

**AN INVESTIGATION INTO HOW PARTICIPATION IN SPORTS CAN ENHANCE A
LEARNER'S SELF-ESTEEM**

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**RESEARCH REPORT SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE
REQUIREMENTS FOR THE MASTER OF EDUCATION DEGREE EDUCATIONAL
PSYCHOLOGY**

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DECLARATION

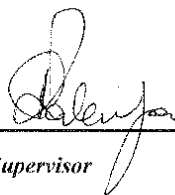
I, Blossom Bulelwa Piliso declare that this dissertation is my own work and has not been submitted previously for any degree at any university



Signature *31/01/2013*

Date

I, Dr R Kalenga, the candidate's supervisor hereby agree to the submission of this dissertation



Supervisor *31st/01/2013*

Date

DEDICATION

I dedicate this dissertation to my late mother, Alberta Vivienne Piliso, who was a pillar of strength and who believed in me and made it possible for me to be where I am today. To my children, Zuko Piliso and Piwe Vuyo Piliso, thank you for your prayers, encouragement, and understanding during the time I spent working on this dissertation.

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ABSTRACT

The study investigates how participation in sport can enhance a learner's self-esteem. There are other significant factors such as the academic performance, peer acceptance, support from school and parental support, which may contribute to increasing the self-esteem of a learner. However, sport has been chosen as the point of focus in this study.

The theories underpinning the study are Self-determination Theory (SDT), Cognitive Evaluation Theory (CET) and Achievement Goal Theory. SDT distinguishes between intrinsic motivation which refers to engaging in something for the pleasure and satisfaction and extrinsic motivation refers to engaging in an activity for some kind of reward external to the activity itself. CET suggests that people must experience both satisfaction for both competence and autonomy in order to maintain intrinsic motivation. Extrinsic rewards like material rewards undermine intrinsic motivation. Achievement Goal Theory proposes two goal orientations, that is, task orientations and ego orientations. Task oriented individuals seek personal improvement and task mastery whereas ego oriented individuals seek to outperform others. Therefore task orientation is self-referenced whereas ego orientation is externally referenced.

This was a qualitative single case study research design informed by an interpretive paradigm. It is about people's subjective experiences and how they understand and interpret the world around them. The idea was that the researcher wanted to discover the unique experiences of participants regarding sport participation and to find out what inspire them. Focus group interviews, semi-structured interviews as well as observations were used as data collection procedures.

The school that was selected for this study is a school situated in the urban area in Pinetown. Six learners involved in sports were chosen to participate in a focus group session which aimed to gather information on their experiences about sports. Learners who participated were selected from Grade 10, 11 and 12.

The sports coordinator who is also a physical education teacher was requested to take part in the semi-structured interview. The intention of the session was to collect data on her views about learners' experiences and whether the support related to sports given by the school to

the learners has benefits that could enhance learners' self-esteem.

Although the school offers a variety of sports and encourages everyone to participate, there are still learners who are not involved in sports for various reasons. This non-participation needs to be addressed as it is important for adolescents to have high self-esteem in order to lead normal lives. Therefore the government and the school need to work together to ensure that all learners take part in sport. Parents also have a role to play in ensuring that their children participate in sport.

Data analysis based on the responses of the participants revealed that learners engaged in sport and have a higher self-esteem than those who do not participate. Moreover, learners participating in sports have positive relationships with their teachers, parents and peers.

The results of the study indicated that there is, indeed, a positive relationship between sport participation and self-esteem. This study was therefore seen as beneficial in motivating learners and parents to motivate their children to partake in sports at school level.

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CHAPTER 1

Background and Rationale

1.1 Introduction

Physical exercise and/or activity that occur as a result of involvement in school sport remain one of the most important contributors to general physical, emotional and mental health. While this is true in terms of every age group, it is particularly more beneficial to younger age groups who are still confronted by the demands of schooling and the accompanying mental pressures. One of the most visible and often discussed benefits that result from involvement in school sport is weight loss, fame and opportunities that are otherwise inaccessible without involvement in sport. Not only is learners' need to be involved in sport the most discussed subject in social media, it remains one of the prime concerns for the Department of Basic Education (DoBE). In this study, an investigation of the extent to which learners' involvement in sport enhance their self-esteem is carried out. Parental involvement also features in the study.

The role that the parents could play in their children's participation in sport cannot be overemphasised. As a parent of a teenage daughter enrolled in grade 12 at a secondary school, I have observed the benefits of her involvement. Not only are such benefits social and in competitive sport itself, but also in other extra-curricular activities offered within her school and outside school. My daughter's involvement in sport and other extra-curricular activities, for example, resulted in the improvement of her academic performance, her self-esteem, as well as her health. All these benefits were not visible before her involvement in school sporting activities. This experience motivated me into helping other teenagers, especially at school level, to realise the advantages of engaging in extra-curricular activities, particularly in sport. It is in this context I argue that the support that the learners can get from parents and in their schools cannot be overemphasised.

The study focused on Grade 10, 11 and 12 learners in a selected high school in Pinetown, South Africa. These learners participate in sport. Bailey (2006) notes that if people participate in sports, they may be endowed with such benefits as the development of social skills and social behaviours, as well as academic and cognitive development. The choice of teenagers at a high school was influenced by the premise that the stage at which learners enter high school is very critical as most of them are already in their adolescent stage.

Adolescence, according to Bowker, Gadbois and Cornock (2003), is a time of transition as individuals struggle to deal with physical, cognitive and social changes throughout their development period. The drastic physical changes that adolescents experience make them aware of their own bodies. This enables them to distinguish between how they see themselves and how others see them. It was hoped therefore that this study would assist learners cope with such adolescent challenges through participating in sports. As a researcher, I chose a particular school in order to study a particular case defined as the relationship between sport participation and self-esteem. It was for this reason that this study explored the relationship between learners' participation in sport and self-esteem.

An investigation into learners' experiences at a secondary school as a result of participating in sports, including the reasons for choosing such involvement, remains one of the purposes of this study. This knowledge has potential to assist the researchers in this field put into perspective the need for teenagers to participate in sport. It is against this background that this chapter offers the rationale for investigating the role of sport for teenage learners, the conceptual and theoretical framework used in this study, the research design selected and the epistemological assumptions guiding the study. The chapter also reveals that the researcher was interested in subjective experiences of learners as far as sport participation is concerned. The chapter concludes by briefly discussing ethical issues, limitations to the study, and issues of reliability and validity of research findings and analysis.

1.2 Research Approach

Data collection and analysis in this study were guided by the following critical questions which were used to investigate the phenomenon under study:

1.2.1 Critical Questions

- What can schools do to enhance learners' self-esteem through sports?
- How does sport enhance a learner's self-esteem?

1.2.2 Aims of the Study

- To investigate what schools can do to enhance learners' self-esteem through sport.
- To investigate ways in which sport enhances a learner's self-esteem.

1.2.3 A Case Study

A case study research design was used within a qualitative approach based on an interpretive paradigm. Given the fact that human systems have a wholeness or integrity to them, an in-depth investigation was necessary (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2011), and these choices created an opportunity to achieve it. This is because case study enables the researcher to offer a comprehensive understanding of how participants relate and interact with each other in a specific situation, and how they make meaning of a phenomenon under study (Maree, 2011). The case study design was thus appropriate as it provided sufficient data related to the goals of the study. It also enabled the researcher to collect descriptive and explanatory data in the form of focus group interviews and semi-structured interviews.

The claims to knowledge in this study are influenced by the notion that I also wanted to understand the learners' perspectives on the issue, hence, an adherence to, and choice of, an interpretive paradigm. Learners were expected to provide their subjective views and experiences. This, however, was done at a group level. In other words, learners were interviewed as a group, not individually. This means that the study is more subjective, that is, it is on people's subjective experiences and how they construct the social world by sharing meaning (Maree, 2011). Interpretive studies, furthermore, attempt to understand phenomena through the meanings that people assign to them. Through unpacking how meanings are constructed, people can gain insights into the meanings imparted, thereby improve their understanding of the whole. Furthermore, an interpretive perspective offers a viewpoint of a situation and the possibility to examine the situation under study in a manner that provides insight into the way in which a particular group of people makes sense of their situation. Human knowledge informs and directs researchers and influences their understanding of the phenomena under investigation (Maree, 2011). It is against this background that the researcher approached the study with the belief that the learners will be keen to participate voluntarily.

1.2.4 A Qualitative Research Method

The researcher used a qualitative method with the aim of allowing the participants to share their views about sports participation as well as sharing their experiences about their participation and whether this enhances self-esteem. According to Cohen *et al.* (2011), qualitative data involves organising, accounting for and explaining the data. In other words,

it involves making sense of data in terms of the participants' definitions of the situation, noting patterns, themes, categories, and regularities (Cohen *et al*, 2011). A qualitative method involves a lot of interpretation, data collection and data analysis. Such activities were characteristic of this study.

1.3 Sampling Technique

In order to select the participants in this study, the researcher used purposive sampling. According to Cohen *et al*, (2011), purposive sampling is used to assess 'knowledgeable people', that is, those people who have in-depth knowledge about particular issues in specific contexts. Cohen *et al*. (2011) also maintain that purposive sampling is a technique that is used by the researcher in selecting the type of participants with certain qualities. Maree (2011) points out that sampling in a qualitative research refers to a process used to select a portion of the population for study. Selecting participants in this study was done with the assistance of the sport coordinator. The researcher directly approached the sport coordinator in order to receive corporation from them in conducting the study. A detailed discussion regarding participants' selection is provided in section 4.5 of Chapter 4. At this stage it suffices to point out that learners were selected on the basis that they were involved in school sport activities. As a researcher there were certain qualities I was looking for from the participants and that is why random sampling, for example, was not an ideal sampling technique for this study. Hence, the qualitative nature of this study warranted the selection of a group of 6 learners: 2 learners from each grade, that is, grades 10, 11 and 12. Given the fact that the researcher wanted to explore the relationship between participating in sport and the enhancement of self-esteem, learners who were involved in sport were an ideal group. As a researcher, I was also aware of the unashamedly selective and bias nature of purposive sampling technique. Such issues are addressed in section 4.10 of Chapter 4.

1.4 Ethical Measures

The relevant gate keepers were approached and relevant documentation in the form of consent letters was issued. Access in the context where the study took place was sought through relevant authorities, including the Principal, the personnel involved in sports for these learners. All participants in this study were guaranteed anonymity, confidentiality as well as privacy. These issues were stipulated in the consent forms issued. Moreover, the

pseudonyms of the participants were used in order to ensure the issues raised above. A detailed discussion regarding such issues is provided in section 4.8 of Chapter 4. While ethical issues are a vital aspect of any research, such a research ought to be reliable so that the research is treated as valid (Cohen *et al.*, 2011).

1.5 Validity and Reliability

In this study the issues of validity and reliability were addressed through the honesty, depth, richness and scope of data that was collected. The type of participants approached and selected for the study also played their part in ensuring that the study was valid. Triangulation in the form of various data collection tools that were used, likewise, ensured the trustworthiness of the study. While I was aware of the subjectivity and biased nature of the responses given by participants from interviews, I ensured that at least such biasness does not lead to invalidity of the study, but maximise validity (Cohen *et al.*, 2011). This was ensured, for example, by selecting the appropriate methodology for answering the research questions, appropriate sample, appropriate instrumentation for gathering the type of data required (Cohen *et al.*, 2011). These issues are discussed in details in Chapter 4. Not everything could be done in the satisfaction of the researcher; and this is the reason there were some limitations that needed to be addressed in order to ensure that the study acquires the necessary integrity.

1.6 Limitations of this study

The nature of the study could not allow generalisations. This is because one school was selected and a few number of learners. There is a possibility, as a result, that the findings in the context from where the study took place might not be the same for the same study in another context. This, however, does not mean that nothing could be learned from such findings. Furthermore, I conducted a study on learners with whom I did not have any relationship before doing this research. While I did not want to treat the participants as objects to be researched, sometimes it felt like I was there just to take what I wanted and go. I, however, address these issues in detail in Chapter 4.

1.7 Structure of Dissertation

Chapter 1 provides an overview of the rationale, aims, research questions as well as the methodology of the study. In this chapter the researcher provides the background and the

reasons why the study was conducted in the first place, and whether or not a relationship between sport participation and self-esteem exists.

Chapter 2 discusses literature relevant to the study. Since there is scarcity of literature on learners participating in sport in South Africa, as opposed to literature on an international front, this study engages with such literature where the reasons, as well as benefits, of participating in sport and self-esteem are discussed and elaborated on.

The conceptual as well as theoretical frameworks from which the research was approached are outlined in Chapter 3. In the presentation of these frameworks, the concepts: 'participation', 'sport', 'learner' and 'self-esteem' are discussed, as well as the theories adapted in this study, namely: Self-determination Theory (SDT), Cognitive Evaluation Theory (CET) and Goal Achievement theory.

In the discussion on research methodology in Chapter 4, the researcher justifies the use of the single case study research design utilised, describes how data were collected, analysed and interpreted, and discusses the study's validity and reliability and its limitations.

Chapter 5 is a description of the development the researcher underwent in her engagement with this study and its participants in the form of data analysis. The study indicates that there are several benefits when one engages in sport activities at school. The Chapter also discusses the impact that sport could have to a learner's attitude to school work and life in general. The support that a learner receives from teachers, parents and friends is so valuable, the Chapter argues. This is because sport is a mentally and physically taxing and strenuous activity. This is the reason one needs all the support they can get.

Chapter 6, which is the last chapter, deals with summary, recommendations and conclusion of the study. This chapter stresses that learners should engage in sport. That is the reason the study recommends government intervention in public schools.

1.8 Conclusion

This chapter has provided an overview of the relationship between learners' participation in sport and enhancement of self-esteem. This inquiry is set against a context that is informed by the availability of sporting equipment in a particular school. The researcher has purposefully chosen to do research on six learners doing grades 10, 11 and 12 in one school in Pinetown,

KwaZulu-Natal. The low number of participants in a single site has allowed the researcher to conduct an in-depth analysis from a subjective interpretivist perspective to engage with a question on what could be done to motivate teenage learners to participate in sport at school level, as well as how this initiative could be done since some students take participating in sport for granted. Furthermore, a theoretical explanation which demonstrates the importance and benefits of participating in sports for learners is given. Finally, sampling techniques used for the study are presented, issues of validity and reliability are also offered, as well as limitations and ethical issues. The next Chapter offers the review of literature relevant to the study.

CHAPTER 2

Review of Literature

2.1 Introduction

This chapter reviews literature that reports on studies about adolescent learners' experiences of participating in sports. Such participation often enhances self-esteem in most of these learners. The Chapter begins by outlining the relationship between adolescent learners' participation in sport and the reasons for this. It then moves to a discussion on the benefits and/or advantages associated with participating in sport. The purpose is to explore such benefits in the context where the study took place, particularly in relation to sport participation and self-esteem. The Chapter concludes with the discussion on literature that focuses on the role of the school and parents concerning learner sport participation.

2.1.1 Relationship between adolescent learners' participation in sport and self-esteem

Kort-Butler and Hageman (2011) state that adolescence is a period during which individuals experience important changes in their physical, cognitive and social identities. This period continues up to the stage of young adulthood. Research reveals that there is a positive relationship between an adolescent's participation in structured or organised extracurricular activities and well-being in a variety of domains (Busseri, Krasnor, Willoughby & Chalmers, 2006). Kort-Butler and Hageman (2011), for example, made use of a growth curve analysis to examine self-esteem trajectories from adolescence to young adulthood, that is, from the ages 16 to 26. The analysis included exploring the effects of age and type of school based extracurricular activities such as sport and school clubs on self-esteem. It was found, furthermore, that there is a relationship between age and self-esteem. Extra-curricular activity seems to have positive effects on the initial level of self-esteem and its growth. The results also revealed that those adolescents who participated in school based extracurricular activities had higher initial levels of self-esteem than those who did not. Results, moreover, demonstrated that those who were involved in sports only and those engaged in a mixed portfolio experienced some growth in self-esteem, although this was less dramatic than those involved in school clubs. In the context of this study, the investigation is focused on adolescents who participated in school based extra-curricular activities, including sport

activities. The purpose is to establish whether or not higher levels of self-esteem are influenced by this participation.

Bowker, Gadbois and Cornock (2003) stress that the physical, cognitive and social changes experienced by adolescents can be stressful and require significant psychological adjustment. During adolescence, both adolescent girls and boys demonstrate declines in self-esteem. Boys' self-esteem, on the contrary, appears to be less dramatic than that of girls. Bowker *et al.* (2003), furthermore, focussed on sports participation as a possible protective factor. They regarded adolescents' physical self-esteem or feelings about appearance as a very important predictor of general self-worth, especially for girls. They also believed that physical self-esteem may be enhanced during adolescence through sport involvement. While the abovementioned aspects raised by researchers are pertinent in terms of modifications that teenagers go through during their adolescent stage, the focus of this study is, however, on the relationship between adolescents' participation in sports and self-esteem. Undoubtedly, the physical, cognitive, as well as social changes teenagers go through are important to know if one is interested in their self-esteem. These aspects are like two sides of the same coin.

Slutzky and Simpkins (2009) conducted research on adolescent participants to investigate if sports participation was primarily associated with indices of adjustment such as self-esteem. The purpose of the research was to test whether children's sport self-concept was related to the time spent in individual and team orientated organised sports activities and self-esteem. The results indicated that children who spent more time in team sports reported higher sport self-concept associated with higher self-esteem than those children engaged in individual sport. This meant that the more time children spent in team sports, the better they felt about their sports abilities, which in turn was particularly associated with self-esteem (Slutzky & Simpkins, 2009). Relating the aforementioned in the context of this study, learners were selected to participate as a group from grades 10, 11 and 12. So, Slutzky and Simpson's (2009) study is relevant for the study in so far as understanding group participation in sports is concerned.

The study undertaken by Findlay and Bowker (2009) explored specific aspects of sport and individuals on four domains of self-system, that is, physical competence and physical appearance, self-concept, global physical and general self-esteem. The purpose of the study was to first investigate whether the level of sport involvement, that is, non-athlete, competitive or elite, and the intensity, that is, strenuous, moderate or mild, predict self-

concept. Secondly, the purpose of the study was to examine gender and sport orientation as potential moderators of the sports participation. The study revealed that the level of athleticism was positively related to physical competence and appearance self-concept, global physical and general self-esteem. A significant difference was also found between the non-athletes and both the competitive and elite athletes. A relationship was also found between athleticism and general self-esteem with regard to sport orientation. Elite and competitive athletes were found to be higher on self-esteem. Non-athletes who had a lower competitive orientation were found to be lower on self-esteem. It was therefore concluded that the level of competition and self-concept may depend on the individual's sport orientation.

Binsinger, Laure and Ambard (2006) emphasise that physical activity is an effective tool to improve self-esteem. The aim of their study was to measure the influence of a regular extracurricular sport practice on self-esteem and anxiety. Two groups of pupils, that is, those who engaged in extra-school physical activity and those who did not, were assessed for three years, starting from the first year of secondary school. Results showed that the adolescents who engaged in a regular extracurricular sports practice had greater global self-esteem and lower trait anxiety than adolescents who did not engage in these activities. This, according to Dworkin, Larson and Hansen (2003), indicates that extracurricular activities are different from other school activities since they provide opportunities to develop social and leadership skills, increase peer awareness and improve emotional fitness. From the above deliberations it was clear that the extracurricular activities that teenagers engaged in included more than just sport participation, but also other social and leadership skills. Such skills in turn require that one is confident about oneself, to have a positive perspective and outlook. In the context of this study, such skills were taken into consideration with regards to sport participation. There are of course various reasons one would participate in sport. The next section thus discusses such reasons.

2.1.2 Reasons for participation in sports

Allison (2005) conducted a qualitative study to explore the reasons adolescent males participate in moderate and vigorous physical activity. They also perceived barriers to moderate and vigorous physical activity. They provided suggestions as to what could be done to increase the adolescents' participation in physical activity. It was, furthermore, found that participants engaged in physical activity for both intrinsic and extrinsic reasons. Intrinsic reasons included participation for enjoyment, challenge mastering skills which include

experiencing a sense of satisfaction and accomplishment when trying to learn a new skill, as well as a sense of mastery when overcoming obstacles and achieving personal goals in physical activity (Allison, 2005). Extrinsic reasons included engaging in physical activity to socialise, that is, spending time with friends and meeting new people. Engaging in physical activity to achieve physical and psychological health benefits was also mentioned by the adolescent males as reasons for participating in sport. The physical benefits included being motivated to stay fit, to burn calories and to feel good about themselves. The purpose of staying fit was to impress girls, to make an impression on others or to gain a good reputation and competing against others. The psychological health benefits included increased self-confidence, self-discipline, stress relief, less tension and anger during physical activity. Detailed descriptions regarding the reasons participants in the study participate in sport are provided in Chapter 5. But one can mention here that such reasons were both intrinsic and extrinsic. This study, however, involved both boys and girls.

In a qualitative study conducted in the United States by Allender, Cowburn and Foster (2006), the reasons given by the youth for participating in sport were both intrinsic and extrinsic. They included weight management, social interaction and enjoyment or fun. Young girls mentioned that maintaining a slim body was what motivated them to participate in sports. Only physical benefits were mentioned and perceived health benefits which are supposed to be the main reasons for participating in sports were not mentioned. Allender *et al.* (2006), furthermore, also noted the responses given by girls when interviewed by Flintoff and Scraton (2001) that learning new skills in sports increased their self-esteem. Participation in sport improved the girls' fitness, enabling them to develop new social networks which motivated them to be physically active. Pule (2007) indicates that many children participate in school sports because sport involvement improves their self-esteem and their self-image. He also mentions that the youth participate in sports in order to develop their skills and to become successful. This shows that young people, girls in particular, involved in sports do not recognise the health benefits associated with physical activity. Therefore there is a need to emphasise the health benefits related to sports participation. Pule's (2007) study is relevant here because of its indication of sports involvement and improvement of self-esteem and self-image. For this study though, self-esteem was about both boys and girls.

2.1.3 Benefits associated with participation in sports

Bailey (2006) explores the scientific evidence regarding the benefits of physical education

and sport in schools for both children and educational systems. His article suggests that physical education and sport contribute to the physical development, the lifestyle development, affective development, social development and cognitive development of young people. However, Bailey (2006) emphasises that the actions and interactions of teachers and coaches were important and they should determine whether young people experience these positive aspects of physical education and sport.

A book edited by Gatz, Messner and Ball Rokeach (2002) is concerned about the role of sport in the lives of young people in urban settings. In the same book, Ewing, Gano-Overway, Branta and Seerfeldt are cited as enumerating the many benefits associated with participation in sports programmes, such as fitness, health and wellbeing; social competence; physical competence and self-esteem; moral development and education. Bowker *et al.* (2003) mentioned studies conducted in 1997 by the Centre for Research on Girls and Women. These studies demonstrate the health benefits of sport such as increased aerobic power, increased muscle strength and decreased obesity. Another study mentioned by Bowker *et al.* (2003) is the one conducted by Kiovula in 1999 which indicates that individuals who participate in sport have a more positive perceived body image than those who do not participate in sports. Bowker *et al.* (2003) notes that previous research conducted towards the end of the 20th century is limited and inconsistent regarding self-esteem and sports participation. Some research indicates a relationship between global self-esteem and perceived physical competence, and that individuals participating in sports have higher self-esteem than those who do not.

Kirkcaldy, Shephard and Siefen (2002) maintain that regular physical activity is related to a more favourable self-image, and that physical activity may have many additional rewards for adolescents. These may include physical fitness, increased physical performance, less body mass and a more favourable body structure. This may lead to recognition from peer groups as well an improvement in an individual's self-image.

Hedstrom and Gould (2004) mention the following possible benefits associated with involvement in sport:

- Learning physical skills and sport-specific skills that allow participants to stay active;
- Appreciation of fitness which means that participants are motivated to get exercise and to stay in shape;

- Sense of belonging whose motive of participation is social interaction which includes peer interaction through both teammate and healthy competition and;
- Acquiring sport skills for leisure means that a participant learns fundamental motor skills through sport which can either aid in skill development or be transferred to other sports and leisure activities. This can promote increased participation and involvement.

In his study, Turner (2010) criticises the advanced technology for bringing about lack of socialisation and interaction with others. He is concerned about the replacement of conflict resolution tasks such as personal interactions, expressions and gestures with texting, twittering and online gaming. He believes that the youth could benefit from being involved in extracurricular activities as these would allow them to develop skills such as leadership, values, sportsmanship, and self-worth as well as the ability to deal with competitive situations. One of the benefits he mentions is the formation of character whereby learners learn to develop character through outside activities and apply the moral and ethical skills to study habits as well as life skills. However this view has been criticised by other researchers who claim that sports participation has been associated with negative issues such as adults modelling inappropriate behaviours like misuse of alcohol, engagement in delinquent behaviours and use of illegal drugs (Holt, Kingsley, Tink and Scherer (2011)). Another benefit mentioned by Turner (2010) is that involvement in extracurricular activities teaches learners organisation and time management skills. Since extracurricular activities like sports take up time after school, learners are expected to balance between academic activities and sports. Other benefits associated with sports participation include the development of teamwork, critical thinking and conflict resolution skills, reduction in alcohol consumption and the creation of more favourable perceptions by peer groups (Turner, 2010).

According to Hardy, Kelly, Chapman, King and Farrell (2010), being physically active not only provides direct favourable health effects for children. Participation in organised physical activity also provides psycho-social benefits. For example, organised sports offer children an opportunity to acquire new skills, interact with others, meet challenges, develop team skills and help improve self-esteem and self-confidence. Hardy *et al.* (2010) stress that children who participate in organised school-based or community sports are more likely to be active and to participate in physical activity as adults.

Fraser-Thomas, Côté and Deakin (2005) noted recent studies which found that participation in structured extracurricular activities was associated with higher life satisfaction among adolescents, and that adolescent well-being or happiness has long been considered a central component to optimal development and a good life. These findings, according to Fraser-Thomas *et al.* (2005), highlight the additional role of sport involvement in youth's positive development.

2.1.4 Sports participation and peer acceptance

Smith (2003) notes that a bulk of research has focussed on teachers, coaches and parents as social agents contributing to the youth physical activity and little research has specifically explored peer relationships in physical activity domain. The same observation has been done by Vazou, Ntoumanis and Duda (2004) that research on youth motivation has mainly focused on the influence of adults such as parents, coach and physical education teacher while peer influence has not received much attention. Vazou *et al.* (2004) have noted that some studies on peer influence in youth sport do exist. However, these studies have not examined how peer interactions affect children's achievement motivation in sport. The purpose of Smith's (2003) research is to encourage sport and exercise psychologists to consider doing more research on peer relationships, as earlier research emphasises the importance of a variety of motives for sport participation, including fun and enjoyment, skill and competence development, social acceptance and affiliation. Smith (2003) sees these motives as interconnected with one another. Therefore emphasis on this study should also be on peer relationship comprising of individuals familiar to one another and having a history characterised by successive interactions, friendships and acceptance within groups.

Smith (2003) also mentions that psychological readiness should be taken into consideration as it highlights the important role of peers in the physical domain. He emphasises that, as youth develop capabilities, they shift from relying predominantly on adults for physical competence information to relying on peers. This shows that peers are important not only to the acquisition of competence information in competitive sport settings, but also more generally to psychological adjustment, as well as social and moral development (Smith 2003).

Vazou *et al.* (2004) also believe that the social context that youth sport athletes participate in is shaped by both adults and their similarly aged teammates. In their study, Slutzky and Simpkins (2009) believe that sports participation is advantageous for children who have low peer acceptance. Therefore, they hypothesised that the relations between sports participation, sport self-concept and self-esteem would be stronger for children with low rather than high social acceptance.

A longitudinal study conducted by Daniels and Leaper (2006) explored the relations between sports participation, peer acceptance and global self-esteem. The data analysis revealed that peer acceptance has a relationship between sports participation and global self-esteem for both girls and boys. Daniels and Leaper (2006) further point out that when individuals perceive themselves as positively regarded by significant others, they internalise the positive regard and experience high self-esteem. On the contrary, when individuals view themselves as negatively regarded by peers, they experience low self-esteem. There is, however, literature that shows a close connection between sport participation, self-esteem and academic performance.

2.1.5 Sports participation, self-esteem and academic performance

The findings from the study conducted by Lewis (2004), Gadbois and Bowker (2007) on extracurricular activities participation and self-esteem reveal that learners who participate in extracurricular activities display higher self-esteem. The research also reveals that the academic performance of learners who participate in extracurricular activities is improved as learners show perseverance and become goal-orientated. There is also evidence that learners' participation in sports reduces the risk of delinquency as well as the possibility of dropping out of school. Learners who concentrate on both academic work and extracurricular activities are less likely to be involved in risky and anti-social behaviour activities such as substance abuse and sexual activities (Lewis, 2004; Gadbois and Bower, 2007). Moreover, the research by Lewis (2004) found out that learners who are involved in extracurricular activities are psychologically and socially healthy. Learners feel good about themselves and as a result have good relationships with others and are able to build social networks.

Rasberry, Lee, Robin, Lari, Russell, Coyle and Nihiser (2011) identified 50 peer reviewed studies and published reports focussing on the association between school-based physical activity and academic performance. Physical activity includes physical education, and

academic performance includes indicators of cognitive skills and attitudes, academic behaviours and academic achievement. The results revealed both a positive relationship between physical activity and academic performance and no significant relationships between physical activity and academic performance. It was found that studies indicating no relationships had small samples and this made it difficult for the researchers to get statistically significant results. Most of the results suggested that adding physical activity to the school day and increased time spent in physical education are not likely to detract from academic performance, even where there is less time allocated to subjects other than physical education.

Coe, Pivarnik, Womack, Reeves and Malina (2006) conducted a study to determine the effect of physical education on academic achievement in middle school children. Moderate to vigorous physical activity outside of school and academic achievement were assessed. Results revealed that students who performed vigorous activity had significantly higher grades than those who had no vigorous activity, and this means that increases in academic performance are associated with vigorous activity. It was also found that moderate physical activity did not affect academic performance.

The study undertaken in China, Hong Kong by Yu, Chan, Cheng, Sung and Hau (2006) on pre-adolescents investigated the relations among academic achievement, self-esteem, school conduct and physical activity level. According to the Chinese culture, physical success should not be regarded as the only indicator of success, and physical activity should be discouraged as it is believed that it drains energy and affects academic achievement. Learners who excel academically are often praised and those who perform poorly are considered to be inattentive or rebellious. This is in contrast to the study conducted by Field, Diego and Sanders (2001) on high school seniors' habits. Field *et al.* (2001) believe that students who exercise more have better relationships with their parents, are less depressed, use drugs less frequently and have higher grade point averages than students who exercise less.

2.1.6 Gender orientation and sports participation

Bowker, Gadbois and Cornock (2003) examined the role of gender, sports participation and gender orientation in predicting individuals' domain-specific and global self-esteem. The study revealed that there are no gender differences in general self-worth between boys and girls. Boys, however, reported greater satisfaction with weight and appearance as opposed to

girls who reported lower levels of perceived athletic competence and global self-worth but higher self-esteem for participating in more non-competitive sports. The findings show that adolescents with more feminine gender role orientation, regardless of their sex, may experience greater benefits from participating in less competitive and more social oriented sports activities (Bowker *et al.*, 2003). The results of the study emphasise that one's gender role orientation, rather than one's gender, may be the crucial variable to consider and that individuals should be allowed to engage in activities that fit with their goals for participation and which make them feel most comfortable. Therefore schools should offer a variety of sports activities, both competitive and non-competitive, to enable learners to choose the ones they feel comfortable with. Failure to do this would result in many learners choosing not to participate in sports.

2.1.7 Barriers to sports participation

In his research, Allison (2005) distinguishes between internal and external barriers to participation in physical activity by male adolescents in North America. Internal barriers include individual characteristics, lower priority for physical activity and involvement in technology-related activities. Individual characteristics consist of physical attributes and psychological attributes. Physical attributes may include being too young or too short for certain activities, being overweight, having a disability, having already been injured or not having sufficient skills to perform the activity. Psychological attributes are characterised by laziness, boredom, wanting to avoid stress and lack of confidence. Also fear of failure or fear of performing poorly is another barrier. Lower priority for physical activity means that both active and inactive participants may limit their physical activity because they and their parents value and emphasise academics more than physical activity. Involvement in technology-related activities includes being addicted to watching television, playing computer and video games, using the internet and talking on the phone rather than playing sport. External barriers to physical activity include influence of peers and family, lack of time to participate in physical activity, and inaccessibility of sports facilities as well as the cost of facilities.

Slater and Tiggerman (2010) conducted a study in Australia to find out the reasons why girls cease participating in sport and why they do not participate as much as boys. The reasons mentioned by girls were lack of interest, boredom, insufficient time and lack of competence. Other reasons included sports not being available, injury, problems with transport, and having

issues with the coach. Also the influence of friends and family and issues relating to teammates as well as teasing were mentioned as barriers. In order to overcome these obstacles parents and teachers need to work hand in hand in encouraging learners to participate in sports and to make them aware about various benefits associated with sports participation.

Bandy and Moore (2009) note that very little research has been done on individual factors such as health, academic achievement and behaviour problems, as well as background factors such as family characteristics that influence children and adolescents' non-participation in out of school time programmes and activities. They stress that child, family and neighbourhood factors matter. Child factors associated with non-participation include child disability, low academic achievement, heavy computer usage, television viewing, video game-playing, negative social behaviour and overweight. Family factors related to non-participation include lack of parental exercise, poor parental health and low parental educational attainment and neighbourhood factors include lack of neighbourhood support and unsafe surroundings. According to Bandy and Moore (2009) out-of-school time programmes can contribute to a reduction in negative behaviours and positive outcomes such as school success and physical fitness. Since one of these out-of-school programmes and activities is sports, achieving success and physical fitness will more likely enhance the adolescent's self-esteem. In their study, Hardy *et al.* (2010) examined Australian parents' perceptions on how cost, time, travel and the variety of organised sporting activities influence their decisions to allow their children to participate in organised sport and recent expenditure on sport-related items for their children. The results of the study indicated that sixty three percent of children participated in organised sporting activities. It was also found that sporting costs, variety and time commitments influenced parents' decisions about their children's participation in organised sport. According to Hardy *et al.* (2010), initiatives are needed to promote access in organised sports in the form of reducing costs and increasing variety, particularly for poor families.

2.1.8 The role of the school with regard to sports participation

According to Pule (2007), schools are considered to be the ideal avenues through which most educational and sport objectives can be achieved. Schools are an ideal setting for teaching youth how to adopt and maintain a healthy active lifestyle and therefore physical education in schools contributes to learners desire to pursue physical activities. Therefore, physical education assumes the key role of educating children regarding the health benefits of an

active lifestyle (Pule, 2007). Rasberry *et al.* (2011) agree with the view of the National Centre for Education Statistics (2009) that schools should provide a unique venue for youth to participate in physical activity. They add that some schools face increasing challenges in allocating time for physical education and other physical activity opportunities during the school day. This is due to an increase in instructional time for subjects like mathematics, science and English which result in the elimination or less time for physical education classes, recess and other physical activity breaks. Physical activity can only be done outside of school hours. According to Standage and Gillison (2007), school is a context that can have considerable influence on the mental health and quality of life of children and adolescents. Standage and Gillison have used a statement from the Department for Education and Employment and the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority of 1999 that, one of the aims of the school is to “promote pupils’ self-esteem and emotional well-being which will help them to form and maintain worthwhile and satisfying relationships based on respect for themselves and for others, at home, school, work and in the community”.

The White Paper on Sport and Recreation: Draft 1 (2010) maintains that the benefits inherent to participation in school sport have not been fully capitalised upon after South Africa’s democracy. Emphasis therefore is that the promotion of sport and physical education at schools plays an important role in creating motivation for and commitment to life-long participation since there is evidence that sport and physical activity can benefit education. The DoE National Curriculum Statement (2008), states that Learning Outcome 3 in Life Orientation comprises the Physical Education component of the curriculum. Physical education enables learners to develop motor skills and to participate in physical activities. It is believed that learners exposed to physical activity on a weekly basis will directly experience the benefits of such participation thereby enabling them to make decisions about pursuing a physically active lifestyle. It is also emphasised that during physical activities, teachers should address the development of other skills such as relationship skills, problem solving skills and the enhancement of self-esteem (DoE National Curriculum Statement, 2008).

2.1.9 The role of parents with regard to youth sports participation

According to Stroebel (2006), parents should assume the role of motivator, facilitator and coach in the life of the adolescent and the enjoyment and anxiety experienced by children during participation are related to perceived parental support. The parent’s role in his or her

child's sports experience may range from being a driver to and from practices and games to something more complex such as being a coach or official (Hedstrom and Gould, 2004). Stroebel (2006) further emphasises that parents should encourage their children's extracurricular involvement and allow them to make their own decisions regarding activities in which to participate and the extent of involvement. Without support from their parents, it would be difficult for learners to reap the benefits of skills development and positive peer interaction (Stroebel, 2006). Welk, Wood and Morss (2003) examined how parents can have an influence on their children's physical activity behaviour. The participants consisted of elementary school children as well as active and inactive parents. Physical activity, attraction to activity, perceived competence and perceived parental influence were assessed. It was discovered that children of active parents scored higher on parental influence than inactive parents.

In a study conducted by Griffith, Clasey, King, Gantz, Kryscio and Bada (2007), the parents' physical activity is reported to influence children's physical activity. Normal weight and at risk overweight children aged 10 to 14 years were recruited. The results revealed that parents, especially mothers' involvement in physical activity was more beneficial than the fathers' in influencing children to begin and continue physical activity. This shows that parents are important sources of support who play crucial roles in their children's health by modelling appropriate behaviour to low fitness-children as well as overweight children. Hancock, Dyk and Jones (2012) examined adolescents' participation in sports, school and community extramural activities to assess the influence of different involvement roles and adult support on leadership skills. The study found that adolescents who perceived their adult support more positively had more positive perceptions of their leadership skills. They also found that adolescents' perceptions towards leadership skills were influenced by being involved in extracurricular activities and by being supported by their parents and other adults.

Fraser-Thomas *et al.* (2005) noted that studies done earlier found that children who perceive more positive interactions, support and encouragement and less pressure from parents experience more sport enjoyment, show more preference for challenge and display more intrinsic motivation than other children. These studies also found that positive parental influence has been associated with greater attraction to sport and physical activity. It has also been noted that parents play a role throughout their children's development. During early childhood, parents play a leadership role and during later adolescent stage, they play a following and supportive role (Fraser *et al.*, 2005).

According to Hedstrom and Gould (2004), parents affect young athletes' motivation and competence as well as emotional responses. Hedstrom and Gould (2004) have observed existing research done by Brustad, Babkes and Smith (2001) which shows that parents can influence a child's motivation, perceived competence and enjoyment of sport. They also stress that the feedback a child gets from a parent and the parent's behaviour can affect how long a child stays involved in sport as well as how a child perceives his or her abilities. Also the outcome a parent expects or emphasises to a child, such as winning a game can have a major effect on what a child believes as success in sport. This means that the manner in which the parent acts before, during and after a game can cause a great deal of anxiety to a child and this can have an impact on the child's performance. It is important that parents should reinforce competence so that the child could become more confident and motivated to perform and also to look up to parents for information regarding future performances. Hedstrom and Gould (2004) also mention that parents can influence their children's emotional responses through unfavourable evaluations resulting in children having a fear of failure before the performance of a physical activity. They therefore stress that parents should play a role in the development of perceived competence, intrinsic motivation and emotional development.

2.2 Conclusion

This chapter has discussed the experiences of the adolescent learners in relation to their participation in sports and whether sports involvement enhances their self-esteem. In addition, the chapter elaborated on the relationship between adolescent learners' participation in sport and self-esteem. The reasons why youth get involved in sport, the benefits of participating in sport which include physical, social and psychological development have been also discussed. Peer acceptance and its relationship between sports participation and global self-esteem; sports participation and self-esteem and how these improve the learners' academic performance; the importance of gender role orientation which enables youth to choose sports that they are comfortable with; and internal and external barriers to participation have also been deliberated on. The chapter also emphasised the role the school and the parents should play with regard to sport participation and how this can assist learners to maintain a physically active and healthy lifestyle. The next chapter discusses conceptual and theoretical frameworks used in the study.

CHAPTER 3

Conceptual and Theoretical Frameworks

3.1 Introduction

Chapter 3 begins by defining, and then discusses, the relevance of the concepts and theories selected in the study. Self-determination Theory, for example, is one of the theories selected for this study. This theory proposes that individuals have innate tendencies towards personal growth (Hill, 2011). The other two theories selected are Cognitive Evaluation Theory and Achievement Goal Theory. These theories were selected because they draw quite directly from what constitutes satisfaction for the individual to the point where there is visible improvement in their life. If one's life is improved, the likelihood is that high sense self-esteem would be achieved. Concepts selected for the purposes of this study are Participation, Learner, Sport and Self-esteem. The number of concepts and theories used in this study are, consequently, described and explained in detail in the different sections of this Chapter.

3.2 Conceptual framework

3.2.1 Participation

Participation in this study refers to involvement in organised after school activities which are important for adolescents. According to Fredricks and Eccles (2008), youth begin to make their own decisions about how to spend their after school time in early adolescence. They agree with Feldman and Matjasko (2005), Mahoney and Stattin (2000) that involvement or participation in organised activities that take place after school hours is associated with positive outcomes. On the contrary, they argue that involvement or participation in unsupervised activities is related to less favourable adjustment. In addition, Coakley and Pike (2009) write that successful participation in sport is related to three factors:

- a person's abilities, characteristics and resources;
- the influence of significant others, that is, parents, siblings, teachers, peers and role models and;
- the availability of opportunities to play sports in ways that are personally satisfying.

3.2.2 Sport

The traditional definition of sports mentioned by Coakley (2001, p. 20) is: “sports are institutionalised competitive activities that involve rigorous physical exertion or the use of relatively complex physical skills by participants motivated by personal enjoyment and external rewards”. Donnelly, Dornell, Wells and Coakley (2007) refer to sport as all forms of physical activity that contribute to physical fitness, mental well-being and social interaction, such as play, recreation, organised or competitive sport, and indigenous sports and games. Berger and Tober in Tenenbaum and Eklund (2007) have used the definition from the American College of Sports Medicine (2006) and from Berger, Pargman, and Weinberg (2007) which refers to sport as organised physical activity that is characterised by a formal structure, focus on competition and winning and elite levels of performance. According to the White Paper on Sport and Recreation (2010), sport is a structured physical activity with the following characteristics: Physical exertion, rule bound, element of competition, external rewards, physically and mentally beneficial, contributes to social outcomes, has economic benefits, causal or organised and facility dependant. What is common to all these definitions is the idea of physical activity and external satisfaction. This study argues that external satisfaction might, in one way or the other, lead to improved self-esteem.

The White Paper on Sports and Recreation also points out that governments the world over are using sport for developmental purposes, and this includes programmes such as sport for peace, fighting poverty and crime, increasing awareness around issues like HIV and Aids, substance abuse and social cohesion. Sport is also used to bridge relationships across social, economic and cultural divisions within society, as well as building a sense of sharing and equality among the participants. In this study, sport refers to organised after school sports. Learners are at liberty to choose which sport or sports to participate in.

3.2.3 Learner

Learner in this study refers to an adolescent high school student who is engaged in physical activity or sport. The learners under study are in grades 10, 11 and 12 and their ages range from 15 to 18 years. Sanacore (2008) distinguishes between a reluctant learner and an inspired or autonomous learner. The reluctant learners demonstrate reluctance during activities and teachers have to attempt to motivate these learners by using strategies and activities with varying degrees of success. To develop autonomous learners, Sanacore (2008) suggests that

teachers must use intrinsic satisfiers and valuations which are essential for the long term. The same applies to sports where some learners who have the potential for sports may be reluctant to participate. The sports coordinator or the coach may find ways to encourage these learners to take part in sport and become inspired or autonomous learners. This study focussed on inspired learners because the researcher wanted to learn if their participation in sport actually enhances their self-esteem. This knowledge, the researcher hoped, would assist in encouraging others to partake in sports due to the benefits associated with it.

3.2.4 Self-esteem

Ferkany (2008) claims that self-esteem is a crucial element of the confidence and motivation children need in order to engage in and achieve educational pursuits, especially in certain fields of instruction such as physical education. Binsinger, Laure and Ambard (2006) conducted a study on the first year secondary school pupils in France. The aim of the study was to measure the influence of a regular extracurricular sports practice on self-esteem and trait anxiety. Roseberg's (as cited in Binsinger *et al.*, 2006, p. 126) defines self-esteem as "a positive or negative orientation towards oneself, an overall evaluation of one's worth of value". A study by Binsinger *et al.* (2006) revealed that the boys' and girls' self-esteem decreases after the transition to secondary schools due to adjustment to the school change. Prevention programmes like physical education or sport may be introduced to improve the adolescents' self-esteem to enable them to cope with mental stress. This study hoped to promote such programmes at school level. While the researcher acknowledges that it is difficult, but not impossible to generalise findings from a case study research design, it is, nevertheless, possible to learn from such findings.

In an article reviewed and updated by Alleyne (2003), self-esteem is defined by the degree worth and competence that women attribute to themselves. Alleyne (2003) believes that young women may enhance their self-esteem through sport by having a positive image of their bodies and the physical skills that they develop. The recognition that girls and young women receive from their families and friends makes them feel positive self-worth. Social relationships are also developed as a result of being involved in sport and physical activity. Mann, Hosman, Schaalma and de Vries (2004) first mention the importance of self-evaluation to mental and social well-being and its influence on aspirations, personal goals and interaction with others. They see the beliefs and evaluations that people hold about themselves and which determine who they are, as powerful inner influences that provide an

internal guiding mechanism and which guide and nurture individuals through life and govern their behaviour. They also refer to people's concepts and feelings about themselves as their self-concept and self-esteem.

According to Mann *et al.* (2004), positive self-esteem is seen as both a basic feature of mental health and as a protective factor that contributes to better health and positive social behaviour. In other words, positive self-esteem which encompasses life aspects like achievements, success, satisfaction and the ability to cope with diseases, guards against the impact of negative influences. On the contrary, poor self-esteem can contribute to the development of mental disorders and social problems like depression, anorexia nervosa, bulimia, anxiety, violence, substance abuse and high risk behaviours (Mann *et al.*, 2004).

In their study about the interrelationships between body weight, self-esteem and performance in childhood, Wang and Veugelers (2008) noted that physical activity affects self-esteem in a positive manner and sedentary activities affect self-esteem and school performance in a negative manner. McClure, Tanski, Kingubury, Gerrard and Sargent (2010) suggest that an identification of modifiable risk factors for low self-esteem in adolescents is important in developing interventions to prevent and to enhance adolescents' low self-esteem. Throughout this study the abovementioned concepts are used so as to conceptualise the direction this study intends to take, for example, the study intends to focus on inspired adolescents who take part in sports at school level so as to learn what inspired them so that others could be involved as well. The lenses through which this study was perceived are discussed hereunder as well as their relevance.

3.3 Theoretical framework

3.3.1 Self-determination theory

The Self-determination theory (SDT) developed by Richard Ryan and Edward Deci in 1985 is one of the theories relevant to this study. The central idea of the SDT is that individuals have innate tendencies towards personal growth and vitality that are either satisfied or thwarted by their immediate environment (Hill, 2011). The SDT distinguishes between two types of motivation, that is intrinsic motivation and extrinsic motivation. In order to understand what is meant by intrinsic and extrinsic motivation, Wilson (2009) has used McCullagh's (2005) definition of motivation which is "the intensity of and direction of effort". The intensity refers to the quality of effort while direction refers to what you are

drawn to. Vallerand (2004) states that “a widely accepted definition of motivation is that it represents the hypothetical construct used to describe internal and/or external forces that lead to the initiation, direction, intensity, and persistence of behaviour”. Therefore, Vallerand (2004) believes that motivation leads to action. Wilson (2009) also believes that enhanced motivation promotes learning, performance, enjoyment and persistence in sport. In the context of this study this theory is relevant because it shows innate ability of an individual to grow, and the motivation to persistently do what is beneficial to him or her, in this case that was sport participation. Not only do individuals have to be motivated to participate but also the environment from where such participation takes place is important. The environment from where the study took place was conducive for learners to participate in sport in terms of the programme for sport that the school designed, variety of sport facilities available as well as the appointment of sport coordinator at the school.

3.3.1.1 Intrinsic Motivation

According to Ryan and Deci (2000), intrinsic motivation refers to doing something because it is inherently interesting and enjoyable. Georgiadis, Biddle and Chatzisarantis (2001) and Taylor and Ntoumanis (2007) refer to intrinsic motivation as the most self-determined regulation which involves pursuing an activity for its own sake. According to Mouritidis and Michou (2011), autonomous motivation such as intrinsic motivation refers to activities that athletes choose to undertake because they find them interesting and enjoyable. This type of motivation can be related to learners who participate in and are passionate about sports and who do not expect any external rewards. Koka and Hein (2003) also state that learners need to be intrinsically motivated in order to engage in physical activity. To support this idea, Goudas, Dermitzaki and Bagiatis (2001) maintain that students with sports experience reported significantly higher ratings on intrinsic motivation than students without any sports experience. The same applies to students with higher physical self-competence who reported liking physical education more than students with low physical self-competence. Weinberg and Gould (2003) further distinguish between three types of intrinsic motivation, that is, knowledge, accomplishment and stimulation.

Intrinsic motivation to know refers to engaging in an activity for the pleasure one gets from learning, acquiring and studying something new in their sport; intrinsic motivation to accomplish relates to engaging in an activity for the pleasure and satisfaction experienced from mastering various skills; and being motivated for stimulation occurs when one engages

in an activity to experience pleasant sensations (Weinberg and Gould, 2003 and Vallerand 2004, p. 60). Another type of motivation apart from intrinsic motivation is extrinsic motivation.

3.3.1.2 Extrinsic Motivation

Extrinsic motivation refers to doing something because it leads to a separable outcome (Ryan and Deci, 2000). For example, exercising to lose weight, improve appearance and social recognition represent extrinsic motives. Another example is that given by Wilson (2009) about extrinsically motivated athletes who participate in sport for external causes such as rewards, positive feedback, recognition, etc. rather than for the inherent satisfaction of performing an activity itself. Mouritidis and Michou (2011) use the term controlled motivation to describe extrinsic motivation which means that the athlete is forced to undertake an activity. This type of motivation reflects a low degree of self-determined motivation whereby behaviour is governed by dictation instead of one's willingness and choice.

Georgiadis *et al.* (2001) see extrinsic motivated behaviour as varying in their self-determination and having either as relatively internal or external locus of causality or perceived locus of causality (PLOC). PLOC represents the degree to which the regulation of an extrinsically motivated behaviour has been internalised. Internalised regulated behaviour is made up of three types of regulation, that is, introjected regulation, identified regulation and integrated regulation. External regulation and internal regulation have been added to complete the self-determination continuum (Georgiadis *et al.* (2001).

3.3.1.2.1 Introjected regulation

Introjected regulation occurs when athletes participate in an activity because of various pressures. The motivation is not self-determined since the individual experiences pressure which is self-imposed and increased tension and anxiety. For example, the athlete would go to practice in order not to feel guilty.

3.3.1.2.2 Identified regulation

This type of regulation occurs when an athlete freely performs an activity out of choice

because it is of high value and important to the participant even if it is not pleasant in itself. For example, playing and training hard in order to lose weight.

3.3.1.2.3 Integrated regulation

Integrated regulation occurs when athletes perform activities in order to benefit from different aspects of life. In other words athletes engage in an activity not for the pleasure of participating in it. For example, training and playing hard in order to become a better player.

3.3.1.3 Self-determination theory (SDT) and psychological needs

Self-determination theory (SDT) also suggests that everyone has basic needs for autonomy, competence and relatedness (Deci and Ryan, 2008). The satisfaction of these needs predicts psychological wellbeing (Deci and Ryan, 2008). Autonomy means that the individual acts volitionally or strives to determine his or her own behaviour; competence means that the individual experiences an inner sense of worth and relatedness means that the individual attempts to have satisfying and coherent involvement with others. According to Hein and Hagger (2007), behaviours that are performed for autonomous reasons are considered as the type of behaviours that satisfy psychological needs. Engaging in such behaviours will result in positive and emotional outcomes such as non-contingent self-esteem and positive affect (Hein and Hagger, 2007). This is in contrast to self-esteem that is contingent or the performance of a behaviour which has a controlling function. In the case of learners participating in sport, true self-esteem is developed as these learners engage in sport independently and have the power to choose sport without being forced. Although SDT's main focus is on intrinsic motivation, the theory does not say what causes this motivation. For this reason, Ryan and Deci (2000) developed a sub-theory to SDT known as Cognitive Evaluation Theory (CET).

3.3.2 Cognitive Evaluation Theory (CET)

According to Ryan and Deci (2000), Cognitive Evaluation Theory (CET) argues that interpersonal events and structures such as rewards, communications, feedback that contribute towards feelings of competence during action can enhance intrinsic motivation for that action because they allow satisfaction of the basic psychological need for competence. For example, satisfactory challenges are predicted to facilitate intrinsic motivation. Ryan and

Deci (2000) further state that feelings of competence will not enhance intrinsic motivation unless they are accompanied by a sense of autonomy. Therefore people must not only experience perceived competence, but also experience their behaviour to be self-determined if intrinsic motivation is to be enhanced. In other words, people must experience satisfaction for both competence and autonomy in order to maintain a high level of intrinsic motivation.

Sheldon, Turban, Brown, Barrick and Judge (2003) noted the argument by Deci and Ryan that extrinsic rewards, especially material or tangible rewards, undermine intrinsic motivation, if such rewards are experienced as an attempt to control their behaviour. For example, athletes who play for money may feel controlled or feel a lack of autonomy or freedom. However, verbal rewards such as praise can enhance intrinsic motivation and non-contingent rewards, that is, rewards given unexpectedly after completion of the task have little negative effect on intrinsic motivation (Sheldon *et al.*, 2003). Another theory which can be linked to this study is the achievement goal theory. Like SDT it is one of the most popular motivation theories in physical activity research (Georgiadis, Biddle and Chetzisarantis (2001). Achievement Goal Theory is discussed here under in terms of its benefits and relevance to this study.

3.3.3 Achievement Goal Theory

According to Kavussanu and Harnisch (2000), the achievement goal theory suggests that two conceptions of competence operate in achievement contexts and that competence can be considered as capacity or improvement. The two conceptions are embedded within two goal orientations, namely task and ego orientation. To support this idea, Georgiadis *et al.* (2001) state that the achievement goal theory was based originally on research in academic settings and it theorised that individuals interpret competence, ability and success in at least two different ways, that is, task orientations and ego orientations. In this context the theory will be linked to sports participation.

Task oriented individuals seek personal improvement and task mastery whereas ego oriented individuals seek to prove themselves by outperforming others and demonstrating superior ability. Task orientation is related to the self or to one's own perceived mastery and is generally related to high levels of motivation. In other words, it is self-referenced. Ego orientation on the other hand is related to social comparison and is therefore externally referenced in nature (Georgiadis *et al.*, 2001). Hein and Hagger (2006) feel that both

orientations can lead to high perceptions of competence. For example, a learner who feels competent in a certain sport where his or her aim is to excel is likely to feel successful. This positive motivational outcome is related to intrinsic motivation found in the self-determination theory. However, a learner with a high ego orientation and a low task orientation will tend to feel incompetent and unsuccessful as he or she will not find the mastery goals to fall back on. In other words, the learner will be extrinsically motivated and may end up dropping out of the physical activity. Kavussanu and Harnisch (2000) further investigated the relationship between global self-esteem and goal orientations in athletes and found that high task-oriented children reported significantly higher self-esteem than low task-oriented children. They also concluded that both task orientations and ego orientations should be considered in the study of self-esteem.

3.4 Conclusion

The concepts of participation, learner, sport and self-esteem have been defined and discussed as well as the three theories of motivation that were used for research in physical activity, that is, SDT, Achievement goal theory and CET, their relevance and significance to the study have also been discussed. All three theories focused mainly on the importance of intrinsic motivation. Concerning SDT, intrinsic motivation or autonomous motivation emphasises the need for learners to have a higher physical self-competence. Intrinsic motivation also stresses knowledge, accomplishment and stimulation which learners must experience in order to engage in an activity. Extrinsic motivation which refers to engaging in an activity for external causes, consists of introjected regulation, identified regulation and integrated regulation. External regulation and internal regulation have been added to complete the self-determination continuum. SDT also highlighted the psychological needs of autonomy, competence and relatedness which need to be satisfied as they predict the psychological wellbeing and that engaging in behaviours for autonomous reasons will result in non-contingent self-esteem. CET claims that feelings of competence should be accompanied by a sense of autonomy in order to enhance intrinsic motivation. Extrinsic rewards such as material rewards rather than verbal and non-contingent rewards undermine intrinsic motivation. The achievement goal theory suggested two orientations that is, the task orientations which are self-referenced and ego orientations which are externally referenced. Intrinsic motivation found in SDT was therefore related to CET which emphasised feelings of competency and a sense of autonomy to enhance intrinsic motivation which in turn is related

to task orientations found in the achievement goal theory. The next Chapter will deal with research design chosen for this study. A number of issues regarding methodological issues are raised.

CHAPTER 4

Research Design and Methodology

4.1 Introduction

Chapter 4 discusses the research design and methodology adopted in this study and used to gather data. The context in which the research study took place and the manner in which the participants were accessed and selected for the study are described. The participants' roles are defined. In this chapter the case study approach is adopted, and its purpose and design for this research study are highlighted. The instruments designed are described according to their purpose and design. The ethical considerations are drawn on and the deep implications of these considerations for the study are revealed. Finally, the limitations of the research design are identified and engaged with.

4.2 Context of the Study

The study was carried out in the Pinetown area, KwaZulu-Natal Province, South Africa. The school where the study was conducted is Vuyolwethu¹ High School, a girls' school found in the middle class to upmarket Pinetown suburb. This school is well resourced and it strives for excellence in all areas. It also offers a variety of sports activities such as netball, softball, touch rugby, hockey, soccer, basket-ball, water polo, swimming, cricket, volley ball and tennis. The teacher who is responsible for sports is a qualified practitioner in the field of sports and her intentions are to develop leadership in extramural activities and social outreach programmes.

4.3 Accessing and Selecting Research Participants

Due to the nature of this study, it was important to seek the assistance of the sports coordinator in selecting learners to participate in this study. The willingness and interest of the participants was important for the study. Therefore the first attempt made to the participants involved was a direct address of the researcher to the sports coordinator. Firstly, I phoned the receptionist of Vuyolwethu High School and asked for an appointment to meet the Principal in order to ask for permission to conduct the study in her school. I explained the

¹ Pseudonym of the school

details of the study and the type of participants I needed for this study. A letter of request accompanied with the consent form was then issued to the principal. After the principal had agreed that I could conduct the study I then made an appointment to see the sports coordinator. This was on the third week of July 2012. I explained to the receptionist the purpose of the meeting. She contacted me a few hours later informing me about the date and time of the meeting. During the meeting with the sports coordinator, I thanked her for making time to meet me and introduced myself and also explained the reason why I came to see her. Since she teaches physical education, she offered to help me with the selection of six experienced learners in sports from Grade 10, 11 and 12 classes and whose ages range from 15 to 18 years. After a week, the sports coordinator informed me that she had identified the six learners to participate in the study. I then requested her to also participate in the study in the form of a semi-structured interview to which she agreed. I then asked to bring consent letters for the parents of learners to participate in the study as well as the participants' consent letters the following week. When we met again the following week she made a suggestion to give the consent letters, that is, the parents' consent letters and the learners' consent letters, to the participants during the physical education lesson. We also made arrangements for a focus group interview and a semi-structured interview to take place on the third week of August 2012. The sports coordinator reassured me that she would ensure that the signed consent letters are returned by the learners to the school to be collected by me the following week, that is, the first week of August. The letters were available for collection on the said week. The interviews took place as decided on the third week of August.

The questions asked in this study were about the learners' experiences regarding sports participation and whether being involved in sports enhances their self-esteem. The questions were based on the following key research questions:

- What can schools do to enhance self-esteem of learners through sports?
- How does sport enhance a learner's self-esteem?

The aims are as follows:

- To investigate what can schools do to enhance self-esteem of learners through sport.
- To investigate how does sport enhance a learner's self-esteem.

It was therefore hoped that learners would come to realise that being involved in sports does not end at high school but can go as far as adulthood.

4.4 Case Study as Methodology

In this study an in-depth understanding of the relationship between a particular high school learner's participation in sport and their self-esteem is explored. The case study being explored in this study is the relationship between the two aspects mentioned above. Yin (2009, pp. 72-73) recognises the provision of "a unique example of real people in real situations". In this circumstance case studies can penetrate situations in ways that are not always susceptible to numerical analysis (Cohen *et al.*, 2011). Hence Yin's (2009) definition of a case study is adopted here for its recognition of studying real people in real situations. For this study, learners were selected at a particular school so that they become participants and the intention was to study the real sporting situation learners engaged in and how that impacts on their self-esteem. It was felt that this case study framework captured the essence of case study research of single case study design.

A case study research method was used within a qualitative approach based on an interpretive perspective; as it has been alluded to above. In other words, it was also used to understand how participants relate and interact with each other in a specific situation and how they make meaning of phenomena under study. In defining the case study, Cohen *et al.* (2011, p. 289) refer to Creswell (1994) who sees a case study as a single instance of a bounded system such as a child, a clique, a class, a school, a community. Since this definition is not clear, Cohen *et al.* (2011) cites Yin (2009) who argues that a case study is a study of a case in a context and that it is important to set the case within its context, that is, rich descriptions and details are often a feature of a case study. De Vos, Strydom, Fouche and Delpont (2005) state that the exploration and description of the case takes place through detailed in-depth data collection methods, involving multiple sources of information that are rich in contexts. Sources may include interviews, documents, observations or archival records. De Vos *et al.* (2005) also point out that case study researchers seek to enter the field with the knowledge of relevant literature before they conduct field research. Cohen *et al.* (2011) further maintain that a case study provides a unique example of real people in real situations. In this study, this refers to the participants involved in organised school sports. To add to this idea, Bergman (2008) states that the case study approach gives the researcher the possibility to investigate a social process in a detailed way in order to grasp the complexities of social interactions.

Maree (2011) notes the criticism of case study methodology, that is, the dependence on a single case. She also notes the claim that the methodology is incapable of providing a

generalising conclusion. Nevertheless, Maree (2011) also maintains that the purpose of the case study is aimed at gaining greater insight and understanding of the dynamics of a specific situation which was the case in this study. Cohen *et al.* (2011), stress that a case study requires in-depth data. This means that the researcher should have the ability to gather data that address fitness of purpose and probing skills. It also means that the researcher should be an effective questioner, listener and prober who have the ability to make inferences, that is, reading between the lines, and also be able to adapt to changing and emerging situations (Cohen, *et al.* (2011). Since the case study uses data collection methods such as observation, interview, artefacts, documents and survey, and different methodologies such as action research, experiment, ethnography, the experienced researcher must be knowledgeable about these and must know how and when to use them. In the context of this study classroom observation, focus group interviews as well as semi-structured interviews were used as data collection tools.

Cohen *et al.* (2011), further stress that the case study researcher must be clear on the ethics of the research in relation to disclosing private or sensitive data and must know how to protect vulnerable people. The researcher must therefore maintain anonymity and confidentiality when reporting about participants. Such ethical issues are discussed in section 4.8 below. Having the subject knowledge and research expertise is another requirement of a case study researcher. This according to Cohen *et al.* (2011) includes being highly prepared, to have a sense of realism about the situation being researched, to be an excellent communicator and to have appropriate personality characteristics. According to Maree (2011), a key strength of case study method is the use of multiple sources and techniques in the data gathering process. The researcher makes a decision in advance regarding the evidence to gather and the analysis techniques to use with the data to answer the research questions. The researcher also knows that the data to be gathered is largely qualitative and will decide what tools to use to collect data.

4.4.1 The case study research structure

The case study research structure is adapted from Yin's (2009) understanding of case study research. Yin (2009) argues that a case study is a study in a context and that it is important to set the case study within its context. Yin's (2009) understanding begins by exploring the case in question. In this study, it is the impact on self-esteem as a result of sports activities learners engage in.

4.5 Participants

The researcher sought the assistance of the sports coordinator regarding the selection of the participants. The sports coordinator was considered as an ideal person to assist since she is also a physical education teacher. A purposive sampling technique was used and according to Maree (2011, p. 79), sampling in qualitative research refers to the process used to select a portion of the population for study and purposive sampling is a technique that is used by the researcher in selecting the type of participants with certain qualities (Cohen *et al.*, 2011). In this case, the following six learners doing Grade 10 [two (n = 2)], 11 [two (n = 2)] and 12 [two (n = 2)] whose ages range from 15 to 18 years and who are engaged and are serious about sports were selected as participants to provide an in-depth information about the central phenomena the participants selected are indicated in Table 4.1 below.

Table 4.1 Selection of Participants

Learners' names ²	Grade	Age
Catherine	10	15 years
Pamela	10	16 years
Sally	11	17 years
Nomsa	11	17 years
Aviwe	12	18 years
Stella	12	18 years

The purpose of selecting six learners was to enable each participant to have enough time to talk in the group, hence in-depth descriptions and thick data, and since all participants had a great deal to share about the topic under study based on their experiences. The learners were also chosen to represent only their school and not all the schools in the Pinetown area. Creswell and Plano Clark (2011, p. 173) states that the inquirer or the researcher purposefully selects individuals and sites that can provide the necessary information. Therefore, researchers intentionally select participants who have the same experiences regarding the central phenomenon. That was taken into consideration in this study. This is in contrast to the random sampling procedures that characterise quantitative research, which is based on statistical probability theory Bloomberg & Wolpe (2008). Cohen *et al.* (2011, p.157)

² The names used for learners are pseudonyms

maintain that “purposive sampling is used in order to access ‘knowledgeable people’, that is, those who have in-depth knowledge about particular issues ... by virtue of their expertise or experience”. This means that participants were selected because of some defining characteristics that make them the holders of the data needed for the study (Maree, 2011, p.79). It has been mentioned above that the participants in this study had the desired knowledge and experiences.

4.6 Research Method

The method that was used for this study is a qualitative method. The qualitative method makes use of epistemological assumptions which, in this case, were guided by an interpretive paradigm characterised by a concern for the individual. This means that the study was more subjective, that is, it was on people’s subjective experiences on how they construct the social world by sharing meaning. In other words interpretive or qualitative researchers begin with individuals and set out to understand the interpretations of the world around them (Cohen *et al.*, 2011, p. 18). According to Maree (2011, p. 50) the qualitative research method attempts to collect rich descriptive data in respect of a particular context with the intention of developing an understanding of what is being observed or studied. The qualitative method therefore focuses on how people see and understand the world and construct meaning out of their experiences. Maree (2011, p. 55) further adds that qualitative researchers believe that the world is made up of people with their own assumptions, intentions, attitudes, beliefs and values, and that the way of knowing reality is by exploring the experiences of others regarding a specific phenomenon. This study focused on learners’ experiences regarding sport participation and self-esteem.

Joubish, Khurram, Ahmed, Fatima and Haider (2011) maintain that qualitative research is used to help understand how people feel and why they feel the way they do. In this study, focus has been on learners’ experiences, beliefs, attitudes, values, feelings about sports participation and how this involvement in sport enhances their self-esteem. The views of the sports coordinator also helped to understand further how significant sport participation is and what contributions this engagement in sport could do to learners’ lifestyles.

4.7 Data Collection Procedures

Maree (2011, p. 78) states that qualitative research is based on a naturalistic approach that seeks to understand phenomena in real world settings and not in an experimental situation. Therefore, unobtrusive data gathering techniques like interviews are carried out in the naturalist or interpretive setting. Before discussing what research instruments will be used by the researcher to gather data, it is essential to first discuss the role of the researcher in a qualitative study. According to Maree (2011, p. 79), qualitative studies accept researcher subjectivity as something that is very important. The researcher is also seen as a research instrument. This means that the qualitative researcher's involvement and immersion in the changing real world situation is essential since the researcher needs to record those changes in the real life context (Maree, 2011, p. 79). Joubish, Khurram, Ahmed, Fatima and Kaider (2011) see the human element of qualitative inquiry as both strength and weakness. Strength means that the researcher uses human insight and experience and weakness depends heavily on the researcher's skill, training, intellect, discipline and creativity. The researcher therefore is seen as the instrument of qualitative inquiry and the quality of research depends heavily on the researcher's qualities as a human being (Joubish *et al.*, 2011).

The research instruments in this study were focus group interview for the learners and semi-structured interview for the sports coordinator. The purpose of using two types of interviews was to obtain in-depth understanding of the phenomenon under study. The questions for both interviews are open-ended and the researcher's intention was for participants to provide information based on the key research questions (Cohen *et al.*, 2011). Before the interviews began, the researcher first obtained permission from the participants to record the responses on tape. The tape recorder is a suitable tool to use as it allows a much fuller record than notes taken during the interview. Tape recording can also enable the researcher to concentrate on how the interview is proceeding and where to go next (Cohen, *et al.* 2011). However, tape recording can have its disadvantages in that participants may not like being recorded and as a result may withdraw. In this case, Cohen *et al.* (2011) suggests that tape recorders should therefore be placed inconspicuously in order to unnerve the participant or the novice researcher. It is also suggested by Maree (2011) that it helps to take notes in order to review the answers and to ask additional questions at the end of the interview. Further, it is advisable to listen to the tape and to review the notes as soon as the interview is over in order to identify gaps that need to be explored in a follow-up interview. In this study the researcher

used a tape recorder to tape the responses of the participants. The researcher also took some notes to keep track of the questions asked and answers given and to probe for more answers.

4.7.1 Focus group interview

According to Cohen *et al.* (2011), focus groups are a form of group interview between the interviewer and the participants and the reliance is on the interaction within the group who discuss the topic supplied by the researcher. The view that is yielded is a collective rather than an individual. The purpose of a focus group interview is to promote self-disclosure among participants (De Vos *et al.*, 2005) so that the researcher knows what people really think and feel. This results in the participants interacting with each other making it possible for their views to emerge. The data then emerges from the interaction of the group.

De Vos *et al.* (2005) points out that focus group interviews are useful when multiple responses are needed on a specific topic. They also mention that focus group interviews are fundamentally a way of listening to people and learning from them. As a result lines of communication are created and this makes it possible for continual communication between the facilitator and the respondents and among the respondents themselves. Responses can be obtained within a short time and this is not the case with individual interviews. Maree (2011) stresses that full participation and interaction among participants should be encouraged and probing should be used to steer the discussions or to clarify aspects. However the interviewer should try and remain in the background. Maree (2011) also stresses that, towards the end of the interview all participants should be focused on the heart of the research question and the researcher should ensure that the final question often returns to a broader and more general wrap-up where the researcher summarises the salient points that emerged from the interaction.

The focus group interview took place in the school's boardroom after school on the 24th August 2012. Since this was the first meeting with the participants, the researcher first introduced herself and asked the participants to introduce themselves. The researcher explained the purpose of the study as indicated on the consent letters (See Appendix 5). Regarding the answering of the research questions, the researcher explained to the participants that she would require them to share their experiences and exchange ideas about sports participation and whether engaging in sports enhances their self-esteem. The questions asked were about the attitudes of participants towards sport, the kind of support they get from

the school, teachers, parents and friends. They were also required to indicate how sport contributes to their school work. The responses to the questions were tape recorded. The researcher also wrote some notes in order to assist her with probing for clarification in case answers were not clear. The interview session took about 45 minutes to complete. So as a group (participants) responding to the interview questions it was possible for the researcher to find information regarding their feelings and attitudes towards sport. They were able to disclose this information in the form of multiple responses. The researcher then summarised the responses in case someone wanted to add something, nobody did, and thanked the participants for taking part in the interview and for their time.

4.7.2 Semi-structured interview

The questions for the sports coordinator were the same as those of the learners. The reason for asking similar questions was done purposefully in order to find out if sports participation can enhance a learner's self-esteem. Maree (2011) states that a semi-structured interview does not take long since the participant is required to answer a set of predetermined questions. A semi-structured interview like focus group does allow probing and clarification of answers. According to Maree (2011), the researcher needs to be attentive to the participants' responses in order to identify new emerging lines of inquiry that are directly related to the phenomenon being studied.

The semi-structured interview was also conducted in the school's boardroom after school on the 25th August 2012. The researcher again explained the purpose of the study to the participant and also explained that the expected responses would mainly be about her views regarding sports participation and how sports can enhance a learner's self-esteem. The questions included her views about the attitudes of learners towards sport, the support learners should get from the school, teachers, parents and their friends as well as her views about how sport can contribute to the learner's school work. The responses given by the sports coordinator were recorded on tape and notes were taken. Probing was used to ensure that all answers were written down and clear on tape. The interview took about 35 minutes. The researcher thanked the participant for her assistance in organising the interviews and for her time. She also promised to share the final report with the school after everything has been finalised.

4.8 Ethical Measures

Cohen *et al.* (2011) emphasise that it is necessary to obtain the consent and cooperation of subjects who are to assist in investigations and of significant others in institutions or organisations to provide the research facilities. Obtaining consent is considered to be very important especially if the participants are going to experience stress, pain or invasion of privacy.

In this case, the researcher firstly approached the principal of the school where the research was to be conducted to seek permission to undertake research. A letter explaining what the research is about and signed by the researcher and her supervisor was presented to the principal. A letter of consent for the principal's approval and which required her signature and the school stamp was also submitted. On being granted permission by the principal to carry on with the research, the next step was to apply for ethical clearance from the institution where the researcher is registered in order to conduct research on the selected topic. The researcher also sought permission from the Department of Education to conduct research at the school of her choice. Having been granted permission the researcher phoned the school to make arrangements for interviewing the participants on the days and times that would be convenient for them and which would not interfere with the smooth running of the school. Since learners at high school are still minors, letters explaining about the research and consent letters requesting parents to allow their children to participate in the study were given to the learners with the help of the sports coordinator to take home to their parents, to be returned later with the parents' signatures. The respondents were also given consent letters to sign. It was made clear to the respondents that participation was voluntary and that confidentiality and anonymity would be maintained at all times. It was also indicated that the respondents' names would not be mentioned in the study. Instead pseudonyms would be used. Also the name of the school would not be mentioned.

4.9 Measures to Ensure Validity and Reliability

Maree (2011, p37) argues that although it is important that results should remain similar or consistent, this is not possible in qualitative research. That is why quality assurance should be facilitated. Maree (2011) therefore emphasises that in order to be taken seriously by the rest of the scientific community, the researchers should ensure that the data collected corresponds with reality. To ensure validity, the researcher would use rich descriptions of the

participants to facilitate reliability. The researcher would also ensure reliability by ensuring that the results are consistent with the data collected.

According to Creswell and Plano Clark (2011, p. 211), validity in qualitative research is more important than reliability as it determines whether the account provided by the researcher and the participants is accurate, trustworthy or credible. Creswell and Plano Clark (2011) also mention some strategies that can be used to determine validity in qualitative research. One of these is member-checking in which the researcher takes summaries of the findings such as case studies, major themes, theoretical models, etc. and ask the participants whether the findings are a true reflection of their experiences. Another approach consists of reporting disconfirming evidence, that is, the information that is contrary to the one indicated by the established evidence. Asking others to examine the data is another approach. The others may include peers such as graduate students or academics, who are familiar with qualitative research and content area of the specific research. Also included may be external auditors not affiliated with the research project who would review the database and the qualitative results based on their own criteria. Another validity approach mentioned by Creswell and Plano Clark (2011) is the triangulation of the data drawn from several sources, such as transcripts and pictures. The researcher will use triangulation and the data will be drawn from the transcripts. Evidence for the code or theme will be built from these transcripts.

In this study the issues of validity and reliability were addressed through the honesty, depth, richness and scope of data that was achieved. The type of participants approached and selected for the study also played a part in ensuring that the study was valid. Triangulation in the form of various data collection tools that were used likewise ensured the trustworthiness of the study. While I was aware of the subjectivity and biased nature of the responses given by participants from interviews, I ensured that at least such biasness does not lead to invalidity of the study, but maximise validity (Cohen *et al.*, 2011). This was ensured, for example in this study, by selecting the appropriate methodology for answering the research questions, appropriate sample, appropriate instrumentation for gathering the type of data required (Cohen *et al.*, 2011). These issues are discussed in detail in Chapter 4. Not everything could be done in the satisfaction of the researcher; there were some limitations that needed to be addressed in order to ensure that the study is believable.

4.10 Limitations of the Study

One of the limitations is that the investigation focussed on one selected school in Pinetown and not Pinetown schools in general. Only six learners and one sports coordinator participated in the study. Another limitation is that the researcher's presence during data gathering is often unavoidable in a qualitative research. Therefore, this can affect the participants' responses.

4.11 Conclusion

This chapter has covered the research design and methodology. The aims of the study have been discussed followed by a detailed description of the research method, that is, the qualitative method and the interpretive paradigm. The case study method based on the interpretive perspective has been discussed. The research site and the sampling procedure have been mentioned and the two research instruments, that is, focus group interview and semi-structured interview have been discussed followed by the ethical considerations, measures of validity and reliability and limitations of the study. The next chapter will deal with data analysis.

CHAPTER 5

Data Analysis

5.1 Introduction

This chapter discusses the research findings drawn from the data gathered by the researcher during the focus group interview. These interviews were used to investigate ways in which participation in sport can enhance a learners' self-esteem and data yielded through semi-structured interview on the sports coordinator's views about sports participation. The responses of the participants which have been tape recorded are heard and an interpretation of these responses relate to literature and theoretical framework. Firstly, the learners' attitudes towards sport participation will be analysed and discussed in detail. Also the views of the sports' coordinator regarding these attitudes will be discussed. Secondly, the support structure which includes parents, peers and teachers will be mentioned. Lastly, sport participation and school work will be discussed.

5.2 Attitudes towards Sports

In this study, the attitudes towards sport include reasons for participating in sport, feelings during sports participation, feelings after playing sport, benefits associated with sports participation, advantages of participating in sport and reasons why some learners do not participate in sport. Learners mentioned intrinsic reasons for participating in sport whereas the sports coordinator stated skills learning. Regarding the feelings during and after sports participation, learners pointed out physical and psychological or mental experiences. The benefits and advantages of participating in sport included the awards given by the school, the learning of new skills as well as physical and psychological benefits. Both the leaners and the sport coordinator mentioned various reasons mentioned in 5.2.6 why some learners do not participate in sport.

5.2.1 Reasons for participating in sport

According to Allison (2005), adolescent males engage in physical activity for both intrinsic and extrinsic reasons. Intrinsic reasons include participation in physical activity for enjoyment, mastering skills which include experiencing a sense of satisfaction and

accomplishment when trying to learn a new skill and a sense of mastery resulting from overcoming obstacles and achieving personal goals. Extrinsic reasons refer to engaging in physical activity in order to socialise or spending time with friends and meeting new people. In the study by Allison (2005), the adolescent males mentioned that their engagement in physical activity was in order to achieve a physical benefit that is, staying fit and to burn calories and to feel good about themselves. Also adolescent males participating in physical activity was done in order to achieve psychological health benefits to increase self-confidence, self-discipline, stress relief, less tension and anger during physical activity. In a study by Allender *et al.* (2006), the adolescent girls' reasons for engaging in physical activity were both intrinsic and extrinsic and did not include health benefits. Reasons included weight management, social interaction and enjoyment or fun. Also maintaining a slim body motivated the adolescent girls to participate in sport. According to Pule (2007), adolescents participate in school sports because sport involvement improves their self-image and self-esteem and that they get involved in sports in order to be successful.

Catherine stated:

"It's a great way to relax and have fun with people that you know."

Others responded:

Aviwe: *"It gives you something to grow towards or work towards."*

Stella: *"It gives you a challenge besides school work, you can do something outside the school work."*

Sally: *"It teaches you how to work in a team because you have to work in a team in order to be successful in sports."*

Nomsa: *"It teaches you to accept different people and to learn about other people's talents and generally about other people."*

Pamela: *"I am involved in sport because in a way it's a way for me to release myself from all the stress of school work, possibly things happening at home if there are any at that moment, you know just to release stress, have fun and meet other people, 'cause you know you have new friendships with different people, different things to do."*

Concerning her views about why learners should be involved in sport, the sports coordinator responded:

“It gives them a good balance. It teaches them time management skills, priorities, what is important. What do they need to do? First it teaches them how to work out certain situations, problem solving. Like facing a situation immediately on the field, they have to sort it out, they can’t sort of sit and wait and ask mom or ask their friends for the advice. They would solve the problem then and there.”

The responses given by the learners above can be related to the Achievement Goal Theory which suggests two conceptions embedded within two goal orientations, that is, the task orientation and the ego orientation. It is clear that the learners’ reasons for engaging in sport are to seek personal improvement and task mastery. This means that the participants are task oriented rather than ego oriented and if they continue like they do, they are likely to become successful in life. This orientation is related to intrinsic motivation in the SDT.

Koka and Hein (2003), concurs with Reeve (1996) that students’ needs, cognitions and emotions should be considered to be the primary motivation sources that initiate learning and active behaviour. Koka and Hein (2003) stress that students’ intrinsic motivation is particularly important in physical education and sports. Students in this case, are intrinsically motivated to participate in an activity for the pleasure derived and not for extrinsic rewards.

5.2.2 Feelings during sports participation

Allison (2005) indicates that people engage in sport for intrinsic reasons such as enjoyment, challenge mastering skills which includes experiencing a sense of satisfaction and accomplishment. This happens when a person is trying a new skill. Also included is a sense of mastering a skill which happens when a person is overcoming obstacles and achieving personal goals in physical activity (Allison, 2005).

Regarding feelings experienced during sport participation, Nomsa asserted:

“Pride, because I’ve worked so hard to get where I am and I’m proud that there are people that support me and that I can put something out on the table.”

The other learners responded:

Sally: *“Sense of achievement, that is, being able to get to do something, like she has mentioned that it makes you proud.”*

Catherine: *“Freedom, because sports is there and there are few things that I am good at. There is not much that I know but then with sports I know I can.”*

Aviwe: *“Sense of accomplishment - accomplishing or achieving something.”*

Pamela: *“Very excited, you know, the excitement of the game like being with those people you feel encouraged because you know that no one is there to judge you.”*

Stella: *“You are all here to do the same thing and no one is better than any other person in sport. It’s a good feeling.”*

The responses given by the learners show how intrinsically motivated they are about sports. The fun or excitement of engaging in sport and being with others who are part of the team, as well as the support and encouragement from the significant others makes these learners more determined to play. The feelings experienced by the learners come from within.

5.2.3 Feelings after playing sport

Again, the responses given by the participants below indicate that they are engaged in sport for intrinsic reasons. This includes determination, a sense of achievement and engaging in sport for relaxation.

Aviwe stated:

“When you win it’s exciting but when you lose it is not as bad, but it is okay because you know you will try and do better next time.”

Others responded:

Stella: *“Determination to do better to keep it at that standard.”*

Nomsa: *“Sense of achievement because you have trained so hard - it is like a boost.”*

Catherine: *“Something to reflect on and something to work at on your next game.”*

Pamela: *“Quite tired, really tired but in most cases normally I feel very relaxed and very tired.”*

The feelings experienced by learners after playing sport can be related to the SDT which, according to Ryan and Deci (2000), states that behaviour can be intrinsically regulated when participation is undertaken volitionally for the pleasure, satisfaction and interest gained from exercise itself. Wilson and Rogers (2002) believe that all behaviours regulated via intrinsic motives are self-determined and that intrinsic regulation represents the upper boundary of the self-determination motivation. While the views expressed by learners differ, but there is a sense of determination and a feeling of satisfaction after sport in most of their responses. For example, learners’ talk of excitement, determination and achievement as it is reflected by the above responses from participants.

5.2.4 Benefits associated with sports participation

Concerning the benefits associated with participation in sport, Findlay and Bowker (2009), found that the psychological benefits of physical activity are many and that adolescent girls who participate in sports have higher levels of self-esteem, more positive mood and less depression than girls who do not participate in sports. These benefits include higher levels of self-esteem, more positive mood and less depression, higher grades in school, higher educational aspirations, and satisfaction with body image and lower scores on measures of loneliness and anxiety. Rasberry *et al.* (2011) support the Physical Activity Guidelines Advisory Committee (2008) which states that when youth participate in physical activity every day, health benefits such as healthy bones and muscles, improved muscular strength and endurance, reduced risk of developing chronic diseases, improved self-esteem and reduced stress and anxiety.

Aviwe mentioned how the school awards and recognises learners involved in sport:

“You get colours you get to go to trials and if you are that good you can make it to UKZN team or PETSA team and you get colours on your blazer and a school badge for being in the first team or something like that and you basically get noticed by all the teachers which is good for when you

want to be a prefect cause the teachers know that you have a good reputation and you are a responsible person.”

Aviwe stressed the importance of rewards such as getting colours and a school badge as well as being recognised by the school for being good at sport and for making it to the trials. The Achievement Goal theory states that task oriented individuals seek personal improvement and task mastery, whereas ego oriented individuals seek to prove themselves by outperforming others and demonstrating superior ability. In this case, learners learn sporting skills for personal improvement and not to outperform others. This means that they are intrinsically motivated. Learners also take part in trials and when they succeed they get the awards as well as recognition. Task orientation is therefore related to the self or to one's own perceived mastery and it is also related to high levels of motivation.

Others responded:

Sally: *“Being able to socialise with people.”*

Nomsa: *“My weight is like stable because I eat a lot and since I do sport I don't get fat.”*

Catherine: *“It keeps me motivated like when I wake up in the morning and it's like aha! I have sport today and then it helps me get through that day. And I don't mind sitting because I know at the end of the day I'm gonna be doing something that I enjoy.”*

The benefits mentioned by the learners are both physical and psychological and they also indicate that being involved in sports is both fun and exciting. Socialising with people who are involved in sports and maintaining one's weight through sports means that these learners are motivated to improve themselves in order to enhance their self-esteem.

The sports coordinator responded:

“They have got the physical benefits where it helps them to not put on weight too much. It keeps them nice and healthy. By running around they get a lot of oxygen into the brain so by the time they get home they do their homework and they are able to learn and absorb a lot more. The team dynamics: They learn to work together in a team so it is not individually

in the classroom, working by themselves, so they are having to learn with people with different personalities and all of that.”

The benefits mentioned include physical, health and social benefits, which means that learners’ participation in physical activity may improve their academic performance and this may in turn enhance their self-esteem. Furthermore socialising with peers who play sport may result in learners’ understanding people with different personalities within sport and this may result in understanding people with different personalities outside sport.

5.2.5 Advantages of participating in sport

Regarding the advantages of participating in sport, learners again mentioned the psychological health benefits as well as the ability to solve problems and to learn new skills.

Sally stated:

“Keeping healthy, leadership skills, you learn to follow and to lead. Because you play sport you have an understanding of people and negotiating and teamwork.”

The others responded:

Stella: *“You have the advantage of being able to solve problems. If there is an encounter coming, you need to think of a solution on the spot. You learn how to solve problems very easily.”*

Catherine: *“It keeps you balanced also. To keep my school work and my sport balanced that will help me in future to be balanced and to prioritise.”*

Nomsa: *“It also helps you to feel good about yourself. If you are good at something, people will also say you are good at something, and this will kind of boost your self-esteem.”*

Aviwe: *“Sense of belonging, because when you are in a team and you gel well with the team, you become part of something bigger than yourself.”*

Pamela: *“You learn skills which you can use outside of school sport like hand skills, feet skills whatever.”*

The above responses can be linked to Ryan and Deci’s CET which predicts that if a reward is perceived as controlling, people will attribute their behaviour to an outside source. On the contrary, if people do not feel controlled by the reward, they will attribute their behaviour to self-determination which is an internal locus of causality

The sports coordinator mentioned team work and the school having a good name as advantages for taking part in sport. Also having more learners participating willingly in sport and winning games may bring about pride to the learners resulting in high self-esteem. The sports coordinator responded:

“Team work, that is, learning to work together. The more girls we have taking part in sport, the better our sport teams get. So the name of the school looks good because we are winning soccer tournaments and we are winning hockey matches and we are the fastest swimmers at galas. So it gives the school a good name and it gives learners something to be proud of. If the school has got a good name, then learners will be proud to say they come here and it gives them something to be proud of.”

The above responses about the benefits and advantages of learners’ participation in sport indicate that the learners have an internal locus of causality, that is, the learners perceive their behaviour to be freely determined or self-determined. Although learners do expect to be rewarded for doing well in sport, this does not mean that they have been forced to participate in sport. Deci & Ryan (2008) state that the satisfaction of psychological needs, that is, autonomy, competence and relatedness predicts psychological wellbeing. By learning new skills and having a sense of pride as a result of being in a team means that the learners strive to determine their own behaviour. In other words, learners have autonomy to decide their own behaviour. In the process of this self-determination they experience an inner sense of worth and also try to have satisfying involvement with others. Believing in themselves is thus encouraged in the process.

5.2.6 Reasons why some learners do not participate in sport

Literature in Chapter 3 indicates numerous reasons why some learners do not participate in

sport. Allison (2005) distinguishes between internal and external barriers to sports participation. Internal barriers include individual characteristics which consist of physical attributes and psychological attributes, lower priority for physical activity and involvement in technology-related activities. Physical attributes may include for example, being too young or too short or overweight to take part in an activity. Psychological attributes may include being lazy, bored, lacking confidence or wanting to avoid stress. Lower priority for physical activity means that learners may limit their physical activity and concentrate more on academics. Learners may also be involved in technology-related activities like watching too much television, playing computer and video games, surfing the internet and spending more time talking on the phone than playing sport.

Slater and Tiggerman (2010) mentioned lack of interest, boredom, insufficient time and lack of competence, sports not being available, injury, problems with transport, having issues with the coach, influence of friends and family, having issues with team mates and teasing as reasons why Australian girls cease participating in sport.

Aviwe stated:

“Self-esteem-Their self-esteem is low and because people are putting them down even more, then they don’t have that strength as such to get up and to prove other people wrong and to prove themselves right.”

Others responded:

Nomsa: *“They may not enjoy playing sport and so they don’t want to play it. They also think that it is not cool to play sport.”*

Catherine: *“Some don’t have the knowledge of how it is like to play sport. They are in groups of cliques or they associate with people who don’t play sport. For them to branch out and go play sport, their friends will be like ‘what are you doing?’ because people don’t like what they don’t understand.”*

Pamela: *“I think it is because they are lazy or they don’t have the support or the encouragement to try out on the sports, possibly because they are not interested in the sport, because they have never tried the sport or they are not aware of the sport, or maybe they just don’t*

have anyone to say 'hey let's go, let's try out' like they are too afraid. I think that is the reason."

The responses from the participants show a lack of encouragement both from the peers as well as from parents of learners who do not participate in sport. Moreover, learners not involved in sport also show a lack of interest in engaging in sports which makes it difficult or impossible for those involved to convince them to join sports.

Pamela added:

"If you are doing very badly like your parents might want you to focus more on school work and less on sports. Like I know personally my grades have dropped because of the exams and my parents are not certain about me doing sports because they are saying it's taking too much of my time so I have to focus on my academics."

The learners' responses indicate how essential engaging in sports is to the individual's well-being. Since there are numerous benefits associated with sports participation, taking part in sports should not be seen as interfering with school work but as a way of improving learners' academic performance. However, there should be a balance between engaging in sports and concentration on academics.

The sports coordinator responded as follows regarding her views as to why some learners do not participate in sport:

"A lot of learners battle with transport, getting home because the parents won't come and pick them up from school or they can't because they work too far. A lot of parents don't see any benefits of them taking part in sport so they want their children home and doing homework and doing chores as soon as they get home. They don't support their children and maybe the children have never had the opportunity to try playing sport. So learners don't know if they are good or not. So they haven't discovered that talent."

This means that parents should give their children the opportunity to participate in sport and find ways of assisting their children to discover if they have the potential to engage in sports. Therefore parents need to work with the school in order to find ways and means of assisting

learners who never tried playing sport but are keen to participate. Since the sports coordinator has the ability to identify learners with potential during physical education lessons, it would also help to contact learners' parents and inform them about their children's potential. The doors should also be open for parents to communicate with the sport coordinator.

5.3 Support Structure

Learners involved in sport would find it difficult to succeed without support from the school, from the significant others such as teachers, parents and friends. Therefore, learners who participate in sport need moral support or encouragement, monetary support, training and knowledge. The data yielded from the interviews indicated that in order for learners to participate fully in sport they need support from various structures mentioned above, (consider the response given by Pamela above: section 5.2.6).

Pamela mentions that her grades have dropped and as a result her parents are not certain about her involvement in sport since they believe that sport is taking too much of her time. The fact that Pamela enjoys playing sport should be taken into consideration by her parents. Therefore Pamela's parents need to assist their daughter to get organised both in sport and in school work.

5.3.1 Support from the school

Most literature indicates the importance of physical activity in schools and after school sports. Pule (2007) emphasises that schools are perfect places for teaching youth how to maintain a healthy active lifestyle. To support this, Rasberry et al. (2011), is of the same view with the National Centre for Education Statistics (2009) that schools need to ensure that there is time allocated for physical education as well as a unique venue for youth to participate in physical activity after school hours. Standage and Gillison (2007), maintain that the school should be seen as a context to influence the mental health and quality of life of children and adolescents and should aim at promoting pupils' self-esteem and emotional well-being. This can be done through sports participation by learners. On being asked about how the school encourages sport participation, Stella responded:

“The school will bring someone who plays sport who knows what it's like to play sport and who can help encourage us to do something new.”

Nomsa added:

“Normally the school will get people who are doing well and who are professionals who know what it’s like to be in a soccer team, hockey team, so they coach you to become a good player.”

Others added:

Sally: *“School does motivate us to at least have one extra-mural activity. Most people will choose sport.”*

Catherine: *“Sport opens a lot of opportunities. School sport is not like street sport, like street soccer. It is organised and people want to participate because they are going to pitch up and play and do what they enjoy. Our sports coordinator gets caught up in all the admin just to motivate us. If you are in a league you will obviously earn a place. Sport makes you go far.”*

Aviwe: *“Even those who aren’t as good as the ones who get colours they do get merit certificates for just being dedicated, so that motivates people to just go on playing sport. I bring colours also because of my sister. She played every sport and made it to KZN for most of them. When the Grade Eights come to the school for the first time and they see softball and this and that all over the place it will motivate them to play sport knowing that if they are good they will go far. The school rewards and recognises us and then that motivates everyone else.”*

Pamela: *“The school offers facilities and has got great coaches, which is good. We’ve got equipment we can use. Basically everything is pretty standard. We’ve got what we need like we can’t ask for anything better because the school supports us in sport.”*

From the learners’ responses above, it is clear that the school plays a big role in encouraging learners to take part in sport and to continue playing sport. The school not only rewards learners who are good in sport but also those who are not so good but are dedicated to sport.

This means that the school ensures that every learner involved in sport is rewarded. By so doing, the learner's self-esteem and emotional well-being are promoted.

The sports coordinator stated:

“In our PE lessons we introduce new sports to them. We teach them skills during the school day and if they show promise we encourage them to come to the afternoon sports, put them to trials for the teams, we reward them with the colours, not only if they achieve in sporting teams but if they are dedicated to the sports. The matrics generally get some colour recognition for being dedicated. We call them up in assembly where they get certificates. We have the notice boards out front where we put the names of achievers. There is a lot of recognition given to the sports participants.”

The response from the sports coordinator indicates the moral support or encouragement given to all the learners involved in sport. The rewards and recognition given to the learners may help learners who are not so dedicated to take sports seriously.

5.3.2 Support from teachers

Besides the support given by the school to learners involved in sport, learners mentioned that there are some teachers who go an extra mile in assisting them with sports.

Aviwe stated:

“Teachers take us to games. They bring us back. We get prizes, medals, all the works.”

Others responded:

Nomsa: *“They understand because they motivate you and help you want to play - coaches and your teachers as well.”*

Catherine: *“Teachers' lives are pretty hectic and they have busy lifestyles. They take time off to help us. They take us to leagues and trials. That helps us to be better people and that shows that they are dedicated not only in the classroom but in the field as well.”*

Pamela: *“In class they make examples like if you are in class and maybe you are working through a sum, they use an example they would use with sports to try and make you think better because you know when you see something physically, it’s easier for you to think than when you don’t see it at all. The sports coordinator does the same thing all the time.”*

The sports coordinator stated:

“I am encouraging them, and picking up on the positives if they are doing really well in the PE lessons. I tell them: ‘You are really good at the sport, you must come, you try out, you must see maybe you can make the team and then you can go to trials and get colours’. So it’s highlighting the positive side of taking part in sport, and telling them that ‘by having you, a new person as part of our team it’s gonna help us to win and make our school look better’. So it’s a lot of positive reinforcement.”

This dedication of the teaching staff to the learners involved in sports can be related to Ryan and Deci’s (2000) CET which is a sub-theory of SDT which argues that interpersonal events and structures such as rewards, communications, feedback which contribute towards feelings of competence during action can enhance intrinsic motivation for that action because they allow the satisfaction of the basic psychological need for competence. However, Ryan and Deci (2000), argue that people must also experience their behaviour to be self-determined if intrinsic motivation is to be enhanced meaning that people must experience satisfaction for both competence and autonomy in order to maintain a high level of intrinsic motivation.

5.3.3 Parental support

Literature indicates that parents can be an important source of support to their children involved in sports. Stroebel (2006) stresses that parents should assume the role of motivator, facilitator and coach in the life of the adolescent and that parents should encourage their children to take part in sports and allow them to make their own choices regarding participation and the extent of involvement. Welk *et al.* (2003) point out that active parents can have more influence on their children’s physical activity than those who are not active. Griffith *et al.* (2007) also agree with Welk *et al.* (2003) about parental involvement, but point out that the mothers’ involvement in physical activity is more beneficial than the fathers’ in

influencing children to begin and continue physical activity. Hedstrom and Gould (2004) argue that parents can influence a child's motivation, perceived competence and enjoyment of sport. They also stress that the feedback a child gets from a parent and a parent's behaviour can determine how long a child can stay involved in sport as well as how a child perceives his or her abilities. Whatever feedback a child gets from the parent can have an impact on the child's performance.

Concerning how parents assist with sports participation, Nomsa stated:

“They come and watch you play and make you feel better when you have done something stupid. They come and watch the game and see how far you have come.”

Others responded:

Sally: *“They buy sports kits.”*

Catherine: *“They take you to the doctor if you are injured. They motivate and make you realise where your strong points lie.”*

Aviwe: *“The fact that parents allow you to go and play games knowing what might happen, but they allow you because they know you enjoy sport, says a lot about our parents and how they support us.”*

Stella: *“When you are losing a match and you realise that you have done this and that, parents will be like you ‘did this right’ and this helps you.”*

Pamela: *“They bring me to school early in the morning since we normally leave early in the morning and quite a few times when I come home injured they help buy me an ankle or knee guard and rub me and send me to bed. Sometimes if they have time they will come to watch me play sport.”*

The above learners' responses indicate how devoted their parents are to them and how this devotion can bring about competence and autonomy in the lives of the adolescent learners. It is also clear from the learners' responses that their parents or guardians also play a part in

making them intrinsically motivated by always being there for them to ensure that they continue to engage in physical activity.

The sports coordinator said:

“By encouraging them, supporting them, it’s win or lose, or if you think your child is good or bad at the sport, it doesn’t matter, you are there to show your support and encouraging the child, and you don’t mind waiting five minutes at the gate while the child is quickly learning a new skill and congratulating her when the team wins, and again with the positive reinforcement, this is what parents should be doing.”

From what the sports coordinator said, it should be stressed that parents give their children positive reinforcement at all times in the form of moral support and encouragement. Parents should also try and be there for their children not only when they compete with other schools but also when they are practising for the games. This would mean a lot to the learner as the presence of a parent would definitely boost the learner’s self-esteem.

5.3.4 Support from friends

According to the study undertaken by Daniels & Leaper (2006), there is an increased need for belongingness during adolescence. Therefore, it is proposed by these authors that peer acceptance is essential in the association between sports participation and self-esteem. Daniels and Leaper (2006), agree with Eccles and Baber (1999), Marsh and Kleitman (2003), President’s Council on Physical Fitness and Sports (1997), and Richman and Shuffer (2000) about the importance of sports participation and its potentially positive effects of physical activity on school involvement, body image, feelings of physical competence and a range of psychological outcomes in both girls and boys. They also make reference to Sullivan’s (1953) interpersonal theory of development which stresses the need for belongingness as critical for the formation of healthy self-concept during late childhood and adolescence. Sullivan’s theory also states that when individuals perceive themselves as positively regarded by significant others, they internalise the positive regard and experience high self-esteem. This is in contrast to individuals who view themselves as negatively regarded by peers. Such individuals will tend to internalise the perception and experience low self-esteem.

Smith (2003) points out that peers should not be seen as playing a role only to the acquisition of competence information in competitive sport settings. Peers should also be considered as generally contributing to the psychological, social and moral development of the youth. Smith (2003) also stresses that the importance of peers is also noticeable when the youth shift from relying predominantly on adults for physical competence to relying on their peers.

Regarding the support they get from friends Stella stated:

“Comments from friends help you to see where you have gone wrong. Even my friends who do not play sport, when they ask you why you did that and ask you to explain, then you realise and reflect and you help yourself. When they know that you are good at something and you want to stop because something happened then they tell you ‘don’t’.”

Nomsa added:

“My friends come and watch me play and if I do well they hug and cheer me up.”

The others responded:

Aviwe: *“My friends carry my sports bag. Since I am in Matric, very few people are playing sport in matric. My friends love the fact that I am actually continuing with what I was doing at a very young age and they motivate me more.”*

Sally: *“If you have done badly, they motivate you and tell you, ‘you can’t do this and that’, so that I do better in future.”*

Catherine: *“Some of my very good friends who play sport understand what it’s like to win and lose and we motivate each other to do better in sport.”*

Pamela: *“I just let my friends know that I have got a game and they will come and they will scream my name on the field and that gives me encouragement, it makes me feel like I’m playing for someone other than myself.”*

The responses provided above indicate the role that is played and the support that is received from friends. So, not only are parents and teachers important in that regard, but also are friends. Parents and teachers will always be there to give all the support, but during the adolescent stage, acceptance by peers is very important as peers may also play a role in enhancing the learners' self-esteem. It is therefore important as a parent to motivate your child into choosing friends who would be in a position to support them either educationally or participating in sports as for the purpose of this study. What is common in these responses therefore is that friends, in this case, did not discourage those who participated in sports, but encouraged them in various ways.

The sports coordinator responded:

“Their friends should be very supportive of them especially when they are in the same school, because by doing well in sport it makes the school's name look good which makes everyone who goes to that school look better. For example, we have two water-polo players, one of them is black. This removes the stereotype that black girls can't swim. No, as a result, people will think that maybe that stereotype isn't true. So we do have girls that can swim. It gives those girls a step. I am using water-polo as an example but you know with other sports there are girls that can behave well and they are disciplined and they can be dedicated to something. It helps them once they are outside the school if the school has a better name. So their friends should encourage each other, like the girl's friends who is a water-polo player, they simply encourage her to take part in sport because it's gonna give the school a good name. We can say we have two water-polo players and five softball players in KZN, then the outside people will think that those girls can take part in sport and when they see them walking down the road they are not gonna judge them on their behaviour because they know in the back of their minds they have seen in the newspaper that we have so many KZN players taking part in sport, so these learners must be doing something.”

The sports coordinator's response also indicates how important the encouragement from peers can assist learners to engage in more challenging sports which may boost their self-esteem.

Ryan and Deci's (2000) SDT theory suggests that there are three basic needs that the individual needs to satisfy, that is, autonomy, competence and relatedness. These needs, when satisfied, predict psychological wellbeing. The need for relatedness means that the individual strives to have satisfying and coherent involvement with others. The same applies to adolescent learners involved in sport who joined the sport out of choice and who experience an inner sense of worth for being involved in sport. Learners also need to relate with others especially their friends in order to satisfy these needs.

5.4 School Work and Sport

In Chapter 2, Lewis (2004) and Gadbois and Bowker (2007) found that learners who participate in extracurricular activities display higher self-esteem. The researchers also found that the academic performance of learners who participate in extracurricular activities is improved. Learners show perseverance and they become goal orientated. Learners' involvement in sports reduces the risk of delinquency and reduces the possibility of dropping out of school.

In response to how sports contributes to school work Stella said:

“It actually distresses so that you can focus more. It allows you that time to clear your mind so you can sit down and do your work and focus on it. You get more excess energy that you can sit down and study.”

Catherine added:

“It helps you survive the day. In my desk I sit for six long hours and then there is just freedom. Sport eases my mind to just let go and to bond with my family as a team.”

The others stated:

Nomsa: *“It forces you to be organised as well because if I've just had school, I'll probably just leave everything to the last minute, because I know I've got sport and I've got a match I need to have my work done at this time and I know how to manage that.”*

Aviwe: *“It teaches you time management, to be organised and being balanced as well. You have to be balanced. You can't do sports*

more and don't do your school work because that's gonna clash. You've got to be doing your academics and then play sports as well."

Pamela: *"It also helps with your health because most sports do, and school going children don't sleep enough but, because I know my body, if I don't sleep enough, I'm not going to survive at school and then I'll be too tired to perform well at sport. So I'll make sure I sleep enough and because I've slept enough, it helps me in the classroom and that helps me in the sports field as well. If you sleep, you feel happy and it helps you feel good about yourself."*

Pamela further stated:

"Sometimes it's not for the best. I'd say most of the time because like coming home tired and take a shower, you just want to sleep without doing your homework. But then in a way that also does help although I can't think of anything yet. At the moment for me it is not helping. Sport does definitely enhance my self-esteem and it brings a lot of encouragement and I think it brings a lot of joy in my life too. In sport, there is nothing to worry about. But in school I have to worry about this test, that test, this teacher whereas in sport, it is happy go lucky."

It is clear from the learner's response above that although she is passionate about sport, sport does interfere with her school work. This means that the learner needs to learn management skills and try to balance sport with school work.

The sports coordinator responded:

"It releases stress; it brings relaxation; makes them concentrate more on school work. It gives them a release of stress. It gives them a break after school since they have lessons the whole day. It gives them an hour and a half after school and they can run around, and they can scream and shout and make a noise and get everything out of their system. When they get home, they are more relaxed. They have burnt off any sugar, any extra sweets they have eaten which they shouldn't have, and they can now focus on doing their homework or studying and they absorb a lot more

information and get a bit of oxygen to the brain and get everything flowing a bit better.”

The above responses can be related to the Achievement Goal Theory which proposes two conceptions of goal orientations, that is, task orientation and ego orientation. In this case learners are task oriented because their aim is to master school work and also to excel in sport. As Kavussanu and Harnisch (2000) have investigated, there is a relationship between global self-esteem and goal orientations in athletes. The authors also found that high task oriented children reported significantly higher self-esteem than low task-oriented children.

5.5 Conclusion

Chapter 5 has analysed data yielded in this study. This Chapter has discussed the reasons why learners participate in sports. Some learners indicated that sport helps to release stress, meet new people and teaches them team work. The sport coordinator indicated that sport participation teaches learners a sense of independence and problem solving skills. So, it was clear that it is everybody's dream to participate in sports because of the benefits associated with it especially if one is in the first team in the school. However, the Chapter also mentioned that there are learners who are not willing to partake in sports. Responses from participants indicate that these learners lack self-esteem. Some learners pay more attention to their studies than sport because maybe they perform badly academically. The chapter concluded by indicating that the support that learners who participate in sport get from their parents, school and friends could never be overemphasised.

CHAPTER 6

Summary, Recommendations and Conclusion

6.1 Introduction

Chapter 6 provides summary, recommendations as well as concluding thoughts for this study. The Chapter indicates what has been learned, the processes that the researcher undergone in conducting this study. The recommendations made indicate to the value and importance of this study. All these issues are detailed below.

6.2 Summary

In chapter 1 the background and rationale of the study have been discussed, highlighting the conceptual and theoretical framework and their relevance to the study. The research approach which includes the key research questions, aims of the study, and a qualitative research method have been explained in detail. The chapter has also highlighted the sampling technique, the ethical measures, validity and reliability, the limitations of the study and the structure of the dissertation.

In the literature review in Chapter 2, the relationship between adolescent learners' participation in sport and their self-esteem was discussed first, followed by the reasons why learners participate in sport. The benefits of participating in sport, sports participation in relation to peer acceptance, academic achievement, gender orientation have been discussed in detail followed by barriers to sports participation. Literature has also revealed the role of the school and parents with regard to sports participation.

The concepts which make up the topic of the study, namely, 'participation', 'sport', 'learner' and 'self-esteem' have been defined and discussed in chapter 3. The theoretical framework also discussed in chapter 3 consists of three related theories, that is, Self-determination theory (SDT), Cognitive Evaluation Theory (CET) and Achievement Goal Theory which are linked to the study. SDT differentiates between intrinsic and extrinsic motivation. Intrinsic or autonomous motivation is the most self-determined regulation involving an activity for its own sake. Extrinsic motivation or controlled motivation reflects a low degree of self-determined motivation.

In Chapter 4, the research design and methodology have been outlined giving a description of the context of the study and how the research participants were assessed and selected, followed by the definition of the participants' roles. The chapter has also highlighted how the case study approach has been adopted and also explained the purpose and design of the study. The ethical considerations as well as the limitations of the research design have been mentioned.

Chapter 5 has analysed the findings based on the data gathered from focus group and semi-structured interviews. The responses of the participants have been highlighted and related to literature and theoretical framework. The attitudes of learners towards sport as well as the views of the sports coordinator have been analysed and discussed. The support structure consisting of the school, teachers, parents and peers have been mentioned as well as how a sport contributes to school work.

6.3 Recommendations

Based on the analysis of the study I would recommend as follows:

- Since sports takes place after school, some learners do not see the need to participate. Therefore time should be allocated for sports within school hours in order for all learners to participate;
- Some learners choose to take part in one sport and not the others. This limits learners' involvement in other types of sports. Learners should at least engage in two or more kinds of sports in order to decide which sport or sports to continue with;
- Since after school sports is held three days in a week, learners could consider taking other extracurricular activities offered at school or outside school in order to keep busy and avoid getting involved in risky behavior;
- The government should intervene and assist parents who cannot afford the sports uniform and sports equipment and ensure that these are provided;
- As sports contributes to the good name of the school, parents and teachers should work together to find ways of helping learners who experience transport problems;

- Parents whose children are not involved in sports should encourage their children to participate in sport. Parents themselves should ensure that they also engage in physical activities and;
- Learners should ensure that they associate with peers who are involved in sports in order to continue with sports and to maintain their self-esteem.

6.4 Conclusion

In this section the researcher deliberates on what has been learned from the study and the conclusions that were drawn. The conclusions indicated that there is a close relationship between self-esteem and sport participation. While this might sound like a summary of the research, the researcher wanted to inform and remind the reader the process that the researcher has undergone to conduct the study.

From the data analysis, it is clear that sport is essential to the wellbeing of every individual. Physical education which is offered as one of the subjects from junior primary, senior primary and high school should include teaching learners about the importance of engaging in after school sports. It is also evident that regular physical activity induces physiological and psychological benefits as affirmed by Bensinger *et al.* (2006). These health benefits may result in increased self-esteem. However, literature has revealed that the enhancement of self-esteem does not only depend on sports participation *per se*. There are other aspects that are involved, such as academic performance, peer acceptance, teacher support and parental support, which, when combined with sports participation, may contribute to the learner's increased self-esteem.

As mentioned by Allison (2005) and Allender *et al.* (2006), the adolescent girls' and boys' reasons for participating in sport are both intrinsic and extrinsic. On analyzing data, it was found that the adolescent learners' reasons for participating in sport are both intrinsic and extrinsic. Intrinsically learners mentioned engaging in sport for fun and to distress. Extrinsically, learners mentioned that sport teaches them to socialise or meet new people or make friendships with different people. The sports coordinator mentioned that sport gives learners a good balance and teaches them time management as well as problem solving skills which means that the learners are task orientated rather than ego orientated and their goal is to become successful in life.

Regarding the feelings during and after sports participation, it is evident from the data analysis that what the learners are experiencing namely, pride, sense of achievement, freedom, sense of accomplishment, excitement, determination and encouragement are related to increased self-esteem. This also shows that learners are intrinsically motivated since these feelings come from within.

Most of the benefits associated with sports participation mentioned by learners and the sports coordinator were social, physical and psychological and these included the ability to socialise with people with different personalities, maintaining weight and being motivated. The advantages also included social, psychological and physical benefits, namely, teamwork, problem solving skills, ability to balance school work and sport, learning to prioritise, sense of well-being, sense of belonging, sense of pride and learning sports related skills. Again learners can be seen as intrinsically motivated or self-determined. Although learners may be rewarded extrinsically, what is important is that engaging in sport happened out of liking the activity.

Since sports is considered by the learners as having something to do with the self-esteem, the reasons mentioned for not participating in sport included having a low self-esteem, not enjoying sport, associating with people who do not play sport, laziness and lack of encouragement. The sports coordinator mentioned lack of transport and lack of parental support and lack of encouragement. Learners, who are being discouraged by peers, have to find courage to engage in sport in order to experience being free and have a sense of belonging and be able to unite with learners who are experienced in sport. In doing so, they would experience self-determination.

Also the school needs to find a way to convince the learners' parents to assist their children with alternative transportation if they are unable to provide transport themselves. Regarding support from the school, learners mentioned that the school normally invites professionals in sport to talk to learners about sport and its benefits. Also the teachers motivate them to take at least one extra-mural activity which can either be sport or something else like music, but sport is the extra-mural activity mostly preferred by learners. Amongst other things mentioned is that some learners who are not as good as those who get colours get recognition by being given merit certificates, which means that the school encourages everybody to participate in sport. The school also ensures that sports facilities are up to standard and employs qualified coaches to enable learners to participate and to learn skills.

The sports coordinator pointed out that during the PE lessons new sports are introduced and learners are taught skills, encouraged to join after school sports, go for trials and are rewarded with colors for being dedicated to sports. Besides announcing learners names in assembly and putting their names on school notice boards, there are sponsorships from the government for making it to the trials and for excelling in sports. This means a lot to learners involved in sports and it elevates them and enhances their self-esteem. The teachers who assist with transporting learners to and from the games should be commended for playing a parental role, as trials and leagues take place during the week when most parents are at work. Teachers' working hand in hand with the parents makes learners participating in sport realise how honored they are to have such dedicated people in their lives.

Positive reinforcement is what the sports coordinator does to support the learners. This includes encouraging and assisting the learner who wants to take part in sport and who is interested and serious about sport to reach her goals of succeeding in sports which include winning and giving the school a better name. Learners mentioned the full support they receive from their parents regarding their involvement in sport. This includes coming to watch them play, helping with injuries, encouraging and being selfless about their child's involvement in sport. The sports coordinator also stated how important it is for the parents to encourage their children when playing sport and how crucial it is to congratulate them when they win. Concerning support from peers, learners mentioned that they receive support from both friends who play and those who do not play sport. During their interaction with friends about sports, they get motivated, understood and encouraged to continue playing sport and not to give up. The response from the sports coordinator also shows that learners' supporting each other in sport and doing excellently in sport, could lead to the positive recognition of these learners by the community resulting in the school having a good name.

Literature indicates that the academic performance of learners who engage in extracurricular activities is improved (Lewis, 2004). One learner stated that sport distresses and energises, and enables her to focus and do her school-work. Another one mentioned that sport makes her survive the day which means that she is always looking forward to playing sport. Two learners mentioned that sport forces them to be organised, that is, to make time for school-work so that academics do not clash with sport. One learner responded that since sport improves sleeping patterns, not having enough sleep could interfere with school-work. Therefore, she would ensure that she has enough sleep in order to feel happy and to feel good about herself. Only one learner mentioned that at that moment in time, sport was not helping

as she had a problem with time management. However, she mentioned that sport does make her happy and enhance her self-esteem. It is therefore important that adolescents engage in a variety of extracurricular activities including sports in order for them to lead happy, active and healthy lifestyles. Being happy, active and healthy will definitely enhance the adolescent's self-esteem.

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FOCUS GROUP INTERVIEW SCHEDULE FOR LEARNERS

QUESTIONS:

1. Why are you involved in sport?
2. What do you feel during sports participation?
3. What do you feel after playing sport?
4. What are the benefits of participating in sport?
5. What are the advantages of participating in sport?
6. What are the reasons why some learners do not participate in sport?
7. How does the school encourage sport participation?
8. How do teachers and sports coordinators help to improve sports participation?
9. How do your parents/guardians assist you concerning your participation in sport?
10. What kind of support do you get from your friends regarding your participation in sport?
11. How does sport contribute to your school work?

SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEW SCHEDULE FOR THE SPORTS COORDINATOR

QUESTIONS

1. Why should learners be involved in sports?
2. What are the benefits of learners' participation in sports?
3. What are the advantages of learners' participation in sport?
4. What are the reasons why some learners do not participate in sport?
5. How does the school encourage sport participation?
6. How do you help learners improve sports participation?
7. How can parents or guardians assist their children with sport participation?
8. What kind of support should be given by the learners' friends regarding participation in sport?
9. How does sport contribute to learners' school work?

Appendix 3

University of KwaZulu-Natal
Edgewood Campus
Private Bag X03
Ashwood
3605

25 July 2012

The Principal
Vuyolwethu High School
Pinetown
3600

Request to conduct interviews in your school

I, Blossom Piliso (205521114), a student at the above-mentioned institution, requests to conduct interviews in your school with the Sports Coordinator and six learners in Grade 10, 11 and 12 who are involved in sports. I am a Masters student under the guidance of Dr Rosemary Kalenga. My research topic is: An investigation on how participation in sports can enhance a learner's self-esteem. I am also interested in finding out how passionate learners are about sports and whether they are aware of the benefits associated with participating in sports.

I shall do my best to conduct my research efficiently, without disturbing the functioning of the school. I will also ensure that the times scheduled for the research will be arranged in agreement with the participants (sports coordinator and learners).

Please find attached consent letters to the sports coordinator, learners' parents and six learners. Semi-structured, tape recorded interviews will be conducted (see the attached questions).

I would be happy if you could allow me to conduct research in your school.

For further information, please contact me on my cell number **083 403 4755 (cell)** or work telephone number **031 260 3480**.

Thanking you in anticipation of a favourable response.

B B Piliso (Ms)

Consent letter

Ms B B Piliso (Researcher)

I hereby agree for my school to be used as a site for your research study. I understand that the participation of our sports organizer and the learners is voluntary and that they can withdraw at any time. I also understand that privacy, anonymity and confidentiality will be assured at all times and that the dignity of all participants would be respected at all times. I am assured by your commitment to ensure that the general functioning of the school will not be compromised. Permission has been granted.

Principal print name: -----

Signature: -----

Date: -----

Name of school: -----

School stamp:

Research topic: An investigation into how participation in sports can enhance a learner's self-esteem

Permission to conduct an interview with the learners involved in sports

Dear Parent

I am a Master's student at the University of KwaZulu-Natal currently collecting data for my dissertation under the guidance of Dr Rosemary Kalenga. My research topic is: An Investigation into how participation in sports can enhance a learner's self-esteem. I am interested in finding out how passionate learners are about participating in sports and whether they are aware of the benefits of being involved in sports.

I would very much appreciate it if you could allow your child to take part in the interview.

I assure that:

- Your child's confidentiality will be protected, as he/she will be referred to as participant. Your child's real name will not be revealed.
- The information will not be divulged to anyone, except to Dr Kalenga who is my supervisor, and
- the data collection process will not disrupt the teaching and learning process at school.

Kindly find attached a letter of consent to be signed by you, the parent.

For further information, please contact me at **083 403 4755** or **031 260 3480**.

Thanking you in anticipation of a favourable response.

Yours faithfully

B B Piliso (Researcher)
UKZN – Edgewood Campus

Dr R Kalenga
(031) 260 7583

University of KwaZulu-Natal
Edgewood Campus
Private Bag X03
Ashwood
3605

Research Topic: An investigation into how participation in sports can enhance a learner's self-esteem

Consent letter

I, _____, hereby allow my daughter to participate in the above research project. I understand that her participation is voluntary and that she may change her mind and withdraw at any time. I understand that some of the answers / responses may be directly quoted in the text of the final dissertation and subsequent publications.

With this understanding, I hereby allow my daughter to participate in the above research study.

Parent's name: -----

Parent's Signature: -----

Date: -----

Researcher: B B Piliso

Date: -----

Research topic: An investigation into how participation in sports can enhance a learner's self-esteem

Permission to conduct an interview

Dear participant

I am a Master's student at the University of KwaZulu-Natal currently collecting data for my dissertation under the guidance of Dr Rosemary Kalenga. My research topic is: An investigation into how participation in sports can enhance a learner's self-esteem. I am interested in finding out how passionate you are about participating in sports and whether you are aware of the benefits associated with participating in sports.

I would very much appreciate it if you could take part in the interviews.

I assure that:

- Your confidentiality will be protected, as you will be referred to as participant. This means that your real name will not be used.
- the information will not be revealed to anyone, except to Dr Kalenga who is my supervisor, and
- the data collection process will not disrupt the teaching and learning process at your school.

Please find attached a letter of consent to be signed by you, the learner.
For further information, please contact me at **083 403 4755** or **031 260 3480**.

Thanking you in anticipation of a favourable response.

Yours faithfully

B B Piliso (Researcher)
UKZN – Edgewood Campus

Dr R Kalenga

(031) 260 7583

University of KwaZulu-Natal
Edgewood Campus
Private Bag X03
Ashwood
3605

Research Topic: An investigation into how participation in sports can enhance a learner's self-esteem

Consent letter

I, _____, hereby agree to participate in the research project. I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I may change my mind and withdraw at any time. I understand that some of the answers / responses may be directly quoted in the text of the final dissertation and subsequent publications.

With this understanding, I hereby agree to participate in the above research study.

Participant's Name: -----

Participant's Signature: -----

Date: -----

Researcher: B B Piliso

Date: -----



6 September 2012

Ms Blossom Bulelwa Piliso 205521114
School of Education
Edgewood Campus

Dear Ms Piliso

Protocol reference number: HSS/0821/012M
Project title: An investigation into how participation in sport can enhance a learner's self esteem

EXPEDITED APPROVAL

I wish to inform you that your application has been granted Full Approval through an expedited review process.

Any alteration/s to the approved research protocol i.e. Questionnaire/Interview Schedule, Informed Consent Form, Title of the Project, Location of the Study, Research Approach and Methods must be reviewed and approved through the amendment/modification prior to its implementation. In case you have further queries, please quote the above reference number. PLEASE NOTE: Research data should be securely stored in the school/department for a period of 5 years.

I take this opportunity of wishing you everything of the best with your study.

Yours faithfully

Professor Steven Collings (Chair)

/px

cc Supervisor Dr R C Kalenga
cc Academic leader Dr D Davids
cc School Admin. Mrs S Naicker

Professor S Collings (Chair)
Humanities & Social Sc Research Ethics Committee
Westville Campus, Govan Mbeki Building
Postal Address: Private Bag X54001, Durban, 4000, South Africa
Telephone: +27 (0)31 260 3587/8350 Facsimile: +27 (0)31 260 4609 Email: ximbap@ukzn.ac.za / snymanm@ukzn.ac.za
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