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The Development of a Career Transition Intervention Programme for Student Athletes

by

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(201041912)

Thesis submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree

Doctor Litterarum et Philosophiae

in the

Department of Psychology

of the

Faculty of Humanities

at the

University of Johannesburg

supervised by

Prof. R.L. van Niekerk

January 2018
DECLARATION

I hereby declare that this research report is my own unaided work. It is submitted for the degree of PhD in the Department of Psychology, Faculty of Humanities at the University of Johannesburg. It has not been submitted before for any other degree or examination at any university.

Thabile Adams ________________________________ January 2018
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to thank and acknowledge the following people for being instrumental in this research study:

• My supervisor, Prof Leon van Niekerk, for being very supportive, patient, insightful, and offering me continuous guidance. I am grateful to him for introducing me to the world of Sport Psychology. This research would not have been possible without his supervision.
• The Gauteng universities' sports departments, namely the University of Johannesburg, University of the Witwatersrand, and the University of Pretoria, for granting me access to their student athletes.
• All the research participants.
• The National Research Foundation (NRF) for the scholarship that enabled me to work towards my academic goals.
• Grammar Guardians for their excellent editing work.
• My husband, Maphutha Adams, and our children, Reratilwe, Mogale and Kgaugelo; thank you for your love and support. You have been my pillar of strength and encouragement. This doctorate is for you.
• My mother, Zandile Buthelezi, and late father, Peter Mokoena, for their sacrificial love and belief in me.
• Above all, my Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. He makes the impossible possible. Thank you.
ABSTRACT

The first objective of the research was to determine how student athletes experience career transitions into university, within university, and out of university. This was important in that it enabled the researcher to understand student athletes’ transition needs and challenges pertaining to experiences that are psychological, psychosocial, athletic, and academic.

Based on the outcome of the first research objective, the second objective of the research was to develop a career transition intervention programme for student athletes. This research project was guided by the intervention research design and programme development methodology of Thomas and Rothman (1994) to achieve both objectives of the research. Intervention research is a research methodology that has a series of interconnected phases that guide researchers to develop innovative interventions linked to improving human service.

The research was conducted within Gauteng universities. The research project used a mixed-methods design within the intervention research and design. This included three individual interviews, three focus groups, and the completion of a psychometric instrument, namely the Revised Student Athlete Career Situation Inventory (SACSI-R) for males and females by 140 student athletes. The research participants reflected both genders and the different races of ethnic groups representing the student athlete population. The age of participants ranged between 18 and 31 years of age. The researcher used snowball sampling to obtain the qualitative data and utilised the purposive sampling method for extracting the quantitative data. The ethical requirements for conducting research were adhered to.

The research found that student athletes experience various transition challenges within their psychological, psychosocial, and academic/vocational areas. There is therefore a need for the development of a career transition intervention programme that will provide them with the necessary skills to cope with the demands of making successful career transitions. The proposed intervention was a preventative psycho-educational group career transition intervention. It is an intervention that provides information and skills training, and enhances support and resources in the psychological, psychosocial, and academic/vocational areas of development for student athletes.

This study contributes to existing knowledge in the field of career transition and intervention development for student athletes within the South African context. A limitation of this study is that it was not implemented to test for efficacy; however, recommendations for further development, piloting, and further development are suggested.
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<tr>
<td>4S (strategy)</td>
<td>Self, situation, support, and strategies</td>
</tr>
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<td>5-SCP</td>
<td>Five-Step Career Planning Strategy</td>
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<td>AAMSA</td>
<td>African-American Male Student Athletes</td>
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<td>ATDE</td>
<td>Athletic Talent Development Environment</td>
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<td>CDSE</td>
<td>Career Decision Self-Efficacy</td>
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<td>EC</td>
<td>European Commission</td>
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<td>EL</td>
<td>Experiential Learning</td>
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<td>GEMP</td>
<td>Graduate Entry Medical Programme</td>
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<td>HPA</td>
<td>High-performance athlete</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HPC</td>
<td>High Performance Centre</td>
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<tr>
<td>HPCSA</td>
<td>Health Professions Council of South Africa</td>
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<td>LTAD</td>
<td>Long-Term Athlete Development</td>
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<tr>
<td>NATQ</td>
<td>Non-Athletic Transitions Questionnaire</td>
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<td>NBPA</td>
<td>National Basketball Players Association</td>
</tr>
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<td>NCAA</td>
<td>National Collegiate Athletic Association</td>
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<tr>
<td>NFL</td>
<td>National Football League</td>
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<td>NRF</td>
<td>National Research Foundation</td>
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<td>NSAs</td>
<td>National Sports Associations</td>
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<tr>
<td>PACE</td>
<td>Programme for Athletes Career and Education</td>
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<td>PSL</td>
<td>Premier Soccer League</td>
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<td>SACSI-R</td>
<td>Revised Student Athlete Career Situation Inventory</td>
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<tr>
<td>SAMSAQ</td>
<td>Student Athletes' Motivation toward Sports and Academics Questionnaire</td>
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<tr>
<td>SASCOC</td>
<td>South African Sports Confederation and Olympic Committee</td>
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<td>SCTQ</td>
<td>Sports Career Termination Questionnaire</td>
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<tr>
<td>spexTEAM</td>
<td>Sports Excellence Talented Elite Athletes Management</td>
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<td>SRSA</td>
<td>Sport and Recreation South Africa</td>
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<td>SSC</td>
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<td>Singapore Sports Institute</td>
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<td>UP</td>
<td>University of Pretoria</td>
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<tr>
<td>USA</td>
<td>United States of America</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wits</td>
<td>University of the Witwatersrand</td>
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CHAPTER 1
INTRODUCTION

1.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter introduces the research purpose and aim, and how the researcher aimed to achieve the purpose and aim. This chapter starts with background information to contextualise the study and then discusses the problem to be investigated. The author then addresses the aims and objectives to be achieved in the study. Thereafter the thesis statement is provided. The thesis statement aims to address the problem that was identified in the problem statement. Subsequently, the researcher discusses the significance of the study and why this research is worth pursuing. Definitions of the terms used in the research are discussed, followed by an overview of the chapters of the thesis. This gives an indication of how the research developed.

1.2 BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Student athletes enter university with the objective of acquiring both an academic qualification and growth in competence in their sports through the successful completion of academic and sports tasks, such as intensive training and achievement in competitive events. University is therefore a significant developmental phase for student athletes, as they are confronted with academic, athletic, psychological, and psychosocial transitions they must achieve. The demand on a student athlete to be both a student (academic) and an athlete (sport) leads to them having a unique and often more challenging university experience than other students (Petitpas, Brewer, & Van Raalte, 2002; Cox, Sadberry, McGuire, & McBride, 2009).

When student athletes have completed their academic studies, they are faced with their next transition, namely into a career. The student athletes can either transition into being professional athletes (sport career) or having a dual career (both sport and another occupation), or transition into a career that is not related to sport. The transition out of university for a student athlete is challenging and may require specific adjustment skills. Therefore, a career transition intervention will be beneficial to aid student athletes to adjust accordingly within higher education and after higher education.

1.3 PROBLEM STATEMENT

Little research has been conducted on career transition interventions to assist student athletes from transitioning out of university (Petitpas et al., 2002). Much research has been conducted on various interventions to assist students and student athletes to adjust into university (Edwards, 2010; Roscoe, 2011). South African research is, however, still scarce in this field of inquiry.
Authors in the field of sport psychology have observed that there is often poor preparation of student athletes and non-athletes for careers post-university (Petitpas et al., 2002; Sandstedt, Cox, Martens, Ward, Webber, & Ivey, 2004; Wooten, 2005; Beamon, 2012). Researchers (Lally & Kerr, 2005; Linnemeyer & Brown, 2010) have found evidence of a lack of career preparedness among college student athletes compared to non-athletes on measures of career planning. The lack of career preparation by student athletes in transitioning from university into their careers or professional sports has the potential to disadvantage them in the future, as they may struggle unnecessarily to adjust to the demands and transitions within their careers. It is therefore important that student athletes are equipped with career development skills that enable them to navigate career transitions.

Researchers (Petitpas et al., 2002; Sandstedt et al., 2004; Wooten, 2005; Beamon, 2012) have observed that there are very few athletes who move to professional sports after graduating from university. The reality is that student athletes may not meet the requirements to be professional athletes post-university and may choose to prolong their academic programmes to continue participating in sports as long as they meet university requirements. This is a challenge because student athletes have a limited number of years to compete in higher education compared to other athletes who retire from sports when they are ready to do so (Fuller, 2014). When student athletes have exhausted extending their academic programmes or no longer meet the requirements as student athletes, they still need to positively transition into the world of work.

An important facet of the problem of successful career transition out of university is athletic identity. Student athletes often seem to define themselves through their athletic identities and may neglect other aspects of their lives (Lally & Kerr, 2005). Athletic identity is defining the self in relation to a role in sports. It has been emphasised by researchers such as Lally and Kerr (2005) as hampering career planning early on during their university careers. Burnett (2010) found that student athletes tend to focus on their sport and their athletic identities during the initial years of higher education and tend to neglect their academic studies. Thus, the university is viewed as a resource to set the course for their sporting careers (Burnett, 2010), rather than preparation for an alternative/dual career. It can be problematic in that as student athletes experience transition difficulties in their academic, sport, and psychosocial spaces, they may fail to adequately deal with the transitions.

When student athletes struggle to cope effectively with the transitions that confront them, they may be faced with a crisis that has the potential to slow down or limit progress in their careers (Stambulova, 2010). However, the opposite is true – that positive transitions equip student athletes with the skills to be successful in their sporting careers and careers post-sport retirement (Stambulova & Alfermann, 2009). Stambulova (2010) argues that there is a need for interventions that will assist athletes with successful transitions in sport and enable them to effectively adjust to career changes. It is therefore the aim of this research to investigate
the career transition needs of student athletes and to develop a career transition intervention programme for student athletes.

This research will develop a career transition intervention programme for student athletes using the research methodology for intervention research design and development of Thomas and Rothman (1994). This research methodology is a form of applied action research that aims to understand individuals and their community/environmental conditions, and contribute to their improvement (Thomas & Rothman, 1994). It is for this reason that the thesis does not follow the more traditional chapter format, but rather that of the phases presented in the applied research format of Thomas and Rothman (1994). Intervention research design and development is a research methodology that has a series of interconnected phases that guide researchers to develop innovative interventions linked to human service (Thomas & Rothman, 1994). This research will focus on understanding the student athletes and their context, and develop an intervention programme to facilitate successful transition in their career development. Such a programme will aim to equip student athletes with the necessary skills of career planning, personal development, and coping with transition into professional sport, a dual career (both sport and another occupation), or post-sport careers.

1.4 RESEARCH AIM AND OBJECTIVES

The aim of this research is to develop an intervention programme for student athletes in career transitions. In order to achieve this aim, the first objective of this research is to determine how student athletes experience career transitions into university, within university, and out of university. This is important in that it will enable the researcher to understand student athletes’ transition needs and challenges pertaining to experiences that are psychological, psychosocial, athletic, and academic. The researcher will achieve this objective by collecting data through the use of mixed methods of interviews and a self-reporting questionnaire. The researcher will then analyse the yielded data and collate the data to achieve the second objective of the research.

Based on the outcome of the first research objective, the second objective of the research is to develop a career transition intervention programme for student athletes. The researcher will then conduct an in-depth literature review to ascertain the elements of successful transition interventions and collate the findings of the outcome of the analysed data to design the proposed intervention. The research aims and objectives will be achieved using the Thomas and Rothman (1994) intervention design and development methodology.

1.5 THESIS STATEMENT

In light of the problem statement and the research objectives mentioned above, the aim of this research project is to develop an intervention programme that will facilitate the successful career transition of student athletes. The researcher will follow the methodology proposed by
Thomas and Rothman (1994) to achieve the research objectives. Intervention design and development has six main phases:

1. Problem analysis and project planning
2. Information gathering and synthesis
3. Design
4. Early development and pilot testing
5. Evaluation and advanced development
6. Dissemination

The different phases are interrelated and reciprocal in nature as new information is obtained or difficulties are encountered. Each of the phases involves sequential steps of activity required to complete the phase, which provides the basis to move to the next phase (Thomas & Rothman, 1994). For the purposes of this study, the researcher will follow Phase 1 to Phase 4 (early development) of the intervention design and development, as the goal of the research is to develop an intervention programme. The last two phases may be conducted as postdoctoral research.

1.6 SIGNIFICANCE

This research is significant because there is a dearth of information on the career transition of student athletes in South Africa. This study will make an original contribution by generating knowledge on student athlete career transitions in the South African context, similar to what theorists have done in the European and American contexts. The research will furthermore develop a transition intervention programme for student athletes based on the Thomas and Rothman (1994) intervention design and development research methodology. Such a student athlete transition intervention programme does not currently exist in the South African context. The applications of this programme will benefit universities’ student athletes and various sporting federations in South Africa and beyond. In short, the significance of this research is that it will contribute towards theory within the South African context on student athlete transitions and practice in the development of a career intervention programme.

1.7 DEFINITION OF TERMS

This section provides the working definitions of the terms used throughout the research to enable the reader to understand the terms used.

**Athletic career:** It is a sports activity that is chosen by an individual to develop, train, and participate in competitions in several sporting events. The athletic career may begin and progress from amateur to professional as the individual goes through the different stages of his/her development. The individual may be part of the athletic career at a local, national, or international level (Tenenbaum & Eklund, 2007).
**Dual career:** Individuals in a dual career are individuals who are concurrently holding two careers. In this research, the term refers to athletes who are professional athletes and who hold a second career simultaneously (Stambulova & Wylleman, 2014).

**Student athlete:** This is a term used to refer to students who are athletes currently registered and studying at a higher education institution as well as participating in one or more sporting activities representing the university and institutions beyond the university. The term implies that the athletes are students first and athletes second (Gayles & Baker, 2015).

### 1.8 CHAPTER OVERVIEW

The aim of this section is to provide an indication of how the research project will develop. This research project will follow the outline as delineated by Thomas and Rothman’s (1994) intervention design and development research methodology.

Chapter 1 introduces the research and provides an outline of the study.

Chapter 2 provides an overview of the intervention research design and development. This includes all six phases within the intervention methodology as stipulated by Thomas and Rothman (1994).

Chapter 3 includes Part 1 of Phase 1. Phase 1 is the problem analysis and project plan phase. This chapter, as the focus will be on Part 1 of Phase 1, titled problem identification and research methodology. The reason it entails problem identification is because it includes the following tasks:

- Identification and involving clients;
- Gaining entry and cooperation from the setting; and
- Identifying the concerns of the population within the research methodology.

Chapter 4 discusses the remainder of the tasks (Part 2) in Phase 1, titled problem analysis and project planning phase (discussion of research findings). In Part 2 of Phase 1 the following tasks are discussed:

- Analysis of key problems; and
- The setting of goals and objectives.

This chapter forms part of the research findings for the first objective of the research, which was to determine how student athletes experience career transitions into university, within university, and out of university.
Chapter 5 includes Phase 2 of the research model, namely information gathering and synthesis. This phase includes the following key aspects:

- An overview of various transitions faced by athletes;
- Using existing information sources; and
- Identifying functional elements of successful models such as Stambulova’s athletic career transition model and the Schlossberg transition theory.

Chapter 6 represents the design (Phase 3) and the early development (Phase 4) of the intervention development model. The focus in Phase 3 is:

- to frame the design objectives;
- the observational system; and
- to specify procedural elements for the intervention.

The second part of Chapter 6 represents the early development phase, which is a culmination of the prototype of the designed and developed intervention.

Chapter 7 summarises the research project’s findings and makes recommendations for future research.

1.9 SUMMARY

The aim of this chapter was to introduce the research by discussing the background information, problem statement, and the research aim and objectives. Research and thesis statements were made, the significance of the study was explained, and an overview of chapters was provided.
CHAPTER 2
INTERVENTION RESEARCH MODEL

2.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter provides an overview of the intervention research model. This is followed by a detailed description of each of the phases of the intervention research model and relating them to the study. It starts with Phase 1 (problem planning and analysis), followed by Phase 2 (information gathering and synthesis), Phase 3 (intervention design), and subsequently a discussion of Phase 4 (early development and pilot testing). Phase 5 (evaluation and advanced development) and Phase 6 (dissemination) are discussed last, although they will only be applied in postdoctoral research.

2.2 INTERVENTION RESEARCH MODEL: DESIGN AND DEVELOPMENT

Intervention design and development is experimental research directed towards developing possible interventions for practical problems (Thomas & Rothman, 1994). The aim of intervention research is to implement purposive change through the design and development of interventions (Frazer & Galinsky, 2010).

The objective of this intervention research is to utilise research-based knowledge to develop human service expertise. Human service expertise ranges from policies, service systems, treatment methods, and programmes to various integrative approaches (Thomas & Rothman, 1994). The aim of this research is to design and develop an intervention programme argued for in Chapter 1 of this thesis. Intervention design and development, according to Thomas and Rothman (1994), has six main phases (see Figure 2.1), namely:

1. Phase 1 – Problem analysis and project planning: This is a critical phase of intervention research as it has several parts, which include identification and involving clients, gaining entry and cooperation from the setting, identifying the concerns of the population, and analysis of key problems. This phase also sets goals and objectives for the development of the intervention.

2. Phase 2 – Information gathering and synthesis: This phase uses existing information sources to identify functional elements of successful models. The phase also studies natural examples, which refers to conducting interviews with the people who have been affected by the problem the researcher is attempting to address.

3. Phase 3 – Design: The focus of the design phase is to structure the design objectives. This refers to the goals of the design for the intervention. The design phase also
proposes an observational system as well as specifies procedural elements for the intervention.

4. Phase 4 – Early development and pilot testing: This phase develops a preliminary intervention that will be pilot tested.

5. Phase 5 – Evaluation and advanced development: This phase refers to the evaluation and further improvement of the developed intervention.

6. Phase 6 – Dissemination: This phase refers to disseminating the intervention for use, review, and replication.

Figure 2.1: Intervention research design and development

Source: Rothman and Thomas (1994, p. 28)
The different phases are interrelated and reciprocal in nature as new information is obtained or difficulties are encountered. Each of the phases involves sequential steps of activity required to complete the phase, which provides the basis to move to the next phase (Thomas & Rothman, 1994). Some of the activities within a particular phase may continue into the next phase. The process is creative, evaluative, and generative (Frazer & Galinsky, 2010).

Intervention research by Thomas and Rothman (1994) has established the groundwork for intervention research for over 20 years and will thus be the main reference for this research. The purpose of this chapter is to provide an overview of the activities within each of the phases of the intervention research. The researcher will utilise the first four phases, excluding pilot testing, to achieve the purpose of her research. Phase 5 (evaluation and advanced development) and Phase 6 (dissemination) will not be implemented at this stage of the study but may be implemented as part of postdoctoral research.

An in-depth discussion of the application of Thomas and Rothman’s (1994) intervention methodology to this study follows.

2.2.1 Phase 1: Problem analysis and project planning

According to Thomas and Rothman (1994), the aim of this phase is to ascertain and analyse the extent of the problem as well as to begin planning for the intervention research. This phase of the research consists of various activities critical to meeting the intended objective, which consists of a partnership between the researcher and the target population. The target population for the purposes of this study consists of athletes studying at various universities who are preparing for a career transition from university into the world of work. The following activities are included in this phase:

a. Identifying and involving the target population
   This activity entails choosing a target population whose problems are identified to be of interest in society. The researcher then intends to conduct the research project focusing on the target population (Strydom, Steyn, & Strydom, 2007). As researchers work with the target population, they identify specific goals and targets for the intervention (De Vos & Strydom, 2011, p. 478). The current research population identified by the researcher comprises student athletes at three different Gauteng universities, namely the University of Johannesburg (UJ), University of Pretoria (UP), and University of the Witwatersrand (Wits), who were within career transitions in higher education and preparing to make a career transition out of higher education.

b. Gaining entry and cooperation from the setting
   This activity consists of developing a relationship with relevant key informants. These key informants lead the researcher to the target population (De Vos & Strydom, 2011, p. 478). Pertaining to this research, the target population refers to role players such as
the directors of sports at the universities mentioned above, the various sporting codes’ managers, the sports coaches associated with the universities, as well as the student athletes. This collaborative relationship with the role players in the sports setting assisted the researcher to identify problems and plan the project intervention.

c. Identifying the concerns of the population
This activity consists of the researcher using qualitative and quantitative methods to assist in identifying and understanding the needs of the population (De Vos & Strydom, 2011, p. 478). This research project utilised a mixed-methods approach, including qualitative methods as well as quantitative methods to elicit the transition challenges of student athletes. The researcher conducted individual interviews with previous student athletes, held focus group interviews with current student athletes (qualitative methods), and administered career transition questionnaires (quantitative method) that were completed by student athletes.

d. Analysing identified problems
This activity enables the researcher to explore the extent of the identified problems and whom they affect (Thomas & Rothman, 1994). The questions below were useful for the activity of analysing identified problems. They guided the researcher to reflect on the reasons previous interventions have not worked and also enabled the researcher to determine if such interventions have been attempted before. The responses to these questions also helped to direct the intervention goals of the study (Fawcett et al., 1994, p. 31). Examples of such questions are as follows:

- For whom is the situation a problem?
- What are the negative consequences of the problem for the affected individuals?
- What are the negative consequences of the problem for the community?
- Who (if anyone) benefits from the conditions as they are now?
- How do they benefit?
- Who should share the responsibility for solving the problem?
- What behaviours (of whom) need to change for clients to consider the problem solved?
- What conditions need to change to establish or support needed change?
- What is an acceptable level of change?
- At what level should the problem be addressed?
- Does the problem reside in the behaviour of key individuals or the immediate physical or social environment or policy or government?
- Is this a multilevel problem requiring action at a variety of levels of change?
- Is it feasible (technically, financially, politically) to make a change at each identified level?
Unsuccessful career transitions of student athletes are both an individual problem and a societal problem. If the individual does not successfully transition from university into the world of work, he/she may experience long-term negative consequences. The individual may experience psychological difficulties such as depression, which may hinder their potential contribution to society as athletes or via alternative careers. Therefore, there could be a need for a programme that facilitates successful transition into the world of work for student athletes at an individual and group level within the university context.

e. Setting goals and objectives

This activity refers to the setting of broad goals that are needed by the population of concern as they relate to the purpose of the intervention research project (De Vos & Strydom, 2011, p. 479). The current research aims to assist student athletes to make successful transitions into either dual careers or single (professional sporting) careers post-higher education. The objective of the research is to conduct an analysis of career transition needs and then develop a career transition programme that would address the career transition needs of the athletes. The researcher needed to be cognisant of the following in her project plan as they influence achieving the objectives of the research: funding, timelines, contracts with field sites and field arrangements, expectations and limitations, retrieval procedures of information sources, data-collection methods and measuring instruments, and data-analysis methods and the associated costs (Thomas & Rothman, 1994).

The challenge the researcher may experience with Phase 1 is gaining entry and cooperation from the setting. This may hamper research progress. Additionally, should there not be a collaborative relationship with the various stakeholders from gatekeepers to the research participants, the researcher will have difficulty identifying the concerns of the population as well as analysing identified problems. In short, should the researcher fail to conduct an effective problem analysis, she will struggle to plan the project going forward. The opposite is also true; should the researcher succeed in gaining entry and cooperation from the setting, the researcher would then be able to implement the different activities within Phase 1. The latter was the case with this particular research.

2.2.2 Phase 2: Information gathering and synthesis

This phase of the development and design of intervention research pertains to exploring successful and failed attempts to address the problem of career transition (Thomas & Rothman, 1994). This phase explores what others have done to understand and address the problem (De Vos & Strydom, 2011, p. 480). The information gathered was an integration of information from different disciplines (Fawcett et al., 1994, p. 33). The outcome of this phase leads to important outcomes that can be included in the design of the intervention.
The information-gathering and synthesis phase has several key activities (De Vos & Strydom, 2011, p. 481), namely:

1. Studying existing information sources: This activity requires conducting a literature review relevant to the current research. This literature review should scrutinise reported practices, previous research, and recognised improvements relevant to the problem under investigation (Fawcett et al., 1994, p. 32). Pertaining to this research, the researcher reviewed career transition literature and investigated and analysed previous interventions in student athletes’ career transitions.

2. Identifying functional elements of successful models: In this activity, the researcher critically evaluated the interventions that previously addressed the problem in question. The researcher needed to consider what made previous programmes successful or unsuccessful, as well as to explore the conditions and the procedures that influenced the outcome (Fawcett et al., 1994, p. 33; De Vos & Strydom, 2011, p. 482). After identifying the functional elements, the researcher had obtained the relevant information to direct the design and development activities. The researcher explored in detail the two theorists pertinent to career athletic transitions (see Chapter 5, Section 5.3).

3. Studying natural examples: This activity includes conducting interviews with people who have faced the problem, who are aware of the problem, and who can shed light on which variables were useful in developing successful interventions (Fawcett et al., 1994, p. 32). In this regard, the researcher consulted, through individual and focus group interviews, with previous student athletes who have experienced transitions and current student athletes. The researcher also administered a career transition questionnaire to gain a sense of the student athletes’ readiness for career transition. The results are discussed at length under Phase 1 (see Chapter 4, Sections 4.2. and 4.4. as part of the analysis of key problems).

The researcher observed that there was a dearth of research on interventions within the South African context for student athletes. The researchers who have used this model in South Africa utilised them for master’s and mostly doctoral studies in different fields and this displays the broadened scope within which one can apply an intervention research model. The researcher identified the following research projects that used the intervention research method to develop interventions:

2. Kruger (2006) used intervention research for a developmental model for the design and implementation of web-based psychological interventions.
3. Londt (2004) conducted research on the management of domestic violence; focusing
on risk-based assessment and intervention guidelines with perpetrators of intimate violence.

4. Bimerew (2013) used intervention research to develop a framework for a district-based information management system for mental healthcare in the Western Cape.

There is, however, a shortage of research within the field of sport psychology using this intervention research model. Therefore, the researcher explored interventions within the field of sport psychology using other models to study existing resources and to identify functional elements.

2.2.3 Phase 3: Intervention design

The design phase naturally follows the problem-focused analysis and information retrieval phases (Thomas & Rothman, 1994). Design refers to the formulation of intervention constructs. The design phase is a stage in the research that includes purposive planned change (Mullen, 1994). The role of this phase is to formulate a design objective, to specify procedural elements of the intervention, as well as to design the observational system for the intervention.

2.2.3.1 Formulate a design objective

The intervention objective is to develop the social technology that would address and amend a social problem. Design objectives refer to the activities that must be achieved in the design work (Thomas & Rothman, 1994). The design objective must take into account the design domain, which focuses on the design activities. Examples of design domains include a set of interacting elements, such as particular techniques used in the intervention, administrative requirements, interpersonal and ethical factors, as well as structural requirements. Other examples of design domains include the implementation of monitoring and assessment methods and intervention techniques. The point of the design problem is identification of unsettled disputes concerning the fundamentals of the intervention under development, thus providing further focus on the design activities. In short, the design objective, design needs, and design challenges provide a foundation for successive steps in the intervention research process (Mullen, 1994).

2.2.3.2 Specifying the procedural elements of the intervention

This section refers to the specification of the elements used in the intervention so that the intervention can be used frequently. The elements include skills training, use of information, change strategies, and reinforcement or punishment procedures (Fawcett et al., 1994).
2.2.3.3 Designing an observational system

The observational system’s role is to serve as a feedback system for determining the scope of the problem and identifying the effects following the intervention. In this way, changes as a result of the intervention can be recorded (Fawcett et al., 1994, p. 35).

In designing the intervention, the researcher included in the programme a pre-test and post-test as an observational system to determine if the programme actually addressed the student athletes’ needs and challenges. The researcher must facilitate a pre-test right at the beginning of the programme intervention and one right at the end of the programme. The researcher will also administer for each session a self-reporting questionnaire on each theme to evaluate the student athletes’ understanding and confidence of the learning area at the end of each session.

Therefore, in essence, the researcher has two observational systems; one as an overview to verify if the programme actually addresses the student athletes’ needs and challenges, and the second observational system is to observe if there were effects following the intervention for each of the sessions. Both these observational systems are self-reporting questionnaires that have advantages and disadvantages. One of the advantages of using a self-reporting questionnaire is that responses are the participants’ own experience of the intervention. These responses can be summarised into tables and graphs and compared with one another. The disadvantages are a possible low response rate, questions may be misunderstood, and the nature of set responses forces people to answer within the framework of responses (Barker, Pistrang, & Elliot, 2016).

In short, the observational system verifies whether the intervention addressed the identified problems and has a measuring system to record if the intervention was successful in aiding the desired behaviour for the smooth career transition of student athletes.

Design is closely linked to the next phase of early development and pilot testing.

2.2.4 Phase 4: Early development and pilot testing phase

Once the programme is designed, it moves into the early development phase (Thomas & Rothman, 1994). This implies that the design is moulded into a prototype format to enable pilot testing of the programme. Pilot testing will aid in revising elements of the intervention programme to improve the effectiveness of the intervention (Thomas & Rothman, 1994). The modifications suggested by the developmental research are incorporated directly into the intervention under development (Reid, 1994).
The strength of the early development and pilot-testing phase lies in the consolidation of the previous phases to develop a theory that will inform implementation for social change. The pilot testing will occur under specific conditions for evaluation and further development.

### 2.2.5 Phase 5: Evaluation and further development

Evaluation in intervention research is an experimental investigation directed towards determining the outcomes of the intervention. Evaluation also assists in further redesigning and developing the intervention (Thomas, 1994). Once the intervention is developed, further testing is conducted to aid improvement in the repeated use and effectiveness of the intervention (Thomas, 1994).

Intervention research has three requirements. Firstly, evaluation should be fair in the testing of the outcomes of the intervention. Secondly, the intervention should address the needs and challenges of the target population. Thirdly, the intervention should be evaluated so that the intervention is further improved to better address the intended objectives (Thomas, 1994).

The evaluation and advanced development phase includes the following four activities:

1. Selecting an experimental design: This task assists to reveal the underlying relationship between the intervention and the conduct-related circumstances directed for transformation.
2. Collecting and analysing data: The outcome of this task informs whether the intervention should be implemented or if supplementary processes are necessary.
3. Replication of the intervention under field conditions: This task deals with the overview of the results of the intervention.
4. Refining the intervention: This task addresses any problems highlighted in the evaluation process. It may include changes in the language, content, and intervention methods (Thomas & Rothman, 1994).

Activities of evaluation consist of applying established methods and techniques of research to the objectives of the intervention evaluation. Evaluation should consider the intervention’s effectiveness and the research design should thus be as rigorous as possible (Thomas & Rothman, 1994).

Advanced development should be directed towards effort within the initial domain of the design and development of the intervention, with emphasis largely on extending the depth of the earlier development. The intervention should be conducted with different client populations and under different conditions to develop the generality of the findings, as well as to determine the limit of its applicability (Thomas, 1994). Once the phase of evaluation and advanced development has reached saturation, the next phase is dissemination.
2.2.6 Phase 6: Dissemination

Once the intervention is tested and evaluated, it is ready for dissemination to target audiences and community organisations (Thomas & Rothman, 1994). The following activities are important in the dissemination process:

1. Preparing a product for dissemination;
2. Identifying potential markets for the intervention;
3. Creating a demand for the intervention; and
4. Encouraging appropriate adaptations and providing technical support to adopters (Fawcett et al., 1994).

2.3 SUMMARY

This chapter provided an overview of the intervention research design and development phases according to Thomas and Rothman (1994). This chapter, in the development of this research, explained each activity within the different phases. The current research was developed until Phase 4 of early development.

The strength of intervention research lies in its creative and generative process. It has the following facets: problem analysis and project planning, data gathering and synthesis, design, early development and pilot testing, evaluation and further development, and dissemination. This enables the researcher to immerse himself/herself within the development, implementation, and evaluation of the intervention grounded in knowledge and practice. The researcher’s involvement in the development and refining of the intervention leads to better results. However, the researcher must be cognisant of researcher bias in order to not influence the validity of the findings. Furthermore, intervention research requires funding, skill and persistence, years of development, and collaboration of professionals within different proficiencies in the development of the intervention (Fraser, 2003).

Chapter 3 focuses on the problem identification activity of Phase 1.
CHAPTER 3
PHASE 1 – PROBLEM IDENTIFICATION
(RESEARCH METHODOLOGY)

3.1 INTRODUCTION

The primary aim of this research is to explore the needs and challenges of student athletes and to then develop a career transition programme in response to the findings. The researcher followed the intervention research design and development as stipulated by Thomas and Rothman (1994) to achieve the aim of the study. The design and development of the intervention research were discussed at length in Chapter 2.

As discussed in Chapter 2, the intervention design and development process has six main phases. The different phases are interrelated and reciprocal in nature as new information is obtained or difficulties are encountered. Each of the phases involves sequential steps of activity to be completed, which then provides the basis to move to the next phase (Thomas & Rothman, 1994).

This chapter begins with a preliminary literature review to introduce the theories and literature that informed the research methodology. It then proceeds to the discussion of Phase 1 tasks.

3.1.1 Preliminary literature review

This is a preliminary introduction to the information gathering and synthesis phase. Its purpose is to introduce the literature reviewed and the theories used to investigate the objectives of the research.

The researcher has theorised that the event of entering university, experiencing university, and exiting university has an influence on the psychological, psychosocial, athletic, and academic aspects of the student athlete. Previous research (Burnett, 2010; Wylleman et al., 1999; Heird & Steinfeldt, 2013; Surujlal, Van Zyl, & Nolan, 2013) has shown that student athletes face an array of challenges in the transitions of moving into university, moving within university, and moving out of university. Therefore, the first objective of the research was to determine how student athletes experience career transitions into university, within university, and out of university. This was important in that it enabled the researcher to understand student athletes’ transition needs and challenges pertaining to experiences that are psychological, psychosocial, athletic, and academic.
Research seems to confirm that stress is influenced by individual and environmental characteristics (Rintauga, Litaba, Muema, & Monyeki, 2014). A study has shown that despite the high levels of stress encountered by student athletes, they seem to be satisfied with their lives (Surujlal et al., 2013). Another study further highlighted the external constraints that prevent student athletes to access resources (Burnett, Peters, & Ngwenya, 2010). The student athletes, according to the literature cited above, seem to experience various challenges and need assistance to help them cope and transition successfully, and therefore these support the need for this research to develop an intervention, specifically within the South African context.

Within Africa and specifically South Africa, studies and interventions regarding career transition are limited. Based on the outcome of the first research objective, the second objective of the research was to develop a career transition intervention programme for student athletes.

In European countries there are student athlete career interventions to support students with their dual careers (Pavlidis & Gargalianos, 2012; Fryklund, 2012). In Italy and Slovenia, however, there seems to be limited assistance for elite athletes, while the athletes seem to be committed to both sports and academics (Corrado, Tessitore, Capranica, Rauter, & Topic, 2012). Similarly, within the American context, there are various interventions to assist student athletes with their career transitions and it seems the results have been positive as the various interventions have been beneficial (Beauchemin, 2014; Petitpas, Cornelius, Van Raalte & Jones, 2005; Van Raalte, Cornelius, Andrews, Diehl, & Brewer, 2015; Burns et al., 2013).

The researcher used Schlossberg’s transition theory and Stambulova’s athletic transition theory to address the two objectives of the research project. Both theories are useful in enabling understanding and facilitating assistance to athletes in career transition. Schlossberg’s transition theory connects a transition to an event (something happens) or non-event (something does not happen), which then translates into changes in beliefs about the self and the world; the transition demands change in behaviour and relationships (Schlossberg, 1981). Stambulova’s (2003) athletic career transition model postulates that transitions are turning phases in career development that come with numerous difficulties; these are often both internal (psychological) and external (psychosocial, athletic, academic). The difficulties associated with transitions may influence the outcome of the transition (Hanin & Stambulova, 2004; Stambulova, 2010).

The adjustment or failure to adjust to the transitions, according to Schlossberg’s transition theory, is influenced by character of the transition, individual characteristics, and character of the pre- and post-transition environments (Anderson, Goodman, & Schlossberg, 2012). Both Stambulova’s and Schlossberg’s theories coincide on several factors pertinent to helping athletes in career transitions. Stambulova’s athletic transition theory speaks to internal and
external difficulties that influence the transition that need to be addressed by internal and external resources (Alfermann & Stambulova, 2007). Similarly, Schlossberg highlights the 4S strategy for coping with transitions. The 4S strategy comprises the self, situation, support, and strategies (Anderson et al., 2012). The research by Sanders and Winter (2016) confirms that the transition success of athletes is attributed to internal and external resources.

Chapter 5 contains a detailed literature review in which the challenges and needs of students athletes are explained in detail pertaining to moving into, moving within, and moving out of higher education. The existing interventions are discussed for student athletes and recommendations are made. Furthermore, the theories chosen by the researcher are explained thoroughly.

In summary, the literature shows that challenges and needs of student athletes seem to be universal, namely the need for interventions, support, and collaboration between various university departments to enable a reassuring environment for student athletes to thrive and have smoother transitions – echoing the need for this research.

Below is a discussion of the tasks in Phase 1 is divided into two sections, which are discussed in Chapter 3 and Chapter 4. In this chapter the researcher explains and discusses the following components of Phase 1: identification and involving clients, gaining entry and cooperation from the setting, and identifying the concerns of the population within the research methodology. In the next chapter, the researcher explains and discusses the following aspects of Phase 1: analysis of key problems and the setting of goals and objectives. The analysis of key problems and the setting of goals and objectives form part of the research findings. Therefore, it would be appropriate for the remainder of the aspects of Phase 1 to be included in the next chapter.

3.2 RESEARCH DESIGN: IDENTIFYING AND INVOLVING THE CONCERNS OF THE POPULATION

The research design refers to the method that a researcher uses to collect evidence (data) and it is fundamental in that it is linked to the research objectives of the study (Vogt, Gardner, & Haeffele, 2012). The research objectives for this study are as follows:

- Firstly, to determine how student athletes experienced their career transitions into university, within university, and out of university. This is important in that it will enable the researcher to understand student athletes’ transition needs and challenges from a psychological, psychosocial, athletic, and academic perspective.
- Based on the outcome of the first research objective, the second objective of the research is to develop a career transition intervention for student athletes.
The researcher chose a mixed-methods design to identify and analyse key problems to address the aim of the research. A mixed-methods design, including both qualitative and quantitative methods, was selected to achieve the two objectives. The researcher desired the benefits of both qualitative and quantitative information to compare and contrast the findings to have a better understanding of the needs and challenges of student athletes to design an appropriate intervention.

The qualitative inquiry would provide an in-depth understanding of the research participants’ experiences and perceptions of transition needs and challenges for the athletes, through the use of focus groups and individual interviews. The quantitative inquiry would identify factors that contribute to student athlete career situations broadly from the student athlete population through the use of the revised Student Athlete Career Situation Inventory (SACSI-R) (Cox et al., 2009). The identification of the factors associated with athletes’ career transition, as well as an understanding of their experiences, needs, and challenges, would enable the researcher to frame the problem and work towards the solution, which is an intervention programme for student athletes. The next section explains qualitative and quantitative research designs as well as the mixed-methods design.

3.2.1 Qualitative design

Qualitative design includes a process of inquiry to understand the perceptions and experiences of the participants on the problem under observation (Ivankova, Creswell, & Clark, 2007). The researcher will study the world through the interpretive constructivist perspective (Nieuwenhuis, 2007). This suggests that the researcher will attempt to understand student athletes’ experiences through the meanings that people assign to them. The advantage of this perspective is that it provides the depth and richness of multiple socially constructed realities (Nieuwenhuis, 2007). This approach involves the collection of a verbal account of the central phenomenon through individual and focus group interviews, observations, document review, and the review of audio-visual materials. The qualitative data used in this research were collected through individual interviews and focus group interviews of athletes. The data were recorded, transcribed, coded, and analysed. The researcher then interpreted and formulated meaning from the analysed findings in light of the research objectives (Ivankova et al., 2007).

The benefit of using a qualitative approach lies in obtaining research participants' individual reflections of their experiences, thus providing meaning of issues that they dealt with during their career transitions. The qualitative research design within this current research uses principles of action research design in that it takes action to investigate and find solutions. Action research refers to seeking a practical solution to a practical problem experienced by the research participants (Nieuwenhuis, 2007).
The researcher’s goal was to understand the problem and context, and, with the participants’ information, plan and implement an intervention that could address the experienced problem (Nieuwenhuis, 2007). In this research, the researcher firstly aimed to determine how student athletes experience career transitions into university, within university, and exiting university. This is important in that it enabled the researcher to understand student athletes’ transition needs and challenges pertaining to experiences that are psychological, psychosocial, athletic, and academic in nature. The qualitative aspect of this research addressed the “why” and the “how” of athlete career transitions (Nieuwenhuis, 2007). The next sections explains the trustworthiness of qualitative research.

3.2.1.1 Trustworthiness of qualitative research

The trustworthiness of data refers to concerns that a researcher must address to ensure that the information collected is valid, applicable, consistent, and objective (Anney, 2014). The researcher had to ensure that her data were credible, transferable, confirmable, and dependable. The following paragraphs explain how the researcher addressed each of the concerns.

Credibility is defined as the assurance that can be assigned to the genuineness of the research findings (Anney, 2014). The researcher emphasised her independent status to encourage the participants to be honest, and confirmed that there were no right or wrong answers. The participants were aware that they could refuse participation and were allowed to withdraw from the data collection at any point without prejudice. This, the researcher believes, gave the participants freedom to be frank about their experiences. Furthermore, the data collected were credible because the researcher repeatedly read and re-read the transcripts over a lengthy period. She also used triangulation. Triangulation is asking the same research questions to different study participants (Teddle & Tashakkori, 2009). This was achieved in the individual interviews and in the focus group interviews. In addition, the researcher reviewed preceding research projects to evaluate the extent to which the current project’s results are consistent with those of past projects (Shenton, 2004; Anney, 2014).

Transferability suggests the application of data to other situations (Anney, 2014). In this research, the researcher provided a thick description of the research projects. She was clear in articulating the research process she followed and how the research is part of a bigger context, thus positioning the current research to be repeated within similar environments (Anney, 2014).

Confirmability is the process of confirming that the data collected are a reflection of the participants’ responses and not anything else (Shenton, 2004). The researcher in this case provided an audit trail, which comprised the steps she used in data analysis to provide the rationale for the decisions made. Furthermore, in reporting the findings, the researcher used direct quotes from the participants in confirming that the responses were the participants’
responses. The researcher also kept the recorded interviews and the transcribed raw data for audit purposes.

Lastly, dependability is the degree to which the research can be replicated and findings would be congruent (Shenton, 2004). Dependability, similar to confirmability, was established through the use of an audit trail. This is where the researcher outlined the research process, accounted for the research decisions, and how the data were collected, documented, and scrutinised (Anney, 2014).

In short, the researcher is confident that the qualitative aspect of this research is valid, reliable, consistent, and applicable, based on the four concerns she addressed at different stages of the research.

### 3.2.2 Quantitative design

The goal of quantitative research is to explain relationships between variables through statistical analysis by administering self-developed questionnaires intended to yield highly reliable and valid scores (Ivankova et al., 2007). This can be done through a survey method by obtaining opinions, perceptions, and attitudes via questionnaires from a known population (Maree & Pietersen, 2007).

In this research, the quantitative instrument that was used is a psychometric instrument called the SACSI-R (Cox et al., 2009). The instrument’s validity and reliability are described in greater detail later in this chapter (see Section 3.4.3). The data analysis of quantitative research interprets descriptive statistics by discussing the overall tendencies in the data, while the inferential statistics analyse the data of the sample to draw conclusions about the population. The researcher then interprets the results in light of the research objectives and previous research (Ivankova et al., 2007). This quantitative design was beneficial for this research in that many participants were able to respond to the research instrument, thus allowing for the generalisation of the results.

Another benefit of the quantitative design for this study was acquiring information directly from the respondents through concise responses to designed questions and obtaining a sufficient response rate (Vogt et al., 2012). Thus, combining both qualitative and quantitative designs enabled the researcher to support results from both approaches as well as having the one informing the other in a mixed-methods design (Vogt et al., 2012).

### 3.2.3 Mixed-methods design

A mixed-methods design refers to a combination of both qualitative and quantitative methods in data collection, analysis, and interpretation. Each approach provides insight into the research objective and it helps the researcher to have access to different kinds of knowledge
that answer the “what”, “how”, and “why” questions about the research problem (Ivankova et al., 2007).

Mixed methods include various ways of responding to the research problem, providing corroboration, depth, and understanding (Creswell & Clark, 2011). The benefit of the design lies in enabling the researcher to choose the most appropriate approach; for example, aspects of qualitative and aspects of quantitative methods to responding to the research question. Another benefit of a mixed method is that it allows for the comparison and contrasting of the qualitative and quantitative data to produce well-proven conclusions, as well as enhancing the qualitative results with a supplemental dataset (Ivankova et al., 2007). A mixed-methods design is said to provide better inferences and provides an opportunity for greater assortment of divergent views in responding to the research question (T Teddlie & Tashakkori, 2009).

The researcher applied various data-collection procedures in the mixed-methods approach, such as individual interviews, focus group interviews, and psychometric assessment (utilising SACSI-R) to achieve the aim of the research. The researcher opted to follow a convergent mixed-methods approach to best understand the phenomena being studied. Convergent mixed methods refer to the collection and analysis of strands of qualitative and quantitative information independently. Once completed, the researcher then compares and contrasts the research findings from the two sets of information and merges them into one during interpretation (Creswell & Clark, 2011). This enabled the researcher to have qualitative and quantitative information from which an intervention programme can be developed by allowing for triangulation of the information.

Triangulation is done by comparing and contrasting both qualitative and quantitative data to produce a well-validated conclusion and making inferences from the results (Teddlie & Tashakkori, 2009). The advantage is that triangulation is not time consuming; however, the challenge is comparing results from two different datasets (Ivankova et al., 2007).

In conclusion, the researcher utilised a mixed-methods design as part of Phase 1 of the problem analysis phase to identify the problem and address the research objectives. The problem analysis in Phase 1 of the research process unfolded in two parts outlined in detail below; first, the qualitative assessment of career transition needs and challenges and second, the quantitative assessment of career transition needs.
3.3 SECTION A: QUALITATIVE ASSESSMENT OF CAREER TRANSITION NEEDS AND CHALLENGES

3.3.1 Introduction

This part of the research methodology comprised collecting qualitative information from two groups of participants. The first group of participants included previous student athletes, with whom individual interviews were conducted. The second group of participants from whom data were collected were current student athletes, with the help of focus groups interviews. In total, the researcher conducted three focus groups interviews with current student athletes. The next section discusses why the researcher used both individual and focus group interviews, and then discusses the challenges posed by these methods. The researcher finally discusses the research participants’ inclusion criteria, as well as the research instrument that was used.

3.3.2 Individual interviews

The researcher conducted individual interviews with previous student athletes. These were beneficial in that the researcher was able to have in-depth conversations about the athletes’ career transition issues. The aim was to explore their world (experiences) through their social reality. As the interviews were semi-structured, the line of inquiry was set and the researcher was able to probe for clarification. The researcher chose to conduct various interviews to gather extensive information on the participants’ experiences, views, and opinions regarding their transition needs and challenges (Nieuwenhuis, 2007). Both the participants and the researcher attended the individual interviews at a prearranged place and time as agreed on. The researcher used an interview schedule, which is discussed in greater detail in Section 3.3.4.

3.3.3 Focus group interviews

Focus groups enabled the researcher to determine the problems of student athletes’ transitions within a discussion format. The participants engaged freely on issues pertinent to the study, which enabled a wide range of responses. The benefits of focus group interviews are that they facilitate the compilation of ideas and comments that may not have been easily accessible in an individual interview (Nieuwenhuis, 2007).

One of the challenges of qualitative interviews may be the researcher imposing preconceived ideas on the data. A researcher’s bias may influence the outcome of the data (Nieuwenhuis, 2007). Another challenge is that the information collected may not be representative of the whole student athlete population, but may be representative only of some student athletes’ experiences. The information collected may be biased towards the dominant individual within the group and the researcher may miss pertinent information from the less outspoken members within the focus group (Nieuwenhuis, 2007). The researcher needed to utilise
communication skills to gain input from other participants to minimise potential bias. Both the participants and the researcher attended the focus group interviews at a prearranged place and time as agreed on. The researcher used an interview schedule, which is discussed in greater detail below.

3.3.4 Research participants and interview schedule

The following section discusses the inclusion criteria of previous student athletes and the interview schedule used. Furthermore, the inclusion criteria of the focus group and the research instrument are also discussed.

3.3.4.1 Interviews with previous student athletes: Inclusion criteria

The researcher decided to invite previous student athletes as research participants in this phase of the study as they have experienced these issues before. They have experienced their own student athlete career transition and were able to share meaningful experiences that were useful in responding to the research objectives.

The previous student athletes comprised athletes who had completed university and who were already in a dual career (sport and another occupation). The goal of the interviews with these individuals was to explore how they experienced their career transitions and to explore what their career transition needs were. The inclusion criteria for the individual interviewees were as follows:

- They were student athletes when at university.
- They recently completed their studies at a university.
- They were in a career for at least one year since the completion of their studies.

The three previous student athletes who were interviewed included two male athletes and one female athlete who participated at elite level (representing their provincial and/or national teams). Although all three of the participants made a transition into coaching in their sporting codes, they had diverse incomes and careers.

Table 3.1: Demographic and career information of previous student athletes interviewed

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Race</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Course studied</th>
<th>Sports code and current participation</th>
<th>Current career</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Coloured</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>Bachelor of Technology in Management Services</td>
<td>Athletics: Triple jump (national level)</td>
<td>Athletics manager and coach</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Black</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>Bachelor of Education Senior Phase</td>
<td>Athletics: Cross-country track and field (provincial level)</td>
<td>High School educator and coach</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Black</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>Honours in Sports Management</td>
<td>Football, netball, and basketball (provincial level)</td>
<td>Lecturer and coach</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
3.3.4.2 Interview schedule for previous student athletes

The interview schedule for the previous student athletes was guided by semi-structured questions, exploring how the student athletes perceived their transitions according to Schlossberg’s transition factors (Goodman, Schlossberg, & Anderson, 2006). Schlossberg’s theory was utilised as the theoretical foundation for the interviews, and lists the following factors as important in career transitions: situation, self, support, and strategy. The theory is explained in greater detail in Chapter 5.

The following are examples of the questions that were asked in the interview:

1. How did you experience your transition from student athlete going into your dual career?
2. Which situations affected your transition (situation)?
3. Which goals did you have (self)?
4. What made your transition easier (support)?
5. What are your recommendations for student athletes going into transition (strategy)?

3.3.4.3 Focus group interviews with current student athletes: Inclusion criteria

The focus group interviews involved current student athletes as participants. The current student athletes were selected through snowball sampling and invited to participate in the focus group interviews. Snowball sampling is a method where a research participant, with whom a relationship has already been established, is used to infiltrate his/her social networks to obtain other research participants who could potentially take part in the study (Nieuwenhuis, 2007). This type of sampling method is useful where the population is hard to find and the research interest is in an interrelated group of people; in this case current student athletes (Maree & Pietersen, 2007).

The goal of the data collection was to explore how student athletes foresee their career transitions and what their career transition needs were. The researcher initially aimed to have one focus group, but ended up having three focus groups until data saturation was reached. As seen in Table 3.2, the first three male participants of University 1 were in one focus group, the two males from University 2 were in the second focus group, and the two females from University 2 were in the third focus group.

The inclusion criteria for participation of current student athletes were:

• students who were registered for a course at a university; and
• students who were registered as student athletes at the sport department of their university and who actively participate in sports.
The demographic information of the current student athletes who participated in the focus group interviews are presented in Table 3.2.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Race</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Currently studying</th>
<th>Year of study</th>
<th>University</th>
<th>Sports code</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Black</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>B. Tech. (Transport Management)</td>
<td>4th</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Beach volleyball</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Black</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>N. Dip. (Transport Management)</td>
<td>2nd</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Beach volleyball</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Black</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>N. Dip. (Town and Regional Planning)</td>
<td>2nd</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Beach volleyball</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>White</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>Biomedical Science</td>
<td>2nd</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Cricket and squash</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Black</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>Bachelor of Accounting Science</td>
<td>2nd</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Rugby</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Black</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>Bachelor of Education</td>
<td>2nd</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Football</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Black</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>Bachelor of Education</td>
<td>2nd</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Football</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 3.3.4.4 Interview schedule for current student athletes

Similar to the interviews with the previous student athletes, the interview schedule was also guided by semi-structured questions. This allowed probing and clarification of responses. The questions were formulated based on Schlossberg’s transition factors (situation, self, support, strategy) (Goodman et al., 2006). Please refer to Chapter 5 for more information.

The following questions were asked in the interview:

1. How do you think you will experience your transition from student athlete to a dual-career individual?
2. Which situations might affect your transition (situation)?
3. What goals do you have (self)?
4. What do you think will make your transition easier (support)?
5. What would you recommend for student athletes in transition (strategy)?

### 3.3.5 Qualitative data-collection process and ethical considerations

Permission to conduct this research was granted by the Academic Ethics Committee of the Faculty of Humanities at UJ. The researcher contacted the Sport Bureau of UJ, Wits Sports at Wits, and TUKS Sports at UP for permission to conduct the research and to gain access to potential participants in the study. At each of the different universities the researcher was referred to a representative who then gave the researcher access to the student athlete population.
Once the relationship was established with each of the universities, the researcher proceeded to contact the previous student athletes and current student athletes within the universities as introduced to by the athletic departments’ representatives. Through the previous and current student athletes, using a snowball sampling technique, the researcher gained access to more previous and current student athletes. The researcher contacted the current student athletes via email and telephonically and invited them to participate in the study.

The researcher discussed the purpose of the research with the prospective participants and requested their voluntary participation in the study. Once the prospective participants agreed, the researcher and the participants agreed on a venue and time for the interviews to take place. The participants were required to sign an informed consent form prior to the interviews.

The researcher explained the following to the participants prior to the interviews: the importance of recording the interview, the duration of the interview, and the format of the interview. The researcher also explained that participation was completely voluntary and non-participation would not have negative consequences for them. The participants were informed that they had the right to remain anonymous and were informed that no identifying information such as names or personal details would be used in the transcripts or research report, therefore their responses would remain confidential.

The participants were also informed that there were no direct benefits for participation and there were no foreseeable risks for the participants. The ethical requirements for research with human subjects were adhered to.

The researcher began her data collection by interviewing the three previous student athletes first. Then the researcher proceeded to interview the current student athletes in focus groups.

The researcher attempted to include student athletes who reflected the diversity of the universities involved in the study. This involved different ethnicities, genders, and different sports played at the university (see Tables 3.1 and 3.2).

Interviews were conducted in English. The interviews were facilitated through the usage of semi-structured interviews. This comprised a list of questions to be answered and probes to facilitate discussions (refer to Section 3.3.4). The researcher kept written notes during the individual interviews. This helped the researcher to formulate new questions as the interview moved along, especially when having to verify something that was said earlier in an interview. All the interviews were audio-recorded and permission to record was granted by all the participants.

Thereafter the researcher used an administrator to transcribe the interviews. The researcher then assessed the transcribed interviews for accuracy and verified the data for quality assurance. The transcribed data were analysed using thematic content analysis.
3.3.6 Qualitative data analysis

The individual interviews and the focus group interviews were analysed using thematic analysis. Thematic analysis is the process of inquiring data from different angles, where the researcher aims to determine similarities and differences in texts that support particular themes (Nieuwenhuis, 2007).

Thematic content analysis is understood as the extraction of the main themes in data, which entails the grouping of statements, words, and phrases (Braun & Clarke, 2012). It involves three essential parts: the data, coding of data, and the identification of themes (Braun & Clarke, 2006). The researcher followed the thematic analysis method as stipulated by Braun and Clarke (2006). It is important to mention that the researcher was flexible in applying the following steps; it was a recursive process that required the researcher to go back and forth as required in the analysis of the data. The steps are illustrated in Figure 3.1.

**Figure 3.1: Braun and Clarke's model of thematic analysis**

Source: Braun and Clarke (2006)

3.3.6.1 Thematic analysis

According to Braun and Clarke (2006), thematic coding has six steps. The steps are: familiarisation with the data, initial coding, searching for themes based on initial coding, reviewing the themes, theme definition and labelling, and report writing. Each of the steps used is discussed below.

- **Step 1 – Familiarisation with the data:** This step involved the researcher reading and re-reading through the transcripts and listening to the recorded interviews to familiarise herself with the data in order to look for meaning and patterns. The researcher made notes of her observations during this process. This formed part of the coding.
- **Step 2 – Initial coding:** This step entails simplifying large texts of data; it entailed identifying what was observed in the data. It comprised looking for what was noticeably said and the latent meaning in the data. The researcher collated the codes into
categories, which allowed for later retrieval and analysis of the codes. This involved noting the patterns in the data. The coding was data led, meaning that it was guided by the thorough analysis of the data.

- **Step 3 – Searching for themes based on initial coding:** This step required that the different coded categories were grouped into themes in a meaningful way. Thus themes pinpointed major patterns in the initial codes and therefore comprised a subsequent level of interpretation of the text, in which the researcher focused on the relationships between the codes. The researcher noted that some of the codes formed main themes and others sub-themes, while others were unnecessary.

- **Step 4 – Reviewing the themes:** Once the themes and subthemes were organised, the researcher reviewed the themes. This involved reading and re-reading through the themes. Then, the themes were checked and they formed a coherent pattern. If they were not coherent, they needed to be adjusted; the coded categories were then collated under different themes. This step essentially entailed reviewing and refining the themes.

- **Step 5 – Theme definition and labelling:** This step is self-explanatory in that it required the researcher to define and label each of the themes accurately in relation to the data.

- **Step 6 – Report writing:** This is the stage where the researcher reported on the findings (see Chapter 4). It entails reflecting on the analysed data. The researcher used extracts within the themes to illustrate the outcome of the analysis as well as to authenticate the findings.

In short, the identification of themes was generated inductively from the transcribed text through reading and re-reading of the transcripts. The data were initially coded, categorised, and grouped into themes. The themes were reviewed and refined and labelled accurately in relation to the data. These results were then summarised into research findings that guided the development of the intervention programme (Creswell & Clark, 2011).

### 3.4 SECTION B: QUANTITATIVE ASSESSMENT OF CAREER TRANSITION NEEDS

#### 3.4.1 Introduction

This part of the research included the quantitative data collection phase of the mixed-methods design. The data collection involved a psychometric assessment of student athletes’ career transition needs. The researcher used the SACSI-R (Cox et al., 2009) to assess the student athletes’ career transition needs, challenges, and situations. The next section explains the research participants and the sampling methods, as well as the research instrument, data-collection process, and data analysis.
3.4.2 Research participants and sampling method

A purposive sample of student athletes who were at the time of the study registered at one of three universities, namely UJ, Wits and UP, were invited to participate in this research. Purposive sampling is a technique involving selecting a large number of participants who collectively represent the population of interest and who can provide knowledge of what the researcher is attempting to uncover (Teddlie & Tashakkori, 2009).

These students had to represent the university in one of any sports codes and also reflect the diversity of the student athlete population. The researcher aimed to include 100 to 150 research participants, and ended up collecting the survey responses of 153 student athletes. After data capturing and preparation of the data for analysis, only 140 responses were usable for the research. The responses of 13 participants were excluded from analysis due to incomplete data.

3.4.3 Research instrument: Revised Student Athlete Career Situation Inventory (SACSI-R)

Student athletes at the three universities were asked to complete the SACSI-R for males and females (Cox et al., 2009). The inventory is a quantitative psychometric instrument to measure the career situation of student athletes. According to Sandstedt et al. (2004, p. 82), in the development of the SACSI-R, career situation refers to the career development of athletes as “the extent of one’s career development and preparation characterized by the sophistication of one’s career attitudes, beliefs, and interests”. The development of the psychometric instrument was influenced by the need for a career development inventory that takes the following into consideration:

- The nature of student athlete career development;
- Internal and external needs; and
- Barriers in the career development transition.

In the development of the SACSI-R, the hope was for professionals within student athlete environments to use it to develop intervention strategies that would prepare student athletes for transitions from their sport to career-related roles as they became aware of the career-related beliefs, attitudes, and interests of student athletes (Sandstedt et al., 2004).

The SACSI-R male and female inventories elicit responses on a five-point Likert scale. Items require participants to indicate their level of agreement with a given item on the Likert scale that ranges from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). The SACSI-R for male participants has 25 items, while the version of the inventory for females has 23 items (Cox et al., 2009, p. 166). The outcomes of the inventory resulted in five sub-scales for men and four sub-scales for females. The next section provides the definitions and the reliability of each sub-scale as referenced in Cox et al. (2009, p. 166).
3.4.3.1 SACSI-R: Male sub-scales

The following are the male sub-scales for SACSI-R:

- **Career confidence** has six items with a reliability of 0.79. Career confidence is defined as having sufficient career-related information to make informed decisions about potential careers, one’s own confident ability to find a satisfactory career, as well as being aware of the steps one must take to find a satisfactory career. In short, this sub-scale assesses participants’ confident ability in career decision-making skills.

- The sub-scale **Low career interest** has five items, with a reliability of 0.77. Low career interest is indicated when a student athlete chooses a major because it is easy to manage, rather than what interests him/her and with others influencing their academic decisions. This sub-scale indicates low motivation to prepare for another career than sport; for example, student athletes may be more concerned about their athletics than academic performance.

- The sub-scale **Academic/career importance** has four items with a reliability of 0.70. This sub-scale of academic/career importance indicates how well the participant is faring in academics and sports. The students understand that they are at university first to study and then to be an athlete, hence the focus is on doing well academically.

- **Sport involvement promotes career confidence** has five items with a reliability of 0.74. This sub-scale highlights vital skills one learns in sports and how that gives one an added advantage to transfer those skills to do well in certain careers.

- The **Barriers** sub-scale has five items with a reliability of 0.73. The barriers sub-scale assesses the lack of time and energy to explore career-related opportunities and to what extent athletic involvement limits one from exploring potential career opportunities.

3.4.3.2 SACSI-R: Female sub-scales

The outcomes for women resulted in four sub-scales. Below are the definitions for each of the sub-scales as indicated and the reliability of each sub-scale as stated by Cox et al. (2009, p. 166):

- **Sport identity** has eight items with a reliability of 0.79. This sub-scale assesses whether the sports identity of the athlete is more important than the student identity, whereby sports is the first priority and there are little or no personal goals besides those for their sports.

- **Career confidence** has five items with a reliability of 0.82. Career confidence concerns having enough career-related information to make informed decisions about potential careers and one’s confident ability to find a satisfactory career, as well as being aware of the steps one needs to take to find a satisfactory career.
• The *Barriers* sub-scale has five items with a reliability of 0.82. This sub-scale assesses the barriers of time and energy that one does not have to explore career-related opportunities and that athletic involvement limits one from exploring potential career opportunities.

• *Sport involvement promotes career confidence* has five items with a reliability of 0.76. This sub-scale highlights vital skills one learns in sports and how that gives one an added advantage to transfer those skills to do well in certain careers.

3.4.4 Quantitative data-collection process

The researcher liaised with the UJ, Wits, and UP sport departments to gain access to the student athlete population. The researcher arranged meetings with athletes from different sporting codes and went to their practice sessions. The researcher explained the aim of the study to the participants and obtained consent from them to participate voluntarily. The research participants were then requested to complete the research questionnaire (SACSI-R). Alternatively, the athletes could also complete the SACSI-R electronically on request.

3.4.5 Ethical considerations

In this section, the researcher highlights the basic ethical principles that she adhered to in the research as prescribed by the Health Professions Council of South Africa (HPCSA) under general ethical guidelines for health researchers and rules of conduct pertaining specifically to the profession of psychology *(South African Department of Health, 2006, pp. 41-45)*.

The basic ethical principles of non-maleficence (do no harm) and beneficence (do good) were adhered to. Autonomy, respect, confidentiality, informed consent, as well as acting in the best interest of the research participants were followed.

The researcher complied with the law, as well as the standards set by the HPCSA. The researcher obtained the necessary institutional approval prior to conducting the research. She also conducted the research according to the research protocol approved by the institution.

The researcher entered into an agreement with every participant that outlined the nature of the research and the responsibilities of each party. This included informed consent, which included informing the participants of the nature of the research and explaining any other matters about which the participants enquired.

The research participants were informed of the voluntary nature of the study and that non-participation would not have negative consequences for them. The research participants were aware that they were not obliged to answer any questions they preferred not to and they were aware that they could withdraw from the study at any time. The participants were informed that they were not at an advantage or disadvantage in any way for choosing to participate or...
not participate in the study. The researcher also obtained informed consent for the audio recording of the interviews.

Furthermore, the participants were informed that all data and personal information would be kept confidential. The research participants were aware of their right to remain anonymous and that the research report would not identify them.

The ethical requirements for research with human subjects were adhered to. The researcher assured the research participants that she would protect their physical, social, and psychological welfare and would honour their dignity and privacy. There were no foreseeable risks for the participants. The researcher was obliged to reflect on the foreseeable repercussions of research and publication of those studied.

3.4.6 Quantitative data analysis

Data were captured and analysed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) 24, a statistics software package for statistical analysis, also called IBM SPSS Statistics for Windows, Version 24.0. The information received from the SACSI-R was entered into SPSS 24. Descriptive statistics, such as means and standard deviation, frequencies, and percentages for all variables were calculated. Inferential statistics for the student athletes’ responses on the inventory and sub-scale values were calculated according to the manual of the SACSI-R (Cox et al., 2009). The researcher observed the central tendency (mean, mode, and median) and the dispersion of the data (range and standard deviation). The researcher then used inferential statistical analysis, which refers to a process of making inferences from samples to populations. It involves the analysis of numerical data from testing the differences between group means. Inferential statistical analysis often involves a judgment of the degree of error in making those inferences (Teddlie & Tashakkori, 2009). The information yielded in the inventory then assisted in addressing the aim of the research by giving insight regarding the career needs and challenges of student athletes.

3.5 SUMMARY

This chapter focused on several components of Phase 1 of the intervention research design and development as stipulated by Thomas and Rothman (1994). These components included identification and involving clients, gaining entry and cooperation from the setting, and identifying the concerns of the population within the research methodology. The researcher used a mixed-methods design, which included individual interviews, focus group interviews, and an inventory called the SACSI-R (Cox et al., 2009). The researcher then explained how she analysed the data to respond to the research questions. The researcher also made mention of ethical considerations in the data-collection process.
CHAPTER 4
PHASE 1 – ANALYSIS OF KEY PROBLEMS
AND THE SETTING OF GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

4.1 INTRODUCTION

Phase 1 of the intervention research design and development is the problem analysis and project-planning phase. The previous chapter focused on the first components of Phase 1, which included identification and involving clients, gaining entry and cooperation from the setting, and identifying the concerns of the population within the research methodology. This chapter follows from the previous one in that the researcher unpacks the two other components of Phase 1. The researcher conducts the analysis of identified problems and the setting of goals and objectives.

The analysis of identified problems pertains to examining the extent of the problem and whom it affects. This section deals with exploring the challenges and needs of student athletes as identified through the mixed-methods design and then collating the needs into objectives for the development of a student athlete career transition programme. The researcher begins by discussing the qualitative findings, followed by the quantitative findings.

4.2 REPORTING THE QUALITATIVE RESULTS

The research results are discussed in accordance to the themes that emerged as a result of the thematic content analysis. The reporting begins with the demographics of the research participants. Thereafter it lists the themes that emerged from both the previous and current student athlete groups.

4.2.1 Demographics of the research participants

4.2.1.1 Previous student athletes

The researcher interviewed three previous student athletes individually. They were all previous student athletes at UJ. A summary of the demographics of the participants is presented in Table 4.1.
Table 4.1: Demographic and career information of previous student athletes interviewed

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Race</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Course studied</th>
<th>Sports code and current participation</th>
<th>Current career</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Coloured</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>Bachelor of Technology in Management Services</td>
<td>Athletics: Triple jump (national level)</td>
<td>Athletics manager and coach</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Black</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>Bachelor of Education Senior Phase</td>
<td>Athletics: Cross-country track and field (provincial level)</td>
<td>High school educator and coach</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Black</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>Honours in Sports Management</td>
<td>Football, netball, and basketball (provincial level)</td>
<td>Lecturer and coach</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

All three participants are still active in sports as participants and coaches but not all would describe themselves as being in a dual career. Two of the three participants interviewed described themselves as athletes and were representing their province or country in their sports codes. These athletes were in full-time employment related to what they studied at university. One participant was in full-time employment related to what he studied, but still competed in his sport for fitness and fun.

4.2.1.2 Current student athletes

The researcher conducted three focus group discussions with current student athletes. Two of the focus group discussions were conducted at university 1, each with two participants, and the third focus group discussion was conducted at university 2, with three participants. The demographics of the students participating in the focus groups are presented in Table 4.2.

Table 4.2: Demographic and information of current student athletes who participated in the focus groups

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Race</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Currently studying</th>
<th>Year of study</th>
<th>University</th>
<th>Sports code</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Black</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>B. Tech. (Transport Management)</td>
<td>4th</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Beach volleyball</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Black</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>N. Dip. (Transport Management)</td>
<td>2nd</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Beach volleyball</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Black</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>N. Dip. (Town and Regional Planning)</td>
<td>2nd</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Beach volleyball</td>
</tr>
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<td>Cricket and squash</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Black</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>Bachelor of Accounting Science</td>
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<td>Rugby</td>
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<td>Bachelor of Education</td>
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<td>Football</td>
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4.2.2 Career transition themes

The following paragraphs explain the themes that emerged from the study in detail under the heading of situations that affected career transitions. Thereafter a discussion on situations that affected the student athlete transitions negatively follows.

4.2.3 Situations that affected career transition

The research participants were asked which situations affected their career transitions. They had diverse responses to the question. The themes that facilitated a smooth transition are reported first.

4.2.3.1 Intrinsic motivation and goal setting

The athletes reported that having goals to achieve contributed to their intrinsic motivation. Regardless of whether these goals were related to sport or to a career, it was an important element that made their transition easier. One participant formulated his sporting goal and indicated that the meaning of the goal reached beyond the event as an achievement to inspire others:

“Go to the Olympics and get a gold, achieve greater distance, inspire people, goal is to succeed and failure is the biggest fear” (Hector, lines 406-421).

Another participant formulated a goal that expressed the clear direction and intensity that a goal provides during transition:

“My goal was always to do my doctorate. It took me longer to get to where I am today but I knew where I wanted to go and I didn’t stop. I didn’t feel sorry for myself. I really outdid myself” (Sarah, lines 147-150).

Sarah formulated the function and beneficial outcome of clear goals during career transition, which provided focused direction and motivation to her as follows:

“So it’s in those lines that people should have focus. You should have a goal and once you have that goal, don’t stop. You keep pushing and me reaching my goal is going to be beneficial” (Sarah, lines 151-153).

Hector emphasised the importance of continuing to achieve a goal with confidence during career transition:

“So stick to your goals, stick to your belief, I mean it’s easy to get discouraged and just go… argh… I’ll just leave it” (Hector, lines 523-524).
Thomas noted the sacrifice that he was aware of and prepared to make to achieve his goal:

“Have a clear mindset of what you want to do if you are going there to play sport and study, know that something has to give way” (Thomas, lines 208-209).

In summary, the evidence suggests that goal setting is an important part of career transition. It provides intrinsic motivation, confidence, as well as direction and intensity of behaviour during career transition. Athletes can formulate sport- and career-related goals. These goals should also have personal meaning when they are achieved. It is important that athletes are aware of the sacrifices they will have to make during transition to achieve their goals successfully. Therefore, being internally motivated by using clear goal setting seems to make transition for student athletes easier and should therefore be included in a career transition programme.

4.2.3.2 Taking action

Taking action was a theme in that the athletes are expected to be proactive, or taking initiative in the advancement of their careers. Responding to opportunities that came their way seemed to make transition smoother. Taking action also included keeping abreast with what is happening in their industry. Sarah summed it up as follows:

“Okay, for me it’s just to get involved and reading more of what’s going on, especially the current events of your industry, of what’s going on in the field that you are branching into” (Sarah, line 451).

This is what seems to have positively affected her transition.

Briefly put, taking action is choosing to respond in a positive way to what is confronting the athlete in order to produce long-term benefits in one’s career development. Taking action is important in career transitions as it teaches the student athletes to be responsible and to take ownership of their career development in sports and otherwise. Two types of action are highlighted here, namely to respond proactively to opportunities that exist and to know what is happening in the industry. This implies that the programme should include skills on how to take the initiative in career transitions to facilitate a smoother transition.

4.2.3.3 Passion

It appeared that passion in sports is often transferred to other areas of the athlete’s life. Passion appeared to be a facilitator of a smoother transition in that it made adjustments easier.
For example, Sarah said:

“My passion is sport, my passion is developing people, but I want to develop people in a teaching way. The lecturing is also part of it. I've been coaching forever and coaching is teaching. And so it's easier for me” (Sarah, lines 622-625).

It seems that following one’s heart and doing what one loves make transition easier and thus one is better equipped to deal with challenges because they are fuelled by passion and knowing their abilities and skills. Thabo stated the following:

“You know, to be honest, I would say follow your heart; if you love something, why don’t you do it?” (Thabo, lines 676-677).

Similarly, Nhlanhla stated:

“If I were to advise anybody else, I would say go for that one thing that you love at the end of the day. Challenges are everywhere that we cannot run away from, challenges are everywhere. Sometimes it’s that will inside you; to say, listen, I’m doing something that I love, come what may and I’m gonna push and I’m gonna stick to it. And I think that goes a long way, when you really analyse it” (Nhlanhla, lines 311-316).

To summarise, the evidence suggests that passion is a very important part of career transition in that it influences and sustains one during difficult times in the career transition process. Student athletes should be aware of their passion and skills and choose a career in their field of interest (passion). Therefore, the intervention programme should encourage student athletes to be aware of their passions and how their passion relates to occupations, as this will keep them going during the tough times in their career transitions.

4.2.3.4 Perseverance and discipline

Perseverance and discipline are related to passion. The research participants felt that perseverance and discipline were very important in facilitating a smooth transition. This included being aware of the challenges one is likely to face and persevering through it. This is what they had to say:

“I will try to push it through. I will try it; I don’t want to have regrets” (Thomas, lines 225-226).

Another participant said:

“I think most importantly it will be to never give up. Always have faith and to believe in themselves (Hector, line 501-502) […] and sometimes is also as athletes you train
hard. You push and you don’t get the results and it’s all about being patient, and just growing, so there’s a lot of obstacles” (Hector, lines 525-526).

Zanele reinforced the importance of perseverance to continue with sport during the transition by adding:

“I just want people to just keep on playing sports, it doesn’t matter challenges and whatever. Just don’t give up on sports” (Zanele, lines 205-206).

Similarly, Nhlanhla was aware of how his discipline in sports could be transferred to other environments as well:

“I think for us student athletes the way we are so disciplined, the discipline that we learned from the course that we studied is now becoming a part of us. Even at home [we] carry that discipline” (Nhlanhla, lines 262-264).

Another participant reflected in the following manner:

“Well, the best things has been, in sports I have learned a lot and I have made a lot of new friends and it has taught me a lot of discipline” (Bheki, line 46).

Another participant indicated:

“The main thing is getting into a routine and sticking to it” (Hector, line 502).

Themba added:

“Well, you know when you’re not used to the whole system as a disciplined sports person, it tends to be quite a challenge at first, but then if you get yourself to be disciplined, it actually becomes an advantage that you’re actually studying and doing sport at the same time” (Themba, lines 90-94).

In addition, another participant said the following:

“Sacrifices of a whole lot of things. I sacrificed what some called social life. So I cut off a certain things that’s not going to give me anything. So something that is not going to beneficial to me, I don’t do it” (Sarah, lines 119-124).

In summary, it seems that an attitude of perseverance is an internal value that drives one’s behaviour to press on. Supported by perseverance is confidence in one’s ability to be patient and grow while adjusting. Thus, in developing a student athlete career transition programme, it will be beneficial to include the exploration of values and its impact on one’s behaviour in
career transitions. Linked to values is the skill of discipline. Discipline seems to be a skill that is pertinent in the life of an athlete and one that can be extrapolated to other environments. Success in a dual career has as foundation the integration of a disciplined lifestyle. So when including discipline in a career transition programme, it is also important to explore developing the skill as well as awareness to transfer it to various career environments in order to be successful and facilitate smoother transitions.

4.2.3.5 **Personal branding and self-knowledge**

Two themes that seemed to be pertinent in dual career transition were the themes of personal branding and self-knowledge. The participants thought it was important that people know who they are and know how to market themselves:

> “People should know who they are. Like that programme should be like sell yourself to others as a product. Who are you, what can you do? So people can know their strengths and know exactly where they are going” (Sarah, lines 556-559).

In response to what facilitated his transition into the world of work, Hector said:

> “It made it easier because then it gave me a sense of responsibility, knowing the environment, knowing myself, what’s happening around you” (Hector, lines 466-467).

Furthermore, the athletes promoted the idea of personal branding and building a name for themselves:

> “Even now, this thing with football, helping out, I’m not getting paid for it. But I’m just doing it because it’s me building a name for myself and people will be like the next time they need somebody to be paid to do that, they’ll think of me” (Sarah, lines 472-475).

Finally, another athlete added:

> “Personally, I think what determines if someone will be successful is how they deal with themselves” (Bheki, line 299).

It seems that personal branding, environmental awareness, and personal knowledge play a vital role in facilitating a smoother transition for student athletes. Therefore, it will be beneficial for the programme to include a component of personal branding and self-awareness. It seems that once the athletes know themselves and the skills they possess, they are then able to market themselves with confidence, thus facilitating a smoother transition.
4.2.3.6 Work opportunities (volunteering and part-time work)

Based on the responses below, what made the transition easier for athletes was available job opportunities, engaging in part-time jobs, and volunteering while being a student. A participant described it as a natural progression to applying what they have studied while at university in a work context:

“No, not at all. I wasn’t like a student athlete and that’s it, I was a student athlete and I also had part-time jobs” (Sarah, lines 91-92).

The same participant had decided to focus on her athletic career and said:

“It was made easier by that because I was already in the swing of things” (Sarah, line 426). “I’ve done a whole lot of voluntary work” (Sarah, line 472).

Again, the same participant said:

“So go do practical, whatever you do. Go do it practically while studying” (Sarah, line 555).

Hector said the following in this regard:

“I think for me being an assistant. I went through the rankings, like they say when you start at the bottom and you work your way up. Instead of going from student straight into management and I wouldn’t have been able to cope. So for me just going from the bottom of the rank” (Hector, lines 465-466).

In short, it will be vital to include an aspect in the career transition programme that deals with finding and making the most of part-time and volunteering opportunities as they assist in making career transitions smoother.

4.2.3.7 Role modelling and mentoring

In addition to work opportunities, role modelling and mentoring from others are support systems that may facilitate smoother transitions. The student athletes listed the guidance, observation, and encouragement of others as important facilitators of their career transitions. Guidance pertains to professional athletes motivating them as well as informing them about what it takes for one to make it as a professional athlete. One participant shared his observation as follows:

“We had a rugby player speaking to us; he plays for one of the franchise rugby teams and so forth. He said to us you are doing this because you love this, something has to
give way and sacrifice. So if you are going to go out and party on a Saturday night and there is a game, then there is no point” (Thomas, lines 80-82).

This reflection is by a student athlete observing older team members being in a dual career and learning from his experiences:

“There is this guy in the team, he is a plastic surgeon and he still plays cricket and my best mate’s dad, he is 56 and we play squash” (Thomas, lines 197-198).

The same student athlete also said:

“I found when I started in the team, that there are seniors and you speak to them. You find out their experiences. That helped a lot. I also spoke a lot to the GEMP [Graduate Entry Medical Programme] students and quite a lot of them have done overseas programmes. They have done sports for four years in America and then joined the GEMP [...] I came in as a youngster; we have relatively an old team. I learned from their experiences, because they have been at UJ, Wits, and overseas” (Thomas, lines 262-268).

Themba shared his observations by adding:

“They know what is it like. It just needs a little bit of adjusting but also we playing with people that are graduates that have been there, that have done it all, that are working now and the way they handle it, it makes you have that sense of, we can also do it, you know, because they’re coping well” (Themba, lines 188-191).

In summary, it seems that mentoring and role modelling assist in facilitating a smoother transition. Therefore, the career transition programme will need to incorporate lessons of learning from role models and lessons on developing mentoring relationships to facilitate smoother transitions. This may suggest that the student athletes in this programme are exposed to mentors and mentoring programmes.

4.2.3.8 Coach support

The participants experienced support from their coaches and they have learned valuable lessons beyond the sport domain from them. The participants also expressed that they expect more from coaches with regard to investing in their holistic development. One participant said the following:

“Right now, we have coaches, we learn from them. Some of them have families, but they always make it to training every afternoon” (Nhlanhla, lines 272-273).
Themba said the following:

“I think as students we have the advantage of, I think our coaches are also trained to be able to handle us from that perspective, from that angle of sport isn’t all that we are doing with our time at that level. So they should be able to prepare us, from the sense of, we should always keep our minds open to other possibilities from being a student and being a sport person” (Themba, lines 358-361).

This theme indicates that coach support is vital in the development and career transition of the student athlete. The career transition programme may need an aspect whereby coaches are invited to share insights on the skills they use to manage dual careers with student athletes. Coaches have the advantage of being valuable authority figures in the lives of student athletes. This may assist in facilitating a smoother transition.

4.2.3.9 Parental support and values

An external factor was the support they received from their parents as well as the values parents had instilled within the athletes: This is what one athlete had to say:

“My disciplines as well started to grow in a sense that, that’s when I started having that conversation with my mom because she would tell me that don’t forget the things that I taught you” (Thabo, lines 640-643).

The transition programme will do well to include a section on reinforcing support and values to facilitate smoother transitions. It seems the athlete benefited from being reminded of the values taught to him and the values he grew up with to shape the person he is becoming as it helps in his development.

4.2.4 Situations that negatively affected transitions

This section focuses on situations that negatively affected the participants’ career transitions. It seems that most of the student athletes were initially unsure of how to cope with higher education when they first started. They thought that there was too much to do both in sports and in their academics.

A discussion on the different themes that emerged from the thematic content analysis follows.

4.2.4.1 Emotional reaction

Some of the athletes were not prepared to deal with change, thus their transition was harder. The emotional reaction of shock seemed to be part of an overwhelming experience:

“When I started off, it was like a shock in the beginning because it was like something that I wasn’t used to” (Hector, lines 282-283).
Another participant had the following to say:

“You know, first year it is bit hectic for almost everybody. You are not sure what to do” (Bheki, lines 46-47).

The other participant was uncertain. This uncertainty may lead one to be confused, withdrawn, and overwhelmed.

Thabo compared his difficulty to adjust to feeling punished:

“Last year I just lost interest in running, training, and all those things I just felt that aaai, this is a punishment now. Like you know it’s enough” (Thabo, lines 233-243).

It seems that Thabo had lost a part of himself; what was once something he enjoyed now felt like punishment and he did not want to do it anymore. This may imply that he may have been going through a loss and experiencing such pain in a new environment may make transitions difficult.

Furthermore, it seems that Nomsa may have experienced sadness and frustration due to struggling to balance the student athlete roles. This weighed heavily on her emotionally as what she expected and what she experienced were incongruent. Nomsa verbalised her experience as follows:

“Yeah, it’s also tough, I don’t want to lie, because when I got here it was like, you know what, I’m gonna play football and try to balance school work, but I feel like 80% I’m focusing on my school work and like 20% on football” (Nomsa, lines 75-77).

It seems that the struggle they experienced in the adjustment to change was to balance their sport and academic responsibilities and lack some internal readiness to cope with the demands. Furthermore, adapting seems to be a transition difficulty. In summary, the participants had various emotional reactions; of toughness, shock, feeling punished, and uncertainty regarding the transition. Therefore the career transition intervention programme will need to focus on emotional aspects of transition and how that might influence the type of transition the athlete is likely to experience.

4.2.4.2 Adaptability and balance

Linked with emotional reaction, learning how to adapt and balance studies are important. A participant said:

“It was very challenging because I needed to change my whole routine” (Hector, line 285).
Another participant said:

“I know that when I started, it was hard for me to commit to rugby. It took me about half the year to commit to rugby and balance it with my studies. As long as you are determined, I think you can do it” (Bheki, lines 212-214).

Themba took a while to adjust to the demands and learned how to cope in the process:

“I feel that sometimes, a slow introduction into something has always helped with growth, with change, and all that, so sometimes I feel like, maybe sometimes, you get all adventurous and we want to throw ourselves into something that isn’t true; sometimes you shouldn’t bite off more than you can chew. So sometimes you take that time to say, listen, right now I can try just make that time work, you know, and slowly walk yourself into that environment and slowly balancing it up and then eventually define the balance” (Themba, lines 280-285).

In short, it will be critical to incorporate skills of learning to adapt and balancing in the intervention programme as that seemed to be something that the athletes struggled with. The skills that Themba described that may be useful are gradually growing into something, not biting off more that you can chew, and being honest with yourself as a person.

4.2.4.3 Time management

Strongly tied to adaptability and balancing is time management. Student athletes become aware of time being a big issue in their transition into the world of work. Therefore some did not define themselves as being in a dual career because of time constraints. The student athletes felt like they needed to choose one career over another. Others felt that they would need to manage their time better. Therefore time management seems to be a big issue that affects career transition. This is what some of the participants had to say:

“So you need to like time everything, you have to do everything on time, you need to prepare. Because we train quite a lot, in the morning it is gym, then a field session, class, then six in the afternoon, you have another training session. It is like four times a week, I think” (Thomas, lines 74-77).

“It teaches you the basics like time management, you understand. It changes your mind view, because most people don’t understand that you come into a class and then you get home at 10 pm and you still have to study. So I feel like it’s been beneficial for us” (Themba, lines 94-97).
Some of the athletes acknowledged that the conflict between their sport and work demands can largely be dealt with through time management and decision making:

“There’s a time when both are gonna clash; there’s always gonna be a time when they both gonna clash. I need to try to manage my time better or choose one” (Nhlanhla, lines 183-184).

Another participant felt this way:

“Well, the amount of work that we have as teachers, it could be hard for us. Sports and then work, like we have a lot of paper work, you have to mark students’ papers. So it’s hard but we have to make time, it’s all about time management” (Zanele, lines 151-153).

Essentially, if the student athletes learn the skill of time management, then their transition will be easier and this is a skill they can use in other areas as well:

“And I think like playing sports can make you learn or know how to manage time because every time you have to get to training at a time. You going somewhere for game training and stuff and engagement is very important in everything that you do” (Nhlanhla, lines 302-304).

In summary, it seems that the athletes have learned time management skills but may still benefit from a career transition intervention programme going forward in their career transition so they are better equipped to prioritize and make informed choices. Time management skills for the intervention programme imply teaching student athletes the art of prioritising and balancing both roles to be effective in their careers.

4.2.4.4 Career decision making

The career decision to be involved with both sport and work in a dual career is influenced by a reason to get a qualification so they can work and a reason to become a professional athlete. Bheki’s first reason seemed to be work but he seemed to be open to considering the possibility of going professional:

“To work, that is what we are here for. That was my initial plan, rugby sort of just happened” (Bheki, line 128). “I think I take the chance […] because you know you can always come back” (Bheki, line 134-135). “Yeah, for me that is where the professional thing comes in, that is why I have to try it out” (Bheki, lines 172-173).
Thabo encountered various barriers, such as an injury, adaptation problems, and not achieving his form, which altered his goals and decisions about his dual career:

“My aim when I was in varsity it was to make the national team but I couldn’t because of those barriers that I had and the injuries and trying to adapt and, you know, not running the qualifying times and all those things so for me it was like no, aaai, I can’t do this anymore” (Thabo, lines 248-251).

Similarly, another participant said:

“Yes, as we are finishing at the university level. We are going to working place, so we need more time to work, nè. So I think volleyball for me is going to be a hobby not a career. So yeah, I think something like that” (Themba, lines 211-212).

Another athlete had decided to prioritise work over sports:

“Yes, I’m still doing it but for the fun of it and then I also do some road races but I don’t do it with the intention of okay, yeah, I’m here to win” (Thabo, lines 281-282).

Some long to go professional:

“I would love to at least join Banyana Banyana and travel some places […] I want to go to work but then I won’t leave soccer” (Zanele, lines 56 and 102).

Others are aware that their age will influence their career decision:

“Yeah, and after everything, maybe I’m old enough, I don’t play anymore, then I go to work” (Nomsa, line 176).

Others are aware of the possible injuries in a sporting career and that one needs a backup plan:

“Because soccer is not reliable; if you get injured you won’t play again, so I can’t rely on soccer. I have to have papers for work, yeah, but if I don’t get any chance, I’m going to work because at home they need money. Yeah, I have to work” (Nomsa, lines 117-119).
Others see their athletic careers moving from being an athlete to a coach:

“I would rather coach than play. If I want to keep myself fit and stuff I will maybe do roadwork or join a gym, something like that, but then coaching, I’m passionate about coaching. It’s something that I want to do, yeah” (Zanele, lines 140-142).

It seemed that some have accommodated the idea of being in a dual career and the challenges it may pose as others have done it before:

“So basically, when you think of the year, obviously it’s gonna be a challenge from once in a while, twice a year, there’s a tournament that needs you to go down to Durban, there’s a tournament that needs you to go down to Cape Town. Obviously that can be straining at times and also with training sessions it can be really, really exhausting but then when you look at people that are already doing it, you have no doubt that you can cope, you can really juggle it around” (Themba, lines 194-199).

Some of the other athletes seem to have made the decision to pursue sports and afterwards focus on their academic careers:

“Well, for me I would say they should go and explore sports opportunities before they go to work. They have the papers, so go explore and get the chances, use the chances and then after you get the chances and then you are old enough, then go to work” (Nomsa, lines 174-176).

Another participant said the following:

“Medicine is the next goal; if I got an opportunity, I would go professional as well. I don’t want to have regrets either” (Thomas, lines 231-232).

In reflecting on their sporting career, the different participants were clear about the benefits of being an athlete that have contributed to their life, yet being realistic about the opportunities to play professionally in their sporting career as well as the current role of being a student:

“I feel that I will always live out a platform for going professional in volleyball. For me it’s bigger than a hobby. The fact that I invest so much towards it, it’s not a hobby. For me it’s part of my lifestyle. You understand? It’s my way of life. Because I’ve learned so much from it and I’ve met so many great friends and with that sense there’s a bigger picture” (Nhlanhla, lines 228-232).

“Right now we saying amateur and we trying to be as professional as we can; as a team we are aspiring to be as professional as we can. Of course, you see the dilemma of being a student and trying to reach a certain goal in terms of our careers elsewhere,
outside of sports, but I think it’s in all of us to want to be professional towards sport” (Themba, lines 251-256).

In summary, career decision making is not straightforward. It seems to be influenced by various factors. The student athletes may have aspirations of being in either dual careers or single careers post-higher education. Both these career choices may be influenced by opportunities available for a dual or single career, psychosocial factors, and level of professional development as an athlete. Therefore the career transition programme will need to include a section that has a career decision matrix to help athletes to make informed career decisions.

4.2.4.5 Social support

A few of the interviewed student athletes felt unsupported by their academic departments:

“But I feel like the school, nje [meaning ‘just’], as a whole committee and stuff, they don’t give us that support” (Nomsa, lines 78-79).

If the athletes are supported, this may facilitate a smoother transition; if not, the transition may be challenging. Therefore the transition programme may need to focus on assisting athletes to find and benefit from social support that enables them to pursue athletic careers and their academics without having to choose one over the other. The athletes may need to be assisted in developing their own social support groups to help them in their transitions.

4.2.5 Summary of qualitative findings

The following paragraphs summarise the major themes that emerged from the student athletes’ career transition interviews and focus groups. Many factors influenced the athletes’ transitions, both positively and negatively. The positive factors that emerged from the analysis included the following:

• **Goal setting and intrinsic motivation**: This gave the athletes direction and intensity of behaviour during their career transition. Therefore student athletes in dual careers should be able to set goals and aim to achieve them to enable a smoother transition.

• **Taking action**: Taking action was a theme that pertained to responding proactively to opportunities that existed, as well as taking action to know what is happening in their industries. Therefore, it is important in a dual career to know how to take initiative and be responsible for own careers to facilitate smoother transitions.

• **Passion**: Passion was a theme that was very integral in career transitions as it sustained and influenced the student athletes during challenging times. Therefore, when pursuing a dual career, student athletes need to be cognisant of their passions
and how they relate to occupations, so that this keeps them persevering during the tough times in their career transitions.

- **Perseverance and discipline**: Perseverance was another theme linked to passion. Perseverance is an internal value to drive one’s behaviour to be patient and grow while adjusting. Student athletes need to know their values and how they influence their behaviour during career transitions. Discipline is a skill that if mastered in one context can be extrapolated to other environments. Therefore, for success in a dual career, student athletes need to further develop the skill of discipline and know how to transfer it to other environments.

- **Personal branding and personal knowledge**: The theme pertains to knowing oneself, the environment, and knowing how to market oneself in order to be successful in career transitions. In a dual career this will facilitate success and opportunities.

- **Work opportunities (volunteering and/or part-time work)**: Work opportunities either through volunteering or working part-time seemed to have prepared the student athletes for a dual career; therefore, including how to find and make the most of such opportunities in the career transition programme will be beneficial in facilitating smoother transitions.

- **Role modelling and mentoring**: This seemed to help prepare student athletes for dual careers. This may suggest that the student athletes in this programme should be exposed to mentors and mentoring programmes.

- **Coach support and parental support**: Coaches are seen as parental figures and are individuals who seem to have adjusted to dual careers. Therefore, in the programme it will be useful if they are invited to share their insights on the skills they have learned to manage dual careers. Furthermore, parental support reaffirms student athlete dual careers; therefore the athletes may need to be encouraged to hold onto parental support and values to facilitate smooth transitions.

The factors that need to be further developed by the student athletes in their career transitions are listed below. The intervention programme will benefit from developing these skills to facilitate smoother transitions.

- **Emotional reaction**: In brief, the participants had various emotional reactions of toughness, shock, feeling punished, and uncertainty regarding their transition. The student athletes seemed to lack the readiness to cope with the demands of balancing their sports and academic responsibilities. Therefore, in a dual career student athletes need to be aware of their emotions as they impact on their behaviour and thinking patterns and thus influence their career transitions.

- **Adaptability and balance**: In order to be successful in a dual career, student athletes need to learn to be adaptable and know how to balance their different roles. This will therefore be a critical skill to facilitate in the career transition programme.
• *Time management:* It was evident that this is a skill student athletes currently grapple with and still need to improve on to maximise efficacy in dual careers. Therefore, enhancing time management is vital in the intervention programme.

• *Career decision making:* Career decision making is influenced by various factors and student athletes wanting to pursue single or dual careers need to explore the various factors that influence their decisions. A career decision matrix in the intervention programme will be helpful to assist student athletes to make informed career decisions.

• *Social support:* Student athletes need to learn to seek social support as well as create support groups to encourage them. Social support was seen as a need and it was beneficial to those who were recipients of it. In order to facilitate smoother transitions, social support will be beneficial.

The goals of the student athletes’ transition post-higher education is to work in the careers they studied for, but being open to the possibility of going professional in a sporting career. The programme will need to enable athletes to grow in taking action, personal awareness, branding, and goal setting in order to help them in their career development.

The current student athletes foresee time management to be an issue in pursuing a dual career and they feel compelled to choose one career over another; therefore making it very important that they cultivate the skills of time management and career decision making to make informed career decisions.

Student athletes believe that transferring the skills of discipline and respect for authority will aid their transition into the world of work. However, similar to the previous athletes, the current student athletes recommended working part-time as well as taking on volunteering opportunities. They also suggested taking ownership of career development and committing to it. The intervention will do well to equip student athletes with skills of finding and making the most of work opportunities, as well as transferring sport-related skills to other contexts.

4.2.6 Implications for the career transition programme

Based on the information received from the interviews conducted with the participants, the researcher, in the development of the career transition programme, should include the following modules:

• Intrinsic motivation and goal setting;
• Dealing with emotional reactions;
• Learning how to be adaptable and balancing roles;
• Time management;
• Growing in personal knowledge and personal branding;
• Utilising passion to fuel perseverance;
• Career decision-making skills;
• How to obtain support from family; and
• Learning from coaches, role models, and mentors.

4.3 ANALYSING IDENTIFIED PROBLEMS: REPORTING ON QUANTITATIVE RESEARCH FINDINGS

4.3.1 Introduction

The following sections report the quantitative results. Firstly, the descriptive analysis of the sample of the participants is highlighted. This is followed by the reliability of the sub-scales, then the sub-scale analysis, and the summary.

4.3.1.1 Descriptive analysis of the sample

The results from the SACSI-R are presented in this section. It starts with a description of the population under study, including the athletes’ representation per university, age, ethnicity, course studied, year of study at the time the research was conducted, and the different sporting codes the participants were part of.

4.3.1.2 Athletes per university

The researcher collected the survey responses of 153 student athletes. After data capturing and preparation of the data for analysis, only 140 responses (SACSI-R male and female version) were usable for the research. The results for the distribution of the participants according to gender and the university they attend are presented in Table 4.3. The sample included 74 (52.9%) males who completed the SACSI-R male version of the inventory at the three universities; Wits (41.9%), UJ (48.6%), and UP (9.5%). The sample also included 66 (47.1%) participants who completed the SACSI-R female version of the inventory from the following universities: Wits (28.7%), UJ, (43.9%), and UP (27.3%). Most of the participants were from UP, followed by Wits, and lastly UJ.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>University</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>n</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>n</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UJ</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>48.6%</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wits</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>41.9%</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UP</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>9.5%</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>66</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
4.3.1.3 Age of participants

The participants had a mean age of 20.47 years (SD=2.08), with an average mean age for male participants of 20.54 years and SD=2.10, and an average age for female participants (M=20.40 SD=2.05).

The distribution of participants according to age and gender is presented in Table 4.4. Most of the male participants were 19 and 20 years old (47.2%), followed by male participants of 18, 21, 22, and 23 years old (45.8%). A small percentage of the male participants was older than 23 (7%).

Most of the female participants were between the ages of 18 years old to 21 years old (73.1%). The number of female participants descended gradually from 22 years to 28 years old (26.9%).

Table 4.4: Age of participants

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Male n</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>Female Age</th>
<th>n</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>12.5</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>20.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>22.2</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>17.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>25.0</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>19.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>15.3</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>14.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6.9</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>11.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>11.1</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>6.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4.2</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.4</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.4</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4.3.1.4 Race of participants

The percentage of participants according to their ethnicity and gender (presented in Figure 4.1) indicated that male participants were mostly white (51.4%), followed by black (36.5%), Asian/Indian (6.8%), and coloured (5.4%) participants. The female participants were also mostly white (57.8%), followed by black (31.3%), coloured (7.8%), and Asian/Indian (3.1%) participants. The content of these results will be biased towards the white and black student population, even though participants from all ethnic groups were included.
### 4.3.1.5 Courses studied by participants

Most of the male and female participants were studying undergraduate degree programmes (see Figure 4.2). The second and third groups of male and female participants were studying either towards a National Diploma or postgraduate honours degrees. Only a few participants were doing their master’s or doctoral studies.

**Figure 4.2: Percentages of courses studied by participants**
4.3.1.6 Year of study of participants

Table 4.5 presents the distribution of the athletes who were registered per year of studies for their respective courses according to gender. It seems that most of the athletes were in the first and second year of registration at the time this research was conducted.

Table 4.5: Participants’ year of study

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year of study</th>
<th>Males</th>
<th></th>
<th>Females</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>n</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>n</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First year</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>41.9</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Second year</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>23.0</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Third year</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>24.3</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fourth year</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6.8</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4.1</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>64</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4.3.1.7 Sporting codes of participants

It seems from Figures 4.3 and 4.4 that the majority of both male and female participants played hockey, followed by football, rugby, cricket, swimming (for males), and football, rugby, netball, and swimming (for females). Most participants played team sports, with only a few participating in individual sports.

Figure 4.3: Percentages of male participants per sporting code
4.3.2 Reliability of the sub-scales for the SACSI-R (male and female forms)

This section of this part of the chapter describes the results that were collected from the participants. The section begins by describing the sub-scales and their reliability. The male form of the SACSI-R has five sub-scales calculated from 25 items, while the female form of the SACSI-R has four sub-scales calculated from a total of 23 items.

Three sub-scales, as presented in Table 4.6, were calculated for both males and females. The career confidence sub-scale with six items for the male participants had a high reliability (Cronbach’s alpha = 0.84) and an acceptable reliability (Cronbach’s alpha = 0.72) for the female form. The next sub-scale, sport involvement promotes career confidence, rendered acceptable reliability (Cronbach’s alpha = 0.73) for the male form and high reliability (Cronbach’s alpha = 0.8) for the female form of the inventory. Similarly, the high barriers to career confidence sub-scale yielded acceptable internal consistency for the male questionnaire (Cronbach’s alpha = 0.74) and a high internal consistency for the female questionnaire (Cronbach’s alpha = 0.83).
Table 4.6: SACSI-R (male and female forms): Sub-scales and internal consistency

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sub-scale</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No. of items</td>
<td>Cronbach’s Alpha</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Career confidence</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>0.84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of career interest</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>0.77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Academics/career important</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0.55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sport involvement promotes career confidence</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>0.73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High barriers to career development</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>0.74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sports identity overshadows career development</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The following sub-scales were only calculated for either the female or male participants. The lack of career interest sub-scale for the male participants had five items with acceptable reliability (Cronbach’s alpha = 0.77). However, the academics/career important sub-scale with four items yielded a low reliability (Cronbach’s alpha = 0.55). The researcher had to exercise caution in interpreting this sub-scale. Finally, the sports identity overshadows career development for the female questionnaire had eight items with an acceptable reliability (Cronbach’s alpha = 0.78).

4.3.3 Sub-scale analysis

This section reports the results from the SACSI-R (male and female forms), which are presented in Table 4.7. The SASCI-R Likert scale had one of five possible responses: 1 – Strongly disagree; 2 – Disagree; 3 – Neutral; 4 – Agree; and 5 – Strongly agree. The research participants were asked to rate the degree to which they agreed or disagreed with the statements. The sub-scales were then calculated according to the instructions in the SACSI-R manual (Cox et al., 2009).

Table 4.7: Female and male sub-scale analysis

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sub-scale</th>
<th>Female participants</th>
<th>Male participants</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N *</td>
<td>Mean</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sports involvement promotes career confidence</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Possess career confidence</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>3.82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High barrier to career confidence</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>2.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sports identity overshadows career development</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>2.08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Career confidence</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>3.85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sport involvement promotes career confidence</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>3.84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Academics and career important</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>3.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High barriers to career development</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>2.76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of career interest</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>2.15</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
4.3.3.1  **Sports involvement promotes career confidence**

The sub-scale “sports involvement promotes career confidence” refers to the pertinent skills one learns in sports; these skills are then used in the world of work, thus contributing to the person’s success in the workplace. It also refers to the mental edge, implying the additional skills athletes possess that non-athletes might not have. Finally, it speaks to how being an athlete influences one’s thinking of what they might want to do for a career as well as making one suitable for certain careers. The items on this sub-scale are 9, 11, 15, 16, and 23. For this sub-scale, 65 participants responded to the female questionnaire. In the male questionnaire, 72 male participants responded to this sub-scale, and this factor has five items.

The female participants seemed to agree with this sub-scale (M=4.0, SD=0.68). The standard deviation ranged between neutral and strongly agree. The female participants seemed to be aware that being involved in sports makes one more suitable for certain careers and influenced their decisions on potential career directions. This implies for the proposed programme that the athletes need to be made aware of the skills they possess and how they can use the skills to their advantage so that they can be successful in the workplace.

Similarly, for the male responses, the results revealed that “sports involvement promoted career confidence” was neutral (M=3.84, SD=0.65). These results seem to suggest that there might be a lack of knowledge on how sport involvement may promote career development. This suggests that in developing the intervention, one should explore ways in which to use “sports involvement to promote career confidence”, thus harnessing transferring skills from sports to other areas of work.

4.3.3.2  **Career confidence**

The SACSI-R male questionnaire has career confidence as the first factor. This factor has six items, and 71 participants responded to this question. The results show that the participants were neutral in their responses but leaned towards an agreement that they possessed career confidence (M=3.85, SD=0.91). Item 3: “I am confident about my ability to find a satisfactory career” (M=4.13, SD=0.86), Item 19: “I have a strong interest in at least one potential career” (M=4.03, SD 0.85), and Item 21: “I am happy with my current major” (M=4.04, SD=0.91) confirmed the participants’ career confidence.

However, with Item 2: “I have enough career-related information to make informed decisions” (M= 3.32, SD=1.12) and Item 5: “I have a good understanding of the steps I need to take to find a satisfactory career” (M= 3.52, SD=0.95), the standard deviation ranged between agree and disagree. This suggests that although the participants possessed career confidence, they were unsure about career information to make informed decisions and the steps they needed to take to find satisfactory careers.
Similar for the female responses, the sub-scale has five items and 66 participants responded. On average, they did not have an opinion on career confidence (M=3.82, SD=0.67). The standard deviation ranged between neutral and agree that they possessed career confidence. This sub-scale’s items were 2, 3, 5, 19, and 21. However, when one conducts the item analysis for Item 2 (M=3.61, SD=1.006), Item 3 (M=3.77, SD=1.093), Item 5 (M=3.74, SD=0.882), and Item 21 (M=3.94, SD=1.149), the range of responses oscillate between disagree and agree for the female responses. The results seem to suggest that although the female athletes may possess career confidence, they might not have the required information to make informed decisions about potential careers or be aware of the steps they need to take or to be happy with their current major.

The results from the female and male responses seem to suggest that the developed intervention will need a component that provides information as well as steps to take when finding and deciding on a career.

### 4.3.3.3 High barriers to career development

This sub-scale has five items (1, 4, 6, 13r, and 14) and 65 female participants responded to it. The results were (M=2.7, SD=0.82), meaning that the participants disagreed with the following as high barriers to career development: insufficient time, athletic involvement, and fatigue. They disagreed with one item [13r-(M=2.51 SD=0.99)] that states “My commitments as an athlete do not hinder me from exploring potential career opportunities”, implying that athletic commitments do indeed hinder the participants from exploring potential career opportunities. It seems that Item 1 (M=2.7, SD=1.027), which refers to time to explore career-related opportunities, Item 4 (M=2.63, SD=1.140), which refers to athletic involvement limiting one from exploring career opportunities, the responses ranged from strongly disagree to neutral. This suggests that what may be barriers for some, are not barriers for others. Also, Item 6 (M=2.85, SD=1.08) refers to fatigue being a barrier to exploring career interests, and Item 14 (M=2.99, SD=1.04) refers to “the time I have spent being an athlete has kept me from doing other things that might help me explore possible careers”. The range of responses for both Items 6 and 14 goes from strongly disagree to agree. It appears that the responses on this sub-scale are contradictory because the respondents stated that the factors listed as barriers are not barriers in their career development.

With regard to the male responses, the sub-scale also has five items and 74 male participants responded to it. The barriers to exploring other career opportunities this sub-scale observed was insufficient time, athletic involvement, and fatigue. On average (M=2.76, SD=0.73) the participants disagreed that the abovementioned are barriers to career development, with a standard deviation that leans between strongly disagree and neutral. Like the female results, this may suggest that what may be a barrier to career development for one is not a barrier to career development for another. This indicates that the career transition programme would
need to identify barriers to career development and provide solutions in the career transition programme to address the barriers.

4.3.3.4 Sports identity overshadows career development

Sixty-five (65) female participants responded to this sub-scale (see Table 4.7). This sub-scale has eight items (7r, 8, 10r, 12, 17, 18, 20, and 22r), of which the following is highlighted: sports identity as defined by rationale for entering higher education. The question was: Is it to study or to play sports? This could have been illustrated by the participant choosing subjects because of the degree to which they are more manageable, compared to being a matter of interest to the student athlete and graduating being the goal rather than interest in a particular field of study.

Additionally, the athletic role seemed to be more prominent and the participants may foreclose other career opportunities. The participants’ average responses (M=2.08, SD=0.63) showed that they disagreed with the statement that sports identity overshadows career development. Sports identity overshadows career development implies that one’s sporting identity is a barrier to career development, as in one is unable to progress through higher education because the sporting identity reduces one’s other career prospects. The standard deviation ranged between strongly disagree and disagree, implying that some felt strongly in their disagreement, while a few did not have an opinion. The results of this sub-scale seem to suggest that sports identity may not be an issue, as it does not overshadow career development. This sub-scale will therefore not affect the intervention.

4.3.3.5 Academics and career importance

The 73 male participants responded with the following results (M=3.70, SD=0.70) to this factor with four items (see Table 4.7). This means that the participants were neutral on the subject of academics and career being important. However, the standard deviation ranges between agreed and neutral. It is highlighted in Table 4.7 that this sub-scale had a low reliability, and thus had to be interpreted cautiously.

When analysing the individual items, one can see that in terms of Item 8: “Excelling in academics is as important to me as excelling in my sport”, the participants generally seemed to agree (M=4.30, SD=0.923), some did not have an opinion, and some strongly agreed that it was important. Furthermore, when one examines Item 24: “I am focusing more on preparing for a career than on becoming a professional athlete”, the participants seemed not to have an opinion on the matter (M=3.52, SD=1.06), while some strongly agreed that they were rather preparing for a career than becoming a professional athlete and some disagreed. Item 9 (M=3.44, SD=1.14) and Item 12 (M=3.52, SD=1.19) concerned the athletic and student identity and the reason why the student athlete was in university. The responses ranged between the two identities; some agreeing that they were students first and athletes second,
while the opposite was true for others. Similarly, some of the participants may agree that they were at university to participate in sports, while others may disagree with that assertion. In short, the above findings have implications for the career transition programme; the programme may need an aspect that explores the motives of student athletes and link the motives to the importance of academics and career development.

4.3.3.6 Lack of career interest

Lack of career interest is the second factor for the male questions and one that had the lowest mean (M=2.15, SD=0.7). This factor has five items. Seventy-four (74) participants responded to this question. All the respondents seemed to disagree with lack of career interest as a factor, suggesting that they were interested in their careers (M=2.15, SD=0.70).

Items 18 (M=2.26, SD=0.97), 22 (M=2.23, SD=0.9), and 23 (M=2.04, SD=0.96) had to do with others influencing and putting pressure on academic decisions and certain careers. The respondents seemed to disagree, with a standard deviation that ranged between strongly disagree and neutral. This implies that their academic and career choices were not externally influenced but rather the students decided on their careers themselves.

Similarly, the following items focused on the student athletes' decision for choosing their careers. The standard deviations for both Item 17 (M=2.08, SD=0.99) and Item 20 (M=2.16, SD=1.02) ranged between strongly disagree and neutral. This may imply that the participants strongly disagreed that they chose careers because they were easy to manage and thus enabling the student athletes to graduate, and some did not have an opinion on the matter. However, because of the range of the standard deviation, in the student athlete career transition programme it will be important to explore the reason(s) why the student athletes are in their chosen careers and possibly guide them to informed career decisions if need be.

4.3.4 Summary and implications of quantitative findings

The responses from both the male and female participants had significant implications for the development of the student athlete career transition programme as they provided insight into the needs and challenges of student athletes. In summary, in developing the programme, the researcher will need to:

• explore ways to use sports involvement to promote career confidence, thus harnessing transferring skills from sports to other areas of work;
• include a component in the programme that provides information as well as steps to take when finding and deciding on a career, which should enable the building of career confidence;
• identify possible barriers to career development and find solutions within the career transition programme to address the barriers; and
include a section that explores the motives of student athletes and link it to the importance of academics and career development.

4.4 PROJECT PLAN

It seems that the career transition programme will be beneficial in preparing student athletes for transitions as it may equip them with the necessary skills for transition into the world of work. The aim of the programme is to benefit the athletes and the community at large. The possible challenges to successful career transition of athletes may lie with the student athletes and the various stakeholders, namely academic expectations of university, coaches, and family members. The athletes may need to acquire further skills to manage and transition effectively. It seems that the transition programme may be beneficial in the second year of study as the athletes would have dealt with transitioning to higher education and may be ready to prepare for their second transition, which is to the world of work.

The plan is to develop a career intervention programme that would be facilitated to student athletes in career transition to equip them in their career development within and post-higher education.

4.5 SETTING OF GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

The setting of goals and objectives focuses on the main aims of the research and how to achieve the aims of the research. The goal of this research is to assist student athletes to have successful transitions into dual careers or single careers post-higher education through the development of a career intervention programme. Therefore, the objective of this research is to develop a group-based career transition intervention that will have the following modules:

- Exploring the four P’s: Personal knowledge, Personal branding, Passion, and Perseverance.
- Value of network of support from family, coaches, role models, and mentors.
- Balancing roles and time management.
- Dealing with various emotional reactions and adaptability.
- Facilitate intrinsic motivation and goal setting.
- Career planning and development so they possess career confidence, adjust accordingly in transitions, and excel in their careers and academics.
- Transferrable skills so that they become aware of the skills they have as athletes and how these skills encourage career confidence. The goal would be for the student athletes to transfer the skills to other contexts as well and they may make informed career decisions in their career development.
- Identify and address barriers to career development.
• A module on career-related information that will include information on volunteering, networking, and testimonials of previous student athletes, as well as other relevant career-related information.

4.6  SUMMARY

In conclusion, in this chapter the researcher unpacked the two other components of Phase 1, which were the analysis of identified problems and the setting of goals and objectives. The analysis of identified problems involved examining the extent of the problem and whom it affected. This was done through a mixed-methods design. The researcher began by reporting on the qualitative results, followed by the quantitative results. Both results had implications for the proposed intervention programme that was the final component of Phase 1, namely setting of goals and objectives. The objectives were how the researcher would achieve the aims of the study in the development of the programme through various modules.
CHAPTER 5
PHASE 2 – INFORMATION GATHERING AND SYNTHESIS

5.1 INTRODUCTION

Information gathering and synthesis is Phase 2 of the intervention research design and development process. This phase has the following components: it uses existing information sources, studies natural examples, and identifies functional elements of successful models.

The focus of this chapter is on two of the three components in Phase 2, namely identifying functional elements of successful models and using existing information sources. The natural examples component involves conducting interviews with people who have faced the problem and who can shed light on which variables were useful in developing successful transitions. This was achieved under Phase 1 as part of the problem analysis (see Chapter 4).

This chapter starts with an overview of transitions and a developmental model of transitions. In using existing information sources, the researcher reviews past and current practices regarding career transitions in sport. The chapter then highlights the successful models in the transitions of athletes.

In identifying the functional elements of successful models, the researcher evaluates the interventions that have previously addressed the problem in question. The researcher then extracts the functional elements to direct the design and development activities.

5.1.1 Primary transition

According to Wylleman and Lavallee (2004), transitions within sporting careers are inevitable and are continual. Thus, Wylleman and Lavallee (2004) emphasise that throughout an athlete’s career, he/she is obliged to experience various transitions. Examples of transitions include transitioning into sport, transitioning through the different levels within the sporting career, and transitioning out of sporting careers (Wylleman & Lavallee, 2004). In South Africa, these transitions would entail transitions from primary to secondary school sport, from secondary school to tertiary education at university, from university into a sporting career, and finally retiring from sport.

Transitions refer to obvious life changes. Schlossberg (1981) defines career transition as an event (something happens) or non-event (something does not happen) that may end in adjustment in beliefs about the self and others and may demand a consistent adjustment of one’s behaviour and relationships. Stambulova (2017) puts it this way: “It is a turning point in an athlete’s growth and comes with stressors and requires sufficient coping activities in order to remain within the athletic or parallel careers.”
Transitions have primary and secondary characteristics. The primary characteristics of transitions can be understood as normative transitions. Normative transitions are voluntary, predictable, and anticipated. The athlete exits one stage and enters another (Adams, Coffee, & Lavallee, 2015). Normative transitions are those in which the athlete transitions from one phase in their personal life or sporting career into another in a predictable manner; for example, the transition from lower-level competition (high school athletics) to high-level competition (university sports athletics) (Wylleman & Lavallee, 2004).

The primary characteristics of normative transitions entail a degree of probability, as already mentioned above; for instance, being initiated into the sport and then moving towards competence. It entails a developmental sequence, like stages of transitions, namely initiation (introduction into the sport), development (growth of one’s competency), mastery (competent), and a post-transition phase (retirement). The initiation phase is followed by sport specialisation, proceeding to high-achievement sports, followed by amateur sport to professional sport (Wylleman, Lavallee, & Alfermann, 1999).

The transition into sport specialisation is followed by transition into intensive training; thus the athlete is expected to adjust to the level of demand required. Should the athlete meet the demands of the sport, they may progress further. If not, they subsequently drop out (Wylleman et al., 1999). Athletic intensive training implies participation and achievement in competitive events. Therefore the athletes need to have a balance between training, competition participation, and injury prevention. A successful balance in the above may lead to the athlete’s participation on an elite sport level (Wylleman et al., 1999). According to Stambulova and Alfermann (2009), the most complex and difficult transition in sports is the transition from youth level to professional level, which coincides with the transitional context of this research. This research explores and develops a programme for student athletes in transition from higher education into a dual career, post-higher education.

Sport participation at an elite level necessitates maximum performance from athletes. This requires another demanding transition, which compels the athletes to dedicate a substantial portion of their lives to the training for and involvement in high-level exercise and competition (Wylleman et al., 1999). At the end of this phase is career termination. This can be normative, meaning it will be expected and out of free will. This is when the athletes decide to no longer participate in competitions on the levels they had achieved (Alfermann & Stambulova, 2007).

The next section presents a description of Wylleman’s developmental model of transition in sports, which addresses the different normative stages of the transitions mentioned above.
### 5.1.2 Developmental model of transition in sports

Wylleman developed a model to enable the understanding of normative transitions in sports (Wylleman & Lavallee, 2004). Wylleman’s developmental model has four layers representing the whole person (see Figure 5.1).

#### Figure 5.1: Wylleman’s developmental model of transitions in sports

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age</th>
<th>10</th>
<th>15</th>
<th>20</th>
<th>25</th>
<th>30</th>
<th>35</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Athletic Level</td>
<td>Initiation</td>
<td>Development</td>
<td>Perfection Mastery</td>
<td>Discontinuation</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Psychological Level</td>
<td>Childhood</td>
<td>Puberty</td>
<td>Adolescence</td>
<td>(Young) Adulthood</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Psychosocial Level</td>
<td>Parents, Siblings, Peers</td>
<td>Coach</td>
<td>Partner (Coach)</td>
<td>Family (Coach)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Academic Vocational Level</td>
<td>Primary Education</td>
<td>Secondary Education</td>
<td>Higher Education</td>
<td>Professional Career</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Adopted from Wylleman and Lavallee (2004)

The first level in the model represents the athletic level of the athlete. Within that level, depending on the age group, the athlete goes through different transitions, namely an initiation into the sport (ages 10-15), followed by a development stage (ages 15-19), a stage of perfection or mastery of his/her sport (ages 20-30), and finally discontinuation of the sport (age after 30) (Wylleman & Lavallee, 2004).

The second level of the model predicts the normative psychological or individual transitions that an athlete is likely to experience. The athlete goes through the phases of childhood (which coincide with their initiation into sport), puberty (which coincides with their development in sport), adolescence and young adulthood (which coincide with perfection and mastery of their sport), and adulthood (which coincides with discontinuation of their sport). In these phases, the athlete faces various normative and non-normative transitions (Wylleman & Lavallee, 2004).

The third level of Wylleman’s developmental model of transition represents the psychosocial development of athletes during their transition phases. This development addresses the different role players in the micro- and mesosystem of the athletes’ life, namely parents,
siblings, peers, partner, coach, and own family. The psychosocial system differs depending on the age of the athlete. For example, if the athlete is 15 years old, then the parents, peers, and coach will be very important to the player compared to when the athlete is between the ages of 20 and 30, when the coach and the partner will be important role players (Wylleman, Alfermann, & Lavallee, 2004).

The final and last level of this model represents the academic and vocational level of the athlete during development. It includes academic and vocational transitions, namely primary education, secondary education, tertiary education, and a professional career (Wylleman & Lavallee, 2004). The professional career of the athlete may be dual (sports and another occupation). The end of elite-level sport participation culminates in the termination of a sport career. Again it is another transition, on social, physical, and personal levels. This transition is a life event that affects the athlete’s development and wellbeing. The quality of adjustment is mediated by the intended or unintended reasons for retirement (Wylleman et al., 1999). This represents the secondary characteristic of the transition.

5.1.3 Secondary transition

Secondary characteristics of transitions are non-normative in nature. These are transitions that are not expected. The characteristics of the adjustments to retirement from competitive sports are mediated by the characteristics of the athlete, type of environment, and the type of transition (Wylleman et al., 1999).

The secondary characteristics of the transition can also be understood as a non-normative transition, referring to the transition’s origin. Non-normative transitions are those that are not necessarily anticipated and are non-events. Non-events are transitions that were hoped for but did not occur; for example, an athlete expecting to meet a qualification standard but failing to do so (Wylleman & Lavallee, 2004). The reasons are often beyond the control of the athlete and influence career termination, namely injury, age, and deselection (Alfermann, Stambulova, & Zemaityte, 2004). If the transition is influenced by injury, growth spurt, psychological wellbeing, drop in achievement, and motivation, it falls under the secondary characteristics of transitions. This may either be positive or in crisis (Wylleman et al., 1999).

5.1.4 Positive and crisis transitions

Positive transitions are influenced by various factors, which include positive attitude, motivation, and beneficial psychological climate towards the sport, competition, training, and confidence in the coach. Research conducted on the transition of athletes seems to support the notion that coach and parental support from early on in the athletic career to later stages of the athlete’s career contributes positively to career transitions (Tenenbaum & Eklund, 2007).
Crisis transitions are when additional effort is needed by the athlete to effectively adjust to new requirements. Failure to do so may result in the athlete experiencing negative emotions, low self-esteem, poor decision making, and emotional discomfort (Wylleman et al., 1999). Research discussed in Tenenbaum and Eklund (2007) on an analysis of athletes’ narratives revealed four categories of crisis symptoms, namely:

- emotional distress;
- difficulty in making decisions and disorientation in behaviours;
- decrease in self-esteem and increase in sensitivity to failures; and
- the number of psychological obstacles.

In the case of crisis transitions, an individual counselling intervention or a group counselling intervention with other athletes going through the same difficulties may be beneficial.

In short, primary (normative) and secondary (non-normative) transitions have the potential to become crisis transitions if the athlete is not adequately equipped to deal with the content of transitional demands, explicitly for normative transitions within career transitions or increased demand in training, competition, participation, and injury prevention or the crisis of change and the crisis of big success or failure. The non-normative transitional demands may be deselection crisis, injury crisis, crisis of change, moral crisis, and psychological distress (Alfermann & Stambulova, 2007).

In the field of transition interventions for athletes, there are crisis-coping perspectives, which involve individual and group counselling and preventative perspectives. The preventative perspectives involve assisting the athlete to successfully cope with transition changes, dual career management, or termination of the athletic careers, as well as transitioning into the world of work. Essentially, the aim of these preventative perspectives is to prevent crisis transitions (Alfermann & Stambulova, 2007). Thus the aim of the current research is to develop a preventative career transition intervention that seeks to be supportive of the athletes’ athletic and academic development so that they are better equipped to deal with dual careers. The following section highlights previous research observing the career transitions of athletes to enable understanding of the impact of various transitions.

5.2 USING EXISTING INFORMATION SOURCES

5.2.1 Introduction

Student athletes face several transitions and various challenges when moving from one sporting level to another. The first main transition is transitioning into higher education in dual roles as a student and as an athlete. In this dual role, they are confronted with meeting academic requirements to enable them to study at the university and affording the student athlete an opportunity to participate in sports if they continue to meet the requirements.
Burnett (2010) revealed that student athletes’ focus is mainly on sport rather than on academic and social life. Similarly, Gayles and Baker (2015) observed that student athletes are overly devoted to sports at the expense of other activities, thus leading to challenges in the psychological, athletic, academic, and psychosocial spaces. The following section addresses the challenges faced by student athletes within and out of higher education. The section then observes student athletes’ career transition interventions in dealing with the challenges, followed by a literature review of athlete career retirement.

5.2.2 Student athlete transition challenges

Burnett’s research (2010) and other researchers’ findings (Wylleman et al., 1999; Heird & Steinfeldt, 2013; Surujlal et al., 2013) indicate that when student athletes are prioritising a sporting life, they are confronted with the following psychological challenges: time management problems, accruing pressure to perform in academia and as an athlete, possible demotivation, and possible fatigue. They are also faced with physical challenges, such as maintaining good physical health and minimising injury. They encounter relational challenges, which include the management of several key relationships (coaches, family, peers, lectures) and are restricted in the development of further relationships as well as limited development in social activities. The various difficulties that student athletes encounter put them in danger of psychological distress (Burns, Jasinski, Dunn, & Fletcher, 2013; Heird & Steinfeldt, 2013).

Research by Adams et al. (2015) refers to the challenges faced by athletes, which include difficulties in combining sports and studies, pressure to be selected for main competitions, lower self-esteem, an increase in psychological barriers, and sensitivity to failures. Other challenges are the various developments that student athletes are expected to make similar to non-athletic peers with their time constraints and balancing their different roles (Gayles & Baker, 2015). Van Raalte, Andrews, Cornelius, Brewer, and Petitpas (2017) highlight the fact that student athletes lag behind regarding career readiness compared to non-athletic peers. This is perceived as alarming as student athletes are meant to possess critical skills through sports involvement, which can be transferred to the workplace.

However, research cited by Surujlal et al. (2013) suggests that the stressors experienced by student athletes may affect their life satisfaction as well as their health. Research conducted on 500 student athletes contending at a university regional, provincial, and national level competition explored the relationship between life satisfaction, coping skills, and perceived stress. The findings of the research demonstrated that the student athletes’ stress levels were higher than average but that they were satisfied with their lives (Surujlal et al., 2013).

Nonetheless, other research conducted on 210 Kenyan student athletes, investigating sources of stress and coping strategies, showed that sources of stress were influenced by environmental and interpersonal factors. The student athletes were characterised by maladaptive behaviours that included alcohol problems, engaging in risky sexual activities,
eating disorders, and depressive symptoms. The research recommended urgent intervention measures from the counsellors, administrators, and coaches (Rintauga et al., 2014).

A study was conducted at a South African university to examine the needs of elite student athletes. In exploring the needs, self-designed questionnaires were completed by 68 elite student athletes. Interviews were conducted with key decision makers. The results indicated that all student athletes need supplementary tutoring at suitable times and they require flexibility in terms of completing assignments. Student athletes were most concerned about sporting injuries as these have the potential to prematurely end their sporting careers. The results furthermore indicated that the utilisation of time was a challenge in juggling responsibilities. Student athletes experienced difficulties in accessing support services and resources, and experienced financial constraints (Burnett et al., 2010).

A case study at a British university was conducted to examine the transition experiences of the student athletes within its High Performance Centre (HPC). The HPC offers elite sport support services to the university’s student athletes. The case study was engaged in extensive interviews and focus groups with current student athletes, graduated student athletes, coaches, administrators, and support staff. The results of the case study revealed that student athletes undergo different transitions concurrently. The transitions were psychosocial, psychological, academic, and athletic. The student athletes utilised their internal and external resources to overcome barriers, and the existence of the HPC was an external resource that facilitated successful transitions (Brown et al., 2015).

A different qualitative study conducted by Čačija (2007) on nine basketball players explored the factors that influence athletes’ transitioning from junior to senior sports. The study explored how the basketball players managed the transition and also distinguished the factors that indicated the termination of the transition. The findings of the study revealed that there was a low awareness of the transition from junior to senior sports. The athletes seemed to indicate that senior sports were similar to junior sports, as they had experienced various transitions before. However, the players did acknowledge that the senior level required more training and the games were tougher than before. Therefore, this meant that they did not have time for anything else (Čačija, 2007).

In short, it seems that student athletes experience various challenges concurrently and they are expected to be on par with non-athletic peers in their transitions. The challenges listed above range from psychological issues such as pressure to perform in sports and academia, fatigue, self-esteem issues, demotivation, and sensitivity to failures. The psychosocial challenges range from management of key relationships, limited engagement in social activities, and balancing various roles. The academic challenges range from not having sufficient time to pay attention to studies as well as being prepared for their careers. Additionally, the student athletes were concerned about sporting injuries, access to sport services and resources, and financial constraints. The student athletes, according to the
literature cited above, seemed to experience various challenges and need assistance to help them cope and transition successfully, and therefore these support the need for this research.

5.2.3 Student athletes transitioning out of higher education

The second main transition of student athletes is transitioning out of higher education. The possible challenge that student athletes are faced with is either choosing to continue with their dual career or selecting one career. The reality is that the student athlete may not meet the requirements to continue participating in sports post-higher education even though that might have been their preference.

Therefore, student athletes may choose to prolong their duration in higher education as student athletes so as to continue participating in sports. Fuller (2014) draws attention to the fact that student athletes have a limited number of years to compete compared to other athletes who retire from sports when they are ready to do so.

Another reality is that student athletes have chosen to study courses in higher education so they meet the requirements of being student athletes, which has a negative consequence. Upon completion of studies at higher education institutions, student athletes are forced to work in a career that they are not particularly pleased with. This may lead to a transition crisis. Furthermore, literature shows that student athletes are affected by low career maturity and unpreparedness to make quality educational plans (Burns et al., 2013). Universities often offer services to help student athletes through workshops, tutoring, and advice (Burns et al., 2013).

However, research cited by Heird and Steinfeldt (2013) reveals that student athletes are reluctant to pursue psychological assistance because they are unconvinced about its effects and are concerned about being judged for using such services. Therefore, student athletes underutilise mental health services.

Different literature revealed that student athletes generally refrain from accessing mental health services for the fear of jeopardising their celebrity status (Beauchemin, 2014). Additionally, time constraints have also been an obstacle for student athletes to access student athlete support services.

Fuller (2014) conducted a qualitative meta-synthesis research method design to study the transition experiences of intercollegiate athletes. The researcher synthesised the data from nine studies comprising 96 former college athletes (62 females and 34 males in 11 different sporting codes). Fuller (2014) identified six shared themes in the synthesis.

The quality of transition was affected by:
• athletic identity;
• the level of anticipation and preparation for the termination of their sporting careers;
• the mode of exit and branching out (this is the extent to which the athlete has invested in other roles prior the conclusion of their athletic careers);
• satisfaction with athletic performance;
• loss of camaraderie (sense of belonging to the team or sport); and
• support system.

In research by Hendricks and Johnson (2016), exploring the experiences of specially admitted student athletes at a Division III university, they found that student success and quality of transition are influenced by involvement, integration, and engagement.

Involvement refers to the student taking the initiative to be involved in formal and non-formal learning opportunities; this involves attending classes, being part of study groups, as well as completion of assignments. Integration has to do with the student being an active member of the university’s institutional academic and social community. Lastly, engagement is the collaboration the student has with the institution’s education-related activities initiated and promoted by the institution for the student to participate in, in order to be successful. This may include departmental workshops and lecture series (Hendricks & Johnson, 2016). Based on this research, should the student athletes and the universities collaborate in achieving involvement, integration, and engagement, the transition within and out of higher education is likely to be smoother. The current developed transition programme is likely going to fall under engagement, whereby if the institution promotes it and the student athletes participate in it, the results may be successful transitions.

Another study that gives a different perspective on the factors that influence transitions into elite sports was conducted by Sanders and Winter (2016). Their study explored the transition experiences of adult triathletes using interpretative phenomenological analysis with seven athletes. The findings of the study revealed that social support, financial sustainability, resources, self-identity, and athletic development of reaching perceived potential were key factors in their transitions.

In summary, the challenges faced by student athletes seem to be constant within their transitions. Student athletes must possess skills that enable them to be resilient and transition successfully. As they are identified, it becomes easier to intervene within their career transitions. It also seems that support systems must be provided for students to transition successfully, therefore a need for career transition interventions exists.

5.2.4 Student athlete career transition interventions

The following section of this chapter explores the different interventions pertaining to student athlete career transitions. The section begins by highlighting European interventions,
American interventions, and thereafter African interventions. The section ends with recommendations for student athlete interventions. The aim of exploring these interventions is to enable the researcher to extract the useful aspects of the interventions for the proposed career transition intervention programme she intends to develop.

5.2.4.1 **European interventions**

It seems that the different European countries have developed programmes or interventions to support dual career athletes. For instance, in Germany there are national sports federations, university sports associations, as well as numerous higher education systems that offer services to support high-performance athletes. In the United Kingdom, a special advisor is appointed to communicate to the academic departments on behalf of the athletes, in support of athletes in their development of dual careers. In Belgium, a study and talent education programme was developed to help student athletes with financial management, communication skills, and time management so that they are better equipped for the world of work and dual careers (Pavlidis & Gargalianos, 2012).

According to Pavlidis and Gargalianos (2012), the European Commission (EC) acknowledges the benefits of a dual career for student athletes and has taken measures through programmes to promote the reintegration of the sports person into the labour market at the end of their sporting career. Sport psychology literature reveals that managing a dual career has been a useful skill in aiding athletes to manage within sport transitions, athletic identity foreclosure, as well as post-athletic career transitions (Stambulova, Engstrom, Franck, Linner, & Lindahl, 2014).

In Greece, according to Pavlidis and Gargalianos (2012), there are support programmes for high school student athletes. The student athletes are allowed to miss 20% to 50% of classes for important athletic commitments. In some cases, the high-performance athletes (HPAs) are entitled to special classes to compensate for the missed classes. However, although the HPAs are entitled to special classes, this was reported to not be as successful as intended. However, although there has been much focus on the student athlete at high school level in Greece, not much has been done to study athlete career programmes in higher education. There are no programmes that support the dual career; the responsibility seems to be left to the athletes to negotiate with their academic departments in managing their athletics and academic studies. Based on the literature cited (Pavlidis & Gargalianos, 2012), Greece seems to be behind regarding athletic career development programmes compared to other European countries.

Some of the studies on career interventions of student athletes focus on students entering higher education. A study by Fryklund (2012) focused on examining the experiences of 26 national-level student athletes who had just entered university and who were in a career assistance programme aiming to reach international-level athletic performance. The career
assistance programme had the following areas of development: medical, physiological, sport psychology, nutritional, and career counselling support. After this first study, Fryklund (2012) also examined the experiences of 16 student athletes who were in a dual career transition (prolonged university studies and elite sports). These athletes had also taken part in a career transition programme. The 16 athletes were also part of the first study. In both these studies, the research was qualitative and thematic content analysis was used. Both studies revealed that stress management, time management, commitment/dedication, and interpersonal support are key factors in transition experiences. Therefore, student athletes in transition need to be prepared with the necessary coping resources to successfully manage their transitions and the organisational sports bodies within the university, private clubs, and nationally must be adjusted to suit the needs of student athletes (Fryklund, 2012).

In Italy and Slovenia, however, there seems to be limited assistance for elite athletes, while the athletes seem to be committed to both sports and academics. A study aiming to understand Italian and Slovenian student athletes’ (n=98) motivation for dual careers used the 30-item Student Athletes’ Motivation toward Sports and Academics Questionnaire (SAMSAQ) (Gaston-Gayles, 2005) in relation to type of sport, gender, and age. It seems that in both these countries there are limited support services for elite athletes. The results of the study found that the Italian and Slovenian student athletes were committed to their sports and academics, and essentially committed to being in a dual career regardless of gender (Corrado et al., 2012). In countries that have support services for athletes, athletes seem to be confronted with mental health challenges and for the fear of stigma may not utilise the support services.

In another research, a career intervention programme from the ecological perspective was conducted to facilitate the transition of athletes from youth level to professional level. The ecological perspective operated from the six principles as described by various authors (Larsen, Alfermann, Henriksen, & Christensen, 2014). Firstly, the practitioner should take into cognisance that the athlete is entrenched within a specific context and must conduct the intervention in the context, as well as involve key people (coaches, managers, and teammates) in the intervention. Secondly, conduct a thorough assessment of the strengths and weaknesses of the micro and macro environments of the sporting culture. Thirdly, the practitioner enriches the environment as part of the intervention; for example, bringing in role models to assist the athlete. Fourthly, the practitioner should be aware of the national cultural context of the sport. Fifthly, the intervention should try to develop and sustain consistent organisational culture. Lastly, the intervention should perceive the sports person as a holistic individual who needs to be supported in sports and life.

A case study was conducted by Larsen et al. (2014) on the ecological transition intervention of Danish under-17 football players. The intervention was seen to be effective in facilitating the dialogue between the athletes and the different agents within their environments. The intervention provided relevant transition information regarding demands and expectations in
entering professional football. However, the intervention did not integrate the non-sporting environment of the athlete, which may have had an effect on the quality of transition.

In summary, it seems that there are various attempts in the European countries mentioned above with regard to developing career interventions for student athletes and systems to support dual careers. The abovementioned research echoes the need for consistent interventions and support from various stakeholders to help athletes in their dual careers and transitions.

5.2.4.2 American interventions

As referenced by the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) in 2006 (cited by Pavlidis & Gargalianos, 2012), the United States of America’s (USA) educational system supports the notion of a dual career through offering scholarships to student athletes. It also has set up programmes and departments that assist in the exploration of educational opportunities for student athlete transition post-competition in the National Football League (NFL) and the National Basketball Players Association (NBPA).

In a Midwestern university in the USA, it was found that a multidimensional outreach model that comprised of sport psychology principles, mental health awareness, and wellbeing was beneficial in influencing the student athletes’ perception of accessing student athlete support services (Beauchemin, 2014). The outreach model is a workshop on overall wellness for student athletes and discusses perceptions of mental health and illness, counselling services, and challenges to accessing services as well as the five cardinal mental skills of sport psychology. The five cardinal mental skills of sport psychology are relaxation, imagery, routines, self-talk, and concentration (Beauchemin, 2014). Because of the generalisability of mental skills outside the sport arena, the student athletes found them to be effective in their mental and physical wellness. Petitpas et al. (2005) indicate that constructive psychological growth will happen when involving learning of life skills to apply to various life situations. Furthermore, Adams et al. (2015) put forward that social support is a helpful coping resource for student athletes as they seem to have benefitted from emotional, esteem, informational, and tangible support.

A study by Kelly and Dixon (2014) sought to review and examine a group of mentors strategically placed for African American Male Student Athletes (AAMSAs) in their transition into college sports. AAMSAs have been reported to have a range of psychosocial and academic needs that are both challenging and ongoing. Therefore, the current traditional model of one primary mentor seemed to be insufficient in addressing the array of the various challenges faced by the AAMSAs. The plausible solution, according to the review, is exploring the potential of a “critical mass” or network of mentors. Although the solution seemed plausible, it has not been empirically examined to test its effectiveness (Kelly & Dixon, 2014).
Furthermore, Petitpas et al. (2005) state that positive psychosocial development in young people is likely to occur when there is engagement in an activity within a specific context surrounded by supportive mentors and community.

There have also been developments in North American universities in developing psycho-educational interventions to alleviate psychosocial problems of student athletes, but time constraints and fear of being stigmatised for attending such services have limited the impact of such interventions. Therefore a web-based psycho-educational intervention was developed for student athletes to provide information on referral networks and mental issues affecting athletes. Van Raalte et al. (2015) examined the effectiveness of such a programme. The programme was developed and evaluated in three different studies with different stakeholders, namely athletic directors, coaches, and student athletes. The programme “SupportForSport.org” is based on a student athlete handbook titled *Managing Student Athlete Mental Health Issues* by Thompson and Sherman (2007), as well as scientific articles on mental health and referral resources. The study found that the multimedia web-based SupportForSport.org was beneficial as it increased student athletes’ knowledge on mental health and referrals. The programme also addressed the issues of stigma associated with utilising such services; because it is online it implies that it can be generalised to other settings as well. However, the effects on behaviour has not been evaluated, therefore future research may need to examine its impact on behaviour (Van Raalte et al., 2015).

Another study (Burns et al., 2013) was conducted with 158 NCAA athletes from Midwestern and Eastern universities in North America. These universities had their student athletes participate in academic support programmes. These programmes were life skills programmes aimed at the first and second year of study to facilitate career exploration. The findings of the research showed that the athletes’ career decision self-efficacy was confidently correlated with the satisfaction with these programmes. The results of this mentioned research seem to concur with previous research that shows that career development services do improve student athlete career decision self-efficacy and may positively affect career transition (Burns et al., 2013).

Furthermore, research by Burns et al. (2013) was conducted to examine the relationship between student athletes’ satisfaction with academic support services and their perceived confidence in making career decisions. The research participants were student athletes in their freshmen or sophomore year. In total there were 158 student athletes in the research, representing the various sporting codes from Division II, first teams at a Midwestern, and an Eastern university in the USA. The surveys measured the following: locus of control with the Locus of Control Scale (Rotter, 1966), general self-efficacy with the General Self-Efficacy Scale (Schwarzer & Jerusalem, 1995), and levels of satisfaction using the athlete satisfaction questionnaire (Riemer & Chelladurai, 1998). In measuring the satisfaction with academic support services, a Likert scale was used, and the Career Decision Self-Efficacy Short Form (Betz, Klein, & Taylor, 1996) was used to measure self-efficacy.
The results seem to indicate that academic support services increase student athletes’ career decision self-efficacy, and the students with higher Career Decision Self-Efficacy (CDSE) were more satisfied with their schools’ academic support services. In terms of students with higher external locus of control and lower levels of generalised self-efficacy, the relationship between fulfilling academic support services and CDSE was better. However, the nature of these academic programmes varied across the university, so it is difficult to ascertain the factors in the academic and career programmes that have a direct impact on the student athletes (Burns et al., 2013).

Research by Burns et al. (2013) seems to indicate that student athletic commitments have an opposite effect on their academics, career development, and personal lives. This then further reinforces the need for academic support services to aid the student athletes in their academic and career transitions and developments.

It seems that in the USA there is a wealth of research on the subject of career interventions for student athletes. The research focuses on different aspects of career transitions. The above research studies focused on the impact of career intervention services. The research shows that there is a benefit to such services, and therefore needs to be encouraged within the African context.

5.2.4.3 African interventions

Within Africa and specifically South Africa, studies and interventions regarding career transition are limited. There have been some studies pertaining to student athletes. One study (Höll & Burnett, 2016) sought to uncover the role of universities in overseeing Long-Term Athlete Development (LTAD) within South Africa. The study was based on a mixed method with key role players and student athletes. The study found that universities are not sufficiently equipped to support student athletes in their academic and athletic endeavours. The study revealed that coaches play a critical role in linking the sport service providers and the student athletes. The coaches were not employed full-time by the university and seemed to have a better understanding of the student athletes’ needs. However, those in full-time employment, such as the sports managers, seemed to be less aware of the student athletes’ needs and were thus unable to adequately support the student athletes. This case study pointed to a need for universities to collaborate with different stakeholders to effectively manage and support the student athletes’ development, thus minimising premature dropouts of sports and maintaining a good academic rate (Höll & Burnett, 2016).

Another study (Tshube & Feltz, 2015) that was recently conducted in Africa explored the dual career and post-sport transition of elite athletes in South Africa, Namibia, Botswana, and Zimbabwe. The findings of this study revealed three major themes. The first theme is the type of retirement, the second theme is dual career, and the third theme is challenges. The challenges these athletes faced across the four countries seemed to be similar; there were
rigid schedules they had to adhere to as student athletes, lack of additional academic services to support them, and lack of mentorship programmes. However, for the athletes who were managing their dual careers successfully, this enabled a smoother transition into post-sport careers. Eleven of the 17 participants successfully managed their dual careers. It seemed from the study that the athletes were transferring sports-related skills into other careers, thus adapting easier and being better equipped than non-athletic peers. This research echoes the need for sporting federations and governments in African countries to fund and manage the dual careers of student athletes so that they can effectively contribute to society (Tshube & Feltz, 2015).

There are also other studies on wellness and coping self-efficacy of student athletes within the African context. Van Rensburg, Surujlal, and Dhurup (2011) conducted focus group interviews with student athletes to explore their physical, intellectual, social, and emotional wellness. The findings of the study revealed barriers to wellness, which included poor time management and obligations to both sports and academics that affected the student athletes' overall wellness. An important finding from this study was that student athletes require assistance in addressing their wellness needs (Van Rensburg et al., 2011).

Similarly, another South African study was conducted regarding coping self-efficacy among first-year rugby players. Coping self-efficacy refers to a person's belief in his/her ability to cope with stress and more specifically his/her ability to deploy strategies that will assist in coping with diverse stressors or threats (Laureano, Grobbelaar, & Nienaber, 2014). This study was conducted to evaluate the effectiveness of an experiential learning programme on coping self-efficacy and psychological wellbeing of first-year rugby players. Experiential learning, as mentioned by Laureano et al. (2014), is a set of experiential activities that develop the students' knowledge through thoughts, feelings, perceptions, and behaviours. In essence, the aim was to develop the learning of the student as well as the student having transformative experiences. This means that the students moved from being passive listeners to active respondents who share what they have learned with others going thorough similar situations.

The research involved 76 rugby players at the North West University in South Africa. The researchers first conducted a needs analysis via focus group interviews and the completion of essays. Both the focus group interviews and the essays were based on the personal, academic, and sporting needs as well as preferred coping methods for the challenges faced in each of the areas mentioned. Based on the information obtained from the needs analysis, a purposive intervention was developed. The intervention entailed a total of six one-hour group sessions with student rugby players over a period of two weeks in the rugby season. The experiential learning intervention included various activities to enhance psychological wellbeing, coping, self-esteem, and promoted self-awareness. The participants were still attending class and attending training as normal. The research employed a pre-test and post-test quasi-experimental research design.
At the end of the intervention, when the results of the instruments used to test for change in both the experimental group and the non-experimental group were revealed, the experimental group, which is the one that received the experiential learning programme, seemed to have facilitated self-efficacy and overall psychological wellbeing for the rugby players. As a result of the research, it is clear that intervention programmes minimise the negative effects linked with transitioning from high school to university (Laureano et al., 2014).

In summary, there is a dearth of research within the African context on career transitions of student athletes, but the available research on wellness, coping, self-efficacy, and long-term athlete development further highlights the challenges and needs of student athletes. These challenges and needs of student athletes seem to be universal; namely the need for interventions, support, and collaboration between various university departments to enable a reassuring environment for student athletes to thrive and have smoother transitions.

5.2.4.4 Student athlete intervention recommendations

As a result of the interventions discussed above, there are suggestions that have been put forward for further interventions for student athletes. A suggestion put forward by Brown et al. (2015) is to get the senior student athletes to share their first-year experiences with the new student athletes as well as propose to the universities flexibility within the athletic and academic departments.

Similarly, the suggestion for facilitating student athletic transition, according to Fuller (2014), is to have career fairs of former athletes that act as transition networks. Another suggestion is to have a curriculum focusing on de-training. This implies that the student athletes are given a curriculum that enables them to continue athletic activity so they adhere to their physical routine. The purpose of the de-training curriculum is to provide constancy during an insecure transition period. Cecić Erpić, Wylleman, and Zupančić (2004) recommended pre-retirement planning as it has a positive effect when retiring. Another suggestion is to have programmes addressing the transition difficulties as well as encouraging student athletes to be involved in non-athletic activities (Fuller, 2014).

Other recommendations are the following activities: continuing education, occupational endeavours, and activities related to social networks (Cecić Erpić et al., 2004). Some of the suggestions from Fuller’s (2014) research state that transition interventions should happen throughout the athletes’ college careers and not only during transitions. Additionally, student athletes should be part of career planning to help the athletes develop a sense of a balanced identity, thus aiding successful transition (Fuller, 2014).

Heird and Steinfeldt (2013) recommend an interpersonal psychotherapy approach to counselling student athletes, because it is effective in its focus on grief, role transition, interpersonal deficits, and interpersonal disputes. The interpersonal psychotherapy approach
takes into account unique issues faced by student athletes, such as athletic identity construction in relation to their self-concept.

In McArdle, Moore, and Lyons (2014) an information processing approach of account making is suggested. This is an approach that involves describing, reflecting, and understanding as well as responding emotionally to significant life events. The account-making process is seen to be useful because it enables the individual to address difficulties and to have an increased sense of control over stressful life events and make meaning.

In summary, these recommendations echo the sentiments of the participants who were interviewed as part of this research. This implies that they need to be integrated within the intervention programme.

5.2.5 International overview of research on athlete career transitions

This section highlights research on the career transitions of athletes and research on the retirement of athletes. This will give insight into whether student athletes faced similar challenges and how the challenges were addressed.

Research on career transitions has grown in the past 30 years (Park, Lavallee, & Tod, 2013). Previous studies range from systematic reviews of athletes transitioning out of sports (Park et al., 2013), career transitions post-Olympics (McArdle et al., 2014), retirement of elite athletes, and the examination of non-athletic and athletic factors of the sports career-ending process.

Park et al. (2013) conducted a retrospective study to provide a methodical review on athletes’ career transition from sport. This study entailed examining 126 previous studies dating back from the 1960s to 2010. Most of the studies (86) revealed that the adjustment to the post-sport life was difficult as the former athletes experienced feelings of loss, identity crisis, and distress. Thirty-two (32) of the studies showed that participants used a variety of coping strategies but there was no evidence to indicate that certain approaches were more applicable than others; coping strategies that were deemed useful include job-hunting on the Internet as well as keeping themselves occupied. Few studies (six) showed maladaptive coping strategies such as increased smoking, drug use, alcohol dependence, or committing suicide.

The quality of transition was influenced by psychological, vocational, and financial deliberation in 28 studies. Furthermore, the quality of transition was influenced by support received from others in 27 studies (Park et al., 2013). In summary, the results from the current analysis revealed that there are many different variables that affect the quality of athletes’ career transition adjustment. Research results (Park et al., 2013) across reports have indicated that athletes who are of different ages during their career transitions showed different needs post-sport career, because of diversities in individual development stages and life plans. For
example, studies with student athletes who terminated their sport career in their teens or early 20s showed that they often chose to become students rather than finding employment. In contrast, the majority of professional or elite-level athletes who retired in their late 20s or 30s made a transition into the world of work (Park et al., 2013).

Cosh, LeCouter, Crabb, and Kettler (2013) examined 84 newsprint media representations concerning career transitions and athletes. These researchers adopted a discursive psychology approach in exploring the choices that athletes made to compete (or not compete) in sport and the dominant social understanding around athlete identity. The findings suggested that returning to sport was compelled by passion, obligation, and demand to play, according to the media accounts. A successful transition into elite-level competition was determined by psychological characteristics of commitment, competitiveness, vision, self-belief, and imagery. Research findings seem to further suggest that transition into elite sport is extremely demanding for athletes. The reasons are that there are new psychological and psychosocial challenges experienced at this level, as well as adapting to the new stressors related with increased training and expected performance outcomes (Cosh et al., 2013).

Cosh et al.’s (2013) research also found that transition into elite sport has received limited attention. Athletes with exclusive athletic identities are reported to be more vulnerable to experiencing difficulties. When athletes retire from sport, they experience a sense of loss and fail to integrate the lessons and skills acquired through their sporting careers post-retirement.

5.2.6 Retirement transition of athletes

There is very little research on the retirement of student athletes; however, there is extensive research on the retirement of athletes. The researcher therefore decided to review some studies on the retirement of athletes to gain a sense of the challenges and lessons that are learned through the transition period of athletic retirement. The information gleaned from the previous studies was useful in gathering information for the context of this study and also useful for directing the proposed intervention.

5.2.6.1 Chinese studies

In a review study on Chinese athletes’ career transitions between the 1960s and 1990s, retired elite athletes were offered job opportunities and they benefitted positively (Zang, Andrade, Flavia, Qui, & Zhu, 2013). Elite sports in China have been supported and regulated by the government since the 1960s. After the 1990s, the retirement policy of elite athletes was reformed. This implied that this population has faced obstacles in career transitions, such as social discrimination, difficulty in finding jobs, and downward social mobility. The change in the social environment greatly influenced athletes’ social mobility. Currently, retired athletes are facing greater challenges and fluctuations in career transitions because of their lack of education and vocational skills (Zang et al., 2013).
Zang et al. (2013) focused on the impact of age at retirement, gender, educational attainment, socioeconomic status, and the type of sports on elite athletes’ career transitions and occupational social mobility (intra- and intergenerational mobility). Empirical data were used to analyse current factors that influence elite athletes’ career transitions and social mobility. The research showed that Chinese athletes are recruited at a very young age and receive very little encouragement to focus on education. The findings showed that about 30% of the athletes abandon regular education after middle school and most attend sport-focused schools. In these schools, athletic performance is overemphasised and academic study is ignored. The findings revealed that the athletic careers of these Chinese athletes are short (Zang et al., 2013). This can also be true about athletes in other countries.

Furthermore, 65% of the 179 participants in Zang et al.’s (2013) study pursued further education once they retired because the government provided fewer job opportunities. Only 26% of the participants found jobs. Retirement at a higher age reduced the likelihood of attending college. Family and social background had a decisive influence on their retirement path. The decision by elite athletes to attend college after retiring from sports was influenced by two aspects. First, college attendance was offered as an alternative to employment in the current retirement policy. Secondly, a sizeable number of elite athletes retired before they reached college age or satisfied the educational requirements. The number of athletes deciding to attend college seemed to be higher than in the period prior to the policy change in 2002, when most athletes preferred to enter the job market at very young ages and accepted job offers from the government (Zang et al., 2013).

5.2.6.2 Slovenian studies

In Slovenia, research was conducted by Cecić Erpič et al. (2004) on the effect of non-athletic and athletic factors on the quality of sport career-ending processes. The research participants were 85 former elite Slovene athletes between the age of 21 and 44 years who had been retired for under four years. They were given two questionnaires, the Sports Career Termination Questionnaire (SCTQ) (Cecić Erpič, 2000) and the Non-Athletic Transitions Questionnaire (NATQ) (Cecić Erpič, 2000).

The results of this study show that an athlete’s voluntariness regarding the evaluation to retire indicates a less difficult sports career transition and a better transition to the post-sports career life. The study also revealed that the quality of the sport career-termination process was influenced by non-athletic factors, particularly by former athletes’ educational status and negative non-athletic transition. The study recommended that complications of sport career termination relied on both athletic (subjective evaluation of athletic achievements, voluntariness of career termination, and prevalence of athletic identity) and non-athletic factors (social, educational, and occupational status and negative non-transition) (psychosocial difficulties). The findings of the research direct practitioners to diagnose both
athletic and non-athletic aspects of the athletes’ life in order to understand the complexity and multifaceted perspective of the sport career-termination process (Cecić Erpić et al., 2004).

5.2.6.3 Singaporean studies

Research by Cecić Erpić et al. (2004) shows that involuntary retirement may lead to psychological difficulties, lower self-respect, and feelings of depression, anger, and anxiety. Suptu (2012) stipulates that the gradualness of the decision to retire from sport participation lends to a better adaptation, suggesting that a decision to retire from sports is linked with better adjustment post-sport life. Additionally, programmes that support athletes’ post-sport retirement also enable better transitions, for instance in Singapore (Suptu, 2012).

Singapore is one of the countries that have a sport governing body that has institutes and associations that have programmes to support their athletes (Suptu, 2012). The main governing body responsible for sport is the Singapore Sports Council (SSC). Within the SSC there a Singapore Sports Institute (SSI) and National Sports Associations (NSAs). These organisations work together in developing effective structures, programmes, and services to support elite athletes. These programmes are Sports Excellence Talented Elite Athletes Management (spexTEAM) and Programme for Athletes Career and Education (PACE). PACE helps the national athletes in managing their education, career, and sport achievements, while spexTEAM only accepts specific athletes who adhere to stringent guidelines (Suptu, 2012).

Suptu (2012) conducted a study using Interpretive Phenomenological Analysis in Singapore to explore the former national-level athletes’ lived experiences of the sport system. The former national-level athletes were disappointed with the management of the sport system while they were athletes as they experienced little support from the NSA during their career. The lack of funding for the NSA hindered their training development. Furthermore, the former athletes felt they received little understanding and support from their families. This research was, however, limited in that the sample size was small (six participants) and the results could not be generalised, therefore the researcher cannot determine if the views represent the majority of former athletes or only those who were interviewed (Suptu, 2012).

5.2.6.4 European studies

Alfermann et al. (2004) investigated the emotional, cognitive, and behavioural reactions to normative sport career terminations of athletes of three nations, namely Russia, Germany, and Lithuania.

In total, the study had 265 former amateur athletes. One hundred and three (103) of the athletes were Russian, 88 were German, and 65 were Lithuanian athletes. These athletes
were both male and female and participated in different sporting codes. The participants were given a questionnaire to complete in their respective languages. The questionnaire explored the following: adjustment to and satisfaction with current life, athletic identity during and after sport career, coping reactions, emotional reactions, and the reasons and circumstances for career termination (Alfermann et al., 2004).

The adjustment to and satisfaction with current life revealed that the Lithuanians needed more time to adjust to life post-career, followed by Russians and Germans. Life satisfaction seemed obvious and there was no difference between the countries. The Lithuanian athletes had a higher athletic identity compared to the Russians and the Germans. The coping reaction of the Lithuanians was denial and Russians used distracting strategies. The Germans had less emotional reactions after retirement. It seems that the Germans were more prepared for the career transition, unlike the Russians and the Lithuanians, who had more transition barriers and less coping resources (Alfermann et al., 2004).

The athletes of the three nations differed in their reasons for career termination. Lithuanian and Russian athletes mentioned sports to be the reason for sport termination, whereas the German athletes cited work-related reasons. Some of the recommendations of the above research is to develop psychological interventions to help athletes maintain personal control over their own retirement. The research also revealed that athletes need transitional resources and need to prepare for transitions. Group psychological interventions may need to be supplemented with individual psychological sessions (Alfermann et al., 2004).

5.2.6.5 Olympic studies

A study in Ireland examined the experiences of the post-Olympics career transition programme for Olympic athletes. McArdle et al. (2014) sought to ascertain the athletes’ experiences of the programme, and their expectations and perceived benefits. The researchers interviewed ten athletes from the Irish Olympic and Paralympic teams. The findings seem to suggest that the athletes benefited from the debriefing sessions and the group workshops. The critical components that stood out was the steering of the athlete to concentrate on future possibilities and plans, as well as the normalisation of the emotional and psychological challenge of the post-Olympics period. In short, this investigation indicated that further research must be conducted to understand athlete career transitions needs as well as how these needs can best be met (McArdle et al., 2014).

Barker, Barker-Ruchti, Rynne, and Lee (2014) explored how education in elite sports affects involvement in activities outside sports settings. The research entailed conducting three interviews with former Olympians in attempting to understand the outlook developed in and after sports involvement. The findings of this research revealed that the end of career transitions was a process of individual reconstruction. The athletes developed new ways of networking with the world around them. As a result of the research, the recommendation put
forward was that the sporting professionals working with athletes need to be cognisant of and recognise the learning that is inherent in sporting environments in order to help athletes deal with their transitions (Barker et al., 2014).

5.2.6.6 South African studies

In South Africa, the Department of Sport and Recreation South Africa (SRSA) is the body that is responsible for sport in South Africa. The goal of the SRSA is to advocate for transformation in sports through equitable access and to develop athletes through the provision of opportunities. Its role is to support HPAs as well as create enabling environments through the provision of funding, technical support, and sporting structures (SRSA, n.d.). The main sporting structure under the SRSA is the South African Sports Confederation and Olympic Committee (SASCOC). This body is responsible for looking after all the national federations affiliated with it, as well as training, presentation, and discharging of South African teams to all multi-coded events (SASCOC, 2013). On the SRSA and the SASCOC websites very little, if anything, is mentioned regarding athletic transitions and retirement or programmes in place to facilitate career transitions and retirement.

This highlights the limited literature and research conducted on the effects of retirement transition of athletes in South Africa. However, research conducted by Marthinus (2007) and Maseko and Surajlal (2011) reiterates the need for pre-retirement planning.

In 2007, Marthinus conducted a study regarding the psychological effects of retirement on elite athletes. This was both a quantitative and qualitative study. The findings of the study revealed that athletes were taken by surprise when the reality of retirement was forthcoming and there were no career-termination programmes in place to facilitate a smoother transition out of sport. The findings indicated that the transition process was uncomfortable for the athletes in retirement and athletes who had a strong athletic identity, but less difficult for those who had control over their decision to retire. One of the outcomes of the study is that pre-retirement planning is a very important factor as it facilitates a better transition to retirement (Marthinus, 2007).

Similarly, Maseko and Surajlal (2011) conducted interviews with 12 soccer players from soccer clubs in the Premier Soccer League (PSL). The research explored retirement planning and job satisfaction among South African professional soccer players. The research pointed to a need for soccer clubs and agents to help soccer players with career development, retirement planning, and financial planning.

In summary, the themes seem to be common for student athletes and professional athletes regarding transition and retirement from sports. The sporting career is prioritised above everything else, such that in retirement the process is difficult and is influenced by athletic and non-athletic factors. There seem to be sporting bodies that have programmes to support
athletes; however, the support seems to be limited. This warrants further interventions throughout the athlete’s sporting career to support and develop athletes during the normative and non-normative transitions in their sporting careers.

5.3 IDENTIFYING FUNCTIONAL ELEMENTS OF SUCCESSFUL MODELS

5.3.1 Introduction

Various approaches exist to explain the transition and development of athletes. The various approaches focus on specific aspects of the transition of the athlete.

A whole-person approach focuses on athletic and non-athletic transitions of the person’s development, ranging from childhood to adolescent to adulthood. It includes athletic, psychosocial, academic, and vocational development (Morris, Tod, & Oliver, 2015).

The holistic ecological approach to talent development in sport refers to the whole Athletic Talent Development Environment (ATDE), which is responsibility in the collaboration of the individual and his/her context (Larsen et al., 2014). The psychological perspective is said to focus on mental preparedness for the sport transition, explore the coping mechanisms employed by the athlete, and explore the influence of the athletic identity in transition, mentoring, and counselling mediations.

The multidimensional approach uses various methodologies to facilitate assistance to the athlete in transition and the transferable skills approach focuses mainly on extrapolating useful skills in sports into life and the world of work (Morris et al., 2015).

The individual approach is said to pay attention to athletes’ internal and external barriers and resources in sports and life in general (Stambulova, 2010). Schlossberg and Stambulova underpin the individual approach. The focus of this chapter is to expand on the individual approaches by exploring Schlossberg and Stambulova’s theories concerning athletic transitions.

5.3.2 Schlossberg’s transition theory

Transition occurs when an event (something happens) or non-event (something does not happen) results in a change in the assumptions about oneself and the world and thus requires a corresponding change in one’s behaviour and relationships (Schlossberg, 1981). Transition is a natural process that may provide psychological growth or psychological deterioration. “Adaptation is a process in which the individual moves from being totally preoccupied with the transition to integrating the transition into his her life” (Schlossberg, 1981, p. 7).

The first step taken for the individual in transition is either moving out of a transition or moving
into a transition. The athlete may be moving out of high school athletics into higher education athletics. Moving in may require orientation and assistance (Anderson et al., 2012).

After one has moved in, there is a concept called moving through the transition. This is, for example, an athlete who has settled with moving into a transition and needs motivation and commitment to move through the various transitions within their academic and athletic career (Anderson et al., 2012).

The third step is moving out. This is where the athlete needs to decide on their career being dual or single and moves out into the world of work. This can been seen as ending the transition phase and starting a new one (Anderson et al., 2012). This research then seeks to develop an intervention at this juncture, to facilitate the moving out of transition into another transition.

The quality of adjustment is influenced by the character of transition, the individual’s experience of the transition, and the context of the transition (Schlossberg, 1981). All three cooperate and result in adjustment or failure to adjust.

5.3.2.1 Characteristics of transitions

In Schlossberg’s (1981) transition theory, there are seven characteristics of transitions, which are discussed as follows:

- First is the role change. This transition may either be a gain or a loss. In the context of student athletes, an example of this may be the introduction of a new coach or team member; alternatively the athlete may be deselected from the team due to injury or being unfit for upcoming sports competitions.
- The second characteristic is affect. This can either be positive or negative. While having a new coach or team member may result in pleasurable feelings, being deselected from the team may result in negative emotions.
- The third characteristic pertains to the source of transition. The questions posed for this characteristic is whether the transition is internal, as in the athlete came to the decision by choosing to do so, or whether it is external, namely the decision was made on behalf of the athlete. In the case of the student athlete being deselected to play, the source is external.
- The fourth, fifth, and sixth types of transitions are linked in that they are timing, onset, and duration. The transition may be on time, for example the student athlete deciding it is time to retire from sports and thus may be dealt with appropriately. The transition may be off time, for example the student athlete exiting sporting due to an injury. They are normally unprepared for it and thus it causes distress.
- The onset of the transition is also important as it influences how the individual may adjust to the transition. If the transition is gradual, it is easier to adapt to compared to a
sudden transition.

- The duration of the transition is another key determining factor on the quality of adjustment of the transition, depending on the status of permanent, temporary, or uncertain.
- The last characteristic of transition is the degree of stress. This is linked to the other characteristics already described. For example, if the transition is a loss, this may result in a negative effect. If the source of the transition is external and the timing is not appropriate and the onset sudden, the outcome of the transition is likely to produce a level of stress. Schlossberg (1981) puts forward that the stressfulness of a particular condition hangs on the balance between a person’s shortfalls and resources.

### 5.3.2.2 Individual characteristics

The individual requires psychosocial competence as a resource to adequately deal with the transition. This implies that the individual may need to have a constructive self-attitude, which is an intact internal locus of control and the ability to maintain a consistent self-image, self-worth, and self-esteem. The individual may need to have constructive and promising world attitudes as well as optimistic behavioural attitudes to adequately address the transitions (Schlossberg, 1981).

Furthermore, Schlossberg (1981) lists the following as factors that affect adaptation to transitions: sex, age, and life stages; state of health; race and ethnicity; socioeconomic status; value orientation; and previous experience with a transition of a similar nature.

Transition may affect one depending on gender. Men may adjust better or vice versa depending on the transition environments, the character of the individual, and the character of the transition. Age, life stage, and state of health may also play a role in affecting the type of adaptation. If the athlete was at an age and life stage where he/she has achieved all they had wanted to by the time they are experiencing the transition, it may be viewed positively. Furthermore, culture and race may influence how one deals with the transition, as well as socioeconomic status and the value placed on the transition one is currently dealing with (Schlossberg, 1981).

### 5.3.2.3 Character of pre- and post-transition environments

The transition environment is vital in that it can facilitate successful transition or it may lead to a crisis transition. The factors in the environment are physical setting, institutional support, and interpersonal support systems. The physical setting speaks to the kind of environment, climate, living arrangements, or season the individual may find themselves in. Institutional support speaks to the organisations, religious institutions, and counselling programmes or other programmes with the purpose of supporting the individual in their transition and development. Interpersonal support ranges from intimate relationships, to a family unit, and the network of friends. These are important resources that may affect how well or how poorly
one deals with the transition (Schlossberg, 1981; Anderson et al., 2012).

### 5.3.2.4 The 4S strategy for coping with transitions

Schlossberg highlights the 4S strategy for coping with transitions. The 4S strategy comprises the self, situation, support, and strategies. The self speaks to the individual characteristics already mentioned above. Situation speaks to the pre- and post-transition environments also discussed at length above. Support refers the support one has, starting from family, to friends and colleagues, and extending to organisational support. Strategies speak to the coping resources one has in managing the transitions. The coping could either be to transform the situation, control the meaning of the problem, or help manage strain after the problem has occurred (Anderson et al., 2012).

### 5.3.3 Stambulova’s athletic career transition model

This section focuses on Stambulova’s (2003) athletic career transition model. It begins by introducing the model, followed by the Five-Step Career Planning Strategy (5-SCP).

Transitions are turning phases in career development that come with numerous difficulties; these are often both internal and external. Internal difficulties are the lack of skills, knowledge, and preparedness, as well as interpersonal conflicts. External difficulties are lack of financial and social support, and struggling to manage sports and other commitments. These transition difficulties need to be addressed via internal or external resources. Internal resources are motivation, personality traits, knowledge, and skills, and external resources are financial and social support. A key internal factor is the athletes’ psychological skills, which allow them to handle the strains of transition (Alfermann & Stambulova, 2007). The difficulties associated with transitions may influence the outcome of the transition (Hanin & Stambulova, 2004; Stambulova, 2010).

This career transition theory puts forward that there needs to be an active balance between the barriers and the resources to successfully overcome the transition. This theory is preventative as it equips the athlete with the necessary resources to address the forthcoming transition demands. This theory uses lessons learned from past experiences to deal with the present and to plan for the future, thus perceiving an athletic career as an fundamental aspect of life-long learning (Alfermann & Stambulova, 2007).

This theory draws important lessons from Vygotsky’s (1896-1934) theory in that the essence of life-long learning is the transference of abilities from the zone of proximal development to the zone of actual development with the support of knowledgeable professionals (Stambulova, 2010).

The theory deals with the critical areas of the client's life, namely athletic, psychological, psychosocial, and academic/vocational areas (Hanin & Stambulova, 2004). This current
developed intervention aims to prepare athletes for future transitions by increasing their resources for efficient coping. If the athlete is able to utilise internal and external resources to address the transitional demands, the athlete would have successfully overcome the transition phase. This impacts the length and quality of the athletes’ participation in sports, as well as post-sport transitions (Stambulova, 2003; Alfermann & Stambulova, 2007). Furthermore, successful transition means addition of new resources to the “resource collection” and in the practice of growth (Hanin & Stambulova, 2004). This psychological intervention under development would fall under crisis prevention. Under crisis prevention there are mental skills training, career planning, goal setting, and organisation of social support systems (Hanin & Stambulova, 2004).

However, should the athlete fail to do so, they would experience a crisis transition. This is a phase whereby the athlete is likely to experience decreased self-esteem, poor decision making, inadequate behaviour, increased sensitivity to failure, and chronic emotional discomfort. In this case, a psychological intervention of crisis coping would be needed to enable the athlete to develop critical coping strategies (Stambulova, 2010; Brown et al., 2015). Psychological crises include largely specific psychotherapy and psycho-correction programmes (Hanin & Stambulova, 2004).

If the psychological intervention is successful, then the athlete is likely to experience a delayed successful transition. However, if the athlete is going through a crisis transition and does not receive the necessary assistance, they end up in an unsuccessful transition. This is a phase whereby the athlete is likely to drop out of sports completely, may decline in their sports performance, and may resort to abusing drugs or other inappropriate behaviour (Stambulova, 2003; Morris et al., 2015). Psychotherapeutic or clinical interventions would be useful in this case as they address the clinical issues and then attempt to facilitate psychological adjustment to improve the athlete’s situation (Hanin & Stambulova, 2004).

In short, the athletic career transition model speaks to three possible transitions pathways. The three pathways are successful transition, and crisis transition that has two possible outcomes, namely delayed successful transition and an unsuccessful transition. A successful transition is the result of productive coping skills and balance between transition demands and athletic resources (Stambulova, 2017). A crisis transition is a transition that athletes may feel helpless to deal with and may require professional assistance. The crisis transition may become a delayed successful transition with the help of effective interventions or it could become an unsuccessful transition due to premature dropouts or other negative factors (Stambulova, 2017).

### 5.3.3.1 Five-Step Career Planning Strategy (5-SCP)

The Stambulova (2010) 5-SCP is an outline for a discourse between the athlete client and the consultant. The basic aim of the 5-SCP is to aid the athlete client to prepare for future
transitions by learning from past experiences in sports and life and applying it in current situations. The strategic aspect of the 5-SCP is bridging the past with the present into the future. Bridging exercises are critical in the 5-SCP strategy.

In the first step, the athlete client is required to draw a lifeline, in which they depict experiences of the past, the present, and possible future of their sport and life in general. The second step entails the athlete client to structure their past. This involves the client describing significant life events that have happened in the past pertaining to sports and life. This step gives the consultant background that may be useful in the career-planning process (Stambulova, 2010).

In the third step, the athlete client is required to structure their present life in order of importance and in accordance to the time spent on each activity/life sphere, as well as to reflect the level of stress associated with each activity. Based on what is put before the consultant by the athlete client, the consultant then asks specific questions to stimulate analysis. During this phase, the client reflects deeply on the importance, stress, and time devoted to the activities. In the fourth step, the client is required to structure their future in the next ten years, five years, three years, and one year. This step enables the athlete client to plan, arrange, and organise preferred important events (Stambulova, 2010).

The final and fifth step requires that the athlete client bridge the past, present, and future in three sub-steps. In the first sub-step, the lessons from the past are discussed in the present. The second sub-step plans realistic and achievable goals in the future. The final and third sub-step focuses on balancing current and future priorities (Stambulova, 2010).

The criticism levelled against the 5-SCP is that its success is dependent on the status of the consultant-client relationship, the consultant’s training level, the mental status of client, and the age/maturity level of the athlete client.

5.4 SUMMARY

Both Schlossberg and Stambulova’s theories are useful in enabling understanding and facilitating assistance to athletes in career transition. These theories may benefit one-on-one and group interventions. In short, the summarised functional elements will direct the design and development of intervention activities. When designing the proposed intervention programme, it will be important to be cognisant of the factors according to Schlossberg’s (1981) theory that affect the quality of the transition, which are the character of the transition, the individual experience of the transition, and the context of the transition. Furthermore, the intervention programme must use the 4S strategy (self, situation, support, and strategies) in identifying and using resources to help athletes in transition.
Stambulova’s transition theory creates awareness of internal and external challenges and resources in dealing with the transitions of athletes. The internal resources are motivation, personality traits, knowledge, and psychological skills. The external resources are financial and social support (Alfermann & Stambulova, 2007).

Both Stambulova’s and Schlossberg’s theories coincide on several factors pertinent to helping athletes in career transitions. Through these functional elements of these models, one is able to facilitate a smoother transition for athletes through the critical areas of their lives, namely the athletic, psychological, psychosocial, and academic/vocational areas. The functional elements highlighted are:

- social support (interpersonal and institutional);
- strategies, being the coping resources and the career planning strategy; and
- exploring and building on the individual characteristics of:
  - motivation (optimistic behavioural attitudes);
  - personality traits;
  - psychological skills;
  - self-esteem; and
  - intact internal locus of control.

As the intervention under development would fall under crisis prevention, the following would also apply based on the theories listed above: mental skills training, career planning, and goal setting.
CHAPTER 6
PHASES 3 AND 4 – DESIGN AND EARLY DEVELOPMENT

6.1 INTRODUCTION

The previous chapters (Chapters 3 to 5) of the research addressed Phases 1 and 2 of the intervention research model. In Chapter 3 the researcher explained and discussed the following components of Phase 1: identification and involving clients, gaining entry and cooperation from the setting, and identifying concerns of the population within the research methodology. In Chapter 4, the researcher explained and discussed the remainder of the aspects of Phase 1, namely analysis of key problems and the setting of goals and objectives.

Subsequently, Chapter 5 discussed Phase 2, which entailed information gathering and synthesis. This was an extensive literature review using existing information sources and identifying functional elements of successful models.

Chapter 6 starts with addressing Phase 3, which is the design phase, and Phase 4, which is the early development phase. The design phase has the following three key aspects: the design objective, the procedural elements for the intervention, and the observational system of the intervention.

The design objectives refer to the activities that need to be achieved in the design work (Thomas & Rothman, 1994). The procedural elements for the intervention refers to the specification of the elements used in the intervention to enable frequent usage, for example skills training, use of information, and change strategies (Fawcett et al., 1994). The observational system is an evaluation system for determining the scope of the problem and identifying the effectiveness following the intervention (Fawcett et al., 1994).

Phase 4 has the following significant aspects: early development of the intervention and pilot testing of the intervention. For the purpose of this research, as was indicated earlier, the researcher would only apply the intervention research methodology until Phase 4 of early development. Because the design phase and the early development phase are closely linked, they are incorporated in this chapter.

The piloting and the remainder of Phase 5 (evaluation and advanced development) and Phase 6 (dissemination) may occur as part of postdoctoral research. Early development refers to moulding the design into a prototype format to enable pilot testing of the programme.
6.2 DESIGN PHASE

This section refers to the three key aspects of the design phase, namely the design objective, procedural elements, and the observational system. The design objective is explored first.

6.2.1 The design objective

The aim of the research was to develop a career transition intervention programme for student athletes. The results from Phases 1 and 2 of the research will be integrated as part of the design in Phase 3. The design objective is the desired outcome of this intervention.

The objective is to design an intervention that addresses the athletic career normative transitions in the psychological, psychosocial, and academic/vocational areas of development. This will be a preventative career transition intervention for student athletes.

The intervention aims to build on internal and external resources and the character of the individual, as these are critical in facilitating successful transitions. The aim of the intervention is for the student athletes to develop psychologically, psychosocially, and vocationally so that they are better equipped to deal with the various situations confronting them. The researcher hopes they develop strategies through the intervention and take advantage of the support available to them.

In the case of the current research, the student athletes would have faced transitions entering into higher education, within higher education, and out of higher education. The transitions were in their athletic, psychological, psychosocial, and academic/vocational areas of development. Below is a detailed discussion of the three areas of development, namely psychological, psychosocial, and academic/vocational (career guidance and development) that will be covered in the design of the intervention.

6.2.1.1 Psychological area of development

The findings of the current study revealed that student athletes experienced the normative transitions as they were moving in and within higher education. These challenges that student athletes dealt with are similar to those cited in the literature, namely feeling demotivated and fatigued, pressure to perform, balance between the different roles of academia and athletics, and time management (Burnett, 2010; Heird & Steinfeldt, 2013; Surujlal et al., 2013; Wylleman et al., 1999). The next sections highlight the themes that were found to be pertinent in the study and linked with the literature. The themes discussed are the those that will be the focus of the intervention.
(a)  *Emotional reaction*

Anderson et al. (2012) argue that student athletes would have moved out of high school into higher education; they would have moved through higher education and moved out into the world of work, be it in a dual or single career. The student athletes in this research dealt with emotional reactions of toughness, shock, feeling punished, and feeling uncertain about the transition. The student athletes seemed to lack the readiness to cope with the demands of balancing their sports and academic responsibilities. Therefore, in a dual career, student athletes need to be aware of their emotions as they impact on behavioural and thinking patterns and thus influence their career transitions. Burns et al. (2013) and Heird and Steinfeldt (2013) concur that this places student athletes at risk of psychological distress if not dealt with adequately.

(b)  *Intrinsic motivation and goal setting*

It seems that goal setting and intrinsic motivation gave the participating student athletes direction and intensity of behaviour during their career transition. Anderson et al. (2012) state that student athletes need motivation to move through the different transitions within academia and athletics. Therefore student athletes in dual careers should be able to set goals and aim to achieve them to enable a smoother transition. In support of the internal resource of motivation, Alfermann and Stambulova (2007) believe that motivation allows student athletes to deal with and handle the strains of transition better; thus making the student athlete’s experience of the transition positive. Research also supports the notion that motivation and a positive attitude influence a positive transition (Tenenbaum & Eklund, 2007).

(c)  *4 Ps (passion, perseverance, personal knowledge, and personal branding)*

Another theme that was found to be beneficial in assisting with a smoother transition related to motivation and goal setting is utilising passion to fuel perseverance. The student athletes reported that passion was integral in that it sustained and positively influenced them during their transitions. Perseverance is an internal value to drive one’s behaviour to be patient and grow while adjusting.

The foundation of the student athletes’ passion and perseverance is their personal knowledge. Stambulova’s transition theory also puts forward that lack of personal knowledge contributes to transition difficulties. Similarly, greater personal knowledge is an internal resource that enables one to handle transition difficulties (Alfermann & Stambulova, 2007). Thus, the theme of personal knowledge pertained to knowing oneself, one’s environment, and knowing how to market oneself in order to be successful in career transitions. Research in facilitating experiential learning interventions promoted self-awareness and minimised effects linked with transitioning from high school to higher education (Laureano et al., 2014); thus emphasising the need to build on self-knowledge to make one’s transition successful.
**Time management and balancing different roles**

The research revealed that the theme of time management and balancing the different roles is “under construction”. It was a skill student athletes grappled with and needed to improve on in order to maximise efficacy in dual careers. Similarly, Van Rensburg et al. (2011) found the barriers to student athlete wellness to be poor time management and the struggle to balance both academia and sports. Furthermore, Gayles and Baker (2015) highlighted time constraints and balancing the different roles to be a challenge for student athletes to develop at the same level as non-athletic peers.

Therefore, enhancing time management is vital in the intervention programme in the current study. Furthermore, other researchers have undertaken interventions focusing on time management and other aspects to help student athletes to be better equipped for the world of work and dual careers (Fryklund, 2012; Pavlidis & Gargalianos, 2012). The interventions were found to be effective as they influenced transitions positively.

Also related to time management is the ability to adapt. "Adaptation is a process in which the individual moves from being totally preoccupied with the transition to integrating the transition into his/her life” (Schlossberg, 1981, p. 7). Anderson et al. (2012) highlight the onset and gradualness of transitions to affect the quality of adaptation to the transition. Sputu (2012) stipulates that the gradualness of the decision to retire from sports participation led to better adaptation.

Other factors that seemed to affect the adaptation to a transition were age, race, sex, life stage, health, socioeconomic status, value orientation, and previous experience with a similar transition (Schlossberg, 1981). Tshube and Feltz (2015) conducted research on athletes who were transferring sports-related skills into other careers; thus adapting was easier and they were better equipped than their non-athletic peers. It seems that the quality of adaptation to a transition is influenced by different factors. Therefore, the student athletes in the intervention need to be taught the skills to adapt and manage their time effectively so that their transitions are positive.

**6.2.1.2 Psychosocial support**

Family, coaches, role models, and mentors fall under the psychosocial level of the athletes’ development in their micro- and mesosystems. According to Wylleman et al.’s (1999) developmental model of transition, the family’s or coaches’ influence on the athletes’ lives dominate at a particular developmental level of the athletes’ career. Furthermore, Stambulova’s (2003) theory also addresses the psychosocial aspect of athletes’ lives (Hanin & Stambulova, 2004). The lack of psychosocial support may be an obstacle that delays the transition, and access to psychosocial support may be a resource that positively influences the outcome of the transition. Schlossberg’s theory (1981) addresses pre- and post-transition environments, stating that institutional and interpersonal support is a resource that may affect
how well or how poorly the student athlete deals with the transition. Also, psychosocial support is the third S (support) of the 4 S strategy of coping with transitions in Schlossberg’s theory of transition (Anderson et al., 2012).

It was found in this research that the value of support from family, coaches, role models, and mentors was an important theme that had a positive impact on facilitating smoother transitions. Family members and coaches seemed to provide psychosocial support that is consistently available throughout the athlete’s life.

Previous studies (Čačija, 2007; Brown et al., 2015; Gayles & Baker, 2015) showed that the psychosocial challenges ranged from management of key relationships, limited engagement in social activities, and balancing various roles. Furthermore, Burns et al. (2013) revealed that although these psychosocial relationships are important at times, managing them is a key source of stress for student athletes. Also, Tshube and Feltz’s (2015) research revealed that dual-career athletes faced the challenge of not having access to a mentorship programme.

Therefore, Larsen et al. (2014) recommend that in conducting an intervention with athletes, coaches and managers need to be involved. Additionally, Höll and Burnett’s (2016) study findings showed that coaches play a critical role in linking sport service providers to student athletes. This supports the fact put forward by Petitpas et al. (2005) that positive psychosocial development is more probable when supportive mentors and community members focus attention on a specific activity within a supportive context.

In summary, the current transition programme under development needs to build on the support of institutions, coaches, family, and other relational networks as previous research has revealed that it is a positive factor in facilitating smoother transitions.

6.2.1.3 Academic/vocational (career guidance and development)

According to Wylleman and Lavallee (2004), career development falls under the academic and vocational level of an athlete’s development. It is a transition that spans over the student athlete’s life and culminates in career termination once the athlete has gone through the various transitions and stages.

In arguing for the need for career development to be incorporated into a career transition programme, the literature cited that student athletes lag behind when it comes to career readiness compared to non-athletic peers (Petitpas, 2017). Student athletes are affected by low career maturity and unpreparedness to make quality educational plans (Burns et al., 2013). Athletic careers are short and retired Chinese athletes, for example, are facing greater challenges and fluctuations in career transitions because of their lack of education and vocational skills (Zang et al., 2013). This can also be true of athletes in other countries.
Additionally, it was found that the EC has taken measures to promote the reintegration of the sports person into the labour market at the end of their sporting career (Pavlidis & Gargalianos, 2012). There is a need for consistent interventions and support from various stakeholders to help athletes in their dual careers and transitions (Fuller, 2014; Larsen et al., 2014).

Furthermore, Burns et al. (2013) state that career development services do indeed improve student athlete career decision self-efficacy and may positively affect one’s career transition as managing a dual career has been found to be a useful skill (Stambulova et al., 2014). Also, Tshube and Feltz (2015) found that the athletes were transferring sports-related skills into other careers, thus adapting easier and being better equipped than non-athletic peers.

In this research, a theme that was found in both the qualitative and the quantitative instruments was career-related development. Students seemed to require assistance with career decision-making skills. They also seemed to require assistance with career planning and development, as well as identifying and addressing barriers to career development.

Furthermore, while some of the student athletes found networking, volunteering, and working part-time beneficial, it was put forward that student athletes need to be equipped with skills to do the same to facilitate smoother transitions. Another skill that the student athletes need to learn was how to transfer their sports-related skills into other work contexts to encourage career confidence.

Therefore, based on the findings of the study and literature, the researcher should incorporate career guidance and development in the intervention programme to equip student athletes with the various skills in order to be successful in their dual careers and transitions.

6.2.2 Summary of the proposed intervention programme

Based on the design objective, the proposed intervention programme will address student athlete career transitions in the following areas of development:

A. Psychological area of development
   1. 4 Ps
      a. Personal awareness/knowledge (developing the self)
      b. Personal branding
      c. Passion and perseverance
   2. Developing intrinsic motivation and goal setting
   3. Dealing with emotional reactions and learning to be adaptable
   4. Time management and balancing different roles
B. Psychosocial area of development
1. Utilising environments to your benefit (e.g. student support services, athletic support services)
2. Learn how to request support from mentors and how to benefit from support of family and coaches
   a. External resources
   b. Increasing support

C. Academic/vocational area of development (career guidance and development)
1. Career planning and development
   a. Career decision-making skills
   b. Increasing career confidence
2. Identify and address barriers to career development
3. Learning to transfer sports skills to other areas of work
4. Learning how to network; searching for volunteering opportunities and part-time jobs

6.2.3 Design components
This intervention aims to be preventative; aiming to enhance athletes’ awareness about forthcoming transition demands and aiding timely development of all necessary resources for effective coping. The core components of interventions, according to Fraser, Richman, Galinsky, and Day (2009), are to:

- deliver knowledge and skills training;
- improve support and resources;
- adjust to access and difficulties; and
- evaluate as well as give feedback.

Therefore, according to Conyne (2013), this transition intervention has the following components: promoting education, fostering networks, strengthening individual knowledge and skills, and avoiding dysfunctions and serious problems.

In short, the proposed components of the intervention programme being developed are to provide information and skills training to the student athletes, as well as to enhance support and resources for the student athletes.

6.2.4 Design: Target, duration, and group size
The following section addresses the target population of the intervention, the duration, and the proposed group size.
6.2.4.1 Target

The intervention programme will target student athletes who are in their second and third year of study as they may have experienced the transition into higher education and may need to start planning for their transition towards a dual or single career post-higher education. The intervention programme will be facilitated within a group format over a number of sessions.

The reason the intervention programme will be facilitated within a group format is to encourage vicarious learning among group members. Groups are also believed to enhance the common experience of the members, thus the group members may feel supported. Furthermore, groups are seen as a place of belonging and a safe environment when handled correctly to practice new learning. It is an opportunity for student athletes within groups to receive and give feedback, thus enhancing their learning experience (Söchting, 2014).

6.2.4.2 Duration

The intervention programme will be facilitated over 12 sessions because there are three areas of development to cover, which will require time to adequately go through each area of development. Thus the length of the intervention programme is likely to occur over 12 weeks and each of the sessions are likely to be between 90 minutes to two hours. The proposed time includes an approximately 30-minute feedback evaluation at the end of each session. The exact timing of the implementation of the intervention programme will be determined during the piloting and evaluation phase.

6.2.4.3 Group size

The group size is likely to be between eight to 12 participants. Yalom (1975) and Yalom and Leszcs (2005), leading authors on group psychotherapy, have stated that the ideal size of the group is approximately seven, with an acceptable range of five to ten members. Furthermore, when conducting focus group interviews, it is suggested that one has between four and 12 participants for reasons of interaction and building on one another’s ideas (Nieuwenhuis, 2007).

The intervention programme will not necessarily be a focus group or a psychotherapy group, but a supporting developmental learning group and the size of the group is important as it may influence the outcome of the objectives. Therefore, the proposed group size of participants for this intervention programme will be between eight and 12 participants, with the aim of maximising its effectiveness. As this is an intervention to be implemented, the group size is subject to review based on application and evaluation.
6.2.5   Early development (Phase 4) and procedural elements

The early development phase of the research is important to develop a prototype of the intervention so that it can be piloted, evaluated, and then amended as necessary. For the purpose of this research, only a prototype of the intervention is discussed. Piloting and evaluation of the programme’s effectiveness will be done as follow-up (postdoctoral) research.

The prototype of the intervention is an example of the intervention programme. The procedural elements’ specification allows for the intervention to be used frequently. This speaks to how the programme will begin, what the sessions will cover, and how it will conclude to allow for replication.

The introduction session will provide an overview of the unfolding of the proposed programme, as well as to obtain consent from the prospective participants to participate in the intervention, and to administer a pre-test intervention self-reporting questionnaire.

Table 6.1: Consent to participate in the career transition intervention

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Consent to participate in the intervention: Student athlete career transition intervention</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I, ____________________________________________, understand what has been explained to me regarding the career transition intervention. I understand that my participation is voluntary. I understand that I will need to commit to all the sessions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I understand that the pre-intervention, post-session, and post-intervention questionnaires will be used as part of further developing the intervention programme. I understand that I have the right to remain anonymous and that no identifying information such as my name or personal details will be used in the transcripts or reports; therefore my responses will remain confidential. I understand that there are no foreseeable risks. I agree to take part and commit to the proposed intervention.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Signature:</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sessions 2 to 11 will deal with various topics as gathered from the research findings from the student athletes as pertinent topics to be covered when conducting the career transition intervention. Table 6.2 is an example of the session outline to enable for replication to occur.
### Table 6.2: Example of session outline

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SESSION</th>
<th>THEME</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Introduction: Overview of programme; needs analysis; pre-testing; consent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2-6</td>
<td>Psychological</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1. 4 Ps</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>a. Personal awareness/knowledge (developing the self)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>b. Personal branding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>c. Passion and perseverance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. Developing intrinsic motivation and goal setting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3. Dealing with emotional reactions and learning to be adaptable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4. Time management and balancing different roles</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7-8</td>
<td>Psychosocial</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1. Utilising environments to your benefit (e.g. student support services, athletic support services)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. Learn how to request support from mentors and how to benefit from support of family and coaches</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>a. External resources</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>b. Increasing support</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9-11</td>
<td>Academic and career guidance and development</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1. Career planning and development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>a. Career decision-making skills</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>b. Increasing career confidence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. Identify and address barriers to career development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3. Learning to transfer sports skills to other areas of work</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4. Learning how to network; searching for volunteering opportunities and part-time jobs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Conclusion: Post-test, review of needs analysis, and closure</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The sessions will be interactive to maximise the learning that will take place (Conyne, 2004; Söchting, 2014). The last session, Session 12, will conclude the programme and facilitate a post-test intervention survey to ascertain if the student athletes benefited from the programme or not.

The researcher proposes 12 sessions for the implementation of the programme to give the participants time to assimilate knowledge that is presented and to practise skills, as well as sufficient time to cover the different sessions adequately. However, when the programme is piloted and tested, the number of sessions should be amended accordingly. A psychologist will facilitate the sessions in a workshop format once a week for maximum two hours with the student athletes.
6.2.5.1  *Proposed session outline*

The researcher will include various activities to enhance the learning and development of the student athletes. Activities in groups are said to facilitate discussion and participation as well as provide opportunities for experiential learning (Trotzer, 2004). Therefore, the activities in the proposed intervention programme will be interpersonal, intrapersonal, verbal, and non-verbal to achieve psychological, psychosocial, and vocational development. The group format will be psycho-educational because it is a preventative intervention. Preventative interventions are best done within psycho-educational groups. This is according to Conyne (2004), a leading author in group and programme development.

The reasons Conyne (2004) puts forward are that psycho-educational groups pay attention to assisting members to develop existing resources. In this research, the intervention programme aims to enable the student athletes to identify and build on internal and external resources. Furthermore, Conyne (2004) states that psycho-educational groups are informative as they develop skills and the emphasis is on application. Similarly, with the current developed intervention, within the three areas of development the researcher aims to develop an intervention that will educate, develop skills, and encourage learning among group members. Finally, Conyne (2004) believes that there are set goals, structure, and efficiency within psycho-educational groups.

In short, psycho-educational models, in maximising efficacy, tend to be time limited, and involve informative content with modelling, imagining, and rehearsal. The knowledge and skills provided are believed to produce a change in behaviour or beliefs (Fraser, 2003). Therefore the researcher chose to follow the following format (see Table 6.3) for the sessions as recommended by authors in the field of preventative psycho-educational group interventions (Conyne, 2004; Trotzer, 2004).

**Table 6.3: An example of a session outline**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Session theme</th>
<th>Goals of the session</th>
<th>Strategies</th>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Resources</th>
<th>Timelines</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

It is important to mention that the outline of the design is tentative and will require application and testing. The goal of the session is what the facilitator aims to have achieved by the end of the session. The intervention will use different strategies to achieve the goal of the session. The examples range from informative, inquiry based, case method to discussions, and active learning depending on the goals one wants to achieve for the specific session theme (Conyne, 2004; Trotzer, 2004). The exercises will be used to initiate and facilitate the sessions. Examples of exercises range from self-assessment, cognitive restructuring, role
playing, imagery, and creative arts to homework. The resources will be the different materials required for each of the sessions. It could be psychological testing materials, diaries, and/or stationery. The timeline is the duration of the unfolding of the different activities within the session.

6.2.6 Intervention observational system

In designing the intervention programme, the researcher will include in the programme a pre-test and post-test as observational systems to determine if the programme actually addresses the student athletes’ needs and challenges. The observational system will be for evaluation purposes.

Table 6.4: Example of a pre-intervention questionnaire

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name:</th>
<th>Date:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Instructions: Please indicate your level of agreement with the statements below in facilitating smoother transitions in student athlete career developments. Use the following scale to select your answer on each item:

0 - No need for improvement
1 - Slight need for improvement
2 - Moderate need for improvement
3 - Much need for improvement

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>AREAS OF DEVELOPMENT</th>
<th>0</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>PSYCHOLOGICAL</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Personal knowledge (developing the self)</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Personal branding (marketing the self)</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Utilising passion to fuel perseverance</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intrinsic motivation and goal setting</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dealing with emotional reactions and learning to be adaptable</td>
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<tr>
<td>Time management and balancing different roles</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>PSYCHOSOCIAL</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Utilising environments to your benefit</td>
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<tr>
<td>Modelling, mentoring, and the value of support</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>ACADEMIC AND CAREER GUIDANCE AND DEVELOPMENT</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Career decision-making skills</td>
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<tr>
<td>Increasing career confidence</td>
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<tr>
<td>Identify and address barriers to career development</td>
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<tr>
<td>Learning to transfer sports skills to other areas of work</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learning how to network; searching for volunteering opportunities and part-time jobs</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The researcher will facilitate a pre-test right at the beginning of the programme intervention and one right at the end of the programme. Table 6.4 is an example of a pre-intervention questionnaire and Table 6.5 is an example of a post-intervention questionnaire.
Table 6.5: Example of a post-intervention evaluation questionnaire

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>AREAS OF DEVELOPMENT</th>
<th>0</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>PSYCHOLOGICAL</strong></td>
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<td>Intrinsic motivation and goal setting</td>
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<td>Dealing with emotional reactions and learning to be adaptable</td>
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<td>Time management and balancing different roles</td>
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<td><strong>PSYCHOSOCIAL</strong></td>
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<td>Utilising environments to your benefit</td>
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<td>Modelling, mentoring, and the value of support</td>
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<td><strong>ACADEMIC AND CAREER GUIDANCE AND DEVELOPMENT</strong></td>
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<td>Career decision-making skills</td>
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<td>Increasing career confidence</td>
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<td>Identify and address barriers to career development</td>
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<td>Learning to transfer sports skills to other areas of work</td>
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<td>Learning how to network; searching for volunteering opportunities and part-time jobs</td>
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<td><strong>ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS</strong></td>
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<td>What have been the most important skills that you have learned since participating in this intervention programme?</td>
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<td>From your experience of the programme, would you like to make any comments or suggestions?</td>
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The researcher will also have for each session a self-reporting questionnaire on each theme to evaluate if the session objectives were met and if the participants grew in their understanding and confidence of the developmental areas. The administration of the self-reporting questionnaire is planned for the end of every session. Table 6.6 is an example of a self-reporting questionnaire.
### Table 6.6: Example of self-reporting session-by-session evaluation questionnaire

**Date:**

**Title of session:**

Instructions: Please indicate your level of agreement with the statements below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statements</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Neutral</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Objectives of the workshops were clearly defined</td>
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<td>2. Participation and interaction were encouraged</td>
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<td>3. The topics covered were relevant to me</td>
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<tr>
<td>4. The content was organised and easy to follow</td>
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<td>5. The materials distributed were helpful</td>
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<td>6. The facilitator was knowledgeable about the topic</td>
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<td>7. The facilitator was well prepared</td>
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<td>8. The training objectives were met</td>
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</table>

**Please answer the following questions honestly and to the best of your ability:**

What did you learn in this session today?

What did you most enjoy (like) of today's session?

What did you not enjoy (dislike) of today's session?

Did you learn any important lesson from today's session? Please tick one

- Yes
- No

Explain your answer:

Thank you for your participation.

In summary, the researcher will use two observational systems: one as an overview of the whole intervention to determine its effectiveness in achieving its objectives, and the second observational system will be to observe the quality of delivery for each of the sessions, which will assist to improve the sessions.

### 6.3 SUMMARY

This chapter addressed the design objectives, which are the areas of development to be explored within the intervention. The design components, elements, and the prototype of the intervention were highlighted to give an example of the proposed intervention. The proposed intervention evaluation systems were also discussed in detail. The researcher will, as part of postdoctoral research, expand further on the early development phase to allow for piloting and evaluation.
CHAPTER 7
SUMMARY AND DISCUSSIONS

7.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter provides a summary of the findings of the research. This chapter is organised in two sections; the first section is a response to the research questions, and the second and final section discusses the study’s contribution to existing knowledge.

7.2 RESPONSES TO RESEARCH AIM AND OBJECTIVES

The aim of this research was to develop an intervention programme for student athletes in career transitions. In order to achieve this aim, the first objective of this research was to determine how student athletes experience career transitions into university, within university, and out of university. This was important in that it enabled the researcher to understand student athletes’ transition needs and challenges pertaining to experiences that are psychological, psychosocial, athletic, and academic.

Based on the outcome of the first research objective, the second objective of the research was to develop a career transition intervention for student athletes. The researcher then conducted an in-depth literature review to ascertain elements of successful transition interventions and collated the findings of the outcome of the analysed data to design the proposed intervention. The research aims and objectives were achieved using Thomas and Rothman's (1994) intervention design and development methodology.

This chapter highlights the four phases of the research that were discussed. Phase 1 responded to the first research objective, which was to ascertain the needs and challenges of student athletes. Phase 2 through to Phase 4 responded to the second research objective, which was the development of a transition intervention programme for student athletes.

7.2.1 Problem analysis and project planning: Phase 1

The problem analysis and project planning phase had two components. The first component was problem identification, where the researcher identified and involved clients, gained entry and cooperation from the setting, identified the concerns of the population, and analysed identified concerns. The second component was developing the project plan and the setting of goals and objectives for the intervention (Thomas & Rothman, 1994).

In short, this phase was explored within two chapters. Chapter 3 focused on problem identification, mainly referring to the research methodology. Chapter 4 focused on problem analysis and project planning, and a discussion of the research findings.
7.2.1.1 Identifying and analysing problems

(a) Mixed-methods design

The researcher decided on a mixed-methods design to identify and analyse key problems to address the aim of the research. A mixed-methods design, including both qualitative and quantitative methods, was selected to achieve the two research objectives. The researcher wanted the benefits of both qualitative and quantitative information to compare and contrast the findings for a better understanding of the needs and challenges of student athletes to design an appropriate intervention programme.

In identifying and analysing the problems, the researcher used convergent mixed methods to explore the career transition needs and challenges of the student athletes. Triangulation was done by comparing and contrasting both qualitative and quantitative data to produce a well-validated conclusion and making inferences from the results (Teddlie & Tashakkori, 2009). The problem analysis in Phase 1 of the research process unfolded in two parts: first, the qualitative assessment of career transition needs and challenges, and second, the quantitative assessment of career transition needs.

The researcher obtained qualitative information from the semi-structured interviews with current and previous athletes through the use of focus groups and individual interviews. The quantitative inquiry identified factors that contributed broadly to student athlete career situations from the student athlete population through the use of the SACSI-R (Cox et al., 2009).

The identification of the factors associated with student athletes’ career transition as well as an understanding of their experiences, needs, and challenges enabled the researcher to frame the problem and work towards the solution, which was the intervention programme for student athletes.

7.2.1.2 Qualitative assessment of career transition needs and challenges

The next sections provide a summary of the qualitative interviews used, followed by the sampling and inclusion criteria, qualitative data analysis, and summary of the qualitative findings.

(a) Individual and focus group interviews

As previously mentioned, the researcher collected qualitative information from both previous and current student athletes through the use of semi-structured questions via individual and focus group interviews.

The aim of using individual interviews was to explore the previous student athletes through their social reality. As the interviews were semi-structured, the line of inquiry was set and the
researcher was able to probe for clarification. The researcher chose to conduct various interviews to gather extensive information on the participants’ experiences, views, and opinions regarding transition needs and challenges (Nieuwenhuis, 2007). The researcher chose to use focus group interviews with current student athletes as it enabled the researcher to determine the problems of student athletes’ transitions within a discussion format. The participants engaged freely on issues pertinent to the study, which enabled a wide range of responses (Nieuwenhuis, 2007).

(b) Sampling and inclusion criteria

For the individual interviews and the focus groups, the researcher used a snowball sampling method to gain access to participants. Snowball sampling is a method where a research participant, with whom a relationship has already been established, is used to infiltrate his/her social networks to obtain other research participants who could potentially take part in the study (Nieuwenhuis, 2007). This type of sampling method is useful where the population is difficult to find and the research interest is in an interrelated group of people; in this case current student athletes (Maree & Pietersen, 2007).

The researcher initially had to establish a relationship with the relevant university departments, which then facilitated contact with the various student athletes. The previous student athletes’ inclusion criteria were that they:

- were student athletes when at university;
- recently completed their studies at a university; and
- were in a career for at least one year since completion of their studies.

The inclusion criteria for current student athletes were students who:

- were registered for a course at a university; and
- were registered as student athletes at the sport department of their university and actively participated in sports.

In total, the researcher conducted three individual interviews and three focus group interviews with students from Wits and UJ. Tables 3.1 and 3.2 presented the demographics of the previous and current student athletes interviewed. The interview schedule for both types of interviews was guided by questions formulated based on Schlossberg’s transition factors, namely situation, self, support, and strategy (Goodman et al., 2006). The theory was explained in detail in Chapter 5.

(c) Qualitative data analysis

The individual interviews and the focus group interviews were analysed using thematic analysis. Thematic analysis is the process of inquiring data from different angles, where the
researcher aims to determine similarities and differences in texts that support particular themes (Nieuwenhuis, 2007). The researcher used the following six steps: familiarisation with the data, initial coding, searching for themes based on initial coding, reviewing the themes, theme definition and labelling, and report writing (Brown & Clarke, 2006).

The identification of themes was generated inductively from the transcribed text through reading and re-reading the transcripts. The data were initially coded, categorised, and grouped into themes. The themes were reviewed, refined, and labelled in relation to the data. These results were then summarised into research findings that guided the intervention programme development (Creswell & Clark, 2011).

(d) Summary of qualitative findings

The following is a summary of the reported qualitative findings of the research. The researcher grouped the findings into psychological, psychosocial, and vocational/academic findings.

The following psychological factors positively influenced the student athletes’ transitions: personal knowledge, branding, passion, and perseverance. Goal setting, intrinsic motivation, and discipline were the other psychological factors that were pertinent in influencing transitions positively. The psychosocial factors that contributed to influencing transitions positively were coaching and parental support, role modelling and mentoring, and the availability of work opportunities.

The psychological factors that must be enriched in the student athletes in their career transitions is learning to deal with emotional reactions and learning to be adaptable. Furthermore, the student athletes felt they could improve in managing their time and finding a balance between their various roles and activities. The psychosocial factors included the student athletes' learning to seek social support to support them in their transitions and developments. The academic/vocational factor that the student athletes needed improvement on was making informed career decisions.

7.2.1.3 Quantitative assessment of career transition needs and challenges

The following sections summarise the research participants and sampling method for the quantitative data, briefly address the SACSI-R research instrument, and discuss the quantitative data analysis and the summary of the quantitative findings.

(a) Research participants and sampling method

A purposive sample of student athletes who were registered at one of three universities, namely UJ, Wits and UP, was invited to participate in this research. Purposive sampling is a technique involving selecting a large number of participants who collectively represent the
population of interest and can provide knowledge of what the researcher is attempting to uncover (Teddlie & Tashakkori, 2009).

These students had to represent their university in one of any sports codes and also reflect the diversity of the student athlete population. The researcher aimed to include 100 to 150 research participants and ended up collecting the responses of 153 student athletes on the survey. After data capturing and preparation of the data for analysis, only 140 responses were usable for the research. The responses of 13 participants were excluded from analysis due to incomplete data.

(b) Research instrument: SACSI-R

This research utilised a quantitative psychometric instrument called the SACSI-R (Cox et al., 2009). This quantitative design was beneficial for this research in that many participants could respond to the research instrument, thus allowing for the generalisation of the results.

The SACSI-R inventory is a quantitative psychometric instrument that measures the career situation of student athletes. According to Sandstedt et al. (2004:82), in the development of the SACSI-R, career situation refers to the career development of athletes; “the extent of one’s career development and preparation characterized by the sophistication of one’s career attitudes, beliefs, and interests”. The utilisation of the psychometric instrument was influenced by the need for a career development inventory that took the following into consideration:

- The nature of student athlete career development;
- Internal and external needs; and
- Barriers in career development transitions.

In the development of the SACSI-R, the hope was for professionals within student athlete environments to use it to develop intervention strategies to prepare student athletes for transitions from their sport to career-related roles as they became aware of the career-related beliefs, attitudes, and interests of student athletes (Sandstedt et al., 2004).

The SACSI-R male and female inventories elicited responses on a five-point Likert scale. Items required participants to indicate their level of agreement with a given item on the Likert scale that ranged from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). The SACSI-R for male participants has 25 items, while the version of the inventory for females has 23 items (Cox et al., 2009, p. 166). The outcomes of the inventory resulted in five sub-scales for men and four sub-scales for females. More information on the definition and the reliability of each sub-scale as referenced by Cox et al. (2009, p. 166) are listed in Chapter 3, Section 3.4.3.
(c) **Quantitative data analysis**

Data were captured and analysed using the SPSS 24 software package for statistical analysis, also known as IBM SPSS Statistics for Windows, Version 24.0. The information received from the SACSI-R was entered into SPSS 24. Descriptive statistics such as means and standard deviation, frequencies, and percentages for all variables were calculated. Inferential statistics for the student athletes’ responses on the inventory and sub-scale values were calculated according to the manual of the SACSI-R (Cox et al., 2009). The researcher observed the central tendency (mean, mode, and median) and the dispersion of the data (range and standard deviation).

The researcher then used inferential statistical analysis, which refers to a process of making inferences from samples to populations. It involved the analysis of numerical data from testing the differences between group means. The information yielded in the inventory then assisted in addressing the aim of the research by giving insight into the career needs and challenges of student athletes.

(d) **Summary of quantitative findings**

The findings of the quantitative findings had the following academic and career development implication: sport involvement and career planning promoted career confidence. Therefore, barriers to career development needed to be identified and addressed. In summary, in developing the intervention programme, the researcher would need to:

- explore ways to use sports involvement to promote career confidence, thus harnessing transferring skills from sports to other areas of work;
- include a component in the programme that provides information as well as steps to take when finding and deciding on a career to enable building career confidence;
- identify possible barriers to career development and find solutions within the career transition programme to address the barriers; and
- include a section that explores the motives of student athletes and link them to the importance of academics and career development.

(e) **Trustworthiness and ethical considerations for both qualitative and quantitative research**

The data-collection process adhered to all ethical requirements as prescribed by the university, the HPCSA, and the South African Department of Health for conducting research (South Africa Department of Health, 2006, pp. 41-45).

The researcher is confident that the qualitative aspect of this current research was valid, reliable, consistent, and applicable based on the credibility, transferability, confirmability, and dependability concerns she addressed at different stages of the research.
Similar to the quantitative research process, the ethical requirements for research with human subjects were adhered to. The researcher assured the research participants that she would protect their physical, social, and psychological welfare and honour their dignity and privacy. There were no foreseeable risks for the participants. The researcher was obliged to reflect on the foreseeable repercussions of research and publication on those studied.

7.2.1.4 Project plan

The second component of Phase 1 was project planning, as well as setting goals and objectives. As a result of analysing the identified concerns, the researcher was able to plan for the intervention programme and have specific objectives.

The project plan was to develop a career intervention programme that would be facilitated to student athletes in career transition to equip them in their career development within higher education and post-higher education. Therefore, the objective of this research was to develop a group-based career transition intervention that focused on three areas of development: psychological, psychosocial, and academic/vocational development, to facilitate a smoother transition for student athletes.

7.2.1.5 Setting goals and objectives

The setting of goals and objectives focused on the main aims of the research and how to achieve the aims of the research. The first research objective was to ascertain student athletes’ needs and challenges. The second objective was the development of an intervention programme in response to the identified needs.

7.2.1.6 Triangulation of results

All the results were analysed and then compared, contrasted, and merged during interpretation. Based on the outcome of the qualitative and quantitative information yielded from Phase 1 of the intervention research, there seems to be a consistency in the research findings, confirming that the student athletes had challenges that needed to be addressed to facilitate smoother transitions within their careers. Based on the qualitative and quantitative results, the objective of this research was to develop a group-based career transition intervention with the following modules:

- Exploring the four P’s: personal knowledge, personal branding, passion, and perseverance.
- Value of network of support from family, coaches and role models, and mentors.
- Balancing different roles and time management.
- Dealing with various emotional reactions and adaptability.
- Facilitate intrinsic motivation and goal setting.
• Career planning and development so they possess career confidence, adjust accordingly in transitions, and excel in their careers and academics.
• Transferrable skills so that they become aware of the skills they have as athletes and how these skills encourage career confidence. The goal would be for the student athletes to transfer the skills to other contexts and make informed career decisions in their career development.
• Identify and address barriers to career development.
• A module on career-related information that would include information on volunteering, networking, and testimonials of previous student athletes as well as other relevant career-related information.

7.2.2 Information gathering and synthesis: Phase 2

The aim of Phase 2 was to use existing information sources and identify functional elements of successful models. This phase was discussed in Chapter 5. For this phase, the researcher firstly conducted a thorough literature review focusing on transitions and existing information sources and identifying functional elements of successful models.

7.2.2.1 Transitions

The researcher explored and defined the primary, secondary, positive, and crisis transitions in sports. She also defined and explored the developmental model of transitions in sports. The primary transition was the normative expected transitions in sports, and the secondary transition was the non-normative, unexpected transitions in sports (Wylleman et al., 1999; Wylleman & Lavallee, 2004). The positive transition was successful adjustment to transitions the student athletes faced (Tenenbaum & Eklund, 2007). When additional efforts are needed by the student athlete to effectively adjust to the new requirements, it is called crisis transition (Wylleman et al., 1999). Students within this current research were said to be experiencing normative transitions as they were moving within higher education and different levels of sports competitions, as well as different levels of academic/career goals.

Wylleman’s developmental model of transitions in sports (Wylleman & Lavallee, 2004) guided the student athletes, who were the focus of this research, towards mastery of their athletic endeavours. Regarding their psychological level of development, the student athletes should be transitioning out of the adolescent stage of development towards young adulthood. Additionally, with regard to the significant influencers within their psychosocial spaces, the model purports that the coaches, peers, parents, and partners play a more significant role in the lives of the student athletes. These athletes were in higher education and about to transition towards professional careers; be it dual careers or single careers. Therefore the normative transition challenges the student athletes faced would have been in their athletic, psychological, psychosocial, and vocational/academic levels.
7.2.2.2 Existing information sources

The existing information sources facilitated in painting a picture of the psychological, psychosocial, and academic challenges the student athletes faced.

The psychological challenges from the literature were pressure to perform in sports and academia, fatigue, self-esteem issues, demotivation, and sensitivity to failures (Burnet, 2010; Heird & Steinfeldt, 2013; Surujlal et al., 2013; Wylleman et al., 1999).

The psychosocial challenges were management of key relationships, limited engagement in social activities, and balancing various roles (Čačija, 2007; Brown et al., 2015; Gayles & Baker, 2015).

The academic challenges ranged from not having sufficient time to pay attention to studies to not being prepared for their careers (Burns et al., 2013). The transitions were challenging because they were within the context of schooling and sports.

The researcher found that there was a dearth of research within the African context on career transitions of student athletes, but the available research did highlight the challenges and needs of student athletes (Marthinus, 2007; Van Rensburg et al., 2011; Tshube & Feltz, 2015). These challenges and needs of student athletes seem to be universal, and there is a need for interventions, support, and collaboration between the various university departments in enabling a reassuring environment for student athletes to thrive and have smoother transitions (Burns et al., 2013; Brown et al., 2015).

The literature review also explored the retirement transitions in sports internationally. The themes seem to be common for student athletes and professional athletes regarding transition and retirement out of sports. The sporting career is prioritised above everything else, to the extent that in retirement the process is difficult and is influenced by athletic and non-athletic factors (Marthinus, 2007; Maseko & Surajlal, 2011).

7.2.2.3 Identify functional elements of successful models

The information gathering and synthesis phase continued by identifying functional elements of successful models in the development of the transition programme. The researcher found both Schlossberg and Stambulova’s theories useful as they are preventative and they pay specific attention to the athlete’s academic/vocational, athletic, psychosocial, and psychological areas of development.

Schlossberg’s theory speaks of transitions being natural processes that may provide psychological growth or deterioration. The quality of the transition is influenced by the character of the transitions, individual experience, and the context within which the individual
experiences the transition (Anderson et al., 2012). Stambulova (2017) states that transitions are turning phases with numerous difficulties, both internal and external, which require internal and external resources to address the transition difficulties.

Both Stambulova’s (2003) and Schlossberg’s (2012) theories concur on numerous aspects as mentioned above pertinent to assisting athletes in career transitions. Through these functional elements of these models, one is able to facilitate a smoother transition for student athletes through the critical areas of the student athletes’ lives, namely the athletic, psychological, psychosocial, and academic/vocational areas. The functional elements highlighted are the importance of social support in dealing with transitions, strategies used in coping with the transitions, and strategies used in planning for career development. Another functional element is working on the self. This ranges from developing psychological skills, self-esteem, internal locus of control, to motivation and exploring and understanding one’s psychological skills.

7.2.3 Design and early development: Phase 3 and 4

The design objective was to develop a preventative intervention programme for student athletes that addresses the psychological, psychosocial, and academic/vocational areas of development.

The intervention aimed to build on internal and external resources and the character of the individual, as these are seen to be critical in facilitating successful transitions.

The early development phase and the design phase are closely connected; therefore the researcher combined them in Chapter 6 of the research. The chapter focused on the design objective, components, and procedural elements, which included an example of the prototype of the intervention and the observational system.

The design objective was to create an intervention that would address transitions in the following areas of development:

A. Psychological area of development
   1. 4 Ps
      a. Personal awareness/knowledge (developing the self)
      b. Personal branding
      c. Passion
      d. Perseverance
   2. Developing intrinsic motivation and goal setting
   3. Dealing with emotional reactions and learning to be adaptable
   4. Time management and balancing different roles
B. Psychosocial area of development

1. Utilising environments to your benefit (e.g. student support services, athletic support services)
2. Learning how to request support from mentors and how to benefit from support of family and coaches
   a. External resources
   b. Increasing support

C. Academic/vocational area of development (career guidance and development)

1. Career planning and development
   a. Career decision-making skills
   b. Increasing career confidence
2. Identifying and addressing barriers to career development
3. Learning to transfer sports skills to other areas of work
4. Learning how to network; searching for volunteering opportunities and part-time jobs

The components of the intervention were to provide information and skills training to the student athletes, as well as to enhance support and resources for the student athletes (Fraser et al., 2009). The procedural elements spoke to how the programme would begin, what sessions would be covered, and how it would conclude to allow for replication. The activities in the proposed intervention were therefore interpersonal, intrapersonal, verbal, and non-verbal to achieve psychological, psychosocial, and vocational development. The proposed programme would be in a group format and psycho-educational because it is meant as a preventative intervention (Conyne, 2013).

The researcher opted for two observational systems. The one was an overview of the whole intervention programme to determine its effectiveness in achieving its objectives. The second observational system was to observe the quality of delivery for each of the sessions, which would assist in improving subsequent sessions.

The prototype of the intervention programme and the remainder of the phases of the intervention research and design will be expanded and refined as part of postdoctoral research to allow for pilot testing, evaluation, and advanced development.

7.3 CONTRIBUTIONS OF THE STUDY

This section includes the strengths and limitations of the study, as well as recommendations for future research. The practical application and value of the research are also discussed.
7.3.1 **Strengths of the study**

The major strength of the research was the utilisation of the intervention research methodology by Thomas and Rothman (1994). In that, the approach enabled the researcher to clearly identify and analyse the problem as well as plan for the project through the different phases of the intervention research and the steps within the phases.

The steps within the different phases of the research brought focus to the research and isolation of the problem. The steps within the phases mapped out what needed to be done, thus providing direction on what needed to be incorporated in the study. The process of intervention research is evaluative, which may have enhanced the usefulness of the development of the intervention programme and the process of the different phases seemed to have generated knowledge for practice.

The approach used in Phase 1 (problem analysis and project planning) of the intervention research of problem identification used mixed methods. It enabled the researcher to respond to the research question from different perspectives, and the combination of qualitative and quantitative information collected led to greater validity of the study.

The researcher collected quantitative information (student athlete career situation inventory) from student athletes within Gauteng universities, thus allowing for the generalisation of the findings. The findings can be generalised because the study used a large sample that may reflect the views of the student athlete population with regard to their career situations.

7.3.2 **Limitations of the study**

The following may have hampered the quality of the study:

- The qualitative information gleaned from previous and current student athletes via focus group interviews does not allow for the generalisation of the results. It was a small number of participants, from two of the three universities, that participated in the study. The researcher struggled to obtain participants from other universities to participate in focus group and individual interviews. The results therefore do not reflect the views of the student athlete populations within the universities. It did, however, provide a sense of what some of the student athletes could be experiencing in their transitions.

- Another limitation is that the researcher ended the current research at the early development phase of the prototype of the intervention. The researcher not following through the different phases of the research, namely to pilot, evaluate, and develop the intervention programme further, may have influenced the outcome of the research.
7.3.3  Recommendations for further studies

The recommendations for future research are as follows:

• Further develop the prototype of the intervention and then conduct a pilot study to allow for refinement, advanced development, and dissemination of the intervention.
• Develop and implement an intervention on student athlete career transition into higher education within the South African context.
• Develop assessments for student athletes within the South African context to ascertain transition needs and challenges.

7.3.4  Practical applications

The applications of this programme will benefit universities’ student athletes and various sporting federations in South Africa and beyond. This intervention research may be useful for athletes in transitions, specifically student athletes starting their second year of study to student athletes in their final years of study and planning their career development.

It will assist them in planning for successful transitions through the development of psychological, psychosocial, and academic/vocational skills. It should build on internal resources to enable them to develop the skills to successfully cope with internal and external challenges. It should equip them with psychosocial skills to take advantage of environments and people within their social spaces that would enhance their development. This intervention should help prevent career indecision, and facilitate identifying barriers to career development and develop skills to address career-related challenges in higher education and post-higher education.

This developed intervention may be useful for student athletes transitioning to professional athletes. As previously mentioned, athletes face the following challenges while transitioning: adjusting to the level of demand required; balancing training, participating, and achieving in competitive events; as well as avoiding injury and deselection. This intervention may help at the beginning of the professional athlete’s career concerning the psychological and psychosocial areas of development.

The psychological areas of development that will be useful for the professional athlete would be developing of the self and knowing how to sell the self. Furthermore, it will be useful in assisting the athlete with challenges of perseverance, motivation, and goal setting. It may equip the athlete with the skills of balancing different roles, managing their time, and coping with the emotional reactions faced as an athlete.

The psychosocial area of development may be useful in assisting athletes to make the most of their contexts and elicit support where necessary to help them achieve their best.
The developed intervention programme may also be beneficial for athletes who are about to retire from professional sports. The retiring athletes may need to rebrand themselves and redefine their careers. The psychological area of development may therefore facilitate further self-development, personal rebranding, renewed motivation, and goal setting. Furthermore, it may assist the retiring athlete with skills on coping with the various emotional reactions that may confront them as a result of retirement and skills on how to adapt to their new careers. The academic/vocational component may help with career planning and development, learning to transfer sports skills to other work environments, and equipping them with the skills for networking and job searching.

The developed intervention may be applied in group or individual contexts of athletes entering, in, and exiting transitions. The benefits of the group contexts may be to facilitate discussions and participation, as well as provide opportunities for experiential learning. The intervention is preventative and psycho-educational and therefore likely to work best in groups. It may also work well with individuals in one-on-one sessions with a sport psychologist. The athletes of individual sports may benefit from the one-on-one interaction and learning from the transition programme.

7.3.5 Value added by the research

This research is significant because there is a dearth of information on career transitions of student athletes in South Africa. This study makes an original contribution by generating knowledge on student athlete career transitions in the South African context.

As a result of this research, there is evidence that student athletes within the Gauteng universities experience transition difficulties and some have developed internal and external coping resources to facilitate smooth transitions, while some may need psycho-educational interventions to facilitate smooth transitions so that they are successful in their sporting and other careers.

Furthermore, the research confirmed the developmental model of transition in sports (Wylleman & Lavallee, 2004), Stambulova’s transition theory (2003), and Schlossberg’s transition theory (2012), and created an understanding of and facilitating assisting athletes in career transitions, thus making these applicable to facilitating transition interventions within the South African context.

The research has also developed a student athlete transition intervention based on Thomas and Rothman’s (1994) intervention design and development research methodology that did not exist before in the South African context.
In summary, this research contributes towards theory within the South African context on student athlete transitions and practice in the development of a career intervention programme.

7.4 CONCLUSION

This chapter provided a summary of findings, which included the objectives of the research and exploring the different phases of the intervention research and design and development. The strengths, limitations, and practical application of the study were discussed. Furthermore, recommendations for further research and the value addition of the research were highlighted.
REFERENCE LIST


Bimerew, M. S. (2013). *Developing a framework for a district-based information management system for mental health care in the Western Cape.* (Unpublished doctoral dissertation.) University of the Western Cape, Cape Town, South Africa.


APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1:
RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

PHASE ONE:
Problem analysis and project planning

Part one

Focus Group Interview(s)

Analysed findings of the focus group interviews

Stage one:
Administering the inventory and doing quantitative analysis

PHASE TWO:
Information gathering and synthesis

Part Two

PHASE THREE:
Design

PHASE FOUR:
Early Development

Information obtained from the focus group interviews and the inventory will lead to phase two to phase four to guide the intervention development.
APPENDIX 2:
INFORMED CONSENT LETTER (QUALITATIVE INTERVIEWS)

INFORMED CONSENT LETTER

Hi, my name is Thabile Adams and I am conducting research for the purposes of obtaining a
doctorate in Psychology at the University of Johannesburg. The aim of my research is to develop
a career transition intervention programme for student athletes.

I would therefore like to invite you to participate in this study. Your participation is completely
voluntary and non-participation will have no negative consequences. You are not at an advantage
or disadvantage in any way for choosing to participate or not participate in the study.

All data and personal information will be kept confidential. The ethical requirements for research
with human subjects will be adhered to. I will protect your physical, social, and psychological
welfare and honour your dignity and privacy. Monitoring devices such as audio recorders will only
be used once you give me permission to do so. As a participant, you are free to reject the use of
monitoring devices. You will have the right to remain anonymous. Your privacy and wishes will be
respected at all times. The results will be consonant with your right to welfare, dignity, and
privacy. There are no foreseeable risks for the participants. The transcripts and audio recordings
will be locked up for minimum of three years after completion of the study, then destroyed
afterwards. I am obliged to reflect on the foreseeable repercussions of research and publication
on those studied.

If you choose to participate in this study, please fill in your details below. Thereafter I will call you
to discuss your participation. Alternatively, I can be contacted telephonically at 082 505 6392.

Your participation in this study will be greatly appreciated.

Kind regards
Thabile Adams

I, ________________________________, have read the information about the study as
explained in the letter. I understand that my participation is voluntary and I am not obliged to
answer any question I would prefer not to. I may withdraw from the study any time. I understand
that I have the right to remain anonymous and also understand that the research report findings
will use direct quotation marks of my responses and that no identifying information such as my
name or personal details will be used in the transcripts or research report, therefore my responses
will remain confidential. I understand that there are no direct benefits for participation and there
are no foreseeable risks. I agree to take part in the study.

Signature: ___________________________ Date: _______________

Telephone number: ______________________
APPENDIX 3:
SEMI-STRUCTURED QUESTIONS FOR CURRENT STUDENT ATHLETES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Race:</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Course currently studying:</td>
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<tr>
<td>Year of study:</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>University:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sports code:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. How do you think you will experience your transition from student athlete to a dual-career individual?
2. Which situations might affect your transition (situation)?
3. What goals do you have (self)?
4. What do you think will make your transition easier (support)?
5. What would you recommend for student athletes in transition (strategy)?
6. Any other thoughts or suggestions that may be helpful in assisting athletes in transition?
APPENDIX 4:

SEMI-STRUCTURED QUESTIONS FOR PREVIOUS STUDENT ATHLETES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Race:</td>
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<tr>
<td>Course studied:</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Sports code:</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Current career:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Are you in a dual career (as in, an athlete and another career)?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. How did you experience your transition from student athlete going into your dual career?

2. Which situations affected your transition (situation)?

3. Which goals did you have (self)?

4. What made your transition easier (support)?

5. What is your recommendation for student athletes in transition (strategy)?

6. Any other thoughts or suggestions that may be helpful in assisting athletes in transition?
APPENDIX 5:
INFORMED CONSENT: STUDENT ATHLETE SITUATION INVENTORY – REVISED MALE (SACSI-RM)

INFORMED CONSENT

Hi, my name is Thabile Adams and I am conducting research for the purposes of obtaining a doctorate in Psychology at the University of Johannesburg. The aim of my research is to develop a career transition intervention programme for student athletes.

I understand the following:

• Participation is completely voluntary and non-participation will have no negative consequences.
• I have the right to remain anonymous and also understand that no identifying information such as my name or personal details will be used in the transcripts or research report and therefore my responses will remain confidential.
• I understand that there are no direct benefits for participation and there are no foreseeable risks for the participants.
• The ethical requirements for research with human subjects will be adhered to.

I hereby agree to participate in the study:

Signature: ____________________________  Date:_______________

Age: 
Race 
Course studying: 
Year of study: 
University: 
Sports code:
APPENDIX 6:
STUDENT ATHLETE SITUATION INVENTORY – REVISED MALE
(SACSI-RM)

INSTRUCTIONS: Please **CIRCLE** the number that corresponds with the extent to which you agree or disagree with each item.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>D</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>A</th>
<th>SA</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. I do not have enough time to explore potential career opportunities.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. I have enough career-related information to make informed decisions about potential careers.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. I am confident about my ability to find a satisfactory career.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. My athletic involvement limits me from exploring potential careers until my season is over.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. I have a good understanding of the steps I need to take to find a satisfactory career.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. I have a strong interest in at least one potential career.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. I am often too tired to explore my career interests.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Excelling in academics is as important to me as excelling in my sport.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
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<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. I am an athlete first, student second.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Many job-related skills can be learned from experiences in sport.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. I believe that being an athlete makes me more suitable for certain careers.</td>
<td>1</td>
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<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. My main reason for being at this university is to participate in my sport.</td>
<td>1</td>
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<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. My commitments as an athlete do not hinder me from exploring potential career opportunities.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
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<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14. The time I have spent being an athlete has kept me from doing other things that might help me explore possible careers.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
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<td>5</td>
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<tr>
<td>15. Being an athlete has helped me develop skills that will help me be successful in my desired career.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
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<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16. Being an athlete has influenced my thinking about what I might want to do for a career.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
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<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17. In choosing a major, I am more concerned about what is the easiest to manage with my athletic commitment than about what really interests me.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
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<tr>
<td>18. Most of the academic decisions I make are strongly influenced by what others may suggest.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
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<td>5</td>
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<td>Statement</td>
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<tr>
<td>19. I have a good sense of what interests me academically.</td>
<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<td>20. I am more concerned with just graduating, rather than the field</td>
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<td>in which I actually get my degree in.</td>
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<tr>
<td>21. I am happy with my current major.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td>22. I feel pressure from others to pursue a particular career.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>23. I am pursuing a certain career only because others have told me I</td>
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<td>would be good at it.</td>
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<tr>
<td>24. I am focusing more on preparing for a career than on becoming a</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>professional athlete.</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>25. Because I am an athlete, I have a mental edge that others might not</td>
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<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td>have.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Thank you for taking the time to complete the questionnaire; your input is valuable and appreciated.

If you would like to participate in the focus group, which will be a part of this research, please write your name and contact number below. The researcher will contact you with further details.

Name:

Cell phone:

Email:
APPENDIX 7:
25-ITEM SACSI-RM SCORING KEY

Factor 1 (Career Confidence)
   2, 3, 5, 6, 19, 21

Factor 2 (Lack of Career Interest)
   17, 18, 20, 22, 23

Factor 3 (Academics and Career Important)
   8, 9r, 12r, 24

Factor 4 (Sport Involvement Promotes Career Confidence)
   10, 11, 15, 16, 25

Factor 5 (High Barriers to Career Development)
   1, 4, 7, 13r, 14

Note 1: Character “r” indicates reverse scoring prior to interpretation and data analysis.

Note 2: Sum item scores for each factor and divide by number of items to get score for each factor.

Note 3: Career-savvy student athletes score high on factors 1, 3, and 4, and low on factors 1 and 5.
APPENDIX 8:
INFORMED CONSENT: STUDENT ATHLETE SITUATION INVENTORY – REVISED FEMALE (SACSI-RF)

INFORMED CONSENT

Hi, my name is Thabile Adams and I am conducting research for the purposes of obtaining a doctorate in Psychology at the University of Johannesburg. The aim of my research is to develop a career transition intervention programme for student athletes.

I understand the following:

- Participation is completely voluntary and non-participation will have no negative consequences.
- I have the right to remain anonymous and also understand that no identifying information such as my name or personal details will be used in the transcripts or research report and therefore my responses will remain confidential.
- I understand that there are no direct benefits for participation and there are no foreseeable risks for the participants.
- The ethical requirements for research with human subjects will be adhered to.

I hereby agree to participate in the study:

Signature: ____________________________  Date:_______________

Age:  
Race:  
Course studying:  
Year of study:  
University:  
Sports code:  
APPENDIX 9:
STUDENT ATHLETE SITUATION INVENTORY – REVISED FEMALE
(SACSI-RF)

INSTRUCTIONS: Please CIRCLE the number that corresponds with the extent to which you
agree or disagree with each item.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>D</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>A</th>
<th>SA</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. I do not have enough time to explore potential career opportunities.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. I have enough career-related information to make informed decisions about potential careers.</td>
<td>1</td>
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<td>3</td>
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<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. I am confident about my ability to find a satisfactory career.</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. My athletic involvement limits me from exploring potential careers until my season is over.</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. I have a good understanding of the steps I need to take to find a satisfactory career.</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. I am often too tired to explore my career interests.</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Excelling in academics is as important to me as excelling in my sport.</td>
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<td>3</td>
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<td>8. I am an athlete first, student second.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Many job-related skills can be learned from experiences in sport.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. I have many personal goals outside of sport.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. I believe that being an athlete makes me more suitable for certain careers.</td>
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<tr>
<td>13. My commitments as an athlete do not hinder me from exploring potential career opportunities.</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17. In choosing a major, I am more concerned about what is the easiest to manage with my athletic commitment than about what really interests me.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18. Being a professional athlete is the only career that interests me.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Statement</td>
<td>SD</td>
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<tr>
<td>19. I have a good sense of what interests me academically.</td>
<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<td>20. I am more concerned with just graduating, rather than the field in</td>
<td>1</td>
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<td>which I actually get my degree in.</td>
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<tr>
<td>21. I am happy with my current major.</td>
<td>1</td>
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<td>3</td>
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<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22. I am focusing more on preparing for a career than on becoming a</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>professional athlete.</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>23. Because I am an athlete, I have a mental edge that others might</td>
<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<td>not have.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Thank you for taking the time to complete the questionnaire, your input is valuable and appreciated.

If you would like to participate in the focus group, which will be a part of this research, please write your name and contact number below. The researcher will contact you with further details.

Name:

Cell phone:

Email:
APPENDIX 10:
23-ITEM SACSI-RF SCORING KEY

Factor 1 (Sport Identity Overshadows Career Development)
7r, 8, 10r, 12, 17, 18, 20, 22r

Factor 2 (Possess Career Confidence)
2, 3, 5, 19, 21

Factor 3 (High Barriers to Career Development)
1, 4, 6, 13r, 14

Factor 4 (Sport Involvement Promotes Career Confidence)
9, 11, 15, 16, 23

Note 1: Character “r” indicates reverse scoring prior to interpretation and data analysis.

Note 2: Sum item scores for each factor and divide by number of items to get score for each factor.

Note 3: Career-savvy student-athletes score high on factors 2 and 4, and low on factors 1 and 3.
APPENDIX 11:
FIVE-STEP CAREER PLANNING STRATEGY

Step 1: Make a Framework

- Draw a life/timeline and mark your birth (e.g. the year) as an initial point on the left.
- Mark your current age (or year) as the second point on the line. Now you have a framework: the past, the present, and the future.

Figure 39.2 Athletic career transition model (Stambulova, 2003).

Step 2: Structure Your Past
• Please take some time to think and then talk about the most important events in your life before now. When did these events happen? Mark their time points on the lifeline.

Step 3: Structure Your Present
• What are the most important parts of your life right now? Write them down as a column.
• Please rank these parts of life on three different scales: (a) personal importance, (b) time spent, and (c) stress level. Use 1 as the greatest importance/time/level.
• Analyse your ranking: Do you devote enough time to your priorities (i.e. the most important areas)? How stressful are your priority areas? Why?

Note: It is possible to use “pie charts” here if the client finds it more comfortable than ranking.

Step 4: Structure Your Future
• Think and then talk about the most important events you wish for/expect in the future. Mark them on the lifeline.
• During your whole life. Mark them on the lifeline.
• During the next ten years (a bit more detail).
• During the next five years.
• During the next three years.
• During the next year (the most detailed).

Note: It is also possible to use “pie charts” here for “the next ten years”, “the next five years”, “the next three years”, and “the next year” categories to reflect the importance of different areas of life at that time point.

Step 5: Bridge Your Past, Present, and Future
A. From the present to the past and back: What were the most difficult moments/periods in your life before today? How did you cope?

What lessons did you learn from your hard experiences? What were the most successful moments/periods in your life before today? What lessons did you learn from your positive experiences?

B. From the present to the future: What do you want to achieve in the priority areas for you right now? Let’s formulate your goals (e.g. for the nearest six-month/one-year period).

Analyse your internal/external resources (helping conditions/factors) to reach your goals in your priority areas.

Analyse your internal/external barriers (interfering conditions/factors) to reaching your goals. Think about how to overcome them. Make an action plan to reach your goals. Think about
how to best use the lessons you learned from your past experiences.

C. From the future to the present (balancing present and future priorities). Come back to your plans (wished for/expected events) for the next three to five years. Can you do anything today to prepare for the coming events/demands/challenges? Do you still think that you have the right priorities right now? If not, try to adjust them to your future plans.

Optional: Determine the date (year/milestone) of updating your career plan:
The Faculty of Humanities
Academic Ethics Committee
University of Johannesburg
23rd May 2014

Dr L. van Niekerk (Supervisor)
Department of Psychology
Faculty of Humanities
University of Johannesburg

Dear Dr Van Niekerk

It is the judgement of the “Faculty of Humanities Academic Ethics Committee” that the research proposal, and the relevant documents submitted to us in support of a request for Ethical Clearance, has clearly indicated that the standard practice of ethical professionalism will be upheld in the research.

From a research ethics point of view, the Faculty of Humanities Academic Ethics Committee therefore endorses the proposed research.

Yours sincerely

[Signature]

Professor Zelda G. Knight
Chair: Faculty Ethics Committee
CC: Chair of HDC, Professor A. van Breda