead, 2008). The aim of this study was to contribute to the understanding of how contextual factors can influence the elite sporting system of SA. The research question guiding the aim was: To what extent do contextual factors influence an elite sporting system?

Through theoretical analysis, systems theory was used as the lens to guide the investigation and evaluate the phenomena of inquiry. Systems theory defines systems as inter-related elements which work together as an interacting whole (Mazzei, Silveira Bohme & De Bosscher, 2016). Additionally, “systems theory provides a macro paradigm for the study of social organisations” (Kast & Rosenzweig, 1972, p. 459). Studying context is imperative, as the environment influences the latter parts of a system (Mazzei et al., 2016). In this regard, systems theory was used in this study due to the inclusive manner in which it portrays the importance of the contextual reality of a system (Chelladurai, 2009, 2014; Kast & Rosenzweig, 1972). The understanding of contextual factors will aid in identifying whether a general ‘one-size-fits-all’ approach (Cloete & De Coning, 2011; De Bosscher et al., 2015) to elite sport policies can be used in the existing contextual environment of SA. This study assessed the country-specific context of a so-called emergingⁱ country through the lens of an ‘open systems approach’.

2. Literature Review

2.1 *Elite Sport Literature*

In elite sport research, varying scholars have focused on identifying factors relating to the needs of successful elite sporting systems (Houlihan & Green, 2005; De Bosscher et al., 2015), whilst others focused on the contribution of resources, education, mass media, science and talent identification in elite sport (Digel et al., 2006). Furthermore, the Olympics and its significance have also been identified as a popular theme in elite sport studies (Houlihan & Zheng, 2013). Additionally, researchers examined politics and the concept of path dependency concerning elite sports (Houlihan, 2005; Green & Collins, 2008). In terms of environmental factors, Bergsgard et al. (2007), and Houlihan and Green (2008) evaluated the historical, social, cultural and political perspectives in relation to elite sport. A comprehensive framework namely; the SPLISS model (Sport Policy Factors Leading to International Sporting Success), has been identified in the elite sport literature as robust in terms of evaluating pillars and critical success factors with reference to elite sport policies. However, a limitation was emphasised by scholars relating to the models' exclusion of contextual factors in the analyses (De Bosscher et al., 2015).

How elite sporting systems operate are highly context specific and context dependent (Houlihan & Green, 2008; Bolke & Robinson, 2009). Authors identified concerns in sport management research, in that evaluations on elite sport tend to seek similarities and ignore cultural specifications, ethnic and social differences in search of making broad generalisations to all contexts (Henry, Mansour, Mahfoud, & Hung-Yu, 2005; Houlihan & Green, 2008; Dowling, Brown, Legg, & Grix, 2018). Elite sporting systems cannot be analysed in isolation of the contextual factors, as this would not provide a comprehensive picture of the implementation (Digel et al., 2006; Houlihan & Green, 2008; Bolke & Robinson, 2009; Andersen & Ronglan, 2012; De Bosscher et al., 2015; De Bosscher, De Knop, & Vertonghen,

2016; Martins, De Bosscher, De Coq, Jacobs & Legg, 2019). The aim of an elite sporting system should be to “find the right blend of system ingredients and processes that will fit the context of history, economy, politics, and culture of a nation” (De Bosscher et al., 2016, p. 84). Within elite sport literature varying studies have identified the importance of understanding contextual influences, and continually recommend that these aspects are included in evaluations on elite sporting systems (Digel et al., 2006; Blamey & Mackenzie, 2007; Houlihan & Green, 2008; Bolke & Robinson, 2009).

2.2 Literature Review on Macro-Level Contextual Factors

A systems view is extremely valuable in depicting the social, cultural and economic factors that influence the sporting system, and the dynamic interaction it presents (Chelladurai, 2014). From a theoretical viewpoint, an open systems approach “by including context in evaluations can provide a *gestalt view* on a complex situation and increase the prospects of applying appropriate actions” (Kast & Rosenzweig, 1972, p. 462). Kast and Rosenzweig (1972, p. 454) noted that “academic disciplines take a narrow, partial systems view (not including context) and find comfort in the relative certainty which it creates”. Even though contextual factors at the macro-level operate beyond organisations boundaries, they do affect the operations (Chelladurai, 2014). All contextual elements external to an organisation or system are considered the environment, therefore, it is important to identify the external variables (Chelladurai, 2014).

Certo and Certo (2009) assert that the broader distal environment (context) includes the following components: (1) Economic, (2) social, (3) political, (4) legal, and (5) technology. Furthermore, Certo and Certo (2009) defined these contextual factors as: (1) the economic component includes aspects relating to the economy and income, (2) the social component refers to demography and characteristics of the population (e.g., social values), (3) political eludes to the political factors of a country (e.g., democracy, politics), (4) legal factors

are closely linked to the political component which refers to the laws and rules of the country, and (5) technology is associated with the production of goods and services. These broader distal environmental components as identified by Certo and Certo (2009) will be the underlying variables under investigation in this study. In this regard, comprehending contextual influences at the macro level will assist in the knowledge of “what works for whom, and in what circumstances” (Pawson & Tilley, 2004, p.2). In the following section, the specific South African context will be briefly discussed to provide insight into the distal broad environment of the country.

2.3 The case of South Africa

The make-up of the South African population constitutes various racial-ethnic groups (Kane-Berman & Macfarlane, 2008), which are based on the social constructs evident in society. The South African population endured the Apartheid project for many years, which was an implementation strategy based on the ideology of separation centred on one’s skin colour (Posel, 2011). During both colonialism and the Apartheid regime, cultural subordination occurred, which led to African traditions, cultures, and knowledge slowly becoming undervalued through the implementation of Western culture, education and the introduction of Christianity (Esterhuizen, 2015; Rajput & Van Deventer, 2010). Society is determined by its social context, which includes the levels of social class, social structures and various social roles (Esterhuizen, 2015). Seekings and Natrass (2005) stated that the racial discrimination of the past has shifted from that of race to social class. In contrast, Esterhuizen (2015) mentions that social class is determined by market relations, but due to the systematic exclusion of ‘black’ people in SA in all previous sectors, the social class differences are still evident by the significant inequalities existent between racial groups.

The post-Apartheid government was tasked to transform SA and address all societal problems caused by the discrimination of the past, which explains the omnipresence of

government in all sectors, including that of sport (Beresford, 2012; Rajput & Van Deventer, 2010; Wolcke & Heymann, 2012). In the past few years, the South African citizens have been frustrated with the slow rate of economic transformation, which has transpired under the current leadership of the South African government which is resultant of the continued inequality existent between ethnic groups which ranges from: (1) unequal and poor education, which negatively affects marketability within industry and employee mobility, (2) lack of investment and empowerment in small/micro-enterprises and the informal sector, (3) existent wage gap between sexes and wage decline which leads to job dissatisfaction, and (4) large unemployment rates in the formal sector (Cronje, Ndebele, Matwasa, & Dimant, 2018; Rogerson, 2016; UN, 2002; Wolcke & Heymann, 2012; Yu, 2012). As demonstrated in this section, the literature on SA highlights the specificity of the country's context, and illustrates how very different it is when compared to other nations. The context of SA ultimately influences people's behaviour, events, and social conditions (Pawson & Tilley, 2004). For these reasons, elite sport cannot be fully understood without understanding the extent to which an 'open system' may influence the elite sporting system in the South African context.

3. Methodology

This paper intends to examine the influence of contextual factors on the elite sporting system of SA, through the lens of an 'open systems approach' by using the components as identified in Certo and Certo (2009).

3.1 Study Design

The phenomena under investigation were examined by means of an exploratory approach with the use of semi-structured in-depth interviews in order to examine how contextual factors influence the elite sporting system of SA. As systems theory was used as a lens to guide the study, the following contextual components, as suggested by Certo and

Certo (2009) were used to deductively collect qualitative data, namely: (1) Economical components, (2) social components, (3) political components, (4) legal components, and (5) technology components.

3.2 Participants

A purposive sampling method was used through a maximal variation strategy, comprising only participants with an a-priori theoretical understanding on the phenomena of inquiry (Anney, 2004; Groenewald, 2004; Plowright, 2011; Cresswell & Plano Clark, 2018). The sample included 16 participants: five sport management experts from SA, five South African governmental stakeholders and six sport management experts from six European countries (Belgium, England, the Netherlands, Scotland, and Sweden). The sport management academics had a research background in the following fields of interest, namely; social, economic, cultural, historical and/or political factors with regard to (elite) sports. Academics were identified from the South African sport management literature, and included these experts in this study based on their understanding of the specific South African context. In addition, experts were identified from international (elite) sport studies, because of their expertise on elite sporting systems and open system approaches. Herewith, the European experts served as a validation means regarding the contextual variables under investigation in this study. Furthermore, governmental stakeholders in SA were included on both provincial and national levels, due to their first-hand knowledge on the implementation of elite sporting systems within the South African context. All governmental stakeholders worked within the portfolio of elite sport in SA.

Semi-structured interviews took place either face-to-face (fourteen interviews) or through Skype call sessions (two interviews). To guarantee the integrity of the research findings, the 'safeguarding' of all participants' identities (Anney, 2004) were maintained with the distribution of consent forms which were all signed. This declaration stipulated to uphold

the confidentiality of all participants, by providing code names to each expert (e.g., SA expert 1 / EUR expert 1). Ethics approval was granted for the research project by the research ethics committee (REC) (SU-HSD-003768).

3.3 Data Collection

3.3.1 Interview protocol.

Before the commencement of the actual interviews, procedures on the trustworthiness of the interview protocol needed to be considered to establish rigor within the study (Anney, 2004; Groenewald, 2004). Firstly, a pilot study and an expert planning committee was carried out in order to understand the contextual variables of inquiry, as was emphasised through the lens of the systems theory with the intention of structuring the interview protocol. The debriefing with the pilot study participants (n=4) and confirmability with expert committee members assisted in: (1) the precision of questions pertaining to the exploration of contextual factors, (2) the understanding of the associated variables, and the (3) choice of words used, which collectively contributed towards minor changes to the interview protocol.

The revised interview protocol was then used, which started with the explanation of the background and purpose of the study. Following the introduction, the funnel principle was applied, by starting with an open-ended broad question to induct any new contextual factors. An example of a broad question included: ‘Describe how contextual factors (at the macro level) could influence an elite sporting system?’. The interview then further progressed into the specific identified contextual components, e.g.: ‘Regarding social factors of a country, explain how it could influence an elite sporting system?’. Within each specific contextual question, various sub-probes and key concepts were allotted in a topical sequence, in the event that the subsections of each question were not fully responded to within the specific contextual questions. South African participants were asked to relate all questions to the SA context, whilst international participants were asked to describe the factors identified by Certo

and Certo (2009) more broadly by asserting the influence on an elite sporting system, as a means to validate the contextual variables.

3.4 Data Analysis

The analysis process started with an indwelling process, through reading and re-reading the transcriptions to gain familiarisation with the data. Thereafter, the qualitative data was placed into the Nvivo.11 qualitative software to structure the findings, so that statements obtaining meaning could be explicated from the interviews. In addition, a thematic analysis was utilised to form themes within the Nvivo.11 software. The clustering of themes was executed by grouping the central contextual factors deductive from systems theory lens into various main themes. Additional main themes inductive from the data were categorised if different from the deductive themes. In addition, the coding development of sub-themes within the main themes were completed. Subsequently, a content analysis was ensued to identify the percentage of participants who referred to the different contextual factors, which indicated the dispersion of the responses to the different variables. Lastly, an analytical summary was used during the entire data analysis process which was utilised to characterise differences between the data sets, produce typologies, and map connections between themes. This summary assisted in identifying the relationships, and the influence contextual factors had on the elite sporting system, which is further described in the next section. To ensure credibility, the ‘peer debriefing strategy’ was used, which entailed utilising ‘critical friends’ (the other authors and a group of Ph.D. candidates) to enhance the accuracy of the accounts. These ‘critical friends’ discussed and reviewed the processes which the main researcher wanted to ensue, and asked questions regarding certain concerns or discrepancies. The main researcher and the critical friends, met on multiple occasions in the form of ‘member checking’ to discuss the coding phase and to evaluate the processes. This ensured that the

processes remained the same and were consistent throughout the data analysis phase which enhanced the credibility of procedures (Cresswell 2014).

4. Results

The findings pertaining to the various contextual components derived from the theoretical underpinning, and the inductive results will be illustrated to comprehend the influence of these factors on the elite sporting system of SA. The broader distal environmental factors as highlighted in the Certo and Certo (2009) indicated the following deductive main themes through the lens of systems theory, which is indicated by numbers (1-5 in italics). The emerging sub-themes inductive from the data are specified by alphabet characters (a-d). These included the following: (1) *Economic Components*: (a) affordability of sport; (2) *Social Components*: (a) demographic factors, (b) cultural factors; (3) *Political Components*: (a) historical factors, (b) quota / target system, (c) educational factors, (d) health factors; (4) *Legal Components*; (5) *Technology Components*, (a) type of school. All participants in the study have identified the influence of contextual factors on an elite sporting system: as emphasised by SA expert 1 ‘An elite sporting system without taking into account history, demographics, race, gender, affordability [individual and family affordability] and resourcing of particular sports codes in contexts, then we are subsequently living in a false paradise’ (SA expert 1). In Table 1, a synopsis is provided of the inductive and deductive main themes, as well as the sub-themes and codes within, which influence the elite sporting system in SA.

Table 1. An ‘open system’ approach to thematic categories of contextual factors influencing the elite sporting system of South Africa

Deductive Systems theory Components Certo and Certo (2009)	Inductive themes From the data	Sub-Themes	Codes
1. Economic Component	Affordability of sport	(a) Socio-economic background of a family linked to elite sport (b) Socio-economic inequality (c) Poverty rates (d) Quality education, resources and elite sport (e) Professionalisation of elite sport	Skewed towards upper-income groups Differences between racial groups Elite sport for the middle and upper class (Differences in varying sports relating to costs) Good schools cost’s more but provide excellence in quality teaching and provide a sporting basis for elite sport Assist in alleviating inequality and unemployment
2. Social Component	/	(a) Socialisation (b) Gender differences (c) Unemployment (e) Inequality	Social habitus Social role perspectives No choice, but to seek work rather than do elite sport Different starting points for coaches and athletes in SA

		(c) Poverty	Disadvantaged communities, single parenting, substance abuse, gangsterism, teenage pregnancies and social well-being (Inaccessible to elite sport)
	Cultural factors	(e) Value of sport	Cultural attractions to certain sport types
		(f) Cultural tolerance	Historical past and ethnic diversity
3. Political Component	Historical factors (Apartheid regime)	(a) Segregated past	Racial-ethnic and power issues, and political struggles
		(b) Psychosocial complex	Superior/inferior skin colour
	Quota / Target system	(c) Top-down approach	To increase transformation in elite sports
	Educational factors	(d) Quality of education	Dual career and lack of Physical Education
	Health factors	(e) TB/ HIV/AIDS and obesity	Inaccessible population for elite sports
4. Legal Component	/	(a) Transparency issue	Relative autonomy
		(b) Sport policies	Implementation is problematic and no political commitment
5. Technology Component	Type of school (Scientific technology at top schools)	(a) Importance of scientific methods	Accessibility
		(b) Opportunities to excel	Platform to be successful at elite sports

4.1 Economic Component

Experts in this study felt quite strongly about the link between the economy of a country and the elite sporting system by stating that ‘the economy is the engine which drives the agency of the system’ (SA expert 3). Furthermore, it has been described, that ‘there's a direct correlation between levels of the economy of a country and the outputs of an elite sporting system’ (SA expert 1). In an analysis identified by expert 4, the ‘economic background of the elite performers in Olympic sports was overwhelmingly skewed towards the upper-income groups, for economic reasons’. In SA, the economy is unequally skewed between racial groups due to the past of Apartheid. The ‘majority of the South Africans live in poverty; and because they're in poverty, elite sports serve the middle class and the wealthy’ (SA expert 1). The reason for this is that it's ‘overwhelmingly significant that elite sport is increasingly expensive to do well in’ (EUR expert 3). In comparison to other countries, ‘socio-economic issues occur all over the world, but the difference in SA is that it comes with the Apartheid prejudice’ (SA expert 2). From a financial perspective in the SA context, respondents detailed the positioning of economics in association with available resources, the status of quality education and the link with elite sport:

If you don't have money, you are not going to attend the best schools. And it is known in SA that if you attend the best schools you are going to become the best sportsman. This is a known fact. The best rugby, cricket, and netball players come from the best schools. And why? Because the schools provide access to excellent coaching, facilities, a culture of sport, sporting excellence and access to education.

Thus, athletes get a good education, but also a good sporting basis. (SA expert 2).

Herewith, only those who have access to available resources in SA can afford to send their children to good schools, those who do not, even if they might ‘have highly successful children, cannot send them anywhere’ (SA expert 2). As a consequence, ‘elite sports

performance is very much linked to family background' (EUR expert 5). This notion ties into the importance of income and economics, which is illustrated below by participants, from a South African perspective:

I think that if we talk about the impact of the economy on a sport, something that matters directly is employment and income. In families where you have employment and you have a reasonable income, there is a chance for people to participate in sport. A lot of athletes are simply disqualified from sports because of a limitation in income. It has an impact on the high-performance sport, because your base of those to even just participate in the sport is much more limited, compared to total populations elsewhere in the world (SA expert 4).

A suggestion was provided by SA expert 8 wherein it was identified, 'if we can inject funding in sport, place the right structures, and professionalise our sport, then it will have a huge impact on our society'. SA expert 9 re-emphasised this by stating, 'if we all invest and everyone is given a fair opportunity, we can get all codes to professionalise and we can get coaches and athletes employed to do this, herewith, addressing the issues of inequality and unemployment at the same time'.

4.1.1 Affordability of sport. SA expert 4, tried to illustrate a holistic picture with regards to affordability and the link with the choice of a sport by asserting that; 'there's a whole range of elite sports types that are not suitable in that you have to have a very special resource allocation to be able to excel in those sports'. Realistically from this perspective 'there is only a certain percentage of children, and high-performance athletes that can afford it' (SA expert 4). Furthermore, more globally, 'once you move to those sports that require expensive equipment, then it's rich countries who compete in sailing and rowing and cycling, it's not poor countries' (EUR expert 3). In clarification, the wealth of a country does not essentially mean a 'rich country, but the willingness of the governments of poorer countries to

invest a higher proportion of the GDP in elite sport' (EUR expert 3). Herewith, there is a need for the private sector to become more involved financially in all elite sports in SA, because 'if you look at sports like rugby and cricket with big sponsorships, it's driving the sports' (SA Expert 2).

4.2 Social Component

Social contextual factors are 'very much influenced by where you grow up, influences in your home, and the schools' (SA expert 5). The challenge comes into play when 'people grow up in a very homogeneous community where their beliefs and thoughts are not challenged in any way' (SA expert 3). In SA, 'the socially constructed understanding of what social worlds of people are, are currently fashioned around gender, redress, and even opening up for gay sports' (SA expert 5). Concerning gender, the perspective was noted that 'it's not socially acceptable for females to do sport, it is perceived that they should be mothers of children and raise the next generation, but the boys or the males could. So in that way social situations, social circumstances are very much influencing the elite sports system and how likely it is, for instance, for kids especially females to do sport' (EUR expert 3). Due to the segregated past and lack of integration, 'the nature of relationships determine a lot of what happens in a team' (SA expert 4). In this South African context, you then have 'the coach who is flying in from Scandinavia that may not be aware of those dynamics in the local football team; then certainly those things have a dynamic on elite sport' (SA expert 4). In addition, 'we are lying if we say there is no social impact on elite sports' (EUR expert 2). All of these social aspects in elite sport 'dictate relationships, socialisation patterns, and prescribes how it manifests' (SA expert 5). Therefore, it 'is crucial in how we shape elite sports policy' (EUR expert 4).

4.2.1 Demographic Factors. In SA, the population is situated at 'twenty-seven percent unemployment rates, a Gini coefficient that's the highest in the world, and

someone is trying to be an elite soccer player as opposed to just putting food on the table, the choice is stark' (SA expert 1). Furthermore, 'the youth unemployment rate is a big issue, thus the context is poverty and youth, so the discourse cannot be understood, without understanding how it manifests in context' (SA expert 5). The social aspects are related to the fact that SA is a, 'completely unequal society, so the starting points for all athletes and coaches are fundamentally different' (SA expert 2). A big problem is that the 'gap between rich and poor is gigantic, and then in terms of the mind as well, where people are still thinking in a certain way and still seeing people of colour as being inferior' (SA expert 10). In SA, 'poverty levels matters greatly. There's a large number of the population who cannot participate in 'normal' sport, purely because of resources or circumstances' (SA expert 4). Participants mentioned that 'the majority of South Africans don't have good jobs, can't afford to send their kids to good schools. So they end up in poor schools' (SA expert 2). On the contrary, a 'significant amount of top athletes are coming from situations where they have nothing' (EUR expert 2). In this regard, 'a whole lot of athletes originate from disadvantaged communities, single parenting, and come from areas where substance abuse, gangsterism, and unemployment is rife' (SA expert 6). In addition, expert SA expert 4 highlighted that:

If we put the demography of SA through a lens by looking at poverty levels, and who is disadvantaged in terms of race and gender and geographical location, then a particular story emerges. These demographic statistics need to be imposed or superimposed over the development realities that we have in SA. It impacts directly on different sports types in different ways.

The specifics around young athletes are 'important to see how many youths are in your country, in order to determine how many are available to play sports at a high level' (EUR expert 4). The problem is that in rural towns in SA, 'the population numbers are too

small to be geographically concentrated' (SA expert 4). Moreover, 'statistics in terms of male/female, the girl child is disadvantaged with regards to demographic figures in terms of single parents and girls falling pregnant' (SA expert 4). In addition, the demographical factors provide information as to how these factors influence an athlete and refer to the 'quality of life, that has very much to do with well-being; holistic well-being which is inclusive of physical, emotional, spiritual well-being, which is defined by your quality of life' (SA expert 3).

4.2.2 Cultural Factors. In different countries, the cultural significance of sport is portrayed differently, meaning 'how people see sports, and what the value contribution of sports is' (EUR expert 4). In addition, cultural factors have 'an influence in terms of why people take up a sport, but it's also a marker as to why people don't take up sport' (SA expert 2). The significance of this idea is that 'culture influences the propensity of kids to be involved in sport' (SA expert 2). The differences in cultures are related to 'how people look at their body, the importance of the body, the importance of winning or the importance of co-operation' (EUR expert 4). EUR expert 1 states that the top sport in SA is 'rugby, which is both incredibly divisive in the country but also symbolic'. SA expert 1 mentions, 'kids in African black townships grow up with a football, they don't grow up with a rugby ball'. Herewith, the emphasis should be placed on, 'why particular cultures are attracted to particular sports, and this revolves around the lack of availability, and the lack of other support structures' (SA expert 2).

Through diversity, 'you get to know different religions and different cultures' (Expert 2). One respondent mentioned 'in SA, as a nation, we, are not we. In the fragmentation of populations within the South African context, culture plays a major role' (SA expert 5). SA expert 2, elaborated on the extent of this concern within SA by mentioning that, 'because of the diverse society, to perform well in a team you have to gel, you have to work together

despite differences'. Therefore, teams have to work together even when people are 'not very fond of diversity, or cultural diversity' (EUR expert 6). Thus, cultural factors linked to the elite sporting system 'has a lot to do with acceptance and tolerance, which has an impact on your sporting performance' (SA expert 3). Team dynamics because of diversity variances could expose itself to many disputes, therefore, training is pivotal to 'bridge these gaps by education programs for coaches and players by making them aware of these issues, and more holistically looking at different religions and cultures, respect them and also try and understand that the game is played on the field and not necessarily that your cultural beliefs have to be imprinted onto a team' (SA expert 2). Furthermore, a suggestion was made to 'take benefit out of diversity instead of looking at it only as a negative factor' (EUR expert 6). EUR expert 2 reflects on this phenomenon by mentioning that 'it's difficult to put in practice, but the richness of diversity is rarely explored'. Therefore, cultural factors 'certainly has an impact and especially in countries where ethnicity is a sensitive issue' (EUR expert 1). Furthermore, EUR expert 6 refers to diversity within the sport, and that it cannot solely be concentrated on the athletes but also by looking at the:

Involvement on different levels, like in administrative, managerial, or in the sports federations. I don't see that many people or sports officials, presidents of federations or coaches – coaches might be some, depending on what kind of sport – but people with influence in the sports federations coming from an ethnically diverse background.

4.3 Political component

4.3.1 Historical Factors. Sport in SA, because of the history of segregation, 'is very fractured due to the historical basis of resources going to particular communities, particular schools, and that history cannot be wished away' (SA expert 2). Respondents maintain that the history of SA 'also going beyond Apartheid, there's the history of early colonialism by

Western European countries' (SA expert 5). Furthermore, SA expert 2 highlighted the effects of such significant historical occurrences:

So because of the Apartheid system, you have a multitude of factors which play a role, And that's particularly, your social and economic status, which comes from a consequence of Apartheid. So you have racial issues, racial-ethnic issues, power issues, and political struggles. And it even plays up in the media, in sporting events, in positions and administration in the workplace.

In conjunction, experts agreed that 'if something has had an impact during so many years, then it leaves traces' (EUR expert 2). Thus, history plays a role in terms of, 'what an elite sporting system would look like' (SA expert 1). In SA, because of the past, you will find 'a 'white' person would be perceived as superior, and if you're 'black' you're perceived as inferior, and it has psychological effects on later generations. Thus, we have sports people [in SA], who still felt as if they were made to feel inferior within teams. And it comes from that history' (SA expert 2). As a consequence 'you have this infighting and gesturing with each other. And this is, as a result of some of the historical issues, which directly impacts your elite performance' (SA expert 2). The confliction of the Apartheid regime 'affects who is in your team, how you accept other people, tolerance level, and whether you're fully emerged in a team member' (SA expert 3).

4.3.2 Quota/ Target System. In SA, 'history and politics are tightly intertwined, wherein in many other countries, history is much less intense, and such a fraught subject matter' (EUR expert 1). Herewith, because of the inequality, the past 'impacts on the elite sport on numerous levels regarding the way policies have been intimated by the government, e.g., transformation policies' (SA expert 2). SA expert 4 identified that 'in the beginning, the sports federations dealt with the Transformation Charter with difficulty and there was even some resistance concerning development programmes and transformation'. Consequently,

‘the Apartheid system the inequalities had to be redressed’ (SA expert 5). Due to the past, ‘we now have the implementation of a target system [quota system] in an attempt to level the playing field in terms of opportunities created for players of colour’ (SA expert 2). The objective of purposeful transformation within South African sport is imperative and ‘the positive is that it has transformed sport, at least from a top-down perspective, how much it has transformed sport from a bottom-up perspective still needs to be shown’ (SA expert 2). Conversely, the effect of being a player or athlete of colour ‘at a national level, where decisions have been made, players weren’t shy to throw it at another player’ (SA expert 2). In return, the intricacies associated with the quota or target system defined by SA expert 2 is that:

Target systems are different. Thus, you cannot blindly impose a target system without knowing the value of it and the problems associated with it. Because it impacts on your elite performance immediately, and it impacts on your team environment.

4.3.3 Educational Factors. In the first instance, ‘elite sport performance is very much linked to family background’ (EUR expert 3). Herewith, ‘sport-active parents bring about sport-active children, but if you’re not a sport-active parent, where else than the education system would they get that’ (EUR expert 6). As a consequence, ‘the education system would directly impact the elite sports system’ (SA expert 2). In a ‘sports club system, you only reach the ones who are applying or attending. But if you have physical education in schools, you will meet all the kids and get a chance to influence them as they pass through these classes’ (EUR expert 3). It has been noted that ‘physical education in schools could be seen as the first step into the elite sports system’ (SA expert 3). As a whole in SA, ‘the profile of school sport, because of poor governance and poor schooling systems in SA are severe. Both lack of physical education and the lack of school sport in the afternoons is having a severe negative

impact on elite sport' (SA expert 4). At former model B schools (definition of schools previously in the townships), there was a 'non-existence of sport, and physical education did not even happen at most of these schools, thus how do you expect a pupil to excel in a sport if they don't have excellence within their immediate vicinity' (SA expert 2). Therefore, within the schooling system, there is access to 'a massive pool of talent, but these talents just go nowhere' (SA expert 1). Correspondingly, 'many top 'black' players who are playing in national elite sports, they all come from bursary systems from good schools. And how many bursaries can we provide to how many kids to attend a good school? Only a few. So we've missed ninety-five percent of the players out there' (SA expert 2). Herewith, 'there are big holes in the pyramid, as those kids don't end up in the elite sport system' (SA expert 4).

4.3.4 Health Factors. Health and sports participation are very much connected and 'very relevant, purely with respect to the levels of participation in your general population' (Expert 5). SA expert 5 highlighted the increase in, 'obesity rates, which is why people are physically inactive as it is the fourth biggest killer of non-communicable diseases'. SA expert 4 mentions:

Health is major. The top three killers are HIV/aids, malaria and TB. Thus, let's have a demographic profile of HIV, TB, and malaria in SA, let's look at which populations they impact upon. We have to look at the percentage of our population that's undernourished by the age of six or twelve. Do they stand a chance to end up in the portfolio of high-performance sport in ten or twenty years from now?

SA expert 8 mentioned that 'even athletes are contracting HIV and Aids'. The challenges from a South African context is that 'there are many ways in which the health status of our population, for different target groups, different codes, age groups, or for male/females which various ways impacts negatively on the elite sport system. You can improve the health system to be able to improve that' (SA expert 4).

4.4 Legal component. Participants identified dishonesty as another deriding factor influencing the elite sports system due to a ‘transparency issue’ (SA expert 4). EUR expert 1 describes this as the ‘relative autonomy of sport where politicians were not held to account for the money, even if the money was spent wrongly’. Experts describe the policies of SA as ‘a very good national sport and recreation plan. But the implementation is the problem. This is what we can focus on. It's not there’ (SA expert 4). A positive aspect highlighted by SA expert 6 with reference to the legal aspects is that it ‘creates a safety net in terms of contractual obligations that need to met’. Conversely, SA expert 6 indicates the negative feature of the legal aspects of governmental policies: ‘The unnecessary "red tape" that binds the athlete in terms of access to services for athletes from Government/Federations/and the Olympic committee. It requires a financial assistance request form which has to go through three/four people to be approved and by the time it is approved the athlete has either been to or came from an event or cancelled his/her appointment for a particular service, because it was not responded to timeously’.

SA expert 7, indicated that ‘in our policies and our documents, we emphasise that priority should be given to the previously disadvantaged’. Similarly, it was noted that ‘the policies are written and positioned to add value to the social and economic environment’ (SA expert 6). However, other participants noted that ‘the policies of SA looks great on paper, but there is no political commitment to say we're making a change and we're making a shift’ (SA expert 4). A reason for this challenge was identified due to the ‘investments because the resources made available are not sufficient’ (SA expert 9). Another problem highlighted was that the policy processes consist of pivotal documents to guide implementation, ‘incidentally, in the South African sports system we don't have an overall strategy, and we only have a white paper and a plan’ (SA expert 4).

4.5 Technology component

Important for elite sport is the ‘availability of scientific methods and information and access to those networks’ (SA expert 1). In terms of scientific assistance, ‘the fact that one athlete has access to medical testing, best sporting facilities, the best equipment, places that athlete in a better advantage’ (SA expert 7). The technological aspect should be focused on ‘a sport academy or high-performance centre with advanced technology to test and assist athletes with preparation and training. These trends regarding the availability and access to such systems are of direct consequence’ (SA expert 4). Furthermore, SA expert 6 mentions: ‘Even though this will benefit the elite sporting system immensely as it is what the 21st-century athlete requires, this is highly underrated within SA due to cost constraints. We are light-years away in many of our elite codes due to lack of technology and being able to track athletes performances to provide factual data on his/her training or competitions’.

4.5.1 Type of school. EUR expert 1 denotes that ‘the type of school in many countries is very significant. It’s quite difficult for children who go to state schools to compete at the elite level, certainly in Olympic sports, because they tend to be quite specialised’. SA expert 2 highlights the differences between the types of schools and the link between technological and scientific support within the SA context:

You're paying an exorbitant amount of fees, but what you're getting is a good education and access to everything. Fields on your doorstep, and physical education. After school, you have to go and do your sporting codes, twice a week. And this has been happening for many years. You've got the best fields, the best facilities, bowling machines, tackle bags, the latest equipment, you've got video analysis. You're exposed to excellence from a young age. And then from there you just get better and better. For someone from a poor school or a public school to get there, they have to go via a different route, because they can't go via their school.

Overall, regarding the influence of contextual factors on an elite sporting system SA expert 1 noted ‘the assumption in terms of an elite sporting system as if it applies to every context is not true. Having a particular conception of what an elite sporting system would look like, aids comparability. As soon as you get down to the nuances of those categories, the context becomes important, because the context is everything, and it's the driving force in terms of being able to make an elite sporting system successful within a particular context’.

5. Discussion

In this paper, the theoretical underpinning of the systems theory lens through the components of Certo and Certo (2009), was used to explore the influence of contextual factors on the elite sporting system of SA. The current findings supported the arguments made by previous researchers who indicated that contextual factors are in close proximity to policy programs and systems (Blamey & Mackenzie, 2007; De Souza, 2014; Pawson & Tilley, 2004; Westhorp, Prins, Kusters, Hultink, Guijt, & Brouwers, 2011), as sport operates in an ‘open system’ (Chelladurai, 2014). As aforementioned, multiple studies on elite sport have acknowledged that national contexts do influence an elite sporting system, yet, very few studies evaluated the intricacies of what context is and how it influences elite sport. This study defined main themes and sub-themes relating to how macro-level contextual factors influence the elite sporting system of SA, which may be useful for other ‘emerging’ or ‘developing’ countries to explore.

The major findings illustrated that because of the previous regime, transformation and ‘quotas’ which is quite a complex phenomenon, is currently the main driver of political discussions made by the South African government to bring about equality and inclusivity in sport. In the literature, it was stated that the ‘dominance of white rugby players must be ascribed to the discrepancies in the availability of resources and facilities and in access to

competition of high international standards' (Hoglund & Sundberg, 2008, p. 809). The inequalities presented in rugby were evident in other sport codes like cricket, swimming and cycling in SA as well (Hoglund & Sundberg, 2008). In an attempt to address this inequality, and to create a more adequate demographic representation to obtain a 'true' South African representation in sports, 'sport unity' was launched (Hoglund & Sundberg, 2008, p. 809). The concept around sport unity aimed "to create a completely new system, based on unity, equality, empowerment and representation" (Hoglund & Sundberg, 2008, p.809). Thereafter, term 'representation' had risen to the forefront of the transformation of South African sport which were based on the notion that any squad representing, or playing in, South Africa should not misrepresent the general demographics of the country (Hoglund & Sundberg, 2008). From this idea, a political tool was introduced focused on increasing the representation due to the political pressure to transform sport in SA. This tool was referred to as introducing quotas in South African sport.

Although the 'quota system' has received a large amount of criticism from the sporting environment, it has been acknowledged to provide opportunities to previously disadvantaged athletes at the top level of the performance chain as was identified in this study. However, on the lower levels of the performance chain it is less evident. In the literature, it was identified that quotas are visible in rugby at the national level, where the political establishment "expects a number of players (commonly four to six players out of a squad of 22) to be from groups other than white" (Hoglund & Sundberg, 2008, p. 810). Additionally, the associated benefits of the quota system in sport include ensuring diversity within sports teams, the attraction of diverse sponsorships, elimination of stereotypes, and reinforces role models in disadvantaged communities. In contrast to the benefits, the quota system has varying concerns in that it undermines talent, solely focuses on demographic representations, not all sport codes adhere to the requirements, and it produces adverse

psychological effects on the players identified as ‘quotas’ (Dove, Draper, Taliep & Gray, 2016). In addition, Hoglund and Sunderberg (2008, p. 810) identified that the ‘quota systems strengthen group identities rather than common identities. Quotas and affirmative action also promote group interests at the expense of individual rights’, which can cause a divide within the elite sport environment. This divided ‘environment’ within elite sport leads to old-fashioned attitudes and perceptions, race stereotyping, racial conflict (increases barriers between racial groups and cultures), and a lack of integration between athletes and staff (Dove et al., 2016). Dissimilarly, it was found in the study by Kruyt and Grobbelaar (2019) that the national sevens team of SA, embraced diversity (e.g., different backgrounds, cultures, personalities), and also challenged conventional thinking in that similarity among group members is essential for strong cohesion. The findings of the study by Kruyt and Grobbelaar (2019) indicated the importance of: (1) the squad members showing the same work ethic (deemed crucial to the team’s success), and (2) having shared team values. The purposeful focus on race within South African sport encourages homogeneous relationships, biased team selections, has low levels of cultural acceptance, decrease in athlete’s perceptions of their self-worth, which may not be as racially deterministic in other countries. Unequivocally, the dynamic interface between the social and political components of the systems theory lens indicates a paradigm, whereof the undoing of the segregation of the past, and its influence on sport in relation to the social perspectives attached to it, is quite challenging and very difficult for the current South African sport government to eradicate (Booth, 1998; Nongogo & Toriola, 2014; Rademeyer, 2014). This may seem perilous, as it leads to an array of complexities in the reality of the elite sport environment.

In addition to the findings on the quota system, the findings alluded to the social and economic challenges facing the country, which deeply penetrates the elite sporting system. SA is described as an ‘emerging country’ with a population size constituting 54, 8 million

(Sanders, Phillips & Vanreusel, 2014; OECD, 2012; SRSA, 2012). Inhabitants are faced with very harsh constraints whereof fifty percent of the total population lives below the poverty line. Progress in the elite sporting system has been hindered due to the exposure of varying social and economic contextual components facing the country at large, such as extreme poverty, high prevalence of tuberculosis and HIV/AIDS, alcoholism, drug abuse, high crime rate, gender bias, lack of affordability of sport, poor nutrition, and inequality in all sectors (Beresford, 2012; Cronje et al., 2018; Rogerson, 2016; Seekings & Nattrass, 2005; UN, 2002; Wolcke & Heymann, 2012; Yu, 2012). In the end, many talented athletes are confronted with these issues and are thus inaccessible to the elite sporting system. The specific perplexing contextual environment of SA accordingly, limits equal access to opportunities which is needed to progress in elite sport.

The strong interface between the contextual factors and the elite sporting system of SA directly impacts on the prospects of attaining international sporting success. These social and economic contextual challenges can largely be influenced by the national government. Whilst social inequality in the country remains a significant factor, the need for detailed applications to the sport policies should be implemented, as context shapes sport policies. Modifications to elite sport policies of SA are suggested, which includes the deductive contextual factors as identified by Certo and Certo (2009), and the inductive themes identified through this study, to realistically achieve the objectives outlined by the national government for the elite sport portfolio. One recommendation is proposed in that the contextual factors need to be incorporated in-depth within the overall operational strategies (policy frameworks) of the sports policies, and further detailed on how implementers should apply it. Additionally, funds to the elite sporting system should be matched for the comprehensive application of these factors in the implementation phase.

Overall, these examples confirm the need to understand the history and the cultural background of countries when analysing elite sporting systems and policies. What these illustrations further allude to is the concept of ‘path dependency’, which ascertains that initial policy decisions can determine future policy choices, a notion cited by Houlihan and Green (2008), but initially introduced by Kay (2005). The deeply rooted implications of the policy formation in the past, thus, hinders the possibility of change in the present. There are several critical success factors which are important to attain international sporting success, however, the weight of the importance differs considerably between nations due to the predisposition of the social, economic and cultural characteristics of countries (De Bosscher et al., 2015; 2016). The findings of this study are meaningful as it demonstrates that countries should ‘bench learn’ from each other by seeking methods to create effective and efficient elite sport policies. This is imperative as countries should not ‘benchmark’ the best practices of superior nations (De Bosscher et al., 2016), without considering the critical influence of the respective countries national contexts. In this regard, the ultimate aim should be to find a suitable amalgamation of processes and practices of an elite sporting system which best fits the context of a country.

The limitation of this study includes only focusing on the exploration of macro-level contextual factors and how those aspects influenced the elite sporting system in SA. The study did not analyse the meso-level and micro-level factors concerning its influence on an elite sporting system, thus are recommended for future research. The theoretical contribution of this study with a focus on SA provided insights into the determinants of context for an ‘emerging’ country, yet, these results cannot be generalised to other country contexts. Each country is unique and a one-size-fits-all approach cannot be applied to every national context (De Bosscher et al., 2015; 2016). Even though an understanding was provided on what the contextual determinants influencing an elite sporting system in SA, the study did not provide

pragmatic details on how policymakers should deal with these issues nor how the system can be effective in this given context. This provides an agenda for future research.

6. Conclusion, Implications and Future Directions

The premise underpinning this study was based on the idea that context matters, specifically when trying to understand factors influencing elite sporting systems and the attainment of international sporting success, in particular, that of 'emerging' countries. What may be perceived as barriers at the macro level in one country, will not necessarily be the same in another, which are important deliberations especially when considering comparing nations at different developmental stages. The major conclusion of this study indicates how the remnants of the Apartheid regime still largely impact the elite sporting system of SA today. As presented, this causes varying complexities in the elite sport environment. Herewith, the findings of this study contributes to the field of sport management by underlining the importance of understanding context, and advocating for the consideration of a 'total systems view' in research, when trying to discuss or analyse the properties of an 'open system' in evaluations on (elite) sports policies and its systems. Contextual knowledge of an elite sporting system can provide strategic input when trying to re-organise policies differently (Pawson & Tilley, 1997, 2004). This will aid in increasing effectiveness during the implementation phase of elite sporting policies, thus, debunking the notion of a 'one size, fits all' model (Cloete & De Coning, 2011; De Bosscher et al., 2015), which evidently cannot work within the South African contextual setting due to the discussed circumstances. Furthermore, the emphasis of national context needs to be applied rigorously in future studies, with the application of theoretical underpinnings. These studies should investigate how country-specific contexts impact on elite sporting systems on all levels of analysis, and further provide solutions to which policymakers can apply.

Disclosure Statement

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Footnotes

- ¹ Two economic measurement scales are used to classify South Africa as an ‘emerging’ country namely: the gross domestic product (GDP per capita) and the gross national income (GNI per capita) (OECD, 2012).

Chapter Five

Article 4

**Inter-organisational relationships
between governmental stakeholders**

in South African elite sport:

**Resource dependency and Inter-
organisational theoretical
perspectives.**

Chapter Five

Article 4

Inter-organisational Relationships between Governmental Stakeholders in South African elite sport: Resource dependency and inter-organisational theoretical perspectives

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Abstract

Inter-organisational relationships between governmental stakeholders are critically important in the implementation of elite sport policies. However, these relationships are often compounded by varying challenges, which can cause a stagnation of elite sport policies and its systems. This study evaluated the perceptions of the inter-organisational partnership between provincial and national governmental sport stakeholders in South Africa. Data were collected by juxtaposing two theoretical frameworks namely; the resource dependency theory and the inter-organisational theory in a qualitative study. Data were analysed by means of thematic analysis to apply inductive and deductive reasoning. The major results depicted a lack in clarity regarding the stakeholder roles and responsibilities, too many entities are involved in (elite) sport, and the lack of funding introduced power dynamics and inter-dependencies. These findings illustrated that problematic inter-organisational relationships can affect the effectiveness of elite sport policies. These results can be considered by policymakers when elite sport policies are reviewed.

Keywords: inter-organisational theory; elite sport; resource dependency theory; partnerships; governmental stakeholders.

Inter-organisational Relationships between Governmental
Stakeholders in South African elite sport:
Resource dependency and inter-organisational theoretical perspectives

In South Africa (SA), sport unites the nation in ways that very few things can (Joffe, 2019). Historically, elite sport was used as a vehicle of change by the former president, Nelson Mandela, in opposition to the Apartheid regime (Ideology based on racial segregation) (Jacobs, De Bosscher, Venter & Scheerder, 2018). The significant meaning of sport is thus, reinforced within the (elite) sport policies of the country (SRSA 2012; SRSA NSRP, 2012; SRSA 2013). As a result, the South African government supports both mass participation and elite sport on all levels, from a funding and policy perspective (Keim & De Coning, 2014). The implementation of policies is amenable related to the interactions between various stakeholders (Cloete & Wissink, 2000). In a study conducted by the African Sport Index (ASI), varying challenges relating to sport stakeholders were identified to contribute to the effectiveness of the sport policies in SA (Keim & De Coning, 2014). These included politics from the government that lead to the restrained growth of sport, a decrease of policy effectiveness in the implementation of policy strategies, and the high turnover of senior and administrative leadership (Keim & De Coning, 2014). Furthermore, one of the key findings of SPLISS (Sport Policy factors Leading to International Sporting Success) found that stakeholder involvement, and the national coordination and governance of elite sport is critically important; however, inter-organisational relationships were not included in the SPLISS analysis as a critical success factor (CSF) (De Bosscher, Shibli, Westerbeek & Van Bottenburg, 2015). Herewith, it was proposed within the literature that the relationships between stakeholders in the South African sport setting be evaluated, so that the dynamics it presents on policies can be clearly understood (Cloete & Wissink, 2000).

The new determining factor of nations wanting to attain competitive advantage in sport has been accredited to effective governance and management of its stakeholders (Sotiriadou & De Bosscher, 2011). Most countries with aspirations of Olympic success have acknowledged elite sport as a function of governmental agencies (Houlihan & Green, 2008; Houlihan & Zheng, 2013). However, resources and the creation of governmental support structures do not guarantee an effective elite sporting system (Andersen, Houlihan & Ronglan, 2015; De Bosscher, Shibli, Westerbeek, & van Bottenburg, 2015). Stakeholders within elite sport interact with one another and enter into inter-organisational relationships (IOR's) with different constituents (Sotiriadou, 2009). IOR's are defined as formulated relationships between

stakeholders who all exhibit a cooperative aim of achieving a common and collective goal (Oliver, 1990; Alexander, Thibault & Frisby, 2008). Furthermore, Sotiriadou et al. (2016) distinguish between different types of IOR's in sport namely; partnerships, linkages and the outsourcing of services between two or more organisations in order to access or interchange services. Conversely, very few studies have included the roles of sport stakeholders, and the governance IOR's in high-performance sport (Frisby, Thibault & Kikulis, 2004; Sotiriadou, Brouwers, De Bosscher & Cuskelly, 2016; Luciderme, Babiak & Willem, 2017), especially concerning the role of government, and the associated impact it has on the effectiveness of elite sport policies (Luciderme et al., 2017). This paper intends to address this gap by analysing the perceptions of the IOR partnership between provincial and national sport government stakeholders in SA. A study on stakeholder IOR partnerships will provide an understanding on how these relationships affects the elite sporting system, and identify whether it contributes to or inhibits the effectiveness of elite sport policies in the country.

An elite sporting system is an amalgamation of inter-dependent stakeholders who work together, yet, all display varying interests, roles, and responsibilities (Green & Oakley, 2010; Green, 2004; Digel, Burk & Fahrner, 2006; Sotiriadou, 2009; Cloete & De Coning, 2011; Carney, 2012; Zheng, Chung Lau, Chen, Dickson, De Bosscher & Peng, 2018). Many challenges regarding IOR's between sport stakeholders have been accredited to a lack of resources, environmental pressures, multiplicity in organisational objectives, communication difficulties, lack of joint operations, perceived power imbalances, absence of trust, and geographically dispersed partners (Babiak & Thibault, 2009; Misener & Doherty, 2014). In addition, the characterisation of inter-dependencies between stakeholders positioned around limited resources has been identified to influence IOR's (Luciderme et al., 2017). When one partner in an IOR 'needs' resources, as a result, it gives power to the entity obtaining the funds (Oliver, 1990; Casciaro & Piskorski, 2005; Hillman, Withers & Collins, 2009; Sotiriadou & Wicker, 2015). Palmatier et al. (2007) explained that financial dependence results in asymmetry, which negatively influences sporting achievement due to the coercive use of power. In this regard, stakeholder coordination and management become challenging and problematic (Sotiriadou, 2009). Vast differences within and across collaborative linkages of stakeholders will affect the overall sporting performance of a country (Babiak, 2009), as IOR's are compounded by these aforementioned challenges, which can cause a stagnation in the progress of the elite sport policies and its systems (Luciderme et al., 2017). In this regard, sport organisations should aim to develop cooperative IOR's with all its stakeholders (Sotiriadou, 2009; Luciderme et al., 2017).

If complex IOR's are aligned better, it will create stronger elite sporting systems (Zheng et al., 2018). Researchers in the field of sport management are becoming increasingly interested in the dynamic nature of IOR's, therefore, studies should examine the capacity (Andersen et al., 2015), and illustrate how governmental networks interact, share information, adapt, and combine in order to produce systematic relational behavior (Carney, 2012). The aim of this study was to evaluate the inter-organisational relationships between governmental stakeholders in order to identify the affects it has on the effectiveness of the elite sport policies in SA. The academic scholarship of this study contributes to theory building by means of jointly applying two conceptual frameworks in order to understand the perplexing nature of governmental IOR's in elite sport. The research question guiding this study was: How does the perceived IOR partnership between provincial and national government influence the effectiveness of elite sport policies in SA?

Literature Review

Inter-organisational relationships in (elite) sport.

The development of athletes requires the involvement and collaboration of all stakeholders within the sporting environment (Sotiriadou et al., 2016). Interactions between stakeholders are crucially necessary in order to implement the sport policies, which have been created to attain international sporting success (Bergsgard, Houlihan, Mangset, Ingeve, Rommetveldt & Rommetveldt, 2007; Alexander et al., 2008). As previously mentioned IOR's refer to the formed relationships between varying stakeholders in order to attain a common and collective goal (Oliver, 1990; Alexander et al. 2008). Previous studies on IOR's in sport management have been undertaken in varying contexts including partnerships in youth sports, multiple cross-sectoral sport relationships, community sport based partnerships, and sport-partner networks. A literature summary is provided in Table 1. which illustrates that researching IOR's within elite sport studies are still scarce and limited (Digel et al., 2006; Sotiriadou et al., 2016; Luciderme et al., 2017). Further studies are required in order to evaluate how these relationships are perceived by the various partners (Alexander et al., 2008), and to evaluate the affects (positive or negative) of these relationships on the effectiveness of elite sport policies.

Table 1. Summary of previous studies examining inter-organisational relationships in (elite) sport

Authors	Focus of study	IOR's emphasis	Major conclusive findings
Lucidarme, Babiak, & Willem (2017)	Perceptions of interdependencies and power dispersions on network governance.	Elite-sport network	The dominance of Sport Flanders over financial resources gave them the power to take the central position in the elite sport network.
Jones, Edwards, Bocarro, Bunds & Smith (2017)	The structural properties of a youth sport non-profit network in one municipality.	Youth-sport	A fragmented network of partnerships, with the majority of organisations operating differently to one another.
Sotiriadou, Brouwers, De Bosscher & Cuskelly (2016)	The IOR's between a regional tennis organisation and tennis clubs in Flanders	Elite-sport network	Federations have to adapt their joint programs and support clubs according to growing athlete development.
Harris & Houlihan (2015)	The attitudes and perspectives of National Governing Bodies (NGB's) and Country Sport Partnerships (CSP's) towards School sport partnerships (SSP's).	CSP's in networks with SSP's	SSP's are effective vehicles for improving access to and coordinating school sport. The ongoing source of instability has been the competitive nature between SSP and CSP relationships.
Misener & Doherty (2014)	The nature of relationships between Community Sporting Organisations (CSO's) and sponsors.	Community-sport partners	Elements of the relationship process and outcomes suggest that the relationship process does not make a difference to outcomes beyond tangible deliverables.
Babiak (2009)	Criteria of effectiveness used by a group of cross-sectoral partners in the Canadian sport context.	Cross-sectoral partners	IOR's are compounded by the number of stakeholders, diversity in interests and nature of the network performance management.

Babiak & Thibault (2009)	The organisational level challenges associated with developing and maintaining multiple cross-sector partnerships.	Multiple cross-sector partnerships	The challenges in multiple cross-sector partnerships enabled and constrained the formation, development, and management of partnerships.
Parent & Harvey (2009)	The framework to examine sport and physical activity community-based partnerships.	Sport and physical activity community-based partnerships	Managing such partnerships involves taking account of the attributes, communication indicators, and decision-making factors.
Alexander, Thibault & Frisby (2008)	The three stages of IOR development over time.	Sport-partner dyad	Formation, management, and outcomes are best conceptualised as inter-related in the IOR development.
Babiak (2007)	The underlying factors that led one Canadian sport centre and its partners into an IOR.	Canadian sport centre and its partners	Provided empirical support to Oliver's (1990) contention that organisations form partnerships for multiple motives.
Babiak (2003)	Study of IOR's in the Canadian sport context.	Canadian sport context IOR's	Politics and competing values in the three stages of IOR contributed to the complexity of multi-sectoral relationships.
Thibault & Harvey (1997)	The inter-organisational linkages between organisations involved in the Canadian sport delivery system.	Linkages between organisations in Canadian amateur sport	For non-profit organisations, links with other partners may result in access to more resources to develop programs and services.

Conceptual framework

Resource dependency and inter-organisational theoretical perspectives.

In certain countries, the importance of using IOR's as a viable strategy in sport has been presented, herewith, advocating for enhanced interactions between sport stakeholders (Alexander et al., 2008). Sotiriadou et al. (2016) explain that understanding IOR's may be useful in comprehending organisational practices, particularly as relationships between stakeholders have been acknowledged to unfold in different ways. Due to the complex nature of stakeholder relationships, IOR's in this study were evaluated with two theoretical frameworks namely: the resource dependency theory (RDT) and the inter-organisational relationship theory (IOR) to evaluate how these relationships affects the effectiveness of elite sport policies in SA.

In the first instance, the RDT explores how resources and the related concept of power provides a lens through which to understand IOR's (Brown & Pappous, 2017). The RDT has been recognised to be advantageous in explaining the complexities associated with power differences within dyadic IOR's (Luciderme et al., 2017). In return, this theoretical lens is helpful in understanding how organisations strategise, structure, and survive (Pfeffer & Salancik, 1978). These different elements are illustrated in Table 2. The RDT has been identified in the literature as one of the most prominent theoretical frameworks used to explain IOR's (Hillman et al., 2009; Wicker, Vos, Scheerder & Breuer, 2013; Jones et al., 2017). However, a shortcoming of the RDT has been disclosed in that it mostly evaluates power dominance, and thus omits the different facets of interdependence and the subsequent effect it has on IOR's (Gulati & Sytch, 2007).

In order to fill this gap, it has been acknowledged that the IOR theory examines relationships (co-operation) between dyadic organisations in order to assess the transactions, flows, and linkages within IOR's (Wicker et al., 2013). The IOR theory has been accredited to providing a valuable frame for understanding the reasons why organisations work together to implement specific programs (Oliver, 1990). Furthermore, the IOR theory has received considerable attention from scholars studying IOR's (Gulati & Sytch, 2007), especially with reference to vertical networks which are usually characterised by power asymmetries (Subramani & Venkatraman, 2003). The IOR theory conjectured by Oliver (1990), identifies the following components as critically important in trying to understand IOR's namely: (1) formation, (2) management, and (3) outcome.

Firstly, the formation component of the IOR theory evaluates the motives and antecedents for entering into a relationship, which includes six determinants, specifically:

necessity, asymmetry, reciprocity, efficiency, stability, and legitimacy (Oliver, 1990). These determinants are further defined in Table 2. Secondly, in the management component of the IOR theory, the assessment of the processes and managerial aspects are evaluated in order to highlight the challenges and benefits of IOR management (Oliver, 1990). Lastly, the outcome component of the IOR theory refers to the deliverables of an organisation which occurs through the IOR's (Oliver, 1990). Within the literature, a specific challenge has been identified in terms of identifying definitive outcome variables in evaluations on IOR's. In this regard, various researchers have suggested that the following variables could be used as a marker to evaluate outcome components of the IOR theory. These include: the resource acquisition of the partnership, performance success, strength of the relationship, visibility of organisation, increase range and coordination of support services to athletes and coaches, and the creation of social capital, all depicted in Table 2 (Provan & Milward, 2001; Babiak, 2003; Sotiriadou et al., 2016). In studies on IOR's, it has been suggested that the formation, management, and outcome components of the IOR theory be examined collectively in one study (Oliver, 1990; Babiak, 2003). Conversely, the application of the IOR theory is still limited within the sport studies (Frisby et al., 2004; Sotiriadou et al., 2016; Luciderme et al., 2017; Zheng et al., 2018).

Dyadic IOR's are dynamic and multifaceted, herewith, evaluations on IOR's requires robust perspectives in order to explain the associated complexities (Hillman et al., 2009). As presented, both the RDT and IOR theory collectively provide significant insights into the examination of IOR partnerships between stakeholders. In addition, several scholars have highlighted that the RDT can be juxtaposed with supplementary theoretical perspectives in order to comprehensively explain an IOR of inquiry (Pfeffer & Salancik, 1978; Hillman et al., 2009). Moreover, Oliver (1990) stated that an explanation of IOR's by only using one theory is overly ambitious. Consequently, by utilising the elements of both the RDT by Pfeffer and Salancik (1972) and the IOR theory by Oliver (1990) provided a comprehensive understanding of the multifaceted nature of IOR partnerships between governmental stakeholders, in order to describe it affects on the effectiveness of elite sport policies in SA.

Table 2. Resource dependency and inter-organisational theoretical perspectives.

RDT ELEMENTS (Pfeffer & Salancik, 1978)	IOR ELEMENTS (Oliver, 1990)		
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The importance of the resource to the organisation in terms of its functioning and survival 2. The degree to which the interest group is able to distribute and use the resources, compared to that of the dependent organisation (Control by another party on the resource) 3. The availability of alternatives for the dependent organisation 	<p>Formation: <u>Necessity:</u> The need to establish linkages or exchanges with other organisations to meet legal requirements</p>	<p>Management: Managerial processes reflecting managerial factors</p>	<p>Outcomes: Outcome components: Effectiveness of the relationships and deliverables accrued through the relationships</p>
	<p><u>Asymmetry:</u> Potential to exercise power or control over another organisation or its resources</p>	<p>Challenges of management of relationships</p>	<p><u>Evaluated by examining:</u></p>
	<p><u>Reciprocity:</u> Motives pertaining to cooperation, collaboration, and coordination to achieve mutually beneficial goals, rather than domination, power or control.</p>		<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Resource acquisition 2. Performance success (International sporting success)
	<p><u>Efficiency:</u> Internally orientated to improve input/ output ratio</p>		<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. Strength of the relationship
	<p><u>Stability:</u> Adaptive response to uncertainty (Predictability)</p>		<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4. Visibility
	<p><u>Legitimacy:</u> Comply with norms, rules, beliefs or expectations of external constituents</p>		<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 5. Increase range and coordination of support services to athletes and coaches
			<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 6. Creation of social capital

Methodology

Study design

A case study approach was utilised in order to evaluate the IOR's between national government and the provincial stakeholders in one province, namely the Western Cape in SA. The IOR partnership were examined with the use of an exploratory qualitative method by means of ten face-to-face, semi-structured interviews (x5 interviews on RDT theoretical elements and x5 interviews on the IOR theoretical elements). The RDT and IOR theory elements were used to collect in-depth qualitative data in order to understand the IOR partnership between provincial and national governmental stakeholders in elite sport.

Participants

A purposive sampling method was utilised (Groenewald, 2004; Plowright, 2011; Anney, 2004; Cresswell & Plano Clark, 2018) by including all participants who worked in the portfolio of elite sport within the governmental departments specified. Five South African governmental stakeholders were included in this study, two were from the National Sport Department, and three were from the Western Cape Provincial Sport Department (each participant was interviewed twice: one interview revolved around the RDT elements and the other interview referred to the IOR theoretical components). Attempts were made to include the minister and deputy minister of sport in SA, as well as the South Africa Sport Confederation and Olympic Committee (SASCOC), however the invitation to participate in this research were responded to by no replies, or were refuted by the difficulty in availability to meet. To guarantee the 'safeguarding' of all participants identities, data consent forms were distributed which were signed by all governmental stakeholders (Anney 2004). To adhere to this ethical practice, code names were assigned to each participant in this paper (e.g., Participant 1). Ethics approval was granted for the research project by the university ethics committee (REC) (SU-HSD-003768).

Data collection

As the RDT and the IOR theory were jointly applied as the theoretical frameworks guiding the study, the following elements were used to collect qualitative data deductively. Firstly, the RDT posited by Pfeffer and Salancik (1978) focused on (a) the importance of resources, (b) the degree of distribution and use of resources (control/power), and (c) the availability of alternatives for dependent organisations. Secondly, the IOR theory theorised by Oliver (1990) included the following elements: (a) the formation of IOR's (necessity,

asymmetry, reciprocity, efficiency, stability and legitimacy), (b) the management of IOR's (management of processes and relationships), and (c) the outcomes of IOR's. As proposed by Provan and Milward (2001), Babiak (2003) and Sotiriadou et al. (2016), outcomes in IOR's studies can be evaluated by examining the resource acquisition of the organisation, performance success, strength of the relationship, visibility, increase in range and coordination of support services to athletes and coaches, and the creation of social capital.

Interview protocol.

Interviews were open-ended in order to comprehend the perspectives on the nature and dynamics of the IOR partnership between governmental stakeholders in elite sport. The funnel principle was applied by starting each interview with an open-ended question about the description of the IOR's between governmental stakeholders. An example of a broad question asked was: 'Describe the partnership between provincial and national sport governmental stakeholders in elite sport?'. The interview then further progressed into the specifics of the theories, e.g.: 'Elaborate upon the strength of the partnership between provincial and national governmental stakeholders in elite sport?'

Data analysis

All audio recordings attained from the interviews were transcribed verbatim. After that, a verification of the transcripts occurred in order to confirm the accuracy. Nvivo (v.12) software was used to sort and organise the qualitative data. A-priori elements were analysed deductively from both theoretical frameworks as indicated in the IOR theory and the RDT. Additionally, any inductive emerging themes were then identified from the data. The following steps guided the data analysis processes which has been documented by Miles and Huberman (1994) to enrich the trustworthiness of qualitative data. The guide commenced with a familiarisation phase of the data by a process of 'indwelling' (reading and re-reading each transcript) (Patton, 2015). The identification of themes and concepts followed to create a coding index. The annotating of textual data occurred with the prior formulated coding indexing. Thereafter, the matrices which identified themes and codes were grouped into applicable charts. Lastly, these charts were then used to identify associations and relationships in order to explain the findings (Miles & Huberman, 1994). Concurrently, an 'iterative' process was applied throughout these procedures, by means of using a codebook to document the deductive and inductive themes. Furthermore, the codebook was used to validate the data by means of triangulation process and

additionally, to ‘bracket’ the researcher from their worldview (Creswell & Miller 2000, Macqueen, Maclellan, Bartholow & Milstein, 2008). Trustworthiness was established by means of providing a rich thick description of the phenomena of inquiry (Thomas, Nelson & Silverman, 2011). To ensure credibility, ‘critical friends’ assisted in the verification of the coding processes, in order to evaluate if the themes and codes were categorised correctly (Smith & McGannon, 2017). The ‘peer debriefing strategy’ was used which entailed utilising ‘critical friends’ (the other authors and a group of Ph.D. candidates) to enhance the accuracy of the accounts. These ‘critical friends’ discussed and reviewed the processes which the main researcher wanted to ensue, and asked questions regarding certain concerns or discrepancies. The main researcher and the critical friends, met on multiple occasions in the form of ‘member checking’ to discuss the coding phase and to evaluate the processes. This ensured that the processes remained the same and were consistent throughout the data analysis phase which enhanced the credibility of procedures (Cresswell 2014).

Results

In the following section, the results of the theoretical elements of both the RDT and IOR theory are presented in the order as illustrated in Table 2. The RDT elements are firstly depicted by illustrating the importance of resources in the IOR partnership between governmental stakeholders in SA, as it contributes to the functioning and survival of the entities. Thereafter, the degree to which the interest groups can distribute resources are discussed as this will indicate the varying levels of control. Subsequently, the alternatives made to secure funds by stakeholders are presented. In terms of the IOR theory, the formation, management and outcome components of the IOR partnership is then discoursed. The results of the inductive and deductive reasoning that identified how IOR’s between governmental stakeholders in SA affects the elite sport policies and its systems are presented in Table 3.

Table 3. The results of thematic inductive and deductive categories illustrating the influence of IOR's between governmental sport stakeholders on elite sport policies and its systems in SA.

Deductive from RDT and IOR Components	Inductive themes from the data	Sub-Themes	Codes
1. RDT: The importance of the resource to the organisation in terms of its functioning and survival	Importance of resources to the survival of federations	a) Lack of funds	Quality of policies and programs are compromised due to a lack of funds. Dependency on government occurs because of lack of funding.
2. RDT: The degree to which the interest group is able to distribute and use the resources, compared to that of the dependent organisation (Control by another party on the resource)		a) Prescribing how funds should be used	Prescription on both levels of government on how funds should be utilised. Have to meet targets regardless of challenges faced.
3. RDT: The availability of alternatives for the dependent organisation, or the nature and control over the utilisation of the resources by the interest group.		a) Alternate funding options	The lottery provides more funds than government. Sponsorships are provided to big codes and less to smaller codes. Other sports not receiving sponsorships are reliant on government funding.
4. IOR: Formation	Assistance of federations	a) Necessity	In order to receive funds from government, entities need to abide by legal regulations. Service level agreements signed between governmental partnerships. Government cannot implement policies without federations.

- b) Asymmetry
Power struggles exist in all levels of sport.
Top-down approach from national government.
Non-compliance leads to withdrawal of funds by national government.
National government holds the power as they provide the funding to sport.
- c) Reciprocity
Different views on policies and policy implementation.
Many relationships in sport.
Repetition in what stakeholders are doing
Sport entities working in silos.
Skeleton staff in both provincial and national government.
Resistance in achieving the full complement.
- d) Efficiency
Governmental priority will determine the funding to sport.
Huge gap in terms of the policy objectives and matching funds to achieve it.
Very little funding to support athletes and teams.
Sport policies are a great idea, but not realistic due to lack of funds.
- e) Stability
Too many relationships in sport are power hungry which prevents stability and leads to conflict.
Lack of flexibility by government which hinders sport.
Sport policies should be aligned better.
Politics affects sport policy operations.
- f) Legitimacy
Moral legitimacy: Not following through accountability.
Practical legitimacy: No follow ups on stakeholder concerns.

The legitimacy
and relevance

of the sports
academies still
questioned

5. IOR: Management

Management of
sport academy
system

a) Managerial
processes reflecting
managerial factors

Overemphasis on governance but no support, guidance or transparency.
Overlapping of roles and responsibilities which hinders the coordination of sport.
The functioning capacity of the sport system is not a concern.

b) Challenges of
management of
relationships

Lack of funding and no support.
Supply chain management red-tape.
Lack of flexibility in sport policies.
Federations are part-time and government full-time which affects operations.
Communication problems.
Quality compromised due to unrealistic expectations.
Overemphasis of services and not the sports academies.
Implementation of sport policies are challenging.

6. IOR: Outcome

a) Resource acquisition

National government receives funding from treasury and then provincial government applies for funding from national through the DoRa grant (Division of Revenue Act).

b) Performance success

Government focuses on targets which compromises quality.
SA dominates in Africa, and does well in the Commonwealth, but the Olympics needs to improve.
Elitist system focused on athletes who are already successful.
Elite sport system of SA should be context specific.

c) Strength of the
relationship

Dysfunction in relationships.
Different views on what is required.

- | | |
|--|---|
| d) Visibility | Government is visible to federations but not to the broader public. |
| e) Increase range and coordination of support services to athletes and coaches | Education of personnel needs to be incorporated.
Lack of resources to provide an increase range in services. |
| f) Creation of social capital | Address challenges of society through sport.
Educating people in sport.
Adding societal needs to sport participation. |
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The importance of resources in governmental IOR's to ensure the functioning and survival of entities

Participant 1 made a statement mentioning that ‘money at the end of the day does make a difference in terms of how far an athlete can go’. We (SRSA) give them (provincial government) money and outline how the money should be spent and they report to us on what they achieved’ (Participant 2). However, participant 2 identified that ‘due to the limited amount of resources we cannot expand our scope. If the issue of resources can be addressed it can lead to sustainable programs and the realisation of long term goals. Currently, the budget is over a billion rands, but it is still not enough for the programs we have’. In addition, ‘the resources that are available are not sufficient enough to cover the demands of the sector’ (Participant 4). It was further noted that ‘funding is too little to sustain programs. The funding that is available is not achieving the targets set out, hereby, the quality (of policies) is compromised’ (Participant 5). An emerging theme eluded to the importance of resources for the survival of sport federations. In this regard, ‘governmental funding tends to make people more dependent, and, therefore, state funding should continue for the survival of federations’ (Participant 2).

The degree to which the governmental stakeholders are able to distribute and use funds

In terms of funds, ‘SRSA provides funding to us at the provincial government, we become the enablers who have to carry out the mandates from national’ (Participant 1). Moreover, ‘as national gives us funding, we have certain targets to meet and report to them on it. We engage on a quarterly basis in meetings’ (Participant 3). Participant 2 stated that ‘the funding unit (from government) asks federations to submit their business plans, and based on those plans they calculate a percentage to fund programs’. As funds are provided by SRSA to provincial departments, ‘a management team will prescribe what must happen in the province. There might be challenges around resources and venue restrictions, but they (SRSA) don’t understand that’ (Participant 1). In addition to national government prescribing how funds should be used, ‘provincial government provides funding to federations, so there is a sense of we are paying you the money, so we will prescribe to you how you use it’ (Participant 1).

Alternative options for stakeholders in securing funds

In terms of ‘SASCOC, they do not only rely on funding from the government but also get sponsorships which sustains them’ (Participant 2). In addition, ‘the Lotto provides more funding than that of government. Federations appreciate the funding from government, but obtain funding from different sources as well, as the government portion is quite small’

(Participant 5). In the private sector, ‘businesses chose to support the big five codes of sport (Football, Netball, Rugby, Cricket and Athletics) in SA due to the exposure they get. But the smaller codes struggle financially’ (Participant 1). In this regard, ‘some federations do get sponsors from the business sector, whilst others dont. Thus, as a department, we need to bridge the gap in terms of funding those sports who are not attracting funds’ (Participant 2). In the bigger picture, ‘government cannot get money from companies. If we do, the money has to go back to the treasury, it does not come to us directly. Whatever money we get, must go to the national revenue fund’ (Participant 4). Comprehensively, ‘we need to encourage federations to source their own funding, because then they can do what they want, and how they want to, and that would put more stability in their structures’ (Participant 3).

Necessity formation factors (the need to establish linkages to meet legal requirements)

In order to meet ‘legal requirements the outlined roles, responsibilities set out the obligations between parties, which is necessary for the implementation of sport programs. We operate within a set of norms, rules, and beliefs, which is crucial for outlining the responsibilities’ (Participant 2). In SA, ‘the organisation is guided by sport policies and it is, therefore, mandatory to meet its objectives and the social responsibility’ (Participant 3). In this regard, ‘government has to demonstrate that we deliver according to legislative mandates and are accountable in terms of programs and funding received from the fiscus. The relationships are mutually beneficial to all parties. We need to be strategic in our delivery of sport, which will assist us in achieving international sporting success’ (Participant 4). In addition, ‘we as SRSA, enter into service level agreements with the provincial government on how funding should be spent, the cooperation, and what the obligations are. And this establishes the rules of what is expected from both parties’ (Participant 2). The provincial governmental stakeholders mentioned that ‘at the provincial level the execution takes place, wherein annual target plans/ objectives are worked on’ (Participant 3). Furthermore, participant 5 highlighted that ‘the process of accountability to meet requirements is acceptable, but it can improve’. An emerging theme was identified in terms of the assistance of federations in necessity formation factors wherein it was noted that ‘we as the government are cognizant that we cannot deliver and promote sports without the role of the federations’ (Participant 4).

Asymmetry formation factors (the potential to exercise control or power in governmental partnerships)

Most respondents identified that ‘there are power struggles at all levels in sport’ (Participant 3). In terms of power dispersion, ‘when it comes to the national government, hierarchy is emphasised, because of the top-down approach wherein national instructs provinces what to do. There is a fight for power of who is really in charge of sport in the country. If you withhold funding you are actually punishing the athletes, who don’t know what the problem is’ (Participant 5). However, the national government does not term the aforementioned as power, stating: ‘I would rather say persuasion influence. We (SRSA) are governed by supply chain management processes. Thus, when we give you money, you need to comply with our standards and report in a certain way. If not, then we withdraw funding’ (Participant 2). This filters down onto the provincial level as, ‘in some provinces, the confederation wants to play a greater role, and wants to hold the provincial department accountable for sport when it is supposed to be the other way around’ (Participant 4). Furthermore, on a provincial level, it was mentioned that ‘from a principle and policy perspective we agree on what the national government wants. On the execution level, it becomes a tug-of-war situation, but we end up agreeing because they (SRSA) provides the funding’ (Participant 3).

Reciprocity formation factors (the need for collaboration between governmental partnerships as opposed to power)

In terms of collaboration, ‘as SRSA, we come up with the programs and get funding from the treasury for it. Then our stakeholders (Provincial departments) are the vehicle of delivery for the programs because they have the athletes, the municipalities and schools’ (Participant 2). Distinctively, ‘we have been brainwashed in believing that sport needs all these different entities. I think there are too many relationships’ (Participant 5). Which then evidently leads to, ‘lots of repetition in what we are doing as SRSA, and our stakeholders’ (Participant 2). In terms of policies, ‘all responsibilities are outlined in the sports plan. Thus, if everyone sticks to their role we will be on par with what needs to happen. This will ensure that there is no confusion on who must do what, and the understanding of people on what to do’ (Participant 4). Another challenge was identified in that, ‘we are working in silos, if we work together we could get our athletes to the podium’ (Participant 1). In addition, skeleton staff was highlighted as problematic as, ‘a staff complement of three people cannot coordinate everything. So having the provincial departments benefits us. However, it was stated that ‘there is a bit of resistance in achieving the full component. SASCOG and SRSA are moving forward, but there is a different understanding at the provincial level’ (Participant 4).

Efficiency formation factors (input/output ratio)

With reference to efficiency, ‘everything depends on political government and what the priority is. If it is education, then the trickle-down effect is that sport will get the least portion of the pie and that influences the monetary versus the outcome factor’ (Participant 5). However, it has been noted that ‘the perceived outcome is that we have to carry out the guidelines as presented in the policy documents. In terms of giving us the tools, the resources, manpower, and the budget to effectively run the programs, there is a huge gap’ (Participant 1). Participant 3 mentions that ‘the funding that has been given is too little, but people will appreciate it, because it is at least something. But you cannot expect to deliver a team that would be able to perform with less money’. Moreover, it was explained that ‘conditional grants stipulate that the province must implement the academies framework, but they can decide on how many they would like to initiate, based on the available resources’ (Participant 4). Participant 5 made reference to this aforementioned by stating that, ‘SRSA provides a provincial government with 1 million to enable the sport academies to take place. These funds should cover equipment, playing gear, and everything to do with the athletes. It is thus a general idea, but it's not realistic, as the program exceeds the million provided’. From a holistic viewpoint, participant 3 highlights that, ‘we have nice policies, but when it comes to the implementation of what is in the policy, then the funding does not match it’.

Stability formation factors (adaptive response to uncertainty)

In the first instance, ‘there are too many relationships in sport who are power hungry which breeds unnecessary and unreasonable conflict and prevents stability’ (Participant 5). Another barrier identified was with reference to, ‘political changes (changing of ministers) which tends to have an impact on the development and implementation of sport’ (Participant 2). In addition, ‘government departments are governed by rules which do not permit flexibility, thus, causing a hindrance to sport’ (Participant 1). The identified challenges in combination with ‘minimal resources in SA, the province and in the federations play a crucial role in the stability of sport in terms of formulating structure’ (Participant 5). Participant 4 mentioned, ‘the systems and policies are in place, but they need to be aligned properly in order to achieve it. Politics should not affect operations, and there should be a strategic direction in terms of administrator uncertainty’. Holistically it was highlighted that ‘stability would strengthen the existing relationships which need improvement’ (Participant 3). In addition, in terms of international sporting success stability, by ‘ensuring that the athlete and coaches pathway are

reached effectively through the vision and mission provided in the framework would produce podium athletes now and beyond 2020' (Participant 1).

Legitimacy formation factors

Moral legitimacy factors (complying with norms, rules, and beliefs).

Sometimes, 'you can say to athletes, I (Government) will help you, and try my best, but then it gets stopped along the line and does not follow through, and then you have to go back to the athletes and explain' (Participant 5). Moreover, 'on a yearly basis, we (Government) engage with federations when they present on the funding they have been given and what they have done with it' (Participant 3). However, 'to have a workshop and not really follow up on it and give feedback is poor, and that is accountability and most of the time it does not follow through' (Participant 5). Thus, 'in order to have a strong foundation, an organisation needs to act and follow up on its intentions. Clients will trust an organization that works with integrity' (Participant 5).

Practical legitimacy factors (expectations of external constituents).

The sport stakeholders, namely, 'athletes and coaches, have platforms which have been created for them to raise their issues about sport in the country' (Participant 2). In certain instances, it was reported that 'there were commissions where the voice of coaches and athletes were heard, but in terms of following up on those sessions and information, it did not happen. The problem comes in that government is very focused on hierarchy, thus, somewhere along the lines someone refuses to listen, and then it ends in terms of practicality' (Participant 5). The emerging theme in the legitimacy formation factors is with reference to the legitimacy of the sport academy system, in that 'federations are still second-guessing the legitimacy and relevance of the sport academy system and whether it is going to produce podium athletes' (Participant 1).

Management formation factors

In the first instance, 'there is an overemphasis on governance (vision and mission statements), but no support, guidance, and transparency. There is also an overlapping of roles which causes a hindrance to the coordination of services' (Participant 5). Participant 3 noted that 'when it comes to the implementation there is not a lot of consultation. National gives money for the objectives of the sports plan. Whether the system works or not, has not been considered'. There is 'insufficient funding, lack of corporate support, lack of transformation, shortage of human resources and the high cost of service providers' (Participant 2). A major

problem identified was due to the ‘red tape in provincial government which bounds you to supply chain processes’ (Participant 5). In this regard, ‘there is not enough flexibility in terms of the policies and the documents. There are response delays which affect the delivery of sport programs. There is also a delay in the releasing of funds and the inability to give feedback or reports’ (Participant 2). In terms of growth, ‘a major challenge is not being able to adapt to the current trends, and the options of a professional league and sponsorships’ (Participant 3). In addition, ‘federations are part-time and the government is full time. Thus, the interaction is at different times and then feedback is not provided immediately. Sport thus comes second which influences the operations and activities of sport’ (Participant 3).

As stakeholders in sport, ‘we don’t communicate effectively with each other’ (Participant 1). In this regard, ‘we are all are not moving together in the same direction. There is a lot of duplication and the roles and blurred lines need to be clarified’ (Participant 2). In terms of policies, the ‘impact is then limited due to the lack of funding and few human resources’ (Participant 3). This evidently leads to the ‘quality being compromised due to unrealistic expectations, and the lack of willingness to want to change. Furthermore, what is hindering our success is complacency’ (Participant 5). Overall, ‘there is a lack of respect for one another, as people or entities don’t listen to each other. In SA, if something is broken we tend to just keep on, and not fix it, and then we become comfortable with a broken bicycle. SA has enough money. It comes down to the misalignment and the resource allocation’ (Participant 5). An emerging theme in the management formation factors relates to the management of the sport academy system in that ‘there is no convergence of what a provincial or district academy must look like and the type of services which should be able to produce athletes’ (Participant 4). In addition, there seems to be an ‘overemphasis on the services rather than the academies itself. Moreover, ‘I do think we have a nice policy when it comes to the academy system, the challenge is the application due to the funding attached to it, which then influences the coaches education and the use of technology’ (Participant 3).

Outcome formation factors

In the next section the outcome components of the IOR theory is illustrated by depicting the following aspects as identified within literature: resource acquisition by the governmental partners, performance success (International sporting success), strength of the relationships between partners, visibility of government, increase range and coordination of support services to athletes and coaches, and the creation of social capital.

In terms of the outcome findings participant 1 highlighted that, ‘the academy system can be more effective, but there is a top-down approach’. Correspondingly, it was identified that ‘power struggles have a negative impact on the action deliverables that need to be achieved when it comes to sport’ (Participant 3). A mismatch in terms of outcomes seems to be presented when participant 5 mentions that ‘SASCOC’s perceived outcomes are getting athletes to the Olympic Games and getting medals in high-performance sport, but at SRSA the outcome is to enable and facilitate’. In the outcomes sub-theme on resource acquisition by governmental partners identified that the ‘national department of sports and recreation come up with programs and get funding from treasury to fund those programs. The role of the department is to secure funding. The provincial departments apply for funding from us in terms of the DoRA (division of revenue act) grant. They need to indicate how many athletes will be supported, how many personnel trained, and how much equipment will be bought, etc. When we as national go to treasury we seek for funding and we motivate why we need a certain amount of funds because we believe they will spend that money’ (Participant 2).

With reference to the outcomes sub-theme performance success (international sporting success) participant 3 states: ‘government judges itself by looking at targets. Thus, if we say we are going to do 50 projects, and do 50 projects, it is a job well done. But under the surface, the quality of those projects are questionable in terms of sustainability and the long term impact (On district, provincial, national and international performances)’. In this regard it was noted that, ‘if we (government) continue doing business as usual in terms of supporting athletes, we won’t see an improvement in the growth of athletes’ (Participant 1). Participant 3 identified a solution by stating, ‘we need to build athletes up from the bottom and take them to national by identifying potential athletes’. In terms of international performances, at ‘the Commonwealth we are doing well, and on the continent we are dominating. We need to work on the Olympics and structure our resources around that’ (Participant 4). In contrast, participant 5 mentioned ‘earmarking 12 medals means that there are 12 athletes in mind who has the potential. However, holistically it is not realistic because it could be much more if you consider everyone else. Thus, it becomes an elitist system, focusing on the minority and not the majority. Talent identification needs to be the focus by searching for athletes and not only taking those who are already there’. Similarly, it was highlighted that ‘we should develop our own system based on the social challenges so that the system can be conducive for the environment, and then our athletes will be able to meet the standard and be out there with the best’ (Participant 3).

In terms of the outcomes and the concept around the strength of relationships between partners, participants identified that ‘there is a power struggle, and it has to do with entities saying this is our space and therefore we are taking charge of it. In addition, there are instances when power is used to bully other entities because of who is funding what’ (Participant 3). In relation participant 5 mentions, ‘I think the relationship between governmental and non-governmental organisations (Federations, sport councils and confederations, SASCOC) are important but it has not been working for the last few years. Many problems within sport take place because of the dysfunction within those relationships’. Participant 3 states that ‘government is moving together, we may not agree on certain things because national most of the time would say this is how it should be done and we can negotiate, but we end up agreeing because they provide the funding’. Differences in perspectives were alluded to as it was identified that ‘all entities (government, sport confederations, sport councils, federations, and municipalities) have a different view on how they see the sport academy system and the support moving in the country. These different ways and methods then contradict one another and hinders sport due to a lack in compromise’ (Participant 5).

Regarding the outcome variable pertaining to the visibility of government, participant 1 mentions ‘we do not realise the power of media, and the power of communicating through the social medium, that is an area which can greatly be improved’. In addition, it was mentioned that, ‘we have a chief directorate within the department for marketing and communication. It does not cover everyone, we need to re-strategise in terms of how we make ourselves more visible’ (Participant 3). Participant 5 states that, ‘we are very visible when it comes to the federations, for example, the tri laterals. In terms of federations, sport councils, sport confederations, SRSA and SASCOC, the visibility is there, but in relation to the broader public I do not think so’. In the outcome findings regarding the increase in range and coordination of support services to athletes and coaches the following were identified as important by participants. Participant 4 mentioned that: ‘they (Athletes) must have coaches, eat well, must have proper facilities to avoid injuries, get scientific and medical support, competitions/tournaments and have a pathway. All of these things are not measured from the developmental level to the elite level’. Furthermore it was identified that, ‘in the context of high-performance centres, it is virtual and not residential. In addition, we are spending money on athletes but we are not really supporting them. We must spend far more time developing a whole athlete and not just provide services around doctors bills, biokinethesists, and physiotherapists, getting them to a gym or providing nutrition. We also need to create more opportunities for the coaches to be educated, that’s how we take our athletes to the next level’

(Participant 1). In addition, ‘there are a lot of talent being identified but not enough funds to support those talents. Moreover, we need to establish the needs of the athletes based on what they need, and not on what we (Government) think they need’ (Participant 2). Importantly, ‘we have a responsibility to make sure that we have skilled and trained personnel to deliver our programs. In addition, we need to ensure that our sport system responds to trends’ (Participant 4). In contrast participant 5 notes: ‘it is one thing to increase the range of services, and another to increase it because it is working so well that you want to broaden your scope. There is nothing worse than creating an expectation of delivering a service but then you cannot do so, because there is not enough resources’.

With reference to the outcome findings of the creation of social capital which is described as the links between shared values and understandings in society that enable individuals and groups to trust each other and work together thus emphasising the social relations among people that might have productive benefits (OECD, 2001, p. 41). Respondents mentioned, ‘by creating an opportunity for someone to excel, that particular person can come back and invest in the community of sport’ (Participant 2). Evidently, ‘there is an opportunity for us to address the challenges of unemployment and inequality in SA, we can do this by creating employment for athletes and coaches both at elite and developmental levels’ (Participant 4). Moreover, ‘to bring about the stability of sport, the key role is to educate people in different areas of sport’ (Participant 5).

Discussion

In the literature, it has been acknowledged that countries need to strive to develop cooperative IOR’s between their sport stakeholders (Sotiriadou, 2009; Luciderme et al., 2017). However, very few studies in elite sport has examined the IOR’s of its stakeholders (Sotiriadou, 2009), or the role of government within these relationships (Digel et al., 2006; Nicholson et al., 2011; Luciderme et al., 2017). The key objective of this study was to evaluate the perceptions of the IOR partnerships between national government and the Western Cape provincial department in the South African elite sport portfolio by using the RDT and IOR theory frameworks. The theoretical contribution of the RDT and the IOR theory assisted in the understanding of why governmental IOR partnerships are formed, in what way they are managed, what the outcomes were, and lastly, how financial resources played a role in the dynamics of these relationships. These aspects are important as it provided an understanding relating to how IOR’s between governmental stakeholders influence the effectiveness of elite

sport policies in this specific case study in SA. The major findings illustrated that: (1) there is a lack of clarity pertaining to the roles and responsibilities of governmental sport stakeholders, (2) too many entities are involved in sport that led to power struggles and non-cooperation, and (3) a lack of funding introduced issues of power within IOR's.

In terms of the IOR theory findings, governmental stakeholders have acknowledged the need to form relationships with all entities in sport, as it served as a means to meet legal requirements to achieve the objectives outlined in the sport policies of SA. However, participants recognised that there are too many stakeholders in sport who collectively had different views and methods of executing the sport policies. This frequently led to difficulties, as stakeholders often contradicted one another, which introduced issues of power. The main cause for the contradiction was attributed to the lack of clarity and understanding pertaining to the stakeholder roles and responsibilities stipulated in the (elite) sport policies. As of consequence, a lack in clarity with reference to what is required, and what should be executed by whom, adds to the complexity of IOR's in the sporting environment. This finding illustrates the difficulty associated with attaining policy effectiveness, as governmental stakeholders have to execute what has been mandated within the sport policies. In this regard, it is suggested that governments should detail the sport policies of SA more in-depth in terms of what the roles and responsibilities of all sport stakeholders are, and verify that it is clearly understood by all entities. This can be executed by means of creating open lines of communication with stakeholders, introduce workshops on what the requirements are, and most importantly follow up reports, challenges, and feedback identified by stakeholders in sport more regularly. Furthermore, the national and provincial governments of SA are recommended to not only provide funds to sport and audit the usage but guide the implementation of the sport policies in a supervisory role in order to produce quality and effectiveness. In international literature, it has been recognised that high-performing nations in elite sport have a strong national coordination of activities, financial inputs, clear task descriptions and deliverables (De Bosscher, De Knop, Van Bottenburg & Shibli, 2006).

The results of the RDT in this study placed an emphasis on the critical importance of government funding in terms of how it influenced the functioning and survival of the sport entities in elite sport. Organisations enter into relationships for varying reasons, which may be attributed to certain constraints within the environment that either limit or influence their choices (Oliver, 1990). Participants in this study highlighted that limited funds made available to elite sport made it challenging to cover the demands of the sector, and to obtain the objectives delineated in the sport policies. Currently, within the South African setting, a mismatch has

been identified between the stipulated sport policy objectives and the limited amount of financial and human resources provided. This mismatch influences the input/output relationship of what could be achieved in elite sport, as it puts a strain on IOR's to produce the policy outputs regardless. Organisations survival or performance depends on its IOR's with other organisations (Oliver, 1990), especially in elite sport networks as the inter-dependency is characterised by a need for governmental funding (Houlihan, 2009). In this regard, the results of this study are meaningful as it propagates that interdependencies in IOR's occur due to the dynamic presented by funding, which ultimately infiltrates policy processes. The different types of partnerships within IOR's are determined by the policy outcomes, which is then replicated within the policy processes (Harris & Houlihan, 2015). Correspondingly, the current results are in agreement with the findings in Babiak (2007) who found that the role of financial resources was fundamental in the formation of IOR's between stakeholders and the interactions amongst them in the Canadian sport system.

In this study, the asymmetry within IOR's has been attributed to power issues and power struggles existent in sport due to funding access. Power is concentrated in the core, due to the financial resources being controlled by the core (Harris & Houlihan, 2015). The core is illustrative of government in sport, wherein even though they are part of the network partners, they often take a central role due to their influence over the resource allocation (Luciderme et al., 2017). In this regard, the arrangement of the hierarchy of government in SA provided the grounds for the withholding of funds if non-adherence to stipulated policy expectations occurred as illustrated in the findings. In the literature, this occurrence was identified to be due to the government being considered the paymaster in the sport network, and as a result, elicits high levels of power (Goodwin & Grix, 2011; Lucidarme et al., 2017). Power issues in IOR's, however, has a negative effect on the implementation of the sport policies and causes stagnation in terms of what can be achieved. A suggestion to overcome power issues is that the government should clearly specify roles and responsibilities of each partner (De Bosscher et al., 2015; Zheng et al., 2018), and the communication and negotiation of IOR's between stakeholders should be less conflictual as it would encourage non-coercive tactics being used (Gulati & Sytch, 2007). Correspondingly, a strategic and coordinated approach to elite sport system management is highly likely to impact positively on the sporting success of countries as this has been acknowledged as a characteristic of efficient sporting nations (De Bosscher et al., 2015).

Limitations

The limitations of the study take account of only including sport stakeholders at the national governmental level and the provincial stakeholders from a single province. The study did not include the members of the Olympic Committee or the minister and deputy minister of sport of the country, even though attempts were made to include these entities, the endeavor was found to no avail or no response. Even though the findings of this case study research can be used as a review providing critical information on sport governmental IOR's in SA, it should be noted that it is not representative of all provincial government departments in SA, and thus should be not be interpreted as such. In addition, future studies should execute case study research on single provinces as well, and then compare the findings to one another in order to get a broader picture of the IOR's and the associated complexities between sport governmental stakeholders in SA.

Conclusion, Implication and Future Directions

The premise underpinning this study was that IOR's between stakeholders are complex, and, therefore, needs to be understood in order to improve the coordination and the implementation of the elite sport policies. Organisations enter into IOR's for multiple reasons (Babiak, 2009), and the success in part has been identified to depend on the other entities in the network (Babiak & Thibault, 2009). The current results have confirmed what has been found in the literature relating to the challenging and often overwhelming influence of IOR management (Alexander et al., 2008). By using the RDT and IOR theory frameworks in this specific case study contributed towards the academic scholarship by placing into perspective the complexity associated with IOR's between the sport governmental stakeholders. The theoretical contribution of these theories assisted in the understanding of IOR's and how that may affect (elite) sport policy effectiveness and the attainment of international sporting success more broadly. The findings of this study add to the field of sport management research by illustrating why the government in elite sport establishes relationships with network partners within this specific case study, and identified the issues which obstructed and also those which facilitated the formation, management, and outcomes. Furthermore, the dynamic yet pertinent role of resources within IOR's aided in the explanation.

IOR's should focus on obtaining mutual respect, equal partnerships in decision making, mutual accountability, illustrate transparency (Parent & Harvey, 2009), and strengthen and develop the collaboration between and within governmental entities to ensure the growth of the elite sporting system (Alexander et al., 2008). Jones et al. (2017) argued that a lack of

collaboration within IOR's may significantly impact on sport entities ability to deliver consistent services. Moreover, international sporting success can only be achieved when there are effective collaborations between the members within the sport network (De Bosscher et al., 2015; Lucidarme et al., 2017). The issues and challenges relating to the findings of IOR's in this case study can be applied when sport policies are reviewed by clarifying the roles and responsibilities of sport stakeholders more extensively within elite sport policies in order to enable policy effectiveness. In addition, the concerns around resources and how it influenced the power dynamics within elite sport needs to be further explored.

Disclosure statement

The authors reported no potential of conflict of interest.

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Chapter Six

Discussion

6.1 Introduction

The overall aim of this current study was to evaluate what facilitates and/or inhibits the elite sport policies of SA through the configurational lens of a ‘realist perspective’, in the case of the WC. This aided in the expansion of knowledge relating to the effectiveness of (elite) sport policy, the varying influence of contextual factors on the elite sporting system, and the nature of inter-organisational relationships between governmental stakeholders in South African elite sport. In this chapter, a short summary is provided in Table 1 of the major findings of the separate chapters that comprise this dissertation, as well as of the elements that were evaluated in each article. This is followed by a general discussion of the configurational outcomes of the ‘realist perspective’ in this study. Thereafter, the general conclusions and relevance of this research are discussed. Lastly, the methodological considerations and the limitations of this research are presented, alongside suggestions for future research.

Table 1. An overview of the major findings of the various chapters

Article	Major findings and the elements evaluated in each article
Article 1: Country profile: Sport in South Africa	a) Governmental funds available to sport may not be realistic to achieve the goals and objectives outlined in the sport policies of SA b) There is a need for an evaluation of the (elite) sport policies of SA due to different challenges identified <i>- (Elite) sport policies reviewed: The White Paper on Sport and Recreation SA (2012), National Sport and Recreation Plan SA (2012), and the Sports Academy Framework (2013)</i>
Article 2: The effectiveness of elite sport policy in South Africa: A multi-dimensional approach applied to the case of the Western Cape	a) Stakeholders perceived that not enough funding was provided to the Sports Academy system in the Western Cape <i>- Evaluation of inputs: Budget sources used: Elite sport budgets of SA and the Western Cape Sports Academy in the following financial years: 2013/2014 to 2019/2020</i> b) Challenges were identified in the athlete pathway, and sport academy athletes did not use the athlete support services provided (throughput) <i>Evaluation of throughputs:</i> <i>- Talent identification, selection and development</i> <i>- Athlete support services (scientific support, technological support, life lessons, career support and guidance, information services, sport exchange opportunities, anti-doping and HIV/AIDS workshops or courses, and training camps)</i>

- *Training facilities*
- *Finances for support services*
- *Coaching*
- *Organisation, governance and administration*

- c) Progressive performances were achieved by the Western Cape province at the Rio Olympic Games in 2016 (outputs)
 - ***Evaluation of outputs: Number of participants at the Games: 1996 to 2016***

Article 3: Contextual factors influencing the South African elite sporting system: An ‘open system’ approach

- a) Due to the previous Apartheid regime, a considerable emphasis is placed on racial transformation in the South African elite sporting system through quotas and targets that are set by government
- b) The social and economic challenges facing the country penetrate deeply into the elite sporting system of SA in various ways

- ***Contextual factors examined through the lens of systems theory: Economic, social, political, technological and legal components***

Article 4: Inter-organisational relationships between government stakeholders in South African elite sport: Theoretical perspectives of resource dependence and inter-organisational relationships

- a) There appears to be a lack in clarity pertaining to the roles and responsibilities of stakeholders in sport
- b) Too many entities are involved in sport, which leads to power struggles and non-co-operation
- c) A perceived lack of funding in sport was identified which lead to interdependencies between stakeholders and introduced issues of power in inter-organisational relationships

- ***Theoretical elements used to evaluate inter-organisational relationships (IOR’s):***

Resource dependency theory focused on (a) the importance of resources, (b) the degree of distribution and the use of resources (control/power), and (c) the availability of alternatives for dependent organisations.

Inter-organisational theory included the following elements: (a) the formation of IORs (necessity, asymmetry, reciprocity, efficiency, stability and legitimacy), (b) the management of IORs (management of processes and relationships), and (c) the outcomes of IORs (the resource acquisition of the organisation, performance success, strength of the relationship, visibility, increase in range and co-ordination of support services to athletes and coaches, and the creation of social capital)

6.2 General discussion

Worldwide, the growing salience of international sporting success is undeniable. Despite the increasing importance of success in elite sport, very few studies have evaluated how elite sport policies are implemented in terms of identifying, developing and supporting athletes (Andersen *et al.* 2015), in particular in ‘emerging’ countries. Additionally, the literature has found that there is a disconnect relating to the lack of the ‘embeddedness of sport’ within the national sport policies (Houlihan 2005). This joint PhD study endeavoured to understand the various aspects of elite sport policies in the South African setting in order to expand on the understanding of policy effectiveness, inter-organisational relationships, and the prevailing context of the country. These critically important aspects were explored by means of a ‘realist perspective’, which utilised a multi-method research design in order to implement a configurational evaluation to assess what facilitates and/or inhibits the elite sport policies of SA, in the case of the Western Cape. In this section, the **outcomes** based on the *mechanisms and context* of the **CMO configuration**, as posited by Pawson and Tilley (1997), will be presented. The major outcomes of this dissertation are summarised in Table 1, which highlights that: (1) there is a perceived lack of funds provided to (elite) sport in order to realistically achieve the sport policy objectives identified by the participants in this study, (2) the context of SA is intricate and influences the elite sporting system in various ways, (3) inputs, throughputs, and outputs were identified to be less effective in terms of the Sports Academy Framework (2013) in the case of the Western Cape and, lastly, (4) the inter-organisational relationships among governmental stakeholders in this case study were deemed complex.

In the introduction of this dissertation, it was highlighted that policy can be seen either as an ‘activity’ or an ‘action plan’ (Houlihan 2012). In terms of the *mechanism outcomes* in the **CMO configuration** of this research, the perceived scarce funds provided to the sport academies, combined with the ambiguity of roles and responsibilities in the sport policy, illustrates that the Sport Academy Framework (2013) can be regarded as an ‘activity’ in the case of the Western Cape. Identifying a policy as an ‘activity’ means that *some* contributions were made to the policy in terms of financial resources, in combination with a less influential policy design in order to achieve the identified objectives (Houlihan 2012). This finding is important, as this type of information could identify what realistically can be achieved by the nation in elite sport in relation to the Sport Academy Framework (2013), which was produced by government to enable the country to become a ‘winning nation’. In all the chapters of this

dissertation, funding was identified as a major stumbling block to achieving what has been set out in the sport policies. In the literature, it was highlighted that the trepidations of resource limitations, in combination with the pressure of expectations and job insecurity, ultimately becomes the elite sporting system (Andersen *et al.* 2015). In addition, Andersen *et al.* (2015) state that access to sufficient funds are central to establishing a successful elite sporting system. Similarly, in a country-comparative study, it was identified that ‘wealthy nations and developing nations who decide to allocate significant funding towards elite sporting success will be more successful’ (De Bosscher *et al.* 2015, p. 355).

Furthermore, *mechanisms* in realist evaluations have been identified as summarising the various ways in which resources can influence or affect stakeholders’ reasoning or behaviour (Alvarado *et al.* 2017; Dalkin *et al.* 2015; Mason 2010; Pawson and Tilley, 1997, 2004, Westhorp *et al.* 2011). What is evident from findings on the inter-organisational relationships is that the perceived lack of funding in sport has led to vast resource interdependencies among stakeholders and, as a result, power struggles and power relationships have been identified to contribute towards the complexity of elite sport. The following aspects were identified as contributing to the complexity of elite sport in this specific case study, namely the dysfunction in relationships, an overemphasis on governance and not on the effectiveness of (elite) sport policies, the overlapping of roles and responsibilities of sport stakeholders, politics affecting sport, a lack of flexibility by government, the perceived lack of funds provided to achieve the (elite) sport policy objectives, different views on the implementation of the elite sport policy, a top-down approach by national government, and the apparent power struggles on all levels in sport. Accordingly, power has been acknowledged in the literature to affect policy output objectives (Houlihan 2005). Sotiriadou (2009) suggests that, in order to have a balanced approach to sport, it is necessary to focus on co-operation among stakeholders, and flexibility has to be ensured in terms of restructuring sporting organisations at the national level and giving them ownership to filter down funds, provide support and develop sport to state level (provincial). Currently, sporting entities and government in SA, as presented in this specific case study on the Western Cape, are running sport in different ways, within silos and in different directions, which leads to many issues and duplication regarding sporting programmes. In this regard, De Bosscher *et al.* (2015) state that the government’s role should be to set strategic policy goals and enable them, and steer away from driving the processes and delivering the objectives. The reasons therefore, were identified by Nicholson *et al.* (2011), who illustrated that top-down initiatives by the government do not always address the needs on the local level,

which causes challenges in the implementation of elite sport policies, as illustrated in the findings of this study.

In this regard, the *mechanism outcomes* of the throughput processes relating to the effectiveness of the Sports Academy Framework (2013) were identified by all sport stakeholders (athletes, coaches and administrators) as challenging and not effective, due to the various barriers associated with the implementation of the sport academy system in the specific case of the Western Cape. The main barriers to the implementation of the Sport Academy Framework (2013) were attributed primarily to the lack of clarity of the roles and responsibilities of the sport academy stakeholders, athletes not utilising the support services available to them, and the absence of an athlete pathway within the Western Cape academy system. Bergsgard *et al.* (2007) mention that the focus of an elite sporting system should not be only on supporting champions, but should rather be on producing champions through a strong, coherent system. It therefore was identified that the emphasis of elite sporting systems should not be solely on producing the outputs, but rather on the processes that yield the policy outputs (Bergsgard *et al.* 2007). In addition, a recommendation was provided on how an athlete pathway can be organised – by focusing on (1) cultural differences, (2) differences in cultural socialism, (3) education, and (4) bodily discipline (Bergsgard *et al.* 2007). Houlihan and Green (2008) cite Oakley and Green (2001), further stress the importance of a culture of excellence that is supportive of elite achievement, adequate financial support and processes through which talent can be identified and developed.

Furthermore, it was noted by participants in this study that the Sport Academy Framework (2013) is a ‘nice idea’, but that it is not realistic. The non-realistic nature of the framework is in relation to the perceived lack of funds provided to the sports academy system, and the lack of detail in the framework pertaining to the roles and responsibilities of all sport academy stakeholders. Flay *et al.* (2005) state that not all policy programmes are ready for widespread dissemination, as they first have to be implemented effectively to achieve the mandated policy objectives. Furthermore, it is noted in the literature that the level of specificity and detail in a policy can have a strong influence on how the policy is implemented and, consequently, on the extent of its impact in reality (CDC 2013). Moreover, if a policy is not clear enough, it may indicate that further education of stakeholders and implementers are needed (Center for Disease Control and Prevention 2013). Therefore, the issues pertaining to the funding of the sports academy system in the Western Cape have to be addressed, the Sports Academy Framework

(2013) needs to be reviewed by policymakers, and the effectiveness of the (elite) sport policies should be prioritised by government. Accordingly, the SPLISS framework (Sport Policy factors Leading to International Sporting Success) could be helpful in this regard to further analyse the (elite) sport policies of SA, as it evaluates 96 critical success factors and 750 sub-factors through inventories and surveys. These specify how the elite sport policies of countries are implemented (in nine pillars) in order to increase international sporting success (De Bosscher *et al.* 2015). These ‘pillars’ have been measured in a benchmark study in which they were shown to relate to the success of countries (De Bosscher *et al.* 2015). Similar to this study, the SPLISS model also utilises a maximum variation strategy that includes the main sport stakeholders (e.g., athletes, coaches and performance directors) in the evaluation of the elite sport policy.

Bearing in mind the aforementioned challenges, a suggestion to government is to cut and simplify the entities in elite sport in the Western Cape, as the number of stakeholders currently leads to a wide array of complexities in the elite sport environment, as has been demonstrated in the various chapters of this thesis. These complexities have mainly been attributed to often conflicting perspectives, which introduce issues of power. A proposed adjusted model for elite sport is recommended in which government provides and distributes funds to national sport organisations (NSOs) in elite sport portfolios, and grants them the authority to transfer funds and provide support to the provincial sport federations, and in turn to the regional (district) sport federations. Each sport federation component would then lead the development and growth of elite sport on the different levels, and accordingly will be responsible for accounting to its counterparts on the usage of government funds. In addition, NSOs and their counterparts need to find the means to generate funding themselves in order to become self-sufficient and sustainable. The NSO of a specific sport code would then provide an account to the government partners of government funds used on all the different federation levels, which can be reviewed by auditing companies in order to promote good governance. Government, alongside the Olympic Committee in this scenario, would be tasked to provide guidance, and to oversee and facilitate the usage of government funds, but the power to implement and achieve the elite sporting objectives effectively, and to generate funds, will rest with the NSOs. This adjusted model might inspire NSOs to become self-sufficient, and to be less reliant on government funding. This conceptualisation was prompted by the change in direction of the Australian model, which was identified by Sotiriadou (2009, p. 847, citing Bloomfield 2001):

A new direction emerged post 2000, Bloomfield outlined a new era of sport, where the ASC (Australian Sport Commission) extended NSO's (national sport organisations) power to increase their administrative and financial efficiency and carry out functions independent of the commission. The aim was to maximize NSO's ability to function at full capacity and deliver sports in a more efficient and self-sufficient way. For this to take place NSO's needed to reduce their reliance on federal government funding and establish greater dependence as a necessity for financial survival. By implication, an assumption drawn from Bloomfield is that NSO's are no longer seen as instruments of sport policy, but rather as organisation to shape power relations.

The proposed model based on providing NSOs with more ownership would encourage more flexibility in elite sport policies, but would correspondingly bring about strategic alignment with the elite sporting system. This is important, as this alignment currently is absent in the elite sport system of SA due to the various entities involved, different reporting lines and the vast distribution of resources, in combination with the blurred roles and responsibilities of the stakeholders in elite sport. The high-performing sporting nations of the world have strong national co-ordination of sporting programmes and activities, financial inputs, and clear task descriptions for the stakeholders and output deliverables (De Bosscher *et al.* 2015). Countries with an integrated approach to elite sport development illustrate the following common characteristics: (1) full-time management staff, (2) autonomy provided to NSOs with a certain degree of government control, (3) national sport policy regularly evaluated by athletes, coaches and performance directors, (4) long-term planning of elite sport policies, and (5) communication with athletes, coaches and performance directors (De Bosscher *et al.* 2015, p. 360). It has been identified in the literature that there is a strong imperative for the co-ordination of (public) policies in relation to elite sport to adapt to international trends (Bergsgard *et al.* 2007). In this regard, the literature illustrates the ever-present concept of 'convergence', which relates to the move towards homogeneity in the development of elite sporting systems in various countries. There seems to be an illustrative 'pressure towards convergence in elite sport systems and factors militating against a uniform approach to developing elite success' (Houlihan and Green 2008, p. 9). In this regard, Bergsgard *et al.* (2007) mention that sport systems tend to celebrate equality and difference at the same time.

This statement by Bergsgard *et al.* (2007) introduces the *context outcomes* in the CMO *configuration*. The results of this research illustrate that the nation-specific context influences the elite sporting system of an 'emerging country' in different ways. Elite sporting systems are acknowledged to be country specific, as they are shaped by the prevailing cultural, economic and political factors (De Bosscher *et al.* 2011). In addition, contextual factors apparently can make a mark on the expansive societal values that influence the goals of elite sport policy, the

policy-delivery mechanisms and the management practices utilised (Sotiriadou and De Bosscher 2011). In this study, the historical impact of the previous Apartheid regime, which ended twenty-five years ago, has not left the country unscathed. As depicted in the results of this research, the remnants of the past have to be addressed because they penetrate deep into the (elite) sport policies of SA. In this regard, Green and Collins (2008) have identified that the heavy hand of history may overshadow even the most transformative policies. Consequently, because of the discrimination based on race in the past of SA, transformation quotas and targets in elite sport have become a critically important focus of political discussions. As discussed in Chapter four, a number of benefits and contradictions have been highlighted in relation to the implementation of the quota system, the concerns relating to the psychological effects this has on athletes, and the negative impact it has on cohesion in team sport. In this regard, it has been noted within the literature that it is ‘essential to recognise the significance of national history and the institutional constraints on policy development’ (Houlihan and Green 2008, p. 13). A suggestion from the findings on history influencing the elite sporting system is related to a pragmatic approach to the Transformation Charter (SRSA 2012). This entails providing compulsory, professionally guided training focused on the ‘healing’ of the past to all constituencies in the elite sport environment, inclusive of athletes, coaches, federation administrators, government officials and sports councils on all levels. The proposed ‘healing training’ under the guidance of the Transformation Charter (SRSA 2012) should focus on the following critical areas: (1) shed light on the social perspectives pertaining to the experience of the Apartheid regime (all ethnic groups), (2) acknowledge the associated hurt/feelings and emotions that the regime inflicted (all ethnic groups), (3) identify collective sport performance goals, (4) indicate the means to achieve these goals and identify the possible barriers to attaining them, and lastly, (5) determine collective ways to resolve racial confliction and promote ethnic integration in the sporting environment.

This suggested ‘healing training’ would encourage ‘transformation, which, if correctly defined and utilised, is a powerful tool not only to correct the injustices of the past but to establish a sustainable competitive advantage’ (SRSA 2012, p. 16). It has been noted that ‘without a truly level playing field (access, opportunities, and support) transformation cannot be realised’ (SRSA 2012, p. 16). Ideas and solutions to bring about ethnic integration in elite sport in SA are important. The critical importance of this aspect has been identified in this study, and solutions to the ongoing problems – whether hard or soft – need to be sought, as proactive strategies need to be implemented. The proposed ‘healing training’ has to be tested, however,

to evaluate its effectiveness in the elite sport environment. This could form the basis for a future study. The standard response of *ignoring the elephant in the room* will not bring about change in the elite sport environment, as it will only end up making things worse. In this regard, Sotiriadou and De Bosscher (2011) state that to ignore the significant contribution of the past would be a severe oversight.

In addition to the major focus on ethnicity in sport in SA, the social and economic contextual factors were identified to largely influence the elite sporting system of SA. Social and economic factors specific to the nation were identified to determine (1) the types of sports athletes would participate in, (2) how far athletes could go in terms of progression in elite sport, (3) potential accessibility barriers facing talented athletes, and (4) the social perspectives that affect the sport choices of athletes due to various cultural differences and the stigma surrounding certain sport types. In this regard, a large number of success factors have been identified in the literature on elite sport that increase the chances of attaining international sporting success. However, due to the confounding influence of contextual factors, success will not always be assured (De Bosscher *et al.* 2015). Furthermore, the study by De Bosscher *et al.* (2015) reports that macro-economic variables (population size and wealth) have a significant impact on success, but cannot be controlled by national policy. On the other hand, if contextual elements are not considered effectively within elite sport policies and are not detailed in the policy frameworks, contextual factors will always be problematic and could influence the policy implementation phase. However, Kay (2005, p. 553, cited by Houlihan and Green, 2008) mentions the influence of path dependency, because ‘the initial policy decisions can determine policy choices, as the trajectory of change up to a certain point, constrains the trajectory after that point’. This once again illustrates that certain policy directions have been taken, and there is often a difficulty turning back.

An example of contextual influences not being included in the elite sporting system in SA is the pay-and-claim method initiated by SASCO. As identified in Chapter four, many elite athletes come from poor backgrounds, thus cannot afford their basic needs. To initiate a system in which athletes have to pay for support services upfront, and then claim the money back, is not realistic in the contextual environment of SA. In addition, the system described in Chapter three, used by the sport academies in the Western Cape to provide support services to athletes and coaches, has caused major problems, also due to the red tape (a long line of permissions) associated with the use of government funds. As a result, many athletes stopped utilising the

support services provided by the sport academies in the Western Cape. In this regard, if contextual aspects are not comprehensively considered within elite sport policy frameworks, the contextual influences will always be used as ammunition in response to why success in elite sport cannot be achieved.

If it is widely accepted within the literature that social, economic, cultural and historical factors influence policy predispositions, then these aspects need to be reinforced and compounded by the policy decisions (Green and Collins, 2008). An example of a pragmatic solution in order to include macro-contextual factors in elite sport policy is with reference to economic factors due to the current climate in SA. This suggestion relates to the creation of centres providing ‘one-stop-shop support services’. These support centres can be aligned with the sport academy system that has been initiated by the government, with one main centre in a province that provides a variety of support services to athletes and coaches, with a number of satellite centres throughout the province. The suggestion of satellite centres is due to the vast size of the provinces in SA. However, these centres should not serve as a ‘middle man’ between various service providers and athletes and coaches, as is currently the case in the sport academy system in the Western Cape. The focus of these support centres should be on providing a ‘one-stop-shop support service’, where athletes can go to receive sport psychology, nutrition advice, and sport science, strength and conditioning, physiotherapy and medical services, and not fret about payments for these services (economic contextual factor). To take full advantage of government funding, a suggestion would be for these centres to partner with universities or private sport academies in the various provinces that already have athlete support services and facilities. Each university can offer services in their close vicinity and also be allocated to the various rural regions in the province. However, the various universities should meet with the sport stakeholders so that the roles and responsibilities and the precincts can be determined. Thus, instead of reinventing the proverbial wheel by means of building new facilities, etc., the government’s financial investments could be used to upgrade existing facilities if needs be, and to pay a full-time professional (inclusive of medical, sport science and coaching staff) and administrative staff complement to run and manage the elite sport centres and the satellite centres. This would address the results of this study, which identified the current sport academy system in the Western Cape as the ‘middleman’ between different service providers and the sport academy athletes and coaches. As was indicated in this study, the roles and responsibilities of the policy implementers are blurred and bring about a variety of complications due to the long line of permissions associated with the supply chain management of government, which

causes barriers in terms of providing services to athletes and coaches. The idea of support centres was motivated by the Chinese elite sporting system, which makes use of athlete support centres from within a centralised approach (Hong *et al.* 2005). These centres have been identified as playing a significant role in the success of the Chinese elite sporting system (Hong *et al.* 2005).

The *outcomes* of the configurational evaluation in this dissertation served as a means to provide recommendations for government stakeholders and policymakers on methods to apply when the (elite) sport policies are reviewed. Chen (2018) highlights that lessons can be learned from extensive evaluations of complex matters in policy areas. Ultimately, developing structures that promote financial accountability, unity of purpose and success in management and risk practices could enable and have a significant impact not only on the performance of the organisation (Sotiriadou 2009), but also on the overall output of achieving elite sporting success. If the goal is to attain international sporting success, then effective elite sporting systems and policies should be the main objective. This can be achieved by putting links in place between the funding providers and the implementers, and to clearly define the roles and responsibilities of stakeholders so that they are understood (Green and Oakley 2010; Sotiriadou 2009). The focus of the government should not be on developing a new model after every policy review or post very poor sporting performances. Rather, the emphasis should be on improving the current model to be more context specific to the needs of SA and in relation to the challenges identified in this study and others.

In the overview of the sporting performance of the Western Cape athletes in the past Olympic Games in Chapter three, it is clear that the province has shown an uneven pattern in terms of the outputs over the years. Sustainable performance on the international sporting stage has to be achieved by the country as a whole, but also by the province, with a strategic focus on producing athletes from the ground up, as opposed to the identification of possible medals from earmarked athletes at the top. The elite sport policies and their systems are thus critical to the goal of desiring to become a ‘winning nation’. However, sustainability has to be ensured. In the literature, it is clear that it is not the whole structure of a system that can bring about sporting success, but rather a unique (context specific) combination of system pieces that will enhance and deliver elite sporting success (De Bosscher *et al.* 2015). This ties into the trend of various nations that are becoming more strategic in how they develop their elite athletes (De Bosscher *et al.* 2008, 2015). In elite sport, the sole focus should not be on the outputs (number of medals),

as this would lead to a provisional top-down approach to achieving short-term sporting success. Similarly, Chen (2018) notes that only using the outputs as a tool to evaluate elite sport policies fails to provide pivotal insight into the effectiveness of the policy interventions, as it would not be able to ascertain how specific factors actually contribute to the attainment of the policy outputs. The emphasis of the elite sport policies in SA should rather be focused on creating effective policy processes (throughput) and inter-organisational relationships, while achieving the identified policy objectives in combination with realistic inputs (resources) within the specific context so that long-term elite sporting success can be achieved. The findings of this research illustrate the comprehensive manner in which a configurational evaluation can provide important insights into the reality of (elite) sport policies in SA. This is visually represented in Figure 1.

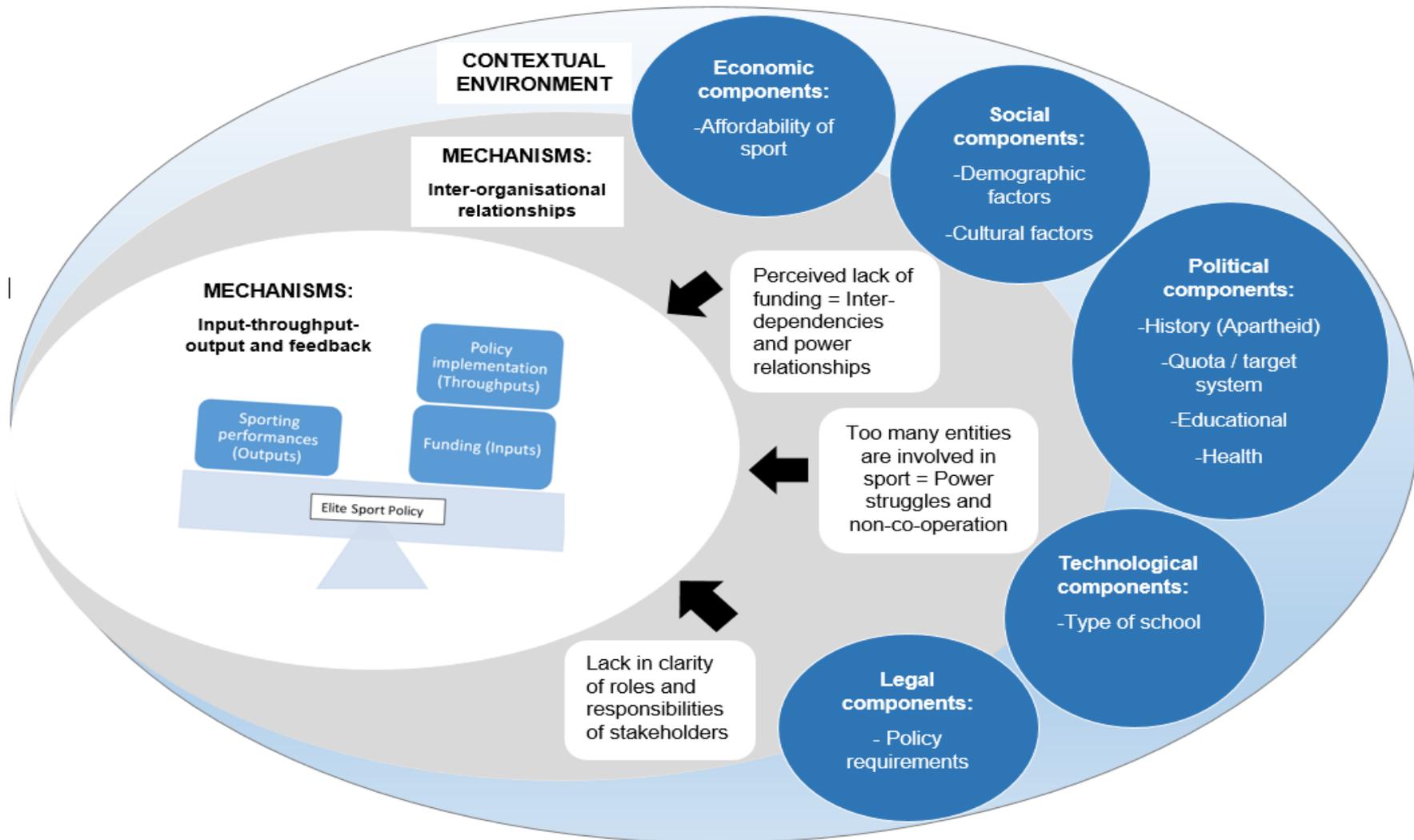


Figure 1. The configurational evaluation outcomes of the elite sport policies in South Africa through the lens of a 'realist perspective'.

6.3 Over-arching conclusions and relevance

6.3.1 Conclusions

The theoretical underpinning of this study was based on the premise that the application of (elite) sport policy and its systems is multifactorial. In this regard, multidimensional evaluations have to be executed in order to fully understand the constraints on the implementation of elite sport policy in a configurational manner. Within the literature on sport management, a gap was identified in that most studies assessed the elite sport policies and elite sporting systems of mostly developed nations, and very few investigated ‘less developed’ or ‘emerging’ countries. In order to gain a wide-ranging understanding of policies and systems, researchers have to understand the external environment, and the various interactions and processes in elite sport. The overall aim of this study was to evaluate what facilitates and/or inhibits the elite sport policies of SA through the configurational lens of a ‘realist perspective’, in the case of the Western Cape. The all-encompassing findings of this study indicate that elite sport policies within their specific context will determine what can be achieved within the close proximity of the system boundaries, as well as indicate what can be achieved on international sporting platforms. The findings of this research confirm what has been found in studies in developed countries, in that strategic elite sport policy plans need to be created in order to attain international sporting success and contextual factors needs to be taken into account in the analysis of elite sport policy. In contrast, the results of this study highlight the intricate complexities specific to the case of the Western Cape, and reveal the still-prevalent influence of the former Apartheid regime on the country’s elite sport policies, which indicated the need for more tangible efforts in order to address and redress the injustices of the past.

These specific findings are important, as they not only illustrate the complexity of elite sport policies in the Western Cape, but also identify the critical areas needing to be addressed by policymakers. The key aspects needing government attention should focus on addressing the specificity and detail of the roles and responsibilities of sport stakeholders in the (elite) sport policies, prioritise the effectiveness of the (elite) sport policies, and increase the amount of resources allocated to the sport policy plans in order to achieve the set policy objectives. If elite sport is identified by the government as

important, then additional funds for elite sport could provide various sustainable opportunities for athletes to excel on international sporting platforms. The needed services include full-time coaching and administrative and professional staff to provide wide-ranging support to athletes and coaches, the inclusion of the contextual realities facing the country within policy frameworks, a focus on coaches' education, and the introduction of scientific and technological equipment to provide a competitive edge in sporting performance. However, it is known that funding is dependent on national contexts, which will determine the priority of elite sport.

6.3.2 Relevance

6.3.2.1 Contribution to theory-building

The utilisation of a CMO *configurational* model based on the elements of **C**ontext, **M**echanism and **O**utcome contributed to the inclusivity of the important policy aspects that provided a comprehensive understanding of (elite) sport policies in this specific case study. In realist evaluations, the focus is placed on assessing how policy programmes and systems work, and then interrogates them by researching whether they are sound, plausible, durable and practical (Pawson and Tilley 1997, 2004). When evaluating a programme, one firstly has to understand it, and then probe it in order to introduce apparatus for change (Pawson and Tilley 1997, 2004). In this regard, the realist perspective utilised in this dissertation advances the field of sport management research, as it provides insights into the policy operations and processes pertaining to a country categorised as 'emerging'. Empirical-based research is required to apply pragmatic solutions to multifaceted situations. What this research has shown is that elite sport policy implementation is complex, and thus requires comprehensive evaluations to formulate robust nation and province specific management and co-ordination strategies for elite sport. As a result, the findings of this study can contribute to comparative research by forming part of discussions on the divergence or convergence of (elite) sport policies worldwide. The increasing awareness of policy processes and practises in other countries can encourage a sensitivity to those in one's own country (Bergsgard *et al.* 2007). In addition, this study can serve as a 'benchmark' for other countries classified as 'less developed' or 'emerging' especially African nations, and also contribute to international research by providing important information that can be included in future cross-national studies.

The utilisation of the overarching realist model, in combination with the various theoretical underpinnings utilised in each chapter of this dissertation, contributes to the academic scholarship of this project in the following ways. Firstly, in Chapter three a multidimensional approach was utilised, which is generally a model used in evaluations of the effectiveness of non-profit sporting organisations (NSOs) (Frisby 1986, Steers 1975, Wolfe and Putler 2002). Chelladurai (2014) identifies organisations as systems of input-throughput-output and feedback. Subsequently, the application of the multidimensional model used in NSO research to a study of elite sport was deemed useful in exploring the effectiveness of the Sports Academy Framework (2013) in the specific case of the Western Cape. The conceptualisation of the usage of the multidimensional approach in this study was based on the application thereof in the SPLISS model, which is an empirically based framework evaluating the effectiveness of elite sport policies (De Bosscher *et al.* 2011). In addition, the systems theory lens was used in Chapter four, with a focus on the macro-level contextual factors identified by Certo and Certo (2009). The findings of this study suggest an additional pertinent factor to be added to the environmental elements of Certo and Certo (2009), namely the historical factor, which was very deterministic and influenced the (elite) sport policies of SA quite substantially.

Two theoretical frameworks were juxtaposed in Chapter five, namely inter-organisational theory and resource dependency theory. Utilising both theoretical frameworks in one study aided in the understanding of the inter-organisational relationships between governmental stakeholders, which assisted in achieving a better understanding of the processes and strategies surrounding these relationships (Hillman *et al.* 2009). Moreover, the findings of this research contribute to the conceptualisation of path dependence, as previously mentioned by Kay (2005, cited by Houlihan and Green 2008). Through the findings in the various chapters, this research identifies that certain policy directions are difficult to change due to previous decisions that were made, which ultimately influence future policy choices, e.g. the quota/target system created in SA. Lastly, the findings of this study add value to the SPLISS model by addressing the weaknesses of the framework (De Bosscher *et al.* 2015). These include incorporating an evaluation of the inter-organisational relationships between stakeholders in elite sport. Furthermore, this study incorporated the contextual reality surrounding elite sport policies, which was identified by the international researchers as a weakness of the SPLISS model.

6.3.2.2 Contribution to mixed-methods and multi-method research

The mixed-methods convergent parallel design (QUAN + QUAL) utilised in Chapter three on the effectiveness of the Sports Academy Framework (2013) provided critically important insight into the policy. The QUAN scales provided information in relation to the presence and usage of the success dimensions of the policy. Moreover, the QUAL data expanded on the understanding of the QUAN findings and filled the gaps where there was a lack of clarity in the QUAN results. Collectively, the mixed-methodology design contributed to a more comprehensive depiction of the policy framework in the case of the Western Cape. Furthermore, it was noted that there has been limited mixed-methods research on sport policy and sport management (Grix *et al.* 2018). Mixed-methods research has been argued to being useful when studying complex phenomena, as it draws collectively on the strengths and minimises the weaknesses of both research approaches, rather than being utilised in its singular form (Cresswell and Plano Clark 2018). In addition, the overarching multi-method research design utilised in this study aided the exploration of the elements of the realist perspective pertaining to the elite sport policies of SA.

6.3.2.3 Relevance for practice

The overall emphasis of research is to advance knowledge in the specific endeavour pursued. The translation of these findings on the Western Cape can be positioned in a ‘case for elite sport’ in order to inform policymakers on the conclusions regarding the elite sport system of South Africa. As this case study research focused on the Sports Academy Framework (2013) applied to the Western Cape Province, it is recommended that these results are used as a source of evidence when the policy framework is reviewed. Modifications to the framework are suggested in terms of the practicality of the policy implementation, clear roles and responsibilities should be detailed in the strategy and, lastly, the funds from the government should match the policy objectives outlined.

In addition, a proposition is put forth that a South African elite sport framework be created that may serve as a strategy for the National Sport and Recreation Plan and White Paper on Sport and Recreation. This strategy should outline the entire elite sporting system of SA, which should include the holistic ‘embeddedness of sport’ within its environment. Furthermore, it is recommended that this proposed document detail the athlete pathway in depth in order to illustrate how athletes can progress in the various performance levels

in combination with the long term athlete development plan (LTPD) and the coaches' framework of the country. In addition, the document should include the contextual reality of SA, as this will govern the specific support system that should be created. The roles and responsibilities of all stakeholders in the elite sporting system should be detailed and clarified so that constituents understand what is expected in order to minimise the effect of power relationships. Lastly, the strategy should emphasise how athletes, administrators, technical officials and coaches should be recruited (TID processes), how they should be developed, and ultimately how they will be retained in the system. This will ensure that long-term sustainable success can be achieved – not only on international sporting platforms, but in terms of the management processes of elite sport as well. The main findings of this study will be summarised by the researcher and will be presented to governmental stakeholders (both provincially and nationally) and policymakers.

6.4 Methodological considerations

Various theoretical and methodological decisions had to be made in the articles included in the dissertation in order to fulfil the identified aims of the various chapters within the overarching theoretical framework. In this regard, various limitations and methodological constraints were acknowledged and are presented accordingly in this section.

6.4.1 Limitations of this research

The studies undertaken for this research focused on the case of the Western Cape, which is one province of SA. In this regard, this study provides the delineation of the research boundary by pursuing a specific case study; however, the findings have limited generalisability to the other provinces of the country, or to other countries. Similar challenges or barriers to the implementation of the (elite) sport policies may be experienced in the other provinces of SA and in other countries; however, prospective studies should evaluate these elite sport policy aspects, subject to the differences of the diverse provinces of SA and in dissimilar countries. Nevertheless, this study paves the way by providing the groundwork through pilot study research, which could be considered when the (elite) sport policies are reviewed by policymakers in SA, and

contribute to the broader discussions on elite sport policies in global sport management research.

Another limitation of this research is that it only investigated macro-level contextual factors and did not analyse micro-level contextual elements that could also influence elite sport policies and their systems in various ways. Furthermore, this research explored the influence of macro-level contextual factors on the elite sporting system of SA, but did not provide pragmatic details relating to how policymakers should deal with these factors in (elite) sport policies, or provide solutions for how policies can be effective within this context. On the other hand, in the general discussion of this dissertation, a suggestion was presented with reference to the economic situation of SA on how the economic context could be considered in relation to providing support services to athletes and coaches. However, this suggestion needs to be tested empirically through pilot study research in order to evaluate its implementation within the SA setting, as the conceptualisation was based on the Chinese elite sporting system. This would provide a basis to measure the proposed suggestions inclusivity and the specificity of the nation before widespread dissemination can take place.

Furthermore, this research focused only on the ‘success ingredients’ specifically identified in the (elite) sport policy of SA, namely the Sports Academy Framework (2013), and did not include all the additional success determinants that were identified in the international literature in terms of the throughputs (policy processes). This presents a limitation of this research, as the study did not include all the critical success factors (CSFs) identified in the SPLISS model, even though it attempted to take a multidimensional approach to policy effectiveness. In this regard, the SPLISS model can be useful in future studies, as it evaluates the effectiveness of elite sport policy through a multidimensional approach by evaluating 96 CSF’s and 750 sub-factors, including the views of athletes, coaches and performance directors, as well as policy documents and interviews with policymakers (De Bosscher *et al.* 2015).

This research included an analysis of government funding (input) of the overall elite sport portfolio, and also analysed the Sports Academy budget of the Western Cape over time. However, this research did not include a study of private funding, nor sponsorships provided by the private sector to the respective elite sport codes in the analysis. This

presents a limitation, as these additional budget sources could provide critical insight into the financial stability or lack thereof with reference to sport in SA.

Lastly, although this dissertation reviewed the National Sport and Recreation Plan (NSRP) and the White Paper on Sport and Recreation SA, the focus of this dissertation was aimed at the Sports Academy Framework (2013). This can be characterised as a limitation of the dissertation, as the two main policy documents were included in the country profile in Chapter two that described the organisation of sport in the country as a whole. However, data were not collected on the NSRP and the White Paper on Sport and Recreation SA, but only on the Sports Academy Framework, which is the policy outline guiding the aforementioned policies to enable the country to become a ‘winning nation’.

6.4.2 Methodological constraints

All governmental stakeholders in the portfolios of high-performance sport (HPS) in the Western Cape and national government were included in this study in the chapter on inter-organisational relationships. However, the skeleton staff in these portfolios presented a methodological restriction, as only five participants ended up forming part of the qualitative data collection. Attempts were made to include the SASCO and the country’s minister and deputy minister of sport; however, the invitation received no response/ reply or availability to meet was identified as a problem. The inclusion of these participants could have increased the understanding of inter-organisational relationships between stakeholders in elite sport.

It is plausible that contextual factors do influence the elite sporting system of the ‘emerging country’ of SA in various ways, as presented in the findings of this research. An interesting study design could have been to include the evaluation of contextual factors in the study on the effectiveness of the Sports Academy Framework. However, due to the wide-ranging multi-dimensional data collection and analysis for the chapter on effectiveness, the contextual environment of SA was dealt with in a different chapter. This was a good decision, as contextual factors and their influence on elite sporting systems needed a separate chapter due to the unexplored nature of the inquiry, not only in SA but in worldwide research in sport management studies.

6.4.3 Methodological aspects

6.4.3.1 Validity

Validity refers to the trustworthiness, credibility and accuracy of assessments (Cresswell and Miller 2000), thus whether an evaluation measures what it is intended to measure. Validity is divided into two components, namely internal and external validity. *Internal validity* refers to how the research findings match the reality. This was ensured in this study by including a maximum variation strategy, in terms of including different perspectives on the elite sport environment, namely those of athletes, coaches, administrators, expert sport management academics and government stakeholders on both the provincial and national levels. *External validity* refers to whether research findings can be replicated in other environments. This study has low levels of external validity due to the evaluation focusing solely on the specific case of the Western Cape province of SA. The findings of this research therefore cannot be generalised to other provinces in SA, or to other countries, which was never purpose of this study.

Moreover, aspects relating to validity can be further divided into sub-aspects, namely face validity, formative validity, construct validity, criterion-related validity, sampling validity and content validity. In terms of *face validity*, this study dealt with addressing the specific issues identified in the literature on elite sport policy, namely the influence of contextual factors on elite sporting systems, the effectiveness of elite sport policies, and the inter-organisational relationships among elite sport stakeholders; within an overarching theory driven lens. All the assessments in this research indicate *formative validity*, as the aim of this study was to identify what facilitates and/or inhibits the elite sport policies of SA in the specific case of the Western Cape.

Construct validity was applied by means of involving experts in the study who are familiar with the different measurement tools and the phenomenon of inquiry relating to elite sport policies as a form of ‘member checking’(Cresswell and Miller 2000) to evaluate the research procedures utilised. This has been identified in the literature as a means to ‘guard the potential lone researcher bias, and help to provide additional insights’ (Burnard *et al.* 2008:431) into the procedures of the study and ensure credibility of the findings. One researcher analysed the respective datasets for this research, but credibility was ensured as ‘critical friends’ assisted in the verification of the coding processes in the qualitative studies in order to evaluate the processes utilised (Smith and McGannon 2017). In addition, construct validity was maintained by including experts in sport management studies in SA and in various European countries (to validate the contextual

factors in Chapter four), involving all stakeholders in the various research sections of this study, and pilot studies were executed prior to the commencement of data collection for each of the respective studies. Furthermore, a process of ‘constant comparison’ (reading and re-reading qualitative data) was used, which has been identified as providing an understanding of the data and the meaning of the data (Burnard *et al.* 2008). Moreover, interviews were open-ended in order to gain insight, and questionnaires were closed-ended to aid comparability.

Criterion-related validity was ensured by means of using a mixed-methods approach in order to triangulate the results of one approach with another (QUAN + QUAL) (Cresswell and Miller 2000). In terms of the financial inputs used, the criterion validity was weak in this study, as the perceptions of the sport stakeholders and policy implementers who utilise the funds were used as markers to determine whether the funds allocated to elite sport and the sport academy system were sufficient. No objective criterion was thus used to correlate the amount of funds appropriated for the policies with a comparative scale. This gave rise to low levels of criterion-related validity, which presents a limitation of this study.

Sampling validity was ensured in this study by not covering a ‘vast area’ for the analysis. The utilisation of the conceptual tools of the realist perspective (context, mechanism and outcomes) aided in this regard, in combination with a specific focus on the Western Cape. In addition, a purposive sampling method was used to identify ‘key informants’ to participate in this research. In terms of the research elements, only the factors relating to the theoretical frameworks utilised in the respective research sections were evaluated deductively in this research.

Content validity was applied by focusing only on the content in relation to the (elite) sport policy under inquiry, namely the Sports Academy Framework (2013), in the evaluation of the effectiveness of the throughputs. As mentioned previously, additional ‘success ingredients’ have been cited in the international literature that contribute to international sporting success. These additional factors were not included in this analysis, and this is thus identified as a limitation of this research and contributes to the low level of content validity.

6.4.3.2 Reliability

In terms of reliability, this research ensured parallel forms of reliability by utilising a mixed-methods approach that used both quantitative and qualitative methods on the same variables in Chapter three. Furthermore, inter-rater reliability was established by means of one researcher collecting the data (questionnaires and interviews), analysing the data and synthesising the findings in the respective sections. However, ‘critical friends’ were utilised in the various studies to evaluate the processes utilised (Smith and McGannon 2017). To ensure credibility, the ‘peer debriefing strategy’ was used which entailed utilising ‘critical friends’ (the other authors and a group of Ph.D. candidates) to enhance the accuracy of the accounts. These ‘critical friends’ discussed and reviewed the processes which the main researcher wanted to ensue, and asked questions regarding certain concerns or discrepancies. The main researcher and the critical friends, met on multiple occasions in the form of ‘member checking’ to discuss the coding phase and to evaluate the processes utilised. This ensured that the processes remained the same and were consistent throughout the data analysis phase which enhanced the credibility of procedures (Cresswell 2014). The interview protocols were tested in pilot study research and adapted accordingly prior to data collection. Furthermore, qualitative credibility was ensured by following the same interview protocols with all the participants, using the same NVivo qualitative software (Edwards and Skinner 2009), and utilising the same Dictaphone and MacBook recorder simultaneously in the interviews in the respective qualitative studies. The thematic analysis made use of a set procedure in order to identify themes and sub-themes, thereby establishing consistency in the data explication process. Furthermore, a codebook was used to validate the data by means of triangulation and, additionally, to ‘bracket’ the researcher from her worldview (Creswell and Miller 2000, Macqueen *et al.* 2008). Lastly, trustworthiness was established by providing a rich, thick description of the phenomena of inquiry by describing the qualitative studies in detail (Cresswell and Miller 2000, Thomas *et al.* 2011). Questionnaires were supplied in both Afrikaans and English, which ensured that the data collected were understood by all the participants.

6.5 An agenda for future research

The evaluation of the sport academies in this research was executed by means of an assessment of the effectiveness of the policy strategy in the specific case of the Western Cape. Even though the findings were broadly similar for the different sport academies in this particular province, specific environments, relationships, and support provided could be completely different in the different sport academies. Therefore, it would be essential for future studies to examine data on the variability between sport academies within one province and, in addition, determine the differences between all the sport academies in the different provinces in comparative research. In this study the realist perspective was used, which focused on the theoretical elements pertaining to context and mechanisms in order to understand the outcomes. The realist perspective theoretical positioning mainly focuses on the implementation of a program. Herewith, a recommendation is made in that the theory of change (ToC) be used in combination with this theory in future studies, as the ToC focuses specifically on the program offering and its activities. By utilising both the aforementioned theories would assist in the evaluation of multi-site interventions in terms of the program as well as the intervention processes within context (Blamey and Mackenzie 2007).

One of the focuses of this research was aimed at investigating the success dimensions of the Sports Academy Framework (2013), thus the policy variables focused only on including the following aspects: (1) talent identification, selection and development, (2) athlete support, (3) training facilities, (4) finances for support services, (5) coaching, and (6) organisation, governance and administration. In elite sport policy research, certain success ‘ingredients’ have been categorised as significantly important in order to achieve international sporting success. These ingredients include: (1) talent identification, (2) talent development [athlete pathway], (3) sport science support services, (4) coaching provision and coach development, (5) access to training facilities and equipment, (6) [inter]national competition structures, (7) funding, (8) lifestyle support and [post]career support, (9) governance, organisation and structure of sport policies, and (10) scientific research and innovation (Berggard *et al.* 2007; Bölke and Robinson 2009, De Bosscher *et al.* 2006, Green and Houlihan 2005, Green and Oakley 2001). In addition, and as mentioned earlier, the SPLISS model evaluates 96 CSF’s and 750 sub-factors in elite

sport policy effectiveness research. In this regard, future studies evaluating the (elite) sport policies of SA should aim to investigate the additional ingredients not included in the Sports Academy Framework (2013), inclusive of (inter)national competition structures, lifestyle and post-career support (even though this is not included in any of the main sport policies of SA), and the contribution of scientific research and innovation in elite sport. Utilising the SPLISS model will provide a comprehensive picture of the elite sport policy effectiveness in the country as a whole.

As was illustrated in the findings of this research, contextual factors significantly influence the elite sporting system of a country in numerous ways. This influence is mainly attributed to the close proximity of these environmental elements to the policy processes during the implementation phase. In this regard, it is suggested that country-specific contexts are included in elite sport policy evaluations in order to assess the influence they have on a specific nation's (elite) sport policies and the subsequent elite sporting systems. The realist perspective can be used in this regard in order to provide a holistic depiction of elite sport policies within context. Context variables identified through this study's systems theory lens, with a focus on the elements set out by Certo and Certo (2009), are economic, social, political, technological and legal components. These components can be used as a guide, in combination with the international contextual literature and nation-specific literature of dissimilar countries, to the respective contextual environments. This would present a dialogical approach in which theory and the literature are constitutive of one another.

In addition, the inter-organisational relationships between stakeholders in elite sport are essential for implementing the legal requirements of sport policies. However, as demonstrated by the findings of this research, inter-organisational relationships are multifaceted and often quite complex. In this regard, a recommendation is made that future studies should further explore the concerns around resources, and how these influence the power dynamics within elite sport. The aspect pertaining to corruption in elite sport was not alluded to in any of the findings of this study, thus future studies could include an exploration of corrupt conduct. Two suggestions are provided with regard to future studies in terms of how contextual factors and inter-organisational relationships in elite sport could be analysed. Firstly, to conduct similar studies in other classified 'emerging' or 'less-developed' countries in order to gain perspectives on nation-specific

contexts and relationships. Secondly, develop in-detail, country-specific critical success factors, as characterised by the SPLISS model in relation to the critical success factors.

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Appendices

APPENDIX A:

Co-author affiliations

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APPENDIX B:**Dissertation release forms from supervisors****STELLENBOSCH UNIVERSITY****FACULTY OF MEDICINE AND HEALTH SCIENCES**

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

ASSIGNMENT/THESIS/DISSERTATION RELEASE

Student's surname	SHAUNDRE' DWAYLYNN JACOBS		
Initials	SD	Student no	15214680
Title of assignment/thesis/dissertation:			
A Configurational Evaluation of Elite Sport Policy in South Africa: A realist perspective			
Faculty	Faculty of Medicine and Health Sciences		
Division/Department	Sport Science Department		
Degree	Joint degree: Ph.D. in Sport Science from Stellenbosch University & Doctor in Movement and Sport Sciences from Vrije Universiteit Brussel		
Supervisor (s)	Prof. dr Veerle De Bosscher		

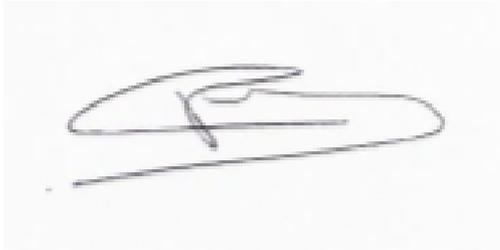
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Title of assignment/thesis/dissertation: A Configurational Evaluation of Elite Sport Policy in South Africa: A realist perspective			
Faculty	Faculty of Medicine and Health Sciences		
Division/Department	Sport Science Department		
Degree	Joint degree: Ph.D. in Sport Science from Stellenbosch University & Doctor in Movement and Sport Sciences from Vrije Universiteit Brussel		
Supervisor (s)	Prof. dr Ranel Venter		

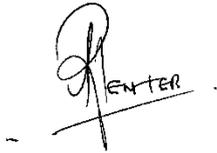
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A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "J. ENTER". The signature is written over a horizontal line that extends to the right. There is a small dash to the left of the signature.

APPENDIX C:**Ph.D. research outputs**

	Reference
Published article (1) :	Jacobs, S., De Bosscher, V., Venter, R., and Scheerder, J. (2018). Country profile: Sport in South Africa, <i>International Journal of Sport Policy and Politics</i> . DOI:10.1080/19406940.2018.1547780 . (RG Impact Factor: 1.38)
Conference (long) paper (1):	Jacobs, S., De Bosscher, V., Scheerder, J., and Venter, R. (2018). The effect of contextual factors on an elite sporting system. PhD seminar pre- <i>EASM conference, September 4-5th, Malmö, Sweden</i> . European Association for Sport management.
Conference abstract (Book) (3):	Jacobs, S., De Bosscher, V., Scheerder, J., and Venter, R. (2017). The effectiveness of the South African Sport academy system towards high performance sport development. <i>SASRECON conference booklet, Potchefstroom, South Africa</i> . South Africa Sport and Recreation South Africa Conference. (Oral presentation)
	Jacobs, S., De Bosscher, V., Scheerder, J., and Venter, R. (2017). The effectiveness of the South African Sport academy system towards high performance sport development. <i>SASMA conference, poster presentation, October 24-27th, Cape Town South Africa</i> . South African Sports Medicine Congress. (Poster presentation)

Jacobs, S., De Bosscher, V., Scheerder, J., and Venter, R. (2018). The effect of contextual factors on an elite sporting system. *EASM conference, September 4-5th, Malmo, Sweden*. European Association for Sport management. (Oral presentation)

Research (published papers not part of my PhD) (1):

Matins Patatas, J., De Bosscher, V., De Coq, S., Jacobs, S., and Legg, D. (2019). Towards a system theoretical understanding of parasport context. *Journal of Global Sports Management* . DOI: 10.1080/2470467.2019.1604078

Research awards:

2016 – 2019 ERC (Early researchers career) Mentor development program

2017 South African Sport Science & Medical Association (SASMA) International congress (Received the award and prize money for best poster presentation of the congress)

Research funding awards:

2018 Global Minds (Great Small Project funds) (From VUB)

2017 Semester exchange and mobility fund: Travel bursary (Bilateral agreement) From Stellenbosch University

2017 DRD Travel Grant from Stellenbosch University

2017-2019 ERC (Early researchers career yearly funds from Stellenbosch University)

APPENDIX D:

Author guidelines for Article One (Country Profile) (International Journal of Sport Policy and Politics)

6000 to 8000 words

- 1.0 Brief history of government involvement in sport. □ When did government (national and/or subnational) become involved in sport and why? □ What were the landmarks in the development of sport policy e.g. key legislation, government reports or administrative reforms?
- 2.0 Current administrative structure and funding. □ Where, in the machinery of government, is responsibility for sport located (in which central/federal department or departments and what is the division of responsibility between national/federal government and government agencies (quangos) and sub-national government)? □ How is public policy for sport funded (taxation, lottery etc)? □ What are the main sources of funding for sport in the public sector and what are the recent trends in funding?
- 3.0 How significant are the not-for-profit and commercial sectors and what involvement do they have with public policy? For example, do not-for-profit organisations help deliver public policy objectives in return for funding?
- 4.0 Current public policy priorities and funding trends. □ How significant is sport as a political issue? For example: o What is the balance of priority between elite success, youth/school sport and mass participation? o What factors/interests are important in shaping current policy priorities?
- 5.0 What, if any, are the key contemporary or emerging issues or debates in sport public policy and what, if any, are the emerging policy trends.

(Harvard style referencing)

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Article DOI:	10.1080/19406940.2018.1547780
Author(s):	Shaundre Jacobs, Veerle De Bosscher, Rachel Elizabeth Venter, Jeroen Scheerder
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International Journal of Sport Policy and Politics

APPENDIX F:

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- Should contain an unstructured abstract of 250 words.
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APPENDIX H:

Author Guidelines for Article Three (International Journal of Global Sport Management)

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Please include a word count for your paper.

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review articles focused on the governance, management, and marketing of sport organizations. Submissions are encouraged from a range of areas that inform theoretical advances for the management, marketing, and consumption of sport in all its forms, and sport organizations generally. Review articles and studies using quantitative and/or qualitative approaches are welcomed.

The *Journal of Sport Management* publishes research and scholarly review articles; short reports on replications, test development, and data reanalysis; editorials that focus on significant issues pertaining to sport management; articles aimed at strengthening the link between sport management theory and sport management practice; and journal abstracts ("Sport Management Digest") and book reviews ("Off the Press"). Individuals interested in submitting book reviews should contact the "Off the Press" section editor: Dr. Melanie Sartore-Baldwin, East Carolina University (sartorem@ecu.edu), Department of Kinesiology, A-20 Minges Coliseum, Greenville, North Carolina 27858 U.S.A.

When preparing manuscripts for submission in the *Journal of Sport Management*, authors should follow the guidelines in the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association* (6th edition; www.apa.org). Manuscripts must be submitted in English. All manuscripts must be preceded by an abstract of no more than 150 words and three to six keywords chosen from terms not used in the title. If footnotes are used, they should be as few as possible and should not exceed six lines each. Figures should be created in Excel or saved as TIFF or JPEG files. All tables, figure captions, and footnotes must be grouped together on pages separate from the body of the text. Reference citations in the text must be accurate concerning dates of publication and spelling of author names, and they must cross-check with those in the reference list. Manuscripts will be summarily rejected if they do not follow the APA guidelines.

Manuscripts submitted will be judged primarily on their substantive content, but writing style, structure, and length are very important considerations. Poor presentation is sufficient reason for the rejection of a manuscript. When first received, manuscripts will be evaluated by the editor in terms of their *contribution-to-length ratio*. Thus, manuscripts should be written as simply and concisely as possible. Papers should be no longer than 40 double-spaced pages (using one-inch margins and Times New Roman 12-point font), inclusive of references, tables, figures, and appendices. However, we

recognize that in rare circumstances, papers intended to make very extensive contributions may require additional space. Prior to submitting a manuscript, authors should consider the contribution-to-length ratio and ask themselves: "Is the paper long enough to cover the subject while concise enough to maintain the reader's interest?" (This paragraph is based on the Information for Contributors of the Academy of Management Review.)

Please note that a blind review process is used to evaluate manuscripts. As such, any clues to the author's identity should be eliminated from the manuscript. The first page of the manuscript **must not** include author names or affiliations, but it should include the title of the paper and the date of submission.

Manuscripts must not be submitted to another journal while they are under review by the *Journal of Sport Management*, nor should they have been previously published. Manuscripts are read by reviewers, and the review process generally takes approximately 12 weeks. Manuscripts will be evaluated in terms of topical relevance, theoretical and methodological adequacy, and clarity of explanation and analysis. Authors should be prepared to provide the data and/or research instrument(s) on which the manuscript is based for examination if requested by the editor. Comments from reviewers concerning manuscripts, along with the editorial decision, are made available to authors.

Questions about the journal or manuscript submission should be directed to the Editor-in-Chief of the journal, Professor David Shilbury, at david.shilbury@deakin.edu.au.

Submit a Manuscript

Authors should submit their manuscript through ScholarOne (see submission button at the top of this page), the online submission system for the *Journal of Sport Management*. ScholarOne manages the electronic transfer of manuscripts throughout the article review process while providing step-by-step instructions and a user-friendly design. Please access the site and follow the directions for authors submitting manuscripts.

Authors of manuscripts accepted for publication must transfer copyright to Human Kinetics, Inc. This copyright form can be viewed by visiting ScholarOne and selecting

"Instructions & Forms" in the upper-right corner of the screen. Also, any problems that may be encountered can be resolved easily by selecting "Help" in the upper-right corner.

APPENDIX K:

Proof of submission to Journal Sport Management

Journal of Sport Management <onbehalfof@manuscriptcentral.com>

to me

26-Jun-2019

Dear Miss Jacobs:

Your manuscript entitled "Inter-organizational Relationships between Governmental Stakeholders in South African elite sport: Resource dependency and inter-organizational theoretical perspectives" has been successfully submitted online and is currently being given full consideration for publication in the Journal of Sport Management.

Your manuscript ID is JSM.2019-0242.

Please mention the above manuscript ID in all future correspondence or if calling the office with questions. If there are any changes in your street address or e-mail address, please log in to Manuscript Central at https://mc.manuscriptcentral.com/hk_jsm and edit your user information as appropriate.

You can also view the status of your manuscript at any time by checking your Author Center after logging in to https://mc.manuscriptcentral.com/hk_jsm.

Thank you for submitting your manuscript to the Journal of Sport Management.

Sincerely,

Journal of Sport Management Editorial Office

APPENDIX L: Proof of ethics approval



UNIVERSITEIT • STELLENBOSCH • UNIVERSITY
Jou kennisvenoot • your knowledge partner

Approval Notice New Application

24-Oct-2016
Jacobs, Shaundre SD

Proposal #: SU-HSD-003768

Title: The contribution of the SA Sport Academy System towards High Performance sport development as perceived by Academy athletes, coaches and administrators in the Western Cape

Dear Miss Shaundre Jacobs,

Your **New Application** received on **03-Oct-2016**, was reviewed
Please note the following information about your approved research proposal:

Proposal Approval Period: 20-Oct-2016 -19-Oct-2019

Please take note of the general Investigator Responsibilities attached to this letter. You may commence with your research after complying fully with these guidelines.

Please remember to use your **proposal number** (SU-HSD-003768) on any documents or correspondence with the REC concerning your research proposal.

Please note that the REC has the prerogative and authority to ask further questions, seek additional information, require further modifications, or monitor the conduct of your research and the consent process.

Also note that a progress report should be submitted to the Committee before the approval period has expired if a continuation is required. The Committee will then consider the continuation of the project for a further year (if necessary).

This committee abides by the ethical norms and principles for research, established by the Declaration of Helsinki and the Guidelines for Ethical Research: Principles Structures and Processes 2004 (Department of Health). Annually a number of projects may be selected randomly for an external audit.

National Health Research Ethics Committee (NHREC) registration number REC-050411-032.

We wish you the best as you conduct your research.

If you have any questions or need further help, please contact the REC office at .

Included Documents:

REC: Humanities New Application

Sincerely,

Clarissa Graham
REC Coordinator
Research Ethics Committee: Human Research (Humanities)

APPENDIX M:

Proof of language proof- read by Language Center of Stellenbosch University



TAALSENTRUM
LANGUAGE CENTRE
IZIKO LEELWIMI



UNIVERSITEIT
STELLENBOSCH
UNIVERSITY

Quote

ENQUIRIES

Cobus Snyman

Tel.: 021 808 9726

Fax: 021 808 2863

E-mail fpsnyman@sun.ac.za

Quote to:

Fkt. GGW: Departement Sportwetenskap/Fct MHS: Department of Sport Science

Contact person Shaundre Jacobs
E-mail shaundrej@sun.ac.za
Tel
Cell

Assignment ref nr 2019/0649
Order nr
Debit code

Total R 6 600,42

Assignment	Language	Tarif /hour	Tarif /word	Tarif /page	Tarif /session	Amount
<i>Jacobs_Request form_2019 language proof read;_Jacobs_SDJ PHD THESIS VERSION 2 TO SEND TO LANGUAGE OFFICES 2019</i>						
Redigeer / Edit	Engels	R 0,00	R 0,34	R 0,00	R 0,00	R 6 600,42
