Managing golf players' transition from junior to professional level

by

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Submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree

Magister Artium: Human Movement Science

Option: Sport and Recreation Management

in the

Department of Sport and Leisure Studies

Faculty of Humanities

University of Pretoria

South Africa

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November 2018

DECLARATIONS

I, Stephanus Johannes Roos, hereby declare that **Managing golf players' transition from junior to professional level** is my own work in design and execution, and that all materials from published sources contained herein have been duly acknowledged.

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Signature   Date

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

My appreciation to the following people for their contribution towards this study. All of you had a large influence on myself and made this possible:

- To God, thank you for blessing me with the opportunity to complete this study.

- To my wife, Hanri, thank you for your love, patience and wonderful support throughout this process. You have always pushed me to be the best version of myself! You are my rock.

- To my son SJ, thank you for giving me a smile when I needed it.

- To Prof. Ben Steyn, thank you for always reminding me that taking care of your family is more important than a degree.

- To both my set of parents, thank you for every effort to assist me in completing this study.

- To the Management Sciences department at the North-West University, thank you for your support. A special thanks to Dr. Re-an Müller and Dr. Anita Lennox.

- To Jomoné Müller, thank you for being an excellent language editor and having the time to assist me.

- To the Professional Golfers Association of South Africa, thank you for supporting this research study in every manner possible.

- Lastly, and importantly, thank you to every participant who made the time for me to be able to complete the study.

ABSTRACT

Candidate: Stephanus Johannes Roos

Degree: Magister Artium: Sport and Recreation Management

Title of thesis**: Managing golf players' transition from junior to professional level**

Study Leader: Professor Ben Steyn (University of Pretoria)

Key words: managing, transition, junior golfer, professional golfer, ecological approach.

Many individuals play the game of golf as a means of relaxation (Newsham, 2006). However, with time the large amounts of prize money in tournaments began to capture the attention of players (Hayman, Borkoles, Taylor, Hemmings, & Polman, 2014; Roos & Surujlal, 2014). Players entered tournaments, and soon realised they need to be competent and that this can only be achieved through professional coaching (Farrally et al., 2003; Roos & Surujlal, 2014). As a result, great demands has been placed on coaches and managers to develop quality players (Cushion, Armour, & Jones, 2003; Roos & Surujlal, 2014). According to Hayman et al. (2014), research has not indicated a sufficient pathway for junior golf players to reach professional level and be successful. It is therefore critical to explore all facets influential in the success of professional golf players.

Despite the limited research on developmental pathways in golf, substantial research has examined developmental paths in elite sportsman (Hayman et al., 2014). The development of proficiency in sport is influenced by various environmental factors such as parental support and coach behaviours. This forms a crucial social network, and when the correct social networks are present, young sports people are more likely to achieve success and progress to elite sport level (Branton, 2013; Côté, 1999; Csikszentmihalyi, Rathunde, & Whalen, 1997; Jowett & Timson-Katchis, 2005). Since the transition from junior to senior level within sport has shown to be a crucial step, where many athletes fail, it is important to gain more knowledge about the process and the correct method to approach this (Hayman et al., 2014; Jorlén, 2008). Assisting junior golf players in this endeavour has evolved from technical coaching to a full-time career management profession. This study aimed to develop a framework for the effective transition of junior golf players to professional level, therefore assisting future junior golf players to achieve success in professional golf.

The main objective of this study was to explore the perceptions of former or current Sunshine Tour players, Professional Golfers' Association of South Africa (PGA of SA)

members, PGA of SA teaching professionals and/or golf administrators. This enabled the researcher to identify the most important psychosocial and environmental factors that can contribute to the effective transition from junior to professional level. The sample size consisted of 17 participants that took part in this research study. Specifically, perceptions on the correct transition strategies for junior golf players to achieve success at a professional level. This study attempted to understand these perceptions from the participants lived experiences which is a vital aspect for researchers working from the structure of a socio-constructionism system (Walters, 2009). By means of the available theoretical models and the empirical data obtained from the interviews, a comprehensive transition framework for junior golfers in the South African context was developed.

The findings suggested that players are required to have mental attributes in order for them to be successful. Adding to the mental aspect of the player development is the social support structure. Participants indicated that individuals in this environment might influence players in a negative manner, and as a result add unnecessary pressure on them. Financial obligations place a lot of strain on a player's mental state which demand that players employ certain skills to overcome a barrier such as this. This study indicated that in order for players to gain sponsorships and solve the financial implications involved, a personal brand needs to be developed by players. Coaches need to be aware of the influential role they play in this process and are required to constantly act as a mentor to a player. Furthermore, players need to participate in as many other sporting codes as possible at a young age. This study concluded that late specialisation is the correct method of development. Individuals pursuing to become a professional golfer need to be aware of the lonely lifestyle of professional golfers and the commitment that needs to be made. Players need to be willing to set aside a social life and be totally committed to the process of becoming better.

These themes can guide programmes to help junior golf players achieve greater success in the transition towards professionalism. A better understanding about this endeavour could increase the chances of even more South African junior golf players to reach professional level.

GLOSSARY OF ABBREVIATIONS

ATDE   Athletic Development Environment

DMSP   Developmental Model of Sports Participation

ESF   Environmental Success Factors

IMG   International Management Group

LTAD   Long-term Athlete Development

LTPD   Long-term Participant Development

OSVEA   Observation, Selection, Visualisation, Execution and Acceptance

PGA   Professional Golfers' Association

PGA of SA   Professional Golfers' Association of South Africa

RSA   Republic of South Africa

SANCF   South African National Coaching Framework

SASCOC   South African Sports Confederation and Olympic Committee

SNAG   Starting New At Golf

TPI   Titleist Performance Institute

USGA   United States Golf Association

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CHAPTER 1: PROBLEM STATEMENT AND RESEARCH AIM

The road to success is always under construction
-Arnold Palmer-

1.1 INTRODUCTION

At the start of 2001, there were 30000 golf courses and 55 million people who play the game of golf (Farrally et al., 2003). According to the Royal and Ancient Golf Club (2015), Africa has more than 900 golf facilities and over 500 situated in South Africa.

Many individuals play the game of golf as a means of relaxation (Newsham, 2006). However, a large number of players became professionals and have made a career in the sport. In the past, golf required little to no coaching, but with time the increase in prize money for tournaments began to capture the attention of players (Hayman et al., 2014; Roos & Surujlal, 2014). Competitiveness increased with higher participation rates in the sport. For players to enter and remain in tournaments, they need the requisite skill and competence that can only be achieved through professional coaching (Farrally et al., 2003; Roos & Surujlal, 2014). As a result, golf has evolved into a professional sport, which places greater demands on golf coaches and managers to deliver players with high skill levels (Cushion et al., 2003; Roos & Surujlal, 2014).

Sport can offer youth opportunities to experience challenges and enjoyment while increasing their self-esteem (Highfield, 2016). The youth clearly experience many positive developmental outcomes through their participation in sport, like support, expectations, constructive use of time, commitment to learning positive values, social competencies and a positive identity (Fraser-Thomas, Côté, & Deakin, 2005).

The absence of fun may have sport dropout as a result (Fryer, 2015). Therefore, any sport including golf has to be presented to juniors in such a way that it creates an enjoyable environment that is conducive to learning and continuation of playing the sport (Sams, 2015). Research on talent development field has identified two dissimilar approaches to reach top-level performance. Firstly, early specialisation and deliberate practice, which involves structured activities with minimal enjoyment (Ericsson, Krampe, & Tesch-Römer, 1993; Ford, Hodges, & Williams, 2013). Secondly, researchers believe deliberate play, where minimal structure and high enjoyment is the aim, is a more

educational sound approach. This method suggests that athletes take part in a number of sports before specialising at a later stage (Coyle, 2014; Hansen, 2014; Malina, 2010; Phillips, 2013b; Picorelli, 2016), thereafter progressively moving away from deliberate play towards deliberate practice (Côté, Baker, & Abernethy, 2003, 2007; Côté, Lidor, & Hackfort, 2009). The question remains, what is the appropriate age for a child to specialise in a specific sport. Bryant (2014) has indicated that delaying specialisation is the preferred developmental path to follow. However, Ford et al. (2013) indicate that early specialisation is the correct method to achieve success. Limited studies have indicated the correct developmental pathway for junior golf players to professional level (Hayman et al., 2014). It is therefore crucial to investigate all aspects influential in the success of professional golf players.

1.2   PROBLEM STATEMENT

Sport and the pursuit of excellence too often have athletes not preparing themselves sufficiently for the future (Maseko & Surujlal, 2011). This may result in limited psychological and physical preparation, as well as employment problems later in life (McKenna & Thomas, 2007). With reference to rugby in South Africa, very few players attain sufficient academic qualifications, because of their complete focus being on the sport (Ellis, 2016), and this notion can be applied to many sports. This leaves athletes with a lack of preparation for life after sport (Bernes et al., 2009) and therefore, has a negative effect on the adjustment to life after sport. Surujlal and Van Zyl (2014) indicate that athletes who had insufficient preparation had emotional difficulties and low self-confidence as a result. The process of transition in sport is crucial and one of the most important transitions is junior to senior level (Jorlén, 2008). When the transition process is not followed in the correct manner, optimal potential may not be reached in the specific sport.

Before retirement is reached, athletes need to progress successfully into professional sport. Vanden Auweele, De Martelaer, Rzewnicki, De Knop, and Wylleman (2004) indicate that only 17% of junior Belgian track and field athletes can handle the transition to compete successfully on a senior level, 31% deteriorate in their development, 28% performed sporadically and 24% withdrew. It appears through this study that not all the talented athletes reach their intended goals (Vanden Auweele et al., 2004).

Kennedy and Dimick (1987) have shown the probability for an athlete to progress from junior to professional level is less than 2%. It is often found that junior athletes who show

the greatest promise, developed the fastest and gains social exposure at a young age are the ones who experience this period as especially difficult (Jorlén, 2008). A possible solution to solve this problem may very well be to study all the structures involved in this endeavour. In view of previous academic articles, the following aspects are regarded as crucial to achieve optimal athlete performance, deliberate practice (Ericsson et al., 1993), deliberate play (Côté et al., 2007) early specification, as well as diversification (Ford et al., 2013; Moesch, Hauge, Wikman, & Elbe, 2013). Deliberate practice can be characterised as activities with a high intensity and concentration, not performed for the sole enjoyment of it but rather as a tool to improve performance (Ericsson et al., 1993).

This, however, does not mean that fun is not a crucial aspect needed for success, the Developmental Model of Sports Participation (DMSP) (Côté et al., 2003) suggests otherwise. According to this model, fun and enjoyment are key aspects in continuing a specific sport in order to reach elite levels at a later stage (Fraser-Thomas, Côté, & Deakin, 2008).

A number of sport nations offer Long-term Athlete Development (LTAD) models (Duffy, 2010). Long-term Participant Development (LTPD) in South Africa has been developed by the South African Sports Confederation and Olympic Committee (SASCOC) (Duffy, 2010). The Canadian LTAD model of Istvan Balyi is commonly documented as a leading framework in the field (Robertson & Way, 2005).

The development of proficiency in sport is influenced by various environmental factors such as parental support and coach behaviours. This forms a crucial social network, and when the correct social networks are present, young sports people are more likely to achieve success and progress to elite sport level (Branton, 2013; Côté, 1999; Csikszentmihalyi et al., 1997; Jowett & Timson-Katchis, 2005). Sport has evolved into a business and in order for professional athletes to be successful, adequate management is needed (Adcroft & Teckman, 2009).

Sport management is high in demand and professionals in the sport industry are seeking education in this area (Ko, 2013). Consequently, it is important to underscore the need for greater understanding of the transition processes involved in professional sport and athlete management (Chadwick, 2009). Therefore, the research question poses the following: **How can the transition process from junior to professional level be optimized, through identification and effective management of the most crucial psycho-social and environmental factors?**

Therefore, the focus of this study is on the processes, dynamics and factors of the transition process. The reason why managing as a term is included in the title and research question, is the fact that the transition process cannot be actualized without effective management. The optimizing of the transition from junior to professional level can only be realized when the managing function is properly fulfilled. It must be stated clearly that the managing processes is not the research focus of this study, but are included in the literature discussion and integrated in the discussion of The Professional Golfer Development Framework in the last chapter. When referred to managing in this study, the term implicates the effective employment of managing as a crucial prerequisite for the optimal realisation of the transition process.

The nature of the research question is embedded in the field of Sport Science. Sport Science is a multidisciplinary field that enables the researcher to move with ease across sub-disciplines and select the most relevant information and knowledge to effectively research a complex phenomenon. This current study is firmly embedded in the field of Sport Science and requires a multidisciplinary approach. To answer the research question of this study, knowledge and information must be selected from sub-disciplines such as Sport Psychology, Coaching Sciences, Sport Education, Sport Management and Sport Sociology.

1.3 MOTIVATION FOR STUDY

Wylleman and Lavallee (2004) suggest that athletes at school level need to be aware of the transitions that occur during and after their sporting careers. Research in the sport psychology field further suggested that any transition phase for an athlete is important (Alfermann & Stambulova, 2007). Individuals have to be aware of these changes and how this will affect them. Modern counsellors often help clients to handle these changes that may cause uncertainty caused by moving from one career to another (Mkhize, 2005).

Elite golfers who are in the beginning phase of their career may find it beneficial to be aware of the importance to prepare themselves for life after golf. This awareness may lead to a smoother transition as result. International governing bodies have developed a number of player development programmes in order for athletes to have a smooth transition process (Hickey & Kelly, 2008; Stambulova, Alfermann, Statler, & Côté, 2009). In this study the focus is on the transition phase from junior to professional level and the impact this has on individuals.

There are various golf academies in South Africa where young aspiring golf players can enrol. However, whether there is sufficient assistance for golfers in this transition process is uncertain. It appears that there is a gap in research regarding the manner in which junior golfers comprehend their career pathway.

According to Hayman et al. (2014), golf facilities assist players in the endeavour towards professional golf. The level of play at professional level is immense and for a junior golf player to play at that level of intense pressure is a great challenge (Hayman et al., 2014). The support of golf academies can be crucial in the preparation for professional golf. Since the transition from junior to senior level within sport has shown to be a crucial step, where many athletes fail, it is important to gain more knowledge about the process and the correct method to approach this (Hayman et al., 2014; Jorlén, 2008). When paying attention to these processes, researchers may gain valuable information on the most beneficial environment for an athlete to achieve success (Coutinho, Mesquita, & Fonseca, 2016), and at the same time prepare them for life after sport. According to Hayes (2015), the environment in South Africa is impeccable for golf players to achieve success.

According to the Royal and Ancient Golf Club (2015), there are a large number of golf facilities in South Africa, 160000 people who play golf in South Africa, and yet in July 2017, there is only one person in the official world golf rankings, namely Charl Schwartzel (OWGR, 2017). Looking at a contradictory perspective of South African proud golfing history, South African golfers have won more major titles than any other country, except the United States of America (Hayes, 2015).

Hayman et al. (2014) identify three factors that are essential for junior athletes to achieve success: 1) the transition from diversified training to focussed training; 2) the role that family and sporting environments have on a player; and 3) significance of obtaining mental abilities in a supportive environment as a junior golfer.

Assisting junior golf players in this endeavour has evolved from technical coaching to a full-time career management profession. The aim of this study was to develop a framework that will enable junior golf players to successfully transition to professional level, and therefore assist future junior golf players to optimise their entrance into professional golf.

1.4 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The reason for referring to a theoretical framework is that it provided a foundation from which to do research and this gave meaning to the process that was followed (Ellis, 2016). By grounding the study on a theoretical framework, the researcher can motivate the study and the data collection methods and therefore, the results (Merriam & Tisdell, 2009).

The foundation of this study was based on the ecological approach by Bronfenbrenner (1986) and Henriksen, Stambulova, and Roessler (2010a). Consequently, this ecological approach was integrated with the social constructionism approach. The ecological approach looks beyond the individual and identifies the importance of many role-players such as coaches and parents (Human, 2015). According to Visser (2007), this approach involves community psychology, where coaches, players and parents are not isolated in the process (Human, 2015). Henriksen et al. (2010a) suggest that the research focus should shift away from talented athletes and concentrate on the environment that they develop in. Parents and coaches need to make sure there is a learning environment provided for the player to progress sufficiently (Hayman et al., 2014). Golf players make use of many professionals and rely on family and friends for support. According to Gordin (2016), all of these role-players have a significant psychological role in the performance of golf players. According to Larsen, Alfermann, and Christensen (2012), Visser (2007), and Witt (2011), players can interact with the social and physical dimensions by employing the ecological approach provided by Bronfenbrenner (1986).

The social constructionism paradigm involves studying participants' interactions and analysing the reasons for their actions. Adams, Collair, Oswald, and Perold (2004) identify social interactions as the manner in which an individual's reality is shaped, and this is also greatly dependant on the cultural and historical influence that affects their lives. Reality is therefore constructed by interpreting the social world as a language or system of meanings (Terre Blanche & Durrheim, 2006). Using social constructionism as a paradigm allows the social world of the individual to construct knowledge by conveying their own experience (Burr, 2015) and this provided the investigator of the present study the opportunity to enter the physical and psychological environment of participants (Mkhize, 2005). By combining ecology and constructionism, it provided a blended, comprehensive framework that incorporated all the relevant ecology of the social systems that is relevant to this study (Human, 2015).

From personal experiences, golf players learn from failure and success and observing athletes in a competitive and social environment are of paramount importance. The human experience is therefore a certainty in the physical realm (Pfeiffer & Sivasubramaniam, 2016). Because of this holistic approach, a social constructionism paradigm linking with the ecological model provided by Bronfenbrenner (1986) allowed for a qualitative and interpretative approach to be followed. The interpretive approach is how our experience creates reason and attaches meaning to our realm. Therefore, allows for the researcher to discover, understand and interpret the human experience (Human, 2015).

Effective transition of junior golf players can possibly be managed by using a theoretical framework such as The Developmental Model (Wylleman & Lavallee, 2004) and The Analytical Career Model (Stambulova, 1994). By adding the overall Athletic Development Environment (ATDE) model and the Environmental Success Factors (ESF) Model brought forward by Henriksen et al. (2010a), this holistic approach should be relevant to make effective transitions possible.

1.5 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

The aim of this study was to develop a transition framework for junior golf players to reach professional level and be successful.

In order to achieve the primary aim of this study, the following theoretical and empirical objectives were identified:

The first objective was to conduct a comprehensive literature study to determine the state of knowledge pertaining to the transitions in sport, and specifically the transition from junior to professional level in golf. The second purpose of this literature study was to identify the most relevant theories, models and research that could assist in the quest for the most important psycho-social and environmental factors that can impact constructively on the effective transition.

The second objective of this study was to explore the perceptions of former and current elite golf professionals, coaches and golf administrators to determine the most essential transition strategies, psycho-social and environmental factors for the successful transition process from junior golf players to professional golf.

The third objective was to integrate the available theoretical models, research findings with the empirical qualitative data that was obtained from the interviews with professional golfers and coaches to develop a comprehensive transition framework for junior golfers in the South African context.

These results can provide more information for programmes to help junior golf players achieve greater success in the professional sport. A greater understanding about this endeavour will enable more junior golf players to succeed in their transition. Consequently, increasing the chances of even more South African junior golf players to reach professional level.

1.6 RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHOD

The qualitative interpretative approach was selected as the research design (Jones, 2015). As a result, the researcher studies objects in their natural setting and attempts to make sense of their experiences. This type of research involves a broad spectrum of interconnected interpretative practices and attempts to gain a better understanding of the particular subject. Consequently, an understanding of the experience of junior golfers during the transition process, could be established. This allowed the researcher to gain a perspective of the correct transition strategies needed for junior golfers. According to Smith (2003), there are certain qualitative research designs that can be used such as: Interpretive phenomenology, narrative psychology, focus groups and conversation analysis.

As implied in the research question, and taking the environmental factors that influence a golf player into consideration, a qualitative research methodology was followed. According to Human (2015), qualitative research explores the lived experiences of the participants. In this case, the researcher moves away from the laboratory type research process and studies the meaning of this experiences (Creswell & Poth, 2018). Smith (2003) argues that by making use of a qualitative research approach, the experience of the participants will be explored and interpreted on a personal and social level.

This research study followed the social constructionism paradigm guided by the ecological model provided by Bronfenbrenner (1986) in conjunction with the insights gained from the interviews.

This research design was interpretative of nature, and the study aimed to develop a framework that junior players could employ and be successful at a professional level. Data collection was administered by means of semi-structured interviews, transcribed and themes identified. The outcome set out for the researcher was to deliver a transition framework to the golf industry that will enable golfers to have better strategies in place to be successful.

1.7   DEFINITION OF KEY TERMS

1.7.1   Managing

"Managing sport organizations at the start of the 21st century involves the application of techniques and strategies evident in the majority of modern business, government and non-profit organizations. Sport managers engage in strategic planning, manage large numbers of human resources, deal with broadcasting contracts worth billions of dollars, manage the welfare of elite athletes who sometimes earn 100 times the average working wage, and work within highly integrated global networks of international sports federations, national sport organizations, government agencies, media corporations, sponsors and community organizations" (Stewart, Nicholson, Smith, & Hoye, 2018, p. 4).

1.7.2   Transition

"Transitions are defined as turning phases in career development that manifest themselves by sets of demands athletes have to meet in order to continue successfully in sport and/or other spheres of life" (Alfermann & Stambulova, 2007, p. 712-713). When athletes successfully cope with the transition phases in sport, they are more likely to achieve success in the specific sport (Stambulova, 2010).

1.7.3   Junior golfer

According to Golf RSA (2018a, p. 8), "golfers up to the age of 13 are classified as junior golfers."

1.7.4   Professional golfer

According to Royal and Ancient Golf Club (2018, p. 1), "a professional golfer is one who plays the game as his profession, works as a professional golfer, enters a golf competition as a professional, holds or retains membership of any Professional Golfers' Association

(PGA) or holds or retains membership of a Professional Tour limited exclusively to professional golfers."

1.7.5　　Ecological approach

"The ecology of human development is the scientific study of the progressive, mutual accommodation, throughout the lifespan, between a growing human organism and the changing immediate environments in which it lives, as this process is affected by relations obtaining within and between these immediate settings, as well as the larger social contexts, both formal and informal, in which the settings are embedded" (Bronfenbrenner, 1977, p. 513).

1.8　STRUCTURE OF STUDY

The study was organised in the following manner:

Chapter 1 provides an outline of the context, problem statement, motivation of the study, theoretical framework, aim and objectives and the research design and method.

Chapter 2 describes a comprehensive literature review of golf. The origin of the ecological model by Bronfenbrenner (1979), social constructionism and the manner in which the theoretical frameworks relate to the golf context is also discussed. The multidisciplinary approach was emphasised in this chapter.

Chapter 3 discusses the research methodology to be followed. The purpose of the study, research process, data collection methods, data verification and ethical considerations are fully discussed in this chapter.

Chapter 4 identifies the results and how it relates to the current body of literature.

Chapter 5 discusses the description of the research process, the effect the research process had on the researcher, a conclusion of the research findings, limitations and suggestions for future research.

1.9　SUMMARY

In this chapter, an overview of the fundamental research components of the study was provided. The manner in which golf has evolved into a lucrative sport and the requirements that players need to perform were highlighted. Thereafter, the problem

statement and motivation of the study were discussed. In this section, the shortcomings in the current body of literature were noted. The theoretical framework that forms the basis of the study and the aims and objectives are discussed next. The interpretative qualitative research method that was followed is explained followed by key terms that is used throughout the research study. Chapter 2 provides a comprehensive literature study.

CHAPTER 2: THE NATURE OF GOLF – LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.1 INTRODUCTION

The main objective of a literature review is to create context for the reader regarding a specific topic (De Los Reyes & Kazdin, 2008). The researcher can identify a gap in current research and therefore, justify the study to be completed by providing a summary of current literature (Aveyard, 2014).

The ecological approach originated in a biological context and the bio-ecological theory has developed into an interdisciplinary and integrative framework. As explained in the first chapter, the research focus of this study necessitates an interdisciplinary approach where knowledge and information are selected from a variety of Sport Science disciplines such as Sport Psychology, Coaching Sciences, Sport Education, Sport Management and Sport Sociology. The creative adaption of the bio-ecological model into the social context of community psychology Visser (2007), created a foundation to extent the model to Sport Science and has been effectively adapted and extended into the field of Sport Science (Human, 2015).

The ecological framework captures the multilayered and complex interpersonal systems that have a significant impact on the sport participant. The wider context and living environment of the golfer can be interpreted in a meaningful way by the ecological approach.

This literature review identifies aspects involved in the career of a junior golfer and what is needed for players to achieve success at the highest level. Many studies do not look at the reality that an athlete find themselves in. To provide a deeper understanding, the chapter starts with the Ecological model in the field of community psychology by Bronfenbrenner (1986) and social constructionism paradigm. This approach refers to focussing on the environment that the athlete competes in, rather than just at the individual. Following this, the chapter continues with the history of golf, referring specifically to the development of the game, equipment, golf courses and players. Early dropout is a problem in sport (Fryer, 2015) and golf (Farrally et al., 2003). Therefore, a detailed discussion is provided on this important aspect both internationally and in South

Africa. Thereafter, the very controversial aspect of early and late specialisation is discussed, referring to experts in this field at the Titleist Performance Institute (TPI). Linked directly with specialisation, is the concept of LTAD, followed by the model used in South Africa is discussed next. This leads to a discussion on career development and career transition, which is crucial to achieve success at the highest level. In conclusion, a summary is provided with the findings and research gaps of the study.

2.2   HISTORY OF GOLF

In order to understand the sport one may need to look at the history of the game. Golf originated in St Andrews Scotland around 1744 (Professional Golfers Association of America, 2004), and by the 1800s the sport progressed and spread through Europe. The term golf itself is Scottish and is formerly from the Mid-Dutch word of *kolf* or *kolve* that means shepherd's crook (Gillmeister, 2002).

Professional golfers compete on a yearly basis in tournaments around the world. Golf has four major championships, the Masters, which is the only major played at the same course, in Augusta, Georgia; the Open Championship played on a different course in the British Isles, PGA Championship, as well as the US Open played on a different course in the United States (Newsham, 2006; Professional Golfers Association of America, 2004; Shmanske, 2012). The sport has grown in such a way that it was included in the 2016 Olympics in Brazil, the first time since 1900 (Hayman et al., 2014; Sens, 2016). This had children and adults alike attached to the television while world-class players compete (Stuller, 2012). Charles Sands was victorious in 1900 with a winning score of 23 over par, played over only 36 holes, with a field of 12 players (Sens, 2016). Justin Rose won the same event in 2016 with a score of 14 under par, quite a difference (Diaz, 2016).

2.3   THE NATURE OF GOLF AS SPORTING CODE

The object of golf is to try and hit a ball with a club into a small hole in as few shots as possible. The problem is, there are obstacles like bunkers, water hazards and trees which presents a challenge to players (Newsham, 2006). Golf is played by young and old over 9 or 18 holes, and because of the handicap system golfers of any level can compete against each other. This game is addictive, and the reason for that is that one always thinks you can do better the next time (Newsham, 2006).

One may think of golf as just a social sport played among friends on a Saturday. However, golf has developed into a global sport with endorsements, participation and media reaching significant heights (Hayman et al., 2014; Roos & Surujlal, 2014). The prize money in golf has quickly and rapidly increased and because of this, the game started to become more and more professional. As the game has evolved, so has the equipment (Roos & Surujlal, 2014).

2.4 EQUIPMENT IN GOLF

2.4.1 The ball

The first form of golf balls was wooden, then hairy, feathery, gutty and finally Haskell followed. The feathery started in 1743, these were made by using wet feathers and leather (Laird, 2007). The three pieces of leather would be stitched together, turned inside out and then filled with feathers. As the leather shrank and the feathers expanded it would form a hard small ball (Laird, 2007). In 1848, the gutty appeared and was made from dried gutta-percha gum that was found in the sapodilla tree in Malaysia. The Haskell ball made from rubber threads and gutta-percha replaced the gutty. From 1967, the construction has enhanced and is currently the 1, 2 or 3 piece ball as we know it today (Laird, 2007). There are now 1051 models of golf balls that conform to the United States Golf Association (USGA) regulations (Chung, Derdenger, & Srinivasan, 2013). As of March 2017, Titleist is the leader in the golf ball industry with 2314 professional players playing with this brand worldwide (Titleist, 2017).

2.4.2 Clubs

The first golf clubs were made in 1603, which was made from trees and built by a bow maker or wood craftsmen. In 1825, hickory was used for the shafts and later on persimmon for the club head. In 1891, the first iron clubs were hand forged and by the year 1902 longitudinal grooves were introduced to the clubface (Steiner, 1999). The Royal and Ancient Golf Club legalised the use of steel shafts in 1929, and by 1973 graphite shafts was introduced. Metal woods was introduced shortly after and since then golf companies have made golf club manufacturing into a lucrative business by researching every possibility to gain the competitive edge (Poulin, Montreuil, & Martel, 2006). In 2005, the golf industry in the United States had a revenue that stood at 76 billion dollars, which is more than the movie industries (Chung et al., 2013).

2.5 THE GOLF COURSE

This is a sport that requires a large amount of space to build a golf course, up to 150 acres (Farrally et al., 2003). Golf on the African continent has grown at such a significant rate that with 7403 golf facilities, it now comprises 22% of these facilities in the world, with golf being played in 40 of the 50 countries. Golf facilities refer to a location where the game can be played on a golf course (Royal and Ancient Golf Club, 2015). During the 1900s the popularity of the game increased, and therefore more and more golf courses have been built (Forbes, 2014). In Africa alone, there are over 900 golf facilities and 512 of these are in South Africa (Royal and Ancient Golf Club, 2015). According to the Royal and Ancient Golf Club (2015), 56% of the golf facilities in Africa is situated in South Africa. These numbers are insignificant compared to the 16052 golf facilities in the United States. Due to the fact that many golf courses is built, this number has decreased to 15372 (Royal and Ancient Golf Club, 2015) and as a result, 303999 golf holes in the United States.

2.6 PARTICIPANTS IN GOLF

2.6.1 Players

It is important to look at players who have performed well at the majors, dominated their era and beaten their compatriots on a regular basis. Taken all of the above into consideration, the following golfers are regarded as the best ever. Jack Nicklaus which is known as "The Golden Bear" is at first place, he won 18 majors and this record is still standing till this day. The player coming in at second is the man closest to his record, Tiger Woods with 14 majors. During his prime, Tiger was the greatest player that ever walked the earth (Clark, 2013; Newsham, 2006). Tiger won 25% of the tournaments that he played in, and the closest to that is Phil Mickelson with 8%. That record in itself explains how good Tiger was during this time. Locally, legends of the game such as Gary Player, Ernie Els and Retief Goosen have reached the highest levels and have all been inducted into the World Golf Hall of Fame (Sunshine Tour, 2018). Golfers reach this high level of performance by employing fitness trainers, coaches, golf psychologists and managers (Farrally et al., 2003; Roos & Surujlal, 2014).

2.6.2 Coaches

Coaches need to understand that each player is different with regard to abilities, previous experiences, stages of learning, learning styles, motivation, strength and weaknesses

(Human, 2015). Coaches should, therefore, approach each individual on their own with no preconceived ideas.

Coaches go through various emotions while coaching, both positive and negative, and as coaches it is important to realise that this influences players in a real concise manner (Human, 2015). While these emotions arise, coaches need to be able to separate their emotions from reality and find a middle ground from which to effectively interact with a player, and this influences the performance of athletes (Human, 2015). According to Hayman et al. (2014), elite adolescent golfers are influenced by their families, supporters and coaches.

Just as coaches go through various emotions, so do athletes, and these emotions can influence their performance greatly, and the key is to manage these emotions. Emotions and feelings influence the behaviour of a golf player, and surface when pressure situations occur (Phillips, 2013a). The difference between elite athletes and amateurs is the manner in which elite athletes thrive under those pressure situations (Phillips, 2013a). In order for golf players to manage these emotions accordingly, coaches need to incorporate or recreate these pressure situations during practice (Cooke, 2017; Phillips, 2013a). Creating these pressure situations relate directly to the ecological approach posed by Bronfenbrenner (1986, 1999).

It is, therefore, important for coaches to have an ecological approach to coaching in order for athletes to achieve success (Human, 2015). The demands to be a successful coach has increased greatly in the environment athletes find themselves in. Consequently, coaches have become more involved in educational programmes in order for them to successfully guide their athletes to elite level (Cushion et al., 2003).

2.6.2.1 Education of coaches

The job description of a golf coach has grown significantly into a number of roles. Youth sports have reached significant numbers at school level. Therefore, a shortage of coaches has resulted in teachers acting as coaches for the various age groups (Fung, 2003). The increase in the number of children participating in sport has raised the requirement for quality coaches at school level (Vargas-Tonsing, 2007). In the United States, as well as in South Africa, a minimum certification has been enforced to ensure certified coaches are standing at the helm of sport programmes (Kubayi, Coopoo, & Morris-Eyton, 2016; Vickers & Schoenstedt, 2011).

The foundation of elite level sport in South Africa is at school level (Vardhan, Balyi, & Duffy, 2012). However, many of the teachers coaching at school have not received adequate training, resulting in education programmes being implemented for coaches (Sport and Recreation South Africa, 2012; Vardhan et al., 2012). The South African National Coaching Framework (SANCF) was consequently developed to ensure skilled coaches at all levels of sport in the country. The development of the SANCF is beneficial to sport coaching in the country, however, research on this matter is limited in South Africa (Kubayi et al., 2016). Improvement of coaches at all levels by means of educational programmes is of paramount importance (Vardhan et al., 2012; Vargas-Tonsing, 2007), and this may very well enhance the quality of inexperienced coaches (Malete & Feltz, 2000).

2.6.2.2 Coaches educating players

Competency in the modern sporting world means results and only results. This, of course, is often not the correct manner which to strive for success. Too often coaches have the appropriate knowledge and expertise. However, they fail to communicate this in the correct way (Human, 2015). Coaches need to make the practices challenging in order for players to be able to handle these pressure situations in a competition environment (Cooke, 2017; Human, 2015; Phillips, 2013a). Coaches, therefore, need to educate players cognitively, affectively and physically.

The relationships of athletes such as with a coach may affect them in a number of ways (Branton, 2013). Human (2015) points out that relationships between the coach-parent, coach-player and coach-psychologist play a considerable role in the performance of players. The importance of the relationship between the coach and player has an influential part to play in career development (Branton, 2013; Sandström, Linnér, & Stambulova, 2016), and is key to effective coaching (Lyle, 2002). Coaches assisting golf players to achieve elite level needs to demonstrate complete commitment to the process and show full support to the player (Hayman et al., 2014). This can be illustrated by world-class athletes such as Michael Phelps and Michael Johnson who had an influential working relationship with their respective coaches (Jowett, 2009). This relationship at a junior level is critical. Research in a number of sporting codes has indicated that with the correct social networks, success can be achieved (Branton, 2013; Csikszentmihalyi et al., 1997; Jowett & Timson-Katchis, 2005).

The relationships with friends and family may also transfer undue pressure onto a player (Henriksen et al., 2010a). Another important relationship is the coach-parent and parent-player relationship, and this can either have a positive or negative effect on the player. Fathers can influence an athlete's development and performance significantly (Hayman et al., 2014). Furthermore, research has shown that a father often has a negative effect on the player (Branton, 2013). Coaches need to be conscious of the pressure that a parent places on a child, whether financial, through sacrifice, self-worth or guilt pressure (Human, 2015; Phillips, 2013b). The expectations of parents have a significant influence on the coach-parent relationship (Kidman & Hanrahan, 2011; Phillips, 2013b). In order to achieve success, the coach and parent need to have the same objective for the player (Kidman & Hanrahan, 2011).

According to Gordin (2016), the coach-psychologist relationship is also crucial for the player developing on a psychological level. The reason for this is that if the coach does not support the involvement of the psychologist, then the player will not utilise the opportunity to enhance his psychological skills (Human, 2015).

2.6.2.3   Conflicts of systems

This ecological approach connects the various systems together (Bronfenbrenner, 1979, 2005). However, these systems are often not compatible. Coaches therefore often feel overloaded with work, receive insufficient reward and a lack of communication and support (Olusoga, Butt, Maynard, & Hays, 2010). This environment causes stressors that inhibits the coach from delivering his expertise effectively to the player (Human, 2015), and each coach uses different methods to cope with these stress situations (Olusoga et al., 2010). Therefore, it is the responsibility of the coach to use the correct methods in order for the player to continue with the sport. According to a study that was done by Crane and Temple (2015), the most influential factors on participants' dropout were enjoyment and the perceptions of their sport competence.

2.7 DROPOUT IN SPORT AS A NEGATIVE OUTCOME

2.7.1   International

Research has indicated that youth sport participation has great health benefits, improved social skills and better academic performances (Fryer, 2015; Lakes & Hoyt, 2004). The benefits are clear, however, kids still withdraw from sport at considerable rates. A study

completed in North America by Butcher, Lindner, and Johns (2002) indicated that 94% of children withdrew from at least one sport, and this number increased with age.

Choi, Johnson, and Kim (2014) indicate that competition in individual sport may produce fear of failure, which is caused by anxiety. These factors reduce the enjoyment of the athlete and often have a low self-confidence as result. These individuals competing in a particular sport will assess their performance and decide their future participation (Crane & Temple, 2015).

Coaches' play a key role in the dropout or continuation in sport. As noted in previous sections, the dropout rate for children in the sport environment increases greatly as participants reach adolescence (Eime et al., 2016), and 12% of children will stop participation in sport by the age of 12 years (Vella et al., 2016). Participation in sport has many intellectual and physical advantages (Fraser-Thomas et al., 2005) and it is therefore important that the youth continue to participate in sport. In order for this to occur, one needs to identify the reason for participation. Aspects such as achievement, fun, social interactions and skill improvements all play a crucial role in sport participation (Fryer, 2015; Ullrich-French & Smith, 2009; Weiss & Weiss, 2007).

2.7.2 South Africa

According to Sport and Recreation South Africa (2017), 248100 people participate in sporting activities in South Africa. Many children engage in sport, however, continuous sport participation has declined greatly despite initial interest shown (Kubayi, Toriola, & Monyeki, 2013). The fact that schools are not making physical education compulsory are decreasing physical activity in the youth (Fourie, Slabbert, & Saayman, 2011). There are no statistics available for South Africa.

2.7.3 Early dropout in golf

Every year 3.5 million people start playing the game of golf, however, the same number leave. This means that the number of golfers joining the game has stayed the same from 1994–2003 (Farrally et al., 2003). Considering the fact that there is no statistics for the dropout rate of golf in South Africa, the statistics in Australia that is available can provide insight into the phenomenon of golf dropout. According to Golf Australia (2016), golf is the number one sport among adults, with a staggering 70% of golfers in Australia over the age of 45, and further statistics indicate that golf does not feature in the top 10 sports

children participate in. Factors that increase the termination of participation are intimidation, cost, duration and transition from practice to play (Farrally et al., 2003; Sams, 2015). Research has indicated that the above numbers are not just golf specific and occur in other sports as well (Dishman, 2001).

What makes golf different is the fact that apart from the technical aspects needed, psychological factors also need to be taken into account. Golf entails the use of various motor skills that need to be applied to different golf courses (Sams, 2015). This poses various challenges for golfers along with the psychological pressures, making it one of the most difficult sporting codes (Sams, 2015).

According to Golf Australia (2016), 54% of golfers play the game for the fun component. For that reason, it is crucial to present the sport to juniors and beginners in a way that makes learning both easier and enjoyable in order for participants to initiate and continue playing the sport. The introduction for beginners into the sport is one of the biggest problems as this is an intimidating process. The method in which golf is taught may have to be modified in order for this to develop into an enjoyable and judgement free environment (Sams, 2015). If coaches can gain knowledge on these factors, sport participation may continue among the youth (Talpey, Croucher, Bani Mustafa, & Finch, 2016).

The methods utilised by SNAG® Golf (Starting New At Golf) may be the solution, as it incorporates all the basic elements of golf but in a fun manner (Sams, 2015). It is also accredited by the PGA of SA. In South Africa other noteworthy beginner programmes providing an intimidation-free learning environment are Playgolf and Introgolf.

2.8   SPECIALISATION IN GOLF

When looking at sport as a whole, certain environmental factors such as parental support and coaches' behaviour may influence success in sport (Coutinho et al., 2016). When considering the management of athletes, the ecological approach identified by Bronfenbrenner (1986, 1999) indicates that the culmination of the entire environment plays a significant role in athlete development (Human, 2015; Larsen et al., 2012). However, limited research indicated sufficient methods to develop elite golfers (Hayman et al., 2014).

The question that many golf professionals have to deal with is when is the correct age for my child to start playing golf? Research points out that in order for an athlete to achieve optimal performance, 10,000 hours of deliberate practice is needed (Ericsson et al., 1993). Deliberate practice can be defined as activities to improve performance, the desired outcome is not fun, but rather performance (Ericsson et al., 1993; Fraser-Thomas et al., 2008). Deliberate play entails activities performed in an enjoyable non-competitive environment (Côté, 1999), and this is another aspect needed for optimal performance (Côté et al., 2007).

Interestingly, Syed (2017) argues that if an athlete has intrinsic motivation to compete in a specific sport, they can achieve success at a young age. Parents and coaches then push these athletes to compete (Syed, 2017). The key component is that the parent and coach did not have to motivate the child to participate, it is an intrinsic motivation within the child. In these cases children often achieve success. When the motivation to participate in a sport only comes from one side, like that of a parent or coach, the child experiences internal tension and often discontinues the sport. In many cases, the child will resent the sport at a later stage in his/her life (Fryer, 2015).

2.8.1 Early specialisation

Early specialisation in sport is important for athletes to achieve optimal performance (Ford et al., 2013). The reason may be that junior golfers start playing golf at a young age due to pressure and expectations from parents (Phillips, 2013b). Fraser-Thomas et al. (2008) and Wall and Côté (2007) indicate a number of negative consequences associated with early specialisation. This could affect social, physical and psychological development, which may include dropout of junior athletes from a specific sport. The question remains whether early specialisation is the most efficient way for athletes to achieve elite status?

2.8.2 Late specialisation

Malina (2010) states that limiting an athlete to one sport may not be the most effective method to achieve success in elite level sport. Golf is a lifetime sport and there is no need to specialise too early, but this still happens in many junior golfers (Phillips, 2013b). According to authors of TPI, early specialisation is definitely not the most effective method and playing more sport will serve the athlete better at a later stage (Coyle, 2014; Hansen, 2014; Phillips, 2013b).

The question remains how do coaches nurture athletes in the correct manner? The first would be to delay specialisation as long as possible to an age of approximately 15 years in boys (Bryant, 2014). Secondly, diversify and develop all skills by experimenting with many sports and finally, coaches need to connect with others who have the same beliefs of late specialisation (Coyle, 2014). Phillips (2013b) indicates that specialising in golf at a young age is not needed as the 25 graduates onto the PGA Tour in 2012 had an average age of 30.

Another author on the TPI system, Picorelli (2016) says that all learners need to be physically literate before moving on to sport-specific activities, including golf. Further research has indicated that through early diversification optimal performance can be achieved, this is where a young athlete should play as many sports as possible at a young age of about 12 and only focus on one sport at the age of approximately 16 years of age (Côté, 1999; Côté et al., 2007; Hayman et al., 2014; Henriksen, Stambulova, & Roessler, 2010b; Malina, 2010; Moesch et al., 2013; Soberlak & Côté, 2003). According to the DMSP, fun and enjoyment are very important for future success (Fraser-Thomas et al., 2008). The focus at this stage is then on enjoyment and not on deliberate practice.

By exposing learners to various physical activities, athletes develop sport skills such as balance, speed (Coyle, 2014), coordination, body and spatial awareness (Picorelli, 2016). One of the greatest examples of this is Roger Federer who played soccer until 12 years old (Coyle, 2014). In the golfing world, great examples are Ernie Els, Adam Scott, Sergio Garcia and Ricky Fowler to name a few, who were extremely talented in other sporting codes (Bryant, 2014). Before Jordan Spieth became the number one ranked golfer in the world and the second youngest player to win the Masters (Team Spieth, 2016), he played a variety of sports. He was quarterback (Football), pitcher (Baseball) and point guard (Basketball), and only started specialising in golf at a later stage (Titleist Performance Institute, 2015a, 2016). In addition, athletes exposed to a multitude of sports also show emotional stability because they are exposed to a variety of situations (Bryant, 2014; Côté et al., 2009; Moesch, Elbe, Hauge, & Wikman, 2011).

2.8.3   Golf specialisation institutions

The TPI is regarded as the frontrunners on body mechanics guidance in the golf swing, with a strong research focus on topics such as junior development, the golf swing, fitness and more (Titleist Performance Institute, 2017). Golfers can undertake a screening process and from those results, a training programme is developed that may contain

physical training or therapy, coaching of swing mechanics, nutrition and psychological strategies.

In the South African context, one needs to look at the manner in which golf talent is developed. Golf RSA introduced their first National Squad in 2016, this group of players are promising amateur golfers who are being assisted and prepared for professional golf, if they choose that path (Barratt & Stander, 2015).

Other noteworthy golf academies in South Africa are The Golf School of Excellence and of course, the Els Performance Golf Academy introduced by multiple major winner and South African golfing legend Ernie Els. The question remains how junior golfers progress into golf academies such as this?

The knowledge gap that exists is how do golf professionals, managers, coaches and parents successfully manage a junior golfer's career in such a way that the opportunity may arise for them to compete at the highest level. There are many golf programmes and coaches. However, each individual has their own opinion and method, with no concrete understanding of a universal framework for the correct transitional path for junior golfers. The field of sport management is growing at a rapid pace and this area of research is becoming more important (Drakulevski, Nakov, & Iliev, 2014). This research project may provide coaches, parents and players with an indication of the most effective procedures to follow.

2.8.4 THE IMPORTANCE OF TRANSITION IN THE DIFFERENT STAGES OF DEVELOPMENT

2.8.4.1 The stages of development

Before specific sport skills learning can be employed, the knowledge of developmental qualities in children needs to be understood (Botha, 2018). Attaining this knowledge is crucial for the holistic development of children, and as a result, successful athletes.

Goslin, Kluka and Van Wyk (2011) in Botha (2018) identifies the following stages of development:

Stage 1: This stage is for children aged 6–11 years old and focusses on having fun. As a result, children develop skills without any competition involved. It is essential for coaches to make the sessions fun, as children will get bored easily.

Stage 2: This stage refers to children aged 11–15 years old and here the focus is on participation and the refinement of the skills attained in stage 1. During this stage, children are often influenced by peers in a positive or negative manner, and if fun is absent, children will often discontinue playing the sport. Coaches need to display adequate leadership skills and be able to guide the behaviour of each individual.

Martens (2012) in Botha (2018) identifies this stage as the early adolescence stage, aged 11–14 years. Children grow at a rapid rate and gain strength during this stage.

Stage 3: This stage consists of children aged 15 years and older, and involves children being exposed to intense competition. During this phase, athletes learn how to strategise and use tactics during competition. The psychological aspect of competitive sport is introduced and children are taught how to handle winning and losing. Coaches need to refine the technical and social skills of each individual.

Martens (2012) in Botha (2018) refers to this stage as the middle adolescence stage, ages 15–17 years. The majority of physical growth is completed. The influence of the peer group on their decision-making is significant. Responsibility becomes known to them and they start to realise the value in helping others.

2.9 LONG-TERM PARTICIPANT DEVELOPMENT (LTPD)

In South Africa, LTPD gets participants actively involved in sport. Furthermore, participants need to be active in sport for their entire life and not just a short time. However, there is a shortage in children getting actively involved in sport because of limited access to sport programmes (Vardhan et al., 2012). Sport is important and influential in the development of a child (Adcroft & Teckman, 2009; Vella, Cliff, Magee, & Okely, 2014) and has many physical and psychological benefits (Fraser-Thomas et al., 2005). Despite this, as a child ages into adolescence, sport participation decreases (Eime et al., 2016). It is therefore vital to develop a better understanding of this issue in order to retain players in a specific sport.

The model for LTPD in South Africa promotes sport participation and quality at all levels throughout the country. LTPD is the method by which the Sport and Recreation Department of South Africa implements their vision, values and principles (Vardhan et al., 2012).

When a training and competition programme is developed there needs to be a clear understanding of the age of the athletes (Balyi, Way, Higgs, Norris, & Cardinal, 2016). The reason why the word "understanding" is used, is because this refers to much more than just the chronological age. The developmental, skeletal, general and sport-specific training and relative age also need to be considered (Balyi et al., 2016). The stages of LTPD can be seen in Figure 2.3 below.
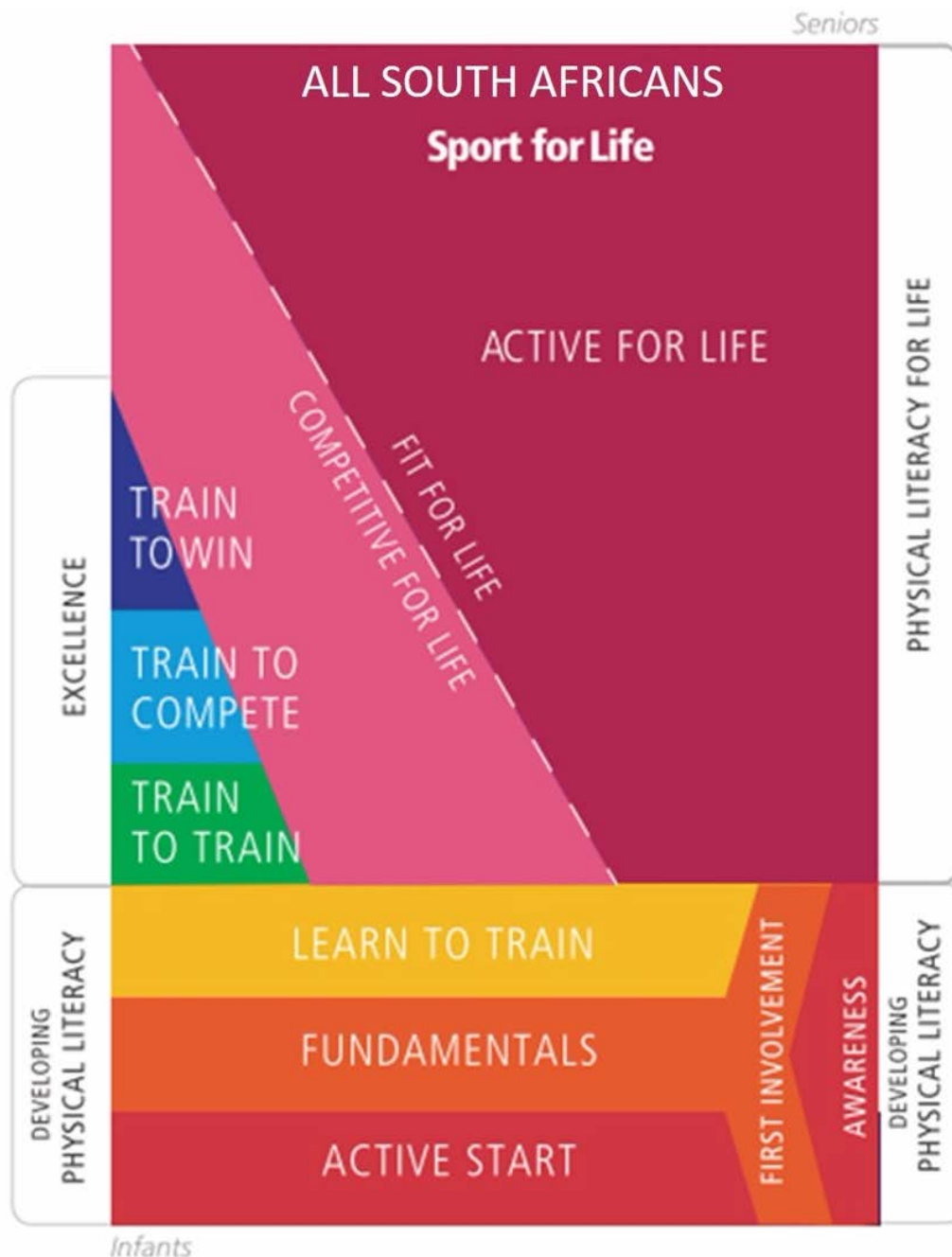
Figure 2.1 The model for Sport for life Long-Term Participant Development (LTPD) in South Africa (Balyi et al., 2016; Vardhan et al., 2012).

The final stage and goal of the Sport for Life LTPD model is to have all South Africans active for life (Vardhan et al., 2012). Physical activity is imperative and has many health

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benefits (Eime, Young, Harvey, Charity, & Payne, 2013; Janssen, 2007). In order to achieve this, all stages of the LTPD model needs to be reached, which include the active start, fundamentals and learn to train stages (Balyi et al., 2016; Vardhan et al., 2012).

The active start stage ranges from birth to six years of age (Shonkoff & Phillips, 2000). This is where the child develops movements like running, jumping, kicking and throwing as it is a fun part of their daily life (Balyi et al., 2016; Vardhan et al., 2012). The fundamentals stage is all about fun and ranges in boys from age six to nine years and girls from six to eight years. During this stage, the development of motor and movement skills as well as agility, balance, coordination and speed are important (Balyi et al., 2016; Vardhan et al., 2012). Learn to train is the next stage and range in boys from age 9–12 and girls age 8–11. During this stage, sport skills in up to three different sports are learned (Balyi et al., 2016; Vardhan et al., 2012).

The excellence and transition stages begin with train to train, which are males aged 12-16 and females 11–15 years old. The selection of two sports and developing endurance, speed and strength are key during this time (Balyi et al., 2016; Vardhan et al., 2012). Train to compete occurs in ages 16–23 years in males and 15–21 years in females. Learning to compete at various international stages, individual and positioning skills are the main objectives of this stage. It is important to note that ages may vary according to the specific sport (Balyi et al., 2016; Vardhan et al., 2012). At ages 19 and older in males and 18 and older in females the train to win stage is reached. During this stage it is all about performance, sport-specific tactical, technical and playing skills are developed (Balyi et al., 2016; Vardhan et al., 2012).

Despite the LTPD model, parents still pressure their children to focus on one specific sport and therefore, specialising too quickly (Malina, 2010). The LTPD model is there to prevent this.

2.10 CAREER DEVELOPMENT

As discussed in earlier sections, the ecological approach brought forward by Bronfenbrenner (1986) identifies the effects of an environment as a whole having a great effect on the development of athletes (Larsen et al., 2012). Coaches, parents and players form this environment and works as a unit to develop the athlete (Human, 2015). Therefore, these relationships need to be put in place by the coach and parents in order for a golf player to develop their career as effectively as possible (Hayman et al., 2014).

Furthermore, a parent forms an integral part of this social network. The influence of a parent on the coach-athlete relationship is an important factor of sport performance (Hurtel & Lacassagne, 2011; Jowett & Timson-Katchis, 2005). Hayman et al. (2014) point out that the father of a young athlete has a significant impact on his/her sporting perceptions. In addition, fathers have a tendency to create more stressful situations than mothers (Branton, 2013). This, however, does not mean that the mother has no influence, in the past mothers had a firm hand on every aspect of a child's life (Grolnick & Slowiaczek, 1994), although this has changed in modern society (Branton, 2013). Côté (1999) posits that parenting style is an important aspect of a child's sport involvement and development. This involvement leads to a positive or negative outcome on the career of a junior athlete (Côté, 1999). When the relationship is positive, the child not only starts to play sport but continues to do so. This occurs by providing a supportive and fun environment for the child (Branton, 2013).

Coaches and parents play a role in career development, however, they are not the only stakeholders. Siblings may also play their part in this process (Branton, 2013). Côté (1999) identified that siblings were cooperative, but that there was a sense of competitiveness. When one sibling indicates commitment towards a sport, the other sibling may have limited resources because of this. This may start tension in the family when one sibling is given more tools to succeed than the other (Branton, 2013). By contrast, when siblings work together an environment is created that is conducive to the development of sporting skills (Côté, 1999; Sulloway, 2007). An example of this can be seen by looking at two cricketing brothers, namely the Waugh twins from Australia (Branton, 2013). In South Africa, one can refer to the Morkel brothers who have both presented their country at international level (Desai, 2010). Branton (2013) indicates that siblings affect performances of each other in many ways.

Hayman et al. (2014) agree that in order for athletes to proceed to elite level, the social environment provided by parents, siblings and coaches are crucial. Reaching elite level is what almost every aspiring golf player strives for. However, the question is how does an athlete effectively develop a career and successfully retire from a sport such as golf?

2.11 BRONFENBRENNER'S BIO-ECOLOGICAL MODEL

Bronfenbrenner (1986) in Larsen et al. (2012) provides the ecological approach that moves away from the individual, but looks at the environment that the athlete develops in. This approach involves community psychology (Visser, 2007), which refers to every aspect as a whole and does not isolate coaches, players or parents (Henriksen et al., 2010a; Human, 2015), as all of them collectively play a crucial role in the context that competitive golf takes place in. Therefore, there needs to be an environment provided by parents and coaches conducive for the development of the golfer (Hayman et al., 2014). Golf players make use of a coach, psychologist, fitness trainers and of course the support of family and friends. All of these aspects play a significant psychological role in their performance (Gordin, 2016). This ecological approach provides the players with the opportunity to interact with the social and physical dimensions involved (Larsen et al., 2012; Visser, 2007; Witt, 2011). Part of coaching is developing an athlete physically, technically, tactically and psychologically (Human, 2015), and these aspects are of paramount importance in the golf environment. Human (2015) identifies Bronfenbrenner's Bio-ecological model as key to identify the role this environment has on development. The model provided by Bronfenbrenner is defined by the "Process-person-context-time" model (Human, 2015). This is indicated in Figure 2.2 below.
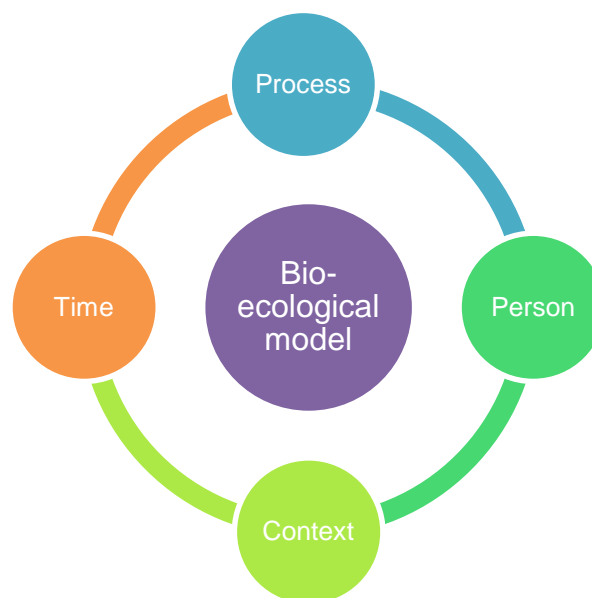
Figure 2.2 The "Process-person-context-time" model

This indicates that development is dependent on people accommodating these four aspects in the changing environment, process, person, context and time (Bronfenbrenner, 1986, 1999; Human, 2015).

2.11.1 Process

Processes can be identified as the interaction between an individual and the environment (Human, 2015) and this is called proximal processes, which form the essence of the bio-ecological model (Bronfenbrenner, 2005).

2.11.2 Person

"Person" in the model refers to the characteristics such as physical appearance, personal character and motivation of an individual and how they interact in the context of development (Human, 2015).

2.11.3 Context

When referred to context in this model, it looks at the manner in which the environment influences the behaviour of the individual (Human, 2015), as such, it is important to understand the context in which the athlete functions (Visser, 2007). Unsatisfactory performances and inadequate discipline can consequently be credited to an imbalance between the individual and their environment, such as an insufficient support system of coaches, family and friends (Human, 2015). Bronfenbrenner (1977) explains the context as a multi-layered interconnected nested system fusing in a complementary way into each other.

Therefore, the player interacts with the social and physical environment, and this directly influences performance (Visser, 2007). Bronfenbrenner's Bio-ecological model evaluates the environment that a human find themselves in, and as a result establishes a theoretical framework that analyses the influence the environment has on an athlete (Human, 2015).

The ecological system proposed by Bronfenbrenner (1979) is discussed below and identifies the microsystem, mesosystem, exosystem and macrosystem.
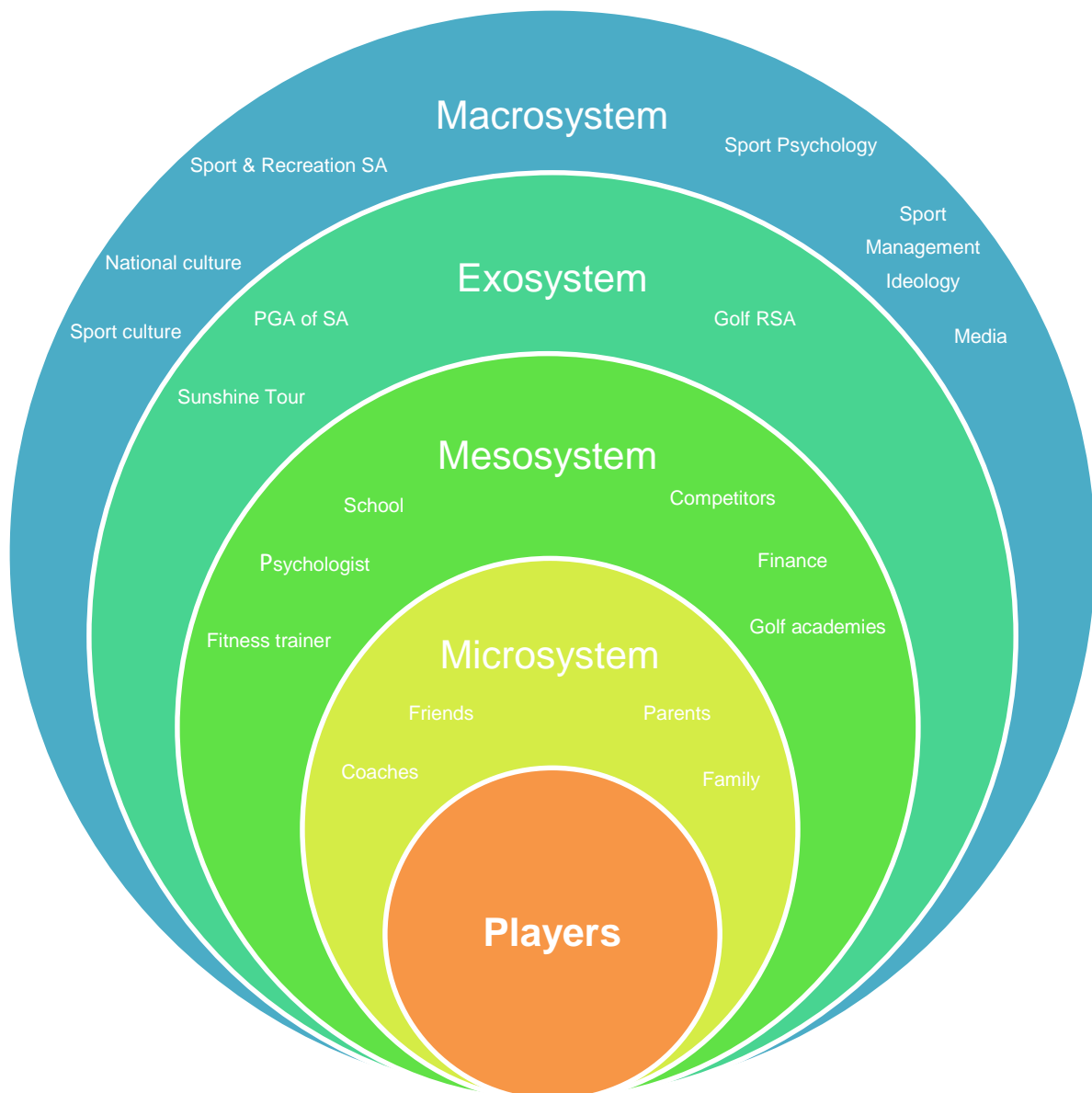
Figure 2.3 The Ecological model of golf (Bronfenbrenner, 1979).

2.11.3.1 Microsystem

The microsystem consists of the direct system the individual is involved in, such as the family, friends, coaches and parents. These systems are in direct interaction with the player (Visser, 2007). The microsystem consist of activities, relationships and social roles (Human, 2015).

According to Krebs (2009), these activities can have meaning to people (molar), or activities that have no meaning (molecular). When applying this to golf, players are more

likely to persist with activities that add meaning to them. The next item in the microsystem is relationships, and this relates to the relationships that exist between the developing person and others in the microsystem. Lastly, social roles in the microsystem are relationships of a player that is expected from society (Bronfenbrenner, 2005; Krebs, 2009). In golfing terms, this could refer to society expecting a player and coach to be successful at qualifying school and progress to the professional ranks.

The coach and player relationship forms an important part in the development of the athlete (Araujo & Davids, 2009; Branton, 2013; Hayman et al., 2014; Sandström et al., 2016). This relationship is complex as both parties bring different characteristics, personality and experiences to the table. Therefore, not just one agent is present but an interaction between two individuals (Wikeley & Bullock, 2006), as such communication forms an integral part of this relationship. The level and expertise of the coach are irrelevant if the coach is unable to convey the message to the player (Kidman & Hanrahan, 2011). If this communication is done correctly, it creates a learning environment where players will develop confidence, competence and character (Human, 2015). However, if communication is absent damage may be done within a few seconds (Walsh, 2011).

In golf, the players are the individuals who physically go onto the course and play. The environment of golf changes regularly as the game is played on a variety of golf courses and players are expected to adapt their skills to the changing environment. For this reason, golf is such a challenging game (Sams, 2015). Just as the environment changes so do the players, as each player has different personality traits. The different individuals in the coaching system need to understand that each player is different and needs to be approached in a different manner. Highfield (2017) agrees that creating an environment conducive to learning is crucial. In this regard, coaches have a direct influence on the behaviour of players, whether enabling players to develop confidence or low self-esteem (Human, 2015). It is more important to provide a learning opportunity to players than just the objective to win (Cooke, 2017; Kidman & Hanrahan, 2011). The importance is whether the coach instils positive or negative expectations in the player.

2.11.3.1   Mesosystem

The mesosystem can be described as a total network of interrelationships and interdependence (Bronfenbrenner, 2005; Krebs, 2009). Consequently, this network involves relationships such as player and psychologist, or other role-players such as

competitors, fitness trainers, parents (Human, 2015). Relationships such as that of a junior golfer and their school, or the relationship with a golf academy may very well influence their development and affect their future transitions. When these relationships are not managed appropriately it can have a negative effect on the development and performance of the athlete (Branton, 2013; Human, 2015; Jowett, 2009; Sandström et al., 2016).

The game of golf is much more than just technical skills, it requires more psychological skills than almost any other sport in the world (Titleist Performance Institute, 2015b). Therefore, the player-psychologist relationship is crucial in the pursuit of success. Golf psychologists, Bob Rotella, has worked closely with coaches and players on professional tours around the world.

2.11.3.2   Exosystem

The exosystem refers to one or more settings that the developing person is not an active participant in. However, this environment may indirectly influence the developing person (Bronfenbrenner, 2005; Krebs, 2009). When a coach has a family crisis at the home, it may affect a player even though it is not the environment he competes in (Krebs, 2009). Organisations such as the PGA of SA, Golf Republic South Africa (RSA) and the Sunshine Tour are not necessarily where the players compete, however, may have an influence on the behaviour and performance of a player.

Expertise in coaching has become a popular topic. However, the quality of coaching may not be the same as that of a qualified and accredited coach (Côté & Gilbert, 2009), such as a PGA of SA member. The PGA of SA was founded in 1925 and is the leader in the golf coaching industry (Gunn, 2012). This association consists of 500 members who met the required playing-ability criteria and completed an academic component of three years while being employed by a fully-qualified PGA member. The programme is accredited and endorsed by the PGA or Europe (Gunn, 2016) and is regarded as the leading golf qualification in Africa (Gunn, 2015). Academic programmes like this is very important for all coaches to become competent (Vargas-Tonsing, 2007).

Golf RSA has put certain systems in place that may enhance the possibility of junior golfers achieving success. Elite players are selected, funds are provided and then the players are nurtured in order for them to be successful on the international stage (Golf RSA, 2018b).

Sport has grown in such a manner that winning has become the main priority of individuals, and coaches are now in fear of losing their jobs if they do not produce results. This transfers a large deal of pressure on coaches, which may result in negative behaviour for them and their players (Kidman & Hanrahan, 2011). When winning becomes the only priority, the enjoyment disappears, and as mentioned earlier this is one of the main reasons for discontinuing participation in junior athletes (Crane & Temple, 2015; Fraser-Thomas et al., 2008; Sams, 2015). Consequently, coaches need to be adequately educated.

2.11.3.3 Macrosystem

Macrosystem refers to the broader environment that interacts with the developing person and has an influence on their life (Bronfenbrenner, 1979, 2005). As such, it encompasses all three previous levels. This level refers to sport governing bodies that provide a national and sport culture that a player needs to abide by (Henriksen et al., 2010a). The player does not have direct contact with this system, however, this may influence performance (Human, 2015).

An example of a social system identified by Bronfenbrenner (1977) and referring to the golf industry could be the following; Sport and Recreation South Africa (macrosystem) may employ a winning-at-all-cost sport culture (exosystem). This has an influence on the player-coach relationship (mesosystem), and finally, influence the player performance due to the large deal of pressure on the player (microsystem) (Human, 2015).

2.11.4 Time

Time refers both to the timing of biological and social transitions such as age and opportunities arising and to the time in which the athlete competes (Krebs, 2009). Therefore, coaches need to be aware of this ecological approach in order for them to achieve success with their athletes. Each coach and player have different manners in which these social realities are handled. Ellis (2016) argues that the need for a social constructionism framework is essential to understand the interactions and thoughts of participants.

2.12 SOCIAL CONSTRUCTIONISM

Social constructionism considers that every individual has a distinctive manner of understanding the social practices in a community (Burr, 2015). This paradigm, therefore,

attempts to describe and understand the different interactions and realities in a given environment (Ellis, 2016).

People make sense of their worlds by referring to their own frame of reference (Ellis, 2016). According to Burr (1995), there are four principles involved when working with social constructionism. Firstly, every person experiences reality in a different and unique manner. As a result, it is impossible to identify an individual reality and meaning about life. The manner in which each individual is regarded as the active agent in their life is essential, therefore, making subjective meaning through their own experience.

Secondly, the manner in which meaning is made from these experiences are interconnected with history and culture (Burr, 1995). According to Naidoo, Duncan, Roos, Pillay, and Bowman (2007), reality is constructed through social interaction. There are many different written and spoken communication with regard to the meaning of sport. Therefore, the researcher needs to be aware that individuals' perceptions may be influenced by beliefs, social realities of a culture and institutions (Freedman & Combs, 1996). Social constructionism identifies that these realities interlink and interact with each other on a daily basis. This is transferred from generation to generation and become the manner in which individuals view their realities (Ellis, 2016). When referring to golf, the history of the sport and the individuals who participate may very well influence the perspective of a player.

Thirdly, knowledge is created and influenced by language in the social interaction realm. Knowledge can be expanded through daily social interaction and influences the manner in which individuals perceive their reality (Burr, 1995). These realities influenced by language in many forms, are constructed, and described through their own personal relationships (Naidoo et al., 2007). Language is a manner in which participants communicate to present a different variety of the reality, due to socio-cultural groups communicating in different languages. Language refers to both the spoken language and the manner in which individuals value certain events. The conclusion can be made that no single explanation can be made for human behaviour (Ellis, 2016).

The last point that Burr (2015) refers to, is the fact that individuals are active participants in this meaning-making process, which is influenced by their own experiences. During the research study, the researcher needs to keep in mind that the participants are active and that an individual's context needs to be considered when making sense of their reality (Ellis, 2016).

By using this theoretical framework, the researcher was able to gather an insider perspective into the reality of each participant.

Within the environment of a golf player, there are numerous factors that need to be understood and made sense of. According to Highfield (2017), creating a productive environment for a golf player is of utmost importance. Social constructionism also challenges the conventional thoughts of people. As a result, people construct their own knowledge and display their own experience (Young & Collin, 2004). As golf is a sport that is played on different courses, different situations and scenarios, understanding these experiences are essential to uncover the secrets to success. When one adds the individual differences each player has, it creates a situation where coaches need to attempt to make sense of the behaviour of each individual.

2.13 CAREER TRANSITION

Career transition refers to the adjustment of retirement from a sport. Retirement from a sport is a reality and may occur at any stage in an athlete's career (Baillie & Danish, 1992). Transition can be normative or non-normative. Normative transitions refer to the predictable transitions in the sport such as starting with sport specialisation or from amateur to professional level (Jorlén, 2008). Non-normative transitions, on the other hand, refer to involuntary transitions, due to certain circumstances such as injuries or not being selected for a team (Wylleman & Lavallee, 2004). The two theoretical frameworks in the transition process that will be referred to below are career stage descriptive models and career transition models.

2.13.1 Models of career transitions

2.13.1.1 Career stage descriptive models

These models refer to the athlete's career as a lifecycle and is divided in different stages, which poses the normative transitions that may occur in the athlete's career (Jorlén, 2008).

2.13.1.2 The developmental model (Wylleman & Lavallee, 2004)

This model uses the person as a whole and the same applies to the career of an athlete. This makes it possible to see the athlete's transition in the sport, as well as outside the

sport when these different aspects of the athlete's life interact it may lead to troubling situations (Wylleman & Lavallee, 2004), as indicated in the developmental model below.

Age	10	15	20	25	30	35
Athletic level	Initiation	Development		Mastery	Discontinuation	
Psychological level	Childhood	Adolescence		Adulthood		
Psycho-social level	Parents Siblings Peers	Peers Coach Parents		Partner Coach	Family (Coach)	
Academic vocational level	Primary education	Secondary education	Higher education	Vocational training Professional occupation		

Figure 2.4 The developmental model on transitions faced by athletes at an individual, psychological, psycho-social and academic level (The dotted line indicates where the transition generally takes place).

The first level (athletic level) consists of four stages and refers to the athletic development in sport both at an elite level and non-elite level. The first stage is the initiation stage which is where children are introduced to sport, and this is often where talented athletes are identified. The second stage is when athletes start to specialise, this occurs at age 12–13 and is referred to as the development stage. Next is the mastery stage at age 18–19 where athletes reach the highest level of sport proficiency, followed by the discontinuation stage at age 28–30. This stage is when athletes discontinue participation in a specific sport (Wylleman & Lavallee, 2004).

The second level refers to the psychological stages reached and are divided into childhood, adolescence and adulthood (Lavallee, Kremer, Moran, & Williams, 2012).

In the third level, the psycho-social development is illustrated and is focussed on interpersonal relationships with parents, coaches, siblings and peers, which are important to the athlete (Lavallee et al., 2012).

The final level refers to the academic development of the athlete. Primary school education starts at ages 6–7, high school at ages 13–14 and higher education at ages 18–19. This last stage refers to athletes proceeding in a professional occupation (Wylleman & Lavallee, 2004).

2.13.1.3 The analytical career model (Stambulova, 1994)

The analytical career model discusses seven normative transitions that occur in the career of elite athletes:

1. The beginning of sports specialisation.
2. The transition to special intensive training in the chosen sport.
3. The transition from mass popular sports to high-achievement sports.
4. The transition from junior sports to adult sports.
5. The transition from amateur sports to professional sports.
6. The transition from the culmination to the end of the sport career.
7. The ending of the sport career.

2.13.2 Career transition explanatory models

These models consist of the consequences, reasons, demands and coping of a transition (Jorlén, 2008), and in these models coping processes are brought to light for athletes during transition (Alfermann & Stambulova, 2007).

2.13.2.1 The athletic career transitions model by Alfermann and Stambulova (2007)

This model illustrates transition as a process that needs to be followed, and during this process the athlete needs to overcome certain demands. The model is divided into two parts. Firstly, the demands the athlete need to cope with and the factors that influence this. Secondly, the possible outcomes and consequences of following a transition process are underlined (Jorlén, 2008). As a result, the outcome can be positive or negative depending on how the athlete copes with the specific demands. In the event that the athlete had a negative outcome, it can be altered with the help of psychological interventions and a successful, but delayed transition will occur. These interventions may be a crisis-prevention intervention that helps the athlete develop resources in order to help with successful transitions (Jorlén, 2008). Crisis-coping intervention involves analysing the situation and identifying the best possible method of coping with the

demands of transition. This is indicated in the model by Alfermann and Stambulova (2007) below:
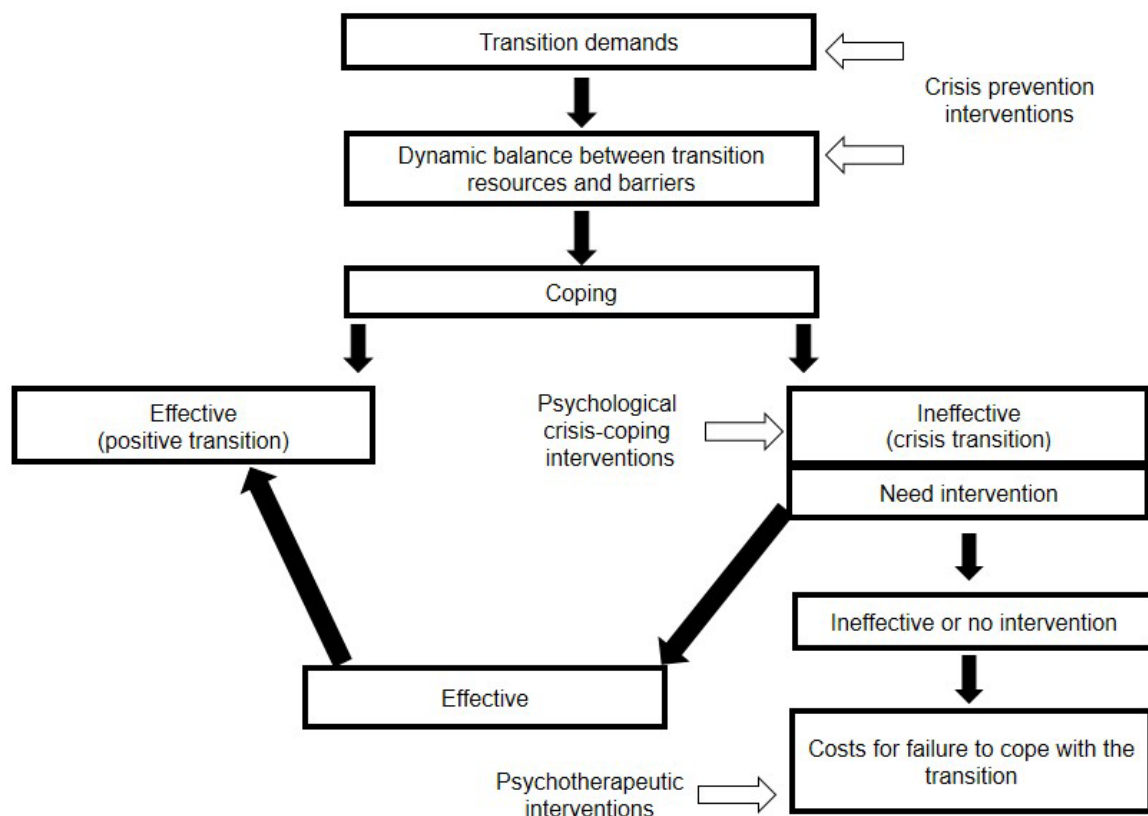
Figure 2.5 The athletic career transition model

2.14 MANAGEMENT

Sport management can be defined as the planning, organising, management and controlling of products related to sports, and these products can also be sports individuals (Parks, Quarterman, & Thibault, 2007). Chelladurai and Chang (2000) define this field as the manufacturing and collaboration of sport services. Stewart et al. (2018) refer to sport management in a different manner, player management is the term used. International Management Group (IMG) is one of the leading player management groups in the world. To many the world of player management is a new venture, however, in 1960 Arnold Palmer signed a deal to be managed by IMG. Arnold Palmer a winner of multiple major titles, was one of the most courageous and loving golfers to ever play the game, this assisted in his brand going from strength to strength (Arnold Palmer Enterprises, 2018). Mark McCormack the founder of IMG had the expertise of realising potential and selling athletes as marketable commodities (Stewart et al., 2018). McCormack soon signed contracts with Gary Player, Jack Nicklaus and more recently Ernie Els and Tiger Woods. Octagon, a rival of IMG, manages Olympic swimming legend, Michael Phelps. Octagon

is a sport marketing and management company promoting athletes in 35 different sports globally. Phelps has created a brand that has scored him a number of lucrative endorsement deals (Stewart et al., 2018).

Nemer, an agent of numerous professional golfers such as Hendrik Stenson and Ian Poulter, quoted in the well-known magazine Golf.com, that it is important to differentiate between an agent and a manager (Golf.com, 2017). Managers are much more involved with the player's day-to-day activities. Nemer further stated that an agent only visits their players on specific times in the year (Golf.com, 2017). Nemer also says that is important for both agents and managers to assist players in everything off the golf course. This will then allow them to perform optimally (Golf.com, 2017). Sport has become challenging for sport managers across the world because of the diversity of each sport (De Waegeneer, Devisch, & Willem, 2016). Sport managers need to be aware of the correct time to pursue athletes and coaches in order to realise optimal future performance (Stewart et al., 2018). According to Nemer, managers need to be able to identify talent and then gain the trust of a player in order for them to start the process of becoming world-class athletes (Golf.com, 2017). The relationship between Nemer and Swedish superstar Hendrik Stenson started when he was ranked 200th in the world, and today he is a major winner (Golf.com, 2017).

Adler (2013) writes in Golf Digest that agents on the professional tours need to be more aggressive and creative. This was the comments of a professional golfer that is also a major winner. This particular player signed with one of the major management firms, however, he moved to a smaller more personal management company. He emphasises that the personal relationship with an agent or manager is crucial. He states that an agent who understands the importance of long-term development is what a player needs.

One of these managers are Chubby Chandler, who is one of the most recognisable figures in professional golf. His company, IMG, now represents more than 48 golfers, and include golfers such as Rory McIlroy, Charl Schwartzel and Louis Oosthuisen (Tidey, 2011). According to Chandler, having a relationship with each player is crucial to his success (Golf Monthly, 2017).

Player management has become an important aspect of the sport industry, therefore further education in this subject is required (Ko, 2013). Sport has developed from being a sport to a business, and in order for this to be successful, adequate management is needed (Adcroft & Teckman, 2009; Stewart et al., 2018). Researchers in this domain

needs to develop a greater understanding of sport management in order to achieve success (Chadwick, 2009). This needs to start at junior level in order for athletes to achieve success. One of the first thoughts is, there needs to be a continuation of playing the sport.

2.15 SUMMARY

Golf has evolved from a recreational activity to the career path of many athletes. The game of golf has evolved in such a manner that professionals are seeking assistance from various sources to achieve success at the highest level. During the course of this literature review, it is clear that the success of a golf player cannot be put down to only one aspect. It is anticipated that the holistic approach towards athletes in all sporting codes and specifically in golf is where success lies, referring to the Ecological model proposed by Bronfenbrenner (1986). Furthermore, the available research indicates that dropout rates increase when athletes specialise too early (Malina, 2010). As such, research suggests that late specialisation is the most effective method to achieve success in a specific sport and in this case, in golf. In spite of this, there has not been a framework developed for junior golfers to achieve success at the highest level. The next chapter discusses the research design, methodology and process, which guided this research study.

CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 INTRODUCTION

In order for a researcher to think critically about a certain topic, there needs to be a level of curiosity about it (Merriam & Tisdell, 2009). Golf has developed in such a manner that the sport has become a lucrative profession (Roos & Surujlal, 2014). The study aimed to explore the perceptions of former or current Sunshine Tour players, PGA of SA members, PGA of SA teaching professionals and/or golf administrators. Specifically, perceptions on the correct transition strategies for junior golf players to achieve success at a professional level. This study attempted to understand these perceptions from the lived experience by the participants, this is a vital aspect for researchers working from the structure of a socio-constructionism system (Walters, 2009). By means of the available theoretical models and the empirical data obtained from the interviews, a comprehensive transition framework for junior golfers in the South African context was developed.

The aim of this study was to develop a transition framework for junior golf players to reach professional level and be successful.

In order to achieve the primary aim of this study, the following theoretical and empirical objectives were identified:

The first objective was to conduct a comprehensive literature study to determine the state of knowledge pertaining to the transitions in sport, and specifically the transition from junior to professional level in golf. The second purpose of this literature study was to identify the most relevant theories, models and research that could assist in the search for the most important psycho-social and environmental factors that can impact constructively on the effective transition.

The second objective of this study was to explore the perceptions of former and current elite golf professionals, coaches and golf administrators to determine the most essential transition strategies, psycho-social and environmental factors for the successful transition process from junior golf players to professional golf.

The third objective was to integrate the available theoretical models and the empirical data obtained from the interviews with professional golfers and coaches to develop a comprehensive transition framework for junior golfers in the South African context.

This chapter discusses the research process and procedures that were followed to gain information from the participants. These procedures were guided by a specific design within a research paradigm leading to a specific research methodology. Information about qualitative research, the process of choosing the appropriate participants, as well as the data collection and analyses are discussed. In order for the research study to ensure scientific trustworthiness, the ethical considerations are also discussed.

3.2   RESEARCH PROCESS

This process starts with a specific interest by the researcher. In this instance, the correct management strategies needed for junior golfers to achieve success at professional level. The researcher needs to ensure that the process followed is done in a consistent manner throughout the duration of the study and adhere to general credibility (Merriam & Tisdell, 2009). In order to authenticate the way the research was executed, a combination of two theoretical frameworks was used in the study. According to Ellis (2016), theoretical frameworks provide direction and meaning to the research process.

Patton (2015) reveal that paradigms can be defined as a manner of thinking in which one makes sense of the real world. Furthermore, paradigms provide a rational for research to be done and constrains the researcher to follow certain methods in data collection, as well as the manner in which this data are interpreted. As a result, paradigms are fundamental in how the research question is asked, as well as the methods used to answer that specific question (Durrheim, 2006). Therefore, the researcher needs to be able to choose the correct research paradigm for the study.

Furthermore, Durrheim (2006) defines research paradigms as expansive systems of interconnected functioning. The basis of the study was formed by choosing a research paradigm that suited the researcher's views on ontology, epistemology and methodology. These systems can be defined as the following: ontology (the nature of knowledge), methodology (how this knowledge is retrieved) and epistemology (the method of answering the research question) (Holloway & Galvin, 2017). As such, ontology refers to the knowledge that someone possesses because of certain experiences and interactions (Blanche, Durrheim, & Painter, 2006; Durrheim, 2006).

Throughout this process, the researcher's role was to make sense of the participants' experience by acting as a facilitator, by gaining a deeper knowledge of their own meaning-

making. For this process to be successful an "insider perspective" was needed from the researcher in order for him to see reality through the eyes of the participant (Patton, 2015). This allowed the researcher to understand the participants from the inside (Jones, 2015). Furthermore, the researcher believes that success is reliant on the environment a golfer finds himself in and the way in which the environment is experienced. As a result, the experience of the participants was explored at a location in which they are most comfortable (Ellis, 2016).

The process of gaining knowledge refers to the methodology, and had to be linked with the researcher's own understanding of truth and how this knowledge is generated (Durrheim, 2006). Furthermore, it relates the best methods to be used by taking the ontological and epistemological considerations into account. The researcher is aware of the fact that the way in which he as researcher understands truth could influence my analysis of the participants.

According to Crotty (1998), social constructionism can be defined as a method in which the researcher makes meaning of the mind of the participant. The interpretation of the individual's experience is regarded as valid and need to be respected (Crotty, 1998). This allows the researcher to form part of the information gathering process, both during the interview process and during other consultations with the participants. Ontological assumptions in the social constructionism paradigm involves the researcher reviewing reality and analysing the reason for the participants' actions (Patton, 2015). Therefore, the researcher makes an assumption about the research question, even so observes reality to make sense of it.

The ecological approach can be defined as an approach that transfers the focus away from the individual, and onto the several role-players such as coaches and parents of the athlete (Gordin, 2016; Human, 2015). Furthermore, by using this method our understanding of the limitations of athletic talent development may be enlightened, and therefore will assist to create optimal talent development guidelines (Henriksen et al., 2010a). Consequently, by employing this ecological approach by Bronfenbrenner (1986), athletes may interact with their social and physical dimensions.

For this reason, the researcher decided to use a social constructivist paradigm that links with the ecological model provided by Bronfenbrenner (1986). In order for the researcher to answer the research questions and reach the objectives, this study utilised a qualitative research approach within the social constructionism paradigm, to gather, interpret and

investigate the data. In order to investigate developing themes, this research methodology included an inductive approach to collecting and analysing data (Durrheim, 2006).

3.3 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.3.1 Qualitative research

The research that the researcher administered had to be scientifically credible. By means of using a qualitative methodology, the researcher was able to investigate human activities from the perspective of the participants. The aim then was not to explain their behaviour, but rather to make sense of it (Jones, 2015). Durrheim (2006) points out that qualitative research should be conducted in the participant's natural location. This allows the researcher to refract attention from the eventual outcome and rather describe the social actions and processes followed by the participants (Durrheim, 2006). Jones (2015) points out that qualitative research captures feelings, thoughts and experiences. These lived experiences give meaning to the world people function in and how they interpret it (Merriam & Tisdell, 2009).

3.4 RESEARCH SETTING

Ellis (2016) indicates that when analysing the data, the setting of where the research takes place needs to be taken into consideration. For this reason, the researcher had to have an understanding of the location of the research and where the participants were located. According to Jones (2015), participants need to have a choice where the interview location should be, as this will ensure a safe and comfortable environment.

This study was undertaken in the North-West and Gauteng provinces at the location of the participants. The majority of the participant chose the golf course or driving range facility where they are employed as their chosen location for the interviews, with the exception of one participant that chose to conduct the interview at his personal residence.

3.5 PARTICIPANT SELECTION

The process of selecting participants need to follow certain ethical procedures. The following aspects of the sampling procedure are discussed: target population, sample method and sample size.

3.5.1 Target population

The target population consist of individuals who have the characteristics that the researcher needs to complete the research. Therefore, the researcher required participants who will provide rich data and add value to the research study. In qualitative research, generalizability is not of great concern and the focus shifts towards participants who are able to describe and explain a phenomena (Jones, 2015).

As mentioned in previous chapters, the PGA of SA is the leader in the golf industry and has more than 500 members actively involved in all facets of the game (Gunn, 2012). The target population for this study is former and current Sunshine Tour players, PGA of SA members, PGA of SA teaching professionals and golf administrators. For this research study, the researcher contacted the PGA of SA to gain permission for the study to be conducted. Once permission letters from the PGA of SA were granted, these letters with the research proposal were submitted to the Research Ethics Committee, in the Faculty of Humanities, at the University of Pretoria. After ethical clearance was granted, a number of possible participants were contacted and informed about the research study and their possible involvement.

3.5.2 Inclusion criteria

The participants were selected for the research study by utilising the following sampling criteria.

- Players who have competed on the Sunshine Tour.
- Players who are currently competing on the Sunshine Tour.
- Coaches who have completed the three-year PGA diploma and qualified successfully.
- Managers who are actively involved in the golf industry.
- The exclusion criteria consisted of participants that is not fully qualified with the PGA of South Africa.

3.5.3 Sample method

Sampling is the stage in the research process where the researcher needs to decide who will be interviewed. For this reason, the researcher needs to have adequate subject knowledge and be familiar with the participants. Thus, the intention of sampling methods are to have maximum effectiveness and validity (Morse, 2016).

3.5.3.1   Purposeful sampling

According to Marlow (2010), there are two types of sampling methods, namely: probability and non-probability sampling.

Jones (2015) identifies nine non-probability methods commonly used in sport research: snowball, theoretical, purposive, maximum variation, typical case, extreme cases, opportunistic, convenience and key informant sampling.

The preferred sampling method for this study was purposive sampling. The reason for this is that this allows the researcher to select participants who have certain characteristics or qualities that may provide rich data (Jones, 2015). It is very difficult to reach professional level in golf and even more difficult being successful and win tournaments on the professional tours around the world (Gordin, 2016). Therefore, the researcher needs to select participants who have experience at the highest level in order to answer the research question. For this reason, a non-probability purposive sampling method was chosen, which is deemed appropriate in qualitative research (Merriam & Tisdell, 2009).

Participants were given a summary of the proposed study and were informed that their participation in the study is voluntary, therefore, they could withdraw at any time. Participants were also given a consent form to complete.

3.5.4   Sample size

Sample size refers to the number of participants who are selected to take part in a research study (Lavrakas, 2008).

A sample size of 17 participants took part in the research study. This consisted of 12 PGA teaching professionals, three former or current Sunshine Tour players and two golf administrators.

The aim of the research study should be the guide of the sample size (Charmaz, 2014). According to Jones (2015) and Patton (2015), the important aspect is not the size of the sample but the quality, depth and credibility of the data. Having a low number of rich data interviews is more beneficial to the study than having a high interview number with low quality data (Jones, 2015). Purposeful sampling should not be judged on the

recommended sample size. Instead, the sample size should support the purpose of the study and be able to answer the research question sufficiently (Mason, 2010).

The data collection continued until a stage of data saturation was achieved. Data saturation determines the sample size of a majority of qualitative research studies (Mason, 2010). Groenewald (2004) states that this is where there is no new data that emerges from the interviews.

3.6 DATA COLLECTION METHODS

3.6.1 Process

The reason for qualitative data analysis is to make sense of the data, therefore, providing enough evidence to answer the research question (Jones, 2015). In order for researchers to make sense of the data, the following questions need to be answered, the "why" and "how", when analysing the data (Attride-Stirling, 2001; Jones, 2015). This process commenced with the curiosity of the researcher of the process golf players' go through, or need to go through to successfully reach professional level. The first step in this process is for the researcher to identify a specific area to be researched and then formulate the research questions (Jones, 2015). Keeping the ethical considerations in mind, the researcher then decided on the target population, sample size and the data collection process.

Interviews were the method used to collect data (Jones, 2015; Kelly, 2006). The questions are related to the research topic and used to start a conversation with the participant. Culver, Gilbert, and Trudel (2003) indicate in their sport psychology research, that the interviewing process is the most common method in qualitative data collection. Interviews allow participants to talk and elaborate about their experience in their own words. Furthermore, interviews may have unexpected data emerging that the researcher did not consider.

3.6.2 Interviews

Patton (2015) indicates that interviews provide the opportunity to collect data from the participants without observing their actions. Therefore, interviews can enter the reality of the participant and view the world through their eyes. Jones (2015) identifies various types of interviews in qualitative research, such as, structured, semi-structured, unstructured, narrative, and focus group interviews. Structured interviews entail that

questions are asked from a questionnaire and the researcher then notes the response. Unstructured interviews are when the researcher has certain topics in mind, but the participant leads the conversation. The researcher then develops further questions as the interview progresses. When looking at narrative interviews, the involvement of the researcher is even less. Here the participant relives his/her experience by developing a story and trying to make sense of what happened. Focus group interviews are essentially a group interview in a semi-structured interview environment.

3.6.2.1   Semi-structured interviews

This study made use of semi-structured interviews during the data collection process. This method was chosen because the participants are experts in the field and the researcher may gather more information from them that is not documented in the interview schedule.

The most popular type of research interview is semi-structured interviews. These types of interviews allow researchers to develop an interview schedule, which consists of various topics related to the research question (Kelly, 2006). As a result, the researcher may ask open-ended questions that ensures a friendly conversation that will provide the data needed (Seidman, 2013). Semi-structured interviews provide the researcher with the opportunity to have a standard schedule. Nevertheless, having adequate flexibility to make use of probe questions within the interview schedule (Ellis, 2016; Jones, 2015).

The interview questions were derived from Jorlén (2008) and Hayman et al. (2014). The researcher's knowledge on the research subject, and the questions used by Hayman et al. (2014) and Jorlén (2008) guided the construction of the semi-structured interviews. The principles of social constructionism and the ecological approach provided by Bronfenbrenner (1986) were kept in mind throughout the interviews.

The questions posed to discuss the following:

   a) The amount of participation in golf at a young age.
   b) Identify aspects the athlete felt was needed for success.
   c) Identify the effect that psychology plays in the success of a player.
   d) To be able to identify methods used to effectively manage the player's career.
   e) Identify negative barriers in the career of a player/coach.
   f) Discuss the social support that were present as a young golfer.

The researcher completed two pilot interviews in order for to review the interview questions and also evaluate the responses of the participants. Pilot studies are important as it tests the adequacy of the research method. This method ensures that data collection proceeds in the correct manner (Van Teijlingen & Hundley, 2001). The interviews were analysed in order for the researcher to evaluate if the research question will be answered. The questions were then slightly modified in order to encounter rich data.

The shortest interview lasted 17 minutes and the longest for 56 minutes. The interviews were scheduled on times and dates that best suited the participants.

During the introduction phase of the interviews, the researcher explained anonymity and confidentiality of the participants and emphasised that they could withdraw from the study at any stage. Following the introduction, the researcher re-explained the purpose of the interviews and also asked the participant's permission to record the interviews.

The primary investigator collected the data, which were done in the participants' home language. In this study there were two pilot interviews conducted in Afrikaans. The remaining interviews were completed of which 13 interviews were conducted in English and four in Afrikaans.

Participants had a choice where the interview location should be as this will ensure a safe and comfortable environment (Jones, 2015). This method links to the social constructionism approach, which does not disturb the participants natural setting (Ellis, 2016). After completion of the interviews the raw data were analysed and then put into categories, themes and subthemes.

3.6.2.2   Transcription

The researcher personally transcribed all the interviews. This allowed him to gain familiarity with the data and started to make sense of the thoughts and perceptions of each participant (Wojnar & Swanson, 2007). The interviews were recorded and after each interview the recordings were transcribed. During this process minor grammatical changes were made to enhance readability. Extra care was taken to make sure that the meaning of the data were not altered or affected in any way during the transcription process.

3.7 DATA ANALYSIS

Thematic analysis in qualitative research is defined by Braun and Clarke (2006) as a method of identifying themes that form patterns during the data collection. This method was used to analyse the data that were collected by means of the semi-structured interviews. According to Braun and Clarke (2006), this is a method that is used regularly in qualitative research and is compatible with a social constructionism paradigm. Corbin and Strauss (2015) posit that using this type of analysis allows the researcher to group the data into smaller units. Because the researcher reflects on the data that are captured, this approach considers the fact that the researcher may influence the construction of categories and themes. According to Jones (2015), thematic data analysis occurs in five steps:

1. Familiarising yourself with the data that was collected.
2. Reduction of data.
3. Organising data by means of coding and themes.
4. Displaying of data.
5. Conclusion.

The researcher needs to familiarise himself with the data by reading through the transcripts and listening to it several times. It is important to keep a high level of reflexivity during this process to increase the quality of the data analysis (Jones, 2015). When the researcher is familiar with the data, irrelevant information may now be discarded, however, ensure that the data are available at a later stage if needed. Organising data by means of coding, constructing themes, and identifies important aspects needed in order to answer the research question (Ellis, 2016). According to Jones (2015), coding involves organising the data into categories. Each code developed is a category where data from the interview is placed. As such, coding provides the raw data with some logical structure. Once coding has taken place, the researcher will look for developing themes, these themes form a label for a group of linked codes (Jones, 2015).

Jones (2015) suggests the following process for developing themes from the collected data:

1. The data collected from the interviews need to be read, all related statements identified and a code given. The codes are then noted and each statement from the interviews assigned to a suitable theme.

2. The data are reread to find further statements that may fit into codes and then form part of a theme.
3. Next, the researcher will look at patterns that formed in the themes.
4. The final stage is called selective coding, this is where the researcher reads through the data to find aspects that may explain the themes that were developed. During this stage, it is important to note that the researcher may not only point out data that form part of his ideas but look for data that are contradictory.

The coding process was completed by using the method outlined above. When compiling the research findings in the next chapter, the researcher revisited the codes as different ideas developed. As a result, a recurrence process of analysing data could be followed. By following these methods the holistic approach towards the data could be achieved.

3.8 DATA VERIFICATION

Quantitative data are unbiased and clear, while qualitative data are open to more interpretation and deliberation (Jones, 2015). According to Holloway and Galvin (2017), the following techniques can be used to validate these interpretations and therefore, ensure the trustworthiness of the data. Data verification may occur through various methods and is discussed below.

3.8.1 Member validation

This was established by the researcher commenting and confirming that the statements made by the participants were understood. It was found that member validation was extremely valuable in the interview process.

When the interview evolved into a conversation between a participant and the researcher, more valuable data emerged. Due to the fact that the participant was in a location that was comfortable to him/her the participant was set at ease. This unlocked areas of discussion that provided rich data and as a result new aspects were brought under the attention of myself as researcher. When new data emerged the researcher used probes to encourage the participant to provide more detail and to elaborate. According to Jones (2015), this is a very important part of the interview and the most important questions to ask.

Further, member validation was established by sharing the research findings with two participants. Feedback was received, and both participants found the results adequate and valuable to individuals actively involved in the golf industry.

When using this method, the participant investigates the strength of the findings by commenting accordingly. In cases where the participant differs greatly from the findings, the researcher needs to identify the source of disagreement (Jones, 2015). Consequently, assessing if the disagreement is valid. When receiving feedback from the participants, this method ensures trustworthiness by excluding misinterpretations that the researcher may have made (Merriam & Tisdell, 2009).

3.8.2   Negative cases and alternative explanations

During the data collection process certain patterns have been identified. When negative cases that contradict the literature arose, the researcher asked for explanations in order to develop new themes.

In order for the research study to hold more validity, the researcher needs to identify patterns that contradict the study (Jones, 2015). According to Patton (2015), there will be a better understanding of these patterns when negative patterns are also identified.

Identifying negative cases provide the opportunity for further learning. During certain interviews it is important as researcher to consider all possibilities and be a "detective" during this process. When the researcher considers all possible outcomes and directions that the study may lead in, it subsequently adds credibility to the research being done (Patton, 2015).

3.8.3   Trustworthiness measures

During the data collection process, the researcher followed the same interview schedule throughout the interview, and the flow of the interview allowed for a natural conversation between the researcher and the participant. It is also important to note that all interviews were completed individually, at the golf facility of the participant's choice. Whenever a participant looked unsure about the question that was asked, the researcher elaborated until the participant had clarity. All questions were asked and the researcher led the conversation as to cover all the questions. Due to the fact that the interviews were completed in a conversational manner the questions were not always asked in the same order, this was in order to keep the flow of the interview.

Jones (2015) defines reliability as the consistency in which the data is collected during a research study. As such, the importance of providing enough detail of the methods followed in order for others to be able to repeat the study successfully.

Consequently, an audit trail of all methods used to collect the data needs to be clearly defined. The researcher needs to document the description of the setting, the participant and the context in which data are collected (Holloway & Galvin, 2017).

3.8.4 Reflexivity

In order to ensure further credibility in a study, the researcher needs to define his/her role in the data collection process and be aware of how this role may influence the results found (Merriam & Tisdell, 2009).

The researcher acknowledge that he himself as researcher may have contributed to the context of the study, because of the subject knowledge and the connection the researcher holds with each participant. During the data collection process, the participants were informed that he as researcher is also a qualified PGA professional. This provided a platform for rich data to emerge as all the participants were aware that the researcher had a fair amount of subject knowledge. The participants, therefore, spoke about the finer detail of the study and not about the aspects that were common knowledge. This provided the researcher with an "insider perspective" (Patton, 2015) into the expertise of each participant.

3.9 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

According to Wassenaar (2006), there are four principles guiding ethical research. These are respect for persons, beneficence, non-maleficence and justice. The researcher had the responsibility to implement these principles as well as the ethical checklist by Patton (2015) throughout the research process.

Before the research process could start, the researcher had to obtain permission from the PGA of SA. They supplied him with four letters that gave him permission to interview former and current Sunshine Tour players, PGA of SA members, PGA of SA teaching professionals and golf administrators. Ethical clearance was then obtained from the Research Ethics Committee of the University of Pretoria (GW20161013HS). Once permission was granted for the study to continue, the researcher started with the process.

Always keeping ethical considerations in mind, the researcher compiled a consent form and information letter for the participants. As a result, the participants were informed that their participation is voluntary and that they could withdraw during the process without prejudice. According to Merriam and Tisdell (2009), this allows the researcher to be unequivocal about the purpose of the study. Consequently, this is the first point of the ethical checklist by Patton (2015), which specifies that participants need to be aware of the purpose of the study.

Secondly, Patton (2015) marks promises and reciprocity as next on the list. This simply refers to the honesty of the researcher towards the participants. Therefore, this entails that the researcher himself needs to adhere to the matters as stipulated in the consent form and information letter. In addition, participants were informed that the completed thesis, as well as the transcribed interviews, will be available to them if they wish to see it.

Risk assessment is the next item on the list. According to Merriam and Tisdell (2009), risk management refers to the amount of risk that the participants may be exposed to when participating in the study. For that reason, the participants were given contact details of a registered psychologist which they could contact if they experienced any risk during the study.

The following aspect on the ethical list is confidentiality. The consent forms indicated that any information regarding the participants would remain confidential, unless permission is obtained from the participants. This was emphasised during the start of the interview, where participants were notified that false names or an alphabetic letter will be used to protect their identity. According to Ellis (2016), the anonymity of the participants can be guaranteed by using false names.

All information collected during the research was kept on the researcher's personal computer with password protected documents, behind locked doors, and was only seen by the researcher. This links to the next aspect on the ethical list by Patton (2015), data access and ownership. The results of the research including the audio interview records were stored at the Department of Sport and Leisure Studies and will be kept there for a period of 15 years, as it is the policy of the University of Pretoria. Only the principal investigator and study leader will have access to the data and will also sign a confidentiality agreement to protect participants.

The last aspect is advice, this was achieved by having guidance from an experienced supervisor and qualified psychologist, as stipulated by Wassenaar (2006).

3.10 SUMMARY

This chapter indicated the research process followed. The research design that was followed was a social constructionism paradigm guided with the ecological model provided by Bronfenbrenner (1986). Furthermore, the research methodology and the location where the research interviews were completed is discussed. The methods used to collect the data and selection of the participants are discussed next. The methodology chapter concludes by deliberating the data analysis, data verification and ethical considerations that were implemented during the study.

Chapter 4 provides the research findings by identifying the themes and categories that appeared by coding the research interviews.

CHAPTER 4: RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

4.1   INTRODUCTION

The ecological approach brought forward by Bronfenbrenner (1977) and the social constructionism paradigm formed the basis from which data were collected. The aim of this study was to develop a framework for effective transition for junior golf players from junior to professional level. By connecting with professionals in the industry, knowledge from an "insider perspective" could be obtained in order to gather guidelines for junior golfers to follow. This was established through semi-structured interviews, and then analysis of these interviews. This section discusses the results and how this connects with the current body of knowledge. During this chapter an outline of the themes and subthemes that emerged during the research process are provided. The following themes emerged during the data analysis: *psychology, social support, lifestyle, specialisation, finance, branding and coaching.* These themes proved to be the most important in the transition for a junior golfer to professional level. The figure below indicates an overview of the themes.
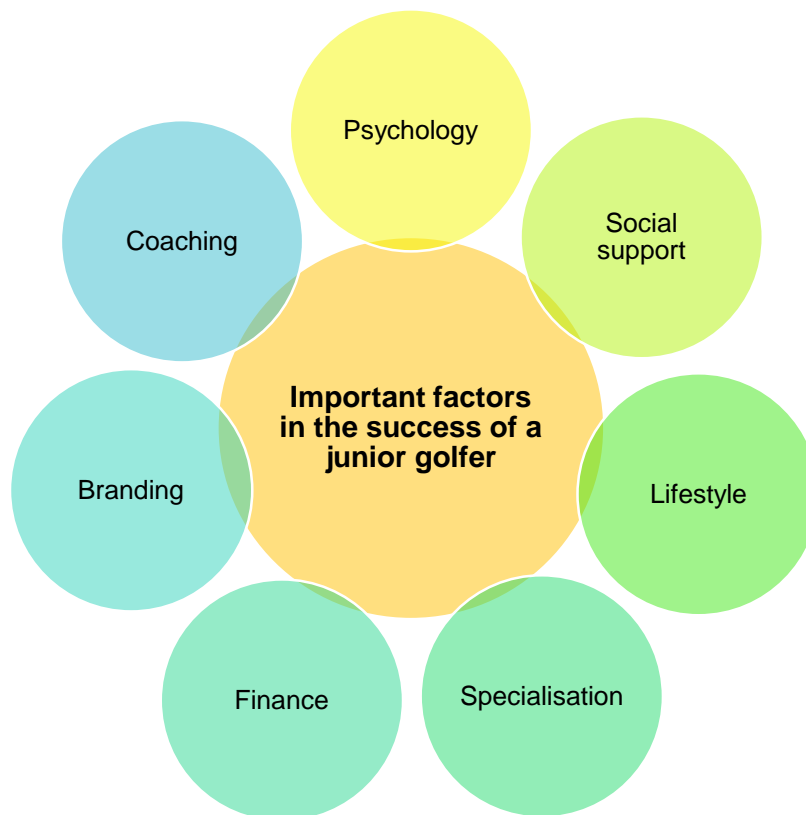
Figure 4.1 Important factors for the success of a junior golfer

4.2 EMERGING FACTORS AS PREREQUISITE FOR SUCCESS IN GOLF

4.2.1 PSYCHOLOGICAL FACTORS

Each participant identified the psychological side of golf competition as influential in the success of a golfer. What participants experienced about psychology in golf were displayed in five subthemes, namely mental attributes, negative mental aspects, mental skills practice, golf psychologists and importance.

Figure 4.2 Psychology as an influencer on the success of a junior golfer

4.2.1   Mental attributes

The majority of the participants confirmed that the mental attributes that a player possess play a crucial role to achieve success. It was stated by participants that there are many players with the same technical abilities, however, the individuals who excel are the ones with a strong mental game.

Numerous participants stated that acceptance is a key component of the success of a professional golfer. As explained by a participant, acceptance refers to players moving on and forgetting about a bad shot that happens on the golf course. Numerous participants emphasised that this is a key to success.

Being positive, having self-belief and confidence are some of the keywords that emerged among participants. Participants also focussed on the fact that a desire to become professional, as well as dedication in this process, is absolutely a key to achieve success. This mental approach was highlighted by many participants as important.

Participant 4 spoke from experience as a former Sunshine Tour player emphasising that being able to accept failure is crucial in the process of becoming successful:

> *I think it's... I think golf is all about being able to accept the bad brakes and move on. [85:17]*

Participant 10 identified the mental aspects that he felt were most needed for players to achieve success:

> *But ja that motivation, acceptance, dealing with adversity. [86:27]*

In most sports, mental toughness is important for athletes and the same applies to golf. According to Anthony, Gucciardi, and Gordon (2016), mental toughness is essential to manage stressful situations in high-performance sport. Mental toughness can be defined as certain psychological characteristics that enhance high-performance sport (Butt, Weinberg, & Culp, 2010). According to Jones (2002), the definition of mental toughness is defined by many researchers as different. In a study by Schaefer, Vella, Allen, and Magee (2016), it was indicated that golfers with high levels of motivation showed higher levels of mental toughness.

Jones, Hanton, and Connaughton (2007) and Sams (2015) posit that mental attributes play a huge role in the success of a professional golfer. Certain attributes that are needed for elite athletes to perform at a high level are self-belief, dealing with pressure, concentration and determination to succeed (Jones, 2002; Jones et al., 2007). Mental toughness is related to self-confidence, motivation and the ability to maintain and regain focus after distractions (Jones, 2002). When athletes show mental toughness they are able to manage negative emotions, such as anxiety.

4.2.2 Negative mental aspects

As emphasised by participants in this research study, mental attributes are important, and especially the manner in which negative mental aspects are controlled. Participant one stated that a player needs to be able to analyse himself and identify the negative mental aspect that caused an error on the course. As a result, the player can then work on those aspects in order to constantly improve. Therefore, dealing with adversity is extremely important to a player, as stated by participant six. Some mental aspects that were

identified by participants are the following: financial pressure, acceptance, anxiety, self-doubt and patience.

Participant 2 explained how negative external factors can negatively affect a player's performance:

> *So that pressure that you have if you're doing it financially by yourself, its huge, to know you got to have your swing, you've got to have the mental strength, and you playing on your own money, and you're doing it once every four months....that's exceptionally hard. So I would say firstly is financial backing, I don't see any other limit for golfers. [79-28]*

Participant 4 identified a negative mental reaction to a bad shot:

> *If you get bent out of shape about things that happen to you on the golf course, because they will, mmm you're not going to make it. [85:18]*

Participants highlighted that **acceptance** is crucial to the success of a professional golfer. Acceptance refers to players moving on and forgetting about a bad shot that happens on the golf course, and a number of participants emphasised that this is a key to success. Acceptance refers to the non-judgemental thought process an athlete goes through and is crucial for sport performance (Bernier, Thienot, Codron, & Fournier, 2009). According to Rotella and Cullen (1996), acceptance is crucial after a player has played a shot that did not meet the desired outcome. He says that if a player is angry then he is incapable to execute the needed mental pre-shot routine.

Bob Rotella, a former director of sport psychology at the University of Virginia, and now consultant to many professional golfers stated, "When you make a mistake, learn from it, then put it aside" (Rotella, 2012, p. 34). Therefore, dealing with adversity is extremely important to a player. As emphasised by participants in this research study, mental attributes are important, and especially the manner in which negative mental aspects are controlled. **Anxiety** is an aspect that is evident in high-performance athletes (Jones, 2002). However, athletes that are mentally tough accept the inevitability of anxiety and believe that they are able to deal with it during competition (Jones, 2002).

Participants identified external factors such as **finances** that add negative mental thoughts to a golfer. This pressure makes it difficult for a golfer to focus on playing his best golf. According to numerous participants, players focus on the outcome and the financial implication of failure. Highfield (2017) argues that players too often focus on the outcome rather than the process. As a result, players develop overarousal or high activation, this is where athletes develop intense emotion and in return cause attentional narrowing where they focus on factors not worth thinking about.

Participants stated that mental aspects such as acceptance of failure and **self-doubt** is a real barrier for many players. It was also emphasised that players put undue pressure on themselves with thoughts such as *"I have to make it."* Participants stated that this is often the result of the financial implications of failing.

Participant 12 believes that these are the barriers professional players have:

> *Acceptance of failure and self-doubt. [83:72]*

Participant 9 referred to playing in the Q-school, and the fact that the financial implications of playing Q-school put him under loads of pressure:

> *I just put myself under so much pressure that I had to make it. [88:16]*

According to Noer (2012), self-doubt is a thought that is not a rare thing on the PGA tour. Doubt is something that no golfer can have and expect to be successful, and confidence is crucial in any professional's mental framework (Ryan, 2016).

Participants identified that many players from junior level up to professional level are **impatient**, and it was noted that many players think that becoming a professional golfer is a quick process. This proved to be incorrect as many participants stated that players move away from a plan as there is a misconception that there is a quick fix to excel to such a level. Participants stated that players need to be patient as becoming a professional is a long process.

Participant 11 referred to the best players in the world and that it took time for them to be successful as well:

> *Too often people move away from the plan thinking that there's some quick fix. [81:5]*

Participant 6 emphasised that a player needs to be on a really high level before turning professional:

> *They may not have that ability to shoot really low rounds consistently and they turn pro too soon and it's too big a jump. [87:57]*

According to Weinman (2016), after Jordan Spieth lost the 2016 Masters in dramatic fashion, he stated that he required more patience. Justin Harding a seven-time winner on the Sunshine Tour says he is more patient on the golf course and he seems to be enjoying it more (Compleat Golfer, 2018).

4.2.3 Mental skills practice

Recreating pressure situations were noted by many participants as an important aspect in order to develop adequate mental attributes required for professional golf. Participants stated that pressure situations can be created by means of a point system and an outcome at the end of the session. According to one participant creating difficulty, such as hitting out of divots can assist a player when this situation occurs on the golf course.

Participant 11 confirmed the creating of a pressure environment and gives an example:

> *So it's just trying to recreate what they going to do out, you know on the golf course I mean things from you know getting them to mmm try to recreate difficult lies that they have you know hitting shots out of divots. [81:19]*

Participant 8 explained that in putting one can create a pressure environment:

> *If they struggle under pressure with putting, well you need to create an environment to maybe try and help them understand that. [90:24]*

According to Highfield (2017), players may enhance their performance by making use of OSVEA (Observation, Selection, Visualisation, Execution and Acceptance). This is a pre-shot routine process that mentally prepares players for each shot. It is important for a player not to break this process. Jordan Spieth said during an interview that he broke the process (OSVEA) when he lost the 2016 Masters tournament after he had a healthy lead. Spieth had hit his ball in the water at a crucial stage in the tournament (Highfield, 2018).

Acceptance is the last step in this process. In order to achieve the last step of OSVEA a player needs to understand their own thought patterns and consequently accept the outcome of a particular shot (Highfield, 2017). This is done by identifying three positive aspects for every negative one. Players then use this phase of the process to learn from their mistakes and analyse where they can improve. According to Highfield (2017), the players are required to write this on paper in order for them to understand the importance of their thought processes.

Game Like Training (2017) creates a competitive environment that a player find themselves in, and this simulates situations a player may encounter on the golf course. According to Cooke (2017) this environment is shaped by four concepts:

1. **Recreate**

This refers to recreating the environment to as close as possible to conditions that a player may encounter on the course. Traditional practice has always been repetitions of the same club on a flat lie. However, according to Cooke (2017), this method does not enhance learning. By creating an environment that resembles the golf course players will play on, their learning will accelerate. This can be done by making players walk between shots, have different lies for each shot and never hit the same club twice.

2. **Simulate**

Simulation is closely connected to recreation, however, a goal and outcome are attached to this section. Create challenges, create a name for each challenge, clarify what is expected of the player and keep a scorecard.

3. **Regulate**

In this section a player has developed goals and strategies are then assembled to achieve these goals to finally reflect on the results. This process is repeated to create more goals and strategies.

4. **Chunking**

This is where information is broken down by a player and can be presented to him in any situation. Due to the fact that the environment a player may encounter on the golf course is recreated, a player can gather information in any situation on the golf course and react appropriately.

According to Highfield (2017), having the correct mental thoughts need to be practised. This indicates that by using certain methods such as OSVEA, mental skills can be practised and mastered.

4.2.4 The role of the golf psychologist

Golf psychologist can be found in the mesosystem of the ecological model of golf. In some cases, participants recommended a psychologist, and in other cases, it was emphasised that having a psychologist may be harmful for a junior golfer. The reason given by a participant is that juniors will start thinking too much and therefore, inhibit their natural ability. Many participants stated that a specialised area such as psychology should be administered by a professional and not by the coach. Participants also highlighted that there is a real value in a sport psychologist as mental strength is essential in golf.

Participant 3 emphasised the importance of a sport psychologist:

So you need a a a ....mental help, you need a sport psychologist that your confident in. [77:31]

Participant 10 confirmed that the psychological aspect in golf should be done by a professional:

Send him to a psychologist. [86:28]

Participant 8 emphasised that sending a child to psychologist too young is not good:

I would say I think it would be dangerous to get a kid going to a psychologist at 11,12,13,14. [90:31]

There are many players that value a golf psychologist on their team, and there are players who will not make use of them. Butch Harmon, long-time coach of Tiger Woods does not believe in receiving help from a golf psychologist. According to Bob Rotella in Moriarty (2013), some players do not want fellow competitors to be aware that they make use of a golf psychologist. Moriarty (2013) argues that this may be to prevent them from showing weakness to the other competitors.

4.2.5 Importance of psychology

The mental ability of players is extremely important as noted by a number of participants. According to one participant, there are many players with excellent technique but do not perform. Players who are not that strong technically often perform well because they have strong mental attributes.

Participant 8 indicated that the mental side of golf performance plays a huge role to achieve success:

So I think it's completely a mental thing. [90:13]

Participant 5 remembered players who had all the resources including the financial backing. However, they did not achieve success because of the inability to play under pressure:

En die mental ding ook. [84:80]

According to Rotella (2008), the difference between players like Tiger Woods and the rest is that he has confidence. Most players on the professional tours around the world can hit all the shots at the same level of someone like him. However, where the difference lies

is the psychological skills that Tiger Woods possess. Therefore, the mental aspect of sport plays a crucial role in peak performance (Butt et al., 2010).

4.2.6 Personal character

This theme emerged as participants identified that certain characteristics are needed to be successful. It was clear during the interviews to see that a specific personality type may be more successful than others.

4.2.6.1 Personal character that have an adverse effect on golf

Participants noted that people who want everything perfect may not always be successful. The reason is that a player will make mistakes, and it is up to the player to work through those moments.

Participant 9 referred to his personality:

> *Your German, that's your problem, you're never happy, if it's not like that, like this, you're not happy. And golf is not a game of perfection. [88:25]*

Participant 3 said that there is no perfect personality for golf:

> *But you have guys that are placid and quiet that are successful and you have guys that are aggressive and throw a few clubs that are successful. So there's no magic one. [77:33]*

According to Ryan (2016), a player cannot be too analytical and think too much. One participant stated that he is a perfectionist and that it is not the correct personality for golf performance. Stoeber and Otto (2006) argue that perfectionism can be good or bad for golf. Normal perfectionism is healthy and leads to enjoyment. Neurotic perfectionism, on the other hand, is unhealthy to an athlete. This involves athletes showing severe concern over mistakes made. Individuals with perfectionist tendencies are more likely to develop anxiety, this inevitably impacts performance (Mor, Day, Flett, & Hewitt, 1995).

4.2.6.2 Personal character that are beneficial for golf

Participants also stated that a player needs to be able to forget about the mistakes and smile about it. However, another participant said that there is no specific personality that is best. He stated that a quiet person and an outspoken person could be successful. One participant stated that a player almost has to be a little arrogant.

Participant 4 believed that you almost "*shouldn't care so much*" to achieve success:

> *The person who can smile after they've just missed the cut, or blown a tournament. [85:63]*

Participant 9 said that a player needs to be confident:

I think you almost got to be a little bit arrogant, and in a way a little bit stupid. [88:57]

Participant 7 indicated that a player needs to have confidence to be successful:

Dit is belangrik dat jy selfvertroue moet hê, en jy moet eintlik net weet en glo jy is beter as die ou langs jou. [89:14]

According to Nigel Roscoe, a manager of professional golfers, a player needs to be confident in himself, as it is a lonely life being on tour (Retief, 2018). Ryan (2016) agrees with that and adds that professional golfers need to be selfish, competitive and have an obsession to improve.

Graham (2017) identifies eight personality traits of a professional golfer: Narrow focus, tough-minded, self-assured, low arousal, abstract thinking, emotionally stable, dominant and self-sufficient.

4.3   SOCIAL SUPPORT

Social support was a theme that emerged with each participant and it was stated that it forms an integral part of the success of a player. Coaches, friends, parents and family all form part of the social environment and is situated in the microsystem of the ecological model of golf. The negative, as well as positive influence a social support structure has on a player, were highlighted by all participants.

Figure 4.3 Social support as an influencer on the success of a junior golfer

4.3.1 Negative influence

Participants relate to many negative parents in their coaching, and the result of this was that juniors stopped playing the game and quit. The reason for this in many cases was the amount of pressure that parents put on their child to perform. Parents put too much pressure on their children to perform at a young age. Numerous participants commented that parents just need to be parents and not the coach.

Participant 10 stated that parents need to understand their role and give freedom to the coach:

> *Parents need to be parents, they're not coaches. [86:33]*

Participant 3 highlighted what a large number of participants said. Negative social support structure is a major influence to the discontinuation of golf:

> *They just quit, they just stop. [77:33]*

Participant 4 indicated a comment from the father of a PGA tour player, Justin Thomas:

> *...they had Justin Thomas's father on...he is a PGA coach, and he was saying his biggest thing is talking to the parents, to say to the parents...don't put this pressure on your kid. Because he doesn't like what you're doing to him and he is going to show you by giving up golf, not behaving well on the golf course. [85:2]*

According to a study completed by Omli and Wiese-Bjornstal (2011) on kids aged 7–14 years old, there are six behaviours identified as disruptive when competing in sport. The following aspects were highlighted: instruction, advice, critical encouragement, arguing, blaming, derogation, disruption, yelling and fanatical cheering.

When parents behave disruptively at sport events children will stop playing the sport and quit. This is due to the fact that the sport is no longer fun (Seefeldt & Ewing, 1997).

According to Ryan (2016), the people surrounding a PGA tour player is of utmost importance. When an agent, journalist, wife, sponsors and the fans do not behave appropriately, the player cannot focus on his game.

4.3.2 Positive influence

In other instances, parents had a positive influence on the players, and the participants noted that there was a marked difference between players with supportive parents and those that had too much pressure to perform. The participants also highlighted that if a

parent believes in the player and shows their support, then success may be easier to achieve.

Participant 12 had great appreciation to his parents for all the support that he received throughout his career and still receive on a daily basis:

I wouldn't be here without them. [83:53]

Participant 4 indicated that throughout his professional career the social support added great value to him:

If all those people believe in you, it's easier to believe in yourself. [85:26]

According to Omli and Wiese-Bjornstal (2011), children aged 7–14 years identified six behaviours that children prefer from their parents when competing in sport namely: Attentive silence, cheering, encouragement, praise, empathy and protective intervention.

Attentive silence refers to parents watching the game and being quiet. Cheering is another aspect that had positive results among the kids in this study. When cheering is done in an appropriate manner it results in the kids having more fun and perform better. The kids stated that when cheering is done to the individual alone it can be embarrassing to them. Encouragement rather than discouragement was shown to be a positive aspect for the kids. Praise in response to performing well was found to be positive to the kids, words like "nice hit" and "you did a really good job" is the preferred behaviour by parents. Empathy is next, and the kids preferred that parents show empathy towards other participants. Protective intervention emerged as the only form of shouting that was appropriate (Omli & Wiese-Bjornstal, 2011).

4.3.3   Importance of social support

Participants noted that the support in the social environment that a player receives plays a huge role in the continuation and success in golf. It was emphasised that the social support structure is crucial and the importance cannot be emphasised enough. During the interview process each participant identified the parents of a junior golfer as the most influential in the social support structure. However, according to participants other people in the support structure such as the coach, fitness trainer and psychologist also has a large influence.

Participant 3 responded to the importance of a social structure with a loud response:

Support structure is important. It's when you feeling down that they're your support structure, say come on you can do this, you've went through this, you've got through other hurdles before. It's just another hurdle. So yes it's pretty important. It takes a strong person to do it by themselves. [88:65]

Participant 6 is a coach for many professional players on the European Tour and Sunshine Tour and his players understand the value of a social support structure:

Massive. Massive effect! You can ask any player who's made it, they can earmark specific people in their lives that made a big difference. Obviously there are parents who introduced them to the game at an early stage, supported them, undyingly supported them, and didn't break them for poor performances. I think that's essential, and good coaches are able to do that too. [87:35]

The environment that a player finds himself in and the support a player receives are crucial for them to participate and compete successfully in golf (Coutinho et al., 2016; Highfield, 2017; Human, 2015; Larsen et al., 2012; Moll, Rees, & Freeman, 2017). Factors such as culture, family views and socio-economic position will have a definite effect on a player. Coaches and parents need to move away from working on the individual and create a productive environment (Highfield, 2017). A key concept is the term "growth mindset", this refers to the understanding that players should not work towards results, but focus on improvement (Highfield, 2017, p. 85).

4.3.4 Resources needed

Apart from parents, other resources needed in the social structure were also identified to achieve success. These were a swing coach, psychologist, fitness trainer and some participants noted that a mentor or manager may also be helpful to a player.

Participant 9 stated the most influential resource that a player needs to have:

Good practice facilities, good mentors, mmm opportunity, and that's in various areas and financial. [88:61]

Participant 7 identified the following resources needed by a player:

Sielkundige, biokinetikus, oefendeskundige, dieetkundige, ordentlike afrigter. [89:4]

Golf professionals employ fitness trainers, golf psychologists, swing coaches and managers in order for them to reach the highest level (Farrally et al., 2003; Gordin, 2016; Roos & Surujlal, 2014). According to Zak (2018), golf on the PGA tour has evolved into a lucrative and professional sport. As a result, PGA tour players employ coaches, fitness trainers, statisticians and masseuses.

4.4 SPECIALISATION

Specialisation is a topic that is spoken about often in the sport industry. There are many schools of thought on when to specialise. However, this research study clearly indicates that early specialisation may not be the correct process to follow. Playing other sport, other than golf, was emphasised as important by each participant. Although there are sport that have a negative effect on golf, the participants highlighted the fact that a player can participate in any sport rather than doing none at all. The benefits of playing other sport in the pursuit of being a professional are endless and are discussed below.
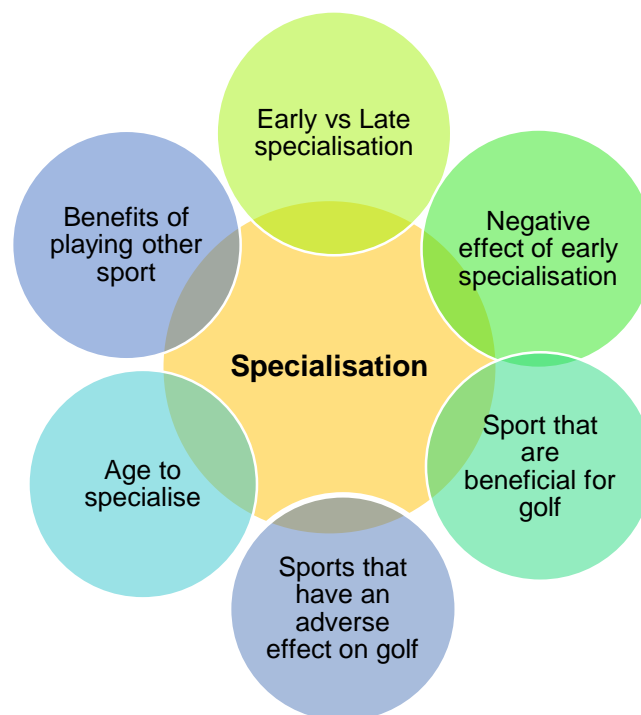
Figure 4.4 Specialisation as an influencer on the success of a junior golfer

4.4.1 Early versus late specialisation

During the entirety of the interview process there were not one participant that stated that early specialisation is the correct process to follow. Every participant emphasised that late specialisation is the correct method to follow for a child to achieve success. It was reiterated that children are also more than just golfers, they are human beings that need to develop as individuals and have more than just a golf swing. Participants said that if juniors are well balanced in their life, they are more likely to achieve success because they are mentally stronger.

In every interview participants overwhelmingly state that athletes should play as many sports as possible at a young age. There was not one participant that said that children should only play golf from a young age.

Participant 4 emphasised that playing other sports teaches a child physical skills as well as confidence in their movements:

> *I definitely would not just let them play golf, they've got to play other sports. [85:32]*

Participant 6 noted that if children only play golf they will burn out and stop playing the game:

> *So we should always encourage our kids to play multitude of sports. [87:28]*

Participant 11 agreed with the majority and identifies what can happen if a player specialises too early:

> *We lose a lot of very talented golfers specifically because they start too young or they specialise too early. [81:2]*

Participant 6 agreed:

> *Early specialisation is detrimental to the majority of athletes. [87:26]*

Players should develop all their skills and play as many sports as possible (Coyle, 2014; Vardhan et al., 2012). Research has been done comprehensively on early specialisation and a large number of researchers have found that early specialisation is not the correct manner for a player to be successful (Coyle, 2014; Hansen, 2014; Highfield, 2016; Phillips, 2013a, 2013b). Players need to develop all of their physical skills before specialising at a later stage (Picorelli, 2016).

4.4.2 Negative effect of early specialisation

One consequence of early specialisation that was noted was that a child's body develops in an unbalanced matter. The other negative effect that was noted by numerous participants was the loss of the players from the game, due to a lack of enjoyment. Participants stated that when juniors specialise too early, they often lose interest and do not enjoy it anymore.

Not one participant stated that early specialisation was the correct strategy to follow.

Participant 4 identified the negative effect of early specialisation:

Their bodies are unbalanced. Their spines are skew, their left shoulders are bigger than their right. [85:37]

Participant 5 identified that children lose the joy of the game:

Die genot van dit verloor het. [84:57]

According to Ford et al. (2013), early specialisation is the correct manner to follow for players to perform at their optimal level. However, early specialisation may have a negative effect on the social, physical and psychological development of players (Fraser-Thomas et al., 2008; Wall & Côté, 2007). As a result, players may discontinue playing the sport (Highfield, 2016).

4.4.3 Age to specialise

Each participant noted that specialisation in golf should only commence between the ages of 14–16, depending on the individual. Participants also said that during this age the body has developed physically and mentally at an adequate level and is ready to specialise. Despite specialisation being a common phase for athletes, some participants argue that even after specialisation in golf a player may play other sport as well.

Participant 2 discussed why children should only specialise at age 15-16 years old:

About 15/16, after 16 bodies now developed nicely, the mind is developed fantastic, the mental strength is there. [79:6]

Participant 6 agreed with every other participant:

So when you turn 15–16 you need to specialise into golf only. [87:29]

Comprehensive research has found that the ideal age for a junior to specialise is between 14–16 years of age (Bryant, 2014; Côté, 1999; Côté et al., 2007; Hayman et al., 2014; Malina, 2010; Moesch et al., 2013; Soberlak & Côté, 2003).

4.4.3.1 Sport that are beneficial for golf

When identifying certain sport that have a positive influence on golf, tennis came up as the most and baseball second. It was emphasised by many participants that each sport will have some kind of benefit to a player.

One participant identified chess as a beneficial sport for golfers. The reasoning behind this statement was that chess helps a golfer with concentration as well as strategic play.

As stated by a participant being able to strategise yourself around the course is important for success.

Participant 1, 2, 3, 5, 7, 8, 10, 11 stated the same sport when asked which sports are beneficial for a golfer:

> *Tennis. [76:14, 77:48, 79:9, 81:38, 84:69, 86:21, 89:34, 90:7]*

Participant 5 and 9 indicated that baseball is beneficial for golf:

> *Baseball. [84:64, 88:51]*

Tennis was the sport that was regarded as the most beneficial for golf. Highfield (2017) agrees there are many aspects in tennis that are similar to golf. Both require a pre-shot routine, both is an individual sport and in both instances, the body uses power from the ground, which is then implemented onto the ball (Highfield, 2017).

4.4.3.2 Sport that have an adverse effect on golf

Cricket was the sport that most participants identified as a negative influence on golf, however, a few participants also stated that there are certain benefits in playing cricket. Hockey was the other sport that proved to have a negative effect on a player.

Participant 1, 2, 3, 7, 9, 10 and 11 identified cricket as a negative influence on golf:

> *Cricket is the worst for golf! [76:15, 77:49, 79:10, 81:40, 86:22, 88:50, 89:33]*

Participant 1 and 11 identified hockey as negative for golf:

> *Hockey. [76:16, 81:41]*

According to Golf.com (2013), Ernie Els excelled at cricket as a youngster, and there is an image of Tiger Woods playing hockey. This indicates that there may not necessarily be a sport that has a negative influence on golf.

4.4.3.3 Benefits of playing many sport

It was noted that playing other sports have numerous benefits such as confidence, longevity, flexibility, strength and also mental benefits. These mental benefits were identified as dealing with failure, working in a team and also being able to accept responsibility.

Participant 4 identified a benefit of playing other sport:

I guess it gives you the confidence that your body can do what you want it to do. Ja you have that sense of confidence in your movement. [85:38]

Participant 2 explained how playing other sports provides longevity to a player:

Mmm I think the all-round sportsman help to prolong their golfing career, back in the younger days now with them playing a lot of soccer and cricket and rugby and all the other sports keep the flexibility, strength and the movement of the body going, they last longer. [79:3]

By playing other sport, players develop the needed speed and balance needed in a golf swing (Coyle, 2014). Picorelli (2016) argues that players develop spatial awareness, body awareness and having control of objects. This will assist them in their golf specific movements.

4.5   LIFESTYLE

The lifestyle that a junior player has to develop and sustain through their professional careers was stated by the participants as important. Participants also describe the life of a professional golfer as lonely. Therefore, this is an aspect that needs to be looked at closely.

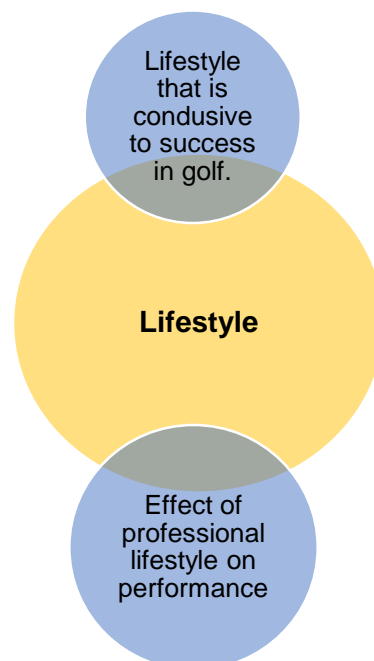**Figure 4.5** Lifestyle as an influencer on the success of a junior golfer

4.5.1   Lifestyle that is conducive to success in golf

The lifestyle needed to become a professional emerged as one of the themes that was noted by many participants as important. Golf was marked as a selfish sport and that professional golfers are loners. According to participants, players are often away from

home and in some cases this has a negative influence on performance. Participants stated that in order for a player to reach professional level there needs to be an intrinsic motivation to achieve success. This motivation to work hard needs to come from the player himself and not from the social support structure if this is achieved then a sufficient lifestyle will happen automatically. The player will then have no problem with the "selfish lifestyle" as stated by a participant.

Numerous participants emphasises that through hard work a player will be able to achieve success.

Participant 3 has experience of the lifestyle of a professional golfer, and he explained that it is not as glamorous as it seems:

> *It's not an easy lifestyle, it's a selfish sport, and you need to be selfish because it's a one-man show, you can't be injured. [77:8]*

Participant 10 identified the professional lifestyle needed to be successful:

> *Uit sy eie wil uit, you know, it's not an effort for him to come and practice or spend 12 hour days, it's not an effort for him to not drink alcohol and to go out jolling, and his whole life is geared towards his golf, but he's perfectly happy with it, and he's immensely talented of course, dit help, but that type of guy, inevitably is going, hy sal 'n loopbaan in golf hê, as far as I'm concerned. [86:9]*

Junior golfers need to practice many hours and put in the hard work to be successful (Rose, 2018; Ryan, 2016). According to Ryan (2016), a player who is devoted and makes compromises, who can spend hours practising effectively without getting bored may very well be successful. He also identifies that players on the PGA tour almost have no social interaction. Therefore, players need to understand that being a professional golfer is a lonely lifestyle.

4.5.2 Effect of professional lifestyle on performance

The statement from many participants said that the lifestyle of a professional golfer is a barrier to success. Participants argued that travelling, being away from your family and being alone has a negative effect on many players. Another aspect that emerged is that due to the fact that professional golfers travel on a regular basis, many do not have lots of friends. This causes them quitting the sport.

Participant 3 stated that the lifestyle of a professional is not suited for a family person:

> *And you travel a lot, so you're away from home all the time. [77:9]*

Participant 12 said that it was a big decision for him to make and live a professional lifestyle without any friends:

> ...living a professional lifestyle from a kid and you leaving all your friends and all the social environments that come with high school. [83:15]

Participant 1 mentioned a professional golfer, playing on worldwide tours. He emphasised that the lifestyle of a professional golfer was the aspect that prevented him from being more successful:

> Hy self vir my gesê...SA Ope gewen, twee toernooie, ek dink Abu Dhabi en Qatar maar hy het dit gehaat, absoluut gehaat om op toer te wees...[76:25]

According to Bamberger (2018), PGA tour players have more pressure at home than the public may think. Usually, these professional golfers have young families and consider their time on the road as work. When these athletes return home after a week of work, their counterparts consider this as their time off. The professional golfers now have to do the duties of a parent and they relish that. This is also where the players have time off and definitely would not like to have conversations about golf.

In 2011, Ben Martin (who played on the PGA tour), spent approximately 27 weeks away from home, sometimes up to a month at a time. This was a time when he was alone on the road without his girlfriend. It is also interesting to note that the average age on the PGA tour in 2011 was 35, and he was 23 years old (Noer, 2012). According to Ben Martin, the stress of travel was wearing on him (Noer, 2012). He says that even though you are travelling to a beautiful town, the only places he saw was the airport, hotel and golf course. Being homesick and lonely are common feelings among PGA tour players (Noer, 2012).

Focussed relaxation is a concept that many PGA tour players employ. It is regarded that the time away from the golf course is just as important as the time on it. Players engage in activities such as hunting, fishing and watching sport. Reading is not a quality that is a high priority (Ryan, 2016).

4.6 FINANCES

During the interviews the participants were asked what barriers exist in the pursuit of becoming a professional golfer. The lifestyle of a professional golfer and also the influence finances has on success were emphasised by the participants.
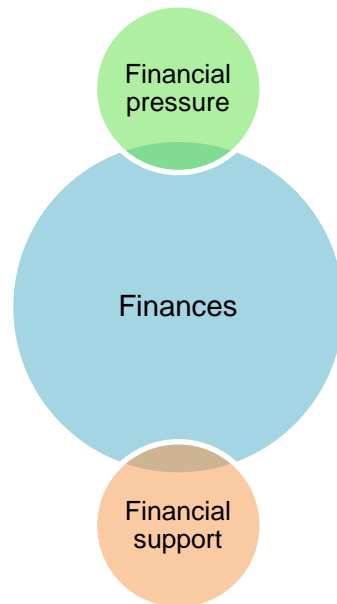
Figure 4.6 Finance as an influencer on the success of a junior golfer

4.6.1　　　Financial pressure

Finances proved to be one of the biggest barriers for success stated by the participants. The main required resource that participants identified for a player to achieve success is finances and without it little of the resources identified will be possible. It was pointed out that when players have the financial implications of failure hanging over their heads it causes undue pressure. Where players are playing without that financial burden in their heads they often perform better.

Participant 11 explained the manner in which financial pressure may have a negative effect on players:

I think financial strain can put as much pressure on a player as a swing change, or whatever it is. I think when you tee it up in a tournament, knowing that you have to make the cut in order to be able to pay for your travel, in order to get to the next tournament, it sort of detracts from the golf. I think that's where a lot of guys just come up short. [81:26]

4.6.2　　　Financial support

The lack of financial support also prevents players from entering certain tournaments, employing the correct support personnel like a quality swing coach, psychologists, fitness trainer and dietician. This also may prevent them from having proper equipment, therefore not being able to perform at the desired level. Where players have adequate financial support the transition is easier for them and they can solely focus on playing golf.

Participant 6 believed that anything is possible, however, finances may hamper the progress of a player:

> *...finances may be the one, the one thing that holds you back, because often you're standing over a put thinking if I miss this I am not going to be able to go to the next leg. That's a very very real problem, and that put undue pressure on that putt. [87:54]*

Participant 5 highlighted the importance of financial support in the process of becoming a professional golfer:

> *...maar jy kan dit nie doen sonder finansies nie. Jy het finansies nodig, so dis baie belangrik [84:74]*

According to Noer (2012), it will cost a player on the PGA tour $110000 to compete for a year. Damron (2015) posits that it will cost $200000 per year on the PGA tour. When taking into consideration that there is no definite income each week, that is frightening. According to Andrew Gunn from the PGA of SA, tour players have a large living expense as they have to pay for travelling and accommodation (Retief, 2018).

4.7 BRANDING

Personal branding emerged as an important aspect in the success of a professional golfer. The importance of players developing a brand for themselves and maintaining this was highlighted by many participants.

Figure 4.7 Branding as an influencer on the success of a junior golfer

4.7.1 Branding strategies

Participants stated that to establish a successful brand you need to interact with people and have conversations with people. The power of social media was also emphasised and according to participants, players need to be active on platforms such as Facebook, Twitter and Instagram. Participants also stated that there lies a large responsibility on players to be disciplined and which activities of their personal life should not be posted on these platforms. It was also emphasised that in order to brand yourself successfully, a player needs to portray the complete package. This refers to physical appearance, golf performance, personality and attitude towards others.

Participant 12 believes that besides social media, it is important to communicate with people:

> *But also the value of interacting with people. It's having a conversation and having time to have a conversation with someone. It can go a hell of a long way, so I think it's definitely important. [83:71]*

Participant 8 emphasised that it is about the image a player portrays to the public:

> *You know so I think it's how you carry yourself and how you, the whole package, you want to put a package together for yourself. [90:45]*

Many participants argued that a player first needs to be successful in order for them to receive a sponsorship of some kind, which is underscored by the views of Hodge and Walker (2015). Players need to develop relationships with people and differentiate themselves from others (Hodge & Walker, 2015). Chubby Chandler, an agent too many top players on professional tours, explains in a well known magazine Golf Monthly (2017), that each player is different. He says that players need to be something identifiable. In saying that he emphasises that players need to stay true to themselves and not attempt to be somebody they are not (Golf Monthly, 2017). According to Adler (2013), it is important when you are a rookie to start creating an image for yourself.

4.7.2 Importance of branding

According to one participant, there are many professional golfers that do not comprehend the importance of personal branding. Each participant stated that personal branding is vital for the success of a professional golfer. It was emphasised that players need money to succeed. In order for them to receive the financial backing they need it will be required of them to attain a sponsorship of some kind and they will only receive this if they establish a successful brand of themselves.

Participant 3 argued that a player needs finances and in order to get that a player needs to develop a brand:

Well you won't survive if you don't have that. [77:51]

Participant 12 openly agreed and said that there are players on the Sunshine Tour that does not believe in the importance of personal branding:

I'd say if you don't and believe it or not there is guys that actually don't, you're an idiot. [83:61]

Hodge and Walker (2015) agree that it has become extremely important for athletes to build and market themselves as a brand. A player like Tiger Woods has developed a brand that is unique and is a tremendous drawing card for tournaments around the world (Golf Monthly, 2017). If a player can develop a successful brand then the opportunities to play in highly visible and lucrative tournaments may arise. Hodge and Walker (2015) state that personal branding is important in all sports as careers are short.

4.7.3 Participants knowledge of branding

There were not many of the participants who were familiar with the term personal branding.

Participant 2, 4, 6, 8

Yes. [79:29, 85:44, 87:45, 90:40]

Raising the theme of personal branding with participants brought a lot of uncertainty among them. There were many participants that either were not aware of the term or who were uncertain of the meaning. Once this was clarified the importance of personal branding in the success of a professional golfer was emphasised.

Participant 1, 3, 5 and 10 had no knowledge of the term personal branding:

No. [76:55, 77:50, 84:85, 86:36]

Participant 7, 9 and 11 were unsure of the term personal branding:

Just run it through me...I think I have. [88:68]

According to Hodge and Walker (2015), the term personal branding with regard to athletes is not well-researched. During the interviews with various professional players, it was found that the players have limited knowledge of personal branding.

4.7.4 Branding challenges for players

The challenge stated by participants is that sponsorships are exclusive and that players are not always aware of what is expected of them. The behaviour of a professional golfer on social media and in a social environment was also highlighted as important.

Participant 8 stated the following with regard to branding challenges:

I think knowing what's expected. So...I think dealing with people. [90:46]

Participant 1 agreed that it is not easy:

Sponsorships is baie min. [76:60]

Hodge and Walker (2015) argue that it is the responsibility of the athlete to implement their own personal brand in the best way. Branding companies should educate professional sportsmen how to successfully create a brand and sustain sufficient marketing of themselves on social media platforms. Hodge and Walker (2015) found three challenges in the branding of players: Lack of time/support, lack of knowledge and differences in career stage.

4.8 COACHING

Participants were asked which aspects had the biggest influence on their career or that of their players. Swing changes, mentorship and simplicity were identified as the aspects that made the biggest difference.

Figure 4.8 The role of coaching in golf

4.8.1 Preparation changes

Participants stated that keeping a player's natural ability is crucial and that making significant changes to a player's swing may not be the correct method. It was said that a player has to work on the swing he has and only make small changes. One participant said that he made the biggest mistake of his career by making too many swing changes. As a result, he lost the natural ability he had. This particular participant stated that under pressure a player always reverts to what feels natural.

Participant 2 said that he will make small changes in the swings of his clients and not change a swing into someone else:

> *Improving on my clients swing, not trying to change my clients swing into Tiger of Rory, or Hendrik Stenson. [79:52]*

Participant 9 reflected on the mistake that he made by being too technical and not keeping his natural swing:

> *Because under pressure you always go back to what is natural. So you'd always try and keep those natural moves in whatever you doing. [88:9]*

Participant 6 reflected on a conversation he had with former Masters champion, Trevor Immelman. He stated that through incorrect swing changes, he has never really fully recovered:

> *I had a really nice chat with Trevor Immelman about that, I said to him...'what happened, why, you won the masters and we were waiting, this is it. He said so did I, he said that the problem was I worked so hard my whole life to win one of these, and when I won it was like an empty thing. It was like hang on now I need to keep going, I need to work harder to get to win another one. Rather than going, well I worked to win one, I can win another one. He felt like he had to be better than he was as a Masters champion to win any of the other majors, which is crazy. But you know he fell into that trap, and he said there are numerous players, other major champions that he had spoken too that felt the same thing. Felt like he needed to make a change, changed coaches, got some advice, that was probably not great advice but he followed it religiously like he always done as a kid. Mmmm and I'm afraid he got injured and his golf game went out the window, so....mmm I think that may well be one of the biggest factors, you played well to get to a point and your growth is coming, it's happening. But then we feel like we need to make changes and then it gets stuffed up completely. [87:59]*

Preparation changes, swing changes and also appearance changes emerged as an important barrier for players. Participants stated that often when players become professional they want to make significant changes and often this has a negative effect on them. It was noted that players need to make small changes and keep the swing they became professional with. Players often become too technical in their preparation, therefore lose the natural ability they possess that make them unique. The reason why professional golfers become too technical is often that they want to swing like their peers on the professional tours. Consequently, failing and not achieving success as a professional. Participants stated that some players change their personality and the way they dress in order to fit in with their peers. It was emphasised that players need to stay true to themselves, and not be influenced by what others do.

Participant 4 stated that being too technical and make too many swing changes is where it went wrong for him:

> *And then all of a sudden Leadbetter came along and now suddenly it was all these swing positions that you could that you had to get in to. You had to get into the right positions and we tried to make all of us look the same, and I believe to this day that I lost my swing then. [85:54]*

Participant 6 agreed that a player needs to stick to what he has and not make wholesale changes:

> *Mmm i think some of them...they turn pro, and immediately feel like they need to change things. [87:58]*

Participants stated that being too technical in their preparations was a definite barrier in their pursuit of success. According to Highfield (2017), players should keep their swings as natural as possible. When players are too concerned with executing the perfect movement it becomes less efficient. Although players want to swing the club perfectly every time, Highfield (2017) argues that this is not possible.

4.8.2 Mentorship

The participants highlighted that being a mentor to a player is a vital aspect of maturing the player to success. The coach needs to understand the person in order for him to make the necessary decisions and guide the player sufficiently. One participant stated that being a mentor involves caring about the person and showing real interest in them.

Participant 3 emphasised that being a coach is also being a mentor and that there are more important aspects than the golf swing:

> *That's where your mentors come into your life is knowing who you are and helping you be that person, whatever its going to be, so if you're a loud person you can't be quiet, and if you're a quiet person you, you can't be loud. [77:55]*

Participant 10 indicated the importance of being a mentor:

> *Making the oaks feel like u care about them. [86:41]*

According to Chubby Chandler in Golf Monthly (2017), a manager to many top European Tour players, the most important aspect is to be personal, loyal and care about your player. He emphasises that a manager need to be a mentor to a player (Golf Monthly, 2017).

4.8.3 Most important qualities needed for a golf coach

Simplicity is another aspect that was identified, and this refers to having a simple approach and focus on the basics. This participant stated that if coaches are too complicated a player may not be successful as there are too many aspects to think about.

Participant 1 indicated that his knowledge of the golf swing is his best quality:

> *...my kennis van die swing en die persoon. [76:49]*

Participant 5 said getting their students to be positive is her best quality:

> *Ek dink as 'n afrigter is dit verskriklik belangrik om hulle van die begin af te leer, hierdie skills te leer om die positiewe raak te sien. [84:84]*

According to Schempp (2018), a good golf coach has to develop relationships with players. Butch Harmon a world-renowned coach says: "I do not teach golf... I teach people to play golf" (Schempp, 2018).

4.8.4 Transition strategies

This theme forms the platform for the developmental stages that a junior needs to follow, which important aspects a coach needs to look at and what skills need to be developed. Participants were asked to identify transition strategies they feel will assist a junior golfer to reach professional level and be successful. Participants were also asked to argue the effectiveness of the transition strategies in South Africa.

4.8.4.1 Stages of development

The participants stated that a junior golfer has to follow the natural developmental stages as recommended in the LTAD programme. Players also need to be aware not to be impatient and realise that becoming a professional golfer is a long process. When this is not followed the golfer may burn out and stop playing the game entirely.

Participant 11 explained the progression he employs with junior skill development.

> *I mean specifically with you know with the kids they starting off at a very young age developing fundamental movement skills, mmm and then only at the later stage do they progress to fundamental sports skills and then the technique gets piled on top of that, and then the pressure situation gets piled up on top of the technique. [81:14]*

Participant 2 stated that the basics are important in the golf swing and that not too many technical aspects should be touched on:

> *That would be a great starting point to get a couple of technical things in, like is the grip correct, is the stance and alignment right, and the small things in the back swing and follow through, not very big things. [79:15]*

As identified by a participant, juniors need to develop fundamental movement skills. This can be confirmed by referring to the LTPD programme of South Africa. During the fundamentals stage kids (6–8 years of age) learn fundamental movement skills and build gross motor skills (Picorelli, 2016; Vardhan et al., 2012). The important aspect that was highlighted by participants was that the "fun" side should be done first, the reason for this is that during this phase all the necessary movement skills are developed.

Secondly, fundamental sport skills will be developed. This entails players completing activities that require their overall body control skills. Picorelli (2016) and Vardhan et al.

(2012) emphasise that players need to have adequate fundamental skills before progressing to the fundamental sport skills stage.

Thirdly, technique and finally pressure situations are added to this process. The final two phases can be confirmed by the LTPD programme of South Africa, this is called Train to Train and Train to Compete (Vardhan et al., 2012).

4.8.4.2 Developmental skills

Many participants stated that this process is something that takes time and that juniors need to stick to a plan. If players rush the process and they are not patient enough, burnout may occur. Participants also emphasised that children need to develop other skills before they will be successful in golf. These skills include jumping, kicking, throwing, skipping and the list goes on. Participants noted that these skills teach children fundamental movement skills needed in a golf swing.

One participant contends that when a player has limitations he needs to work on his strong points, rather than trying to fix the faults. He explains that if you do not hit the ball far, then do not try and get more distance, rather work harder on your short game.

Participant 11 discussed the importance of having a plan and process in place:

> *Young kids mmm they need to go through phases of development. [81:9]*

Participant 9 identified strategies that he did not use in his career but wishes he had:

> *...work harder on your strong points. You know, so in other words work harder on your short game. If you're not long enough work harder on your short game. Not stand on the tee trying to find the distance that you don't have. [88:34]*

Participant 11 highlighted that juniors need to work on a process and be patient:

> *I think it's important to have plans in place mmm...and follow, you know stick to the plans. [81:3]*

4.8.4.3 Individual or group lessons

Participant 5 pointed out an example of a parent who insisted that their child receive individual golf lessons. She states that kids will stop playing golf due to the fact that their friends are not playing with:

> *Hy gaan belangstelling verloor, want daar is nie maatjies nie. [84:55]*

When players practice they learn better when they are in a group than they would if they were alone, and it is also more fun when playing in a group (Schempp, 2018). According to Matthew Cooke in Schempp (2018), having group lessons is more beneficial to his clients.

4.8.5 Golf RSA

4.8.5.1 Beneficial Golf RSA transition strategies

According to the majority of the participants, Golf RSA has recently put in time and money to develop talented players in the country. Golf RSA is situated in the exosystem of the ecological model of golf. Participants also stated that getting juniors actively busy playing tournaments is extremely important and point out that Golf RSA has in recent times made that possible.

Participant 11 stated that the level of competition is sufficient in South Africa:

> *On a junior level there is adequate competition available to the golfers as well as open amateur level. [81:7]*

Participant 6 agreed:

> *I think obviously golf South Africa/golf RSA has done a great job of trying to help a specific group that they have earmarked as having potential. [87:3]*

Golf RSA has developed a national squad, which is funded by Johann Rupert. These players are identified and then provided with support, advice, training camps and opportunities to play competitive golf locally and abroad (Golf RSA, 2018b). The success of this programme is indicated by the number of South African players playing on professional tours around the world.

4.8.6 Fun component in golf

Many participants emphasised that kids need to have fun first before they can be successful. The point that if kids are not having fun they will quit the sport completely, was raised numerous times by participants.

Often parents want their kids to have individual coaching, one participant stated that at a young age kids need to be playing with a friend, if they do not, they will stop having fun and quit.

Participant 3 emphatically agreed that kids need to have fun and have the self-motivation to play golf:

> *Always! Always, you got to be having fun. If the kids doing it for somebody else, they not having fun you're not going to get a very happy golfer and they will quit. [77:22]*

Participant 12 said that it is important to keep having fun, not just when you are a junior:

> *You got to keep that enjoyment factor there. [83:25]*

According to Crane and Temple (2015), the most dominant factors in the dropout of kids in sport is perceptions of their sport competence and the enjoyment of the sport. Highfield (2017) agrees that juniors need to have fun training sessions. Fryer (2015) agrees that the lack of enjoyment is one of the biggest reasons kids stop playing sport. Schaefer et al. (2016) posit that athletes are motivated by enjoyment and as a result are more likely to develop mental toughness. When activities are performed in a fun, non-competitive environment, optimal performance can be achieved (Côté et al., 2007; Fraser-Thomas et al., 2008).

4.9 SUMMARY

This study was exploratory guided by a holistic framework in identifying aspects necessary in the transition from junior to professional level. Seven main themes were identified, quotations by the participants were provided and then linked with the current literature. This will ultimately aid the researcher to develop a framework that will assist player development.

Participants indicated that several aspects influence the performance of players and that it is essential to pay attention to each one. The results were taken from the experience by the participants and also from world-class players that they have assisted in the golf industry. Consequently, the results provided in this chapter is the reality that former and current Sunshine Tour players, PGA of SA members, PGA of SA teaching professionals and golf administrators experience.

As a result, players are required to consist of mental attributes in order for them to be successful. Adding to the mental aspect of the player development is the social support structure. Participants indicated that individuals in this environment are able to influence players in a negative manner, and as a result add unnecessary pressure to them. Financial pressure plays a massive role to a player's mental state and players need to possess certain methods to overcome a barrier such as this. Coaches need to be aware

of the influential role they play in this process and are required to constantly act as a mentor to a player. Junior golfers need to compete in a multitude of sporting codes and only specialise in golf at a later stage in their careers. Players pursuing a career as a professional golfer need to be aware of the challenging lifestyle that will be expected of them. Furthermore, players need to be aware of the importance of establishing effective branding strategies to assist in the process of being successful as a professional golfer.

The next chapter concludes the research study and provides recommendations for adequate player development.

CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter starts with a short summary of the research procedure and process that were followed. The researcher then explains the effect the research study had on himself, followed by the conclusion of the research findings. Consequently, the next section identifies certain recommendations and management strategies that may benefit golfers. Concluding this chapter the limitations of the study is discussed, and possible future research are identified.

5.2 DESCRIPTION OF THE RESEARCH PROCESS

In order to answer the main research question and sub questions, 17 semi-structured interviews were completed with former and current Sunshine Tour players, PGA of SA members, PGA of SA teaching professionals and golf administrators. Two pilot interviews were conducted in order to review the interview schedule. Open-ended questions and a few close-ended questions were asked during the interviews, and as a result this evolved in data rich conversations with the participants. Each interview was transcribed by the researcher and data analysis were done by means of thematic data analysis. This is an appropriate method in qualitative research (Braun & Clarke, 2014).

5.3 CONCLUSION OF THE RESEARCH FINDINGS

A very important component of any research project is to reflect on the study and determine if the aim and objectives have been achieved. The reflection of the end product reveals the strengths and the weaknesses of the study and provide deeper insight for future research projects. The aim of this research study was to develop a transitional framework that will assist junior golfers to reach professional level, and be successful. Each objective will be reflected on and therefore determine if the objective was achieved in this research study.

5.3.1 First objective

The first objective was to conduct a comprehensive literature study to determine if a research gap existed in the transitions in sport, and specifically the transition from junior to professional level in golf. The literature study revealed limited research in terms of the

transition in sport in general and specifically in the transitions in the golf context. As a result, the second purpose of this literature study was to reveal all the relevant theories, models and research that could assist in selecting crucial and essential psycho-social and environmental factors that can impact significantly on the transition process.

This objective was achieved by using the following models:

- The developmental model by Wylleman and Lavallee (2004) and the analytical career model by Stambulova (1994) was selected and the relevant components used in the research study. The model by Wylleman and Lavallee (2004) defines the individual as a complete person, both psychologically and socially, during the transition phases of the career of an athlete. Stambulova (1994) identifies the specialisation stages and the transition within a given sporting code.
- To be able to view the reality of each participant in an holistic manner, the ecological model by Bronfenbrenner (1977) in Henriksen et al. (2010a) was also used. This model assists the researcher to analyse the environment that the athlete finds himself in. This environment has a significant influence on a player and needs to be taken into consideration.
- Furthermore, a social constructionism paradigm was used to understand that each individual experiences their realities in different ways. This allows the researcher to view and make sense of social interactions in the environment of a player.

The career models, ecological approach, and the social constructionism paradigm guided the research study. By following the above models the researcher could establish that a holistic approach is needed for golf players to be successful.

5.3.2 Second objective

The second objective was to examine the perceptions of former and current elite golf professionals, coaches and golf administrators to determine the most essential psycho-social and environmental factors for the successful transition process needed for junior golf players to succeed.

The foundation of the study was guided by the use of the ecological model by Bronfenbrenner (1977) and was confirmed by the results that emerged from the participants. The themes that emerged indicated that to achieve optimal performance a holistic approach is needed. Participants accentuated the importance of each aspect, and

highlighted that for a player to achieve success every aspect need to be mastered and function together as interconnected systems.

This objective was achieved and the following themes emerged from the data collection: Social support, coaching, specialisation, finance, psychology, lifestyle and branding. The emerging themes in association with the use of the ecological model provided the researcher to develop a framework that may enhance development and deliver higher accolades for players.

5.3.3   Third objective

The third objective and the main aim of the study was to integrate the available theoretical models and the empirical data obtained from the interviews to develop a comprehensive transition framework for junior golfers in the South African context. The objective was achieved and a developmental framework for golf players could be generated. This framework indicates the process that needs to be followed by players in order to reach professional level and be successful.

On the next page is the Professional Golfer Development Framework (PGD-framework).
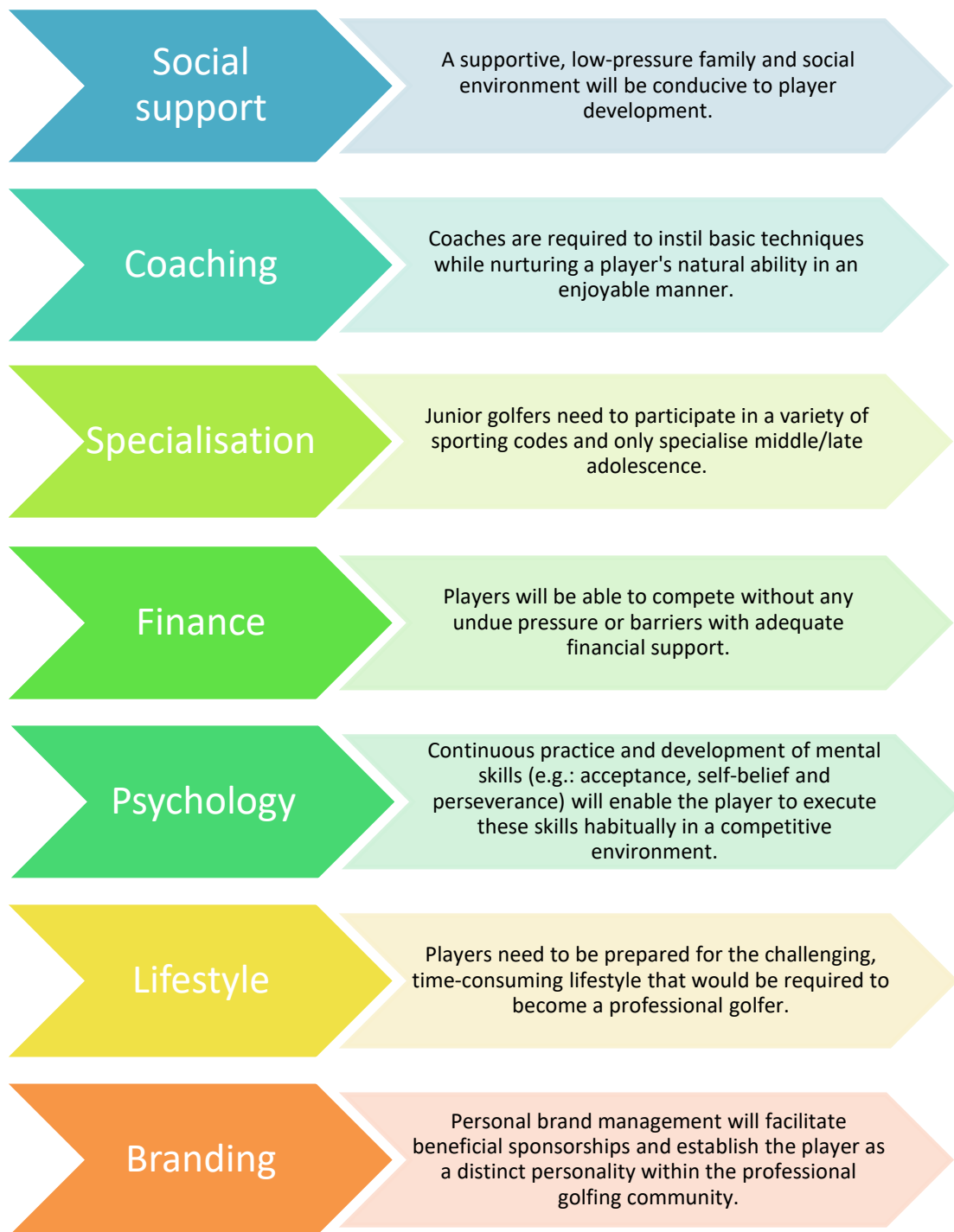
Figure 4.9 The Professional Golfer Development Framework (PGD-framework)

As indicated in the first chapter, the importance of effective managing of all the factors listed in The Professional Golfer Development Framework must be reiterated. The optimization of all these listed factors that will contribute to the effective transition process is dependent on the quality of managing the transition process. All the role players such as the coach, medical team, parents' and other important role players can contribute to the success of managing of the transition process. However, a professional sport

manager that is fully qualified in all the important areas of Sport Science can significantly improve the quality of managing this transition process. The professional manager can develop a well-integrated psycho-educational intervention program where all the factors that are listed in the PGD-framework, can be skilfully employed in the training program when optimal windows for interventions occur in the development of the golfer.

5.4   RECOMMENDATIONS

Individuals involved in golf academies, teaching professionals, parents and players are now able to make use of this framework. This will assist successful management of the transition strategies needed for players to reach professional level and be successful.

5.4.1   Social support

- The social support structure of a junior as well as professional player need to be managed sufficiently and provide adequate opportunities for improvement. The individuals involved in the social support structure may have a significant influence on a player, both positive and negative. For a player to achieve success, it is essential that this environment does not consist of any undue pressure towards the performance of a child, as this may have discontinuation of the sport as a result.
- Players need to have a team behind them such as a swing coach, fitness trainer, psychologist and dietician who manages and supports them through this process.
- Parents, players and coaches need to understand that this is a long process and encourage, support and praise their children. This research study indicated that when players receive adequate support the level of performance may enhance.

5.4.2   Coaching

- It was emphasised that junior golfers need to be able to have fun through the whole process, if this does not happen, discontinuation of the sport is a real possibility.
- Coaches need to train basic techniques into their players and keep simplicity as a key component. It is essential that the natural ability of a player needs to be maintained and not make large swing changes in order to emulate peers.
- Coaches need to adapt training sessions to simulate scenarios that may occur during competition. If players train in this manner, situations on the golf course will be performed with greater ease.

- The importance of coaches being a mentor to the player cannot be underestimated. When the coach-player relationship is sufficient, players will be encouraged to work harder.

5.4.3   Specialisation

- Before players start playing golf, they need to participate in other sport. This study concluded that late specialisation is the correct method of development. Players need to play as many other sporting codes as possible at a young age. Therefore players need to be managed adequately in order for the correct process to follow.
- The LTAD framework needs to be followed in order for children to develop first as athletes and thereafter evolve into golf players. This will greatly benefit them when focussing on golf at a later stage.
- During this research study it was found that the benefits of playing other sport are immense. Players develop physical skills needed to be able to perform a sufficient golf swing. Other benefits are that players develop psycho-social skills that will assist them in golf performance and in life after golf. Therefore, by being involved in a team environment players develop methods to deal with success and failure.
- This study concluded that late specialisation is the correct method of development, and as a result indicated that the benefits of late specialisation are countless.

5.4.4   Finance

- The financial implications of becoming a professional golfer emerged as an important theme during this study. Participants and the accompanying literature confirmed that the process to be successful as a professional golfer is expensive, and this barrier proofed to be detrimental to many amateurs.
- When players have adequate financial support, it was found that players play with a sense of freedom without pressure present in their subconscious.
- It was also found that even when golfers reach professional level, it is still difficult for most golfers to carry the financial implications involved. Players need to employ coaches in the support structure and this requires available finances.
- Players may consider employing managers to assist them in the financial aspect of becoming a professional golfer.

5.4.5 Psychology

- Participants emphasised the importance of mental abilities of players, and this included acceptance, perseverance and confidence. It was also highlighted that these mental aspects need to be practised by players in order to have a positive effect on performance. For players to have better mental abilities the social support they receive from coaches, parents and friends are essential.
- Creating an environment that is as close as possible to a golf course is crucial for improvement. When failure or disappointment occur in competition, players will have the needed mental skills to overcome negative results. The current method of practising for most players appear not to be the most effective. Due to this study, various players in contact with the researcher have changed their practice methods and seen improvement.
- Players need to be patient in the process of becoming a professional and also be patient on the golf course.
- OSVEA (Observation, Selection, Visualisation, Execution and Acceptance) is a key component that needs to be utilised by players. This enables a player to have a consistent process to fall back onto when pressure situations immerge.

5.4.6 Lifestyle

- It was interesting to note that the lifestyle of being a professional golfer is not as glamorous as it seems. This study indicated that travel and being away from family has a negative effect on the performance of players. Many individuals describe this as a real reason for failure.
- When the playing schedule of players are managed sufficiently players may perform better.
- Individuals pursuing to become a professional golfer need to be aware of the loneliness of professional golfers and the commitment that needs to be made. Players need to be willing to set aside a social life and be totally committed to the process of becoming better.

5.4.7 Branding

- Players, coaches and managers need to be more knowledgeable on the concept of personal branding. If coaches and players understand this, many opportunities may emerge that will enhance performance strategies.

- As identified earlier, the financial strain to become a professional golfer is immense. Therefore, players need to be able to develop an income stream to assist them in costs like tournament fees, travel, equipment and the coaching staff.
- This study indicated that in order for players to gain sponsorships and solve the financial implications involved, a personal brand needs to be developed by players. Players need to be aware of methods to attract stakeholders and gain the needed financial aid to be able to pursue a career as a professional athlete.

These results can provide more information for programmes to help junior golf players achieve greater success in the professional sport. A better understanding about this endeavor will enable more junior golf players to succeed in their transition. Consequently, increasing the chances of even more South African junior golf players to reach professional level.

5.5   LIMITATIONS

During the research study, the researcher was actively reflecting on the process followed. As a result, the following limitations were identified:

- The sample size could have been evenly distributed between the different types of participants, teaching professionals, administrators and players. If the researcher expanded the sample selection to different provinces in South Africa different data may have presented itself.
- The majority of the sample selection was males, with only one female being interviewed. Gender differences could have provided different data. The research study may have been different if gender was taken into account.
- Interviews were the only method of data collection and completed only once with each participant. Adding another form of data collection such as questionnaires could have been beneficial to the research study.

5.6   SUGGESTIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

More research is needed on the lifestyle of a professional golfer and the effect it has on their performance. Numerous participants emphasised the effect that the lifestyle of a professional golfer has on performance. However, further research is required to gain a better perspective of the factors involved.

Interventions studies can be conducted by making use of the PGD-framework and determine the impact of these factors on the effective transition and development of professional golfers. Furthermore, the professional management of the effective transition process from junior to professional level can be researched to identify the most important managing functions that will support and realise an optimal transition process.

The relationship between players and coaches emerged during this research study, however, this specific topic could be researched in more detail.

The influence of golf equipment on performance was not investigated and could form an influential part of player performance. Research areas such as the influence of top branded golf equipment vs. entry-level equipment on performance could be investigated, and identify any psychological factors involved. This requires further research in order to examine the influence equipment will have on a player.

Technology in golf plays a significant role in the preparation of players and need to be investigated in more detail. Players often become technical in their preparation and this is often influenced by the available technology. Technology such as Flightscope and Trackman may influence a player significantly as the needed mental skills are not active.

5.7 SUMMARY

The aim of the study was to develop a framework that could be utilised by golf academies, coaches, parents and players to effectively manage a player's career to professional level, and be successful.

The number of themes that were identified, along with the richness of data proved that this is a subject that needed attention. The enthusiasm shown by the participants indicated the mutual belief that players need assistance to pursue a career as a professional golfer. When discussing certain aspects during the interviews, participants reflected on their own experience and tried to make sense of it.

Due to the application of an ecological approach, the research study confirmed that a holistic view on player development is needed.

This research study indicated that certain aspects were not new to the literature, however, there is not a encompassing framework available for the South African context. As a

result, the framework developed may very well enhance the development of players. This provides rich data for players in order for them to reach success.

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APPENDIX A: DECLARATION OF LANGUAGE EDITING

Jomoné Müller

Language Practitioner
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DECLARATION OF LANGUAGE EDITING

5 November 2018

To whom it may concern

This is to confirm that I, the undersigned, have language edited the completed research of Fanie Roos for the *Magister Atrium in Human Movement Sciences* entitled: Managing golf players' transition from junior to professional level

.

No changes were permanently affected and were left to the discretion of the author. The responsibility of implementing the recommended language changes rests with the author of the thesis.

Yours truly

Jomoné Müller

APPENDIX B: INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

Semi-structured Interview schedule

When: February 2018

Where: Location is chosen by the participant, this is in order for the participant to feel as comfortable as possible.

Who: The principal investigator (Mr. SJ Roos) will conduct the interviews, he has received training in the interview process at his institution, North-West University. The interview process will be overseen by the study leader Prof. Ben Steyn who is also a registered counselling psychologist at the Health Professions Council of South Africa.

The study sample will comprise of former and current Sunshine Tour players, PGA of South Africa members, PGA of South Africa teaching professionals and golf administrators. Questions will be different for coaches, players and administrators. The interview questions that will be used are derived from Jorlén (2008), Hayman et al. (2014), and Ellis (2016) and will be adjusted with the following themes:

Introduction:

As a former or current Sunshine Tour player, PGA of South Africa member, PGA of South Africa teaching professional and/or golf administrators, do you think the transition/steps for junior golfers into professional golf in South Africa is enough? Please explain why? Please explain why not?

Players:

a) **Using climbing a mountain as a metaphor for transition into professionalism, please answer the following questions:**
   - What are the lessons you learned in climbing the mountain to professionalism?
   - Please identify the barriers in climbing the mountain.
b) **Participation in golf**
   - Looking back over your childhood and adolescence, can you tell me in as much detail as possible how you first became involved in golf and a summary of your career?
   - If you had to explain to someone how they can become a professional golf player, what would your answer be?
   - In your opinion, what are the different steps that a golf player need to go through to become a professional?
   - Why do you think certain players are successful in becoming a professional, whereas others do not succeed?

c) **Pleasurable diversified sporting skill training**

- Did you play any other sport as a child? If so, which sports did you play? At what age did you play those sports?
- At what age did you only focus on golf?
- Did you enjoy playing other sports?
- How do you think playing other sports influenced your golf ability?

d) **Mental training**

- Describe in as much detail as possible the mental aspects that you feel a player needs to achieve success?
- Which methods do you use to prepare yourself psychologically?
- What was your biggest motivation for success?
- Describe the mental barriers that prevented you from achieving success?

e) **Optimizing performance**

- Looking back over your career, which aspect made the largest impact on you achieving success?

f) **Social support**

- What resources does one need in order to become a professional player?
- How would you view the impact of people around you for example, father, mother, siblings, coach, and managers?

g) **Negative barriers**

- Which constraints may have hindered you becoming a professional?

h) **Personal branding**

- Are you familiar with the concept, personal branding?
- Why is it important for a golfer to consider themselves as a brand?
- What can golfers do to market their personal brand?
- What branding challenges are golfers facing?

i) **Recommendations**

- According to you, which mistakes did you make in your career and how would you have changed it?

Probes to be used:

- "please provide more detail",
- "why did you think that",
- "what did that mean to you",
- "how did that make you feel".

Coaches:

a) **The role of golf in future career trajectories**

- If you had to explain to someone how they can become a professional golf player, what would your answer be?
- In your opinion, what are the different transitions/steps that a golf player need to go through to become a professional?
- Why do you think certain players are successful in becoming a professional, whereas others do not succeed?

b) Pleasurable diversified sporting skill training

- Do you feel that players need to practice many sports or just focus on one?
- From what age do you feel players need to focus on one sport?
- Which sport other than golf attributed the most towards yourself achieving golf success?

c) Mental ability

- Describe in as much detail as possible the mental aspects that you feel a player needs to achieve success?
- Which methods do you use to prepare players psychologically?

d) Optimizing performance

- Looking back over your career as a coach, which aspect made the largest impact on your players?

e) Social support

- What resources does one need in order to become a professional player?
- How would you view the impact of people around your player for example, father, mother, siblings, coach, and managers?

f) Negative barriers

- What are possible constraints that may hinder the process of becoming a professional?

g) Personal branding

- Are you familiar with the concept, personal branding?
- Why is it important for a golfer to consider themselves as a brand?
- What can golfers do to market their personal brand?
- What branding challenges are golfers facing?

h) Recommendations

- According to you, which mistakes does aspiring golfer players make and how would you have changed it?

Probes to be used:

- "please provide more detail",
- "why did you think that",

- "what did that mean to you",
- "how did that make you feel".

Administrators:

a) **The role of golf in future career trajectories**
   - If you had to explain to someone how they can become a professional golf player, what would your answer be?
   - In your opinion, what are the different transitions/steps that a golf player need to go through to become a professional?
   - Why do you think certain players are successful in becoming a professional, whereas others do not succeed?
   - How would you describe the challenges of pursuing to be a professional golf player?
   - What skills does a golfer need to be successful? (mental, physical, commitment ex.)

b) **Pleasurable diversified sporting skill training**
   - Do you feel that players need to practice many sports or just focus on one?
   - From what age do you feel players need to focus on one sport?
   - Which sport other than golf do you think attributes the most towards achieving golf success?

c) **Mental ability**
   - Describe in as much detail as possible the mental aspects that you feel a player needs to achieve success?
   - Which methods do you use to prepare players psychologically?

d) **Optimizing performance**
   - Looking back over your career as a coach, which aspect made the largest impact on your players?

e) **Social support**
   - What resources does one need in order to become a professional player?
   - How would you view the impact of people around your player for example, father, mother, siblings, coach, and managers?

f) **Negative barriers**
   - What are possible constraints that may hinder the process of becoming a professional?

g) **Personal branding**
   - Are you familiar with the concept, personal branding?
   - Why is it important for a golfer to consider themselves as a brand?
   - What can golfers do to market their personal brand?

- What branding challenges are golfers facing?

h) Recommendations

- According to you, which mistakes does aspiring golfer players make and how would you have changed it?

Probes to be used:

- "please provide more detail",
- "why did you think that",
- "what did that mean to you",
- "how did that make you feel".

APPENDIX C: PERMISSION LETTERS

The Professional Golfers
Association of South Africa
P.O Box 949
Bedfordview, 2008

VAT No: 4780173185
Tel: +27 11 485 1370
Email admin@pga.co.za
www.pga.co.za

09 May 2017

To whom it may concern

Dear Sir/Madam

This is to certify that Mr Fanie Roos, I.D. 8307045120087, is at present studying towards his Master's degree.

We at the PGA give him permission to do his research to assist him in obtaining his qualification.

We do not foresee an issue with Mr Roos approaching PGA of SA members in the course of his research.

If you have any queries please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely

ANDREW GUNN
Manager Education and Training
PGA of South Africa.

The Professional Golfers
Association of South Africa
P.O Box 949
Bedfordview, 2008

VAT No: 4780173185
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To whom it may concern

Dear Sir/Madam

This is to certify that Mr Fanie Roos, I.D. 8307045120087, is at present studying towards his Master's degree.

We at the PGA give him permission to do his research to assist him in obtaining his qualification.

We do not foresee an issue with Mr Roos approaching Sunshine Tour players in the course of his research.

If you have any queries please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely

ANDREW GUNN
Manager Education and Training
PGA of South Africa.

The Professional Golfers
Association of South Africa
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09 May 2017

To whom it may concern

Dear Sir/Madam

This is to certify that Mr Fanie Roos, I.D. 8307045120087, is at present studying towards his Master's degree.

We at the PGA give him permission to do his research to assist him in obtaining his qualification.

We do not foresee an issue with Mr Roos approaching golf administrators in the course of his research.

If you have any queries please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely

ANDREW GUNN
Manager Education and Training
PGA of South Africa.

The Professional Golfers
Association of South Africa
P.O Box 949
Bedfordview, 2008

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09 May 2017

To whom it may concern

Dear Sir/Madam

This is to certify that Mr Fanie Roos, I.D. 8307045120087, is at present studying towards his Master's degree.

We at the PGA give him permission to do his research to assist him obtaining his qualification.

We do not foresee an issue with Mr Roos approaching PGA of SA teaching professionals.

If you have any queries please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely

ANDREW GUNN
Manager Education and Training
PGA of South Africa.

APPENDIX D: CONSENT FORM

Faculty of Humanities
Department of Sport & Leisure

January 2017

Dear Sir/Madam,

MANAGING GOLF PLAYERS' TRANSITION FROM JUNIOR TO PROFESSIONAL LEVEL

We would like to invite you to participate in a research study being conducted to obtain a qualification at the University of Pretoria.

This informed consent letter is for former and/or current elite golf professional or coaches. As a coach you obtained a PGA diploma from the Professional Golfers Association of South Africa. You are receiving this informed consent letter to request your participation in a research study, which will investigate golf players' transition from junior to professional level.

This Informed consent letter has two parts:
1. Information sheet (to give you the necessary information about the research).
2. Written informed consent (for signatures, should you decide to take part).
We would appreciate it if you could take the time to read through the attached documents. If you are uncertain of any part of this research, you are welcome to contact us.

Kind Regards,

Mr. Fanie Roos   **Prof. Ben Steyn**
Researcher   **Main researcher and Head of Department**

The Department of Sport and Leisure Studies   Tel: 012 420 6094   Fanie.Roos@nwu.ac.za
Faculty of Humanities
University of Pretoria
LC de Villiers (Sports Campus)
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Office 2-15
4555
PRETORIA
Republic of South Africa

PART 2: WRITTEN CONSENT FORM
Please mark the questions with the appropriate mark (X) and return the signed form to us.

1. I agree to take part in the above mentioned research project.

YES ☐

NO ☐

PLEASE ONLY ANSWER QUESTIONS 2 - 9, IF YOU MARKED YES ABOVE.

2. I confirm that I have read and understood the document entitled *Information Sheet* for the above research project. Any questions or concerns about the study have been addressed and dealt with adequately. ☐

3. I understand that my participation in the research is entirely voluntary. I acknowledge the fact that I may withdraw from the research at any time and this decision will not be held against me. ☐

4. I understand that I will need to undergo a one-on-one individual interview, face to face, via Skype or telephonically (whatever suites you). ☐

5. I understand that the researcher will not identify me by name in any reports and that all information about me will be kept confidential. ☐

6. I understand that there are no financial benefits involved with my participating in this study. ☐

7. I understand all my rights as a research participant.

8. I know whom to contact about any concerns regarding the research project. ☐

9. I would like to receive a summary of the results of the research project, once completed.

YES ☐

NO ☐

_____
Name of Participant

_____   _____
Signature of Participant   Date