Socio-ecological factors in talent development in cricketers in a diverse society

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DECLARATION

I, **Mary Ann Dove** hereby declare that the work on which this thesis is based, is my original work (except where acknowledgements indicate otherwise) and that neither the whole work nor any part of it has been, is being, or is to be submitted for another degree in this or any other university. I authorise the University to reproduce for the purpose of research, either the whole or any portion of the contents in any manner whatsoever.

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ABSTRACT

Introduction: In recent years, there has been a move to understand the environment and context in which athletes develop. South Africa's unique context provides an opportunity to understand how environmental factors could influence talent development in cricket. Since democracy, there has been limited representation of Black African cricketers at the elite levels in South Africa. Therefore, the aim of this thesis was to determine the role that socio-ecological factors may play in the development of cricket talent in a diverse society.

Methods: Qualitative research methods were used to explore the experiences and perceptions of South Africa's male cricketers as they progressed through the talent pathway from exposure to the game to the elite level. The perceived effectiveness of the introduction of an ethnic target policy was also explored. Seventy-one semi-structured interviews were conducted with a purposive sample of players from all ethnic groups (n=43), and with knowledgeable and experienced key informants (n=16). A thematic analysis of the data resulted in the identification of themes which are presented using a multi-level socio-ecological framework.

Results: All players progressed to the elite level; however, their access points to and routes through the pathway varied. This progress was influenced by the inter-relationship of distal and proximal socio-ecological factors that they experienced during their cricketing careers. These influences can be summarised into five talent development components that acted either as barriers or enablers to progress: (1) access to opportunities and competition, (2) holistic player development, (3) effective support networks, (4) inclusive team environments, and (5) adaptive mind-sets. In addition, various intrapersonal characteristics were identified that further affect a player's ability to achieve elite cricketing success. Finally, it was determined that an ethnic target policy alone is not an effective intervention for developing cricket talent in a diverse society undergoing transition.

Conclusion: A socio-ecological framework to talent development lends additional support to the idiosyncratic, multifactorial, dynamic and complex way in which cricket expertise is achieved, particularly in diverse societies. It provides stakeholders involved in the talent development process with evidence to inform policy and practice, as well as design effective interventions.

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Translational publications

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Dove M.A., Draper C.E., Taliep M.S., & Gray, J. (2016) How important are socio-ecological factors in talent development? The Medallist, 2016 (1): 44-45.

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NOTE ON TERMINOLOGY

Various terms relating to race and ethnicity have been used throughout this thesis to describe the South African society and cricket landscape. This note explains the rationale for the particular way in which specific terms have been used.

The terms 'race' and 'ethnicity' are very often used interchangeably in the literature, however in the social sciences, 'race' refers to physical characteristics and 'ethnicity' to cultural identity.[1] The use of appropriate terms shifts with time and context[2] and this needs to be considered when determining the most suitable terms to employ. Furthermore, the validity of race categorisation in health sciences research has been questioned.[3,4] South Africans were and continue to be classified according to their 'race', which has previously been referred to as 'population groups'. Given the past injustices and current inequalities in South African society, these categorisations continue to be used legally in official government and census documents.[5] The four groups are: 'White', 'Coloured', 'Indian/Asian' and 'Black African.' Furthermore, these categorisations are used in everyday life; for example, applying for a job or research grant,[6] and even selecting sports teams.[7] Although the term 'Coloured' has negative connotations in many parts of the world, because of its continued, wide use and acceptability in South Africa, it has been maintained in this thesis.

With no intention to cause offence, and despite the personal reservations of the author of such classifications, this study has identified the varying experiences of cricketers from the different ethnic groups. This was not to evaluate these differences based on ethnicity, but rather to inform policy and practice interventions to address the inequalities that persist in cricket going forward. The legally and socially accepted South African group names (defined below) have been used. However, considering the socio-ecological approach of this study, the terms 'ethnicity' and 'ethnic' group have been used throughout as opposed to 'race' or 'population group'. Although the 'Coloured', 'Indian/Asian' and 'Black African' groups were previously referred to as 'non-White', the term 'Black' has been used when these three groups are referred to collectively. This is in line with Cricket South Africa's terminology.

LIST OF DEFINITIONS AND ABBREVIATIONS

Term (abbreviation)	Definition
'Black'	Coloured, Indian and Black African.
Black African (BA)	Individuals of indigenous African descent.
Coloured (C)	Individuals of mixed race or mixed ancestry.
Cricket South Africa (CSA)	Organisation responsible for managing cricket in South Africa.
Elite	Players playing for and/or contracted to play for a franchise team or higher. See methodology (Chapter 4) for rationale for definition.
Football	Often referred to locally as soccer.
Four-day match	A domestic cricket match played over the course of four days; each team has two opportunities to bat.
Franchise team	Regional-based professional cricket team. Equivalent to Australian state or English county teams. There are currently six in South Africa. Professional refers to being paid to play the game.
Hub	The term 'Hub' is used to describe effective cricketing centres that service a community within a particular area. Hubs provide surrounding disadvantaged schools with access to well-resourced cricket facilities.
Indian (I)	Individuals of Indian descent.
One-day match	A match consisting of a limited number of overs (usually 50) per team and played over the course of a single day. The version of the match played between two national teams is known as a One-day International (ODI).

Over	Six balls bowled by one bowler to a batsman.
Proteas	South African national cricket team.
Province	Geographic region. These are equivalent to Australian states or English counties. There are nine provinces in South Africa.
Senior level	Approximately 19 years and older.
Senior provincial team	Senior cricket team which acts as a feeder team to the franchise team. There are currently 13 of these teams in South Africa. Some of the 9 provinces have two senior provincial teams as they have either greater populations or larger geographical areas. Approximately 50% of the players in these teams are paid a small monthly salary (roughly equivalent to $600).
South Africa (SA)	The Republic of South Africa.
South African 'A' (SA'A')	The second highest senior national cricket team.
SA Cricketers' Association (SACA)	Organisation representing South African professional cricketers.
South African Emerging Team	The third highest senior national cricket team.
Test match	An international cricket match played over the course of 5 days.
Twenty20	A cricket match consisting of 20 overs per team. The international version of the game is known as a T20 International (T20I).
White (W)	Individuals of Caucasian or European descent.

Footnotes have been used to explain and clarify specific language, personalities and contexts that are unique to the South African environment.

CHAPTER 1   INTRODUCTION

"Cricket is thus a game with a rich, complex and at times burdensome history, one that determines its unique political and social context. But there are everyday variables that affect each game of cricket beyond this somewhat sweeping backdrop; variables as peculiar and yet familiar to players and fans as any of cricket's most famous eccentricities." (Bob Woolmer, former South African cricket coach & Tim Noakes, well-renowned South African sports scientist)

1.1   Introduction

This chapter provides the background and context to the research. The relevance and significance of the research will be introduced. The chapter concludes by presenting an outline of the scope and structure of this thesis.

1.2   Background and context

There has been a growing interest in sport talent identification and development research over the past 40 years as individuals, teams and countries seek to optimise elite sporting success.[8] As the shift, from focussing only on the role of individual characteristics in the process of developing expertise towards an understanding of the proximal and distal environments in which individuals develop gains momentum, many questions remain unanswered.[9-11] In addition, the environmental influences may vary between socio-economic and cultural contexts, as well as across sports, leading to the exclusion and drop out of potential participants.[12, 13] Furthermore, there has been limited research into the influence of environmental factors on the development of cricket talent.[14-16]

The game of cricket originated in the English countryside in the 14th century and with the growth of the British empire, spread to other countries such as the West Indies, India, Australia and South Africa.[17] Today, 105 countries play the game.[18] Cricket is a game played by two teams, each consisting of 11 players, on a field with a specially prepared 20.12m pitch in the middle. It is both a team game and a one-on-one challenge between the batter and bowler. The teams take it in turns to bat (termed an innings) and bowl (field). The object of the game is to score more runs (either by running between the wickets or hitting the ball over

the boundary) than your opponents before 10 players are dismissed. The skills required by batsmen and bowlers are determined by their different roles in the game.[19]

> "Football is about group domination of space: cricket is about an individual's encounter with time. In cricket, exceptionally diverse levels of competition are imposed upon the individual. He plays directly against a single other batsman or bowler, against the pitch and conditions, against himself, against the needs of the game in terms of attack and defence, and against ten other participants in addition to his immediate adversary. He does this both for himself and in relation to the mood and intent of his team."[20]

The first international cricket match played by a South African team was in 1889,[21] but in 1970, South Africa was banned from playing international cricket because of its apartheid policy. The population was categorised according to ethnic groups under this policy, which institutionalised segregation among the ethnic groups and denied basic human rights to those citizens who were classified as 'Black' (Black African, Coloured and Indian). This resulted in significant inequalities between the ethnic groups across all facets, including sport, of South African society. Between 1889 and 1970 only White players represented South Africa in official test matches.[22] This was despite all ethnic groups in the country playing the game.[22] The inequalities caused by apartheid continue to exist today.[23] Furthermore, as explained in the note on terminology, the ethnic classifications are still used throughout South African society in an attempt to redress the injustices of the past.

With South Africa's readmission to international cricket in 1991 and the abolition of apartheid in 1994, the transformation of the game to be representative of all ethnic groups has been a priority for Cricket South Africa (CSA) and the South African government. The lack of Black African players representing the South African national cricket team (Proteas) in all formats of the game, has been a cause for concern for CSA for a number of years. Therefore, one of the aims of this thesis was to gain a better understanding of the reasons for this lack of progress.

The varying historical, social, cultural and economic realities of South African society have added a complexity to developing sporting talent that has not previously been empirically researched. The uniqueness of the South African context provides an opportunity to investigate how environmental factors could influence talent development in cricket. In addition, it provides a platform to identify the effects of socio-ecological factors on both the individual and the local sporting community, which may be translated into the broader

sporting community. Therefore, the overall aim objective of this study was to determine the role that socio-ecological factors may play in the development of cricket talent in a diverse society.

This research used a qualitative research methodology to explore the lived experiences, feelings and personal meanings of such experiences for the players and key informants, from all ethnic groups, directly involved in the South African cricket landscape.[24, 25] The lack of the players' 'voice' and perspective has previously been criticised in the process of researching talent development.[26]

1.3   Relevance to South African cricket and contribution to research

The pragmatic philosophy adopted in this research endeavoured to find practical solutions to the current problems experienced by CSA in developing cricket expertise among all ethnic groups.[27] The findings of this research will provide CSA with additional evidence to inform policy and practice.

No studies have been reported that have used a socio-ecological approach to talent development in diverse, low- and middle-income countries. It is hoped that this research will add to the talent development literature by providing support for the value of such an approach in better understanding the idiosyncratic, complex, multi-dimensional and dynamic talent development phenomenon. More specifically, the insights of this research may add to the cricket talent development literature.

1.4   Thesis outline

In addition to this introduction, ten chapters make up this thesis. Chapter two provides readers with the context in which this research was conducted by positioning it in the diversity of South African society, as well as in the historical and current cricketing landscape. The talent identification and development literature, including relevant models, distal and proximal environmental factors, and intrapersonal characteristics is reviewed in Chapter three. This chapter also evaluates the current knowledge of socio-ecological frameworks with particular focus on their use in the sporting sphere. The qualitative methodology employed in all four studies that comprised this research is detailed in Chapter four.

The results are presented in Chapters five to eight, using the multiple socio-ecological levels as a framework. Chapter five describes the progress of South African cricketers through a talent pathway from exposure to the game to the elite level. In Chapter six, the distal environmental factors that were perceived to enable or hinder progress are shared, while Chapter seven focuses on the influence of the four most important proximal factors identified. The players' perceptions of the role of intrapersonal characteristics in talent development are presented in Chapter eight.

In Chapter nine, the findings are discussed and a socio-ecological framework of talent development in South African cricket is proposed. Using this framework as a reference, perceptions of the effectiveness of an ethnic target intervention are presented and discussed in Chapter ten. Chapter eleven concludes this thesis by summarising the key findings and discussing their implications. Recommendations made to CSA and their application over the past number of years are presented. The study's strengths, limitations and suggested future research areas are considered in this chapter, including the role of the researcher throughout the research process.

CHAPTER 2   CRICKET IN THE SOUTH AFRICAN CONTEXT

"The black man is subjected to two forces in this country. He is first oppressed through institutionalised machinery…Secondly, and this we regard as the most important, the black man in himself has developed a certain state of alienation, he rejects himself precisely because he attaches the meaning white to all that is good, in other words he equates good with white." (Steve Biko, South African anti-apartheid activist)

2.1   Introduction

This chapter sets the scene by providing a brief overview of South Africa's past and current social, economic and political developments. It positions cricket within South African society and the factors that have affected the development of cricket talent among all ethnic groups.

2.2   South Africa as a diverse society

2.2.1   Historical perspective

The impact of colonialism on South Africa's history can be traced back to the arrival of the Dutch in 1652 and the British settlers in 1820. In 1913, the Natives Land Act limited Black African land ownership. However, ethnic segregation was entrenched from 1948 with the introduction of what became known as the apartheid era.[28] Apartheid was a system of legal, ethnic, segregation policies involving political, social and economic discrimination against Black African, Coloured and Indian ('Black') South Africans.[29, 30] It sought to ensure that the ethnic groups did not interact in any manner. The system entrenched and formalised the ethnic segregation that had previously existed in the country during colonialism. These policies were enforced by the South African government between 1948 and 1994, prior to the first democratic election and inauguration of Nelson Mandela[1] as president. Basic human rights to those citizens who were classified as 'Black' were denied under these policies. Ethnic classification determined every aspect of an individual's life in South Africa, including where you lived, your family circumstances, what school you attended, what work you could do, your

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[1] Nelson Mandela was the first president of a democratic South Africa. Having been jailed in 1964 for 27 years for his opposition to apartheid, he was released in February 1990. On 10th May 1994, he was inaugurated as president and served until June 1999. He died on 5th December 2013 at the age of 95.

earning potential, the transport you could use and which beach you were permitted to swim at.[30-32] The lasting impact of colonialism and then apartheid resulted in significant inequalities within South African society.[31]

The Group Areas Act of 1950, enforced the geographic segregation of the ethnic groups, forcibly removing people from one area to another and limiting ownership of land by 'Blacks'. [33, 34] This Act and other apartheid legislation resulted in separate communities for each ethnic group, usually far away from the limited, low-paying job opportunities available to 'Blacks'. Migrant labour, which entailed workers travelling from their rural homes to work in the cities and on the mines was another scar caused by apartheid. The workers were housed in temporary, single-sex hostels just outside of the White areas. This split families and "influenced South African society in ways that will reverberate for generations".[34] With a lack of economic activity in the 'Black' areas, referred to as townships, resources were limited, resulting in impoverished communities and squalid living conditions. The contrast between the relative affluent White areas, sustained by cheap 'Black' labour, and the poverty encountered in the townships continued to grow. Black Africans were most disadvantaged, followed by Coloureds and then Indians.[28, 35]

In addition to the structural, social and economic impact of apartheid, its racist ideology shaped the attitudes of Whites and 'Blacks' alike.[30] 'Blacks' were perceived as inferior and Whites grew up believing that segregation was normal. The Afrikaner *'volk'*[2], subscribed to a set of ideals that included White supremacy and the belief that Afrikaners were chosen as God's special people.[30] In a 1996 survey of social identities, most South Africans used ethnic terms to describe themselves and only 20% used a national description as a form of identification.[36] More recently, some opinion makers believe racial stereotyping and perceptions continue to play a role in the South African psyche and perpetuate divisions along ethnic lines.[37] As Farland and Jennings[38] argue, attitudes do not suddenly change just because a new political system has been achieved.

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[2] A nation or people, in particular the Afrikaner people

2.2.2 Post-democratic transition

Since 1994, there has been some progress towards redressing the basic social and economic effects of apartheid. For example, between 1996 and 2016, electricity to households has increased from 58.2% to 90.3%, piped water from 60.8% to 83.5% and 60.6% of households had flush toilets in 2016, compared to 49.1% in 2001.[39] Enrolment at foundation level educational institutions has also increased significantly for all ethnic groups between 1996 and 2011.[40] However, the majority of consequences will take longer to rectify, and 24 years after democracy, South Africa still suffers from marked socio-economic divisions and inequalities between communities.[23]

Financial inequalities

As shown in Table 2.1, despite comprising 80% of the South African population, Black Africans continue to have the lowest household income and highest unemployment rates.[5, 41] A specific example of this inequality is seen in satellite television ownership.[42] White South Africans, on the other hand, have the most positive results in all these measures, while the Coloured and Indian ethnic groups score between these two groups.[41, 42] Furthermore, Black African and Coloured parents of children in Western Cape secondary schools were found to fall into the lower socio-economic brackets.[43]

Table 2.1: Representative statistical information demonstrating the inequality and diversity of the South African population

Ethnic Group	% of total population (2016)	Average annual household income (ZAR) (2011)	Official unemployment level (%) (2011)	Satellite television as % of total television ownership (2011)
Black African	80.7	60,613	35.6	26.3
White	8.1	365,134	5.9	71.3
Coloured	8.7	112,172	22.3	34.5
Indian	2.5	251,541	11.7	63.6

A recent survey indicated that 55.5% of South Africans were living in poverty in 2015. Of these, 64.2% and 46.6% of Black African individuals and households respectively were living in poverty compared to 1.0% and 0.8% of White individuals and households. The equivalent percentages for Coloureds were 41.3% and 32.2% and for Indians 5.9% and 4.6%.[39] Based on

income per capita (comprising salaries, wages and social grants), South Africa's level of inequality as measured by the gini coefficient index[3] was 0.68 in 2015 [39] and the country has recently been ranked by the World Bank as the most unequal country out of 149 countries.[44]

Family structures

In the first decade of the 21st century, only 27% of Black African children lived with both their biological parents compared to 48% of Coloureds and approximately 80% of Indians and Whites.[45] Furthermore, 39% and 28% of Black African and Coloured children respectively lived only with their mothers, compared to 16% and 14% of White and Indian children.[46] Twenty two percent of Black African children were reported as orphaned compared to 3% of White and Indian children and 8% of Coloured children.[45] Furthermore, it is usual for Black African children to be raised without their father's social or financial contribution to their wellbeing.[32, 47]

Educational opportunities

During apartheid, schooling in South Africa was also segregated. 'Black' education was characterised by a lack of schools, shortages of qualified teachers, high learner-teacher ratios and an inferior curriculum.[40] These schools were "starved" of resources and as such textbooks were more valuable than sporting equipment.[30] The ongoing effects of the inequality in education can be seen in the percentage of children completing secondary school as reported in the census of 2011: 77% of White children complete school compared to 62% Indian, 32% Coloured and 35% Black African children completing school.[41]

The structure of the South African schooling system has undergone many reiterations during and post-apartheid.[40] Currently a quintile system is used to categorise schools based on their level of financial need.[48] However, this system is complex and currently under review.[48] Therefore for purposes of this thesis, schools have been divided into the two broad categories commonly used, namely 'former model C' and 'former model B' schools. 'Former model C'[4] schools refer to previous 'Whites only' schools and only a small number of learners attend

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[3] An index of 0 represents a state of total equality (everyone in the society shares the same level of income) and an index of 1 reflects a state of complete inequality (in this society, one person gets all the income and everyone else gets none).

[4] The terms 'former model C' and 'former model B' are not official government terminology, but are the descriptions used by most people when discussing the different types of schools.

these schools in comparison to the total number of learners. These schools are on the whole well-resourced in terms of finances, teachers and amenities.[49] Many of them have extensive sporting facilities. In addition to government support, parents pay fees for their children to attend these schools. 'Former model B' schools refer to schools that were previously reserved for 'Black' learners only and they are usually located in the townships and rural areas. In the past, there were separate schools for Black African, Coloured and Indian learners. These schools are funded by the government and Coloured and Indian schools have been better resourced than the Black African schools.[49] The overall quality of education in many of these schools is poor. Sport facilities in the majority of these schools are limited and physical education plays a limited role in the curriculum.[7] The gap between township schools and those in the former White areas has remained or become greater in the years post-apartheid.[50] The majority of 'Black' learners still attend these 'former model B' schools as they are unable to pay the fees at the 'former model C' institutions. Photographs of typical 'former model B' and 'former model C' schools are shown in Appendix A.

Sport in South Africa

Along with all other aspects of society, sport was also affected by the policies of apartheid. Sport is an important part of South African culture, although for many years it was played separately by the different ethnic groups.[6] During these years, sport was controlled by the minority White South Africans and access to suitable facilities were denied to the majority of the population.[51] Indians and then Coloureds had more facilities than those afforded to Black Africans, but these were limited in comparison to the Whites.[31] The few facilities in Black African communities catered mainly for football.[52] Football is still the predominant sport in most Black African communities.[53, 54] Sport reflected the power and privilege of the White population and can therefore not be separated from the broader socio-economic and political framework of White advantage.[52] In fact, in the minds of most Whites during apartheid, sport for 'Blacks' was non-existent.[31]

Significant sporting improvements have been achieved in the past 24 years, but 'Blacks' still continue to live a life and play sport on an unequal footing to their White counterparts.[7, 52] The development of cricket talent therefore needs to be viewed in light of both the historical

and current disadvantages experienced by 'Black' South Africans and particularly Black Africans, as well as in light of the wider social context.[30]

2.3   Cricket in South Africa

2.3.1   *History of the game prior to 1991*

Cricket was introduced to South Africa by Britain in the 1800s as a result of the spread of the British Empire. The game continued to grow and was eventually played among all communities.[22] However, as the disparities of apartheid took hold, the game flourished among the Whites, but was damaged in many 'Black' clubs, thereby relegating the game to lesser importance and a more social focus in these communities.[53, 55, 56] From as early as the 1890s, 'Blacks' were excluded from the national cricket association and only Whites were entitled to represent South Africa in official test matches.[22, 30] The other ethnic groups had their own organisational structures and local tournaments.[56]

With limited facilities and equipment, substandard pitches and a scarcity of coaches, the development of natural talent among 'Black' players was hampered.[30] Despite the barriers faced, there was significant talent.[31] One of the most well-known examples being Basil D'Oliveira, a cricketer of Coloured ethnicity. Being unable to be selected for the South African team, he left the country for England in 1960 at the age of 29. He went on to be selected for England and played 44 tests between 1966 and 1972. His inclusion in the English squad to tour South African in 1968/69 resulted in the tour being cancelled as the South African government objected to D'Oliveira's inclusion in the team. This sparked the beginning of the sporting boycott against South Africa's apartheid policies.[53, 56]

In 1970, South Africa was excluded from all international cricket participation and only readmitted in July 1991.[56] During this time, rebel tours, in which players from other countries were paid large amounts of money to play, were organised by the White South African Cricket Union (SACU) as a strategy to keep the game alive. The majority of 'Black' South Africans despised the White South African team and supported the rebel teams.[56] The last of these rebel tours, in 1990, was called off midway during the tour following enormous pressures and demonstrations from 'Black' protestors and sporting organisations. This coincided with the

release of Nelson Mandela after 27 years in prison and the start of the transition to a democratic South Africa.[50]

2.3.2   Post-1991 transition to a unified administration

In May 1990, the basis for a South African political settlement was agreed, which paved the way for negotiations towards unity among the previously disparate, ethnically aligned cricket administrations.[56] Despite political and sporting agendas among the various stakeholders,[30, 31, 50, 51] the United Cricket Board of South Africa (UCBSA) was formed in June 1991 following influentially facilitated discussions by Steve Tshwete.[57] Tshwete would later become the first Minister of Sport in a democratic South Africa. The UCBSA became Cricket South Africa (CSA) in 2006. Readmission to world cricket occurred in July 1991, followed by the first tour since isolation to India in November 1991, participation in the World Cup in February 1992 and a tour to the West Indies in April 1992.[56] Sport played a key role in the political settlement negotiations and cricket unity was fast-tracked to heal the racial divide and return South Africa to the international fold prior to the democratic elections in 1994.[50]

Throughout much of the 1990s, Whites still dominated the game in most respects.[58] There were limited numbers of 'Black' players at senior provincial and national level and the team to India in 1991 fielded no 'Black' players. The lack of 'Black' players in this first team was perhaps indicative of the decline of 'Black' cricket during the apartheid years.[22] The speedy return to international competition upset some stakeholders because the first chief executive, president, national coach and head of selectors were all White.[53, 56] The first Black African player, Makhaya Ntini debuted in 1998,[59] and the first 'Black' national coach was only appointed in December 2012.[60] Since the early 2000s, the administration of South Africa cricket has been under the leadership of 'Blacks' and more recently Black Africans.[53] However, politics and control have continued to affect the leadership and administration of the game by CSA and its provincial affiliates.[6, 53, 56, 61, 62] As Alfred[61] suggests, when politics and cricket mix, players suffer. In a frank assessment of matters, a former CEO of CSA acknowledged in 2003 that there was a lack of 'Black' representation on and off the field, implicit and explicit racism in a divided game, unsatisfactory management systems, lack of transparency at all levels of administration and an unsuitable and inconsistent flow of quality players into provincial and national teams.[22] As recently as 2012, a government commission of enquiry

recommended changes to the governance and administration of CSA.[63] The same commission believed that insufficient funds were being allocated to the development of grassroots cricket in disadvantaged areas and recommended that Sport and Recreation South Africa (SRSA) should give more attention to this in its budget allocations.[63]

2.3.3 Development of cricket talent

A key focus of cricket administrators post unity was to develop the talent of players across the ethnic groups. In 1982, the then CEO of SACU initiated the 'Bakers'[5] mini-cricket development programme in the Black African townships of the Transvaal[6] to increase access to the game for more participants in these communities.[57] The programme was expanded nationwide and to other communities in 1986.[56] By 2009, two million youngsters had been exposed to the game,[56] and this had grown to two and half million by 2017.[64]

Along with the mini-cricket programme, bursaries were offered to 'Black' and particularly Black African players to attend the best cricketing schools in the country where they would have access to facilities and coaching that was not available in the township and rural schools.[6] However, as Desai and Vahed[56] argued, bursaries alone couldn't produce international cricketers, because of the socio-economic conditions in the townships. In addition, money was spent building new or upgrading existing facilities in the 'Black' communities and over time, CSA have continued to add additional programmes to develop talent in all communities.

Post 1991, township cricket continued to struggle. The 'old' 'Black' clubs battled to compete with the White ones because of the lack coaches and facilities as well as the means to maintain the facilities. Transport to training and matches also posed a challenge.[56] 'Former model B' township schools could not match 'former model C' schools in terms of cricket resources and expertise. In addition, the lack of quality nutrition and limited family support on match days contributed to 'Black' players' ability to perform.[53] Whilst CSA attempted to provide facilities in the 'Black' areas, they couldn't do it alone and government has not delivered the infrastructure required in schools to develop participation and excellence. Only 8% - 16% of secondary schools in South Africa participate in cricket.[7] Furthermore, it is estimated that

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[5] The programme was referred to by the name Bakers, after Bakers biscuits who sponsored the programme from 1982 until 2010. In 2010, KFC took over the sponsorship of this programme.

[6] The Transvaal was one of four provinces in South Africa prior to 1994.

approximately one rand (equivalent to approximately US$0.08) is spent by the government on sport and recreation per annum per child.[53] Without opportunities to play the game, 'Black' players are unable to access the game and then to develop their natural talent to enable them to progress. Equality under law does not necessarily equate to equality of opportunity.[52] With these statistics in mind, some authors suggest that cricket remains predominantly a middle class sport.[6, 38, 56, 63, 65-67]

The perceptions and attitudes of White administrators and coaches that 'Black' players were not good enough to play at international level further contributed to the slow progress of 'Black' players through the talent pathway.[53] The non-selection of 'Black' players for the national team were very often justified by blaming a loss of form or other similar excuses.[61] On the other hand, the careers of young 'Black' players may have been hampered, by premature selection to appease politicians and administrator.[68] Furthermore, the psychological impact on 'Black' players having to transcend these structural and attitudinal barriers cannot be under estimated. For example, having to play at stadiums that bore the names of bastions of apartheid.[58]

During the 1990s and early 2000s there was much criticism that the development programmes had produced very few 'Black' players at the professional and national level and many questions were raised with regard to its success in developing talent.[53] The South African squad at the 2009 Twenty20 World Cup did not contain a single Black African player.[56] In more recent times, the programmes seem to have experienced greater success in progressing talent to the U19 level, with 12 of the 15 members of the South African U/19 ICC World Cup winning team in 2014 having come through the mini-cricket programme.[64] However, up to the 2012/13 season, as shown in Table 2.2, the progress to the senior levels (i.e. post U19) of Black African players in particular has been slow. Coloured and Indian[7] players have fared somewhat better. Between the 2013/14 and 2017/18 seasons an additional nine Black African and six Coloured/Indian players were chosen in the different formats for the Proteas.[69] This period coincided with the introduction of specific numerical targets (Section 2.3.5 and Chapter 10)

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[7] Although this thesis presents the views and experiences of the Coloured and Indian players separately to understand their different challenges, CSA when presenting numbers combines them.

for Black African players which were introduced at the senior provincial and franchise levels in October 2013.

Table 2.2: Progress of players from U15 to Proteas (National) level [70, 71]

	% U15 (2004 - 2010)	% U19 (2001 - 2009)	% SA U19 (2000 - 2012)	% Senior provincial (2012/13)	% Franchise (2012/13)	% Proteas (2012/13)
White	51	53	54	**46**	54	**57**
Coloured/ Indian	23	24	28	33	32	**37**
Black African	26	23	**18**	**21**	**14**	**7**

2.3.4 Transformation of South African cricket teams

Throughout the past 24 years, the ethnic composition of the Proteas, and to a lesser extent lower representative teams, has been constantly debated at all levels in South African society.[72, 73] At the heart of the matter is the definition of and most effective manner in which to transform the game to be more representative of the ethnic demographics of the country.

The understanding of transforming South African sport has over the years been somewhat confusing.[74] The adoption of a new South African Constitution[75] removed all forms of discrimination and ensured that everyone should be granted fair and equal rights to participation in sports and that no one should be excluded from participation due to his or her race, ethnicity or background. In the Transformation Charter for South African Sport,[76] transformation is defined as "a process of holistically changing the delivery of sport through the actions of individuals and organisations that comprise the sport sector to ensure increased access and opportunities for ALL South Africans, including women, persons with disabilities, youth, children and the elderly to sport and recreation opportunities." For purposes of this thesis transformation refers only to redressing ethnic inequalities as they pertain to male cricket players.

A government review in 2012 of the progress made by the country's major sports, including cricket, towards transformation concluded that transformation initiatives had been mostly

ineffectual over the past 20 years.[77] They cited "one-dimensional, demographically-based processes that ignored the need for a multi-dimensional approach, and over simplistic, 'quick fix' strategies that focused on demographic change at the highest levels as contributing to this lack of transformation".[77] It concluded that Coloured and Indians had benefited more than Black Africans over the past 20 years and therefore the Black Africanisation of sport needed to be prioritised.

CSA subscribes to a 'bottom up', systemic approach to transforming all aspects of and stakeholders in the cricket system to address the changing market demands and ensure long term sustainability, relevance and competitiveness.[78] It believes that the process of transforming the game from grassroots up by providing access, along with sporting and social support will sustain the game, while numerical change only at the top provides short-term comfort without increasing the pool of talent.[78] As such CSA, believes that cricket should refrain from setting targets at the international level.[78]

Despite varying philosophical, political, legal and social viewpoints, most authors seem to agree that transformation in cricket is essential, but that it cannot be attained by forced changes to the demographic representation of the national team alone.[31, 38, 79, 80] Without fundamental structural and social changes within South African society as a whole, equal and fair access to opportunities will be difficult to achieve. The eradication of the injustices of the past, which to a great degree still exist, need to be addressed at multiple levels. Many of the obstacles to progress, such as inequitable schooling, limited facilities, lack of equipment, inadequate coaching quality are however, beyond the players' control.[31, 38, 50, 53, 56, 74, 80]

2.3.5   Targets in cricket

Ethnic targets, which are one mechanism for achieving demographic transformation of representative sport teams[80] have been a feature of South African cricket since 1999.[22, 31, 53, 56] As described by Louw,[79] a numerical target can be defined as a guideline or goal that is trying to be achieved, while 'quotas' are non-negotiable targets, i.e. they are mandatory in that they have to be achieved and are usually prescribed by an outside party. While the majority of academic and non-academic manuscripts on the subject use 'quotas', CSA uses 'targets' to describe the numerical guidelines that they set. Therefore, for the purposes of this thesis, 'targets' will be used to conform to CSA's preferred terminology.

Other countries have used varying degrees of regulation to effect equality of opportunity in sport for their citizens. The United States (USA) and England have used meritocracy to achieve anti-discrimination. Like South Africa, Malaysia's approach has been one of preferential treatment, for example 'quotas'.[81] The results in terms of international sporting success have been varied with the USA and England's approach appearing to have a positive impact, while the preferential treatment approach has also had a generally positive impact, but with some potential longer term negative consequences.[81]

At no stage have ethnic targets in sport been legislated by the South African government, but rather it has become the practice of national sports organisations to self-regulate in order to achieve transformation.[82] Furthermore, although the Transformation Charter encompasses more than just numbers in representative teams, it is the criterion on which the government, most often, judges sporting organisations' transformation progress.[80] Following dissatisfaction from government and within cricket with the pace of transformation and the number of 'Black' players at national level, targets were introduced for the first time in 1999. These specified the number of 'Black' players in provincial teams from U13 to senior level[8].

October 2013 saw the introduction of Black African specific selection targets at franchise and senior provincial level.[83] This was followed in September 2016, when CSA announced a selection target of 54% 'Black' of which 18% should be Black African players in the national team on average across an entire season,[84] despite its previous stated preference for not having targets at international level.[78] These percentages have been confirmed by CSA's Transformation Manager (personal communication with the author, 17 April 2018). Government pressure has continued, most recently in 2016 when cricket and other sports were barred from bidding for or hosting international events if they had not achieved their transformation targets.[7]

Political interference in selections to satisfy ethnic demographics, has impacted the careers of 'Black' and White players alike.[57] Over the years there have been numerous examples of interference in national team selections by politicians and administrators with little regard for the effect on the individual players.[56] White and 'Black' players have voiced their opposition

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[8] At this time, there were only provincial teams at senior level, i.e. no differentiation between senior provincial and franchise teams.

to ethnic targets, including the submission of a memorandum to CSA in 2007.[56] There has been criticism of politicians for not understanding the "atmosphere of a dressing room" when a player is chosen for non-cricketing reasons, and others wanting to play, not for the colour of their skin but because they deserve to be selected.[85-87] One 'Black' player even withdrew from a tour after being selected ahead of a White bowler.[56]

On the other hand, Black African players have officially bemoaned the lack of playing time extended to them when picked for national squads. An extract from a formal letter from a Black African national squad member to CSA reads:

> "The quality of opportunity afforded to Black African players….the call-up has acted to erode the Black cricketer's human dignity and self-esteem…..There is a mistrust of Black African players' ability to perform and assume responsibility…At the national level Black African players have become political pawns and official drinks carriers."

An investigation into this complaint found that Black African players had toured with the national team without being given opportunities to play. Although the reasons may or may not have been cricket related, the investigation found that there did appear to be a mind-set indicating mistrust of Black African players particularly in high profile Proteas matches.[51]

The multiple levels of interests and complexities in the use of targets to transform South African cricket exemplify the differences among the various stakeholders' requirements and obligations to their constituencies.[57] However, as Farland and Jennings[38] emphasise, the selection of representative national sports teams needs to take international sporting traditions into account. While ethnicity might be one criteria, other factors such as team make-up and specific skills requirements also contribute to a team's competitiveness to win matches. As such, the individuals tasked with selecting national teams need to possess expert knowledge of the players' expertise.[38]

2.3.6   Changes within and outside cricket that are likely to impact the game

Since cricket was first played it has undergone significant changes both in the way the game is played and in how it is administered. The last 40 years have seen the game turned into a major television and commercial spectacle.[88, 89] This has seen the emergence of truly professional players able to build a cricket career and earn significant money from the game. However, as Gemmell[1] contends, this is tearing up cricket's old ethos and replacing it with a

new set of values in which money is becoming more important than the 'correct way to play', the 'spirit of the game' and playing for one's country. This is perhaps most typified by the emergence of the Twenty20 Indian Premier League and other such leagues around the world.[63, 65, 90]

In 2004, the franchise system was introduced in South Africa, which contracted players for between one and two years.[91] This enabled more players to earn a living from the game; however, it was a small amount compared to international players and provincial rugby players.[92] The commercialisation of the game and the shortened Twenty20 format both need to be considered in attracting, developing and retaining cricket talent. A specific threat to retaining players in the franchise teams is the movement of players to the United Kingdom as a result of the Kolpak[9] ruling,[56] and the weakness of the South African currency.[65]

In addition to changes within cricket, decreasing physical activity patterns, increasing sedentary behaviour and rising levels of information and use of communication technologies, internationally and in South Africa, are also likely to impact youth cricket participation.[93-98] Insufficient physical education in South African schools has been reported[93] with only 34.4% of 11-13 year olds belonging to a sports team.[99] Furthermore, in rural South Africa, lower socio-economic status has been associated with lower moderate-to -vigorous physical activity in schools and clubs.[100]

2.3.7 Conclusion

South Africa's political, social and economic history resulted in significant inequalities and injustices among the ethnic groups that still exist today. These factors have and continue to impact the development of cricket talent in the country.

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[9] The Kolpak ruling allows players from non-EU countries to play cricket in the EU/United Kingdom without being considered an overseas player. There is a limit in the United Kingdom to the number of overseas players per county team.

CHAPTER 3 TALENT DEVELOPMENT AND THE SOCIO-ECOLOGICAL APPROACH

"The ecology of human development is the scientific study of the progressive, mutual accommodation, throughout the life course, between an active, growing human being and the changing properties of the immediate settings in which the developing person lives, as this process is affected by the relations between these settings, and by the larger context in which the settings are embedded." (Urie Bronfenbrenner, psychologist known for his ecological systems theory of child development)

3.1 Introduction

The aim of this chapter is to review the existing, relevant literature pertaining to the sporting, and where available, cricket talent identification and development landscape, including applicable models. This also includes an appraisal of the factors in the environments, both distal and proximal to the individual, which impact the development of expertise. In addition, the role of intrapersonal characteristics in the talent development process is considered. An overview of the applicability of a socio-ecological approach to talent development concludes the chapter.

The literature search was first conducted using the EBSCOHost, PubMed, Scopus, Web of Science and Google Scholar databases. Key words used included but were not limited to 'talent identification', 'talent development', 'sport', 'cricket', 'socio-ecological' and their related terms. Furthermore, specific words such as 'coach' and its derivatives, 'family', 'team' and 'schooling' were used in conjunction with the key words. Government and organisational documents were obtained through relevant electronic sources. Reference lists from the retrieved, relevant articles were searched for further related studies. Books were sourced from the University of Cape Town (UCT) libraries, or other university libraries, personal collections and electronically.

Publications from the past 10–15 years have been given preference, but where appropriate older ones have been used for context, historical perspective and seminal work. Only English

language sources have been included. The nature of the topic has, in some instances, necessitated the use of opinion pieces and non-academic sources.

The structure of this review is summarised in Figure 3.1.

Talent identification and development landscape	Distal environments	Proximal environments	Intrapersonal attributes	Socio-ecological framework
• Introduction and background • Talent identification • Talent development • Models	• Ethnicity, social class and socio-economic status • Sport culture • Sport policy • Sports organisations • Birthplace and community effects • Relative age effect	• Family • Role models • Schools and clubs • Coaches • Mentoring • Team environment	• Physical attributes • Motivation • Psycholgical/ mental attributes	• Introduction • Bronfenbrenner's model • Approaches to sports talent development

Figure 3.1: Outline of literature review

3.2   Talent identification and development landscape

3.2.1   Introduction and background

Talent identification and development in sport has been increasingly studied over the past four decades as individuals, teams and countries seek to achieve higher levels of elite sporting performance.[8, 101, 102] In this regard, it is important to understand what makes one athlete better than another and the contributing factors. The field has been characterised by a wide variety of approaches as researchers, practitioners and policy makers continue to explore the dynamic, complex, multifactorial nature of talent, its prediction and its development.[9, 101, 103, 104]

Since Galton[105] first put forward the notion that to achieve success at the highest level, one must inherit certain qualities, the nature-nurture debate has been a central theme in the definition of athletic talent.[104] Is sporting success a result of innate talent, many hours of practice or the wider socio-cultural context in which an athlete develops? More recently, this polarity of opinion has diminished as researchers agree on a more interactionist perspective between genes and the environment in which the individual develops.[106, 107] However, the notion of talent and its conceptualisation in high performance sport still requires further research to achieve a common understanding.[108, 109]

3.2.2 Talent identification

Talent identification refers to the discovery and selection of athletes based on them possessing specific qualities that could predict some form of future sporting success.[101, 110] Typically, anthropometric factors, motor and/or physiological measures, and junior/early performance success have been used as criteria for selection.[111, 112] Another common form of assessment is what some term, the 'coach's eye' for talent, which may involve a holistic, multidisciplinary perspective.[113] Although psychological factors have been recognised as playing a role in elite sporting,[114-117] and specifically cricket performance,[118-120] psychological assessments have been less widely utilised in talent identification than physical ones.[11, 112]

Despite the prevalence of talent identification programmes in sport, they have shown low to moderate efficacy[112, 121, 122] and there seems to be general agreement that talent identification programmes have not been particularly successful,[110, 123-126] because of the non-linear, dynamic, multifactorial and complex nature of elite performance.[127, 128] Weissensteiner's[14] conceptual model of expertise in cricket batting and Phillip's[15, 16] ecological dynamics approach to the acquisition of bowling expertise[15, 16] demonstrated the multifactorial nature of cricket expertise. This highlights the difficulty in identifying talent particularly at an early age before the completion of biological growth and maturation.[125]

A further consequence of the multidimensionality of athletic talent, relates to some athletes being able to compensate for low assessment in certain areas of performance by scoring high in another performance area and still reaching the elite level.[11] This suggests that there is more than one way to achieve the same performance goal.[129] For example, a short fast bowler in cricket may compensate for his height with technique and/or mental strength. Not only does this make the assessment of athletic talent particularly difficult but it also increases the risk of selecting or de-selecting the wrong athletes.[11] This may be particularly pertinent in diverse societies with a high prevalence of social inequalities, which "ultimately lead to biases in talent identification and development".[9]

While talent identification programmes may have a role to play in identifying a certain level of athletic expertise,[121] talent development is more essential for athletes to reach an elite level of performance.[110, 130, 131]

3.2.3 Talent development

As an understanding of the complexity of talent identification and the influence of environmental factors grows, research has shifted more towards talent development.[132] Talent development can be described as the process of nurturing selected athletes by optimising a wide range of influences that may impact on the acquisition of sporting skills,[101] and thereby facilitating performance progress and increasing the likelihood of success at the senior elite level.[112] Henriksen[11] expanded this definition by describing athletic talent development as "a process of transformation of the innate potential of an athlete into the qualities, abilities, skills and performance excellence that are required in his/her sport over years of practice and competition and through interaction with both sporting and non-sporting environments".

Talent development is therefore the interaction between an athlete's intrapersonal or intrinsic attributes and environmental or extrinsic factors. Many of the intrapersonal attributes may themselves reflect a complex interaction between nature (genetics) and nurture.[104, 106] For example, sex is 100% genetically determined, while height is currently thought to reflect 80% genetic and 20% environmental influence.[106] Environmental factors can be either proximal or distal to the individual, thereby exerting either a direct or indirect influence.[133] The relationship between a coach and athlete would be considered a direct influence, while an athlete's birthplace may have an indirect influence on his/her talent development.

Previously there has been an over-emphasis on one aspect of development, described by Dunwoody as "organismic asymmetry".[134] However, it is evident that environmental factors exert influence on developing sporting expertise.[11, 135] Although Martindale et al.[136] suggest that environmental factors may be more controllable than intrapersonal factors,[136] this may not be true for some environmental factors such as socio-economic status, family circumstances and even luck.[130, 137] Therefore, by identifying these factors, they can be optimised to enhance sporting performance.[138]

A wide variety of environmental factors have been identified that may hinder or facilitate talent development.[8, 11, 103, 107, 124, 136, 139-142] An expansion of the influence of environmental factors has developed through the ecological dynamics approach to talent development.[143-

[147] An ecological dynamics approach emphasises the different ways in which talent can develop, the individual nature of pathways to the elite level and the range of interacting constraints to which the individual needs to adapt.[143] Therefore, an ecological dynamics approach to the development of cricket fast bowling was adopted. The findings highlighted the importance of degeneracy and adaptability in this discipline of the game.[16] Ecological dynamics approaches have, however, tended to focus on factors in the practice or proximal environment and have thus been criticised for their limited acknowledgement of the contribution of psychosocial influences in talent development.[128]

In an attempt to understand and explain the complex, integrated, multidimensional nature of talent development and the interaction of all the components involved at the different levels and throughout the different stages of the developmental pathway, a variety of models have been developed. However, gaps in the literature still exist.[148] These models can be broadly divided into one of three categories: stage-based, transitional or multifactorial. The main models in each of these three categories will be summarised in the next section as they pertain to this thesis.

3.2.4 Models

Various authors have included different models in their reviews of the athletic development literature highlighting the evolution and complexity of the topic as well as the different disciplines and focus areas of the researchers.[138, 149-151] Furthermore, it may also point to a possible lack of discourse between researchers' approaches,[152] which may hinder a more common understanding of the athletic development phenomenon.[149]

Stage-based models

The main characteristic of stage-based models is their description of the developmental activities and interactions of the athlete through a series of stages during a pathway from exposure to the elite level of sport. These models have tended to emphasise intense nurturing and years of commitment to training.[11] One of the earliest and most popular models of talent development emerged from Bloom's portrayal of the talent development process as a series of transformations and adaptive processes spanning several years.[153] Durand-Busch and Salmela[154] built on the work of Bloom, and while Abbott et al.[114] used the same four stages in

their Psychological Characteristics of Developing Excellence Model (PCDE), its major contribution was the importance of psychological factors in talent development. Table 3.1 summarises the major stage-based models that have influenced the talent development landscape since 1985.

The theory of deliberate practice[155] has probably had the most widespread influence on the talent development field, with its appeal to both academics,[156, 157] and the mass media.[158-160] Their proposition, based on initial studies with musicians suggested that those who practised longer (approximately 10,000 hours) and with a greater level of intensity would eventually become the best in their field.[155] It signified a move away from the belief that innate talent was solely responsible for expert performance and supported the early specialisation trajectory of talent development. However, despite being widely used by practitioners, academics have questioned the need for developing athletes to specialise from an early age and engage in deliberate practice,[161] which requires investment in highly structured, goal-oriented, supervised training requiring cognitive and physical effort.[155]

The Developmental Model of Sport Participation, incorporates both an early (deliberate practice) and late specialisation trajectory.[162-164] The late specialisation or early diversification trajectory is based on "the concept of deliberate play, where young athletes engage in rule-based play solely for fun, which in turn fosters intrinsic motivation and the propensity to be externally motivated in later years".[157, 162]

Despite a lack of empirical evidence,[165] the Long-Term Athlete Development Model (LTAD)[166, 167] has been adopted by many sports organisations around the world, including Cricket South Africa (CSA).[168] More recently, multidisciplinary practitioners and researchers have integrated the latest thinking in the talent field and put forward the Foundations, Talent, Elite, Mastery (FTEM) Model. Although categorised as a stage model, because of the prominence of its 10 phases, it encompasses a more multifactorial approach.[151, 169]

Table 3.1: Summary of stage-based models of talent development

Model and key references	Primary disciplinary background, methodology	Stages	Key emphasis	Ecological and other limitations
Stages of Talent Development[153]	Educational psychology. Retrospective interviews with high achievers in six different domains including sport (tennis and swimming).	Three phases: Initiation (early years), development (middle years) and perfection (later years). Transitions not dependent on chronological age, but on learning and achieving tasks.	High achievement is dependent on a long and intensive process of training and development supported by family and coaches who provide encouragement and nurturing. Strong emotional commitment to chosen sport and a desire to reach the top.	Application limited to two individual sports. Main focus on performer's characteristics and relationships with individuals in immediate environment. No focus on influence of wider environmental factors.
Development of Expert Athletic Performance[154]	Psychology. Retrospective interviews with 10 gold medallists (male and female) from individual and team sports.	Four stages through career: Sampling, Specialising, Investment and Maintenance. Transitions usually indicated by a significant event, e.g. entering secondary school.	Contextual factors such as parents, coaches and support staff, friends and education were important during the latter two stages. As well as personal characteristics (self-confidence, motivation), intense technical, tactical and mental training and meticulous competition preparation.	Small sample and possible recall bias. Main focus on performer's characteristics and relationships with individuals in immediate environment. No focus on influence of wider environmental factors.
Psychological Characteristics of Developing Excellence (PCDE)[103, 114]	Performance psychology. Analysis of literature, retrospective case studies with elite performers in various domains including sport. Pilot interventions in schools.	Dynamic process of four stages: Sampling, Specialising, Investment and Maintenance.	Strong focus on the psychological characteristics and skills needed to develop excellence through the developmental pathway. Development of psychological characteristics to manage the transitions.	Not sport-specific. Although purports to be a multidimensional, the over-emphasis on psychological aspects detracts from other factors. No focus on influence of wider environmental factors.

Model and key references	Primary disciplinary background, methodology	Stages	Key emphasis	Ecological and other limitations
Developmental Model of Sports Participation (DMSP)[162-164]	Social and developmental psychology. Review of literature. Retrospective qualitative and quantitative studies with elite performers, recreational participants and dropouts from small selection of sports in Canada and Australia.	Three stages: Sampling (6-12 years), Specialising (13 – 15 years), Investment (16+ years) Different trajectories offer routes for recreation or specialisation after sampling stage. Alternatively, a single stage comprising an early specialisation route that is based on the concept of deliberate practice.	Encourages sampling of multiple sports during childhood with emphasis on self-organised, deliberate play, which refers to exploratory activities that provide a range of motor and cognitive experiences that are intrinsically motivating. Later specialisation and deliberate practice in chosen sport. Strong emphasis on role of family.	No definition of elite provided. Focus on proximal socio-cultural factors with no discussion on how distal factors may interact with the other factors and influence development.
Long-Term Athlete Development (LTAD)[167]	Exercise physiology and anatomy. Literature review, observations of practice and anecdotal evidence from various sources.	Seven stages of development through the lifespan: Active start, FUNdamentals, Learning to Train, Training to Train, Training to Compete, Training to Win, Active for Life.	Although psychological and social components are mentioned, the core focus is on physical/biological maturational measures to guide coaches in individual training and competition at each stage. Critical periods of training emphasised.	Limited empirical evidence, questionable assumptions and methodologies restricts interpretation of the model. One dimensional thereby excludes importance of environmental factors in talent development.
Foundations, Talent, Elite, Mastery (FTEM)[151, 169]	Multidisciplinary sports practices and research. Theoretical research and empirical observations with pre-elite and elite Australian sportsmen and women from team and individual sports	Whole pathway framework with four macro stages differentiated into 10 micro phases. Foundations (F1, F2, F3), Talent (T1, T2, T3, T4), Elite (E1, E2) and Mastery (M). Avoids age delineations and accommodates non-linearity of talent development.	Acknowledges an active lifestyle, sport participation and sport excellence. Dynamic and holistic with the inclusion of developmental enablers such as psychological assessment and support through the stages.	Limited focus on the influence of wider social context on development. Applicability in diverse societies questioned. A generic rather than a sport-specific model.

Following a review of long-term athletic development models, the Composite Youth Development (CYD) model was proposed.[170] Using the Youth Physical Development (YPD) model as its basis,[171] it incorporated the late specialisation trajectory of the DMSP model[157] and a psycho-social component emanating from a review of mental training best practices in young athletes.[172] Although the CYD model covers three stages from early childhood to adolescence and may add some value to the athletic development discussion, it has not been discussed any further in this thesis as its primary focus is concerned with the physical development of the young athlete which is beyond the focus of this thesis.

All the models in Table 3.1 emphasise that progress through the talent development pathway is a long process that spans the athlete's sporting career. The difference in the number of stages is indicative of the complexities, disciplinary origins and methodologies used in expounding the models. Furthermore, although categorised by stages of development, the evidence that talent identification and development are idiosyncratic, non-linear and dynamic suggests that a staged approach may not be the best way to portray talent development.[173, 174] For example, not all gold medallists follow the same pathway to the top.[154]

Although the specifics of each stage differ, there are however, a number of similarities among the models. Except for the early specialisation trajectory of the DMSP, the emphasis in the early developmental years was on fun, play, exploration of many different sports and developing fundamental movement and motor skills. As the athletes progress, there was increasing emphasis on learning sports specific skills and devoting more time to their chosen sport. By the time they reached the elite level there was intense focus on only one sport. Although many of the models acknowledged that development required interaction between the biopschyosocial factors, the main focus was on the physical developmental processes of the athlete. Social environmental factors were mainly limited to the direct relationship and role of family and coaches with the athlete. The impact of other potential environmental developmental drivers such as socio-economic status, sports culture and organisational support were not emphasised to the same degree as family and coaching. In addition, none of the models provided a socio-ecological perspective to talent development and were not sport-specific. Whilst Weissensteiner[14, 119] and Phillips[15, 16, 175] have provided potential

multidimensional models of developing expertise in batsmen and fast bowlers respectively, there was limited reference to socio-ecological factors.

Transition models

Closely related to the stage-based models are the athletic career transition models that describe the transitions between different stages of an athlete's sporting career.[176-180] Furthermore, these models provide a holistic lifespan perspective of development by incorporating the developmental transitions occurring in other domains of athletes' lives: personal, psychosocial and educational/vocational. The focus of these models is on understanding how athletes cope with the specific demands related to practice, competition, communication and lifestyle required to progress successfully in sport.[181] This then allows for appropriate interventions to be designed to educate and support the athletes through these transitions to increase their chance of continuing to the next level.[178, 182]

Two types of transitions have been recognised: normative or predictable transitions, and non-normative or unexpected transitions. Normative transitions occur throughout a sportsman's career development and distinguish between one stage and another. They may be determined by age (e.g. junior to senior), a specific sport's organisational structure (e.g. school to provincial) and/or proficiency (e.g. regional to national). Non-normative transitions are unplanned and occur as a result of a specific event such as a season-ending injury or the unanticipated termination of a playing contract.[177]

Although a number of normative transitions have been recognised, the most important one for elite athletes is the transition between junior and senior level sport, i.e. the period after school.[176, 183] Challenges such as sports career uncertainty, increased level of competition, greater physical and mental demands, relationship and social changes and leaving school have all been identified as stressors for athletes transitioning from junior to senior level sports.[176, 184, 185] Furthermore, the transition from a caring developmental to a tougher success-driven environment was found to require a period of adaptation in professional British footballers.[185] During this transitional phase; knowledge of the process, social support, intrapersonal characteristics (e.g. work ethic, confidence, intrinsic motivation, readiness for elite competition and coachability) and environmental factors (e.g. club culture, role expectations,

opportunities and extrinsic motivation) have been found to be fundamental in managing the demands of the transition.[182, 185]

Multifactorial models

Multifactorial models have been proposed in an attempt to better portray and explain the complex, dynamic and multiplicative nature of talent development. While most of the stage-based models provide direction through the talent pathway, they fail to integrate the full range of factors involved in developing talent. Two models that can be termed multifactorial will be discussed briefly below.

Gagné's[130] Differentiated Model of Giftedness and Talent (DMGT), shown in Figure 3.2, proposes that talent development is the process of transforming outstanding natural abilities (or gifts) into exceptional systematically developed skills (or talents) in a particular domain over a long period of time. Besides chance factors, two sets of catalysts (intrapersonal and environmental) influence the talent development process. The intrapersonal catalysts consist of mental and physical characteristics while there are three environmental components: milieu, individuals and provisions. The milieu can be divided into the macroscopic (e.g. geographic, demographic and sociological) and the microscopic (e.g. family size and socio-economic status). For example, a gifted cricketer who lives in a rural community may not have access to training facilities and his family circumstances may prevent the purchase of expensive cricket equipment. Individuals refer to the significant people in the youngster's immediate environment, who may positively or negatively influence development. Provisions relate to all forms of talent development services and programmes.

While the model is gaining some acceptance in the sporting domain,[10, 109] the applicability of the full model to sport still requires verification.[151] Furthermore, it has been argued that Gagne's model portrays the individual as passive in the process with the contexts enriching the performer's abilities, as opposed to a two-way process in which both the environment and individual influence one another.[135] The concept of the macro and micro milieus offers some progress towards recognising the potential influence of socio-cultural factors on talent development.
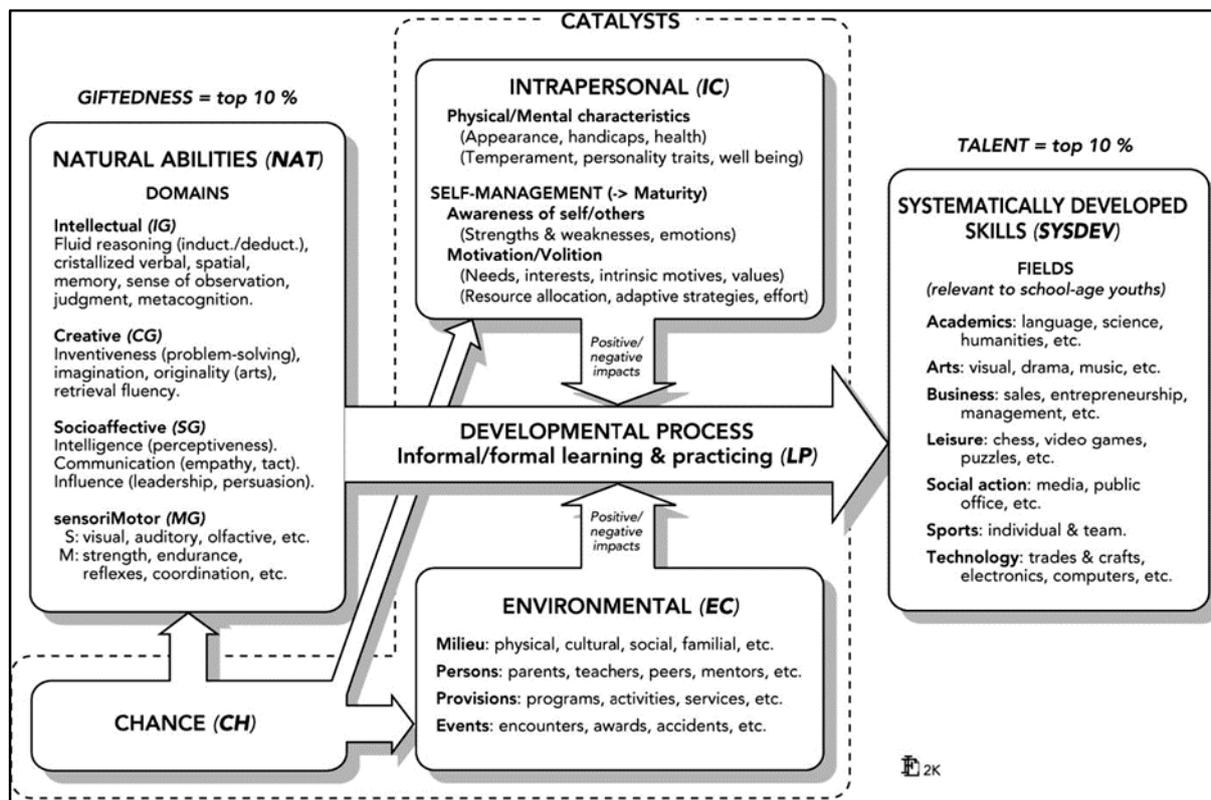
Figure 3.2: The Differentiated Model of Giftedness and Talent[130]

The Athlete Talent Development Environment Model (ATDE) in Figure 3.3 proposes a framework for examining the dynamics of the micro and macro developmental environments,[11] based on the Bio-ecological Model of Human Development.[186] Described by Henriksen,[11] "An ATDE is a system of an athlete's interactions inside and outside sport on the micro-level and how these interactions are influenced by the macro-level." Using the ATDE and the Environment Success Factor (ESF) working models, together with a case study methodology (interviews, observations and document analysis), he studied the development environment of pre-elite to elite level in Danish sailing,[187] Swedish Track and Field,[188] and Norwegian kayaking.[189] These empirical studies identified eight features of successful Scandinavian sport organisations which were: "supportive relationships within training groups, proximal role models, support of sporting goals by a wider environment, facilitation of the development of psychosocial skills, training allowing for diversification, focus on long-term development, strong, coherent organizational structure, and finally the integration of individual effort".[11]
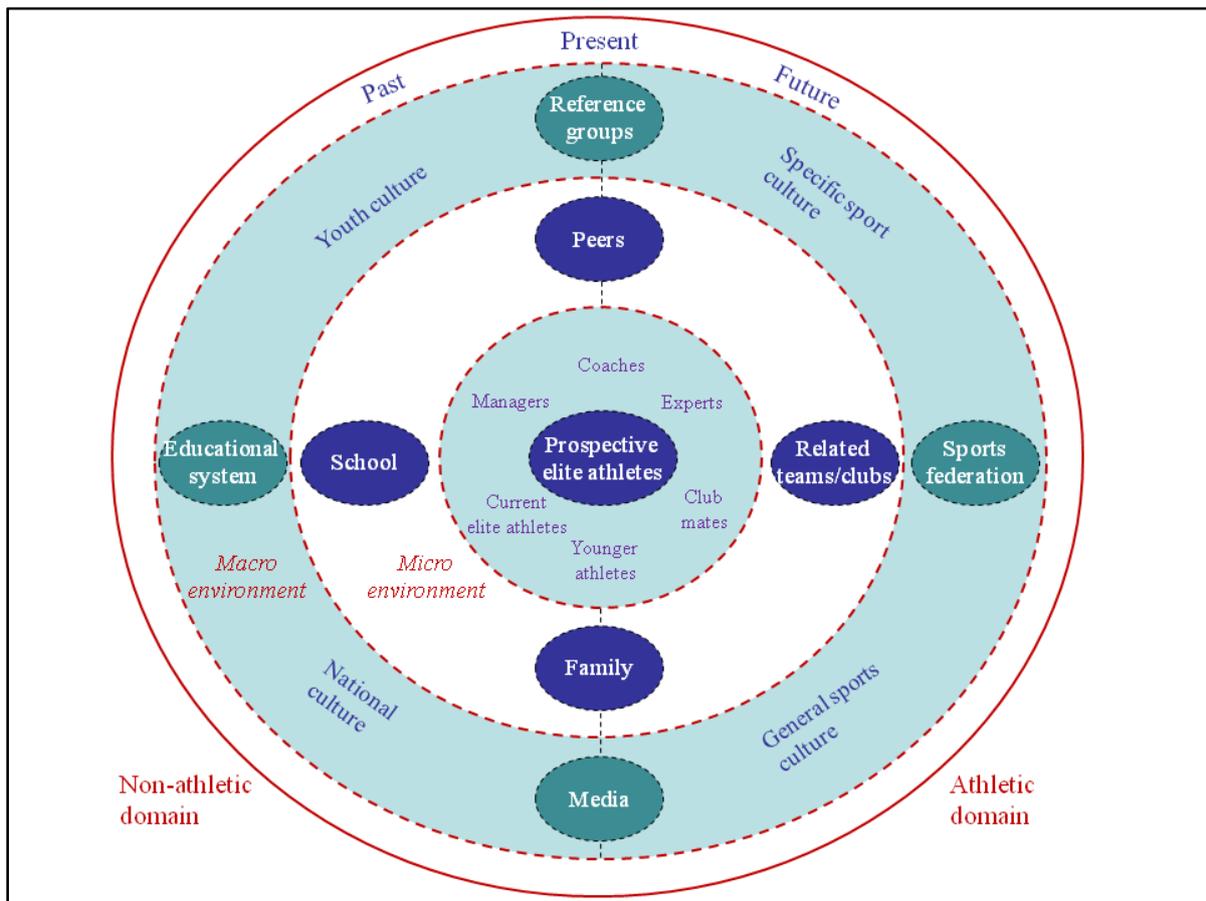
Figure 3.3: Athletic Talent Development Environment (ATDE) working model[11]

The ATDE model focuses not only on the individual,[187] but also on the interconnection between levels and within the levels themselves, and provides an avenue to form an integrated account of increasingly larger systems that comprise athletes' developmentally relevant environment.[190] From a practical perspective, it encourages coaches and other individuals involved with the athlete to create a micro and macro environment that supports the player's development.[191] This research took a significant step towards a more holistic ecological approach to talent development in sport.[190] There were however certain limitations: the focus was on the pre-elite to elite level (approximately 15–21 years of age) only,[151, 190] there was no examination of the interaction with the intrapersonal factors[151] and limited attention was given to the surrounding community and overarching culture and social structures.[190]

3.3 Distal environmental factors

The depiction of the environmental influences on human development as a series of four nested structures, consisting of the macro, exo, meso and micro environments, was conceptualised by Bronfenbrenner in his early theories of human development.[192] His theories and their applicability to this research is discussed in detail later in this chapter (section 3.6).

The distal environment is made up of Bronfenbrenner's macro and exo environments and consists of those wider contextual (socio-cultural, community and organisational) factors that indirectly impact the proximal factors.[186] Sport is itself a socio-cultural construct[193] and therefore understanding and being sensitive to the influence of differing cultures, social classes, ethnicities, economic statuses, beliefs, attitudes and values on proximal processes may provide researchers with enhanced insight into potential barriers and enablers in the development of sporting talent. For example, Collins[194] argues that while other factors play a role, poverty is at the core of sporting exclusion.

3.3.1 Ethnicity, social class and socio-economic status

Ethnicity and social class have been identified as two factors that may exclude potential athletes from participating and then progressing to the elite level in sport[2, 195] and in cricket specifically.[66] Sixty five percent of Black African cricketers in the Gauteng province of South Africa believed that White senior provincial players were given better opportunities than their Black African counterparts,[54] and South African Black African international rugby players have been found to have less game time than other players.[196] This suggests that there may be racial prejudice in South African sport. Racial prejudice, stereotyping and discrimination of ethnic minorities have been found to exist throughout all levels of English cricket.[66, 197-200] A particular example of this is positional 'stacking', which entails players of specific ethnic groups dominating particular disciplines and thereby being absent from other disciplines.[66, 201] This results in a lack of equal opportunity for all players. As Malcolm[66] argues, to achieve equality of opportunity, it is not sufficient to only focus on those that are excluded, but also to address "the majority whose regulations and practices serve – sometimes unwittingly, sometimes not – to discriminate against particular groups".

Socio-economic status has also been found to affect sport participation and by extension talent development.[12, 138, 141, 202-204] These reviews and studies concluded that lower socio-economic status was associated with lower levels of sports participation and therefore fewer opportunities to progress to an elite level. Furthermore, it was concluded that less access to sport facilities and safety concerns in low-income neighbourhoods limited sports participation for these communities.[98] On the other hand, a transdisciplinary study confirmed that there was no relationship between socio-economic status and cricket participation in Australia.[205]

Physical fitness levels of primary school South African children have shown differences among ethnic groups, with the scores for Black African children being significantly lower than those of White children. Coloured children had scores between these two ethnic groups.[206] In South African pre- and primary school children, visual motor skills, which are necessary for playing cricket,[207, 208] have been found to be lower among the Black African children compared to other ethnic groups,[209] and lower in children from lower socio-economic communities.[210, 211] Furthermore, junior and senior level Black African batsmen have been found to perform less well than their White counterparts.[71]

As discussed in Chapter 2 and further highlighted above, ethnicity and socio-economic status in South Africa are closely associated. Therefore, cricket inequalities are a function of our society, not the ethnicity of the players.[3]

3.3.2 Sport culture

Although recognised as having a potential impact on sports participation, talent development and international competitive success, the influence of a culture of sport in general or of a particular sport in a country has not been widely studied.[107, 139, 145] Specific examples of countries where a particular sport may be dominant might include: ice-hockey in Canada, sprinting in Jamaica, football in Brazil, or cricket in India. The role of the media and particularly television is thought to promote a particular sporting culture. For example, field hockey was for many years the 'national sport' of India, although cricket and football were also popular. However, since the 1980s, increasing television coverage has contributed to "making cricket integral to modern notions of Indian identity".[88]

3.3.3 Sport policy

Government policies and investment in sport have grown in recent years and contributed to the development of sporting talent and expertise.[212-214] The evolution, purpose, priorities and implementation of such policies vary among countries as they seek to manage differing social, cultural and political contexts. As a result of their political nature, policies display a certain power dynamic, which may result in the relationship between and objectives of the policy makers and implementers not always being aligned.[214]

Since 1994 in South Africa, several government related sports policies have been enacted. The guiding policy document, entitled, "An Active and Winning Nation," aims to both promote physical activity and sport amongst all the country's citizens, and enhance performance at the highest levels.[215] This is operationalised by the National Sport and Recreation Plan and its five yearly strategic plan and annual performance plan. At the heart of this plan is the Transformation Charter and Scorecard, which aims "to bring about the establishment of a competitive and demographically representative sport system, guided by principles of equal opportunity, redress, fairness and just behaviour, equitable resource distribution and empowerment and affirmation".[76] In addition, the National Department of Sport and Recreation has been assigned oversight, monitoring and evaluation roles. An example of which is the monitoring and evaluation of transformation policies and implementation across the entire sports sector.[216]

3.3.4 Sports organisations

Sports organisations, for example CSA and the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI), play a facilitating role between the broader society (including government) and the individual participants in administering and promoting sport in a particular country. This role is conducted in accordance with each sport's international governing body, for example the International Cricket Council (ICC), which represents 105 members.[18] There is therefore, a need to better understand organisational influences on athletic performance.[217]

A document analysis of 35 Australian Olympic and professional national sporting organisations' (NSO) annual reports, highlighted the various stakeholders required to develop elite athletes.[218] As De Bosscher et al.[219] have previously reported, high quality and accessible training facilities, elite development programmes, qualified coaches and high level

competitions and events were identified as cornerstones of developing elite athletes.[218] Funding of these resources has been made available from federal and state governments, while the NSOs have had the responsibility of identification, development and preparation of elite athletes and coaches and management of the high performance programmes.[220] On the other hand, a lack of funding and facilities was perceived, by Irish international athletes, to be a major barrier to progress to the elite level.[133] CSA manages its cricket talent through a performance 'pipeline' consisting of 10 distinct levels from mini-cricket to Proteas.[78]

In addition to resource-related issues, leadership and management of sporting organisations have been identified as important to elite sporting performance. A qualitative study of the perceptions of 13 (11 male and two female) national performance directors of British Olympic sports was conducted to determine performance leadership and management best practice. Four main areas were identified that contributed to success at Olympic Games.[221] The areas included: vision (development, influences and sharing), operations (financial management, strategic competition and training, planning, athlete selection for competition, and upholding rules and regulations), people (staff management, lines of communication and feedback mechanisms) and culture (role awareness and organisational and team atmosphere). People management involved recruiting, supporting and developing people who could contribute to the team's functioning.[221]

Transformational leadership, which is a relatively contemporary approach, particularly in sport, involves leadership through the building of personal, emotional and inspirational relationships with followers,[222] and results in increased satisfaction and commitment from followers.[223] Following the completion of leadership and effectiveness questionnaires by eight provincial Chief Executive Officers (CEOs) and the national CEO of South African cricket organisations in the late 1990s, it was concluded that transformational leadership resulted in organisational effectiveness.[224] Ten years later, in 2008, the perceptions of 20 male Black African cricketers (aged 18–30 years) from the Gauteng province of South Africa suggested that the leadership of the Gauteng Cricket Board could be improved. They further believed that the cricket structures in the province were weak and not working effectively, that transformation of the game was not taking place and that the Board did not have faith in Black African cricketers.[54]

3.3.5   Birthplace and community effects

Previous research found that compared to population norms, North American athletes participating in a variety of professional sports were born in cities with between 50,000 and 500,000 people.[225] They hypothesised that cities of this size provide opportunities to engage in a variety of sports with fewer safety concerns and less competition for leisure time, which are believed to be favourable conditions for talent development. Despite small sample sizes, similar developmental advantages have been perceived by batsmen[14] and fast bowlers[16] growing up outside major cities.

Following inconsistent findings pertaining to birthplace effect in their study of Olympic team members from four different high-income countries, it was concluded that there was a need to consider the effect of birthplace on athletic development in light of specific sports and socio-cultural factors.[226] In many South African communities, as a result of their historical past, there are limited sporting facilities and infrastructure.[7, 31, 56] The limited facilities have contributed to fewer opportunities to participate in organised sport, which is not only a barrier to talent development and competitive sport, but limits access to a range of physical activities that are important contributors to personal and societal well-being, health and fulfilment.[76] Therefore, the birthplace effect needs to be viewed with caution until such time as further research is done in low-and middle-income countries and among more diverse socio-cultural societies.

In an attempt to better understand a community's influences on sport talent development, a case study was conducted in a very small (population of 646 people) athletically successful Canadian community.[190, 227] Three main themes were identified. Organised and unorganised sporting activities with relatively stable team mates throughout provided positive developmental experiences. Secondly, there was a close interdependence between the local schools and the community. The third theme related to athletes having a strong pride in their own community, but an "intense inter-community rivalry".[190] These themes provided further insight into how communities may impact the development of sporting expertise.

3.3.6   Relative age effect

Most sports organisations arrange youth participation into annual age group classifications with a specific cut-off date, which varies dependent on country and in some instances sport

code. For example, in most northern hemisphere countries, 1 September is used as the cut-off date, while in the southern hemisphere the date is typically 1 January. This annual cohort may result in what is termed the relative age effect (RAE).[228, 229] This refers to the over-representation of children born in the first quartile of the cut-off period compared to those born in the fourth quartile. While the mechanism for RAE is still not fully understood; a recently proposed theoretical developmental systems model proposes that individual, environmental and task constraints interact to influence the RAE.[230] This may provide some insight into the contribution that contextual factors such as socio-economic status may have on the RAE.

Although RAE has been observed in many sports, particularly in high-income countries,[228] it has not been strongly observed in cricket players.[231-233] Fifty six percent of international players[232] and 59% of youth players[233] were born in the first half of the selection year. Furthermore, it was found that 60% of cricketers in England and Wales identified for and entering the national academy system (approximately aged 16 years) were born in the first half of the selection period.[231] However, when investigating the progression of these players to the international level, the percentages had changed with only 42% being born in the first half of the period. No RAE across disciplines were found.[231] A recent study examined RAE in 262 super elite (international) cricketers over a 20-year period and found a 1st quartile RAE for all disciplines combined and for batsmen and spin bowling disciplines, but not for fast bowlers.[234] It would appear that the findings on RAE in cricket are conflicting and limited at this time.

3.4   Proximal environmental factors

The proximal environment equates to Bronfenbrenner's micro and meso environments and the factors that interact directly with the developing individual and/or with one another.[186] Those that are relevant to this study are discussed below.

3.4.1   Family

The significant influence of family, and particularly parental support in sport has been well recognised.[11, 14, 16, 117, 235] Interview studies have been the main source of evidence for the tangible and emotional support provided by families.[8] Tangible support in the form of

finances, information, time and logistics provides the developing athletes with the necessary access to participation opportunities, coaching, training and competition.[153, 162, 236] Emotional support assists young athletes in developing the psychological and coping skills needed to navigate the talent pathway and compete at the elite level.[117, 154]

The role and contribution of family varies during the different phases of the athlete's development from non-elite to super-elite level.[8, 153, 154, 162] In the early years, parental influence has been found to be very important in introducing their children to sport, including cricket.[14, 16, 140, 153, 162, 235] Fathers are particularly important in the initial interest in sport,[138, 237] and it is common for parents to introduce their children to the same sports in which they participated.[238, 239] Parents whose children participate in the same sport that they had played, are better equipped to support their children as they understand the sport and its associated systems.[240] Siblings may also play a role and children are often encouraged to participate in the same sport as their older siblings.[10, 241] The value that parents place on sport and their attitudes to participation are likely to drive their commitment to introduce their children to sport.[242] This may however, be shaped by different social, cultural and economic backgrounds that mediate the ability of families to provide the required assistance.[98, 138, 243-245]

As the child progresses, practical and emotional parental support increases.[153, 162] Sporting commitments take up significant time; for example, transporting their children to practices and matches, watching them participate and compete, preparing meals, washing clothes and in some instances coaching their children.[98, 153, 162, 246] Studies with elite youth soccer and tennis players highlighted different support roles played by mothers and fathers, with mothers seemingly more involved with time commitments.[236, 247] While this dedication benefits the sporty child, it can impact on family life and the activities of other family members, particularly siblings.[235, 242]

Along with tangible support, families have been found to influence the development of psychological skills in Olympic athletes with different family members contributing in different ways. Parents particularly provided encouragement, empathy and created a positive environment in which their child could achieve.[117] Parental nurturing and support were perceived to assist Olympic and World Champions deal with setbacks,[154] and super-elite participants believed that parental involvement had assisted them to develop mental

toughness.[248] Further attributes that parents are thought to contribute positively towards include intrinsic motivation, self-confidence, work ethic and enjoyment of sport.[235] While tangible support decreases at the elite level, emotional support becomes more important as the athletes manage the highs and lows of competitive sport.[162, 249]

For all the positive support from parents, there are those parents whose behaviours are perceived as negative by young athletes. This may cause children to drop out and not reach their potential.[250] For example, an overemphasis on winning and unrealistic expectations were perceived to increase the pressures on young tennis players.[246, 251]

As the family is one of the most influential factors in sports participation and throughout the talent development pathway, family structures and circumstances are likely to affect progress.[138] In the United Kingdom, it has been reported that children from a two-parent family were more likely to achieve high levels of sports performance.[138, 243] This is most likely because they can provide more opportunities and access as a result of financial resources and practicalities such as work and transport.[138] Without access to additional support networks and well paid employment, children from single-parent families, particularly if the single parent is a mother, are less likely to participate in sport.[242, 244]

Financial resources have been identified as another important factor in providing opportunities to young sports people,[98, 235, 242] and may even be the biggest demand placed on families.[243] Furthermore, this burden is likely to increase as the athlete progresses through the talent pathway and the costs of equipment, coaching, training and travel increase, resulting in youngsters from low-income families being disadvantaged in terms of achieving success.[98, 243-245] Furthermore, the money spent by parents on cricket equipment has been found to be higher than for other sports such as field hockey, tennis, gymnastics, netball and soccer.[244] Many families have reported having to make financial sacrifices to support their talented child's sport progress.[98, 244]

It therefore appears that the barriers faced by athletes from low-income and non-traditional nuclear families continue to limit these athletes from the benefits of access to participation and progress in sport.

3.4.2 Role models

Role models have been recognised as making an important contribution in different sports by both inspiring and modelling behaviour for future participants.[136, 249, 252, 253] Proximal role models were found to be a positive influence in successful individual Scandinavian athlete talent development environments.[11] On the other hand, the lack of proximal role models in the transition from the youth to professional level in a Danish football club was considered to hamper the transitional process.[254] The South African government's White Paper on Sport acknowledged that "successful athletes serve as role models for the youth of a country as achievers, unofficial ambassadors and individuals committed to equality and fairness in competition".[215]

National cricketing idols were acknowledged as attracting and motivating Australian fast bowlers to cricket[16] and observational learning has been identified as a socio-developmental factor in the development of batting expertise.[14] The role modelling of professional conduct (attitudes and on-pitch performance actions) by captains and senior players provided inspiration for English professional county cricketers,[255] and young Black African South African players.[54] On the other hand, Black African players were disillusioned that there were so few Black African cricket role models to inspire future generations of Black African players and erase the myth that cricket was a 'White man's game'.[54] The need for role models from the same ethnic group seems to be an important factor in developing an interest for the game among less well represented groups.[1, 256, 257] While this has been highlighted by some authors, the level of importance has not been well researched.

3.4.3 Schools and clubs

Schools

School systems vary greatly in different countries around the world.[258] In high-income countries, schools are the main societal institution for introducing and providing physical education, fundamental movement skills and sport to young people, either as part of the school curriculum or in the form of after school activities.[259-261] Learning fundamental movement skills provides the basis for future sporting activities and potentially high level performance.[161] Conversely, children who do not have access to opportunities to develop

these skills are more likely to be excluded from organised sport and therefore have less likelihood of developing sporting expertise.[259]

The type of school that one attends also seems to affect sporting success. The evidence from England suggests that attendance at independent (private) schools was associated with higher levels of performance in sport and other domains.[138, 262] This is most likely associated with more physical education and sports time, better facilities and coaching resources and high levels of competition as a result of the financial resources available.[138] In addition, schools may also play a role in facilitating the identification and development of sports talent.[263, 264] It has been suggested that the sporting advantages derived from attending better resourced schools are also linked to socio-economic status and family background as this enables the family to afford these schools.[138]

While the South African sporting administrators recognise the value of school sport in developing sporting talent, the lack of sports facilities, motivated teachers, qualified coaches and administrative capacity in the vast majority of South African schools limits access and opportunity to these benefits for most South African youngsters.[264] A study of parents' perceptions of their children's participation in physical activity conducted in Western Cape Secondary Schools in South Africa, established that the majority of schools in the province could not fulfil parental expectations to provide their children with physical education and its associated benefits.[43] However, the same study found that White and Coloured South African parents preferred their children to receive sports coaching at school rather than at clubs, while Black African parents believed that either option was a possibility.[43]

Clubs

A sports club is an organisation (very often voluntary in nature) that provides an opportunity for young and adult participants to play their chosen sport.[265, 266] They are dynamic, complex and multifaceted social environments and they play different roles and functions in different countries and sporting contexts.[11, 265, 267] Clubs may however be an alternate or complementary component of the talent development pathway, but their contribution would need to be country and sport specific. The effectiveness of South African cricket clubs to develop talent has not been evaluated; however, as discussed in Chapter 2, clubs are a space where cricket is played. Furthermore, CSA has recognised that clubs play a role in retaining

and developing, talent, particular those players who may be late developers, and is devising plans to incorporate club cricket into the talent pathway.[78]

An investigation of the dynamic interactions between young cricketers, parents and coaches within a club environment highlighted how the experiences impacted a player's social construction of 'self as cricketer' and his continued participation or attrition from the club.[265] Furthermore, elite Australian cricketers believed that the challenging experiences of playing with senior club players had assisted with their transition to the senior levels.[14, 175] The role of clubs in the socialisation of children into sport and the complementary parental involvement is a complex social process that is beyond the scope of this thesis.

3.4.4 Coaches

There is general agreement that coaches play a central role in developing sporting talent, creating an effective talent development environment and determining the quality of the sporting experience.[8, 10, 136, 268-272] However, it has been argued that owing to a lack of definitive literature on the impact of coaches on talent development and the positive and negative coaching experiences reported by athletes, coaching should be "valued for the potential contribution it makes to athlete development".[268]

Côté and Gilbert's[269] review of the teaching, positive psychology and athlete development literature highlighted three components that contributed to coaching effectiveness: coaching knowledge, coaching outcomes and coaching contexts. Similarly, the coach's personal characteristics, coaching skills and the team environment were found to contribute to effective coaching in professional Australian sports teams (cricket rugby union and rugby league)[273] and elite American team sports.[270] Along with the primary goals of improved performance and winning matches, a high priority for coaches in elite contexts, was to develop the players' skills both on and off the field with a "humanistic approach" to coaching that focussed on the development of the whole person.[270, 271, 274] This is in contrast to the view that in the professional environment, winning championships and entertaining fans supersedes the holistic development of the athlete.[269]

As differing coaching contexts: participation for children, participation for young adolescents, performance for young adolescents and performance for older adolescents and adults, have different coaching needs and outcomes; coaches require a different mix of sport-related

(professional), interpersonal and intrapersonal skills and knowledge to develop athlete outcomes in each of the different contexts.[268, 269] Moreover, a coaching approach that may be desirable in one context may be inappropriate in another.[117, 275]

In addition to having a thorough technical and tactical knowledge of their sport,[276] effective coaches have been found to possess specific intrapersonal and interpersonal skills and attributes.[269, 270, 277, 278] These skills and attributes form the basis of the relationship, communication, and leadership competencies required in the coaching of elite athletes.[273, 277] Furthermore, it has been suggested that constant introspection and reflection allows coaches to develop a better understanding of themselves that enables ongoing review of their own coaching philosophies[271] and practices.[269]

Strong relationships between coach and athlete have been found to be integral to Olympic success.[279] Developing positive relationships on a personal and professional level, with elite players contributed to effective coaching. These relationships were characterised by mutual honesty, trust and respect.[270, 280] Cricket and rugby league players preferred closer relationships, similar to those found in families, while the maintenance of a professional distance was perceived as being a more effective coaching strategy in rugby union.[280] Getting to know and understand each athlete individually has been found to enhance a coach's ability to develop the type of relationship that each athlete prefers.[117, 270, 281, 282] Furthermore, an open door policy, as well as showing an interest in players' lives outside of their sport, assisted in establishing rapport by creating a relaxed and accessible atmosphere that could foster two-way communication between professional players and coaches.[280]

Effective communications between elite players and coaches have been described as being honest, clear, fair, regular and consistent.[255, 270, 273] Along with contributing to developing relationships, regular dialogue has been perceived to be particularly important with respect to selection and de-selection issues. [268, 280] Selection is an important aspect of many coaching environments and is a complex activity dependent on a variety of different requirements and constraints.[268] Coach selection decisions have the capacity to affect team dynamics[283] as well as the relationships between team members and the coach.[284]

While effective coaches of professional sports teams possessed their own leadership style, they were able to adapt their style to resonate with the players and other staff.[273] Developing

a professional approach, delegating responsibilities and decision making were highlighted as the key properties underlying effective coaching leadership in professional Australian sports teams. Cricket and rugby union players preferred more empowering environments in which their input was valued, while rugby league exhibited a more coach-driven leadership style.[285] Empowering high performance athletes has been found to enhance their confidence.[276] Transformational leadership behaviours, which entails coaches building relationships with players to allow them to develop to their full potential,[286] have been found to contribute to success in a World Champion rugby union team,[287] and professional English cricket teams.[255]

Effective coaching appears to be more focused on creating a player-centred environment as opposed to the more traditional coach-centred approach.[270] This has implications for the structure and content of coaching education and training programmes, which have typically focussed on the sport-related technical and tactical skills.[276, 288] Therefore, intrapersonal and interpersonal skills training and development need to be incorporated into coach education programmes to provide coaches with the knowledge required to holistically develop players and assist in their progress.[276, 280] In addition, continual development of interpersonal skills allows the coach to communicate appropriately and effectively with diverse individuals who may vary in age, background, education and competitive levels, and thereby build the good athlete-coach relationships that characterise great coaching.[270]

The role of the coach and the importance of his/her intrapersonal and interpersonal skills in creating optimal team environments is further discussed under the team environment (section 3.4.6).

3.4.5 Mentoring

Although the definition and understanding of mentoring has evolved over the years, common features include trust, guidance, support and development.[55, 289] The relationship between the two parties, usually between a more senior, knowledgeable person (the mentor) and a junior, less knowledgeable person (the mentee), is considered to be central to mentoring success.[289] Although still limited in the sports literature,[289] mentoring has become more popular in the sports environment.[290-292]

Studies have found that mentoring was perceived to be an effective process in the development of young Black African cricketers in the Eastern Cape province of South Africa,[55]

and elite young English university cricketers[289] as they transition to the senior levels of the game. A key difference between the two studies was that the South African findings were based on a structured programme that had been implemented, while the English study was the perceptions of potential mentees' insights into mentoring, despite no mentoring programme being in place. In addition, Black African players from South Africa's Gauteng province also suggested that mentoring could assist in the progress of Black African players through the cricket pathway.[54]

The importance of the relationship, including commitment from both parties and a good understanding between mentor and mentee was a common finding in both studies.[55, 289] The English players felt that this relationship should be an informal one.[55, 289] The more structured South African programme focussed mainly on imparting cricket-related knowledge.[55] On the other hand, the English players felt that together with technical and tactical advice, psychological support that builds the mentee's confidence was a particularly important factor to be addressed due to the psychological stresses associated with cricket.[289] The mentors on the South African programme were current players, but it was concluded that retired players who have more time available might be more suitable. Furthermore, there was evidence that there was a lack of skills training and support for the mentors.[55] In contrast, coaches, unrelated to the specific team environment were perceived to be the most desired mentors by the English players.[289] It was suggested that improved communication skills, particularly of the mentees, would enhance the effectiveness of the South African programme.[55]

The similarities and differences identified in the two studies would suggest that there may be some flexibility required in a mentoring process that takes the different cultures, contexts, circumstances and requirements of the participants into consideration.

3.4.6   Team environment

The team environment influences athletes' progress and talent development. This is achieved through the relationship between team cohesion and individual cognitive, affective and behavioural outcomes.[283] Cohesion in sport is a process which integrates both task and social objectives.[293] This implies that unity within a group needs to consider both task and social perspectives. A moderate to strong relationship has been found between team cohesion and performance.[294, 295] This relationship held for task and social cohesion, individual or team

sports and was bi-directional, i.e. cohesion led to performance and vice-versa. However, team cohesion does not necessarily translate into team effectiveness.[296] Although, multiple behaviours and processes are involved in the effective functioning of teams,[296] research in this area remains fragmented.[297, 298]

Team performance, as measured by on-field results, is the cornerstone of professional sport, yet as Webster et al.[299] argue, team performance does not take into account the manner in which the performance is achieved. They proposed a more holistic approach that takes both the outcome and the team interactions into account in achieving the desired results. They have termed this team effectiveness.[299] Therefore, it would seem appropriate to discuss factors that affect team cohesion and team effectiveness when considering the broad concept of team environment on talent development. This may be particularly pertinent in cricket, which has been described as a team sport characterised by segregated interdependence.[300] This definition implies that despite players being part of a team, they are not always required to interact with one another, and individual players can produce a performance that enables the team to win.[299]

Team cohesion

A comprehensive review demonstrated the positive links between group cohesion and individual cognitive, affective and behavioural outcomes that all affect team performance.[283] The evidence that higher levels of team cohesion enhanced athlete motivation, understanding of role expectations and personal and social skill development was discussed. Furthermore, task[301, 302] and social cohesion[302] have both been found to enhance athlete satisfaction, which itself is thought to be a prerequisite for athletic performance.[303] Finally, behavioural outcomes of effort[304] and ongoing engagement[305] within a sport were found to be associated with higher levels of team cohesion. Despite these positive factors associated with team cohesion, too much cohesion has been found to have negative consequences at both the group and the individual level in sports teams.[306] In summary, it would appear that team cohesion benefits both the individual and team.

Team effectiveness

Various frameworks of team processes have been used to examine team effectiveness in sport.[299, 307] A review of these is beyond the scope of this thesis; however, one such model, which has been proposed following a qualitative study in professional English cricket will be briefly discussed.[299] Six inter-related themes, depicted in Figure 3.4, were identified that together characterised team effectiveness and the desired performance goals in professional cricket.[299] These themes were similar to the factors that contributed to a positive team environment in professional Australian team sports[273] and the motivational climate of a World Cup winning New Zealand rugby union team.[287]
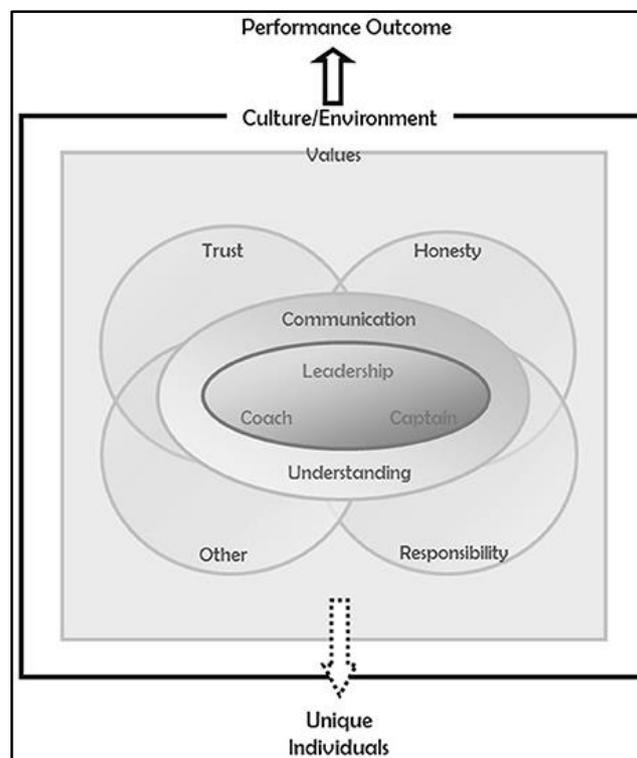
Figure 3.4: Applied heuristic of the essential ingredients of team effectiveness in cricket[299]

In English professional cricket, a safe environment, free from judgement and fear, in which the team and all players can thrive and achieve was created by the coach and maintained by the captain and senior players. Shared values of trust, honesty and responsibility provided the foundation for the team culture and environment to develop.[299] Organisational culture and team environments are increasingly being recognised as important contributors in professional sport.[217] In line with previous findings,[255, 282, 287] transformational leadership was

found to be a central tenet of effective professional cricket teams.[299] This leadership style promoted open and honest communications that facilitated a shared understanding of player personalities and abilities which contributed to the achievement of goals. Effective communications and understanding of players have previously been found to contribute to player-centred team environments.[270, 272, 273, 308] Further support for the importance of understanding individual player characteristics was the finding that professional cricket teams comprise unique individuals, who may contribute positively through exceptional individual performances, but also negatively when individual and team goals are not aligned.[299]

Team cohesion and effectiveness in professional sport appear to be multidimensional, complex social constructs dependent on intrapersonal and interpersonal relationships between unique individuals in a high-performance environment. Emotional intelligence has been found to facilitate both team cohesion and team performance in sport.[120, 287, 308] Furthermore, emotional intelligence appears to be a competency that can be learned.[309]

Adaptation and inclusivity

All athletes are likely to experience a variety of challenges that require adaptation as they settle into a new environment. For example, it has been reported that freshman intercollegiate student-athletes experienced transitional challenges, such as loneliness, fitting in with the new team and adapting to different coaching styles.[310] For athletes from cultural backgrounds different to the team's dominant group, these personal and sporting demands are likely to be compounded by the cultural differences to which they have to adapt.[310]

Within the context of elite sport, research has focussed on the challenges and acculturation process of immigrant athletes as transnational sporting migration increases,[311, 312] and on the experiences of indigenous athletes.[313, 314] Athletes in these North American and Australian environments all identified social and cultural challenges within the community and sports context. These included loneliness and lack of family support, unfamiliarity of the environment (e.g. food, social connections) and verbal and non-verbal language barriers, which affected socialisation experiences. Within the sport context specifically, adjustment to training and role requirements, and understanding different meanings of team social norms, for example, group versus individual warm-ups, particularly stood out.[310, 311, 313, 314] Furthermore, racism

was experienced by the sample of five indigenous Australian players transitioning into the Australian Football League.[314]

Adapting to different environments requires changes from both the dominant and transitioning group. Acculturation has been referred to as the "process of change in cultural practices that an immigrant or cultural minority member undergoes to align with the dominant societal group".[311] Acculturation is a complex process that takes place at both a psychological and a sociological level, and the degree to which individuals prioritise their own culture over the dominant culture results in different outcomes.[315] When acculturation is a shared or a reciprocal process, involving both the immigrant/indigenous elite athlete, and team-mates, coaches and support staff from the dominant culture, learning and understanding about one another's differences, it can be an adaptive process and a merging of views.[311, 316] Communication, empathy and social support create a sense of belonging and build trust between the different groups, but it requires a level of discomfort on both parts.[310]

3.5 Intrapersonal attributes

Intrapersonal attributes refer to those characteristics that are intrinsic (anthropometric, physiological and psychological/mental) to the individual.

3.5.1 Physical/physiological attributes

Physical/physiological factors are a pre-requisite for sport and cricketing performance. Studies of South African,[317] English[318] and Australian[319] professional cricketers found that the bowlers were taller and heavier than the batsmen. The South African and English batsmen had slightly higher VO_2max, but similar body fat percentages to the bowlers.[317, 318] The results of physiological testing indicated that professional cricketers had superior fitness profiles to the general population,[318] and that there were no real physiological differences between cricketers and international rugby union players from the same era, despite the greater perceived physical demands of rugby union.[317] Furthermore, 11 of a sample of 15 South African cricketers were highly proficient at other sports, particularly rugby union, prior to choosing to specialise as professional cricketers.[317]

Injuries are part of sports participation and performance, and cricket is no exception. Over a 10-year period, the annual average injury prevalence in elite Australian cricketers was

12.5%.[320] In comparison to the other cricket disciplines, fast bowlers have been reported as having the highest prevalence of injuries. [320, 321] Although cricketers sustain a wide variety of injuries, the most common injury reported was the hamstring strain,[320] while the prevalence of lumbar vertebral stress injuries in fast bowlers has been estimated to be as high as 67%.[322] It would further appear that fast bowlers younger than 20 years of age are at increased risk of this injury which results in the highest number of missed days.[320] Bowling technique and workload appear to contribute to the risk of young players developing lumbar stress injuries.[320, 323]

The main impact of injuries on players is time out from practice and competition. For example, lumbar stress injuries can result in players being out of action for anything between 2 and 12 months,[322] which requires great determination to overcome.[16] Furthermore, injuries contribute to the drop out of players from the game.[15, 324]

3.5.2 Psychological/mental attributes

Mental performance and the role of psychological attributes and skills is now widely accepted as an important factor in contributing to and developing sporting excellence, particularly at the elite level.[115, 325] Moreover, psychological characteristics have been found to distinguish successful from less successful athletes.[117, 326, 327] However, little is known about the relationship between psychological attributes and performance success in cricket.

The game of cricket, particularly at the elite level, is a complex interaction between physical, technical, tactical and mental performance.[19] Various psychological attributes, such as motivation, love of the game, dedication, good work ethic, mental toughness, dealing with setbacks and willingness to learn/change were found to contribute to the development of cricket fast bowling skills.[15] Similar attributes were also highlighted as important in developing batting expertise.[14] However, highly skilled batsmen were only distinguishable from batsmen of lesser skill by their higher degree of global mental toughness.[119] The skilled batsmen scored significantly higher on mental toughness dimensions relating to motivation, coping skills (perseverance) and self-belief (potential). A recent qualitative study with five U19 and six senior international Pakistani cricketers confirmed that psychological skills were important in dealing with the pressure of and creating a positive mind set in competitive cricket.[328] Specific components mentioned were psychological control, psychological preparation, freshness of

mind and an adherence to coaches' instructions for mental strength. The lack of key psychological skills was identified as one of the factors in the drop out of potential expert Australian bowlers.[15]

Motivation is a complex human characteristic which determines the manner in which an individual behaves. Motivation is broadly defined as "the various internal processes that energise and direct behaviour".[329] Two types of motivation, intrinsic and extrinsic have been described,[330] both of which are thought to drive the behaviour of highly successful individuals.[331] Intrinsic motivators, such as fun, enjoyment, challenge and achievement, love of the game, camaraderie and desire to be the best, were key attributes in sustaining the necessary level of practice and commitment to develop batting expertise.[14] Furthermore, high levels of motivation and passion were perceived to be essential characteristics for success in fast bowling.[175]

In addition to developing batting and bowling expertise, cricketers are required to perform consistently at a high standard over the course of five days (test cricket), during the course of a test series (a period of four to six weeks), throughout a tournament (e.g. World Cup) and during a season. Using three different data analysis approaches, a number of core antecedents (total self-confidence, optimal arousal levels, motivation and focus, and total mental preparation) were highlighted that batters and bowlers required before "repeatable good performance" occurred.[332]

Many of the psychological attributes recognised as contributing to the development of cricket talent and success are similar to the attributes that characterise mentally tough performers.[333, 334] Mental toughness has emerged in the literature as a specific aspect of a sportsman's psychological profile associated with elite performance.[117, 118, 248, 333-335] Although there has been no consistent agreement of the definition of mental toughness, the definition proposed by Jones et al.[333] has been fairly widely accepted.

> *"Mental toughness is having the natural and developed psychological edge that enables you to: (1) generally cope better than your opponents with the many demands (competitions, training, lifestyle) that sport places on the performer; and (2) specifically, to be more consistent and better than your opponents in remaining determined, focused, confident and in control under pressure."[333]*

It has been argued that different sports require a context-specific approach to mental toughness and that mental toughness can be exhibited in very different behaviours.[118, 336] Interviews with 12 English cricket internationals recognised as being mentally tough suggested that developmental factors, personal responsibility, dedication and commitment, belief and coping with pressure had contributed to their success.[118] Five subscales of mental toughness, namely affective intelligence, attentional control, resilience, self-belief and desire to achieve were identified by cricketers from the major cricket playing countries, including South Africa, as impacting on cricket performance. Furthermore, these five factors were each positively correlated with dispositional flow, hardiness and resilience, and negatively correlated with athlete burnout.[336] It would therefore appear that mental toughness and its associated dimensions encompass many of the psychological attributes that foster cricket development and success.

3.6   Socio-ecological frameworks

3.6.1   Introduction

Talent identification and development in sport, including cricket, is a dynamic, complex, non-linear and idiosyncratic process. Furthermore, in a diverse society such as South Africa, this is compounded by varying historical, social, cultural and economic realities (Chapter 2). Socio-ecological frameworks provide an approach for exploring these complicated challenges and therefore this research has adopted a socio-ecological approach. Socio-ecological models can be conceptualised and adapted in different ways depending on the issues being addressed, the specific situations and the varying relationships that may exist. They provide a framework for understanding a range of factors that may impact human behaviours.[337] Furthermore, they can assist researchers to understand the inter-relations between a wide range of personal and environmental factors.[338]

Systems theory which recognises that complex phenomena should be viewed as a whole forms the basis of a socio-ecological approach.[339] The term ecology is derived from the biological sciences, but in the behavioural and social sciences, it refers to the interactions between individuals and their environments.[192, 340] Ecological Systems Theory (EST) postulates that human development occurs through the interaction of the individual and the

environment in which he/she is embedded.[98, 341, 342] Ecological models consist of interconnected multiple levels of proximal and distal environmental influences that may include physical, social, cultural, organisational, policy and psychological contexts.[340]

A number of researchers have contributed to and informed the current ecological models.[339, 340, 343] Bronfenbrenner,[186, 341, 344, 345] who acknowledged the influence of Lewin on his work, provides a comprehensive and dynamic framework for understanding human development. His early theories focused on aspects of context with his famous hierarchical categories of influences, depicting the environment as a series of four nested structures.[192] Bronfenbrenner's framework has influenced the majority of researchers utilising an ecological approach in the sporting sphere and it has informed the socio-ecological approach of this study.

3.6.2 Bronfenbrenner's Bio-ecological Theory of Human Development

Bronfenbrenner's theory for analysing the role of the environment in shaping human development through a person's lifespan evolved over time.[346] Following his initial contextual based theory, it has developed into its current theory, which stresses how development is affected by the complex inter-relationship between four components: process, person, context and time, often referred to as the PPCT model. The model acknowledges that as well as the context affecting the individual, so the person affects the context.[186]

Process refers to proximal processes that are considered the primary mechanism of human development and are defined as the interactions, both positive and negative, between the developing individual and his/her immediate environment.[186] For example, a young cricket player selected for a professional team may thrive in the environment or be overwhelmed without the requisite personal attributes to manage the challenges of the high performance environment and may drop out altogether. These proximal processes evolve over time and can be seen as non-linear and idiosyncratic interactions between the player and his immediate environments, and may constrain skill development.[347]

The second component of the model is the person and refers to the bio-psychological characteristics of the developing individual and the manner in which the person interacts with the environment.[341] Three kinds of personal attributes, namely dispositions, resources and demands, were identified as influencing proximal processes. Dispositions relate to variations

in motivation, temperament and perseverance and can activate proximal processes either positive or negatively.[186, 348] Resources refer to the abilities, experiences, skills and knowledge of the individual that enable the effective functioning of proximal processes at a given stage of development. These resources may be assets or liabilities and are influenced by genetic factors and/or physical and cognitive maturation of the individual. Demand characteristics invite or discourage reactions from the social environment, which can foster or disrupt the operation of proximal processes.[186] For example, an individual's physical characteristics may have an immediate impact on how he/she is perceived by another person.

Context is the third component of the model and refers to the multi-level ecological environment in which the individual develops.[341] The person is situated at the centre of a hierarchy of nested systems, which are primarily defined in sociological terms[349] and represent proximal to more distal environments spanning increasingly larger contexts as shown in Figure 3.5. The individual and the environments interact either directly or indirectly with one another.
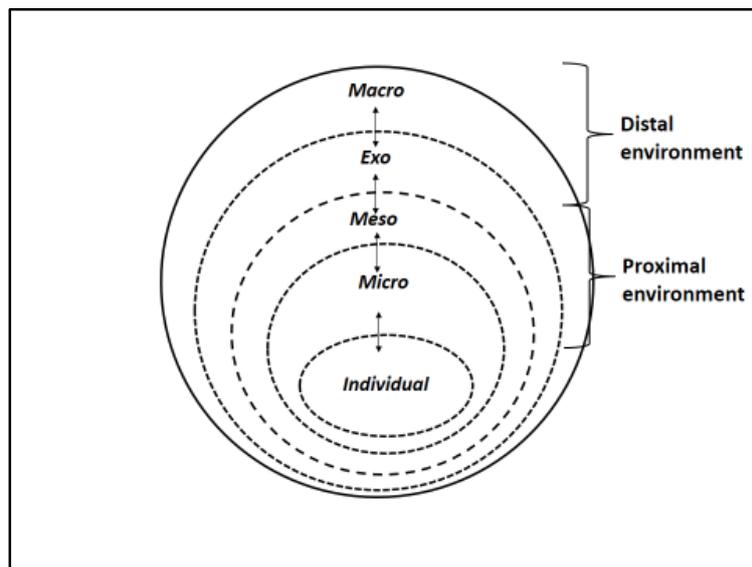
Figure 3.5: Depiction of Bronfenbrenner's multi-level environments

The micro-system is the one in which the person is directly involved in activities, roles and relationships and where the proximal processes operate.[341] The individual is likely to be part of more than one micro-system; for example, family, school, coach. The interactions with these different systems shape the quality of the person's development.[347] In a cricket context,

the player's relationship with his coach will influence the development of his cricket talent over time. The majority of research on athletic talent development has occurred at this micro-system level.[155, 346] The meso-system consists of the inter-relations and connections that emerge between the different micro-systems with which the individual interacts.[348, 350] For example, a cricketer will have separate interactions with his teachers and with his coach, but interaction between the teacher and coach may provide further information to assist the player's cricket development. There has been a movement towards research that captures many of an athlete's micro-systems in one analysis.[348]

The exo-system is formed by contexts in which the individual is not actually situated but which have an indirect influence on development. The exo-system is centred on understanding how distal processes enable or hamper proximal processes.[190] For example, the impact that decisions made by cricket administrators may have on the future development of player's talent.

The most distal level of the nested system is the macro-system which encompasses all the linkages among the other three levels. It has been described as, "the overarching pattern of micro-, meso-, and exo-system characteristics of a given culture, sub-culture or other broader social context".[351] It can be considered as the broad socio-cultural context for the developing individual.[145] Furthermore, the all-encompassing presence of "distinctive belief systems, values, life styles, resources, opportunity structures, life course options and patterns of social exchange" have been highlighted as characterising a macro-system.[344] Understanding the influence of differing cultures, social classes, ethnicities, economic statuses, beliefs, attitudes and values on proximal processes, may provide researchers with enhanced insight into potential barriers and enablers in the development of sporting talent in diverse societies. For example, how do differing socio-economic statuses affect opportunities to participate in an expensive sport such as cricket?

The final component of the model is time. Bronfenbrenner identified three temporal levels. Micro-time refers to the ongoing continuity and discontinuity of activity within the proximal processes, while meso-time has a longer focus of days and weeks. Macro-time acknowledges the influence of historic events or periods on human development.[186] For example, South

Africa's history of colonialism and apartheid have the potential to impact the development of current cricket talent and current events may influence future generations' opportunities.

The PPCT model has been summarised as follows: "The PPCT model states that the form, power, content, and direction of the processes affecting development vary systematically as a joint function of: a) the characteristics of the developing person, b) the environment in which the processes are happening, c) the developmental outcomes under consideration, and d) the changes occurring over the time period during which the processes are taking place".[352]

While recognising the importance of the proximal processes, person and time components of the model, the contextual element has been used as the framework to discuss the results of this study. The exploratory and descriptive qualitative nature of this study did not permit a focus on the mechanism of proximal process interactions. Person attributes that may contribute to cricketing success were identified by the participants in this study and are discussed without providing details of how the disposition, resource and demand characteristics influence the proximal processes, as this is beyond the scope of this thesis. As micro- and meso- time relate to the activities of proximal processes, only macro-time events are discussed. Socio-ecological factors that were perceived to impact cricket talent development, were identified at each of the four levels. The exo- and macro-systems are referred to as the distal environment and the micro-systems as the proximal environment.

3.6.3   *Socio-ecological approaches to sports talent development*

Socio-ecological approaches have been used to guide population-wide interventions aimed at changing behaviours by addressing multi-level factors in the health and physical activity fields,[340, 342, 353-358] as well as to explain the complex interactions associated with sport participation and competition in different settings.[359-362] Furthermore, ecological frameworks can also be found in the sports management literature to explain different role players' involvement in sporting success.[218, 219, 363-366] However, there has been limited use of a socio-ecological approach to investigate the complexities of sports talent development specifically.

A theoretical model of sports talent development based on Bronfenbrenner's PPCT model using proximal processes as the core of the model has been proposed.[348] A literature search indicated that his model does not appear to have gained much traction with researchers. Although the PPCT approach is gaining some popularity among researchers, most have

focused on the multi-level environmental contexts in which the athlete develops.[145, 187-189, 191, 227, 254, 367]

Utilising Bronfenbrenner's contextual framework to identify factors that had enabled international Swedish[368] and Irish[133] athletes to develop their sporting expertise, the micro environment was considered to be most important. Specific factors in this proximal environment included a good club environment, social support and close interpersonal relationships. Furthermore, intrapersonal attributes were perceived to be central to maximising their talents and responding to their environment. Wider system support was perceived to be necessary to overcome sporting, financial and personal barriers at the later stages of the Irish athletes' development.[133]

Henriksen utilised Bronfenbrenner's multi-level framework to explore the influence of macro level factors on athlete interactions at the micro level of an ATDE in individual sports.[11] Henriksen's holistic ecological approach was used by Larsen and colleagues in their investigative[254] and then intervention[191] studies of talent development in Danish U17 football. The success factors identified did not differ considerably from those found in individual Scandinavian sports.

More recently, the 3D-AD2 (three dimensional athlete development) model conceptualised athlete development by considering the interplay of individual attributes with environmental (meso), system (macro) and chance factors.[169] This model proposed that the contribution of and relationship between the different factors varies during an athlete's progress through the development pathway.[169]

A Canadian case study on community influences on developing athletic talent,[190, 227] utilised Henriksen's adapted Bronfenbrenner model.[351] The nature of the themes identified in this case study highlighted the need to pursue investigating the role of indirect environmental influences at multiple levels in the development of sporting talent throughout an individual's lifespan.

No studies were found that explored talent development in cricket specifically using Bronfenbrenner's model, although Phillip's[175] examination of fast bowling talent development utilised a dynamical systems theory as a multidimensional rationale.

3.7   Rationale for this study

This review has discussed the complex, multifactorial, non-linear nature of talent identification and development in sport and cricket. The interaction between intrapersonal characteristics and environmental factors at multiple levels of society supports the need for a more nuanced approach to talent development that takes specific sports and cultures into account and considers unique barriers and enablers to development in these contexts.[173]

The majority of talent identification and development research has focused on Western, Educated, Industrialised, Rich, and Democratic (WEIRD) societies,[9, 190] and therefore the applicability of the findings beyond these contexts need to be viewed with caution. For example, Henriksen's[11] and Balish's[190] studies were conducted amongst athletes from similar cultural backgrounds in high-income countries.[369] Australia and the United Kingdom, where much of the cricket talent development research has been carried out, had per capita GDPs in 2016 of US\$ 49,927 and US\$ 40,412 respectively.[369] Elite sporting performance is influenced by the historical, socio-cultural, political and economic circumstances of a country.[148]

As has been discussed, South Africa is a low- and middle-income country (GDP per capita in 2016 of US\$5,284),[369] with diverse cultures, economic circumstances and communities, which has been further divided by its history of colonialism and apartheid. For many years, most of the population were excluded from participating in the social, economic and sporting activities of the country, and despite 24 years of democracy, many inequalities among the ethnic groups still exist. The lack of progress of 'Black' cricketers throughout the talent pathway, but particularly at the elite levels, has been a cause for concern for both government and CSA.

South Africa's unique circumstances and CSA's desire to understand the barriers and enablers to cricket talent development and thereby implement appropriate interventions provided the opportunity to utilise a socio-ecological approach. This research investigated proximal and distal factors that interact with intrapersonal attributes to influence talent development in a team sport (cricket) through the lifespan of the players from initial exposure up to the elite level in a low-and middle- income, multi-ethnic country. The unique nature of this study hopes to address some of the limitations highlighted in this review and thereby contribute further insights into the socio-ecological nature of talent development. Talent development by its

nature is idiosyncratic to each sport, context and ultimately to each individual, and therefore requires a renewed approach.

Therefore, the overall aim of this study was to determine the role that socio-ecological factors may play in the development of cricket talent in a diverse society. Specific objectives were to:

- Explore the experiences of career progression as a cricketer in South Africa;

- Explore the perceptions of individuals and institutions that have provided support, or not, in the process of developing cricketing talent, particularly in the Black African communities;

- Explore the perceptions of low representation of Black African cricketers in South Africa, including factors influencing this low representation;

- Obtain insights into the players' perceptions of intrapersonal characteristics that may contribute to cricketing success; and

- Assess the perceived effectiveness of an intervention to address the low representation of Black African cricketers in South Africa.

CHAPTER 4   METHODOLOGY

"The game of cricket existed long before I was born. It will be played centuries after my demise. During my career I was privileged to give the public my interpretation of its character in the same way that a pianist, might interpret the works of Beethoven." (Sir Donald Bradman, former Australian batting legend)

4.1   Introduction

Having positioned the research within the wider South African and cricket context, talent development literature and a socio-ecological framework, this chapter provides a comprehensive account of how the research was conducted and the motivation for the specific methodology adopted. The chapter describes the research design and philosophy that underpinned the approach. It continues by explaining the rationale and appropriateness of a qualitative approach and the specific research methods employed. Thereafter, the researcher's role, the participants sampled and the ethical issues are discussed. The data collection process and procedure are described in detail. The chapter ends by clarifying the way the quality and trustworthiness of the research was ensured.

4.2   Research design

4.2.1   Research philosophy

This study has been guided by a pragmatic research philosophy.[27, 370, 371] A pragmatic approach seeks to find practical solutions to current problems experienced by individuals and society.[27, 372] The initial focus of the research was to explore the reasons for the low representation of Black African cricketers in South Africa – a real world, contemporary problem being faced by the players themselves, Cricket South Africa (CSA) and South African society as a whole. Therefore, there was a need to approach the research in a manner which not only better understood the phenomenon, but could also identify possible solutions to inform policy and practice. As the study progressed, additional research questions arose which required flexibility in an attempt to answer the varying problems.[373]

Furthermore, "pragmatists recognise that scientific inquiry is contextual in nature and that the past and current social, historical, and political conditions strongly influence the scientific

process."[27] Cricket talent development in South Africa has been impacted by the social, economic, cultural and political consequences of the history of South African society. In light of these constraints, a pragmatic stance was deemed to be the most appropriate approach to address the range of research requirements and the diversity of stakeholders, and to interpret and translate the findings into possible interventions for CSA.[372]

The research has also taken a transdisciplinary approach.[25, 205] Transdisciplinary research attempts to find solutions to complex, real-world challenges by combining the resources and knowledge of academics and practitioners across different disciplines.[374] Solving contemporary problems aligns with the objectives of pragmatists. By its nature, transdisciplinary research brings together individuals with different philosophies and paradigms and therefore a pragmatic view is most appropriate to reconcile these differences on a practical level.[373] In addition, and in line with the qualitative approach, players, coaches, administrators and other cricket stakeholders were co-creators of the research findings by their participation in the interview process.[375, 376] The transdisciplinary nature of this research was further supported by a variety of disciplines: sport and exercise psychology, social sciences, sport and organisational management, and health and sport sciences. Literature from these disciplines was sourced to guide and support the studies.

4.2.2 Overall framework

This study was based on a qualitative research approach,[25, 375] using in-depth interviews.[377] Qualitative methods are recommended when exploring a phenomenon, namely cricket talent development in a diverse, multicultural society, which has previously been poorly understood.[375, 376, 378]

The research consisted of four distinct but related studies that were conducted during two different cricket seasons[10]. This is depicted in Figure 4.1. Study one (2012/13 season) was initiated at the request of CSA to understand why only a limited number of talented Black African cricketers were progressing to the elite level (section 4.4.1), despite significant investment in cricket development in the country.

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[10] The domestic South Africa cricket season runs from August/September to the following April/May.
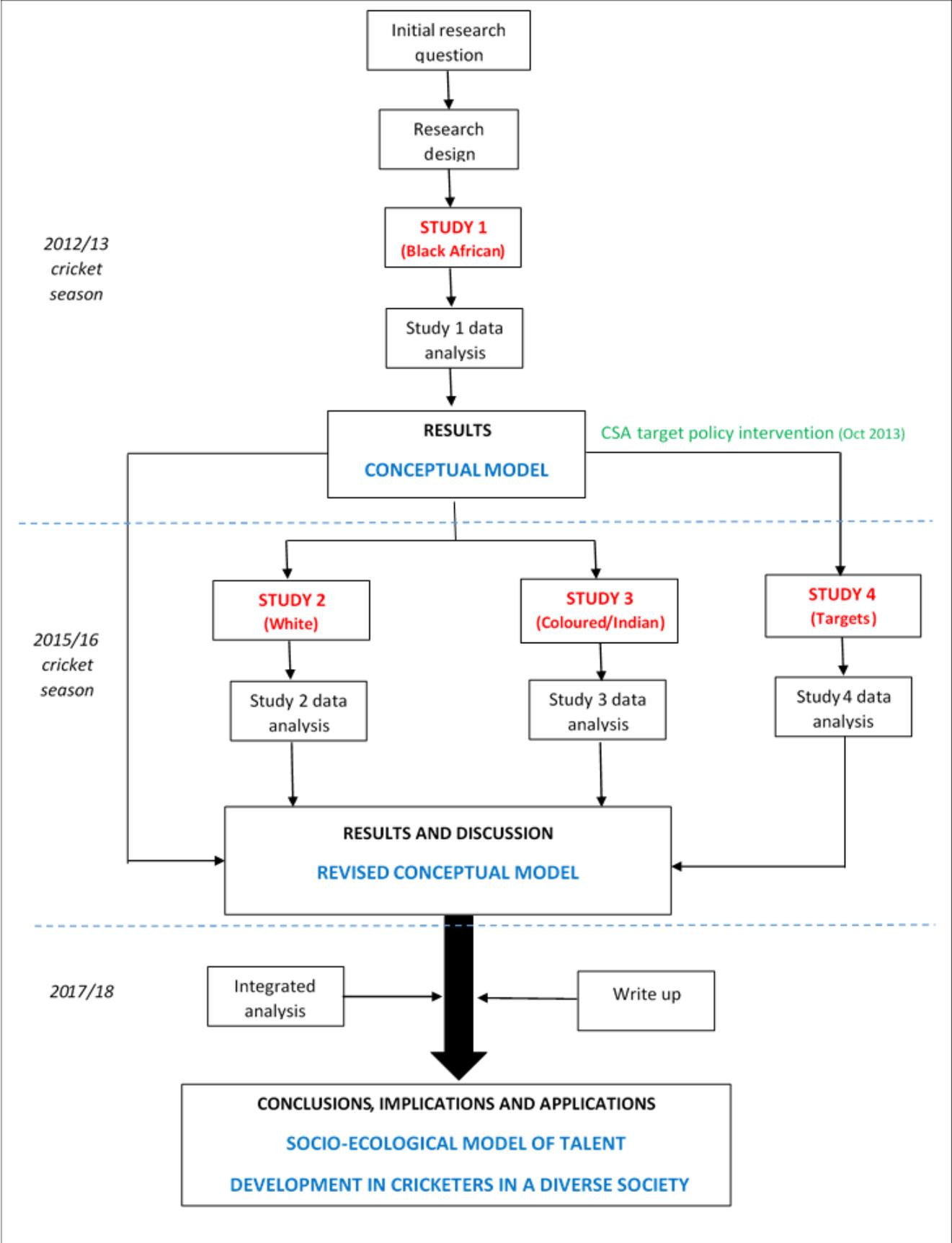
Figure 4.1: Schematic illustration of research process

Based on the results of study one, a conceptual socio-ecological framework was developed, using an adapted version of Bronfenbrenner's bio-ecological model.[186] Thereafter, study two and study three were conducted during the 2015/16 cricket season to determine how the experiences of matched White, Coloured and Indian players in South Africa compared to those of their Black African counterparts. The extent to which the conceptual framework applied to these groups of players was also evaluated.

In October 2013, CSA implemented an ethnic 'target' policy (Chapter 10) which required that a minimum number of Black African cricketers play at the senior provincial and franchise levels. This number was increased progressively over the next two seasons. Study four was undertaken during the same season as studies two and three to determine the perceived impact of this intervention on both the players' cricketing experiences and the conceptual framework. The findings of studies two, three and four were used to refine the conceptual framework and propose a socio-ecological framework of talent development in cricketers in a diverse society.

4.2.3 Qualitative approach

A qualitative approach to research in sport, exercise and health has been on the increase and has gained more acceptance over the years.[25] Qualitative research is an evolving discipline[25] that is underpinned and influenced by a variety of different theoretical and philosophical assumptions,[24, 375, 379] and arising from different disciplines, for example sociology, anthropology and psychology.[378] This has led to multiple research methods and specific qualitative research traditions such as ethnography, phenomenology, grounded theory and case study.[25, 378] However, it has been suggested that a qualitative approach can be followed without adhering to a specific qualitative tradition or method.[24, 375]

Despite the varying assumptions and traditions, there are some common features. Qualitative inquiry investigates individuals in a naturalistic, real-world setting in which the experiences of the individuals can be studied within a specific context.[24] It facilitates a deep understanding of complex problems to determine personal meaning for the individuals directly involved.[25] Qualitative studies are useful when there is a need to obtain exploratory, descriptive and explanatory information.[376] Rich descriptions and meaningful explanations

obtained through in-depth, explorative, qualitative methods contribute to an improved understanding of a phenomenon in which there was previously limited information.

Qualitative research can be used for both inductive (to generate new theories) and deductive (to test existing hypotheses) purposes.[375] Whether using inductive and/or deductive processes, qualitative inquiry and analysis generate patterns and themes that may contribute to the development of new frameworks, theories and models.

More specifically, a qualitative approach has previously been used in multicultural research of groups that have previously experienced racism, discrimination and exclusion.[24] A qualitative approach was used when exploring the acculturation of elite immigrant athletes.[311] Qualitative approaches are also very informative in highlighting differences experienced by individuals and groups such that individualised interventions can be designed to address specific needs.[371]

4.2.4   Appropriateness of a qualitative approach

As the overall aim of this study was to explore the experiences of South African cricketers as they progress through the talent pathway, a qualitative approach was deemed the most appropriate considering the current limited understanding of this phenomenon. Another aim was to uncover and better understand the barriers and enablers to this progress. Despite the existence of numerous sports talent development models and research into the development of expertise in cricket batting[14] and fast bowlers,[16] there is no comprehensive talent development model for cricket. This lack of an existing, specific theoretical model necessitated an initial research approach through which a conceptual framework could be postulated. Thereafter, deductive methods could be utilised to further enhance the framework. In addition, the historical context and diverse nature of South African society and cricket added another layer of complexity that needed exploring. Through the flexibility and iterative nature of qualitative research, the varying objectives could be accommodated.

4.2.5   Research methods and instruments

Qualitative research utilises a variety of research methods to collect the data necessary for analysis.[376] When choosing the most suitable method, it is important to ensure coherence with research aims and questions.[375] One-on-one interviews and focus groups are appropriate

research methods to obtain in-depth understanding and interpretation of individual experiences, perspectives, beliefs and opinions.[25] As individual players were the unit of analysis,[376] in-depth one-on-one qualitative interviews were chosen as the only form of data collection in this study. While qualitative research often uses multiple research methods, a single method such as an interview is acceptable.[24]

Qualitative interviews are a versatile method to understand what a wide variety of people across cultures think and feel about specific ideas.[377] They are naturalistic, allow for exploration of individual experiences and interpretation of the meaning of such experiences.[377] Qualitative interviews are suitable for shedding new light on perplexing problems, for example, the reasons for few Black African players at the elite level of South African cricket; they also provide different perspectives or experiences of the same process,[377] for example, progress through a talent development pathway. Focus groups do not allow for the same depth of relationship between researcher and participant to develop, resulting in less depth of insight and fewer personal experiences, details and meanings.[377] For the purposes of this research the depth of personal experiences was more important than the interactive nature of focus groups.[375, 380] Furthermore, for confidentiality, anonymity and logistical reasons focus groups were not considered an appropriate research method for this study.

Qualitative interviews are conversational in nature[381] and an invitation to interviewees to share their thoughts and opinions about a topic of interest to the researcher.[382] Qualitative interviewing has been described as a "conversation with a purpose", which combines the subjectivity of a conversation and the factual nature of an interview.[383] In this way, the researcher can access both the manifest and latent[384] significance of what is being said without the detachment that often taints an interview.

Effective qualitative interviewing is dependent upon the nature of the relationship between the researcher and interviewee such that a level of trust is developed which encourages the interviewee to engage openly with the researcher.[377, 382] The interviewee, who should be considered the expert in the relationship, plays an active role in directing the conversation. The researcher, by listening carefully with all senses[24] and respectfully,[382] is able to hear what

is personally important to the interviewee. This active listening helps reassure the interviewee that he can safely share the depth and complexity of his experiences.[382]

The in-depth interviews were semi-structured,[25, 385] utilising open-ended guide questions.[377, 382] The guide questions (section 4.6.1) provided a general framework for the conversation and ensured that all topics that needed to be explored were covered. Open-ended questions are informative and allow the participants to share their experiences in their own words and manner, and they provide a platform for the researcher to follow up specific responses by asking for more information, explanation, meaning, elaboration or clarification.[375, 377, 382] This format of interviewing allows unexpected issues to surface while simultaneously eliciting rich, personal information from the participants. Furthermore, it was flexible enough to engage with participants from different cultures while still covering the same issues of interest.[386]

In addition to player interviews, key informant interviews also formed part of the research method. These interviews followed a similar approach to the player interviews. Key informants are individuals with particular expertise, knowledge and experience in the phenomenon under investigation.[375] They can provide different, unique and multiple perspectives compared to the players' experiences.[375, 387, 388] Their insights add depth and enhanced meaning and understanding to the data collected for analysis, thereby providing the researcher with another source of information. This is often referred to as data source triangulation,[375, 376] and key informant information may confirm or contradict other participants. The key informants' perceptions were a component of establishing the trustworthiness (section 4.8) of this research. The key informant interviews were conducted to provide context and perspectives from the viewpoint of differing cricket stakeholders.

The main research instruments in this research were the researcher (section 4.3) and the interview guide questions (section 4.6.1).

4.3   Role of the researcher in qualitative research

In qualitative research, the researcher is recognised as the main research instrument and is an integral part of the research process.[24, 25, 375, 380, 389] The researcher engages in the process with his/her own characteristics, values, beliefs, experiences, roles and assumptions that are likely to influence the process. Although it is unlikely that the researcher will be completely

objective or neutral through the process,[375, 380] he/she should strive to achieve a balanced approach.[390] The researcher's influence on the process is known as 'reflexivity' (or self-awareness) and is an accepted feature of qualitative research.[24, 25, 375, 377, 380, 382]

A major consideration in this study was the potential influence of the different age, gender and ethnicity of the primary researcher (middle aged, female and White) as opposed to the participants (young, male and diverse ethnicities). This difference was accounted for in the different stages of the research process. Firstly, in designing the interview guide questions, input was received from individuals from diverse backgrounds (a co-researcher and a Black African player) and was piloted with a co-researcher from a different ethnic group to the primary researcher. This was to ensure that the guide questions were relevant, applicable and understandable, in both language and meaning, by culturally diverse participants.

Furthermore, during the interview process, the primary researcher endeavoured to be respectful, non-judgemental, and to display empathy and have an open mind to the experiences that the participants shared by employing listening and communication skills that are central in a qualitative interview.[377, 382, 391] Remaining non-judgemental was also important during the analysis and interpretative phase in an attempt to 'step into the participants' shoes' to understand and learn from their experiences from all perspectives and through the different cultural lenses.

Another consideration in qualitative inquiry is whether the researcher is considered an insider or outsider as this may influence how he/she is perceived by the participants.[380] The primary researcher's involvement in cricket which spanned different roles: player development manager, mental performance coach, level one cricket coach and lecturer in coach education programmes, may have positioned her as an insider and created a power dynamic during the interview process. While this may have caused participants to withhold information, it was countered by carefully explaining the researchers' role. On the other hand, the primary researcher's understanding of cricket provided her with a connection to the players, which assisted in the interview process.

4.4　Participants and sampling

Purposive sampling was used in all four studies.[24, 25, 375, 385] This is a non-probability method of selecting participants who meet specific selection criteria that will enable the participants to provide insight into the phenomenon being studied.[375] This type of sampling should provide the researcher with relevant, rich, descriptive and meaningful information.[24, 25, 375] Purposive sampling also allows for the inclusion of experts, for example key informants, in the research sample.

Patton[375] discusses a variety of purposive sampling options, ranging from deviant case sampling to homogenous sampling, depending on the nature of the research question. As the purpose of this research was to explore the varying experiences of South African cricketers, a heterogeneous sampling strategy was employed. This provided maximum variation to obtain a broad range of information with differing and diverse views, which would increase the current limited information about the topic. A diverse sample of players who met the inclusion criteria (section 4.4.1) across the different ethnic groups and within each group was selected.

Qualitative sample sizes are typically smaller than those found in quantitative research. However, this is justified because the purpose of qualitative inquiry is to explore topics in-depth versus the breadth that would be characteristic of the large samples used in quantitative research.[375] The sample size is deemed sufficient when no new themes emerge as further interviews are conducted. This is termed data saturation.[392] Patton[375] further emphasises that there are no rules to the sample size in qualitative research, and as with many other decisions in this form of research, it is left up to the researcher and is dependent on information required, purpose, usefulness and credibility.

The primary researcher's and two co-supervisors' knowledge of the cricketers in the country assisted in identifying potential participants who met the studies' criteria. The selection of participants for each study is explained in the sections that follow.

4.4.1　Player sampling criteria and recruitment – study one

The criteria for inclusion in the first study were adult (aged 18 years and older), Black African male, South African cricketers who were successful at the elite level and were playing the game at the time of the research. There is a lack of consistency across the literature in defining

elite performance.[151] As debated by Araujo and Scharhag,[393] the definition of sport performance level in research is often imprecise and therefore does not allow for accurate comparison across studies. [393 393 393 393 393 393 391 390 390] Their suggestion to provide a specific and precise descriptor of the study participants has been incorporated in the description of this sample.

Athletes who play professional sports, such as cricket have been included in some researchers' definition of 'elite'.[218, 228] Furthermore, in a review of the literature on defining elite athletes, professionalism was the third most common definition of 'elite'.[394] In this study, the elite level was defined as franchise level cricket and above. Franchise level is the first level at which all members of the team are deemed professional. 'Success' was defined as those players who had played at least one match of any format (Twenty20, one-day and four-day), at the franchise level, and/or had a franchise playing contract (section 5.5.2) for the particular cricket season during which the players were interviewed.

Players from all the different playing disciplines in the game, i.e. bowlers (seam and spin), batsmen and wicket keepers were recruited. In addition, as far as possible, all the franchises were represented to include regional differences in individual experiences. In the one instance in which this was not possible, a key informant was selected based on his knowledge of cricket in the region represented by that franchise.

Only 22 Black African players were identified who met the above criteria. Based on the different franchises and playing roles that they represented, 15 of these players were approached for participation in the study. This entailed a telephone call to the players by the primary researcher to explain the research (based on the information sheet (Appendix B) approved by the University of Cape Town Human Research Ethics Committee, 322/2012) and request participation in the study. Of these, four players declined to participate primarily because they were worried about their identity being recognised based on the information that they would provide. Despite assurances that their anonymity would be maintained, they still declined to participate and their decision was respected. A confirmation email (with a copy of the information sheet) was sent to the 11 potential participants. All 11 agreed to participate and during the interview process, this number was deemed sufficient as no new themes emerged after eight or nine interviews.

4.4.2 Player sampling criteria and recruitment – studies two and three

Study two

In study two, White players who, as far as possible matched the age, playing position and franchise level experience of the 11 Black African players interviewed in study one, were identified. By the very nature of the criteria, precise matching was not possible. However, 19 'matched' players were contacted, in the same manner as the Black African players, for participation in the study. Fourteen of these were willing to participate; one player said that he was not interested in taking part and four players did not return telephone calls or respond to an email outlining the study. White cricketers, at this time, comprised the majority of franchise players; however, the low number of 'matched' players was as a result of many of the White players being older than the Black African players and therefore not meeting the age or length of franchise playing experience criteria.

Although 14 players were more than the 11 Black African players interviewed, the increased number was justified for several reasons: the views expressed by these 14 players provided a diversity of White players' experiences; the majority of 'matched' players approached were willing to participate in the study; and the imprecise ability to match players directly required additional players to be recruited.

Study three

In study three, Coloured and Indian players who satisfied the selection criteria and, as far as possible, 'matched' the Black African players were identified. There were 26 players who fulfilled the criteria for inclusion in this study. These players were contacted by telephone as for the previous studies. Two players were not interested in taking part, one player was not contactable despite numerous attempts by telephone and email, and five players were willing to participate but were unavailable during the time that the primary researcher travelled to their home town. Although attempts were made to re-arrange interviews with these five players, this was not possible. However, the data elicited from the 18 players who were available, were deemed sufficient based on no new themes emerging towards the end of the interview process.

After reading the information sheet forwarded to them by email, these 18 Coloured and Indian players were included in the sample for study three. Ethnic classification in South Africa is not a precise science and therefore these players were asked, during their interviews, to indicate the ethnic group with which they best identified. Following the interviews, 13 players classified themselves as Coloured and five as Indian. Despite the small sample of Indian players, this was deemed to be representative of this group based on the total number of Indian players represented in the franchise teams as well as the homogeneity of the themes identified by these players.

4.4.3 Summary of player information

A total of 43 players were interviewed. Due to the high profile of these players, safeguarding their anonymity was an important consideration in this research,[376, 395] and therefore disclosure of player information in Table 4.1 has been kept to a minimum so as not to identify individual players.

Table 4.1: Player demographic information

	Black African	White	Coloured	Indian	Total
Sample size	11	14	13	5	43
Mean (SD) age in years	24.9 (± 3.7)	26.1 (± 3.2)	28.0 (± 3.7)	25.6 (± 3.4)	26.3 (± 3.6)
Mean (range) years playing	16.9 (11–24)	22.1 (17–30)	21.5 (16–31)	20.4 (14–26)	20.4 (11–31)

SD = standard deviation

The players ranged in age between 21 and 36 years and they were all born either before or during 1994, the year of South Africa's first democratic elections. The oldest players were born in 1980 and therefore grew up in the last 14 years of apartheid. All six franchises were represented, with five being the lowest and 10 being the highest number of players interviewed per franchise. Players from all cricket disciplines made up the sample of players: 14 batsmen, 11 seam bowlers, four spin bowlers, six wicketkeepers, five batting all-rounders, and three bowling all-rounders.

4.4.4 Key informants

Key informants were interviewed as part of studies one, two and three. As the phenomenon being researched was talent development in South African cricketers, with a specific emphasis on Black African players who were inadequately represented at the elite level, key informants were purposively sampled based on their knowledge of these issues. In line with the ethical considerations of anonymity and confidentiality, limited information about these key informants has been disclosed in Table 4.2.

Table 4.2: Key informant information

Number of key informants interviewed	Function at date of interview	Length of involvement in cricket
16 representing all ethnic groups	7 coaches 8 administrators 1 journalist	20–50 years in different capacities including playing the game of cricket

There were a number of criteria for selection. The key informants had all played the game for a reasonable length of time and at least at club level. All four ethnic groups were represented to ensure a variety of cricket playing experiences. The key informants fulfilled a diversity of current roles in South African cricket organisations, with a specific focus on developing young talent either directly as coaches or indirectly through administrative involvement. To a greater or lesser extent, the key informants understood the challenges posed by the historical inequalities of the wider South African context.

4.4.5 Sampling criteria and recruitment – study four

The purpose of study four was to elicit the perceptions of the impact of a specific intervention, i.e. an 'ethnic' target policy, aimed at increasing the number of Black African players at the elite level. The player sample for this study was the same Black African players, who had participated in study one because Black Africans were the direct beneficiaries of the target policy. Ten of these players agreed to partake in study four and one player was unavailable during the interview period. As the interview process progressed and the themes emerged, it was deemed that there was no need to increase the sample size as the same themes consistently arose. As the studies with the other ethnic groups were conducted during the

same season as this study, questions on this target policy were addressed to these players during their interviews.

Three key informants from study one and an additional key informant, with integral knowledge of the intention and implementation of the target policy, were included in this study.

4.5   Ethical considerations

An ethical approach to qualitative inquiry is not only about the formalities of obtaining ethical approval and the signing of a consent form, but it also encompasses the entire research process[25] and the relationship with the participants.[382] As such, the researcher has a dual responsibility as both a researcher and humanist[382] and this relationship continues before, during and after the interview process.[376] The researcher's own role in and attitude towards the research relationship is fundamental to maintaining an ethical stance throughout the process.

Ethical approval for these studies was obtained from the University of Cape Town's Human Research Ethics Committee (Ref: 322/2012) prior to the commencement of data collection (Appendix C). The main ethical issue related to the anonymity of the participants and the confidentiality of the potentially sensitive information they shared during the interviews. This was of particular concern to the players, as they were worried about their views being made public and affecting their future playing careers. The Indian players were at most risk due to the small number of players from this ethnic group that met the inclusion criteria. There was less concern regarding the key informants' identities, but as many of them were employed within the South African cricketing structures, their identities were protected in the same manner.

Another potential issue was the language in which the interviews were conducted, as English was not the home language of some of the players. However, this sample of players had all learned English at secondary school level and English was the predominant language spoken in the coaching and playing of cricket in South Africa. In the wording of the interview guide questions, this concern was addressed by ensuring that the language used would be easily understood by all participants.

The above concerns were addressed in a number of ways. During an initial telephone call to discuss the study and request their participation, participants were assured that their anonymity would be protected, and it was clarified that the interview would be conducted in English. All participants indicated that they were comfortable conducting the interview in English. Occasionally a participant asked for clarification of what the question entailed. This information was confirmed in an information sheet sent by email to potential participants prior to them confirming their participation. At the start of the interview, the primary researcher verbally re-iterated the confidentiality of the information shared and the anonymity of their participation. The participants were informed that their involvement was voluntary,[24] that they could withdraw at any time without prejudice, and that they could refuse to answer any question that they felt was too sensitive or would identify them. Participants were given the opportunity to ask any further questions pertaining to the research and the purposes for which it would be used.[24] All participants signed the informed consent forms, which contained the same information as the information sheets that they had previously read, and no-one chose to discontinue the interview.

Anonymity and confidentiality were further enhanced by allocating each player and key informant a unique identifier code. Players were identified by a 'P' and a numerical number (1–43), for example, 'P23', and key informants by a 'KI' and a numerical number (1–16), for example, 'KI11'. No differentiation was made regarding each player's ethnic group as this would have compromised anonymity and confidentiality. All electronic data was password protected.

As highlighted in the sampling process (section 4.4), some players declined to participate in the research. All those that agreed to participate did so willingly by arriving at the interview as arranged and completing the interview. A few participants did not answer a question, not because they did not want to, but because they felt that they did not have sufficient knowledge about a particular issue to answer satisfactorily or the question was not relevant to them. This pertained to questions regarding experiences of other players in different provinces.

In all communications (verbal and written) with the participants, they were treated with respect and the process was open and transparent. During one interview, a player shared

some very private information which would have allowed him to be easily identified and it was agreed that this would be completely removed from the transcript.

4.6   Data collection

4.6.1   Interview guide questions

As discussed previously (section 4.2.5), one-on-one, in-depth, qualitative, semi-structured interviews were chosen for this study. Interview guide questions were designed to provide some focus and general direction to the conversation without being so specific as to limit the players' responses.[375, 377] The interview guide assists in ensuring that all relevant topics of interest are covered.

Study one

Initial questions for study one, were developed using previous literature as a guide,[14, 110, 162, 175, 236, 247, 396] and input from members of the research team. The primary researcher and other members of the research team have significant experience and understanding of the South African cricket landscape due to their lengthy involvement at different levels in the game. An initial set of guide questions was discussed and agreed upon by the research team. Thereafter, the research team tested the relevance of the interview guide questions by jointly interviewing a player who met the inclusion criteria mentioned above (section 4.4.1). This interview highlighted additional areas for exploration and the interview guide was amended accordingly. This player's interview formed part of the research data, with his consent.

The interview guide questions for players who participated in study one, appears in Extract 4.1 and consists of six sections. Topics covered included: demographic profile, early cricketing experiences, career progression, personal attributes and skills, views on the representation of Black African cricketers in South Africa, and opinions on minimum player targets. Participants were given an opportunity to provide any additional information at the end of the interview. The complete set of interview guide questions for studies one to three (players and key informants, where different) can be found in Appendix D.

Interview guide questions - Study one – Black African players

1. **Demographic information**
   a. What is your age?
   b. At what age did you start playing cricket?
   c. How long have you been playing cricket professionally?
   d. What is your main role in the team – batsmen, bowler, wicket-keeper or all-rounder?
   e. What is the highest level of cricket that you have achieved?
2. **Early experiences**
   a. Tell me about how your cricketing career started (i.e. at school, as a child / teenager).
   b. Why did you choose cricket over other sports (e.g. soccer, rugby, hockey)?
   c. How would you describe the culture of cricket at your school?
   d. Is it possible to be successful as a cricketer by playing the game in the current club structures?
   e. What can you tell me about the coaching you received in these early years? What guidance did you receive?
   f. What kind of facilities did you have access to in these early years? What is the minimum you could make do with?
3. **Career progression**
   a. Tell me about how you progressed from school / club cricket to the elite / franchise level.
   b. What/who helped you to progress?
   c. What made it difficult for you to progress?
   d. Describe the follow up that is provided to players by the cricket environment as you progress from junior to senior levels
   e. What have you observed about the progression of other Black African players in terms of how they have or haven't progressed?
   f. How do you think other 'Black' players' experiences (structures and barriers) differ between provinces?
   g. Given your entire cricket career, what has been your greatest thrill relative to cricket?
   h. Given your entire cricket career, what has been your greatest disappointment?
   i. Within the team environment, how would you characterise the level of integration and team dynamics
4. **Personal Attributes and Skills**
   a. Why do you feel you were successful in cricket?
   b. What other factors could have made you more successful?
   c. What are your greatest physical attributes?
   d. What are your greatest psychological/mental attributes?
   e. Did you naturally have these attributes or did you acquire them during your career?
   f. Throughout your career, how did you deal with setbacks and disappointments? What did you do to stay motivated?
   g. Throughout your career, how did you deal with all the success you achieved? Was there extra pressure and, if so, how did you deal with it?
5. **Representation of Black players in SA cricket**
   a. What is your opinion of the representation of 'Black' players at the elite / franchise level?
   b. What do you think are the reasons for this low representation (if they agree that it is low)?
   c. What is your impression of the differences between provinces in terms of 'Black' representation?
   d. How would you describe the culture/history of cricket in Black African communities in SA?
   e. How has TV coverage of cricket/lack thereof affected a culture of cricket in Black African communities?
   f. Some research has shown that there are more 'Black' bowlers than 'Black' batsmen. What do you think could be the reason for low numbers of 'Black' batsmen?
   g. What is your opinion on setting quotas/targets?
   h. Do you think there should be quotas/targets in cricket at junior levels and/or franchise level?
   i. Are BA cricketers who progress through the ranks able to compete under pressure?
6. **Conclusion**
   a. Do you perceive there to be a gap in performance of Black African players between the junior and senior levels? If yes, at what age do you think this gap occurs?
   b. If resources were not an issue, what would you do to improve the situation of 'Black' players to perform at the elite / franchise level, and therefore increase the representation of 'Black' players in South African cricket?
   c. What has been the hardest thing about achieving the cricketing success you have?
   d. Is there anything else you would like to add that you feel we haven't covered?

Extract 4.1: Sample interview guide questions for study one

Studies two and three

The interview guide questions used in study one were amended, to a limited extent, for studies two and three based on feedback received during the first study and to account for the different ethnic groups. In addition, questions in Extract 4.2, specifically addressing the issue of the ethnic target policy for Black African cricketers introduced in October 2013, by CSA, were added to obtain White, Coloured and Indian players' perceptions and experiences of this policy.

5. **Quotas/targets in South African cricket**
    a.   What is your opinion on setting quotas/targets?
        a.   At junior levels?
        b.   At franchise level?
    b.   Do you think there should be quotas/targets in cricket at junior levels and/or franchise level?
    c.   Have quotas/targets in South African cricket affected your progress?

Extract 4.2: Sample of target questions posed to White, Coloured and Indian players

A specific question, in Extract 4.3 was included for the Coloured and Indian players to give them an opportunity to share their 'preferred' ethnic group affiliation. The rationale for this was highlighted above (section 4.4.2).

•   What ethnic group do you classify yourself as belonging to/identifying with?

Extract 4.3: Example of 'classification' question posed to Coloured and Indian players

Key informants

The interview guide questions for the key informants were similar to that of the players. It focussed on their views on the career progression of 'Black' players, player attributes and skills, and the representation of 'Black' players in South African cricket.

Study four

The process for developing the interview guide questions for study four in Extract 4.4, was similar to study one. Initial questions were developed by the primary researcher based on the themes and sub-themes, pertaining to player targets in teams, that emerged from study one. Following review and refinement of the questions by the research team, the primary

researcher conducted a pilot interview similar to the one described below (section 4.6.2), with one of the players from study four's sample. This interview, with the player's consent, was included in the research data that were analysed. Minor refinements, relating to use and meaning of words, were made to the interview guide questions before commencing with the remainder of the interviews. The complete interview guide questions appear in Appendix D.

4.6.2 Pilot interview

Before commencing with the interviews in study one, a pilot interview[136, 376, 381] with a member of the research team, who himself had played cricket at a senior level, was conducted by the primary researcher. The purpose of the pilot was to determine whether the interview guide was effective in allowing the participants to share their experiences in detail [299] and cover the topics necessary to answer the research questions interview guide used wording and language that would be familiar to the participants,[382] and this was also tested in the pilot.

The pilot interview provided the primary researcher with an opportunity to refine her interviewing skills,[255] as well as gain confidence in using the interview guide without it creating a barrier to the conversational nature of the interview. She was also able to test the functioning and quality of the audio recording device to be used. The pilot interview resulted in final refinement to the wording of the questions.

Interview Guide Questions – Study four – All participants

1. **Overall policy perceptions**
   a. What are your thoughts on the target/quota policy?
   b. How successful do you believe the policy has been in increasing meaningful Black African player representation at the elite (amateur, franchise and national) levels? Has this been the same experience for batsmen and bowlers? If not, what differences have there been?
   c. For how long do you believe the policy should continue and what would have to happen for the policy to be terminated?

2. **Progression of BA players**
   a. In your opinion how has the quota policy affected the progression of Black African players from U19 to senior levels during this period?
   b. What effect has the policy had on the attitudes of Black African players towards the game and their desire to stay in the game after school?

3. **Opportunities**
   a. Given that there are now more Black African players being fielded by teams, how has this translated into the quality of playing time, i.e. number of overs bowled, batting position? Give me an example of an opportunity that you have experienced or are aware of.
   b. How has your franchise implemented the policy in terms of selecting players?

4. **Player development and monitoring**
   a. Describe any programmes that you have experienced/are aware of that have been put in place to assist you improve and develop your physical, technical, tactical and mental capabilities. Are such programmes specific to Black African players or for the benefit of all franchise players
   b. If yes, who has been responsible for these programmes and what has been the buy-in to these programmes by your coaches and administrators?
   c. How are provincial and national administrators monitoring your progress and following up other Black African players in the pipeline?

5. **Team Environment**
   a. Describe the team environment and culture that you have been a part of during the past 2 years
   b. Have this environment and mind-sets changed during this time? If yes, how has it changed?
   c. How has your team addressed issues of diversity, stereotyping, discrimination understanding and assimilation of different cultures, understanding of individual player needs?
   d. What role, if any has your team leadership played in creating an empowering environment? Have all players benefited from this empowerment?
   e. How have communications between team leadership and within the team contributed to the team environment and building trust? Give me some examples
   f. How has the policy impacted the psychological effect on Black African players in terms of labelling and ability to perform?

6. **Macro Environment**
   a. Tell me about any initiatives that you are aware of that have been put in place to address some of the socio-economic issues that affect Black African players progressing.
   b. How has your financial situation been affected by this policy?
   c. How has the policy affected your lifestyle positively or negatively?
   d. What role have player agents played in the contracting of Black African players?
   e. Has SACA's Player Plus programme benefited you? If so, how?
   f. What opportunities have you taken to act a role model for young players?

7. **Conclusion**
   a. Other than quotas, what other policies or changes are you aware of that CSA or your franchise have implemented to increase Black African representation and development?
   b. Is there anything else that you would like to add that you feel we haven't covered?

Extract 4.4: Sample of interview guide questions for target study

4.6.3 *Procedure*

The data collection procedures were the same for all four studies and for all participants (players and key informants).

Once participants had agreed to be interviewed, following receipt of the information sheet by email, they were contacted telephonically or on WhatsApp by the primary researcher to arrange the interview date. For study one, all interviews took place during the 2012/13 cricket season. For studies two, three and four the interviews were conducted during the 2015/16 season. The lengthy timeframe (a cricket season) for conducting the interviews was not deemed to be a problem because the focus of the research was on player experiences over a long period of time, i.e. from first exposure to the game until the time of interview. The gap, i.e. two seasons, between the first study and the next three studies, was to be able to assess the perceptions and opinions of players from all ethnic groups of the ethnic target intervention introduced in October 2013. There needed to be a period of time for its impact to be experienced.

Seventy-one interviews were conducted, which included 13 participants being interviewed twice. The interviews were conducted on a date and at a place convenient to the participant. Five interviews continued for longer than the time that the participant had made available; and all five participants were willing to continue the interview at a later time or date.

As far as possible the interviews took place in a quiet, private venue. The venues included private offices or homes, coffee shops, airports, meeting rooms at cricket clubs and stadiums, and in the stands of stadiums. The purpose of the venue choice was to make the participant feel at ease and comfortable. During six of the interviews, there were short interruptions during which the conversation was stopped to ensure that the quality of the recording was preserved. Where available, refreshments were provided by the primary researcher for the participant.

In one key informant interview, the key informant asked a colleague, (who the key informant thought would make a significant contribution to the interview), to join the interview. Rubin and Rubin[377] suggest that additional interviewees should not be declined, and as this individual met the inclusion criteria he joined the interview. He was able to provide further insights during the interview.

All interviews were audio recorded (with permission) and lasted between 30 and 127 minutes with the average length being 63 minutes. Audio recording allowed the researcher to focus on and listen intently to the participants' responses without fear of losing what was said.[377] In addition to the audio recording, the primary researcher took notes, which consisted mainly of reminders of points to follow up on. Following each interview, the recordings were downloaded onto a computer and stored in Dropbox (both password protected) to preserve the data collected for later transcription.

After each interview, the primary researcher made additional notes about each interview, noting themes that may be developing. These notes also included observations not captured by the audio recording, such as the demeanour of the participant, his willingness to share his experiences and the primary researcher's personal feelings about the interview.

4.6.4   Interviews

All interviews were conducted face-to-face by the primary researcher who is a trained executive coach with experience in interviews of this nature. This experience allowed her to approach the interview in a manner that provided the participants with a safe space in which to share their experiences, opinions and perceptions of their personal cricket journey.

The players' interviews began with some initial questions (which did not form part of the interview guide questions, the transcripts or analysis) about their current cricket endeavours, for example, "How was training today?" to make them feel comfortable, build rapport and encourage a conversational approach.[377, 397] For the key informants, initial questions pertained to issues more related to their current work within the game. Rapport building and gaining trust was particularly significant bearing in mind the differences in age, gender and in most instances ethnicity between the participants and the primary researcher.

The questions pertaining to demographic information were asked first and these were followed by asking the players to talk about how they started playing cricket. For some this was answered in a few words, while for others it was a prompt for them to share their 'cricket story'. This served as a platform from which to continue with the guide questions in a flexible and sensitive way as specific issues emerged. As much as possible, the interviews progressed with the natural flow of the conversation resulting in a unique experience with each

participant which assisted in enhancing the relationship and becoming acquainted with what was important and personal to each one.

Despite allowing the participants to talk freely, the researcher needed to keep the conversation focused and ensure that by the end of the interview, all topics of interest had been covered. As such the sequence of questions differed from participant to participant. The majority of participants seemed more than willing to openly share their experiences, and in some instances the researcher had to gently guide the participant back to the focus of the interview.

Before concluding the interview, the participants were asked if there was anything else that they wanted to contribute. In most instances there was very little added at this stage. Thereafter, the interview was ended by the primary researcher re-iterating that confidentiality would be maintained, thanking the participant for his support in the process and his willingness to engage openly.

Rapport was maintained throughout the interview by non-verbal cues (nods, smiles, "okay", etc.), tone of voice and confirmation of the meaning of some statements by summarising what was said. Summarising and paraphrasing what was heard, and 'mirroring' participants' expressions was particularly necessary with the players from an ethnic group different to that of the primary researcher to reach a common understanding of what they were trying to convey. Acknowledging that their opinions had been heard and understood was portrayed by use of follow up questions and asking for more explanation and elaboration on certain issues. These techniques all form part of 'active listening'[382] and are an integral part of building a trusting relationship, which is the foundation of obtaining quality data for analysis.[376, 377]

4.7   Analysis and interpretation

4.7.1   *Qualitative data analysis*

Qualitative data analysis is the process of bringing order to the large amounts of data collected during field work, identifying common and significant patterns amongst the data and synthesising it into a meaningful format that reveals the essence of the findings.[24, 375, 376, 385] In essence, it can be described as taking raw data (very often texts) and transforming them

into a useable, meaningful product (written report) through a process of data condensation, comprehension, drawing conclusions and recontextualising.[376]

Data analysis is a continuous, messy, complicated, and time consuming process. It overlaps with other research phases, but generally starts during the data collection phase when the researcher may have some thoughts about the patterns that may have surfaced during the interviews.[372, 376] This is not surprising as the researcher is the research instrument;[398] it allows him/her to refine the focus of inquiry during data collection and provides guidance in determining when to conclude data collection. It has been contended that analysis may even start with the research question, design and interview guide questions as they influence the data that is collected.[376]

As a result of the large amounts of data, it can take many hours of painstaking immersion in the data by listening to audio-recordings reading and re-reading the texts, and studying the notes.[398] Despite the time-consuming nature of the process, it allows the researcher to become familiar with the data and develop an intimate knowledge of the patterns and themes emerging.

After listening to the audio recordings and reading the transcripts, the first step in the analysis process involves coding of the texts. Coding is the process of assigning a label to a chunk of data (single word, sentence or paragraph) so that it provides meaning to that data chunk and condenses that data into more manageable parts.[376] The codes may be derived inductively, from the data itself, or deductively, from a predetermined 'framework' and interview guide questions.[375, 385, 398] Through coding, the data becomes condensed, simplified and focused on the common patterns and themes that emerge through the researcher actively interacting with and interpreting the data.[384] Similar codes can then be combined into categories[399] that form the basis for themes and theories to be derived.

Computer Assisted Qualitative Data Analysis Software (CAQDAS) packages are available to support the analysis process but cannot replace the critical thinking required. The analysis process requires judgement, creativity and analytical intellect.[375] The main benefit of such packages are to assist in the management, retrieval and collation of large amounts of data. Atlas.ti Qualitative Data Analysis Software (Scientific Software Development GmbH, Berlin and Germany)[400] was used in conjunction with manual analysis and summarising of data.[401]

Qualitative data analysis has evolved into a wide range of unique analysis methods,[376] including grounded theory, interpretative phenomenological analysis, thematic analysis and content analysis.[25] Choosing the right analysis method for a particular study is dependent upon the research questions, purpose and audience.[375]

4.7.2 Rationale for choice of data analyses used

A number of different analysis options were explored, including a grounded theory approach,[402, 403] thematic analysis,[384] and content analysis.[404] The finite sample of elite Black African players was not conducive to the constant comparative analysis requirement of grounded theory.[403, 405] Furthermore, grounded theory has its philosophical basis in social interactionism and positivism.[405]

Thematic analysis[384] is a flexible analysis method which can be used across a range of epistemologies and research questions. It is a "method of identifying, analysing and reporting patterns (themes) within data".[384] Thematic analysis is an appropriate process for analysing data when the aim of the research is to determine relationships between variables and to compare different sets of evidence that pertain to different situations in the same study.[406] It highlights similarities and differences across the data set[25, 384] and can be used to guide policy development.[384]

Content analysis is similar to thematic analysis in that it also systematically codes and categorises text to determine patterns of words used. It has been further defined as, "a research method for the subjective interpretation of the content of text data through the systematic classification process of coding and identifying themes or patterns".[404] The main difference between the two analysis methods is that content analysis provides the opportunity of quantifying and measuring the frequency of categories and themes.[407]

Each of the four studies brought unique characteristics and challenges that affected analysis decisions.[376] Furthermore, comparison between the four studies was another objective to be considered. In line with the pragmatic paradigm of this research, the choice of analysis methods needed to be congruent with such an approach so that practical and rational explanations were surfaced that could then inform and guide policy and practice decisions that would in turn encourage meaningful and sustainable change. Flexibility and uniqueness of each research situation have been acknowledged as guiding analysis decisions.[376]

It was therefore decided that an adapted thematic analysis would be the most appropriate analysis to use. Broad quantifiable measures were borrowed from content analysis to capture the varied experiences of the diverse sample of cricketers as a 'pure' thematic analysis would not have sufficiently portrayed the similarities and differences among the groups. This added to the depth of the qualitative research.

4.7.3   Overview of analytical process

The process of analysis consisted of four distinct phases, shown in Figure 4.2, which consisted of both an inductive, and a deductive analytical approach.[375] During the first phase; all data, from study one was coded into multiple categories (code manual 1 in Appendix E), and then refined into candidate themes.[384] Phase two consisted of using code manual one as a framework to deductively and inductively analyse data from study two and study three respectively. There was considerable overlap and congruence between the codes of phase one and two. Some additional codes, for example "injuries", were identified and data from study one was re-analysed taking the new codes into consideration. There were also codes from study one that were not applicable to study two and three. Phase one and two resulted in a composite code manual (Appendix F). The candidate themes generated in phase one were refined using the composite code manual.

The considerable consistency and overlap in the themes identified in studies one, two and three indicated significant similarities in the experience of talent development in South African cricketers. The main differences related to the extent of importance, significance and impact of some experiences, which was highlighted by the content analysis.

Phase three was an analysis of the data from study four (target intervention) resulting in codes and categories (target code manual in Appendix G), derived from the transcripts. These were then thematically analysed. As the findings from study one had informed the guide questions in study four, there were some similarities in the codes and categories between the studies.

Phase four consisted of reviewing the candidate themes generated across the four studies into the final themes and sub-themes using thematic maps[384] and matrices.[376] This was done with reference to the conceptual framework that had been developed during the research process.

Phase 1

STUDY 1
(Black African)

Phase 2

STUDY 2
(White)

STUDY 3
(Coloured/Indian)

Phase 3

STUDY 4
(Targets)

Transcriptions

Transcriptions

Transcriptions

Transcriptions

Inductive/
deductive analysis

Deductive/
inductive analysis

Deductive/
inductive analysis

Inductive/
deductive analysis

CODE MANUAL 1

(Appendix E)

'TARGET' CODE
MANUAL

(Appendix G)

COMPOSITE CODE MANUAL

(Appendix F)

Refinement

CANDIDATE THEMES

CANDIDATE
THEMES

Phase 4

FINAL THEMES AND SUB-THEMES

Denotes co-researcher review

Figure 4.2: Schematic illustration of analysis process

4.7.4 Detailed analytical process – phases one, two and three

The detailed analytical process of the data collected during each of the four studies is described below. The process was iterative as there was continuous referral between transcripts, coding, notes and theme development.

Familiarisation

Familiarisation or 'immersing' oneself in the data is common to all qualitative analysis and starts during data collection.[376] After the interviews were transcribed verbatim[408] by an independent third party, the primary researcher reviewed the transcripts against the audio recordings to confirm accuracy. During this familiarisation stage, certain information provided during the interviews was verified against publicly accessible databases and CSA documentation. For example, demographic information such as date and place of birth, was verified using ESPNcricinfo[69] and specific reference to CSA policies and terminology was confirmed by reference to CSA documentation that was made available to the primary researcher.

Coding

After generation of an initial code list from the transcripts, each of the three co-researchers checked a random selection of transcripts and a research team meeting to discuss any differences was held. Thereafter, the coding table to be used to code each transcript was agreed upon. Regular research team meetings in which constructive debate took place, was an important feature of each study to guide the primary researcher and enhance the trustworthiness of the findings.[409]

All transcripts (players and key informants) were then coded by assigning a code to each data extract that was deemed of interest to the research questions. This was done with the assistance of Atlas.ti software as shown in Extract 4.5. During this process some data extracts were left uncoded, some were coded only once and some were coded many times. This contradiction, along with tensions and inconsistencies within data sets, is considered an acceptable aspect of the thematic analysis process.[384] In the coding process, some of the surrounding data was kept, where relevant, to maintain the context of the data extract.[410]
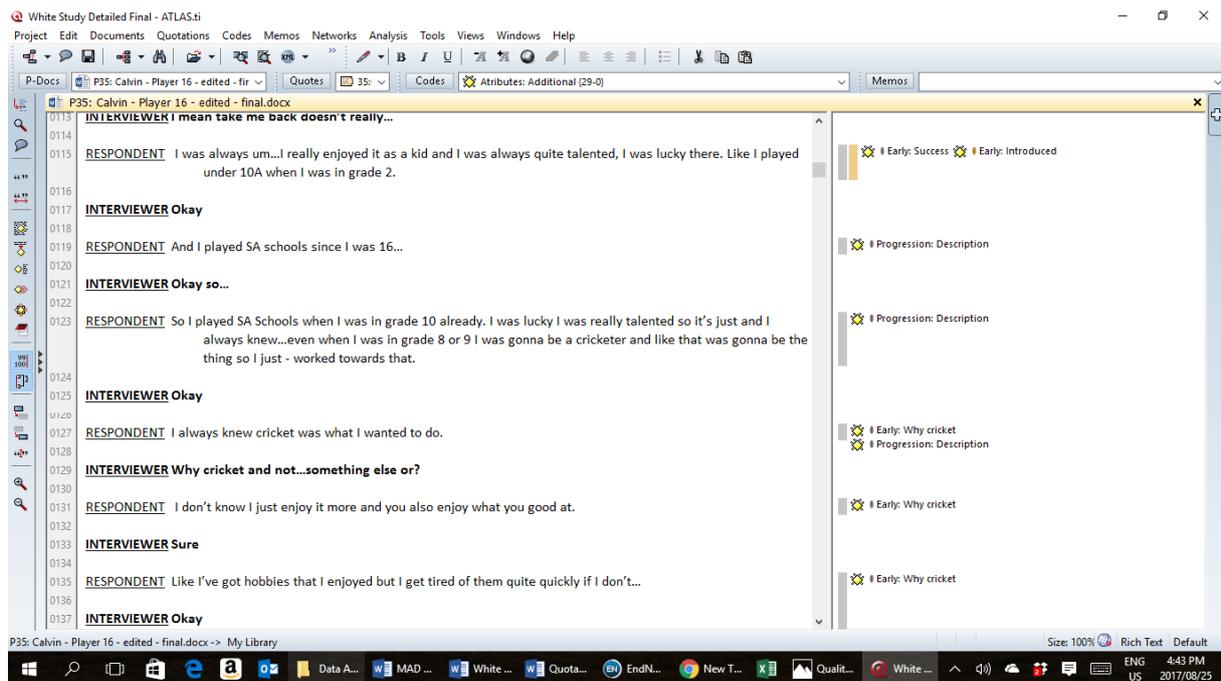
Extract 4.5: Example of data extract coding using Atlas.ti software

All data extracts pertaining to a particular code were then collated and reviewed. Some codes were combined where the number of data extracts were too few to be significant or there were similarities between codes. This resulted from initially coding as many potential patterns as possible.[384] The necessary changes were effected on the Atlas.ti programme. Similar codes were grouped into categories,[399] which assisted with theme identification.

Atlas.ti coding outputs

A final data extract by code document was generated using the software and exported into MS Word. This document was later used for manual review of the final themes in phase four and for selecting participant quotations to be used to support the interpretation of the data. A code by participant Excel spreadsheet, shown in Extract 4.6, was also generated by Atlas.ti. In the tradition of content analysis this served as a basis to broadly quantify the codes[404, 407] within each study to provide a general comprehension of the differences in experiences, insights, meanings and opinions of the different ethnic groups.

Code	KI1	P1	P2	P3	P4	KI2	KI3	KI4	P5	P6	P7	P8	P9	P10	Total Quotes	Partici-pants
TE: Assessment	2	7	3	3	3	1	2	4	2	3	2	2	1	4	39	14
TE: Coach	4	1	1	2	1	2	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	2	14	8
TE: Culture	1	1	1	3	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	11	6
TE: Enabling	10	5	2	2	4	2	1	3	2	3	5	0	1	3	43	13
TE: Importance	3	1	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	1	9	7
TE: Limiting	4	8	0	1	2	0	0	0	2	3	2	1	0	1	24	9
TE: Nature	7	2	0	0	1	1	0	2	0	0	3	2	2	3	23	9
Termination: Do	6	2	2	1	1	3	2	1	1	2	0	2	0	4	28	12
Termination: length	1	2	2	2	1	2	1	2	1	1	0	1	4	6	27	13
Termination: Sustain	5	0	0	1	1	1	0	7	1	0	0	0	3	0	22	7

Extract 4.6: Code by participant and quotes

Themes

Once the coding process had been completed, the primary researcher used the codes and categories to identify the themes. This was done by using tables, matrices (example in Extract 4.7), and mind maps to determine inter-relationships, overlaps and sub-themes. Codes that had originally been allocated to a specific category were reviewed and reorganised during this process. In addition, the original transcripts were re-read and manually summarised to highlight possible further themes that may not have been originally identified.

Extract 4.7: Example of a comparison matrix

Once a complete list of candidate themes in Table 4.3 had been collated, the research team met again to confirm the themes from study one and study four. Furthermore, and in line with the transdisciplinary and pragmatic approach, stakeholders from CSA were presented with the themes from study one and agreement was reached with small semantic changes. These candidate themes further informed the conceptual framework (section 4.2.2).

Table 4.3: Candidate themes for all four studies

Candidate themes – phase one and two	Candidate themes – phase three (targets)
• Demographic information	• Opinions
• Cricket in different communities	• Mind-sets
• South African context	• Individual impact
• Representation levels	• Player progress
• Socio-economic factors	• Organisational structures
• Coaching	• Leadership
• Targets	• Macro environment
• Exposure	• Transformation
• Education and schooling	• Implementation challenges
• Facilities and equipment	• Opportunities
• Team environment	• Team environment
• Support networks	• Support networks
• Opportunities to compete	• Coaches
• Organisational structures	
• Organisational leadership	
• Intrapersonal attributes	

4.7.5   Integration of all four studies – phase four

The final phase was to review and refine the themes generated across all four studies to confirm external heterogeneity and internal homogeneity within themes and to ensure accurate representation across all data sets.[375, 384] This included re-reading all the transcripts, summaries and notes to check that all significant issues discussed by all the participants had been accurately represented. Themes were compared and contrasted and then combined into meaningful groupings. A final meeting of the research team agreed the key themes and sub-themes as shown in Table 4.4.

Presentation of themes

The themes are explored in results Chapters five, six, seven, eight and ten by relating them to the socio-ecological framework. The chapter and section headings to which each theme relates are shown in parentheses in Table 4.4. Analytical narrative and data extracts (participant quotations) are presented to provide both a descriptive and interpretative account of talent development in South African cricket. Each player and key informant was allocated a unique identifier code (e.g. 'P23' or 'KI7'). These identifier codes were used to 'identify' the different participants' quotations that have been used throughout the results to give voice to the participants [377] and enhance trustworthiness. The quotations are presented verbatim to reflect the participants' voice with grammatical changes made only to enhance readability.[408] When reading these quotations, the players' use of 'slang' as a result of their youth and the conversational nature of the interviews should be borne in mind. Furthermore, although they were comfortable conversing in English, it may not have been the home language of all participants.

Table 4.4: Final themes and sub-themes related to results chapters

Themes and sub-themes with relevant results chapter/section number in parentheses

1. Demographic information (Chapter 5)
2. How successful cricketers progress through the talent development pathway (Chapter 5)
   - Exposure to the game (Section 5.2)
   - Progress during the middle years (Section 5.3)
   - Transition from under 19 to senior level (Section 5.4)
   - Senior level debut and progress (Section 5.5)
3. The South African cricket landscape (Chapter 6)
   - A historical perspective (Section 6.2)
   - Cricket transformation and development post democracy (Sections 6.2, 10.1, 10.2)
   - Cricket culture in different communities (Sections 6.3, 6.4)
4. Socio-economic factors impact talent development in a diverse society (Sections 6.2, 6.4, 7.2, 7.3)
5. How organisational structures enable and/or hinder progress (Section 6.5)
6. The role of organisational leadership (Section 6.5)
7. The value provided by different support networks and programmes (Sections 7.2, 10.5)
8. The influence of educational and schooling experiences (Section 7.3)
9. Role of coaching in players' progress (Section 7.4)
10. Contribution of the team environment to inclusivity and performance (Section 7.5)
11. Intrapersonal attributes (Chapter 8)
    - Physical factors and injuries (Section 8.2)
    - Reasons for playing cricket (Section 8.3)
    - Achievements and disappointments (Section 8.4)
    - Mental attributes (Section 8.5)
    - Coping strategies (Section 8.5)
12. Targets as a mechanism to transform South African cricket (Section 10.2)
13. Overall assessment of a target intervention policy (Section 10.2)
    - How it impacts on opportunities for players to compete (Section 10.3)
    - Implementation challenges (Section 10.4)
    - The need to adapt mind-sets (Section 10.7)
14. The effect of targets on the individual, team and player progress (Sections 10.6, 10.8, 10.9)
15. Factors that may mitigate against the impact of a target intervention
    - Role of coaches (Section 10.4)
    - The importance of support networks (Section 10.5)
    - Responsibility of Cricket South Africa (CSA) (Sections 6.5, 10.5)
    - Possible solutions to minimise the effect of the macro environment (Sections 10.5, 10.7, 10.10)
16. Why some players do not make it and drop out of the game (Various)
17. Perception of player representation at senior level and across provinces (Sections 5.2, 6.5, 10.1, 10.2)

4.8   Establishing trustworthiness

Assessing the quality of qualitative inquiry continues to be a much-debated topic among qualitative researchers. Scholars in the field have over time offered different and important insights into best practices for qualitative research.[389, 411-415] The complexity around the issue is exacerbated by the wide variety of qualitative traditions and methods. Furthermore, different epistemological and ontological paradigms may have specific views when assessing qualitative research.[414] There has even been a lack of agreement as to the most appropriate terms (rigour, validity, reliability, trustworthiness) for assessing qualitative research validity.[416]

Lincoln and Guba[412, 417] proposed the concepts of dependability, conformability, transferability and credibility as the foundations of establishing trustworthiness in the qualitative field. More recently, a number of scholars have proposed various lists of criteria for judging qualitative work in general and within specific disciplines. For example, Tracy's[414] "big tent" criteria have been extensively used in the sport and exercise psychology discipline,[25] and a 32-item checklist based on a review of qualitative research has been proposed in health care.[415] It has been argued that the universal application of criteria to a research study is not always desirable or necessary.[311, 418]

The uniqueness of each qualitative study's characteristics: research questions, design, methods and instruments, participants, procedures, analysis and interpretation, and stakeholders, warrants its own assessment of validity.[375] The pragmatic and transdisciplinary paradigms underlying this research further supported Patton's view. In addition, Tracy argues that certain practices used in assessing the trustworthiness of qualitative research should not be so tied to an epistemological or ontological paradigm that the end goal, i.e. valid research, is forsaken.[414] Tracy's eight criteria were not pre-set prior to the commencement of the research, but rather Lincoln and Guba's original four concepts guided the process. However, on reflection, all eight of Tracy's criteria have been met. Each of the criteria are discussed below and highlighted in *italics*.

1) The topic of the research was deemed to be *worthy,* relevant, timely and significant as it explored a specific issue that had been a topic of extensive debate in South African cricket, sport, politics and society for considerable time. Despite a variety of

interventions over a number of years, there had been limited progress in solving the problem in a meaningful manner.

2) Its contribution to the South African cricket community has been *significant* as evidenced by the number of ways in which it has been applied by CSA (section 11.3). The dual use of thematic analysis with content analysis provides researchers involved in informing policy and practice with a method for differentiating among the needs of different communities. Furthermore, the socio-ecological framework has provided talent development scholars and practitioners with an alternative model for understanding talent development, particularly in diverse societies and low- and middle- income countries.

3) To achieve *rich rigour*, the study used appropriate sampling, data collection and analysis methods and processes. The sample (43 players) provided a wide range of diverse and distinctive experiences representing all cricketers that met the inclusion criteria (elite and successful), as well as input from other stakeholders, as key informants (n=16) in South African cricket. Through the analysis process the similarities and differences among cricketers from different backgrounds, cultures, ethnicities and experiences were highlighted.

4) Through a detailed disclosure of the researcher's background, experiences, characteristics and possible biases, as well as the influence that these may have had on the research process (section 11.5), readers can ascertain the *sincerity* with which the research has been conducted. The research process has been described in great detail to provide transparency as to how the study was conducted. An audit trail of all processes was documented in a logical and traceable manner. This started during the research design and continued throughout the research process from evaluation of participant criteria and sampling decisions to the detailed steps of analysis and interpretation. In addition, the primary researcher maintained a journal of field notes and observations throughout, which have been incorporated into the analysis. Specific challenges encountered and how these were resolved have been shared through the methodology.

5) To evaluate the *credibility* of the data, data source triangulation was employed through the inclusion of 16 key informants who all had varying knowledge, experience

and expertise in the subject. During the analysis, the co-researchers regularly and systematically reviewed codes and themes and where differences arose, agreement was reached through critical and constructive discussion. In addition, CSA representatives were presented with the initial themes to obtain additional input; furthermore, a summary of study one, outlining findings and themes, was sent to participants for comments and feedback. No comments were received from the participants and a few semantic changes were provided by CSA, thereby enhancing and confirming the analysis process. Finally, one co-researcher was an experienced qualitative researcher who was able to guide the primary researcher through the process.[419]

6) *Resonance* refers to the research's ability to meaningfully reverberate and affect an audience,[414] and may be compared to Lincoln and Guba's concept of transferability[412] and Stake's "naturalistic generalisation".[420] This was achieved by providing rich descriptions and direct quotations from the participants, to allow the reader to make his/her own connections and judgement about the transferability of the study based on the specific context.

7) As discussed under ethical considerations (section 4.5), the research adhered to all *ethical* guidelines and processes pertaining to relationships with research participants, and it was approved by the University of Cape Town's Human Research *Ethics* Committee.

8) Finally, regarding *meaningful coherence*, the study is situated within the current literature pertaining to talent development and the context of South African cricket and society. The findings address the research questions posed and conclusions and implications connect the literature and results. However, the pragmatic paradigm that guided the study meant that concepts were borrowed from different methods and paradigms and did not necessarily follow a consistent thread. Tracy[414] acknowledges this as part of creative and ground-breaking work.

4.9 Conclusion

This chapter has presented the rationale for the theoretical choices in the research design and methods, taking into account the pragmatic philosophy which underpins the research. In this

way, the study has sought to be theoretically sound and practically relevant. Furthermore, the detailed description of the methodology has provided transparency and a basis on which to assess the rigour, quality and coherence of the research.[25, 375, 413, 418] The results will now be presented in the forthcoming chapters as shown in Figure 4.3.

Chapter 5	Chapter 6	Chapter 7	Chapter 8	Chapter 10
Progress through pathway	Distal factors	Proximal factors	Intrapersonal characteristics	Impact of target intervention
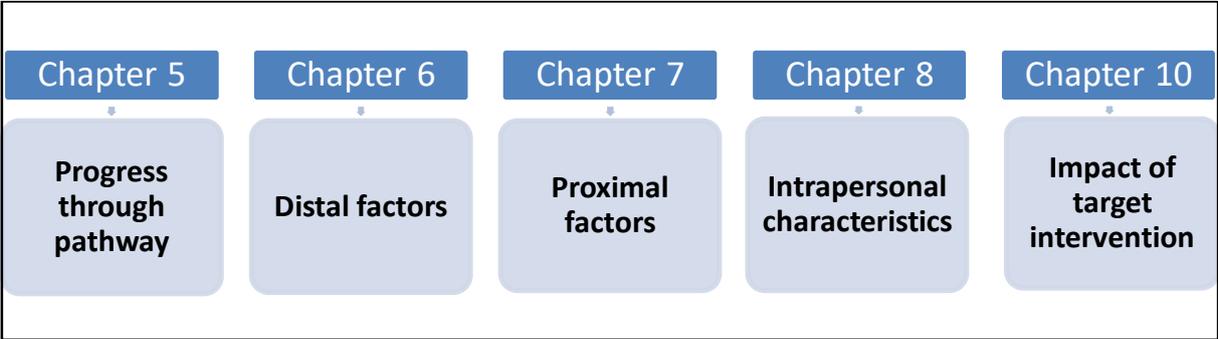
Figure 4.3: Overview of results chapters

CHAPTER 5   PROGRESS THROUGH THE TALENT DEVELOPMENT PATHWAY

"Success is a process... During that journey sometimes there are stones thrown at you, and you convert them into milestones." (Sachin Tendulkar, former Indian batting great)

5.1   Introduction

This chapter describes the progress of this cohort of South African cricket players through the talent pathway in Figure 5.1. It focuses on how, when and where the players were exposed to the game and the role played by significant individuals and programmes in this process. Progress through the middle years, culminating in cricketing success at the under 19 level, is tracked, and the different options available to players during the transition phase from the under 19 to the elite level is explored. The final section presents the debuts of the players at the different levels of senior cricket.
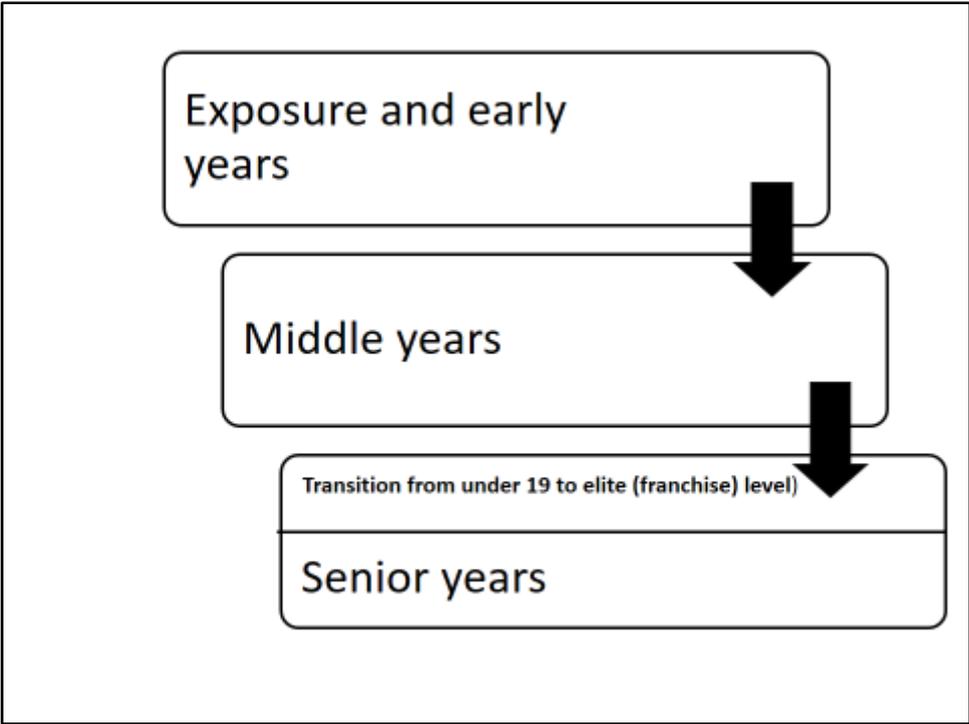
Figure 5.1: Progress through the talent pathway

5.2   Exposure and early years

The early years covers the period from the introduction to cricket until approximately 13 years of age, which corresponds to the end of primary school in South Africa. Although there is a move away from including chronological ages in talent models,[151, 169] cricket participation in South Africa is managed according to chronological age groupings and therefore it was, for practical purposes, deemed appropriate to refer to age ranges. Furthermore, the players referred to their progress by reference to the ages and/or events at which progress occurred.

5.2.1   Date of birth

Sixty percent of all players interviewed were born in the first half of the calendar year, which corresponds to age group selection cut-off date (1 January) in South African cricket. Figure 5.2 details the specific birth months of the players. Among the Black African players, only 36% were born in the first half of the year. With respect to birth date and playing positions of all participants, 57% of batsmen and 45% of seam bowlers were born in the first half of the year.
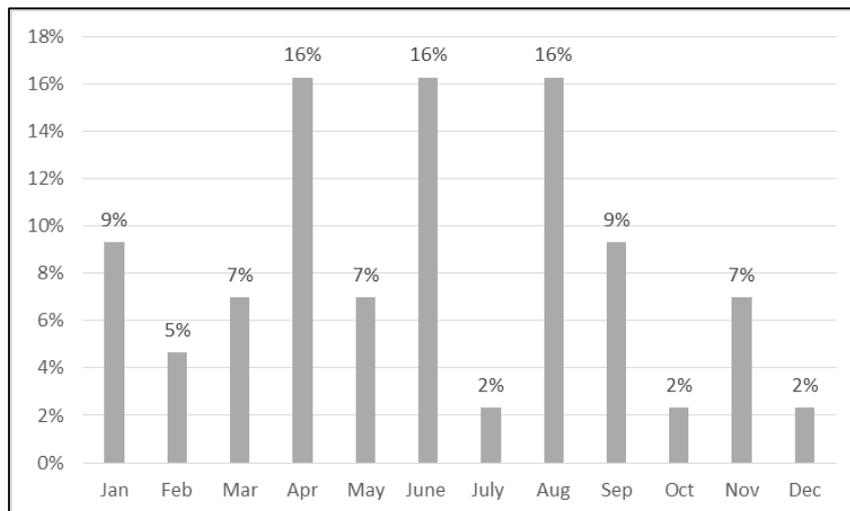
Figure 5.2: Birth months for all players in the sample

5.2.2   Place of birth and early development

Seventy two percent of the players interviewed were born in a city with a population greater than 500,000.[421] The remainder of the players were born in areas populated by less than 500,000 people. Most of the players spent their early years in the same place or an area similar in population size, to their birth place, and this can be used as their place of development.[422]

"I think any sport is big in [small town name]. The school enjoyed their sport, but it's just normal. It's not like ………. the schools in [large city name] where it is getting very big, sport at schools and the guys get their clinics now and academies and people give extra training at night. Where in [small town name] it was just, you had your training after school and then you played on Saturdays. Nothing overboard." (P18)

5.2.3 Introduction to cricket

Age of first playing

The average age at which all players indicated that they had started playing cricket was 6 years of age. The White players were the youngest, starting at an average age of approximately 4 years old, followed by the Indians at 5.2 years and the Coloureds at 6.5 years of age. On average, the Black African players first played at approximately 8 years of age. The Black African and Coloured players started playing between the ages of approximately 4–13 years old and 2–11/12 years old respectively. All the White and Indian players had started playing by age seven and eight respectively.

Key influences

From players' responses, it was evident that family members played a significant role in introducing them to cricket. The majority of White, Coloured and Indian players indicated that their fathers had got them involved in the game. Not one Black African player mentioned their father introducing them to cricket, but some spoke of extended family members playing a role in this regard. One Black African player specifically mentioned that his mother had provided him with the initial opportunity of playing the game.

"We were always involved in cricket. So I would say, mainly my mom, my dad and my grandfather were probably the three most important influences." (P39)

"So I found a liking in it at a very young age, I used to play with my grandmother basically at the back." (P13)

Friends and teachers were also mentioned by some players as introducing players to cricket.

"One of the teachers that actually got me involved in playing cricket." (P27)

For most of the Black African players, Cricket South Africa's (CSA) mini-cricket development programme was their introduction to the game and the majority enthused about the

importance of this programme in their cricket development and how it became part of their lives. Although many of the Coloured and all the Indian players indicated that they had played mini-cricket through this programme, it seemed to have held less excitement and meaning than for their Black African peers. Only four White players specifically mentioned this development programme.

> *"The Bakers mini-cricket program was also running… it was very popular within the townships at the time. It was pretty much part and parcel of township culture at some point." (P28)*

5.2.4   Initial cricket playing experiences

'Backyard' cricket was spoken about fondly and animatedly by most players. For the majority of the White players this meant playing in the gardens of their homes with friends, siblings and fathers. The other ethnic groups played with their friends in the streets outside their dwellings in the townships, or on any piece of land they could find. It appeared that the players' cricket skills and love for the game grew through this unstructured, fun-filled play; and that it was an exciting part of their childhood experiences. A few 'Black' players referred to 'test' matches in which they imagined being players from other countries, often not South Africa. This highlighted the lack of identification with the previous 'all White' South African cricket team by these players, as a result of the past segregation in the country, and this may have contributed to later challenges in creating inclusive environments.

> *"So I just started playing cricket, and then yeah that's where everything kicked off. We played in the backyard…the local ground…wherever we could find space around." (P6)*

> *"There was a time when we didn't even have balls, we used to play with lemons." (P29)*

All the White players said that they played cricket at the primary school that they attended, while a few mentioned also playing for youth club teams. For players from the other ethnic groups, this was less clear cut. Some played at school if they attended a school that had resources (facilities and coaches); while others played at municipal/communal grounds, either as part of the mini-cricket development programme or as part of an 'organised' group. These groups were arranged by local cricket authorities, combined school/club structures or the players themselves. The availability of cricket at primary school made it much easier for those

players to participate compared to their counterparts, who often had to make more effort to create opportunities to play.

"Proper cricket at school was maybe around about eight years, nine years. But I was messing around in the garden playing Bakers, and all that stuff, probably, about five or six." (P39)

5.2.5 Significance of role models

The players mentioned a range of role models who had inspired them to play the game. They provided a variety of reasons for choosing the different individuals. The majority of players believed that role models added to their cricket and life development in differing ways depending on whom that individual was and his proximity to the player. The key informants agreed with the benefits that role models added to players' development.

"I think they play a massive influence. They play a massive part, because if you look at Jacque Kallis[11], for an example, if you want to be like him, you generally want to say, you want to know what he does of cricket, how he takes care of himself and how he thinks and how he looks like and how he carries himself around people and stuff like that. So it's not only about skill, but it's more on a personal level as well as a person, which is important." (P22)

Most of the players interviewed spoke of a cricketing role model. Most players' role models were from the same cricket discipline and ethnic group as the player and most were South African. However, some White and Coloured players mentioned non-South African cricketers. A few 'Black' batsmen said that they admired Sachin Tendulkar (the renowned Indian batsman), and among the Indian players particularly, the Indian team was supported. A few players spoke about role models from other sports. From the names mentioned, these role models were distant to the players and provided inspiration for the players to play cricket, and in some instances to learn by watching them. These role models could perhaps be more accurately described as heroes. Although not consistent among all players, cultural characteristics and cricket discipline were the outstanding features of the majority of these heroes, which possibly indicates the desire of players to aspire to someone similar to

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[11] Jacques Kallis was one of most famous and successful cricket all-rounders (batsman and bowler) who represented the Proteas between 1995 and 2014.

themselves. This may have implications for 'Black' players, and particularly Black Africans, for whom there are fewer local heroes at international level.

> *"I've always admired Graham Smith[12] as a player, as an opening batsman. I also related to Graham Smith because I never felt like he was overly talented, you know, like he was more through mental strength." (P41)*

> *"You do need people to look up to I think, and if you wake up, like four in the morning…. just to see them play, I think you learn a lot from them as well if you watch them." (P37)*

> *"…growing up I think that's quite key as well to have a role model." (P13)*

On the other hand, some role models were closer in proximity to the players. A number of participants stressed the need to relate to your role model in some way, which was illustrated by referring to understanding the person's story as well as their cricketing talents. The way role models conducted themselves, as well as their attitude to playing the game were both mentioned by a number of participants, as attributes which the players wished to learn from and emulate. However, a few participants felt that carving your own identity was more advantageous, particularly as some role models' attributes were not always perceived as desirable.

> *"…you kind of look at their story…. or he scores hundreds of runs but I actually…if I know the guy's story more then, he becomes a sort of role model." (KI1)*

> *"It's very important for youngsters to look up to somebody and to try to model themselves to become that person, but at the same time not everyone is perfect, so just take out the good in their role model and try use that. (P10)*

Fast bowler, Makhaya Ntini, South Africa's first and most capped, international, Black African player (101 test matches), was mentioned most often as both a hero and role model for the Black African players because of his unique and motivating story. Ntini grew up in an impoverished village in the Eastern Cape Province. At age 15, he was discovered by a talent scout, provided with some cricket boots and awarded a bursary to attend a 'former model C' school; at age 21, he debuted for the Proteas. The Black African players could understand and

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[12] Graham Smith was a highly successful opening batsman for the Proteas between 2002 and 2014, and captained his country from 2003 until his retirement in 2014.

relate to Ntini on a number of levels: background, ethnicity, cricketing discipline and success, and personal attributes. Indeed, he appeared to give a generation of cricketers the belief that international cricketing success was possible for a 'poor 'Black' man.' Some Black African players and key informants felt that the lack of an international Black African batsmen had indeed hampered the aspirations of young Black African batsmen. At the time of the original interviews, the majority of Black Africans were fast bowlers, although this has changed somewhat since 2013.

> *"...there's not many 'Black' role models in terms of cricket. You've got Makhaya Ntini, that's about it, you've got Makhaya Ntini who has succeeded in international cricket, but after him there was no one else. An African player, you've got no one else..." (P3)*

> *"We do not have any role model batters, there are no role models, so that is one of the things that I think is a weakness." (KI5)*

It would appear that, especially for players from ethnic groups who had limited representation at the highest levels compared to other groups, that role models from the same ethnic group were preferable as a guiding light in the lives of potential future cricket stars.

> *"I think obviously it's another important aspect, because it gives you that belief that you know, if he can do it, that's the way I want to do it, and it inspires you and you always want to be doing well and stuff like that. Role models they, I don't know, it just excites you and it motivates you. .... I don't think a role model actually should go on skin colour, it could be the fact that the guy's right-handed, he's a right-handed batsman and you're a right-handed batsman and you went, hey, he does what I do and is successful, but in South Africa it obviously helps that someone is of the same skin colour." (P43)*

5.2.6   Role of television in exposure to cricket

Television was closely linked to role models as another tool for encouraging participation in cricket. There was agreement from participants[13] that showing cricket on television was advantageous for a variety of reasons: it created an awareness for the game and inspiration by seeing your heroes perform. Observational learning was another benefit mentioned by

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[13] The White players were not directly asked this question. However, during their interviews a number indicated that they watched cricket on television.

some participants, and a few participants felt that television was a marketing tool to grow the game.

> *"So I think, if more of these local games…should be able or get televised, it would definitely be something neat for the people around this area. I also think that it would get them interested in sports again, interested in cricket again." (P27)*

5.2.7   Initial cricketing success

Many of the players believed that they were successful cricketers during their early years. This belief is corroborated by the fact most of them were playing provincial age group cricket by 11 or 12 years of age. A third of the Coloured players did not play at provincial level during their primary school years, and a few players from all ethnic groups felt that they were only reasonably successful at this stage of their career, even if they had played provincial cricket. From this it appears that it was not only early success but also simply participation that contributed to future cricketing success.

> *"I had a lot of success, I was earmarked to be a talented cricketer, one for the future." (P17)*

Early success for some players, provided them with opportunities to continue with their cricket development, which may not have been possible otherwise. In most instances this opportunity came as access to the strong South African 'former model C' schooling system. Many players indicated that they had received a bursary to attend these better resourced schools. This was particularly true for 'Black' players. Without financial assistance, most of these players would have been unable to go to these schools and may have dropped out of the game as the 'former model B' schools did not have the necessary resources for developing their cricket talent. Most of the White players were fortunate enough to have the financial means to attend the 'former model C' schools, but some also received bursaries, usually based on their cricketing, other sporting or academic ability.

> *"To be honest, even today I'm still thinking how I actually got the bursary, and I think maybe through under 13 provincial tournament." (P21)*

> *"Good throughout the age groups, and I managed to get myself a scholarship at [school name]." (P14)*

"There's no doubt that cricketers will be produced through our school system, there's no doubt in my mind." (KI2)

Although this sample of players all progressed to the next level, a few participants indicated that socio-cultural factors, such as financial and family circumstances as well as drug and alcohol abuse in their communities, may also play a role in 'Black' players giving up cricket at this stage of development.

"We've ensured that the numbers are great at mini-cricket level, OK and I think the progression then, it tapers off for various reasons, my personal feeling, adolescence at high school, OK, I've had the experience of losing another boy this year, U15 boy, who has gone onto drugs, you understand me and has been taken out of the school." (KI3)

5.2.8   Summary

In summary, the early years were characterised by providing access to the game through multiple sources: family members, CSA's mini-cricket development programme, schools and clubs. This was complemented by 'backyard' cricket which enriched enjoyment, love for the game and skill development. To a lesser degree, role models, usually from the same ethnic group or cricket discipline, and watching the game on television contributed to inspiring these players to take up and then continue participating in the game. Despite the differing access points, which were easier for some than others, success in the early years was most common, although it was not essential to later success.

5.3   Middle years (+/- 13 to 18 years)

The middle years equate to the secondary school years in South Africa.

5.3.1   Where the game was played

During the middle years of their development this sample pursued their cricket either through their school or through an external club. The route was usually dependent upon the nature and availability of sports resources at the school they attended, which varied greatly and often along ethnic lines.

All the White and Indian cricketers played at their school during their middle years. All the Indian players also joined a cricket club, while only a few White players indicated that they

had done this. Whether this occurs because of cultural influence, commitment or involvement in multiple sporting or cultural activities requires further investigation.

Except for two, the Black African players played cricket in the school system, courtesy of the bursaries they had obtained. These two players participated in a combined school/club team. Some of the Black African players also played for a local club. The scenario for Coloured players was more varied. Some played for a school and a club, others for a combined school/club team and a few played for a club only.

5.3.2   Specialisation in cricket

The vast majority of players participated in sports other than cricket during their early and middle years of development (until at least age 16 or later). These sports were predominantly rugby union, football and field hockey, and they correspond with the major team sports played in South Africa and offered at the schools attended by the players. This may have been as a consequence of the schools they attended which required learners to play at least one summer and one winter sport. Cricket is played during the South African summer (September to March), while field hockey, rugby union and football are considered 'winter' sports. Sixteen of the 43 players represented their province and/or country at an age-group (under 13 to under 19) level in a sport other than cricket. These sports were field hockey (eight), rugby union (five) and one each in football, athletics and tennis.

> *"I guess from when I was small we just played all sports. I did athletics, rugby, cricket, tennis and I always enjoyed all of them. Primary school I played all of them. So I played rugby and cricket from then onwards." (P25)*

With respect to their cricket, many of the players changed cricket disciplines during their development process. This was usually between age 13 and 16 years. Some batsmen became bowlers and vice-versa, and seam bowlers changed to spin bowling.

> *"I was first a batsman, it's funny you always hear a bowler saying they were batsman first, a batsman saying they were bowlers first. And I just ran in and started bowling fast." (P40)*

> *"And then I only started bowling spin when I was fifteen. I was a seamer up until then." (P11)*

The Indian players tended to specialise earlier and played other sports less seriously than their counterparts. Two players specialised in cricket from about 13 years old: one because there were no other options available, and the other managed to persuade his school that he only wanted to play cricket.

A few key informants offered an opinion on the age at which talent identification, if any, should take place. There was no shared agreement in this regard, with a range of 10–15 years old suggested.

5.3.3 Cricket progress

All the players continued to make good cricket progress during the middle years, demonstrated by their selection for and participation in provincial age group teams (under 13 to under 19 level). Sixty percent of this sample of players represented South Africa at the U19 level, fairly evenly spread between the ethnic groups (BA = 54.5%, W = 64.3%, C = 53.9% and I = 80%). For many this included competing in an Under 19 World Cup tournament. Success at this level was believed to have opened the doors to future recognition and opportunities.

> *"He's either gotta go to a world cup under 19, win it for them and put his name in head lights, that's how he's gonna do it. If you don't…. if you not that individual, you not gonna be seen." (KI1)*

Only four players, two White and two Coloured, were not chosen for any provincial age group teams at all, which they believed slowed down their progress to the senior representative levels. All four of these players debuted at franchise level (section 5.5.1) at an age older than the average franchise debut age of this group. This may suggest that not playing provincial age group cricket in secondary school could delay professional debut.

5.3.4 Summary

Through the middle years, there was an increasing focus on playing and success in cricket, although a third of the players were also highly competitive in other sports. Progress was mainly through 'former model C' schools, although a few players managed to succeed via the club route. By the end of this stage, all the players had chosen to specialise in cricket and possibly make a career in the game. This was, in most instances, as a result of success at age

group provincial or national level, but even for those who had been less successful during the middle years, their passion for the game drove them to persevere at the next level.

5.4 Transition from under 19 to senior level

The transition from the under 19 to senior level was recognised by a number of the participants as being particularly challenging. The development trajectory during this period seemed to be less clear and progress more intermittent for this group of players. In addition, this was perceived by most participants as the time of highest drop out. Some players entered the CSA high performance pathway directly (academies and senior representative teams), while others took a more circuitous route (foreign experiences and clubs) before joining the high performance pathway.

"I came into a scenario, and a situation here, where there was no more guidance." (P9)

"I don't know if other people identify at that level, but certainly straight after school that's when your biggest fallout would be. But I don't think we need to be overly sensitive. I think we need to know it's a universal problem." (KI2)

5.4.1 CSA high performance pathway

Typically, this pathway was provincial and/or national representation at the under 19 level, followed by an invitation to a provincial or national academy. Thereafter, selection for senior provincial and then franchise teams could follow. This route was acknowledged by the vast majority of participants as being the most ideal. However, progress was not always linear and some players played senior representative cricket or overseas before joining an academy setup. Some participants commented that performances alone did not determine a player's future progress; and that the support of influential people in the organisational structures often played a part in selection.

"I played SA U19, so I followed the line. The path, which is actually I think a lot more unusual … than people might think. I mean like, virtually no one in our current team actually followed that sort of path." (P7)

"I think it's possible, you have to be outstanding. I think, because people really have to notice you and talk about you. So it's amazing that stats are not really… I think people look at, it's more the talk that goes around about you." (P15)

All the Black African and Indian players attended either the national academy or a provincial academy at some stage in their progress. The majority of White and Coloured players did likewise. Four Coloured players were not invited to attend an academy, but their determination to play at franchise level saw them persevere with their cricket careers by playing club cricket. A few White players did not attend an academy but were part of university academies, which provided similar developmental opportunities on and off the field.

Attendance at these academies was recognised by the players as a significant learning experience in their ongoing development. It benefited the players' cricket skills, and in many cases their personal development. However, many of the Black African players and key informants felt the functioning and offerings of the provincial academies could be improved. The Coloured, Indian and White players did not provide any significant input in this regard.

> *"It [the national academy] was unbelievable; best time of my life. We learnt a lot there about cricket more mentally than skill point of view. It was good." (P4)*

> *"I think I grew up there, being on your own. I learnt a sense of responsibility of your game and as a person. So it was a good time for me in the national academy." (P24)*

5.4.2 Club cricket route

An alternative pathway was to perform well at club and/or university cricket and then enter the high performance pathway at a later stage. There was agreement from all players and key informants that although it would be possible to progress to the elite level in this manner, it was a significantly more difficult option for several reasons, which will be discussed in Chapter 7.

> *"…. And it doesn't help that cricket administrators seem to have given up on club cricket as a channel for talent." (KI16)*

> *"I think unless you out of school, where you get involved in the [province name] academy or the amateur side, unless you…you involved in that system from out of school I don't think it's possible,…you want to try and make it through your club performances it's not gonna happen." (P16)*

> *"At the moment, absolutely not…with the way cricket has gone and all the quota systems that are filtering, or transformation that's filtering into the schools and club*

scenes. I would hate to be a seventeen-, eighteen-year-old, just finishing school, going into the club system trying to make it as a cricketer." (P11)

The four Coloured players who followed the club route all debuted at franchise level at age 25 or older, providing some indication that players progressing in this manner may take longer to "make it". Several players believed that it was not possible to succeed via this route. However, others felt that the ability to succeed, whatever the circumstances, was dependent upon an individual's attitude.

"Well, the thing that's going to hold you back is your persistence, if you prepared to go three, four years down the line just playing club cricket, and then getting a chance later." (P39)

"It depends on, it really entirely depends on, what age you are and your determination, but personally I don't wanna be the profit of doom on guys, I don't think it's possible to be an out and out club cricketer…just the quality of, of…facilities that you playing on…" (P24)

5.4.3   Foreign playing opportunities

Some of the players played club cricket in England after leaving school. There were some differences between the ethnic groups with regards to this opportunity. Half the White players, four Coloured and one Black African player interviewed, played club cricket in England. Not one Indian player mentioned doing this. Once reaching the senior level, several players from all ethnic groups in this sample have also benefited from playing in the northern hemisphere during the South African winter/off-season.

Playing in a foreign country was described as a very positive experience for those who had taken this opportunity. They felt that they grew both as people and cricketers. The different playing conditions, responsibilities and training enabled them to develop technically, tactically and mentally. Off the field they learnt many life skills that prepared them to effectively manage their future cricket and personal lives.

"I think I definitely grew up, and got a little bit more mature in that period. That helped me. It's small, something that's not really related to cricket, but it helped me like getting away from home." (P34)

"It really develops your game because when you go overseas….So the experience I got there was, it was irreplaceable. I mean the wickets we played over there, are so much different than the wickets we play here, so that is where you develop the different part of your game. For a player to go overseas it's highly advisable." (P25)

"England really moulded my game very nicely. I was on my own …. Had to fight for yourself and that's why it helped me a lot like I said mentally, mentally is probably my strongest part of my game." (P1)

5.4.4   Summary

For the majority of the sample, future cricketing success was accelerated through the CSA high performance pathway which provided structured opportunities to continue playing and developing. Despite this being the preferred route, consistent perseverance and performance at club level enabled four Coloured players to eventually play professional cricket. The benefit of different cricket playing conditions in England as well as personal growth experiences were highly recommended by those afforded this opportunity.

5.5   Senior years

The senior representative teams consist of 13 senior provincial teams and six franchise (professional) teams. Thereafter, there are a number of national teams, namely Emerging South African team, South Africa 'A' and the Proteas.

5.5.1   Senior provincial and franchise debuts

The majority of players debuted at senior provincial cricket before the age of 21 years. However, eight debuted as young as 16 or 17 years, while they were still at school. Players debuted at franchise level, on average between 0.9 (W) and 2.4 (C) years after their initial senior provincial debut.

Table 5.1 provides means and ranges of debut ages, as well as the difference in years between debuting at the different levels, for the entire sample and by ethnic group.

Table 5.1: Player debut ages

	Black African (n=11)	White (n=14)	Coloured (n=13)	Indian (n=5)	Total (n=43)
Mean (SD) age and range at senior provincial debut (years)	18.7 (± 1.5) (17–22)	19.6 (± 1.3) (17–22)	19.2 (± 2.1) (16–23)	16.8 (± 0.8) (16–18)	18.9 (± 1.8) (16–23)
Mean (SD) age and range at franchise debut (years)	20.5 (± 2.2) (17– 25)	20.5 (± 1.7) (18–24)	21.5 (± 3.3) (18–28)	18.8 (± 1.3) (18–20)	20.6 (± 2.4) (17–28)
Mean (SD) number of years and range between senior provincial and franchise debut	1.8 (± 1.3) (0–4)	0.9 (± 1.2) (0–4)	2.4 (± 2.1) (0–7)	2.0 (± 1.4) (1–4)	1.7 (± 1.6) (0–7)

SD = standard deviation

Since their debut, several of the players played regularly at this level. However, some players only made limited appearances and that may have been in a specific format (4-day, 50 over or 20/20). The reasons for limited appearances varied. Some players were still quite young at the time of interview and had not yet established themselves at this level, while others' progress had been hampered by recurrent injuries. One player commented that he had not played to his potential. Players from all ethnic groups felt that they had not been given sufficient opportunities to perform to their potential. This may provide some insight into the effect of mind-sets prevalent in the management of senior teams, target policies on playing opportunities for some ethnic groups or just cricketing selection decisions.

> *"I think the past 5 seasons or 5 years that I've played first class cricket[14] here, I haven't really filled my full potential." (P17)*

5.5.2   Playing contracts

The majority of the players interviewed had received playing contracts[15] from their respective franchises. The total length of playing cricket with a contract ranged from one to 18 years, although contracts are only awarded for a maximum of two years at any one time. One Black African, three White and one Coloured player had never had a franchise contract although

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[14] First class cricket is the equivalent of senior provincial level.
[15] Each year, the six franchise teams award contracts of employment to the players they wish to retain for that cricket season.

they had represented their respective franchise team at this level. A few players had recently been awarded their first contract, while others had previously had a contract, but for various reasons had lost it. These players were, however, still playing senior provincial and franchise cricket to a greater or lesser extent dependent upon each team's requirements. The different status of the players' contracts at interview date may be related to the age range (21–36 years) of this sample of players, who were purposively sampled, indicating the transient nature of professional cricket.

5.5.3   National/highest representation

At the time of interview, 11 players from all ethnic groups had represented the Proteas in one or more format (test, one-day international or T20). In line with the definition of success used in this research (section 4.4.1), these players had only played a limited number of matches at this level. It took anything up to eight years (mean of 4.5 years) for these players to progress from their franchise to national debut.

Nine players, representing all ethnic groups, had played for South Africa 'A' and three players were part of a South African Emerging team. The highest level achieved by the remaining 20 players was franchise cricket.

From the players' responses, there appeared to be no relationship between early debut at franchise level and progress to Proteas level or early debut and the awarding of contracts. This was illustrated by the fact that the two youngest players to debut at franchise level had not played for the Proteas. This may suggest that early success is not necessarily a determinant of international selection or that there are other complexities, such as appropriate team composition that may influence selection.

> *"It didn't make sense for them to sign someone who hasn't played franchise cricket and I played it or debuted at 17 for them. And like when I think of it later if [1st player name] had debuted and both the guys that had played at such a young age had contracts, [2nd player name] had a contract, [1st player name] had a contract, but I didn't have one."* (P43)

5.5.4 *Summary*

The average age at which these players debuted at senior provincial and franchise level was 18.9 and 20.6 years respectively, which demonstrated that the majority had been successful at the elite level at a fairly young age. Of these, a quarter had represented South Africa in a limited number of matches at the time of interview and this had not significantly changed by 2018. The awarding of contracts was dependent upon the age of the player, the stage of his cricket career and the requirements of each franchise. However, it appeared that additional factors may also have played a part in the awarding of contracts.

5.6 Conclusion

In this chapter, the progression of this cohort of South African cricketers through the talent pathway to succeed at the elite level has been described. No single route was followed, but a preferred trajectory was recognised: early exposure and participation in the game, attendance at well-resourced schools, provincial age-group representation and entry into the CSA high performance pathway. However, socio-ecological factors in both the distal and proximal environments created different challenges for this cohort and other potential cricketers. The influence of these factors on cricket talent development will be presented in the following two chapters. Thereafter, the intrapersonal characteristics that may impact talent development is discussed in Chapter 8.

CHAPTER 6   IMPACT OF DISTAL ENVIRONMENTS ON TALENT DEVELOPMENT

"The Proteas team has to be the identity of the South African people, it has to understand what South Africa has to be. That is the most important thing: what do you want South Africa to be?" (Hashim Amla, current South African opening batsman)

6.1   Introduction

This chapter focuses on the participants' perceptions of how the environments, distal to the players, may have affected their cricket development. The environments identified included the communities in which the players grew up in, and the organisational structures (Cricket South Africa (CSA) and its affiliates) that manage the game in the country. At the most distal level, South African society encompasses and therefore indirectly influences all the environments. This is depicted in Figure 6.1.
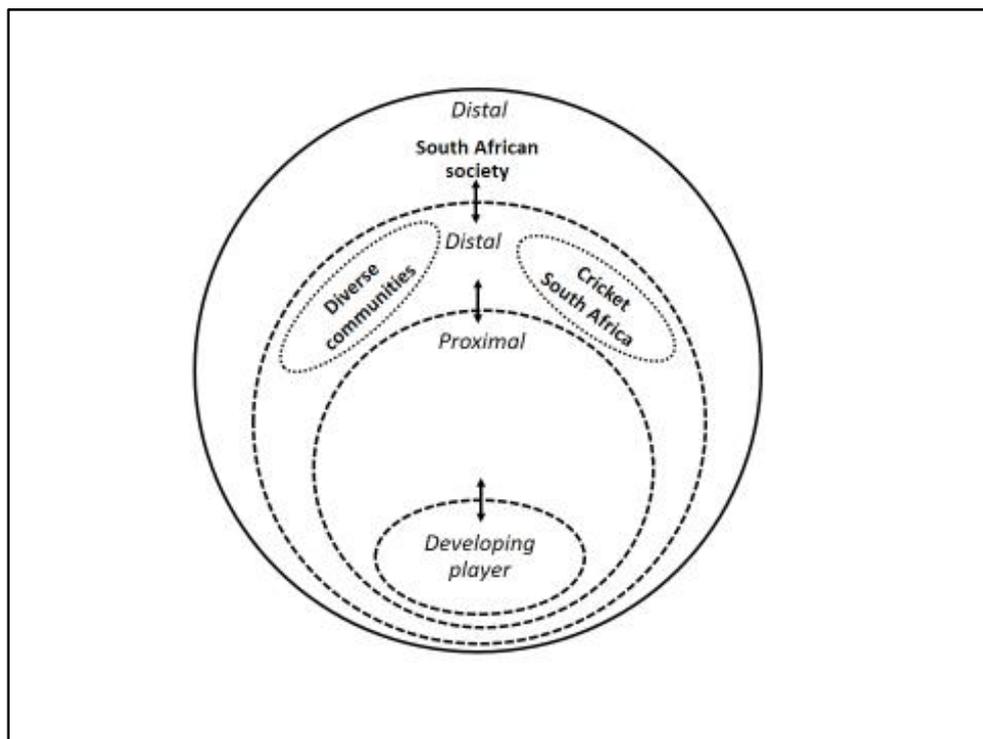
Figure 6.1: Distal environments indirectly impacting the developing player

6.2 South African society has indirectly impacted individual talent development

It was explicitly stated by some of the key informants (and alluded to by the rest of them), and by all the Black African and some of the Coloured and Indian players, that current cricket talent development challenges need to be seen in light of South Africa's transition from a segregated to democratic society. It can be summarised as follows, by the words of one key informant:

"A strong middle class and cricketing culture was fostered amongst the Black African communities in the Eastern Cape as a result of the establishment of mission schools in the early 1900s…However, with the increased need for cheap Black labour on the mines, followed by institutionalised apartheid from 1948–1991, Black South Africans were excluded from the mainstream economy and cricket participation until 1991." (KI12)

A few of the 'Black' key informants and players described how their family members had played cricket, but as part of segregated teams.

"Back in that day, there was like apartheid and stuff like that, it was very segregated so…he [my father] played Indian Natal schools." (P26)

These participants agreed that the substantial historical disadvantages had created a massive divide between the ethnic groups in terms of socio-economic status, opportunities for participation and understanding of and attitudes towards one another's challenges and cultures.

"You have the haves and the have nots and we are really struggling to close that gap." (KI8)

"That's where our situation is unique, there's a hell of a lot of racial tension underlying… that impacts interaction…and…and that is key." (KI15)

6.3 Societal changes may compromise the future of cricket

Changing societal norms and recreation patterns were mentioned by some participants as posing a threat to the survival of cricket. The time-consuming nature of the game was of particular concern as it conflicted with the youths' desire for instant gratification provided by sports of shorter duration, social media, other forms of technology and other interests. In

addition, declining levels of physical activity were also acknowledged by some as a confounding factor. It was suggested by a few participants that there was a decreased passion for the game and an increased emphasis on the monetary rewards for both players and coaches.

> *"I mean the instant gratification culture that we have is amazing. I mean, who has time to go and watch four days of cricket and no one wins." (P7)*

> *"It just worries me sometimes like…playing cricket; whenever I sit in a dressing room and play, all the players talk about is money, the subject money always comes up…and for me it was always about making cricketing decisions." (P23)*

Awareness of these changing patterns would seem likely to assist CSA in its strategies to grow and develop the game from grassroots through to the elite level.

6.4 Diverse communities create varying challenges

With a few exceptions, all the 'Black' players were born and grew up in the communities that were previously designated for their specific ethnic group. All the White players were born and lived in previously 'Whites only' residential areas according to the Group Areas Act of 1950.[33]

6.4.1 Socio-economic disparity influences talent development

All participants emphasised the differing socio-economic challenges faced by the different communities and that these had a major impact to varying extents on individual players progressing.

Economic status

A few Black African players and some key informants debated the perception that cricket worldwide is a middle-class sport; and that due to South Africa's history, by default that this equates to cricket being a 'White man's game'. The privileges, for example facilities and coaching, afforded to the middle class have therefore perpetuated the gap between White and 'Black', especially Black African players. In addition, this privilege appears to have extended to attitudes towards Black African players. A few key informants were positive that the growth in the Black African middle class in South Africa provided promising signs of

uplifting cricket in the Black African communities. One key informant commented on how cricket in India had previously been a sport of the privileged, but that this was also slowly changing. Despite the perceived class divide, it would seem that there was a need to breach the class and ethnic distinction within the South African cricket mind-set to provide access to all those that wish to play the game.

> *"So realistically there's no way that in any part of the world that I have been to for cricket, not every school in England plays cricket. Yes a lot of schools play, but not everyone does, some play football some play rugby, we have got this thing, where we now think that everybody must play cricket." (KI4)*

> *"I look at the guys that are playing franchise, I try, from the little bit I know about their family backgrounds, you can see, OK, nobody comes from actual poverty." (P28)*

> *"It's important, it's actually a sad thing that this is a White man's sport, we as 'Black' cricketers, we as Black Africans, we trying to get into the system and trying to be part of the system." (P21)*

Many key informants were upset that the majority of Black African South Africans live in poverty. In the words of one:

> *"The reality of life is that most African people are like....in poverty." (KI12)*

Despite the benefits of watching cricket on television, not all players were afforded this luxury, as they did not have access to satellite (paid) television. Since most cricket in South Africa is shown on satellite television, this creates a further socio-economic barrier to access the game. In addition, the lack of 'Black' players on the screen created the perception and entrenched the mind-set that cricket was reserved for White players only. This would seem to suggest that cricket was still battling to transcend the segregation created by apartheid and colonialism. Furthermore, it could be argued that, without appropriate interventions to increase the numbers of 'Black' cricketers to provide heroes to inspire potential 'Black' players, the status quo could remain.

> *"I think not seeing lots of 'Black' players on TV. To me I thought, even now, people still laugh when I do lots of interviews, cricket, how do you look at cricket back in the days and now, where you come from, I thought cricket was a White man's sport. The only time you tune on TV, it's only...White people playing, but to me it was nothing until you*

see Oom[16] Makhaya[17] and then to me I said, oh, OK, wow, so there is players of colour." (P20)

A number of participants alluded to how the economic challenges faced by the majority of Black African, many Coloured and Indian, and fewer White families, do not permit talented youngsters the luxury of the necessary time, post school, to develop into a professional cricketer. It was also mentioned that post school, young Black African men are very often expected to provide financially for their families. Some participants commented that for others, they do not have the financial means to support themselves while trying to enhance their cricket talents and become a professional player, an endpoint which is never guaranteed. Studying or working may therefore be a better option to achieve financial security than cricket.

> *"They don't have the luxury of going even, getting a good education for the first 3 or 4 years, because they haven't got that luxury, so they have to literally go back and go back home and get a minimum paying job and look after their families. It's a difficult one, but it obviously has a lot to do with social and poverty."* (P42)

> *"You going to go and try get a job at nineteen. That to me should be your prime time, where you saying I'm going to give three years of my life, to just work hard on my game and try and get somewhere…"* (P31)

The economic challenges experienced in the disadvantaged communities are very real issues that may limit the ability of players from these lower socio-economic groups from both taking up the game and then continuing to play.

Logistical challenges

During the transition from school to senior level, some of the 'Black' players indicated that they had faced challenges in terms of distances to practice and match venues. These were almost exclusively situated in previously White communities, and often very far from where 'Black' players lived. Most of the Black African players and fewer Coloured and Indian players said they relied on public transport and had to leave home very early to arrive on time. For the vast majority of the White players, this was less of a problem as they had access to private

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[16] Oom is the Afrikaans word for uncle.
[17] This is a reference to Makhaya Ntini.

transport and lived closer to the venues. Once the players had made it to the professional level, they agreed that these issues became less of a problem, but for some they still existed.

> *"A young 18-year-old having to catch 3 taxis to come to training. He finishes school at 2 and he has to be at training at 3. By the time he gets to training, it's 3:30 or 4; he's tired and then he needs to leave at 5; and by the time he gets home, its 7, 8." (KI11)*

The consequences of the logistical issues were not only the costs and amount of time taken to get to practice, and the potential risks for young players using, often unreliable public transport, but the impression of tardiness created among their team mates when they regularly arrived at practice late.

Social challenges in disadvantaged communities

Community-wide social ills, including HIV/AIDS, drug and alcohol abuse, gangsterism, widespread rape and murder, and unsafe living environments were highlighted by many of the Black African and Coloured players as contributing to the barriers faced by young cricketers growing up in these areas. In addition, they argued, peer pressures added to the demands faced by these youngsters often causing them to be led astray. A couple of the Indian players also alluded to the temptation of being side-tracked by their friends.

> *"I run in the road, there's a gang fight somewhere, is it safe for me to run? No." (P1)*

> *"It's not just, a 'Black' cricketer before he walks onto the field, half the time he's had to, some time he's missed…a bullet out of the township." (P28)*

A particular concern expressed by some of these players was that increasing community safety fears meant that 'street' cricket was not as prevalent as when they grew up. The potential downside of this may be the loss of the benefits of unstructured practice and developing a love for the game.

> *"And there you can also see some raw talent but what I don't hardly see is a lot of boys playing cricket in the street like we used to do." (P23)*

Some 'Black' players asserted that these peer and social pressures had contributed to other talented players from their communities not progressing to the senior level. In some instances, these difficulties were individual choices, but for the majority it was the reality of the situation in which they lived that forced them to forsake their own cricketing ambitions.

The majority of Coloured players interviewed were certain that this was the main reason preventing other Coloured players from progressing in the game.

> *"I had to make sacrifices and…a lot of ['Black'] people fall away in whatever code of sport they enter into, simply because, they get side-tracked by alcohol, all that other stuff and I did not want to fall away." (P19)*

> *"A problem that I've found in townships is not that boys can't play cricket, but because of the social life that is outside cricket, which is a problem, which brings gangsters or drugs and there's lots of dropouts of school. There's alcoholism and there's lots of things that these boys are influenced by, outside of cricket." (KI6)*

Many of the key informants echoed the perceptions expressed above and steadfastly believed that the overall social structures and circumstances faced by, particularly the Black African communities, were unconducive to both cricket development and high-level cricket performance. They further commented that unstable backgrounds and limited ongoing support increased the challenges for these young players.

> *"I would say social circumstances, you understand me, peer pressure, gang activity, you know, in townships and for me, that is, that's going to dominate the cricket thing, because the guy must go home. It doesn't matter what he does with us, he goes home, back into that and then he's got to cope with that, you know." (KI3)*

It was obvious from the emotional manner in which the 'Black' players and some of the key informants spoke that the social ravages faced by these communities were serious challenges that added to the pressures of playing and succeeding at cricket. The encounters confronted them on all levels: socially, physically, mentally and emotionally.

6.4.2   Diverse sporting cultures

Football

Most of the 'Black' players played football during their youth but, with a couple of exceptions, this was on a relatively social basis. More than half the Black African players said that they predominantly watched football on television. Despite enjoying the game, the Black African players did not believe they were good enough to have a future at the professional level and the Coloured and Indian players felt that their ethnicity precluded them from being selected for higher football honours. Only a few White players indicated that they played football and

that was at primary school. There was a perception that football was a 'Black African' game and that there were limited opportunities for individuals from other ethnic groups to play at the national level.

"It's just that the one sport, soccer is more accessible, there is more support, there is more favour for it in terms of cricket and that obviously also comes back to the mind-set that cricket is a White man's sport, soccer is a 'Black' man's sport." (P3)

"I played soccer just for fun that was about it to be honest." (P38)

"He [my dad] told me there's a brighter future in cricket for you than you would have in football. There's also plenty of politics in football that people don't know about. I was there, I experienced it, it's also down to a whole race thing unfortunately it's down to that." (P24)

Other sports

Some of the Black African and Coloured players indicated that rugby union and field hockey were also played in their communities. Furthermore, these sports are also the dominant sports at the 'former model C' schools and therefore this may have impacted on participation in these sports. Individual players mentioned other sports that they may have played, but appeared to be less important to the community as a whole. In addition to rugby union and field hockey, a number of White players mentioned playing tennis and golf, while very few players from the other ethnic groups played these sports. Some players from all ethnic groups, except the Indian players, took part in athletics. Swimming was mentioned by some of the White, Coloured and Indian players. No Black African players indicated that they actively swam while growing up. The ability to relate to role models in a particular sport was mentioned by some players as a consideration for a particular sport's appeal.

"Winter was hockey, cricket was summer. It is still the case although I think it's dying a slow death. Not so many people involved at the moment." (P13)

"I did swimming, from swimming to cricket to rugby to…hockey to water polo, I tried everything yes." (P37)

It was clear that playing sport was an integral and enjoyable pastime for the entire sample of players. For some, even a distraction from the challenges of their home and community lives.

"I'm not going to say cricket, but sport. I saw it more as like a mode of escapism, like where I could just go and be myself and just relax, you don't have to worry about problems at home and all those other things. You can just be yourself and just enjoy yourself there." (P3)

The varying sports played may be indicative of the differing socio-economic statuses of the ethnic groups, cultural affinity for and access to opportunities to play a particular sport within their school and/or community environment.

6.4.3   Cricket culture in 'Black' communities

Culture referred to the history of and interest in cricket as well as competing interests and sports. The White players were not asked about the culture of cricket in their communities as it was acknowledged that cricket has been dominated by White players, administrators and spectators,[58] and therefore a strong culture could be assumed.

The majority of the Black African players indicated that there was a strong cricket culture and 'love for the game' in many of the Black African communities, particularly the ones in which they had grown up in. There was agreement that some areas, namely the Eastern Cape and parts of the Gauteng Province, had a more deep-seated cricket culture than other Black African regions. Furthermore, Langa Township, in Cape Town (Western Cape Province), was singled out by a number of Black African players and key informants for its fervent cricket culture.

"They loving it, like I said the culture in the township and the passion for cricket is unbelievable. All they need is proper guidance. They only need like proper coaching, because another thing is the facilities. When I grew up playing cricket, we never used to play on proper fields, proper equipment." (P4)

"I mean at Langa within the community itself there is a great cricketing culture, average cricketing culture within the community….. It's there, it's died a bit, but I mean there are people who have stepped in and tried to build that culture back again. Mainly from the older people…. If you go to Langa you will see the guys playing street cricket, there are still things like that as much as soccer." (P3)

Cricket culture in the different Coloured communities was epitomised by 'street' games, self-organised tournaments and a way to bring the society together. Most of these players

enthused about their communities' passion for cricket. The Western, Eastern and Northern Cape were identified as the predominant bastions for producing Coloured cricketers.

> *"Each street had their own team and they all get invited, and then people used to make tournaments where you play over a couple of months. We played with a tennis ball and any type of bat that you can make. Just find an open piece of land…Put up you know, those large banana boxes as the wickets. Get a couple of those and…no real boundary rope, but everybody had sort of an idea where the boundary used to be." (P27)*

All the Indian players described the rich cricketing history among the Indian community. They stressed that the majority of South African Indians reside in KwaZulu-Natal Province and therefore that was the only province (of nine) in which Indian cricket had truly prospered. Some of the Indian players specifically commented that parental influences to focus on academics together with perceived limited opportunities in cricket, was decreasing interest for the game in their communities. They suggested that this was the biggest reason for their fellow Indian players leaving the game.

> *"In the religion that I or culture that I come from, it's not very often that you see…Indian kids pursue a career in the game, because the parents are generally more into academics." (P14)*

Interestingly, very many of the 'Black' players revealed that they still chose to play their club cricket for clubs in their own community, despite offers to play for more prestigious clubs. They felt that it was important to support their fellow players and a number commented on how achieving cricketing success was not for themselves, but for their entire community. In this vein, some participants felt that there was a need for the 'Black' players to be accessible role models in their own communities to inspire the youth as to the possibilities available through cricketing success.

> *"You played, because you didn't just play for yourself, you played for the other hundred thousand people that is before you, that didn't have the opportunity. That you have… whatever club I went to…I only played for Coloured clubs in [town name]…Purely because that was where I come from, and I love to strengthen you know my Coloured community." (P2)*

> *"I wanna be a hero among my people…and they realise that the dream is possible." (P24)*

"…it's a lot that actually can be done at franchise level. I still think the players can even be a lot more involved, especially in townships, just to be seen, so that people in the townships can know who he is." (KI11)

A number of Black African players and key informants identified the need to increase the number of children, particularly Black Africans, being introduced to and learning the game by playing mini-cricket. They identified the absence of physical education and sport in the vast majority of primary schools in the townships and rural areas as a barrier to growing the game in these areas. Despite existing strong cricket cultures in a number of the 'Black' communities, it would appear that there may be an opportunity to further exploit this passion for the sport in these areas and introduce the sport to new communities.

6.5 Role of the cricket organisation in talent development

All participants commented on the role and leadership of CSA and its provincial and franchise affiliates in influencing the development of South African cricket and its players. Several participants confirmed that the overall system was good, but that individual players' experiences of the system may affect their perceptions.

"I honestly believe at the moment, you know, our structures in this country are outstanding for cricketers. I don't think there's anyone can tell me that there's not enough opportunity in this country right now. I think [administrator's name] is doing an unbelievable job in Cricket South Africa in trying to get the structure right." (KI15)

6.5.1 Commitment to development of the game and its players

Development programme

Many participants were critical of CSA's various development programmes, as they felt they had not produced the desired objective of increasing Black African, Coloured and Indian participation, integration and representation in the game. They felt that following initial effort, in the early 1990s, on the development of Black African players in particular, CSA had neglected its duty to these programmes through decreased allocation of resources and a lack of focus. The results of this were fewer Black African players being exposed to cricket and then progressing through the talent pathway. Some of these same participants recognised that the mini-cricket programme in particular had regained interest and momentum in recent years

with increased attention and a new sponsor. As many of this cohort of players had progressed through sustained development initiatives, the benefits of such a programme would therefore seem to be clear.

> *"I think there is no sense of purpose towards transformation within Cricket South Africa because the sense of, if they're serious about saying, do you want to increase representation for 'Black' players, at a higher level; you have to really be serious about the development of those players." (P28)*

> *"You cannot, your business cannot be cricket and your development doesn't work and development means junior cricket where irrespective of what colour they are, if you don't invest money there, in 4 years' time your brand will die." (KI9)*

Two key informants strongly believed that the way transforming the game was initially managed by CSA did not serve the interests of the 'Black' players. One commented that in the 1990s, the development programme was nothing more than a public relations exercise and that more needed to be done to move South African cricket from a Victorian culture to a more African culture. Along with this, they both felt a change away from a colonial, White-dominated mentality was needed to bring about meaningful transformation. Two other key informants remarked that change could not happen overnight.

> *"20 odd years for me that's still very young for a country to develop...change and...where everything is really integrated and mixed and so on. Still you go to different areas, can still see areas...in one Coloureds live here, 'Blacks' live here, Whites live here all of that still in that sense. Slowly, slowly only but it's only the elites that moved and...and move around like that, but that's a slow process." (KI1)*

Facilities

Of concern for many of the Black African players and key informants was the limited number of cricket facilities in the Black African communities[18]. They felt that CSA needed to increase facilities to assist in bridging the gap between those with access to good schools and those who remain in the township areas. There were a few comments regarding the lack of maintenance of facilities in these areas that had been built in the past, which may be related to the socio-economic challenges faced by these communities. Some participants bemoaned

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[18] The White, Coloured and Indian players did not comment on community facilities.

the lack of suitable facilities and equipment, and that this had a negative psychological effect on players, which contributed to their sense of exclusion.

> *"It affected the whole community and they have taken ownership of that it…So facilities changes the environment, and it changes the mind-set of people not necessarily in cricket. Cricket will benefit from that." (KI7)*

> *"Probably kit, because obviously it's difficult as well when you a young player and your team mate has got shoes and you don't even have shoes so you sort of feel like why should I come next week because I don't feel I belong so I think that also plays a major role." (P22)*

Insufficient Black African coaches and coaches in Black African communities

The majority of participants agreed that CSA needed to develop additional Black African coaches and increase the deployment of coaches in the 'Black' communities. Furthermore, a number of Black African players and key informants believed that there had even been a decrease in the quality and number of coaches in these communities since their own developmental years. Some of these participants remarked that the poor remuneration offered to coaches in 'Black' communities contributed to the decline in interest in coaching the game in these areas. This further contributed to the lack of opportunities and progress of Black African players. Those participants that commented, recommended that development programmes should be resourced by committed, qualified and better paid coaches, who would nurture the youngsters and enhance the standard of cricket.

> *"…. For me I will pay those guys in the grass roots level more money than us who are here at this level, because at this level we don't do any coaching." (KI13)*

> *"We had four coaches who were actually coaching in [townships' names]….and I actually found out those guys, they don't even have level one[19], so I'm asking myself a question that how can the guys teach under twelves, under fifteens, but they don't even know the basics themselves?" (P33)*

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[19] Level one refers to the lowest level of cricket coaching courses.

Senior level

There was some dissatisfaction from a few participants with CSA's senior provincial structures and that this could hamper progress. These issues pertained to practice times that did not take all players' circumstances into account. For example, as not all the players at this level are paid, some players have to work or are studying and therefore mid-morning practice times are not feasible. One White player in particular lamented the differing and in some instances inferior, senior provincial facilities around the country which resulted in unequal opportunities to perform.

> *"He is now told practice is at 10:00 and if you don't pitch you can't be picked. So effectively [senior provincial team name] is saying actually we don't want you. Because he works for [#*&*] sake." (KI16)*

Despite reaching the senior level, a few participants emphasised the need for ongoing development requirements, particularly in the senior provincial teams. They suggested giving young players sufficient time to grow, competitive playing time and opportunities to learn from senior players before being exposed to franchise cricket. A couple of key informants felt that specific programmes to enhance the skills and experiences of Black African players, who may not be at the same level as other players, due to past inequities at lower levels, would be beneficial. It would seem that even at senior level there is a need to continue to develop players, particularly those who have not benefited from all the advantages that are learned through a structured talent pathway. In as much as development is needed, there was a sense expressed by some that players should be patient and not expect to play at the elite level too early in their career. It would appear that a review of the role, structure and functioning of the senior provincial teams may create opportunities for all players to be better prepared for professional cricket.

> *"So, once players are in the system then I don't think there's a lot of skill development, and I think that hampers the progress." (P11)*

> *"…those coaches or those administrators there, should make sure that these guys bide their time, work hard and get into the system you know…and to create a culture that the youth know that this is what it takes to play franchise cricket, to play for South Africa and that's how I feel South African cricket will grow." (P12)*

"Now you come to franchise level or semi-pro[20] level and you having to compete, but your foundation is not solid like the other guys are, specifically around performance so what is it, it's experience. What do I reflect on when the times get tough?" (KI15)

A few players and key informants judged that there were too few franchise teams to accommodate the number of excellent players. They supported the creation of one or two additional franchises to increase professional playing opportunities for all players, but particularly 'Black' cricketers. A handful of players expressed the opinion that there were players better than them who were not playing at the senior level because of too few chances to play. Some, particularly Coloured players, reasoned that changing provinces was often necessary to obtain opportunities to play and improve, and in the main, it had benefited their cricket, but that others did not always have this opportunity.

"In South Africa, I don't think there are enough professional teams first of all, because there are only six which means every week all the franchises are playing, there are only 66 players playing a week." (P43)

"There is a lot of guys that I'm playing with, or I played with, or I played against that are good enough to play at franchise level." (P10)

In addition to increased resources (coaches, facilities, funds and attention), accurate measurement of the implementation of talent development programmes was suggested by a number of key informants to ensure accountability at all levels. Others recommended ongoing and closer monitoring of players' progress. A specific concern was expressed by a few key informants around not losing late developers through early talent identification programmes that may exclude them. Furthermore, there was some support shown for enhanced integration between the national and provincial structures. This was crucial to improve performance and demographic representivity throughout the pathway and in the national team specifically.

"The monitoring…does he still feel important, does he still feel he's a world beater, does he still believe in himself or does he feel he's been left out." (KI11)

"You know some players are late developers as I say, and there are so many players that would probably fall through the cracks, because they're not showing great

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[20] Semi-pro refers to the approximate 50% of players in the senior provincial teams that are paid a very small salary, but are not considered professional players

potential at a young age. But if you endured with them, and continued monitoring them, they might be a player in the future." (KI2)

"So I'm of the belief that we have to have sustainable programmes, funded by Cricket South Africa, in each province, that they monitor." (KI3)

It would appear that there is a perception by participants and key informants that the amount and effectiveness of interventions during the 20 years post-apartheid have been insufficient to transform South African cricket, to accommodate and develop all players and be truly inclusive.

6.5.2 Relationships with senior level players

There was a broad assessment from many of the players that guidance for and support of them from the national and provincial cricket organisations' leaders was poor and could be improved. This was of particular concern during two specific periods of their careers: the transition from U19 to senior level, and during times of exclusion from the playing team as a result of injury, lack of form, implementation of 'ethnic targets' and non-selection for a particular format of the game. Some participants were somewhat disturbed that decisions relating to performance and selection were not always explained to players and that this created a perception of unfair treatment of some players by individuals within the organisational structures.

"Maybe they're not being followed, maybe they're not being looked after as well as they should be, after school." (P3)

"He never supported us when we got dropped." (P33)

"I think...like a lot of people, a lot of players get forgotten too quickly...you know especially with stuff like injuries." (P2)

"So it's difficult to get...to find your role, sometimes you'll be a bowler who will bat...but this season for the [franchise name] was actually quite shocking...." (P26)

A number of players from all ethnic groups expressed disappointment in the poor and insufficient communication from organisational leadership. Of particular concern to a few players was the lack of transparency and honesty in the messages conveyed, particularly about issues affecting the players themselves, resulting in misunderstandings and a loss of trust.

They reported that notification of selection to and de-selection from teams, including at national level, was very often first received via the press as opposed to directly from a member of the selection panel or management team. Explanations about organisational processes and progress was also considered by many to be lacking.

> *"Like being left out of teams for reasons that were very eye-opening and reasons that are not valid and also, being lied to on numerous occasions." (P19)*

> *"Communication to me was always shocking, I never…sometimes I had to read in the newspaper I've been left out, I've been part of the squad and now…the next thing be left out of the squad for the next tournament." (P23)*

> *"I never used to hear about [province name] trials." (P40)*

> *"I know there is a committee, but the players don't know who the committee administrators are, and the administrators they don't know who the players are. I think there is a lack of relationship. There's a massive gap." (P4)*

> *"I think that was frustrating, because not knowing why or understanding why." (P39)*

On the other hand, a few players, mainly from the smaller unions, were fortunate to have specific individuals who provided the necessary encouragement. A few players also praised the support they received from some of the medical personnel in the system.

> *"I think they good about following all the youngsters that start out here, and then go off and play somewhere else." (P27)*

It would appear that better support and more effective and proactive communication would enhance the relationship between all players and CSA's organisational structures, which in turn may enhance individual development.

6.5.3 Playing contracts and remuneration

The South African cricket playing season runs from September to April. However, playing contracts are awarded to approximately 18 franchise and seven (approximately half the total squad) senior provincial cricketers for the period 1 May to 30 April of the following year. A few players believed that the limited contract period (one or two years maximum) provided limited security for players. For some players, the contracting process and negotiations were

regarded as unfair, particularly for those with limited access to professional advisors early in their careers. This seems to have caused some mistrust of the process.

"Then I went to the CEO and I asked him, I said like how does it [contracting] work, because I was looking for a…contract and how does it work that you give two guys that haven't represented the franchise…contracts and I've represented the franchise and I don't get one." (P43)

Some Black African, White and Coloured players expressed concern that franchise players overall were underpaid. This was in comparison to their soccer and rugby union counterparts at a similar level and some non-sporting careers. In addition, there is a cap on the maximum earning potential of franchise players. They suggested that these concerns may influence some players, from all ethnic groups, in choosing cricket in South Africa as a career, particularly if they had other options (overseas or other jobs) available to them. Furthermore, some Black African players were upset that remuneration among ethnic groups was inequitable. This was exacerbated for many 'Black' players who incurred additional costs, because, for example, they lived far from the practice and match grounds. In addition to being unfair, inequality of pay would appear to create further divisions between the ethnic groups and increasing feelings of exclusion for some.

"The franchise system, if you just look at it from a professional angle, it can't be a career, because your top paid, there is a cap that CSA puts, which is about [specific amount], and then some players get extra money. But if you compare that to any professional career that someone who, who has done an accounting degree or anything like that, half a mill a year, you're not going to satisfy them." (P28)

"…we getting the same amount of money, if I use this money on taxi the whole month, I've got [specific amount] to spend. So, whereby we will say no, maybe it's the same person he earns so much money, they will give him petrol money and something just to live on, because he is a White person he deserves this." (P21)

From the few players that commented, the value of the semi-professional contracts was also considered too low. There was further concern expressed regarding the disparity in having only half the team paid yet training and performance expectations were the same for everyone. These two factors were perceived to contribute to players leaving the game after

only a couple of seasons. The loss of experienced players could then limit the number of senior players from whom young players could learn.

> *"Because cricket doesn't pay very well, the guys don't stick in it for um…for very long… because you don't get paid that well so who's gonna do cricket even…a lot of the guys who play amateur cricket only…they go…A lot of them retire 25/26." (P30)*

> *"Only half the team [are paid]. So what are the other guys doing? There are other guys who are committing their time, like a professional. They're sitting there maybe not at nineteen to twenty-one years old, they may be twenty-four, twenty-five, twenty-six trying to make it and if they don't have a semi-pro contract what are they getting? So I think the structure really needs to change desperately." (P41)*

6.5.4 Leadership and accountability

Many participants believed, to a greater or lesser extent that organisational leadership was less than optimal and that it needed to be improved so that South African cricket and all its cricketers could thrive.

> *"For me…the setup is not professional…Some players get put on a pedestal up there, and then some players…get treated like absolutely non-existent…just the average cricket player…And it's almost like the cricketing Gods are saying listen here, sort out your house. If you sort out your house, then you'll win a big tournament, but if your house is not sorted out then you can't win…a big tournament." (P23)*

A number of participants believed that having the appropriate people, from executive to grassroots level, performing their jobs conscientiously and being held to account would enhance the effectiveness of the national organisation and its affiliates. Appropriate people were considered to be adequately trained, hardworking, committed and passionate about their work and the game. There was a feeling that some of the current people involved at all levels in the game were unsuitable for the roles they were undertaking.

> *"There needs to be accountability…This thing here, it is a long chain, and every time you have a weakness in that chain, that just breaks….You have to be pretty good wherever you are, whatever position. Now if a person is not doing the job you got to get rid of that person, it's as simple as that." (KI5)*

> *"I will make sure I have the right people again, at the right places." (P20)*

"You've got to have the right CEO's, you got to have the right people like I said in positions where they will be able to get in money obviously, so they can invest in township programmes." (KI11)

A few participants mentioned the lack of professionalism in the running of some provincial affiliates as well as the administration of some clubs. There were also a few comments from participants pertaining to poor marketing of cricket resulting in a lack of finances to grow the game and ensure its long-term sustainability.

"And we're still having people…without any – some who are elected on the board without any massive business knowledge." (P39)

"That the club itself, hasn't had an AGM for more than five years, so we haven't had a committee." (P33)

"I think it's not being marketed properly…Look we've got an international team that is on fire at the moment, Protea Fire, they've got their own brand, but there's nothing, there's nothing other than that." (P12)

Several participants called for less reactive leadership and more innovation both on and off the field. Innovative suggestions included the formation of 'business' partnerships and less predictable cricket on the field. For example, a partnership with local government to maintain facilities or the twinning of 'former model C' schools with 'former model B' schools to share resources where possible.

"I went back there less than six weeks after that and you could not see the cricket pitch…it had not been cut…I mean there was grass up to…That is where you need government involvement." (KI4)

It became fairly clear that a number of players and key informants, did not believe that CSA and its affiliates were performing their respective leadership functions as well as these participants expected to effectively develop the game and all its players.

6.6   Conclusion

In conclusion, South Africa's political history has perpetuated an environment in which diverse communities have emerged. This has created socio-economic, cultural and attitudinal divisions among the communities. The advantages and disadvantages of these communities

have shaped the contrasting enablers and challenges for potential cricketers. Furthermore, the influence of CSA in developing talent has both assisted and hindered players' progress in varying ways. The following chapter will present the perceptions of the participants with respect to the proximal environments in which South African cricketers are embedded.

CHAPTER 7   INFLUENCE OF PROXIMAL ENVIRONMENTS ON TALENT DEVELOPMENT

"What is known is that there are thousands of exceptionally talented sportsmen and – women all around the world who never realise their full potential because they simply get lost in the system, simply because they never had the chance to show what they can do at the crucial time." (AB de Villiers, former South African captain and batsman)

7.1   Introduction

Four proximal environments were identified as having a major influence on the players in terms of their cricket talent development: family, school and club, coach and team. In addition, these environments have been influenced by the distal environments described in the previous chapter. Although presented separately, it is acknowledged that each of these four environments may interact with one another to a greater or lesser extent. These relationships are shown in Figure 7.1.
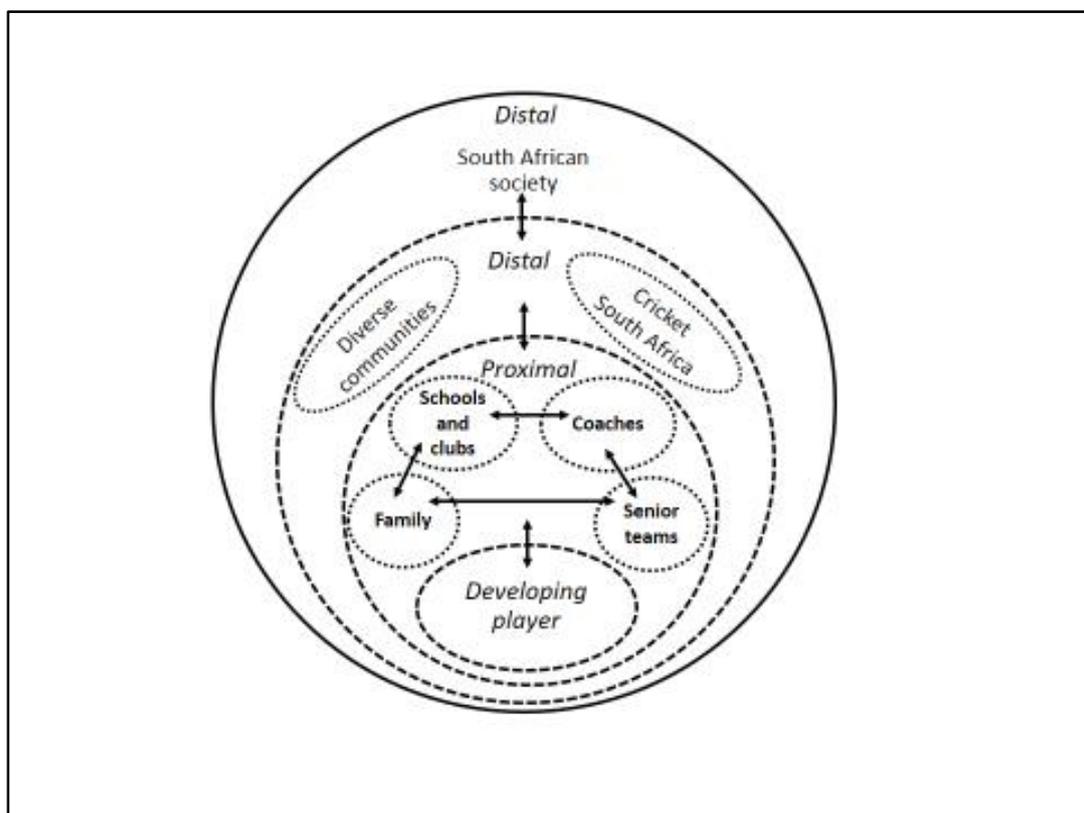
Figure 7.1: Relationship between proximal environments and developing player

7.2   Family provide significant support

7.2.1   Introduction

The family category includes parents, grandparents, siblings and significant others. All the Indian players, more than half the Coloured players, and with the exception of two, all the White players lived with both their parents while growing up. On the other hand, only a few of the Black African players stayed with both parents. Some lived with a single mother, whilst others stayed with extended family, such as their grandparent(s). The vast majority of all the players interviewed affectionately enthused about the support they had received and continued to receive from their families throughout their cricket careers. The nature and extent of this support was influenced by the realities of the different communities in which the families lived. Some key informants went as far as to say that a lack of parental support is the biggest obstacle to cricketing success.

> *"Unfortunately, we come from a different background, whereas maybe most of our parents, not that they're not interested, but they don't really get involved in sport, and then out of ten you probably get one out of ten." (P33)*

> *"There is no support base, back home, there's no support base and I think the successful cricketer must have a support base…mental stability is crucial and just life stability." (KI3)*

7.2.2   Cultural and social differences

Half the White players said that their fathers had played cricket, while fewer Coloured and Indian players' fathers had played the game. Among the Black African players in the sample, none mentioned that their fathers had played cricket. A number of the White, Coloured and Indian players mentioned that they came from a 'sporty family'. With the exception of the Black African players, it was clear that sport played an active part in the family lives of these cricketers. A few Black African players and key informants strongly emphasised the importance of parental understanding of the traditions and unique subtleties of cricket so that they were able to provide cricket-related support in the home environment. Unlike their White counterparts, the Black African players were often first-generation cricketers. A suggestion was made by two key informants that educating Black African parents in the nuances of the game would assist youngsters in developing a passion for cricket.

"I've got a very sporty family and we have always loved sport….I've got two brothers and a sister who love sport. My mom she did netball for South Africa and my dad did athletics, so we just all did sports and every afternoon I found myself with a ball and a bat…." (P18)

"I mean, it was cricket talk around the dinner table, much to my mom's disgust, and my younger brother is also mad over cricket." (P7)

"He needs family…A story a guy told me. A child came home one day and he asked how did it go? He said I scored a duck[21]. He said that is great, can we cook it. The point is, he has a parent, his parents know nothing about cricket, they probably work stupid hours so they cannot support him." (KI8)

All the Black African players and the majority of key informants discussed the challenging family circumstances in which many potential Black African cricketers grow up. These include high levels of poverty, hunger and poor diets, single or no parent households, loss of family members and family responsibilities at a young age. They acknowledged that these social factors were significant barriers to individual player development. The situation for this sample of players was less dire and had to some degree been alleviated by the participant being identified as a talented cricketer and awarded a bursary to attend a 'former model C' school. This removed them from some of the family and community pressures for some of the time. No Indian players and only one Coloured and one White player commented on negative family social conditions.

"I spoke to him, he just said to me he hasn't eaten for the last six days because there has been like nothing in the house." (KI13)

"With African players, it's difficult, because you come from a poor background and you don't only have to worry about cricket, but have to worry about your family, you have to worry about what you going to eat at night." (P22)

"I could have easily been a thug today, I could have easily went into crime, because we were struggling at home." (P4)

Most White, Coloured and Indian parents played an active role in their sons' cricket development. In some cases, this involved coaching their children for a period of time. Most

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[21] A duck in cricket is the term used for scoring zero runs in an innings.

of these parents were able to and did watch their sons play much of the time. Many of the Black African parents were less actively involved.

"Very supportive, they at every game, even up till today I mean if we at home, they'll be there, the whole family would be there." (P40)

"I think the main difference is between Whites/Coloureds and Black Africans is that the parents support. While you will find White communities and Coloureds with parents around and supporting those kids. I think psychologically it works…." (KI6)

Growing up, a number of the Black African and a few Coloured and Indian players commented on the difficulties in getting to practice and matches as their parents could very often not assist in this regard. This was due to living with only one or no parents, both parents working and no access to private vehicles, thus relying on unpredictable public transport or assistance from schools and other parents. For example, trains very often do not operate due to theft of equipment, the taxis are not roadworthy and the industry is plagued by ongoing community violence. Walking to practice was often the only option available. In contrast, the majority of White players indicated that they were transported by their parents. While all the key informants supported these views, two suggested that increasingly both parents of White players were also working as economic circumstances have changed. One Coloured player recalled even having to give up cricket for a couple of years during his teenage years because his mother was unable to transport him to practice.

"So there's days I couldn't make it, and I would get the…maybe the taxi home and stuff and she'd make a few phone calls just so I could get to cricket. So it was quite tough for her with financials and stuff like that." (P32)

"Where my Mom didn't have time to take us to you know match days and practices. So we just stopped for I think it was 2 seasons." (P12)

A number of the White and a few Coloured players commented on how their parents encouraged their cricket careers without undue pressure. On the other hand, a few players commented that their parents had been quite strict and pressured them in terms of their cricket performance. Two Indian players also revealed that their sibling's activities had taken a back seat because of the family's commitment to his cricket career, but that they believed the sibling had coped well with the lack of attention. One White and one Coloured player stressed that their parents had shown limited interest in and support for sport and cricket and

that they were more focused on them obtaining a good education. There would appear to be no specific parenting style that had enabled this sample of players to succeed, although a less pressured and more supportive approach seemed to be experienced by more of them.

"I think my family was good; they never pushed me, especially my Dad, because he never played cricket, so he'd never like be on my case, but they always travelled and watched my game. He still watches all my games." (P25)

"I'm not sure that the right parenting style is the one that creates a hell of a lot of pressure and a hell of a lot of importance around performance. If you, if you talk to guys who successful, 9 times out of 10 you ask them about their parents…they just supported me in anything that I did you know, if I did well if I did poorly, they were always there for me." (KI15)

7.2.3   Financial circumstances

The majority of the White players indicated that there were no major financial constraints to pursuing their cricket dreams, although one remarked that it had not always been easy. The majority of Black African, Coloured and Indian players interviewed indicated that financial resources had to some degree been a barrier to their progress. However, differing support mechanisms: bursaries, assistance from family, friends and community members, as well as sacrifices made by their parents had allowed them to pursue their cricket careers. It would seem that, despite significant financial challenges for many of the players, their parents managed to find ways to provide some of the financial support required. A few Black African, Coloured and Indian players were less affected by financial circumstances. It would seem that money was not an inconsequential barrier to their progress and certainly prevented the 'Black' players from having the same advantages, for example, private coaching (section 7.4.2) and quality equipment, as the majority of White players. It also appears to have contributed to them feeling alienated from the majority of their team-mates.

"I think cricket wise, if it wasn't for them making the sacrifices they did, I remember I never missed a practice I never missed a game, I never missed anything to do with sport or cricket…if I look back now I don't actually know how they did it." (P36)

"So, 'ja'[22] and my dad – he sacrificed a lot for me. I'm not going to lie…I know he's missed work because of me and…just having him there to watch me on weekends and things like that, it really means a lot, like any child would want to see their parents at the game…So ja that's been one of their pivotal roles in terms of success in my career so far." (P19)

"A single mum. Wow, she is actually my role model she's one of the toughest women I know in the world having gone through what we went through…she actually made a difference in our family because where we were, waking up in the morning not knowing what we were going to eat, going to a cricket game, I don't know where I'm going to get the funds,…she made a difference, she made sure that she hassled for us, she goes and begs for family to people." (P4)

"There was never money available." (P15)

"The little money that you get from your parents actually makes a difference…To feel sort of, to feel like you're part of the same as the guys as well." (P10)

"Ja, I've lived a very blessed life…And privileged life. I mean, there're so many guys who aren't afforded these opportunities." (P7)

There was wide agreement from most participants that cricket is an expensive sport, particularly from the middle years onwards. A number of participants expressed the opinion that cricket equipment, particularly for batsmen, is expensive and this may create a barrier to the game for many players. This was also put forward by some as a reason for the limited number of Black African batsmen.

"It was tough…financially, equipment wise, because cricket is expensive sport." (P6)

"My dad couldn't afford to buy me a cricket bat, you know, it's R500 and he said no." (P20)

The White players said that equipment was a necessity for the game and that they had sufficient equipment. 'Black' players indicated that they often did not have their own equipment and they either borrowed from others or it was provided by the cricket organisation. A few key informants mentioned that for Black African players obtaining equipment was a challenge.

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[22] Ja is the Afrikaans word for yes and is used colloquially by most South Africans.

"That's twenty thousand Rands of cricket kit versus a pair of soccer boots and a ball. Wow, son, don't you want to go and play soccer. I mean, for some it's as simple as that." (P7)

"The Association does assist in having kits. I would say that maybe the quality of the equipment is not high quality. I should think, even the equipment that they give doesn't last two seasons, because it's over used." (KI6)

"We didn't have equipment then, we didn't have gloves, so you'd go in with a broken bat, you'd go in with no helmets, no boxes, so you can just imagine, guys would just go in and you'd get two or three guys with equipment." (KI9)

It is apparent that families from lower socio-economic levels have less money available to support non-essential, and in the case of cricket, expensive activities.

Post school, some of the Black African players indicated that family responsibilities did not always allow them the choice to play their cricket with freedom from worry. This included the stress of having money, which they were expected to share with other family members. A few believed that these burdens may have hampered their cricket progress. It would appear that for the majority of Black African schoolboy players, the transition to senior level has more financial obstacles than those identified for other players making the step-up.

"And with us 'Black' cricketers you know as soon as you are twenty and you go home you are always under pressure. Your family will ask you, you know you should have a job, you've got that responsibility of helping out your sisters and so now the guys tend to give up cricket very early." (KI10)

7.2.4   Emotional support

Many of the Black African players warmly described the emotional support from their families throughout their cricket development to date. They felt their families were mostly happy with their achievements and this inspired them to continue. For many of them, this love and reassurance came from their single mothers, whom they held in awe; or from a grandparent(s). Players from the other ethnic groups also talked passionately about the emotional support of their families and two specifically mentioned their wives' ongoing contribution to their cricketing success. It was clear that emotional support from parents and other family members played a major role in all the players' cricket success. Sharing their

successes and disappointments with their family and in some cases their friends assisted some players in coping with the pressures of the game. For the Black African cricketers, it seemed that the lack of tangible support was supplemented by emotional support.

> *"I knew that if I go home if I did badly, I would always cry on my grandfather's shoulder. If someone does something to me then I've got my grandfather to support me." (P21)*

> *"I think my family is my greatest inspiration and the fact that the one time I came back from somewhere and I went home and I actually found my grandmother crying and I spoke to her and I said, and she…was scared that how will I be if I don't succeed in cricket, and I promised her that hopefully God keeps her until I play for South Africa hopefully, so that was sort of my inspiration and my drive for her." (P22)*

Players from each ethnic group stated that one or both of their parents were their role models, further creating the sense of closeness to the values instilled in the players by their parents.

> *"…my biggest role model is my [single] Mom, the strength that she had through the struggle when I was growing up and looking after 5 kids, I really admired that …." (P23)*

7.2.5   Friends

Friends were mentioned by a few players from all ethnic groups and their influences were either positively or negatively experienced. On the positive side, friends provided the players with a 'release valve' for decreasing the intensity of high performance sport. Negative experiences included jealousy of the player's success, lack of understanding of their passion for the game and the distractions of peer pressure.

> *"It takes a community to build one person, so if half the community doesn't like you, you never going to be a better person. So people that you like, they say in our culture, Ubuntu[23] you know that saying?'" (P21)*

> *"I mean I was in a position where friends became jealous, "who do you think you are". You get nasty comments and all kinds of things, so it really becomes tough." (KI11)*

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[23] Ubuntu is an ancient African word meaning 'humanity to others'. It also means 'I am what I am because of who we all are.'

7.2.6   Summary

Family members were acknowledged as playing an indispensable support function in the development of cricketing talent as they have a direct influence on the individual player. A strong family culture of sport and cricket was considered a key enabler, while a variety of family circumstances (e.g. finances, single parent) were barriers to progress for many players. Parents provided tangible (logistical and financial backing), as well as emotional support that provided the players with opportunities to develop their cricketing skills. Black African players received less tangible family support than their counterparts, highlighting another disadvantage that they may need to overcome to progress to the elite level. Economic circumstances, social realities and cultural beliefs seem likely to play a part in distinguishing the levels of parental support.

7.3   Schools and clubs provide cricket playing opportunities

7.3.1   Introduction

Two options, schools and clubs, were identified as the predominant channels through which cricketers could play the game. Each had a varying influence on the developing player. The primary route to the elite level was through the competitive school cricket leagues. Clubs are part of the cricket structure throughout the pathway; however, as shown in Chapter 5 this was not the preferred route for this sample of players. On the other hand, for many players, clubs were the only option, because cricket was not played at their school.

> *"But absolutely the school pyramid is still exceptionally strong in South Africa, good cricket is played, amazingly good cricket." (KI16)*

7.3.2   Contribution of schooling to holistic development

Type of school attended influenced progress

The White players all attended 'former model C' (well-resourced) schools throughout their school career. Such schools could be termed 'cricket schools'. Over three quarters of the Coloured and Indian players went to 'former model B' (less well-resourced) schools at junior level. All the Indian and half the Coloured players attended 'former model C' schools from age 13 years. About half the Black African players attended 'former model C' primary schools and

this number increased to over 80% at secondary school level. Two Black African ex-players interviewed as key informants also attended such schools. Three Black African and two White players attended private secondary schools, having received cricketing and/or academic bursaries.

> *"I think even now, you look at 'Black' cricketers who play franchise cricket, or basically I don't know ninety percent of them would have gone to decent schools, to decent cricketing schools." (P31)*

Almost all the Black African players and key informants lamented that the dysfunctional nature of education at 'former model B' schools, was a barrier to progress for the majority of potential cricketers attending these schools. In particular, they cited limited sport and cricket facilities, disinterested teachers and insufficiently qualified coaches. Consequently this led to a limited cricket culture and few quality players to compete against. They felt that the overall environment in many of these schools was not conducive to preparing cricketers for the elite level.

> *"We not finding guys playing at [former model 'B' school name] coming through a structure...you won't see him." (KI1)*

> *"I think the whole community of ['Black' township name], that there's a lack of educators that are interested in sport." (KI6)*

> *"So my view there is...the school system will fail you in townships." (KI7)*

A few Coloured players were saddened that talented Coloured players leave their community to attend 'former model C' schools because 'former model B' schools are not being adequately resourced. A few participants contended that it was possible to succeed as a cricketer through 'former model B' school system, but that it would be more difficult and slower.

> *"So for you to play in like a Coloured community or a 'Black' community it's quite difficult, because if you have talent you end up at a White school and I don't think the Coloured and 'Black' schools are still competing against the well-known schools...you know." (P32)*

The majority of the players who attended 'former model B' secondary schools, debuted professionally later than the average franchise debut age. In fact, three of the players were the oldest three players to debut at franchise level. This may suggest that the lack of cricket

resources (facilities and coaching) during the middle years of their development slowed their progress compared to their peers at better schools. Conversely, attendance at a good 'cricket school' would seem to enhance talent development. Table 7.1 provides more details of the types of schools attended by the different ethnic groups.

Table 7.1: Type of school attended by players interviewed

	Primary School (5–13 years)		Secondary School (13–18 years)	
	'Former model C' and 'private' (%)	'Former model B' (%)	'Former model C' and 'private' (%)	'Former model B' (%)
Black African	55	45	82	18
White	100	-	100	-
Coloured	23	77	54	46
Indian	20	80	100	-
All	56	44	81	19

Bursaries provided opportunities to less privileged players

All the Black African players who attended 'former model C' secondary schools were awarded cricket-related bursaries. These were either organised by Cricket South Africa (CSA) or the specific school. This was the only basis on which they were able to attend such schools, because in most instances their parents or guardians were unable to afford the fees. Some White and the majority of Indian players indicated that they also received bursaries, and two White players said that they needed the bursaries due to financial reasons. Only four Coloured players received bursaries. Three Black African and one Indian player mentioned having a primary school bursary.

> *"Yes I got that scholarship…I wouldn't have been able to go to [school name] if I didn't get that." (P30)*

The Black African players expressed much gratitude for the opportunity to attend a good school and they all enthused about it having a major positive effect on both their cricket and personal lives. Despite initial challenges, such as language, cultural differences and home sickness, they all agreed that they would repeat it. These challenges were perceived to be more pronounced for those Black African players who attended a boarding school, but as one

commented, *"If you were good at the sports, you became very popular, very quickly."* With one exception, White, Coloured and Indian players did not comment on their bursaries.

> *"…I'll do it, at a heartbeat I'd do it again. I think it's been very good for me and it's a special thing that happened to me, and I'm thankful, I'm grateful for it, that I was part of it, I'm actually grateful." (P10)*

The majority of Black African players and most of the key informants believed that a bursary programme was essential to cricket talent development within the disadvantaged communities of South Africa. They identified the decreased number of bursaries in recent years as a reason for fewer Black African cricketers progressing to the elite level.

> *"Well for me the system of, the bursary system that Cricket South Africa had, if I look at a number of cricketers that have been successful, a large majority will tell you that they were given an opportunity at a traditional cricket school. So it is those things now, I know at Cricket South Africa they cut those bursaries, so that for me is a major factor." (KI5)*

One key informant expressed some concern that some beneficiaries of bursaries had in the past encountered negative consequences. For example, excessive peer pressure to compete socially led to antisocial behaviours. Another key informant questioned the fairness of the selection process for bursaries holders. This endorsed the proposal from a few key informants and Black African players that monitoring of bursary holders' holistic progress should be carefully managed.

> *"I was in charge of a bursary school…we took kids from [township name] who didn't even have breakfast and we put them into [private school name]and there were lots and lots of repercussions for us and back lashes…We thought we are doing good, but we did more harm to the child than we did good to them, because kids in that school, look grade 11 and 12 were coming to school with their dads' four by fours and their BMs[24] and our kids were getting hand-outs from whatever we could get giving them clothing and the peer pressure on him was huge." (KI7)*

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[24] BMs refers to BMW cars.

Benefits of 'cricket schools'

A number of the Coloured and Indian players and all the Black African players, extolled the virtues of being exposed to this schooling system and the advantages that they obtained compared to their peers who did not attend such schools. It was not only the cricketing exposure, but just as importantly the overall learning environment. Only a few White players commented on the benefits derived from their education. They spoke mainly about the significant impact that the school's traditions, role models and sporting structures had on their cricket progress. A few Black African, Coloured and Indian players also commented on these factors. It would seem that the 'Black' players were more verbal about the numerous advantages of receiving a bursary to attend a good school beyond simply enhancing their cricket education.

> *"We had education, better education as well which was actually pretty good. I think it played a major contribution to my career. We got to learn about how to live a good life, a disciplined life, because we were at the hostel and how to make up your bed, to wear neat clothes when going to school. So it was a positive in terms of we did not only learn about cricket, but we learned about life as well, which was important." (P22)*

> *"I think that there's a lot of pride with the school and with cricket. We've always had…when I was growing up, someone in the national team…So, we always had people to look up to and aspire to." (P39)*

The specific benefits identified by the players are presented below.

Culture of cricket. The vast majority of players who attended a 'former model C ' or a private school described their schools as having a very good cricketing culture, often referred to by them as "traditional cricket schools". By this they meant that there were good facilities, sufficient coaching, competitive matches and that cricket played an integral part of the school programme. A number of participants alluded to the fact that many of the schools that these players attended form the backbone of South Africa's "world-class" cricket pathway and have produced a number of South Africa's national players over the past few decades. Despite the cricketing culture, many of the players still identified rugby union as being the "number one" sport at their school. On the other hand, a few players felt that cricket was the most admired sport at their school. Those players who attended the 'former model B' schools were disappointed by the absence of a cricket culture that they experienced at their schools. The

lack of a cricket culture may have added to the difficulties in progressing as quickly in their cricket careers. Being immersed in an environment that valued cricket seems to have nurtured cricket progress.

> *"We had nets from what I can remember, we had an outside coach…I think we trained Mondays, Tuesdays and Thursday with a couple of nets and then fielding so, we were decent we weren't great but we were alright." (P8)*

> *"Probably second to rugby, cricket and hockey are on par." (P30)*

> *"I think [school name] is known for their cricket I mean all the players that they've produced…You feel part of something like you feel like you part of the history. So I mean that traditions and stuff that [school name] had or has is second to none basically." (P26)*

> *"You'd play once a month maybe if you lucky against ['former model B'] schools on your like level." (P15)*

Several White players commented on the positive contribution of the high level of competition between the strong 'cricket' schools in some cities; while two were grateful for the enhancement of their confidence by attending a smaller school with more opportunities to perform. One Coloured player, who attended a less well-resourced, 'former model B' school, and debuted much later than most players, emphasised the personal drawback of not playing sufficient matches and not playing against competitive schools. This lack of opportunities and competition was echoed by other 'Black' players and key informants when discussing the impediments faced by most Black African and many Coloured and Indian players. They suggested that a lack of opportunities had contributed to 'Black' players giving up cricket.

> *"Ja, and the school never had cricket, they only had soccer. I think I played like 4 cricket games in my whole high school career." (P40)*

Along with learning to play the game, a number of participants argued that understanding and discussing the unique nature of cricket was fundamental to advancing to higher levels. This entailed appreciating the traditions and values, grasping the strategies and tactics and being able to confront the mental pressures that differentiates cricket from other sports. They believed that much of this is learned and linked to growing up in a cricket culture both at school and home. For many of the Black African players who did not have this culture at home,

school coaches and mentors were an important source of knowledge. In addition, two participants observed that Black African players in particular have limited access to information such as books and videos. Some of the key informants commented that this lack of a cricket background may hamper the progress of many Black African players.

> *"Education about the game was also vital." (P36)*

> *"Compared to…other sports, rugby…cricket's mental stresses. So I think that it's important to have a person…to talk about the game, he can't succeed every game when it's going good you try and make the most of it you know." (KI1)*

> *"It's just about creating a culture that says, come and be involved in cricket, come and love the game of cricket, live the game of cricket. Because really if you don't love the game of cricket you can't be good at it because it's unique in that way…." (KI15)*

Access to facilities through schools. Most of the White players indicated that the facilities at their junior and secondary schools were reasonably good to very good. For the other ethnic groups, during their early years, access to facilities was more of a challenge and in many cases limited, yet this did not impede them from managing to play. At secondary school level, the quality of facilities for most of the 'Black' players improved when they went to better schools.

> *"Like the facilities just get better and better it only invites…you to really enhance yourself." (P5)*

> *"There might be a few like…broken bottles lying around. So that was tough, but I guess we just made do with what we had. I mean there's no point in going home and saying, no we can't do this anymore. It's something we loved…so we made a plan we found a way to – to improve." (P6)*

There was general agreement from the player sample that during the early years, facilities are not as important as during the middle years. They felt it was possible to learn the game with access to a field, bat and ball. However, many players agreed that better quality facilities may speed up the learning process, during both the early and the middle years. A few players mentioned the benefit of practising on a similar type of field to the type on which you play a match. The importance of good quality facilities during the middle years was supported by many of the key informants. Some participants believed that coaching and passion for the game was more important than facilities. There was a definite sense from those who did not have access to good facilities that their progress had been impeded.

"I think a bat and a ball, I think that's all you need a bat and a ball, and a heart and a passion for the game." (P29)

"I think the higher you go, age group-wise the turf nets start becoming essential, when you play at a higher level and the skills get better. And you need to train those skills on the sort of pitches you're going to play on." (P35)

Holistic development. In addition to the facilities and coaching (section 7.4), the majority of Black African players commented on "doors being opened", by attending these 'cricket' schools. This allowed them to grow and be better prepared for cricket and life by developing their intellectual, emotional, social and cricket intelligences on and off the field. Specific attributes mentioned were discipline, respect, stability, responsibility, support, camaraderie and being challenged to improve oneself. Some Black African and Coloured players mentioned how the teachers contributed to their development by providing care, support and guidance. In some instances, this assisted the players in overcoming their challenging home environments. These opinions on the holistic value of a 'cricket school' were echoed by the majority of key informants. Attendance at functional and well-resourced schools seemed not only to enhance cricket development, but also the all-round growth and learning of all players

"Obviously there have been a lot of ups and downs in my route, but like I wouldn't of been this far, I would probably be still stuck in my village, probably studying somewhere." (P10)

"They took over my development compared to someone in the location, so it was easier for me to grow up and be in this environment that I am in today." (P31)

"So like changing my whole life around from coming from under privileged area to something like [school name], learning a lot of new things. That was great for me. That was a big step in my life going forward." (P6)

"Let's get them into a school, where they're given all these life skills, and they're given support, and they're trained, they do their cricket every day but they go to school every day." (KI2)

About half the Black African and a few White players indicated that they were boarders at their schools, which for most of them was an enriching experience. Boarding also relieved some of the logistical pressures of getting to practice and matches. However, one player

commented that boarding is specific to each individual's personality and attitude and therefore may not suit everyone.

> "I loved staying as a boarder, at the hostel, I didn't really particularly enjoy going home, even over weekends and holidays...I think everyone is different and it's a big change for certain people. I mean coming out of the rural areas and getting thrown into a very different environment, some guys thrive on it and some guys don't. So I think it's very much into who you are as a person and how you were raised." (P42)

7.3.3 What role for club cricket?

Benefits of playing club cricket during the early and middle years

The players from all ethnic groups who played school and club cricket during their early and middle years all enthused about the benefits of club cricket experience. They felt that the technical, tactical and mental aspects of their game improved quicker by being exposed to senior players, role models and a tougher environment. Particular comments alluded to players being "hardened" by the experience compared to the "soft" nature of the school game. This could suggest that players should, where possible be encouraged to play club cricket so that they can learn more by interacting with players from different age groups.

> "In the way of getting mentally stronger." (P34)

> "It's not to knock school cricket, but I just feel there comes a point where the school boys just stagnate there a bit, instead of taking the next level you know." (P23)

The increased number of games played by participating in club cricket, provided additional competition that accelerated the players' overall talent development. On the other hand, those players who only had access to club cricket, particularly in the 'Black' communities, believed that they were at a disadvantage in progressing. This was, because of the quality of cricket played and fewer games available compared to school. Interestingly, a couple of the seam bowlers chose not to play club cricket to prevent overuse injuries at a young age.

> "You're there with a bunch of adults so as a result, I think, your cricket improves. Probably your skill level's up to where theirs is, but they are a bit faster and a bit bigger so you grow up quickly there I would say, because the [club name] side is a bit of a rough side as well." (P35)

"He was included in the trials, but he explained to me he got limited opportunity, he felt that he was at a massive disadvantage because he was coming through the club system as opposed to the school system. So, I think, and I think when I was at school it was the same. I mean, when you play in those provincial sides and basically every boy came from a recognized school." (P41)

"I didn't play [club] at school…I found…the school cricket was enough and I wanted to go home and then to play on a Sunday as a bowler especially, a young bowler, tried [not to play] to prevent injury." (P16)

Current assessment of club cricket

There was agreement from participants that the quality of club cricket in South Africa was for the most part inadequate to develop sufficient talent to the standard required for elite performance. While there were and still are a number of well-resourced, and therefore strong, clubs around the country, the vast majority, mainly located in the 'Black' communities, were struggling to function effectively. The comments also pointed to a further decline in club cricket since these players had grown up. The reasons given for this included poor and inequitable facilities, financial constraints, deficient administration, a lack of attention to club players, and decreased commitment and passion from players and coaches.

"It's the kid who hasn't succeeded, that wants to play further, the…non eighty percent talented kid wants to go further and there is no club structure. If there is nothing for him to go to, then you are not going to succeed." (KI7)

"I think one of the critical differences is, when I captained a club team I used to steal from work. I'd steal my time, I'd steal my telephone time, I'd steal my fax time. If you're not employed, you cannot steal from work. So many 'Black' clubs have unemployed people." (KI16)

Furthermore, a number of players indicated that they and their senior colleagues very rarely played club cricket due to their professional obligations. Other concerns mentioned were limited strong club teams to provide competitive matches, different formats played around the country and a more social approach to the game by most club players.

Future directions

There was some debate mainly from the key informants as to the future role of clubs in the development of South African cricket talent. On the one hand, some believed the clubs were imperative as a structure to nurture those, particularly 'Black' players, who do not have the opportunity of progressing though the school system and into the high performance pathway. On the other hand, family and social challenges, and societal changes seemed to be impacting upon the future viability of club cricket. One suggestion put forward was creating links between schools and clubs to provide an immediate conduit for players who are not identified for the high performance pathway.

> *"Club is important. I think club is actually the one tier, we were mentioning something about the absorption rate. I think that is where a lot of players kind of fall out the bus and they miss out. They don't even get to touch club cricket. Really good players at school don't even go to club cricket, so I think a lot of players are missed out, one because, clubs don't pay, two, clubs are not really good facilities and some clubs are not that good and also they tend to be quite stagnant in terms of progression and letting youngsters in." (P28)*

> *"I don't think our clubs are doing enough to link themselves to schools that sit within their communities to offer assistance to carry on doing that, and look club cricket is very family orientated, this day and age there's a lot more distractions, there's a lot more things happening…." (KI1)*

There was interesting debate from a number of 'Black' players and key informants regarding development of cricket facilities in the communities as opposed to identifying talented players and providing them with opportunities to attend 'former model C' schools with the accompanying cricket resources. The consensus was that both options needed to be pursued to achieve short- and long-term development goals. One Coloured player stated that while coaches may try to coach in the disadvantaged communities, the lack of facilities made this difficult.

> *"There are probably stories of where we try to develop in the community, but it's such a struggle where it either gets vandalised or the support's not there, the support structures not there to sustain the facility. I think in the past, everyone put up the great facility, but never put in a sustainable structure behind that to maintain it. Because it would be wonderful to attract young kids to and create a central point around sport*

within those communities, because social aspects and all of those things, but people just come down and break it down and sometimes their own people… So…there has to be somewhere a middle ground that needs to happen, which I think everyone is still struggling to find." (KI1)

It would appear that CSA needs to consider what role, if any, clubs should play in the future development of cricketers and how best to administer this component of the talent pathway.

7.3.4   Alternative solutions

Hubs in the disadvantaged communities

With access to schools constrained for many prospective players and the poor quality of club cricket, particularly in 'Black' communities, alternative structures have evolved. Some participants mentioned how combined school-club teams enabled players from disadvantaged/under-resourced communities to participate by providing access to facilities and coaching resources at a central Hub in these areas. The majority of key informants, two Black African and one Coloured player commented that this offered another route for these players to progress through the pathway and that this model should be expanded throughout the country. Major advantages of this model would seem to be increased exposure to and competition against 'cricket' schools, retention of talent in their communities and potential decreased dropout from the sport.

"Like three players who played for club cricket and the other guys came from different schools, like I said we combined our school cricket and club cricket." (P4)

"I definitely think that the Hubs are working." (P27)

Universities and academies

The majority of White players stated that some of the university clubs offered strong, competitive cricket and that this was a possible option for players to pursue, while simultaneously obtaining an education.

"The universities, if you go and do well at university that's also another option I think. I haven't heard of many players who were very average at school, progress." (P16)

Almost half of all the players had not engaged in any tertiary studies at the time of being interviewed. Of those who had undertaken further education, two were still studying. From the remaining group, half had completed their qualification, and half had started but not completed their studies. Therefore, only a quarter of this cohort had completed some tertiary education. The majority of White players had embarked on some tertiary education, while amongst the other ethnic groups, the majority had not. This may suggest that tertiary education was more accessible and encouraged among the higher socio-economic communities.

Some players and key informants commented that with the obligations of professional cricket, for example morning training and extensive time away, it was difficult to study simultaneously. This was somewhat different in the past when most cricketers studied either before or during their cricket career. Some White players mentioned that certain of the universities offered flexible study arrangements. On the other hand, a few 'Black' players believed that the lack of a university in their region resulted in players leaving the area with adverse consequences for the development of cricket in the region.

> *"The guys went to do their jobs during the day and had an arrangement with their employer that they knocked off at three o' clock to go and practice; and that's how it was at first…now practices starting at nine, nine-thirty in the morning." (P7)*

It would appear that tertiary education, either university or vocational training, was not a priority for these players, with less than a quarter completing some form of tertiary education. This may have been compromised by financial constraints, the demands of the game as well as success at the elite level, because a number of players started studying but then stopped as their cricket careers took off. It was, however, acknowledged by many participants that it was important to have some further education, which would provide choices for them post cricket.

The inclusion of a compulsory educational component in the provincial academies was considered essential by those participants who commented on the topic. The Fort Hare[25] academy model was applauded by some key informants; and it was felt that it should be replicated around the country. This model enables aspiring talented players to develop their

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[25] Fort Hare University is situated in the Eastern Cape Province

cricket skills, while at the same time obtaining a university qualification. In addition, ongoing mentoring, support and monitoring are provided to the players. By adopting this model, the problem of players not completing their tertiary education may be solved.

"It should not happen only at Fort Hare, I think it should happen in all the Provinces because you can't just keep hoping that you know we are going to produce cricketers, we need to make sure that there are structures in place." (KI10)

Many of the players discussed studying and/or working as competing interests that had contributed to talented under 19 players giving up their cricketing dream. They commented that these players felt that obtaining a tertiary education offered a more secure future for them than risking the small chance of succeeding as a cricketer. For others, having a permanent job provided more stability than the short-term contracts offered in the cricket environment. This sample of Indian players believed this was the biggest reason for their fellow Indian players leaving the game.

"They just stopped playing because they've got a job, they've got other things to do." (P33)

"I think some of them are actually in the business world, some are…still involved in cricket. Uh…but generally most of them are working." (P14)

7.3.5 Summary

Attendance at well-resourced schools, with fervent cricket cultures provided the players with opportunities to participate, compete and develop the fundamental skills required of an elite cricketer. The current club structures and the quality of the schools available to the majority of potential players do not provide the same opportunities. Good schooling contributed to the holistic development of these players. Bursaries, Hubs and educationally-linked cricket academies would seem to offer a pragmatic alternative to providing further opportunities for developing cricket talent among all ethnic groups.

7.4 The role of coaches in holistic player development

7.4.1 Introduction

The majority of players interviewed shared similar comments regarding their coaching experiences and their opinions of coaches' roles and attributes in developing successful players. These experiences as well as the role of, and attributes needed by coaches differed as they transitioned through the talent pathway. Attributes refer to the traits, personality, characteristics, knowledge and skills that the coach brings to the coaching relationship. A few players and key informants believed that coaching was the most important enabler in progressing to the elite level and that naturally 'talented' youngsters would grow from the correct guidance offered by coaching. This would suggest that available resources would be best spent on developing coaches who can identify and then develop competent players.

> "The coaching, it's the most important thing, that's the first tool to have, that is your first tool. If you can have coaching in, you start, it improves your game by 15–20% and the rest will come from your talent, your disciplines and all your attitude towards everything." (P20)

> "If you don't have the quality coaching, you know, to take a guy's natural skills and make it to be what it should be, that could be the reason why there is not enough 'Black' players coming through." (P3)

Congruent relationships influence participation and performance

Most players indicated that they had been exposed to many different coaches during their careers and that the variety of different contributions had enabled them to develop their playing skills. Players emphasised that they had learned specific competencies from each of these coaches and implemented relevant suggestions as applicable to their own game. Most players felt that they learned more from those coaches with whom they had a good relationship. There were a few coaches, whose names were repeatedly shared by players, as having had a positive influence on them. On the other hand, some players suggested that the same coach, whom they perceived positively, may have had a negative impact on another player. The implication of these experiences suggest that a player's progress and performance is improved when the coach-player relationship is aligned. This means that coaches need to

understand how to get the most out of each player and that the approach to each player may need to be different.

Some participants were insistent that there was a need for more qualified Black African coaches who could better understand and relate to Black African players. The development of 'Black', and especially Black African players, may therefore be hampered until such time that coaches and players from different ethnic groups learn to understand and relate better to one another, or there is more diversity among coaches at all levels

> *"I worked a lot with [coach name] and he wasn't a good influence on my career at all." (P9)*

> *"I think [coach name] goes both ways he either makes you a really good cricketer or he kills it." (P38)*

> *"So he knew how to get the best out of me, because I was so well prepared, because he was always on the case to prepare well." (P30)*

> *"I don't think there's enough 'Black' coaches, because it's a lot easier for a player to relate to someone when the coach is, someone who I can talk to and if I miss my train tomorrow or I miss my bus, because of whatever." (P42)*

7.4.2   Coaching through the talent pathway

Early years

Most of the players felt that they had reasonably good coaches during the early years. This was from family members, mainly fathers, at school, or through the mini-cricket development programme. However, about half the Coloured players commented on having limited coaching at this stage. This may be related to them not attending schools with competent coaches and the fact that during their early years the focus of the mini-cricket programme was more on Black African than Coloured communities. This again highlights the differing experiences of South African communities as cricket attempts to find a new vision that includes all potential participants. Two Black Africans and two Indian players mentioned that they learned through watching television or DVDs, or reading coaching manuals.

"I mean like most of the guys that I played with had raw talent, never got coaching in their life, because playing informal cricket. So you get onto a stage where they give you a specific bat now, not just a piece of wood that you sawed out yourself." (P27)

"In terms of playing cricket we never played matches, but we used to go to a practice every day, my Dad used to coach me with the DVDs." (P38)

There was consensus that learning the basics of cricket, developing a passion for the game and having fun should be the key focus during the early years. Three players spoke about the excessive pressures being exerted on young players now, while a key informant believed that the increasing focus on winning at junior levels versus developing players needed to change. Some participants mentioned the need to balance a player's natural talent against being over coached at a young age and allowing the player to understand the game in his own way.

"Junior school you just let them play, they can have fun let them enjoy themselves. The technical side of it, I would say only comes in when you get to grade 6/7[26], just before you go to high school." (P27)

"See, my whole thing now with cricket, especially the youngsters growing up, they put too much pressure on themselves with regards to private coaching and technique, and working on all this other stuff." (P39)

"I would love to see a revolution around our coaching and our instruction and our mentorship. A revolution that says we go away from this winning and losing thing at under 13. Let's revolutionise the way we treat kids and the way we want them to perform and how do we encourage that and how do we understand that." (KI15)

During the early years, many of the Black African players and fewer Indian and Coloured players referred to coaches, and to a lesser degree cricket scouts and administrators, as providing the inspiration to participate. These passionate and committed individuals, who were usually part of the mini-cricket programmes, were fondly remembered as caring, nurturing and patient individuals. This had encouraged the players to continue playing. In some instances, the players reported that these individuals provided equipment, logistical and financial resources. Without these cricket people, many of the players would not have had the opportunities and means to participate in cricket. What particularly stood out for these players was the belief in, and extra lengths that these individuals went to for the players. There

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[26] Grade 6/7 equates to approximately aged 12 or 13 years.

was a feeling among a few of the key informants that this passion was not as strong as it previously was, and that financial reward was now more important to coaches. This observation may suggest a changing socio-economic imperative, which potentially has implications for the education and remuneration of coaches going forward.

"So…when you starting, I think they [coaches] have to drive that passion… The passion comes from you, but that enjoyment factor you know you have to enjoy the game to go far in it." (P2)

"I started off with [coach name] that used to coach me at Under-8 and he used to make sure that if I didn't come to practice, he will come to my house and ask why I didn't come to practice." (P22)

"The feeling that I get now is the coaches, they don't use this as a stepping stone to do well in life or to move on to other bigger things. It's almost like they use it as, well, I have to do this…it's not coming from the heart. There is too many average coaches, below average coaches that are involved in the program that are just doing it for the sake of doing it, they are not doing it because they want to do it." (KI11)

"He [coach] came to [township name] as well just to teach us and just to teach us about the game like he made a big impact in my life…he is my hero basically because of what he did for cricket in [township name]." (KI13)

Middle years

As this group of players progressed, access to coaching continued or increased either through the 'former model C' schools, by playing at clubs, or both. The majority of players indicated that coaches were the most influential people in their cricket progress during this period. It was during this stage that most players believed technical cricket coaching should commence. For some of this cohort, technical coaching started somewhat earlier and for others considerably later during this period. It appeared that those players who only received quality technical coaching later or even only at senior level achieved later success at the franchise level, again emphasising the benefit of appropriate quality coaching during the talent pathway.

"At ['former model B' secondary school], same thing you don't have your, you don't have your qualified coaches I would say, but people who played the game for a while, so there was no technical coaching." (P15)

Most of the coaching at the schools was provided by teachers, some of whom were qualified coaches and others who were not. Some players indicated that qualified coaches were brought in for the more technical aspects of the game. In addition, there were a few comments that the teachers, even at the 'former model C' schools, were good enough for school level players but not for players wishing to make a career as a cricketer. One key informant and one White player were concerned about the decreasing number of teachers, even at 'former model C' schools, with the ability to coach at the required level. This may indicate the reason that external coaches are being utilised at these schools. Only the more affluent schools could afford external coaches, thus highlighting another potential socio-economic advantage. The perceived decreasing competency of coaches to prepare players for the elite level, during the critical middle years, is likely to create challenges for the entire coaching system and education of coaches.

> *"I had my main coach at high school. Under 14, under 15 they mainly teachers; once you get to first team that guy can play a major role, as to if you become a good cricketer or not." (P30)*

> *"Like, if you are going to school and you just go attend your school practices and that you not gonna get anywhere. It's not that high level like it's [coaching] good enough to perform at school level, but if you wanna make it further, it's really, it's up to you." (P16)*

A major difference between the ethnic groups was availability, affordability and utilisation of private (one-on-one) coaching. The majority of White players indicated that they had private coaching at various times during their early and middle years – one player from the age of eight years. Two Indian players had private coaching, while no Coloured and Black African players mentioned having this. Some Coloured players mentioned what could be termed semi-private coaching organised for 'talented' players by the cricket authorities in their region. Private coaching was acknowledged by a number of participants as providing additional opportunities to learn, play and compete, particularly if school coaching was insufficient. This enhanced the number and quality of opportunities afforded to cricketers from higher socio-economic levels, thereby tipping the scales in their favour.

> *"He got to a point where he couldn't tell me anything anymore. That's when I went I've been going for private coaching with [coach name] and basically his coaching was*

more on the mental side and a little few technical…he did teach me the technical side, but I felt like I always was good in that department." (P26)

Many players indicated that in addition to their coaching expertise, many of the coaches provided the players with the guidance to succeed at later stages. Such guidance included discipline, hard work, patience, preparation, intensity and learning from past experiences. Particularly pertinent for this sample of players was being exposed to an empathetic coach to whom they could relate. A number of players commented on being able to speak openly and honestly with a coach about both cricket and personal matters. It became clear that coaches fulfilled more than just a technical coaching role for many players, suggesting that coaches, particularly in diverse societies, require a wide range of intrapersonal and interpersonal competencies to provide a more holistic developmental learning experience. In many ways, coaches seem to be filling a gap created by the challenging home and social backgrounds of some players.

"I mean [coach name] is like, like a father figure to me." (P40)

"So [coach name] went and bought bowling shoes for me and then I stayed for practice...and I bowled and he was very impressed…. He was also one of the mentors, one of the people that really helped me in terms of my development in cricket, because I came from a poor background in a way where my parents couldn't afford cricket equipment." (KI10)

Senior level

A number of players from all ethnic groups were disturbed that the coaching expertise at the senior level was not as proficient as they felt it should be. This related to all facets of the game, as well as the manner in which coaches interacted with and treated players. On the other hand, a few players commented on the good quality of some coaches with whom they had interacted. A number of players believed that specialist coaches were required for different cricket disciplines, for example batting, and for different aspects of the game, for example, mental performance.

"And if I'm totally honest I don't think I have the coaches at [province name] or haven't had the coaches at [province name] to help me to get to that next level in terms of my technical game and mental game. I'm having to work things out myself in order to try

and get myself to a place where I'm performing regularly, to try and stay in the side or try and push for higher honours." (P17)

There was a general feeling from many participants that at senior level, there should be a lesser requirement for ongoing technical coaching and more emphasis on the tactical and mental aspects of the game. Contrary to this, a few key informants suggested that senior level coaches should be continuing to develop players' technical skills, particularly if they were lacking, and not abdicating this responsibility to lower level coaches. This highlighted the need to perhaps redefine the roles and expectations of coaches at the different levels of the pathway, particularly in light of the inequalities that many cricketers experience as they progress.

At the senior levels, particularly, the ability to manage people was identified by a number of participants as a key attribute for successful coaches and one that they felt many coaches did not accomplish very well. Specific aspects of people management mentioned were: communications, feedback, connecting with and understanding each player individually, and believing in players' ability to perform.

"A coach, and quality of coaching and communication. That's going to make or break a player." (P9)

Communication between coach and players was identified by most players as being important, but needing improvement. Across the ethnic groups, individual feedback pertaining to areas for improvement was another attribute that many players believed was lacking. They felt that more meaningful feedback would enhance development and performance in all aspects of the game.

"It's by treating people right, communicating, having the respect you know." (P23)

"No feedback…. Coaches that say, "Ja okay you've got to bowl better, go at less runs per over, get more wickets." But it's not here, let me have a one-on-one session with you to work on what I think needs to be done." (P16)

"There isn't a lot of feedback. It's basically you dropped…but why we don't know… when you get that communication of why you got dropped, these are the reasons…what do I need to work on going forward, do...they see a future like in years

to come, and the communication is probably I'm probably not the first one to say this but ja communication is not that...great." (P26)

The lack of ability and commitment to understand each player's background and circumstances was highlighted by many of the Black African and a few Coloured and Indian players as a common shortcoming of many coaches, who at the time of this research were predominantly White. In addition, these players also felt that the coaches did not believe in their ability to perform. This mind-set was considered a barrier to the progress of these players. Many of the key informants echoed this sentiment. Only one White player mentioned that he felt frustrated by a lack of belief from a coach. There was agreement among the participants that a coach's trust in his ability built confidence and augmented performance. It appeared that the more a coach understood about a player on all levels, the greater the belief the coach had in the player's cricket ability.

"Looking back on my cricketing career now I think that definitely is a major part in terms of developing players, understanding them, knowing where they come from, knowing their background whether it be cultural or racial or whatever the case maybe but just being able to connect with your players on the same level." (P27)

"The backing, because that creates confidence." (P38)

A few key informants believed that measuring coaches, even at the senior level, only on their win-loss record, which is typically what happens in professional teams, was not conducive to developing players. They felt that more comprehensive measurement criteria would encourage more player-centred coaching behaviours.

"So a guys doesn't just get kicked out or lose his job as a coach because he...has lost again. He could be playing players of colour, he could be nurturing and giving those guys a chance to get through the system, he might not be winning, but he could have a plan." (KI5)

7.4.3   Coaches as mentors

Nearly all the players spoke about the importance of having mentors to support and guide them at all stages of their development. About half the Black African and many of the White, Coloured and Indian players named their mentor. In most cases this was a coach at some stage during their development. However, some players mentioned ex-players, cricket-related

people and in a few instances family members. There was no common reason among players for the choice of mentor and some players had been mentored by more than one person, depending on the stage of their career. In contrast to their role models, in all instances, the players had a close personal relationship with their mentor.

> *"So I think almost everyone that succeeds in life has had someone who has helped them at a key moment or they've had some luck." (KI12)*

The players mentioned that mentoring was as much about the technical aspects of the game as the challenges and pitfalls along the way. In particular, players mentioned the ability of the right mentor to "open doors" for you. The vast majority of key informants also valued the role of mentors. They emphasised how appropriate mentors could guide players' overall lifestyle and where necessary impart necessary life skills. Such guidance would allow players to become independent and self-sufficient. It was felt by the key informants that many potential Black African players had been lost along the way because of a lack of appropriate guidance. This again seemed to reinforce the socio-economic challenges faced by many players from disadvantaged communities, who have not been exposed to guidance and help with life lessons that the majority of White players tend to take for granted.

> *"I definitely…would like to be a mentor to someone starting out now, because I know what it takes to get where I am at the moment. I would really love to share that experience with someone younger than me, just for them to avoid some of the pitfalls that I went through to getting where I am at the moment." (P27)*

> *"He's always had his arms like wide opened or like his ear ready to listen and things like that." (KI13)*

> *"Those life skills he needs to start, you need to get those guys from a very early age and that is why for me if you identify, because we can't fix everything, it is going to take years to fix that in our country, but it you have got a talented cricketer and you take him in and you look after him you can have a Makhaya Ntini." (KI5)*

The transition to senior level has previously been described as a challenging time for these players (section 5.4) and a number further commented on not having enough guidance through this transition. Some players felt that the lack of a cricketing mentor hampered their progress. This would suggest that more support should be provided during the transitional

phase to all players, but that players from disadvantaged backgrounds may need this support more as they have less family and community support.

> *"I think when you're a youngster, you need a lot of guidance, like that transition from 18 to 21. 18 to 22 I think is a very important phase, and that's where you really need a mentor coach to really spend time with you. To really invest time. And I never had that. So I just, it was almost like I bashed my head against the wall."* (P9)

Almost half the White players and a few Coloured players observed that senior players were an important source of learning for young players joining a senior level team. These players acted as role models and mentors. Interestingly, all the players named were from the same ethnic group as the player being interviewed. Two players went as far as to say that the senior players made a bigger contribution than the coach. Characteristics of these senior players that were noted included professionalism, general conduct and work ethic. These senior players provided both guidance and feedback, on and off the field; this allowed the young player to adapt to his role in the team and understand the team culture. In addition, it gave the players the confidence to perform. Some players commented on the personal and lifelong friendships that had evolved through some of these interactions.

> *"I think as a young player involved in the franchise or amateur setup, it's very important here for the older guys being…there and being able…go to them and bounce ideas off them because…they've been there.… I would definitely say that players have more impact than the coaches…for me."* (P16)

> *"Like my seniors when I played they all taught me different lessons. Like I played with [senior player name], he was the biggest role model just the way he played his game, the way he conducted himself."* (P18)

The limited number of senior Black African and Indian players meant that young players from these ethnic groups had fewer mentors from the same ethnic group from whom to learn. Therefore, they may be disadvantaged in understanding the written and unwritten rules of the team, adding to the exclusion these players felt within the team.

There was a compelling argument from all the key informants, most of the Black African players and a few other players for an increased and more formal mentorship programme in South African cricket. They suggested that such a programme should start at about age 15 years and serve all players, but particularly Black African players who have been more

disadvantaged, socially and economically than the other ethnic groups. The holistic development of players that grows people, who can become better cricketers, was advocated by many participants.

> *"So that's where we need to be really smart, is to kind of teach each other how do we navigate our way through...the mentorship, understanding the friction that is below the surface. You can't just come and tell me you need to be better at that, you need to understand why I can't be and then help me with that. If it's purely technical that's such an easy fix, 80% of the time it's not, it's so far deeper than that." (KI15)*

Ideal mentors were considered by a number of the key informants to be appropriately trained, empathetic and respectful individuals, who could easily relate to each player's unique background, circumstances and challenges, both on and off the field. Ex-players were regarded by some key informants and players to be best positioned to fulfil a mentoring role. In addition, some participants felt that there was a need for senior players within teams to play a bigger part in guiding the youngsters irrespective of ethnicity. This may imply that a better understanding of one another would assist this process.

> *"So I think empathy, the individuals are crucial because it is about friendship and mentoring and showing concern to someone else. It is a form of respect, so that, that person feels it and then goes out there to almost you know feeling reinforced okay. So the system has needed it, that personal empathy." (KI12)*

7.4.4   Summary

In summary, coaches were one of the most important influences, both on and off the field, throughout this cohort of players' cricket development. The coaches played contrasting and various roles during the journey to the elite level. These roles required different expertise and attributes, which the coaches may or may not have had. In addition, a congruent coach-player relationship and an active mentorship process were recognised as key components in enhancing holistic player development. This would suggest that coach education and deployment need to be carefully managed.

7.5 Senior team environments

7.5.1 Introduction

Closely related to the influence of the coach on each player's individual progress was the senior team environments to which the players were exposed. For the purposes of this study, team environment refers to the cohesion and effectiveness of the team, which together impact the team's performance. Moreover, team includes both team management and players. A well-functioning team was recognised by all participants as contributing to the progress and performance of individual cricketers and teams.

7.5.2 Perceptions of senior team cohesion

There were some differences (although not sufficient to adequately differentiate) among the provinces and an acknowledgement by some participants that team environments may change over time. In addition, there was a general feeling from all player groups that the senior provincial team environments were more unified than the franchise teams. Furthermore, two of the players who had played for the Proteas commented on the welcoming culture they had experienced at that level. In contrast, a key informant lamented the manner in which he was treated in the national team. The franchise teams would therefore seem to be the area of most concern with respect to team environments, possibly because they are both the first fully professional level and the 'feeder' to national honours. Furthermore, there were considerable differences in the perceptions of the Black African players compared to those of the other ethnic groups.

> "I'm more comfortable with the amateurs[27]." (P20)

> "But like I said in the SA environment you just want to be there. It's a very nice place to be. Looked after quite nicely, but rightly so. But it's a good environment." (P37)

> "I mean, there were scenarios that happened in my career, and I thought, gee, is it this bad to play for South Africa, you know, I don't want to be there." (KI9)

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[27] Amateurs is the senior provincial team.

Black African perspectives

The majority of Black African players sensed that they did not belong in the current senior team setups. They believed that this was, in the main, due to the mind-sets of team leadership and to a lesser degree, team mates. Furthermore, the implementation of ethnic targets (Chapter 10) contributed to the complexities experienced in these senior teams. This sense of exclusion manifested in limited playing opportunities and a lack of integration into the team culture. The Black African player sentiments regarding the lack of quality of opportunities (for example insufficient playing time in terms of overs bowled or batting position), and the unwelcoming nature of these environments were reinforced by most key informants. Many of the players were disappointed that these negative team experiences had impacted their on-field performances and therefore their possible potential progress beyond the franchise team. Furthermore, this sample of Black African players cited these mind-sets and team experiences as a major reason for their Black African peers quitting cricket at the senior level, as they were unable to sustain a career in the game and needed to find alternative employment.

> *"And that did affect my cricket, because no one wants to be in a place where it's like you're not welcome type of stuff, you don't feel welcome and you don't feel comfortable."* (P43)

> *"They were really good, but they just didn't get the opportunity and they gave up."* (P28)

The vast majority of Black African players and key informants provided many examples of how Black African cricketers had been denied quality opportunities to demonstrate their playing ability. A number criticised the perceived discriminatory selection practices, which often included non-selection, despite a playing contract; and if selected, limited playing time, for example bowling only a few overs or a batsman coming in low down the batting order. Some of them were aggrieved that, as Black African players, they felt they needed to outperform their White counterparts to make and then retain their position in the team. The inconsistency of playing opportunities would seem to have prevented these players from improving their cricket and delivering the performances necessary to compete for places at a higher level. Stereotyping of Black African players as only bowlers and not batsmen was another issue cited

by some Black African players and key informants. This would also have prevented potential batsmen obtaining opportunities to play, and to play in the correct position.

> *"Because of the kind of inbuilt prejudice and mentalities we've spoken about people just simply always find excuses not to pick players and it still happens in franchise cricket today." (KI12)*

> *"Made a 50 on debut[28] and then sort of told to go back and work hard…." (P4)*

> *"OK, they can only bowl, they can't bat because batting tends to be associated with thinking." (P28)*

A number of Black African players felt that coaches believed that it was not possible to win matches with Black African players in the team. A few also felt that it was not only the coaches that did not trust their ability to play and win matches, but also some of the captains and team-mates. This played out on the field during matches, evidenced by not being bowled 'at the death', for example. At franchise and national level, winning is the priority and therefore it was felt that this was why Black African players, especially batsmen were not selected or played in appropriate positions. This was another example of limited opportunities to develop and perform. The majority of key informants supported this view. While a few Coloured and Indian players felt this lack of trust from coaches, they did not express the same sentiment towards their team-mates. In the case of these players, it may signify a better relationship among players than between players and coaches.

> *"The coach mostly got no say, because if you go on the field, the coach can only tell the captain what to do, but if the captain doesn't agree." (P20)*

> *"I have always had…that idea that we need to force the coaches now to believe in these guys. At the moment they are not, they don't back these chaps to win matches for them even though they are very talented…they need someone to believe in them. The coaches don't look at them as match winners so, ja, I think that is where the problem is." (KI10)*

Along with the limited quality of opportunities to play and a perceived lack of belief in Black African cricketers' playing abilities, there were more indirect experiences within the team that contributed to a feeling of exclusion. A number of the Black African players spoke about

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[28] This refers to scoring 50 runs, which is a good performance particularly for a first match

language barriers[29], which prevented them contributing fully to the team. They also spoke about a lack of consideration from the majority of team members for the different preferences, in for example, music, food, sports and interests outside of cricket. Furthermore, many Black African players felt that coaches and team-mates did not fully understand the different social, economic and cultural challenges faced by most Black African cricketers. It would appear that these subtler and often unintentional behaviours may have a profound effects on team cohesion and functioning.

> *"The White guys, they would have nicknames amongst the team. I wouldn't have a nickname, it's a small thing…like I don't get it. I'm also young and I'm sure there's a nickname for everyone." (P43)*

Cliques

Another manifestation of non-inclusive environments was cliques. Some players from all ethnic groups commented that cliques existed in the teams and that they were part and parcel of sports teams. They emphasised that not everyone was alike, and individuals gravitated towards people with shared interests (e.g. music, hobbies) and similar backgrounds (e.g. schools attended, language). One White player stressed that as long as the groups were open to all, they were not *per se* damaging. However, the implication of cliques in South Africa is that due to the cultural differences they tend, very often to be ethnically based and with limited Black African players in the team, this would be somewhat alienating. An overt expression of group behaviour in a number of the teams was confirmed by the first comment.

> *"This is a White kombi[30], can't you see, go back to that kombi." (KI11)*

> *"….if I'm an African person and I don't like to play golf and the culture in the team is we play golf it becomes an issue, because in my culture we don't know golf." (P43)*

There were differing opinions from some of these Black African cricketers and key informants, regarding whether Black African players needed to assimilate into the existing team culture or whether new team cultures should be created that accommodated all cultures and contributed to team cohesion. A few spoke about incorporating different languages and

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[29] There are 11 official languages in South Africa. English and to a lesser extent Afrikaans, are the two languages most spoken in South African cricket. The home language of Black Africans would be one of the other nine languages and while they may have learned English and/or Afrikaans at school, the subtleties and idioms would not always be understood.
[30] Kombi is a South African colloquialism for a minibus, used to transport passengers.

sayings, playing different music and sharing different social activities as part of moving towards a new environment in which all players could actively participate. Moreover, some of this group believed that without the necessary desire and resilience, some players chose to give up rather than oppose or adapt to the dominant culture.

> *"So you buy into the talk of the team without actually owning that kind of feeling…."* *(KI12)*

> *"You are the one that is going to have to adapt to that environment, so I mean if you, if there is nothing within you pushing you, you know, motivating you to do well, to succeed in that environment then it will be a waste." (P3)*

White, Coloured and Indian player perspectives

The majority of White, Coloured and Indian players were quite positive about the team environments in which they played. The cohesive nature of the teams was expressed by use of words such as "family", "friends", "support for one another", "change-room celebrations" and "fun on the field". Only a few of these players had contrary views. Despite their more positive sentiment, these players all recognised that there was still much room for improvement in team cohesion and functioning. Four players from these ethnic groups remarked that selfish players contributed to a decline in team functioning. Some of the White and Coloured players indicated that they were able to leave any team dynamic issues in the change-room and that their on-field performances were not affected.

> *"I find that weird, selfishness of people, not caring about someone else's journey."* *(P15)*

> *"I think if you can be mature and professional enough, it shouldn't affect your play."* *(P39)*

7.5.3 Factors influencing team effectiveness

All participants shared, to varying degrees, factors that they believed were contributing, positively or negatively, to the effective functioning of senior team environments.

Leadership

There was strong agreement from some participants that team leadership (coaches and captains), but particularly the head coach, had a major responsibility for defining, building and maintaining the desired team environment to ensure effectiveness, cohesiveness and inclusivity. Some participants felt that not all coaches had taken this role on board adequately. From the comments shared it was clear that players attributed more positive and inclusive team environments to the values and direction instilled by the coaches. The values mentioned included trust, honesty, integrity, responsibility, transparency and inclusivity.

> *"We don't have strong leadership, which is huge. So I don't think we've got the leadership required to really push us that level further…. You can't build solid foundations without leadership, you can't." (P9)*

> *"People must just be honest with people." (P21)*

It would appear that the captain's role was more in the maintenance of the team culture by modelling the values both on and off the field. Therefore, there would need to be a compatible relationship between coach and captain, and captain and players. A few Black African players and two key informants were specifically critical of how captains deployed Black African players in matches by limiting their meaningful involvement, which affected their performance opportunities. On the other hand, the importance of Black African players needing to perform at the expected high level to earn the trust of the captain was highlighted by a few participants.

> *"He's a very good captain so I think if he sees, so I mean he stamps it out very quickly." (P30)*

A few participants believed that the creation of empowering environments, in which all players were enabled to contribute to and buy-in to the team's vision, values and functioning would facilitate better team cohesion and effectiveness. Some participants felt that to successfully empower players and build trust, coaches would need to be more authentic, approachable and open. The inclusion of all players' opinions in this process would provide an opportunity for a diverse range of ideas to be incorporated into teams' values, thereby moving towards more inclusive environments.

"I tried to give younger players responsibilities while they're still young, rather than telling them what to do, because for me I feel the best way of learning is trying to give younger guys responsibilities." (P33)

"The big thing is, all the players need to buy in and…it's either, you are part of it or you get out and it's a harsh approach, but that's how it is." (P8)

Some participants questioned whether many of the coaches had the necessary intrapersonal awareness and interpersonal skills required to lead and holistically develop players of all ethnic groups and effectively build and manage diverse teams. The implication of this assessment indicated that coach selection, education and development should focus not only on technical and tactical knowledge, but as importantly on intrapersonal and interpersonal learning and growth.

"As I said the knowledge, that people skills that he has had with me, the people skills." (P31)

Communications

The majority of participants commented that communication within the team environments was not very good. In contrast, some White players in particular felt that communication among players was good, but that the bigger concern was between players and management. This feeling was supported by a few players from the other ethnic groups. Poor communication was characterised by a lack of clear discussions and mixed messages pertaining mainly to issues affecting players' selections and futures. Furthermore, a few players commented on not always being aware of their role, particularly when they were not part of the playing 11. This lack of open communication would appear to impact upon the ability of players to deliver to expected standards and adversely affect team dynamics.

"Ja it's very bad in South African cricket, especially between player and coach communication is not the best." (P40)

For some of the Black African players, language and cultural differences also hampered unambiguous communication both among team members and with management. Some felt that this was exacerbated by a feeling of intimidation when speaking to coaches, resulting in them keeping quiet about issues that concerned their development. Communication

difficulties therefore further excluded Black African players from feeling that they were part of the team.

> *"Speaking their own language for instance, having their names spelt right on the scoreboard and pronounced right on the radio…. Can you imagine a [franchise team name] team with Xhosa[31] guys chatting away and someone making a joke about it from a minority perspective, and then the generosity and reaching out that comes from the other side and that is how you shape unity and understanding." (KI12)*

Most participants felt that more consistent and open communication between team leadership and players and among players would enhance functioning of the team both on and off the field. This would potentially contribute to player development, team success and create more inclusive team environments.

> *And the times, where my team that I played for has been successful, it's been, everybody's been an open book. And…people are open and honest with each other." (P17)*

Understanding players

The majority of participants shared the need for team management and players to better understand all the players in their team. This pertained to their personalities, capabilities, backgrounds and circumstances and how these contributed to performing their cricketing roles. There was a strong belief that this would contribute to enhancing team dynamics with concomitant individual development and team performance benefits.

> *"But I think motivating players and understanding players is key, because to motivate different players…and I think that's difficult then to create a team culture, because you can't motivate the whole team or you can't get everyone to buy in to the culture which I think it's a big problem." (P25)*

> *"…he just maybe has a personality that people do not like. I played with a number of those. Exactly, we all have. I played with 'cocky' guys." (KI4)*

The Coloured players felt strongly that management in particular did not understand their individual personalities. A few Black African and White players also felt this way. A small

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[31] Xhosa is one of the 11 official languages of South African and spoken predominantly by Black Africans from the Eastern Cape. After Zulu, another official language, Xhosa is the second most spoken language in South Africa.

number of White, Coloured and Black African players also believed that their capabilities were not fully appreciated. Most of the key informants and Black African players were concerned by the lack of understanding by team management, especially coaches, and fellow players of the social, economic and cultural challenges, faced by many Black African players as they struggle through the talent pathway. A few Coloured and White players acknowledged these difficulties faced by their fellow players.

> *"Do you understand, this guy has got to get on two trains and three taxis and then he has to walk the last three kilometres to get here." (KI8)*

7.5.4 Transition to improved inclusivity

Quite a few players remarked that as the older, mainly White players, were replaced by a larger core of younger, more ethnically diverse players, the environments began to improve. This may suggest that the environments are becoming more inclusive, possibly as the younger players are more accepting of cultural diversity or that as there is a greater critical mass of more ethnically diverse players. Further, it became apparent from the sentiments expressed, directly or indirectly, that some of the senior players battled more to adapt to the changing team environments, and that this would need to be managed as the teams transitioned to more inclusive environments. Linked to these impressions, a number of players and a few key informants believed the team environments at junior levels (under 19 and below) were more cohesive and integrated than the senior teams. Non-professionalism and less pressure to win in the lower level teams may also contribute towards a more inclusive environment.

> *"There's been the core of like older guys slowly…gone out of the system and now…the younger guys going through…we all…friends, we all played cricket at school together."*
> *(P16)*

The transition to culturally diverse teams, following many years of segregation, would seem to have had a major impact on the sense of belonging and inclusivity encountered by players previously excluded from South African cricket teams. Although also previously excluded, the Coloured and Indian cricketers shared very few experiences of exclusion in comparison to the Black Africans. This may be due to previous target policies that had focused on increasing 'Black' players in teams and resulted in more Coloured and Indian rather than Black African

players being selected and playing in the senior teams. This perhaps provided players from these ethnic groups with time to become more comfortable and assimilated into these teams.

Despite the perceptions expressed above there were some participants who felt that progress had been made towards more inclusive senior team environments, but that there was still considerable ground to be covered. It would seem, however, that this process would take time and effort from all stakeholders as attitudes had become ingrained through many years of forced segregation among the ethnic groups.

"I think we've moved away from a very alienated team environment." (KI14)

The majority of Black African players and most key informants believed that adapting mind-sets was fundamental to creating more inclusive environments. By this they meant that team management and all players needed to understand, accept and accommodate the differing cultures within the teams. For some this meant respecting each player's differences. Some key informants stressed the need to actively educate all team members to achieve mind-set change as it would not happen without a concerted effort. Many of the perceptions described above would need to be interrogated by each player as they grapple with making changes that may have been steeped in past experiences and beliefs.

"Mind-sets need to change." (KI7)

"As I said…before we're cricketers, we are people. So just to understand the person, who is this kid, then maybe we can be able to make sure that the injustices of the past are sped up." (KI13)

7.5.5 Summary

The cohesion within senior (mainly franchise) teams was perceived differently by the varying ethnic groups. The attitudes of team management and players lead to a sense of exclusion for the Black African players as a result of limited playing opportunities and off-field integration. Poor communications between players and team management, insufficient leadership skills, and a lack of team members' understanding of the unique characteristics and circumstances of each player affected team effectiveness. Targeted and on-going education of players and coaches would seem to be a strategy to improve these factors and contribute to more inclusive and supportive team environments.

7.6   Conclusion

This chapter has highlighted how the four proximal environments, both individually and interacting together as a meso-system, have contributed to the talent development of South African cricketers. In addition, they were impacted by the distal environments which encompass them. Together these socio-ecological factors have influenced access to opportunities and competition, holistic player development, effective support networks, inclusive team environments and adaptive mind-sets as represented in Figure 7.2. All these outcomes were identified as critical to cricket talent development in a diverse society such as South Africa. Chapter 8 focuses on the intrapersonal characteristics perceived by the participants to contribute to cricketing success.
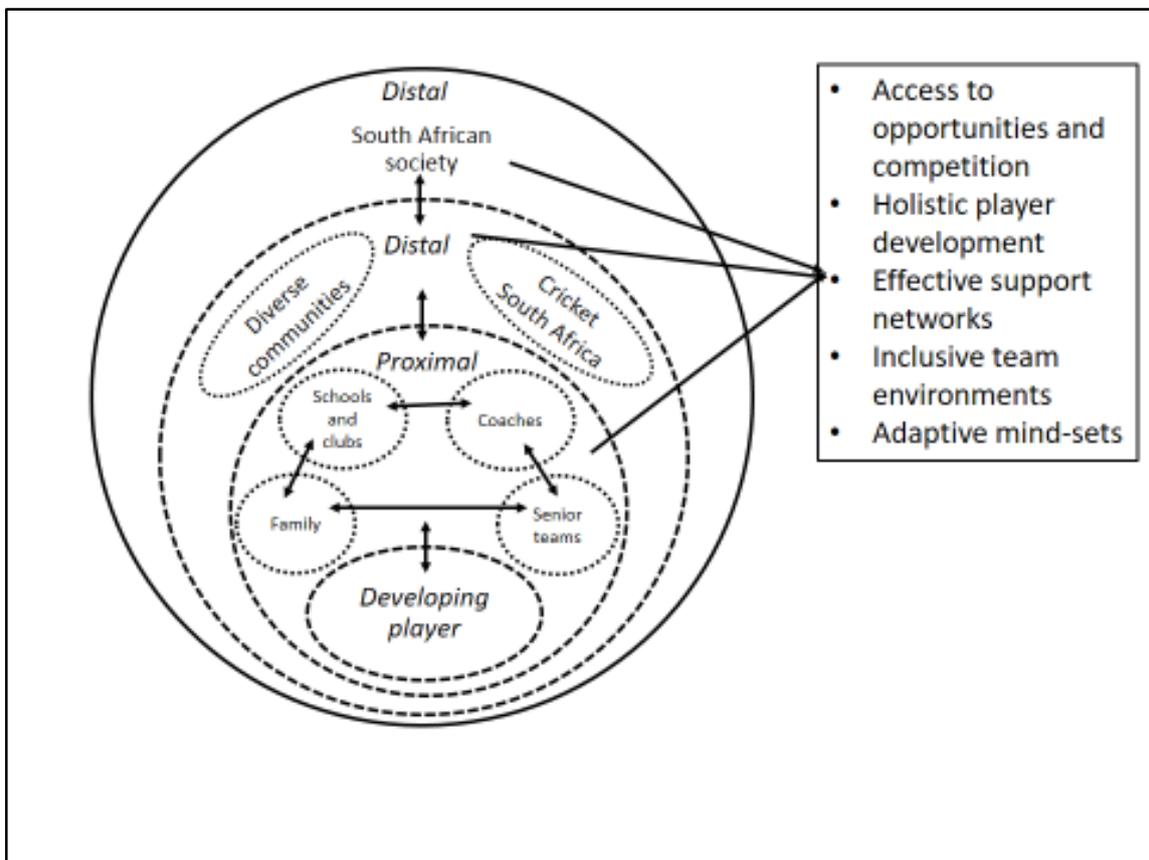
Figure 7.2: Talent development outcomes as a result of socio-ecological influences

CHAPTER 8   ROLE OF INTRAPERSONAL CHARACTERISTICS

"It is not only about ability. Thank heavens for that. It is about courage, perseverance, strength of character and the ability to rise up after disappointment. It is about physical toughness and mental strength, never giving an inch. Above all it is about having the courage to develop one's talent to the full…. The road they choose is a tough and lonely road. Along the way there will be many setbacks and disappointments. Ultimately it will be a balance between success and failure that will shape their personalities as only sport can." (Kepler Wessels, former Australian and South African cricketer)

8.1   Introduction

All the players identified intrapersonal characteristics that either enabled or hindered their progress to the elite cricket level. These traits appeared to be unique to each player and no ethnic differences were discernible.

The majority of White and Coloured players thought that intrapersonal attributes had both aided and impeded their talent development. All the Indian players felt that their intrapersonal characteristics were more of an enabler than barrier to their progress. Most of the Black African players believed that other obstacles, for example socio-economic circumstances, were bigger barriers to their development than their personal traits, but that these barriers may have affected their individual characteristics.

> *"…I sort of let other factors influence me outside of cricket that actually didn't help me to perform to what I actually could have…. The fact of feeling inferior, the fact of not feeling good enough that had an effect on…my performance. Well that does not reflect what potentially I could actually do." (P22)*

8.2   Physical factors

Physical fitness, followed by strength and speed, was the most cited physical feature that players felt had assisted their progress. Two players commented on how physical fitness contributed to their mental 'fitness' particularly in demanding situations. The differing lengths of cricket matches (three hours for a 20/20 game to five days for a test match) requires good physical fitness. Other physical characteristics included co-ordination, agility and anthropometric features such as height and physique. The implication of this may be that

there is no definitive physical attribute for all cricket players, but that players perceive specific disciplines to require specific physical features.

A third of the players believed that injuries had hampered their advancement at some time during their cricket career. Coloured and White players mentioned this most often. Few comments were made regarding injuries during the early and middle years, and therefore it appears that the impact of injuries on their progress in cricket was experienced to a greater extent during senior cricket. Three key informants who had previously been players mentioned that their careers had been curtailed by injury.

Back injuries, mainly stress fractures, were the most common injury and in all cases affected the seam bowlers in the sample. The White players' back injuries tended to occur between 17 and 20 years old, while back injuries in the other ethnic groups' were reported in their 20s. This suggests that the White players may have bowled more during their high school years compared to players from the other ethnic groups. Other injury sites recorded were shoulder, ankle and knee. A possible reason given for incurring injuries across all players was too much cricket. For 'Black' players who had not attended 'former model C' schools, poor conditioning and lack of and access to appropriate knowledge and recognised practitioners was mentioned as a contributing factor to their injuries. This would suggest that players from lower socio-economic environments may not have access to the same degree of physical conditioning and medical information as players from higher socio-economic groups or who attended more advantaged schools.

> *"Not having…I don't know, I think when you young when you get hurt it's weird you don't treat yourself…small things I don't know it's hard to pin point, small things like maybe I needed inner soles or what's this…orthotics when I was small so I could have protected my knees…and then you know like your hips could have been in correct alignment and your back could have been neutral. So there's all those things that I mean that you can link it to but you can never say." (P15)*

> *"…there was more demand on the body when it came from playing…from playing 6 months cricket to playing 10 months cricket. So demand was a bit too much for me you know, with the fitness I was in…I don't think…I would say I wasn't that optimal peak level you know. I was below my own standard, because of the change in my career path you know, I'm playing 6 months to 10 months and it's tough on the body. I didn't know how to manage myself." (P12)*

8.3   Motivational factors

8.3.1   Intrinsic and extrinsic factors

The players were motivated by internal (intrinsic) and external (extrinsic) factors for initially taking up cricket and then continuing with the game. In the early years, the most distinctive difference between ethnic groups was that many of the Black African players were motivated to participate because of the food and kit that they were given, as well as the chance to attend a better school. One Coloured player mentioned these as motivational factors. This may imply that these players believed that cricket could provide an opportunity to overcome the challenges of their socio-economic circumstances. Players from all ethnic groups talked about passion, fun and playing with friends as early motivators.

> *"The Bakers mini-cricket then, we started coming as well, we used to get biscuits and shirts, so I thought, no, but at soccer we never got those things and volleyball we never get any clothing, so, and caps and all that and shoes and so I thought maybe this is the right sport to go to. You got more free stuff and then I enjoyed it, biscuits, you know, boerewors[32] at lunch time and a small juice and stuff like that." (P20)*

> *"I loved playing so much running around, so cricket we played for long hours so we played the whole day, so for me it was like just running around the whole day. I enjoyed that." (P4)*

In later years, players from all ethnic groups mentioned success and passion as the key motivators for continuing to play cricket. However, for the White players, being successful was the most compelling reason, while passion for the game was the most important driver for Coloured players. The uniqueness of cricket's challenges, traditions, physical and mental requirements was described by a number of players from each ethnic group as drawing them to the game.

> *"So I love being out there and taking bowlers apart and just that feeling of doing well at that stage. Obviously, you fail more than you win, but that feeling, nothing beats it in the world." (P34)*

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[32] Boerewors is a traditional South African sausage

"The element of being an individual sport and team orientated I think for me, that kind of pulled me into it a lot, because obviously being an individual and team orientated you get to express yourself as an individual which betters the team." (P31)

"I love to learn and understand the traditions of the game and where it's come from, and all the nuances, all the rules, and the traditions. I love that sort of stuff and to walk around the Lords Museum." (P7)

"I think cricket is a good leveller…I think it's a gentleman's game, it's a game where you fail more than you succeed and I think I like challenge of the mental challenge of that, but cricket is a more mental game…you meet so many people you get to see so many places and you get to be challenged everywhere you go." (P29)

"But it's just that passion and love that I had for it from a young age." (P26)

"And so it teaches you how to stay humble." (P17)

Direct monetary motives were rarely expressed as a motivation for playing the game, but the possibility of providing for their families was mentioned by some of the Black African players. A few players felt that cricket offered better financial opportunities than other sports they could have pursued, although not as lucrative as rugby union or soccer.

"I want to be a successful cricketer. I wanna play for South Africa one day and I know that if I do, if it does come to that, I know how happy my family will be and I know financially, my family, I'll be able to provide for my family. And I think that's probably the main reason just to probably…to provide for my family." (P10)

"I favoured cricket over hockey, because there is no money in hockey." (P5)

8.3.2 Achievements and disappointments

Achievements and disappointments provided further insight into the players' individual motivators. There were three major cricketing achievements celebrated by the players in their careers to date. The most momentous being their selection at the highest level that each player had attained, whether it was playing for the Proteas, South Africa U19 or a franchise team. Individual performances, for example taking a hat trick[33], and playing experiences such as travelling to different places, were other pleasurable experiences for these players. Team performances were considered thrilling by fewer in the sample. This individual focus may be

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[33] A hat trick is when a bowler gets three batsmen out with consecutive balls.

related to the individual nature of cricket, despite it being played as a team, or the challenging team environments that characterised senior level teams at the time of this study (section 7.5). Alternatively, the motivation and drive of this sample to achieve may reflect their personal success or disappointment.

> *"The highlight has to be the test match you know it's every sportsman's dream of representing the country and actually wearing the baggy green and something kind of special." (P14)*

> *"Probably my biggest achievement is winning domestic trophies with my team." (P23)*

The players provided a variety of different factors that had made it difficult for them to personally achieve the success that they had enjoyed being a professional cricketer. Their own and other people's expectations for them to perform were cited most often as the biggest challenge. These expectations had created pressure to achieve, which increased at the more senior levels. Some players spoke about the sacrifices, for example missing important family events that they had to make during their cricket career; others affirmed the strain placed on relationships as a result of long hours away from partners. Consistency of performance was also put forward by some players as a challenge to achieving and maintaining success at the elite level.

> *"There's definitely pressure and expectations, but I think it's more what you put on yourself. Like what I've experienced is, I put a lot of pressure on myself in wanting to, wanting to achieve and wanting to do well. And also with regard to expectations being one of the senior batsman in the [franchise] team at the moment, they obviously expect you to do well and do well as often as possible." (P13)*

> *"I think consistency is hardest, the hardest thing." (P42)*

All players shared their experiences of cricketing disappointments. Not performing to their potential was the most common disappointment offered. This was followed by personal events, such as losing their contract or not making the most of an opportunity. With the exception of Black African players, injuries were another common frustration, while not playing for South Africa was reported by many Coloured and White players. Black African and Indian players were disillusioned at not being selected for senior teams and Coloured and Indian players expressed concern over the way the cricket authorities had behaved towards them. There would appear to be some bias against 'Black' players with respect to selection

and conduct by cricket authorities which again may point to a concern regarding mind-sets of some individuals in the organisational setup.

> *"Ja, I thoroughly believe I haven't nearly reached my potential yet. I think the frustration of not reaching my potential keeps me motivated. For me, I want to see what it's like when I start playing to my potential." (P9)*

> *"And I thought like this is my chance, if they don't select me now, it's never going to happen. And that was probably the biggest disappointment in my career. Ja, I think I was quite hard on myself after that and I was quite down, it took a while for me to be happy again." (P11)*

> *"The biggest disappointment would definitely be getting injuries and stuff like that at crucial stages of my career." (P27)*

Focussing on their goals and positive thoughts were the two processes mentioned most often by the players as to how they managed to remain motivated during these times of disappointment. Appreciating the 'big picture' and maintaining a balanced approach to life were also motivating factors for some players.

> *"I plot goals and I want to meet those goals. For me, what's motivating me now, is I want to play test cricket for South Africa." (P12)*

8.4   Mental attributes

A wide variety of mental characteristics were proposed by all participants as positively impacting on the ability of cricketers to develop and then succeed at the elite level. The five most often mentioned attributes were, in order: mental toughness, self-belief, perseverance, passion for the game and hard work. Other factors considered important were humility, having an inner drive, discipline, positivity, goal orientation and self-reflection. These attributes were not all necessarily possessed by this sample of players, but rather those that they considered differentiated the good from the most successful. A few players commented on the individual manner in which natural talent and mental characteristics interrelate to achieve success.

> *"You have batters, who've just got pure natural talent, who find it very easy to do things and then you got guys, who are less talented, and because they are less talented*

they understand that there are certain other things that they have to do in order to be successful." (KI15)

"I believe I work a bit harder than talented players do, I think there's a lot more talented players out there, but I work a bit harder than those talented players." (P36)

Remaining calm, performing under pressure, resilience, a clear focus and managing emotions were all mentioned too, and have been incorporated into mental toughness. This is in line with the wide-ranging definition of mental toughness.[333] Furthermore, a few players described mental toughness as the ability to execute game plans effectively. However, there was no consensus on what mental toughness really was, and different participants seemed to give it their own definition.

"Critical moment, mental toughness of being able to deliver at a moment in a match would be a part of that." (KI2)

"If you have a strong mind you can execute plans much better." (P40)

"To explain mental toughness…probably be different to everyone." (P2)

Along with mental toughness, self-belief was mentioned most often by participants as influencing cricket performances, either positively or negatively. There was agreement that positive self-belief was enhanced by having the support and trust of other cricket stakeholders, particularly coaches. Some players mentioned specific individuals who had boosted their self-belief during their careers. Two key informants promoted the concept that experiencing success fostered self-belief.

"I really believe 90% of people need to have some experience of success along the way. They have to have a reflection of success somewhere in their career that ultimately, what does it create. It just creates belief, it just tells me that I can do this. You know you find very, very few cricketers, very few sportsman that are successful that don't believe in themselves. There are very few now." (KI15)

A few players yearned for the same level of self-belief that they had experienced at junior levels. They felt that this had decreased with the increased pressures and responsibility of playing at the senior level and increased fear of failure. Three players specifically mentioned that injury had increased their self-doubt and encumbered their return to previous superior

performance levels. Inconsistent selection for teams was also mentioned by a few players as increasing self-doubt and thereby diminishing their ability to deliver the desired results.

> *"Like I said when you were young and you in smaller schools and smaller pond, then you believe you can do everything. You know, as soon as you get into an emerging team where you play against at an international level, the under 19 World Cup, then the self-belief maybe just wasn't there or…but I think if you play a lot…if you play a lot of cricket at a certain level, you will adapt eventually." (P25)*

> *"And just self-belief that's number one and I'm trying to improve my self-belief. That's the only thing that's stopping me from being going to the next level is self-belief." (P30)*

> *"I didn't get the same [injury], I got a [different injury]. So for me that was…for me that was a dark patch in my career. So ja it was a rough patch for me and I started doubting myself after that you…it really made me doubt myself." (P12)*

Many of the Black African players emphasised that they struggled with developing strong self-belief. The major reason put forward was the perception that Black African players were undeserving of their selection and were only chosen "to make up the numbers." This had led to feelings of inferiority, mediocrity and alienation. The resultant poor self-belief became a barrier to progressing in cricket. Many key informants reiterated the Black African players' comments regarding the mind-set of some stakeholders towards Black African players.

> *"He actually made me believe in my ability I used to set my standards so low I never used to believe in myself. So, he sort of made me believe in my ability. Yes, I think the hardest thing was that actually it was feeling inferior that sort of feeling that I wasn't good enough – I was just feeling that I was just filling up the numbers." (P22)*

> *"It's difficult, because a lot of people are driven by a lot of things. You see, we still get it at junior level, where kids are playing there and being told they are not good enough, so by the time he gets to 19, 20, he still has that stigma, so if you start off at an early age, say, we said 15, 17 was a crucial age." (KI9)*

It would appear that self-belief was fostered by significant individuals, very often coaches, with whom the players interacted during the development of their cricket career, as well as by consistency of selection. The lack of either was felt to negatively affect self-belief. This seems to have been particularly the case for Black Africans who were either not selected for teams, or if selected, were not "backed" by coaches, who were in the past usually White, to

perform. This attitude towards Black African players in particular was believed to further impede Black African cricketers at a personal level.

Coping skills were also deemed to be important by many in this cohort of players. However, several revealed that they had not yet learned the necessary constructive coping skills required to manage the ups and downs of the game. A few players reflected on the importance of not letting cricket define them.

> *"I find it very hard to understand how cricketers can be in any way arrogant. And why I say that is, because you spend most of your time failing." (P41)*

> *"I don't let cricket determine what kind of person you are." (P3)*

There was approximately a 50/50 split among players as to whether mental attributes were inborn or nurtured during development. Coloured players seemed biased towards a more nurturing perspective, while the White and Indian players felt it was more a combination of both nature and nurture. Black African players and key informants were not asked this question.[34] A common sentiment regarding the development of mental attributes was captured by these quotes:

> *"Part of it I think I learnt and part of it I think I've always had it." (P27)*

> *"I think…I probably always had them, but as I…played more cricket and understood my game better it probably just enhanced them." (P6)*

The ability to nurture mental attributes relevant to cricket success therefore appeared to provide players with opportunities to enhance their performances. In this vein, a few participants believed that there was a need for more mental skills training.

> *"I think a lot more work on the mental side of the game. A lot more investment into the mental side of my game, I really think would have set me apart. It would have kicked me into a different gear." (P9)*

Several players emphasised that luck played a part in achieving success in sport and cricket. This related to places in the team becoming available due to another player's injury or

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[34] As part of the iterative nature of qualitative research, the guide questions evolved based on previous participants' responses. Hence, the question about nature vs. nurture was included subsequent to the interviews with Black African players.

selection for a higher team allowing a player to 'seize his opportunity'. On the other hand, some players complained that their own injury or a change in coach had counted against them.

Many participants commented that talented players stopped playing because they did not have the self-belief, mental strength or motivation to continue. They stressed that sacrifices were required to succeed at the professional level and the ability to manage the pressures and expectations exerted. Others felt that some players were not prepared to persevere through the transitional period between junior and senior level and commit to the hard work needed to triumph. And for others, deciding to quit was due to bad luck (often injury) or unfortunate timing, in that their career paralleled with more talented players in their position.

"And if they not mentally tough, they don't make it." (P1)

8.5   Summary

This cohort of players identified a range of personal attributes (physical and mental), and intrinsic and extrinsic motivators that contributed either positively or negatively to their cricket development and success. Although the majority of the intrapersonal attributes were similar for all players, there were some trends that may provide insight into the additional challenges faced by players from lower socio-economic groups. These factors were extrinsic motivators such as food, equipment and money to provide for their families, less access to relevant physical conditioning and medical information necessary to prepare for cricket and manage injuries, and attitudes towards Black African players by predominantly White coaches resulting in decreased self-belief. The participants further suggested that some of these attributes may have resulted in other players not succeeding.

CHAPTER 9   DISCUSSION

"You do not take a person who for years has been hobbled by chains and liberate him, bring him up to the starting line of a race and then say, 'you're free to compete with all the others', and still justly believe that you have been completely fair."
(Lyndon B. Johnson, former President of the United States)

9.1   Introduction

The overall aim of this study was to determine the role that socio-ecological factors may play in the development of cricket talent in a diverse society. Player progress through the pathway, the four proximal socio-ecological factors that directly influenced player development, and intrapersonal characteristics will be discussed with reference to the literature and the varying influences of the indirect distal socio-ecological factors. The results highlighted that access to opportunities and competition, holistic player development, effective support networks, inclusive team environments and adaptive mind-sets were identified as the major barriers or enablers to talent development in South African cricket. The interactions between all these factors are presented in Figure 9.1. The chapter concludes by depicting the relationship of the specific socio-ecological factors to the five main talent development barriers and enablers.
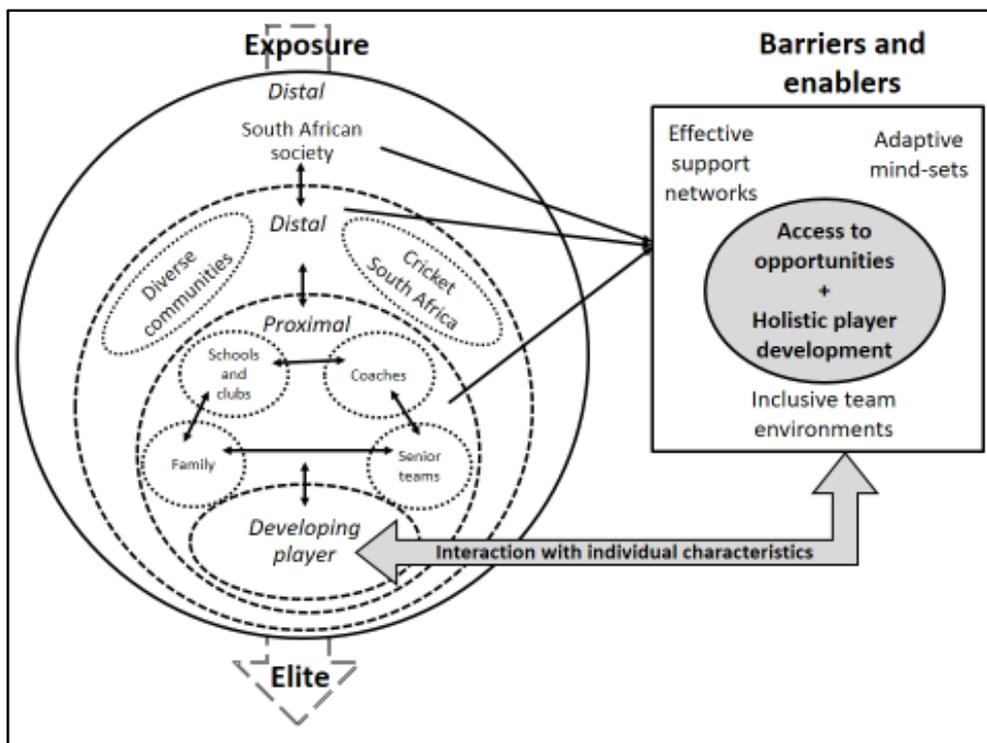
Figure 9.1: Socio-ecological framework of talent development in South African cricket

9.2 Progress through the pathway

This cohort of male cricketers representing all four South African ethnic groups all progressed through the talent pathway from initial exposure to the elite level. However, as a result of the variety of interacting socio-ecological factors, this progress was experienced differently by the players. Furthermore, it is acknowledged that the progress and experiences of female cricketers may be different, however their experiences were beyond the scope of this thesis.

9.2.1 Four-staged process

The pathway followed could be divided into four broad phases: exposure and early years (from 2 to +/- 13 years), middle years (13–18 years), transition from U19 to elite level and senior years. This pathway is not based on any specific developmental factor such as physiology, psychology, maturation or hours of practice, but serves merely to provide a timeline to understand the players' experiences. Progress most closely followed the sampling, specialising, investment trajectory of the Developmental Model of Sport Participation,[157, 162] although the specialising (age 12–15 years) and investment (age 15–18 years) stages would have been encompassed by this study's middle years. The early and middle years were equivalent to the primary and secondary schooling years of this cohort, which is most likely because of the central role played by school sport in developing talent in South African cricket.[78, 80]

Although Cricket South Africa (CSA) has adopted and adapted the Long Term Athlete Development (LTAD) model[167] as its own development and coaching framework,[168] not one participant referred to it during the interviews. Furthermore, CSA's own player 'pipeline' consists of 10 distinct levels that do not appear to directly correspond to LTAD stages, but are more operationally organised.[78] Each of these 10 levels can however be incorporated into one of the four developmental stages identified in this research. It may therefore be warranted for CSA to rationalise its 'pipeline' and LTAD frameworks into a single entity to avoid confusion and duplication and provide an integrated talent pathway for South African cricketers that encompasses both theory and practice. A single framework would provide a clear route for players to follow accompanied by the relevant coaching to enhance player development.

9.2.2 Exposure and early years

Place of birth and early development

In contrast to the literature on North American athletes,[225] and cricket batsmen,[14] the majority of the cricketers interviewed grew up in major metropolitan areas with populations of greater than 500,000 people. However, this is similar to international fast bowlers, 55% of whom spent their early developmental years in cities with more than one million people.[175] The contrasting and inconclusive findings, as well as small sample sizes in the research presented thus far, would suggest further quantitative research is warranted.

The proposed benefits of smaller communities[225] may also be mediated by sport specific and socio-cultural factors.[226, 227] The insights provided by the participants in this study, highlighted the particular relevance of this in the South African context, because of the inequalities of different communities within the same metropolitan area. The lack of cricket facilities and coaching in the lower socio-economic communities,[7, 31, 56, 423] whatever the population size, hinders access to opportunities for developing cricket talent. For example, in 2015, there was only one turf wicket in the Black African townships of KwaZulu-Natal,[53] the second most densely populated of South Africa's nine provinces.[42] In addition, poverty and the wide ranging social ills in these communities, create a disadvantage from early in life for these youngsters compared to those from more prosperous communities even within the same city.

While similar socio-economic relationships have been found in other sports and countries,[98, 203] these findings are less evident in Australian cricket,[205, 424] which may be related to the strong cricket culture and higher average socio-economic level in that country.[16, 369] The strong football culture[53] and a limited cricket culture, understanding and interest in the game in some South African communities may compound the lack of participation in cricket. Furthermore, it has also been found that football was preferred because of lower costs and more accessible facilities.[54] In addition, the previous strong cricket culture in certain communities had been eroded by the apartheid policies, by limiting resources and preventing 'Black' players from competing internationally.[22] Despite democracy and efforts by CSA to build facilities and promote the game,[56] it is evident that many of these inequalities still exist in the lower socio-economic communities thereby limiting opportunities to play cricket. This would suggest that an individual's choices of sport may be shaped by his or her particular circumstances.

Relative age effect

The birth dates of this sample of players suggests that there may be a mild relative age effect (RAE) present in cricketers in South Africa, with 60% being born in the first half of the year. However, further examination of the data indicates that 39% were born in the 2nd quarter of the year and 57% between April and August, thereby diminishing the RAE. This is further supported by the percentage of batsmen (57%) and seam bowlers (45%) born in the first half of the selection period. Although the size of this study's sample is too small to draw any statistical conclusions, other studies using larger samples of players that examined RAE in cricket also showed similar RAE percentages across different levels of players. Therefore, it would seem that the RAE may not be as relevant in cricket as other sports.[231-234]

The smaller percentage (36%) of Black African players born in the first six months of the year, may be because of the small size sample. Alternatively, this low percentage of Black African players born between January and June may be indicative of a range of contextual factors (similar to those mentioned under place of birth) that limit opportunities for youngsters from lower socio-economic groups, to participate in sport and thereby negate any benefit from the perceived advantages of the RAE, such as better coaching, more training and competition time and associated psychological benefits. This would support a developmental systems explanation for the RAE.[230] This is the first known study that has looked at possible RAE in cricket in South Africa; however, it did not support the benefits of the RAE, which may be due to the small and purposive nature of the sample. A quantitative study would prove more informative.

Age of first playing the game

The average age of 6 years at which this sample started playing cricket is not dissimilar to the 9.1 years old (SD=4.7) at which 256 male and female elite Australian athletes from 27 different sports (including cricket) were exposed to their sport of later specialisation.[173] The range of 2–13 years corresponds to the early phases identified in Bloom's model,[153] DMSP [162] and LTAD.[167] The varying range of starting ages among the ethnic groups, with the White players starting earliest and the Black Africans latest, may reflect differences with regards to exposure to the game and access to opportunities between the ethnic groups. The influence of socio-economic status may be reflected in that the ethnic groups with a higher average household income of

South African families correspond to an earlier age of initial cricket exposure (W=4, I=5.2, C=6.5 and BA=8).[41] In a recent magazine interview, Temba Bavuma, the first Black African batsman to score a century[35] for the Proteas commented, "Early exposure gave me the edge over my peers who remained in the township".[425] Temba grew up in the Black African township of Langa, but at age 10 years, attended a 'former model C' primary school and then a private secondary school.

Family influence

With the exception of the Black African players in this cohort, the majority of the rest of the players were introduced to cricket by their parents and in many cases their fathers. This tendency is supported by findings in other sport,[138, 140, 235] and cricket[14, 16] literature. The lack of input from the Black African fathers is hardly surprising as many of these Black African players did not live with their fathers. Furthermore, across the entire South African population 39% and 28% of Black African and Coloured children respectively live only with their mothers. In comparison, 16% and 14% of White and Indian children live in a household headed by their mother.[46] In addition, it is not unusual for Black African children to have limited social or financial input from their fathers.[32] CSA's mini-cricket development programme therefore has an important role to play in introducing the game to the Black African communities specifically.

CSA's mini-cricket development programme

For many of the Black African players, exposure to cricket was through CSA's mini-cricket development programme, unlike other ethnic groups, who had more access through their schools and clubs. Without the benefit of parents introducing them to the game, there seems to be a need for alternative ways to attract youth from lower socio-economic communities to cricket. This was endorsed by participants' comments and supported by others' opinions that fewer players were exposed to the game when CSA focussed less on the mini-cricket development programme, resulting in fewer players to progress through the talent pathway to the elite level.[53, 56]

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[35] Century = 100+ runs in one innings and is considered a significant batting achievement.

England's Chance to Shine programme, which aims to increase cricket participation in schools and communities in which the game is not played and to develop personal skills and values, is another example of a programme designed to expose less privileged youth to cricket.[426] It would appear that exposing lower socio-economic groups to cricket could increase the base of players for future talent development and potentially decrease the perceived social class gap in the game.[56, 66]

With 84% of South African youth under the age of 18 years being Black African, and only 10% of the total population being White,[5, 80] there are pragmatic reasons for increasing opportunities for Black Africans to participate and develop their cricket talent.

Role models

Consistent with the perceptions of the players in this study, role models have been recognised as making an important contribution in sport,[136, 249, 252, 253] and cricket specifically,[16] by inspiring, attracting and modelling behaviour for future participants.

Comments pertaining to the influence of Black African fast bowler, Makhaya Ntini, by Black African cricketers from the Gauteng province[54] support the finding of this study that similar ethnicity is an important characteristic of role models. It was further suggested that more Black African role models would not only inspire potential cricketers in Black African communities, but also assist in breaking down the perception of cricket as a White sport. Henry Olonga, the first Black African to play test cricket for Zimbabwe in 1995, also shared similar thoughts on not having Black African cricketing role models in Zimbabwe.[256] On the other hand, White players felt that they were accepted as role models in the 'Black' communities.[85] Increased numbers of Black African players in the franchise and national teams would by implication boost the number of Black African role models.

In the past, the majority of Black African South African players have been fast bowlers. Similar trends have been shown in the English cricket team. Of the Black African players to have represented England up to 2002, 21.4% were batsmen, 64.3% fast bowlers and 14.3% all-rounders.[66] This may suggest a preference for fast bowling, a particular physique and physiology suited to the discipline or the influence of role models. The majority of players in this study identified role models from the same cricket discipline as themselves. Therefore, together with ethnicity, the significance of Temba Bavuma's test match century in January

2016[427] cannot be underestimated in positioning him as a role model for potential future Black African batsmen. This may further assist in changing mind-sets regarding the ability of Black African batsmen, which has often been questioned by the South African public and cricket fraternity.[53, 428]

Television

While there is no direct relationship between having a Black African player in the national team and increased Black African viewership, television is recognised as being a strong mechanism for creating awareness of the game.[70] The participants in this study agreed with this perception. Television provides a powerful mechanism for exposing youngsters to and growing the game, as has been witnessed in India since the 1980s, when through increased television coverage, cricket replaced field hockey as the predominant Indian sport of choice.[88] Reduced access to satellite television channels on which most cricket is shown, combined with fewer Black African players in the national team, may contribute to limiting growth opportunities, access to role models and changing the perception of cricket as a 'White' sport, particularly among 'Black' communities and disadvantaged Black African participants. An increase in total satellite ownership to 41.4% in 2016,[5] may improve the situation somewhat, but there seems to be sufficient rationale to encourage increased cricket on the free national broadcaster, particularly as cricket is the second most popular sport in the townships.[423]

Unstructured play

The developmental benefits of the 'backyard' cricket, described by these players would be similar to the concept of 'deliberate play' during the sampling years of the DMSP,[157, 162] and the *pelada* and *futsal* played by young Brazilian footballers.[145] Elite Australian bowlers and batsmen also commented on how the unstructured nature of 'backyard' cricket contributed to developing their expertise as well as the participation, enjoyment and competition derived from these activities.[14, 16, 175] Although unstructured play seemed to be particularly beneficial during the early years, the provision of cricket at their primary schools was an additional enabler for White players in comparison to the majority of their 'Black' counterparts.

The threats to the benefits of unstructured play by a changing society, such as general outdoor safety concerns and less leisure time, reducing access to play environments have been

previously expressed by elite Australian batsmen.[14] This study's participants' perceptions of security concerns in the streets of lower-income communities, highlighted another potential obstacle that players from these areas faced, thereby reducing the benefit of unstructured play in developing cricketing skills. On the other hand, participants from all ethnic groups cited decreased youth physical activity levels, a greater interest in modern technology, and increased participation in less time-consuming sporting and other pursuits as possibly reducing cricket participation. This potentially poses a big challenge for CSA to overcome in its quest to grow the game at grassroots level, particularly as many of these factors represent societal changes and are largely outside of CSA's control.

The lack of identification with the South African cricket team by some 'Black' players during 'street test matches' highlighted the depth of disconnect between the ethnic groups caused by historical attitudes. The notion of 'Black' players not supporting the 'White' South African cricket teams of the past was a common and openly expressed opinion during the fight against apartheid and segregation in sport.[6] Preconceived attitudes and fixed mind-sets across the ethnic groups, seem likely to continue to hamper the holistic transformation of South African cricket without deliberate interventions to educate all cricket stakeholders and manage these prejudices.

9.2.3   *Multiple sports and specialisation during the middle years*

The participation by most of this cohort of players in a variety of other sports before focussing exclusively on cricket from about age 16 years supports current thinking that early specialisation in a single sport may not be necessary for future success, and that participation in a variety of sports in the early years may be beneficial.[148, 429, 430] It is suggested that participation in other sports (particularly interceptive sports) may improve hand-eye co-ordination, spatial awareness and movement adaptability which are required in batting.[14] Expert Australian bowlers played multiple sports during their development and similar to this study's players, many also achieved state representative level in sports other than cricket.[16] This was similar to the finding of the South African cricketers at the 1999 World Cup.[317] Later specialisation in the fast bowling discipline in Australian bowlers[175] was similar to the comments from a number players in this study that they had changed or established their cricket discipline towards the end of their middle years.

It would seem that playing multiple sports and later sport specific specialisation is beneficial to cricket players' skill development. In the South African context, this opportunity was very dependent upon the well-resourced 'former model C' secondary schools that the majority of players attended thereby providing them with enhanced general sports skills development that benefited their later cricket skills. Unpublished data in 2002, relating to physical activity patterns of nine-year old South African children revealed that only 45% of 'Black' children participated in school sport, compared to 83% of White children.[431] Ten years later only 34.4% of 11–13 year olds from predominantly Coloured schools belonged to a sports team.[99] These discrepancies have not changed significantly in 23 years,[7] and therefore the majority of 'Black' youth continue to lag behind their White counterparts in sports skills development.

Later specialisation does not detract from the view that there is still a need for cricketers to accumulate significant experience in the sport to make the appropriate decisions to achieve high levels of success.[432] Further, it has been found that skilled batsmen who had accumulated more playing hours than less skilled batsmen had enhanced anticipatory skills, although hours playing only explained some of the anticipatory variance.[208] Therefore, later introduction to the game, fewer opportunities to participate and less exposure to competitive matches that characterise the circumstances of the majority of potential Black African players, may contribute to the reason for fewer Black African players and especially batsmen at the elite level.

9.2.4 Transitions

While transitions between different stages are well described in sport,[177, 179, 181] there may be additional challenges for individuals from differing socio-economic and cultural environments.

Early to middle years transition

The vast majority of this cohort transitioned from the early to middle years through the strong South African schooling system, either because their family was able to afford the school fees or because they were identified and then received a bursary to attend a well-resourced 'cricket school'. The remaining minority progressed by playing club cricket. Despite CSA's mini-cricket programme introducing some 2.5 million youngsters (mainly from disadvantaged communities) to the game over the past 35 years,[64] the vast majority of these potential

cricketers seem to battle to continue with the game in the middle years due to the lack of opportunities to play and develop their skills.[7] Sufficient opportunities to participate in competitive games and demonstrate their competence have been shown to retain young Australian cricketers in the game.[433] While lower household incomes and not being taken to sporting events have been shown to contribute to drop out from organised sport in 10-year-old Australian children.[203]

However, despite levels of between 64%– 85% of sport participation in high-income countries, for example Australia, during childhood,[434] these numbers decrease quickly during late childhood and adolescence,[435, 436] suggesting that retaining adolescent sport participation is not unique to South Africa. On the other hand, the overall level of organised sport participation of under 18 year olds in South Africa had declined to between 21% and 40% by 2016, indicating an already low base from which to retain sport participants.[93] This provides a major challenge for CSA, which needs to ensure that young players continue with cricket into the middle years so that the best talent is available for development. Furthermore, the lack of opportunities to play organised sport hinders those youngsters wishing to pursue their cricket participation.

While early identification assisted the majority of the Black African players, all the Indian and some of the Coloured players to continue playing, which would seem to make it a possible solution, talent identification programmes have typically shown low to moderate efficacy.[110, 121-123, 125] The multifactorial nature of cricket expertise may further increase identification difficulties.[14-16] Therefore, while talent identification may be necessary to identify potential cricketers, particularly from 'Black' groups, the unpredictable process of identification suggests that there may be a loss of potential talent. This is further exacerbated by the small base and limited opportunities for 'Black' players in the middle years. In addition, the possibility of excluding late developers who may become successful later should also be taken into consideration.[122] In a complex sport like cricket and in a country with significant socio-ecological barriers, there is an increased risk of not selecting the best potential talent if identification is done too early. As suggested by some key informants, close measuring, monitoring and managing by CSA of players' progress in the talent development process would be a key success factor.

Therefore, the challenge for cricket in South Africa to create access to opportunities and development poses a number of dilemmas: accurately identifying sufficient players who can then be developed, funding the development of these players through the middle years without guarantees of elite success, increasing facilities and coaching in 'Black' communities and providing appropriate support to assist the players in managing the challenging family and social circumstances they may experience to assist through this period of natural attrition.[435]

Under 19 to senior level transition

Transitions have not previously been identified as a distinct stage in talent development models. The inclusion of the transition from U19 to elite level as a separate stage within the senior years was deemed appropriate for a number of reasons. Firstly, the importance of the transitional period and the significant stressors encountered during this time have previously been identified in the literature.[176, 183, 437, 438] Specific stressors identified by this cohort included: unclear pathway options, limited financial support, lack of communications and perceived unfair decision-making. Secondly, the varying routes (directly into the high performance pathway, foreign opportunities or club cricket) that were available to these players. Thirdly, the length of time (as long as nine years) spent in the transition period for some players. Fourthly, the limited support and guidance provided by CSA during this transition. And finally, the comments from these participants that many of their colleagues gave up the game during this time.

These five reasons suggest that more emphasis and attention should be placed on managing this period in a cricketer's career, as it is another period during which many athletes, including highly successful ones, stop competing.[183, 439, 440] The fact that only 3.6% and 7.1% of talented English cricketers and rugby union players transitioned from the elite academies of the respective sports to play international cricket or form part of the national rugby squad,[231] provides confirmation for the 'bottleneck' that talented players face during this transitional period. The development of psychological attributes, mentoring and supportive environments have been offered as solutions to assist athletes deal with this transition.[55, 183, 289, 437, 438, 441]

The acknowledgement by all the participants that CSA's high performance pathway offered the best chance of elite success is supported by the literature examining the role of sports organisations in high performance sports programmes.[218, 219] Despite this being the preferred

route, the ability of the four Coloured players who progressed through the more difficult club route supports evidence for varied pathways to elite performance.[173]

Some of the positive contributions to their cricket development, both on and off the field, experienced by the players who attended the national, provincial or university academies has been shown in an English cricket academy programme albeit for slightly younger players.[441] Furthermore, the skills acquired by the players attending the academies have been recognised as important in the successful transition to senior level in football.[185, 437] Players also commented on the benefits of the life skills they learned through the academies or by playing overseas. Life skills have previously been identified as contributing to a more holistic development of athletes.[442-444] Playing cricket in England further highlighted how, additional opportunities to develop their game holistically and compete in varying conditions and against different opposition may advantage players.[19, 445] The evidence highlights the benefits of playing overseas and/or attending structured academies during this transition phase between the junior and senior levels.

A particular concern expressed by participants was the lack of financial support that players from lower socio-economic groups were given while trying to navigate the transition to the elite level. English and Canadian studies have found that athletes from lower socio-economic groups may be disadvantaged in achieving sporting success,[98, 245] particularly in more expensive sports such as tennis.[446] While cricket is popular at a recreational level amongst the 'Black' population, the transition to the elite level requires expensive facilities and equipment. In addition, as participants in this study shared, many young Black African men are forced to take on family financial and social responsibilities at this time. Both of these factors create additional barriers for these players to continue with their cricketing careers.

9.2.5   Senior level

Debuts at different levels

There was a wide range of ages at which the players debuted at the different levels: senior provincial (16–23 years) and franchise (17–28 years of age), as well as varying time differences (0–8 years) between debuting and progressing to the next level. Similar findings were found in the performance pathways of Australian elite athletes.[173] Furthermore, the youngest

cricketers to debut in the past 30 years, internationally and for South Africa in a test match, were 14 and 18 years of age respectively, while the oldest were 37 and 39 years of age respectively.[447] This provides support for the idiosyncratic and complex nature of competitive sport, which is influenced by a multitude of factors. Whether unhappiness expressed by some players pertaining to opportunities to perform at the elite level reflects either historical attitudes and mind-sets,[1, 53] and/or the complexities of selection decisions,[38, 268] individual player development and progress would likely be hampered.

Remuneration and playing contracts

The concerns expressed in this study over the low level of earnings of franchise cricket players in comparison to other equivalent professional sports (rugby union and football) in the country were supported by the comments of Stewart.[92] Added to this, is the insecurity of short-term (maximum 2 years) playing contracts. These remuneration levels appear to be at odds with the rapid commercialisation[1] of, and increased revenues in the game at international level,[89] mainly as a result of the Indian Premier League,[63] without commensurate rewards for franchise level professionals. Although franchise and lower level matches draw very little interest, few spectators and limited television coverage, some participants did question CSA's ability to market the game locally. The risk for CSA is that players choose alternative career options, or where possible, pursue the game via other means; for example Kolpak contracts,[56] or worldwide Twenty20 competitions,[448] thereby further reducing the talent pool. The extensive investment in developing a cricketer through the pathway could then be questioned if they are to be lost to the game as senior players.

Team disparity, commitment to training and early termination of playing careers were all suggested as a result of the small value of remuneration offered to only half the players at the senior professional level.[449] The need to address the contract system at this level has been recently recognised by CSA.[450]

While difficult to substantiate, the perception of Black African players that salary levels and additional benefits are inequitable should be investigated by CSA, and the South African Cricketers' Association (SACA) as the player representative body. Such perceptions would seem to contravene labour relations practices, be unethical, reflect bias and contribute to tension within the team environments. Certain English counties have very recently been found

to be paying players below the minimum wage and using unapproved contracts.[451] On the other hand, evaluating the value of contrasting individuals' cricketing skills is a difficult task. Furthermore, SACA should provide improved advice to players, particularly those without access to professional advisors and/or parental support, with respect to contract and remuneration negotiations which seemed to be another area of concern for some of these players.

Structures

The general perception was that the South African cricketing structures were good, although not everyone agreed. Some of the findings (e.g. lack of access to quality playing opportunities and the need for enhanced coaching for player development) of CSA's review of existing domestic cricket structures conducted in 2016 would seem to support the results of this study.[450] This particularly related to issues highlighted in this study pertaining to the role, structure and functioning of the senior provincial teams to adequately prepare players for professional careers. On the other hand, the findings of this study to increase the number of franchise teams to provide more opportunities for players was not supported by the same review. Other structural issues raised in this study that are obstacles to ongoing development for some players, for example team training times to accommodate all players, distances that some players have to travel to attend practice, are likely to be addressed through CSA's newly implemented player needs analysis tool. This holistic tool, which covers all areas affecting player development, is designed to determine the specific challenges that players may experience that prevent them from performing optimally.[78] Previous research has found support for the role of a multitude of stakeholders, including the key responsibility of national sporting organisations, in the development of sporting talent.[218, 365]

Relationships between senior players and administrators

Many of the players' perceptions that relationships between South African cricket's organisational leaders and the players needed improvement is in contrast to the findings that transformational leadership resulted in organisational effectiveness in South African cricket.[224] On the other hand, this study's findings were not dissimilar to the Black African players' perceptions of Gauteng cricket's leadership.[54] The poor communications between players and the organisation in this current study is not uncommon in the cricket

environment.[452] Good communications would appear to be paramount in the building of personal, emotional and inspirational relationships with followers as part of transformational leadership,[222] and they were a key focus in the achievements of performance directors in managing successful Olympic teams.[221]

9.3 Proximal factors influencing talent development

9.3.1 Family

The influence of tangible and emotional support provided by family, in developing their cricket talent was acknowledged by all the participants in this study. The benefits of family support have previously been described.[14, 16, 117, 235] While beyond the scope of this study, the nature of the support changes as the athlete transitions through the pathway.[8, 153, 162] Furthermore, the ability to provide the necessary tangible support was, to varying degrees, affected by the differing family structures,[138, 243] and the socio-cultural[242] and financial[98, 133, 235, 242, 244] circumstances experienced by these players. These factors may affect the ability of Black African families to be as actively involved in their sons' cricket compared to the other ethnic groups.[54]

Family structures

The family structures, described by the players in this study, are similar to those reported across South African families and were influenced by the apartheid laws that split families.[34] Only 27% of Black African children live with both their biological parents compared to 48% of Coloureds and approximately 80% of Indians and Whites.[45] Children in the United Kingdom from a family headed by two parents were more likely to achieve high levels of sports performance.[138, 243] Further research in the United Kingdom and Australia found that without access to additional support networks and well paid employment, children from single parent families and those headed by women are less likely to participate in sport.[242, 244] While differing family structures are not necessarily unique to a particular ethnic group, in South Africa, the current demographics show that there are more single parent and female headed families among the lower socio-economic communities. These structures affect their ability to provide the levels of financial and time resources required for sport participation and ongoing involvement.

Socio-cultural context

In comparison to the Black African players, a strong family culture of sport and cricket made it easier for players from the other ethnic groups to participate in the game during the early years. For many, their fathers had played the game. Other studies have found that it is common for parents to introduce their children to the same sports in which they or older siblings have participated.[16, 238, 241] Furthermore, having an understanding of the game and its nuances enables parents to provide better support.[240] Notwithstanding the lack of parental involvement, these Black African players were encouraged to participate through extended family members, community sources and CSA's mini-cricket programme. However, in communities without these additional support networks, potential players may be lost to the game.

Financial circumstances

Kay's assertion that financial barriers are the major burden to sport participation and progress to the elite level[243] was to some extent borne out by the findings in this study, and supported by the findings among low-income, diverse Canadian families.[98] As a result of historical exclusion from the economy, this cohort of 'Black' players, who were from traditionally lower socio-economic backgrounds, experienced greater financial burdens and their families had to make more sacrifices to support their sons' cricketing participation and progress, than their White counterparts. As a result of the advantages received through their cricket talent, for example bursaries to 'cricket' schools, these 'Black' players were not perceived to be as severely disadvantaged, as many players from similar communities who experience high levels of poverty and hunger. However, access to private coaching and equipment were two noticeable aspects cited that directly impacted this cohort's cricket development.

Private coaching, which the majority of White and two Indian players received, enabled these players to further develop their cricketing skills. Access to expensive cricket equipment, which has previously been identified as a barrier,[244] was another aspect that most White players had access to compared to the other ethnic groups, who often had to borrow equipment. This was particularly relevant for Black African batsmen and may be a contributing factor to fewer Black African batsmen. A lack of equipment was also experienced by Zimbabwean Black African cricketers.[256]

Emotional support

Consistent with the literature,[117, 154, 235, 249] this study also found that the emotional support, provided by parents or other significant individuals was a key enabler in the development of this cohort's cricketing talent. Such support allowed them to share their success, but also assisted them to cope with the challenges and setbacks associated with competitive, high performance, professional sport. The parental role modelling described by a number of the players provided them with values such as work ethic, intrinsic motivation and enjoyment of sport that aided their cricket progress. Parents have been previously recognised as contributing to such attributes.[235] Although a few players indicated that their parents had been strict and overly pressurising, the overall perception from this study was of a less pressurised and more supportive approach, which is in contrast to that experienced by young tennis players,[246, 251, 453] but similar to an autonomy-supportive parenting style.[250]

Peers

As with this study, peer support has previously been identified as valuable to elite athletes.[117] On the other hand, some of this cohort felt that their friends were jealous of their success, which was an added challenge to being a professional cricketer. There may be a link between this and the pressure felt by some of the Black African players of having money that family members and friends expected to share in because of the low levels of economic activity in these communities. This pressure and stress may further be impacted by the philosophy of 'Ubuntu' in African communities that espouses caring for and sharing with one's community.

9.3.2 Schools and clubs

Although schools and clubs are the two conduits through which players can participate and compete in cricket in South Africa, schools and specifically the well-resourced 'former model C' schools were the preferred option for this cohort. This supports the findings in the literature that schools provide access to opportunities to develop the fundamental movement and sport specific skills needed for high performance sport. Schools are also an environment in which children can develop cognitively, psychologically and socially through physical activity and interaction with teachers and coaches.[80, 259-261]

Type of schools

The findings in this study that the majority (81%) of these successful players attended fee-paying 'former model C' or private secondary schools is supported by the academic literature that found that high level sports performance was associated with attending private schools in the United Kingdom.[138, 262] The non-academic literature reported that the majority of English international cricketers attended private schools,[454, 455] and that South Africa's best cricketing talent comes from mainly 'former model C' or private schools.[456, 457] On the other hand, more Australian international players went to state schools[458, 459] compared to private schools.[458, 459] Being a high-income country, the difference between state and private schools may not be as great in Australia as it is in South Africa. The benefits of attending good schools, which were identified in the literature,[138, 259-261] were all shared by the participants in this study as contributing to their cricketing success. In addition, the participants in this study highlighted the contribution of these schools to their holistic growth by developing their cricket, intellectual, emotional and social intelligences on and off the field. This development was facilitated by their teachers and coaches. It has been found that intercollegiate athletes derive maximum benefit from their sports training when all other aspects of their life are healthy.[460]

Players who attended the 'former model B' secondary schools debuted at the franchise level later than their counterparts. This provides some support for the value of good facilities, quality coaching, competitive matches and an all-round holistic education in the development of competent cricketers, during the middle years. Although the majority of players attended 'former model B' schools during their early years, the lesser importance attributed to facilities and coaching at this stage of their development assisted them to overcome this barrier by moving to a better school later on. The poor quality, in terms of overall education and sporting facilities, of these 'former model B' schools, which the majority of 'Black' children still attend, has been supported by academic,[43, 50] non-governmental,[49] and governmental[264] sources. Furthermore, the very small percentage of secondary schools that have cricket facilities[7] further limits the opportunities for the vast majority of potential cricketers to play the game at school, thereby excluding them from the game and developing cricketing skills and other benefits that sport may provide.[259]

Bursaries

The provision of bursaries to the players in this cohort to attend the 'former model C' schools provides some confirmation that these quality schools created the best cricketing and educational opportunities for the players and that other schools could not offer similar prospects. Furthermore, as bursaries were the only means by which the majority of 'Black' players could attend such schools, while most of the White players' parents could afford the fees, it highlights the link between socio-economic inequalities, family circumstances, schooling and access to cricket opportunities.[259]

The bursaries that the 'Black' players received were facilitated by CSA in conjunction with 'former model C' or private schools and corporate sponsors. However, for a number of years subsequent to these players receiving bursaries, the programme was scaled back, which many participants in this study felt was one of the reasons that fewer Black African players in particular progressed through the talent pathway (Table 2.2). In recent years, CSA has once again actively embarked on a bursary programme, sponsored by a number of South African corporations. As confirmed by CSA's Youth and Tertiary Cricket Manager (personal communication, 3 April 2018), there are currently 72 bursary holders at predominantly 'former model C' schools around the country. It would appear that bursaries are a vital short-term strategy to increase the number and quality of 'Black' and specifically Black African cricketers. However, there is a limit to the number of players who can be absorbed by these schools. Furthermore, as was recognised by a number of participants, it does not address the more fundamental question of increasing access to opportunities and enhancing the cricket culture in the communities in which the players live. CSA alone cannot address this problem and it will require integrated interventions by all stakeholders (government, communities, CSA, schools, families and individuals).[56, 80]

The ability of the players to overcome the initial challenges of leaving their communities and attending unfamiliar schools, with cultural differences and language barriers, may underscore the intrapersonal attributes of these players, such as mental toughness and resilience. Some recent qualitative research has suggested that in contrast to a smooth developmental pathway, high performance athletes may benefit from overcoming challenges and obstacles (both sport and life-related) during their development.[461-463] Hence, the challenges of

attending schools outside of their communities and overcoming these challenges may speak to this cohort's relative success in cricket. On the other hand, the negative consequences experienced by some bursary holders in the past should be taken into consideration when implementing an effective bursary programme, and steps should be taken to minimise the impact of leaving one's community. As proposed by participants in this study, all aspects (education and cricket) of such a programme should be carefully monitored and managed to maximise its success for both the bursary holders and CSA. As talent identification is an imperfect process, this monitoring will also ensure that identified players continue to progress.

Clubs

This study found that although only very few cricketers progressed to the elite level through clubs, they still form an important part of the cricket landscape, particularly in communities where there is a lack of school cricket facilities. However, the poor administration and standard of cricket at many of these clubs limits their contribution to the talent pathway.[91] As clubs are very often voluntary organisations,[266] an additional problem in the lower socio-economic communities compared to the more affluent clubs in the previous White communities, is the lack of resources to administer club activities and maintain facilities. This was widely seen with the decline in club cricket participation and quality of competition in these areas,[6] thereby creating further inequalities between the communities. As with all other facets of society, club cricket was segregated in South Africa until the end of apartheid and although no longer legally required to, most players in this study chose to play for clubs in their own communities indicating a strong identity with their own community.

Furthermore, the perceived societal changes (decreasing physical activity patterns , increasing communication and information technology) identified by this study's participants and changing family social patterns, for example less leisure time,[14] may threaten the role of clubs in society. Further challenges identified in this study were a decreasing passion for the game and the amount of professional cricket being played, thereby reducing the availability of quality senior players for club matches further decreasing the standard of club competition.

Notwithstanding the above, playing club cricket during their middle years was perceived by the players in this cohort to be very beneficial for all aspects of their game, in many cases as

an adjunct to school cricket. Similar to the findings of other cricket studies, these benefits accrued from early exposure to senior club cricketers, increased number of matches and tougher competition.[14, 16] These reasons were also put forward as a possible explanation for the increased number of Australian international players from state schools who played more club cricket than their private school counterparts.[458]

Hubs as part of the talent pathway

As a result of the limited cricket opportunities through the schools and clubs in 'Black' communities, alternative structures known as Hubs evolved and have been further developed by CSA. Furthermore, it was suggested that Hubs become an integral part of CSA's plan to develop cricket talent in the communities. In 2015/16, there were 47 Hubs around the country, each accommodating 100 children from U11–U19 level. These Hubs draw young cricketers from local schools, provide transport for them to attend practice and offer coaching from three qualified and better paid coaches. In addition, 12 Regional Performance Centres (RPCs) complement the Hubs by identifying talented players for further development.[464] The Hubs and RPCs have enabled the players to receive quality coaching at better facilities within their communities, play more matches against stronger opposition and retain players from the mini-cricket programme, many of whom would most likely have had to drop out of cricket because of the lack of sufficient resources. In December 2017, 243 players (out of a total of 900 cricketers) from these Hubs/RPCs participated in the age-group provincial representative tournaments,[465] which suggests that these initiatives are beginning to make a difference in providing continued access to the game. This number was confirmed by CSA's Manager: Mass Participation (personal communication, 8 February 2018).

Post-school

Playing at a university was identified as a possible option for continuing to develop cricket talent while furthering players' education. However, for many players this was unaffordable or unavailable in their region. Furthermore, the time commitments of professional cricketers were perceived to interfere with their studies. Only a quarter of this entire cohort had completed any tertiary studies, while half of those who had started tertiary studies had dropped out. Dual careers in which athletes pursue both education or work and sport simultaneously are becoming more common.[466, 467] A study conducted into the relationship

between dual-career and post-sport career transition among elite athletes in four Southern African countries indicated that dual-careers assisted with the retirement transition.[468] Furthermore, in a study of 143 elite Australian athletes (73 from team sports and 38.5% males), 72% of those athletes who were working or studying believed that this aided their sporting performance.[469] A number of the cricket player associations (representing cricketers' welfare and interests) around the world, including SACA, the Australian Cricketers' Association (ACA) and the Professional Cricketers' Association (PCA) in England and Wales, actively support dual career and education initiatives amongst their players.[470-472]

Therefore, the expansion of the educationally-linked high performance academies, proposed by participants in this study, whereby the player both studies and plays cricket, would seem to be a sound suggestion. These academies also offer social support structures. A study conducted among South African academy players indicated significant positive changes in self-efficacy, esteem social support, informational social support and tangible social support over a cricket academy season.[473] This holistic approach would seem to provide some long-term security to those players who are unable to progress to the elite level by developing non-cricket competencies. Furthermore, for players who are not afforded the benefits discussed above of a 'former model C' school education, it provides an opportunity to obtain additional skills and experience needed to compete at the elite levels.

9.3.3 Coaches

The significant influence that coaches played in all the players' development on and off the field supports previous findings on the role of coaches in talent development.[8, 269, 273, 474] Although the origin, amount and quality of the coaching may have varied, players felt that coaching had made a positive contribution to their development as they progressed to the elite level. However, the lack of qualified 'Black' and particularly Black African coaches, as well as a shortage of coaches in the 'Black' areas, was recognised by the participants as a barrier to many potential cricketers progressing further. Furthermore, the perception of some participants that there was a decrease in and quality of coaches at secondary schools was also cause for concern. Therefore, CSA needs to invest in the development of all coaches, but with a greater emphasis on 'Black' coaches.

Role

The findings in this study that coaches demonstrated different roles and influences at the different stages of the pathway is similar to the contention that the requirements of coaches change with changing coaching contexts.[269] Furthermore, during the early and middle years, the players' assessment of their coaches' ability to fulfil their roles appeared to match the objectives cited in the literature.[269] This therefore indicates that during these two stages, the coaches, with whom these players interacted, had the correct mix of professional (technical and tactical), interpersonal and intrapersonal skills and knowledge to develop the required coaching outcomes for each stage.

The promotion of fun and enjoyment along with the development of basic skills, provided by passionate and committed coaches, who nurtured and believed in their young players provided the foundation for this cohort's continued participation and progress. Unfortunately, the increased pressure to win at a young age, and a decreased passion for coaching, identified by some participants, may impact the development of these desired outcomes in the early years. This pressure is further exacerbated by the selection of provincial age-group tournaments from as young as 11 years of age.[78] CSA may need to address these concerns in the education, deployment and remuneration of coaches within its structures. Furthermore, it may also need to address some of these concerns within the school structures by emphasising the benefits of the correct early coaching objectives, to the future development of cricketing skills and expertise, in line with the LTAD to which CSA subscribes.[168]

Attributes and skills

Similar to the literature on effective coaching of senior high performance sports teams,[270, 273, 274, 276, 278] people management skills were identified in this study as important requirements of senior level coaches. However, there were concerns that many of these coaches did not possess such skills resulting in them not being able to holistically develop all players' competence, confidence, connection and character.[269] This seemed to play out mainly in White coaches' lack of understanding of the 'Black' players' backgrounds and circumstances, which may also have led to the perception that these coaches did not have the belief and confidence in Black African players' ability to perform. Understanding players on all levels has been found to contribute to effective coaching.[281, 282, 299] In addition to a lack of intrapersonal

and interpersonal skills, the contribution of existing mind-sets, resulting from the structural, social and ideological legacies of South Africa's past, cannot be underestimated in understanding the coaches' approach to interacting with and developing players.[38] The suggestion of key informants that more comprehensive measurement criteria of senior coaches would encourage more player-centred behaviours, was in contrast to the notion of win-loss records being the major focus of coaches of professional teams.[269] However, others have found that effective coaches at this level focus on developing the whole player.[270, 273]

A congruent relationship, which may or may not have existed, between player and coach was perceived to be a critical success factor in holistically developing talent throughout the pathway.[279] This supports the contention that coaching does not always contribute to athlete development,[268] and what works in one circumstance may be inappropriate in another.[117] Furthermore, highly competitive North American team athletes [270] and professional Australian rugby union, rugby league and cricket players[273] identified an aligned athlete-coach relationship as a critical contributing factor to effective coaching. Although not essential for congruent relationships, an increased diversity of coaches, who have a more intimate understanding of the challenges faced by 'Black' players, may enhance the relationship between individual players and coaches and assist in adapting mind-sets going forward. It would appear that CSA may need to include more interpersonal and intrapersonal skills development in its coach education programmes as opposed to focussing only on technical skills development.[288] Such skills would also enable them to manage the team environments more effectively.

Mentoring

The overall benefits of mentoring (cricket knowledge and life-related) mainly from coaches, recognised by the participants in this study, were also evident in the findings of studies with Black African South African provincial,[55] and elite English student[289] cricketers. Furthermore, proximal role models[11] and observational learning[14] were both found to enhance the expertise of athletes as they progress to the elite level. The strong sentiment to introduce a more formal structured mentoring programme, as had been done in the Eastern Cape,[55] was in contrast to the informal mentoring preferred by the English players.[289] Despite the different views on the best person (ex-players or coaches) to mentor developing young cricketers, there was

agreement between the findings of this study and the other studies referred to, that such a person should be trained in mentoring and display good interpersonal and intrapersonal skills and attributes. Mentoring would seem to be a constructive intervention for all cricketers. However, the diversity of cricket and life experiences among South African players suggests that an organised mentoring programme would provide additional assistance to those players who have not had the same cricket and life opportunities and support. This is supported by the literature which suggests that life skills are not learned passively but need to be effectively taught.[475, 476]

9.3.4 Team environment

Task and social team cohesion,[294] and team effectiveness[277, 296, 299] both played a role in contributing to the functioning of the senior team environments. However, the differing views of the participants in this study of the effect of team cohesion and effectiveness in the franchise teams impacted the perception of these team environments. Despite the differing opinions, there was agreement that supportive team environments contributed to player and team performance.

Team cohesion

Similar to the experiences of 'Black' English cricketers,[66, 201] and other 'Black' South African players,[53] the Black African players' reports of stereotyping, 'stacking' and limited quality of opportunities compared to other players reduced their playing time at this level, thereby affecting their ability to compete and prove themselves. These experiences were attributed, in part, to the fixed mind-sets and prejudices of both coaches and captains. An example of this is that Black African players at a junior provincial level appear to receive fewer opportunities to bowl in tournament matches despite having similar bowling performances to other ethnic groups.[29] The lack of selection and quality of opportunities for 'Black' South African rugby union players has also been described,[52, 80, 196] enhancing the perception of prejudice in South African sport. While racism was not directly mentioned by these participants, examples of racism against 'Black' South African cricketers,[6, 53] and other 'Black', indigenous or immigrant athletes in different sporting teams in various countries[314, 477] have been reported, suggesting that the possible existence of some ongoing racism should not be completely dismissed.

The Black African players' feelings of not belonging in the franchise teams, through a lack of social cohesion, has been observed in other sports and environments in which athletes from the non-dominant group experience a variety of social and cultural challenges both on and off the field.[310-314] Language barriers[56] and cliques[53, 86] have both previously been reported as challenges for 'Black' players in South African cricket teams as they battle to assimilate into the culture of the majority.[53] The formation of cliques has been found to contribute negatively to elite team environments.[478] These feelings of alienation have also been reported by Black African Zimbabwean players.[256] In contrast, White players felt that 'Black' players had assimilated well into White dressing-rooms without major problems.[85]

Despite having made it to the franchise level, the sense of exclusion felt by the Black African players due to limited playing opportunities and a lack of social cohesion, was another perceived barrier to further progress and contributed to the drop out of their counterparts as they were unable to carve out a cricket career for themselves. Aside from these perceptions, the highly competitive and tough nature of elite sport,[479] and the range of criteria that impact on selection decisions,[268] also need to be borne in mind when assessing the variety of factors that can effect team cohesion.[283]

Team effectiveness

All the players shared the perception that improving key components such as leadership, communications and understanding of individual players would promote more supportive and inclusive franchise team environments.[255, 277, 282, 299] Although all team members bear responsibility for contributing to the functioning of the team, the coach and captain manage the team through their leadership positions.[299] Moreover, due to the nature of the game, a cricket captain has more influence on team effectiveness than captains of other sports.[19, 480] In addition, transformation leadership has been found to contribute to successful team functioning.[255, 287]

The perceived limitations of coach and captain leadership skills, such as empowering players through open, honest and authentic communications, were in contrast to those identified as contributing to team effectiveness.[255, 273, 299] Furthermore, by creating an environment in which all players feel safe to contribute in team meetings would enable them to thrive and achieve personally and for the team,[299] as well as create a more inclusive environment

through the sharing of diverse views.[310] The influence of clear and effective communications on team cohesion, effectiveness and positive relationships between players and management has also been established in elite sports environments.[136, 255, 280, 287, 299] It would appear that the effectiveness of franchise teams would benefit from an investment in improved coach and captain interpersonal skills development, which would also assist in managing team cohesion.[282]

The emotional intelligence of players has been found to contribute to the success of cricket[120] and rugby union[287] teams. In addition, emotional intelligence training was found to enhance the emotional intelligence of individual cricket players.[309] Furthermore, emotional intelligence has also been found to contribute to coaching efficacy.[278] Although the value of understanding all aspects of each unique player, to build effective teams, has been identified in other studies,[273, 282, 299, 481] this study found that this was of particular importance in diverse team environments in which some players felt excluded because of their different backgrounds and circumstances.

Inclusivity

Although this study found that franchise team environments were slowly becoming more inclusive, it was recognised that there was still room for improvement, particularly with the implementation of ethnic targets (Chapter 10). It was suggested that there needs to be a deliberate, long-term intervention to educate all team members (and the cricket organisations) in understanding more about the different cultures of the participants in South African cricket. As part of a shared acculturation process, all the ethnic groups would learn about and understand one another's differences as part of an adaptive process and merging of mind-sets.[316] The degree to which acculturation occurs within a team would likely affect team cohesion and effectiveness and therefore influence the inclusivity of the team environment.

9.4   Intrapersonal characteristics

The findings of this study that intrapersonal attributes also contribute to the development of cricketing talent, supports the multifactorial approach to the acquisition of sporting expertise.[130] Although not the primary focus of this study, the players' perceptions of which

intrapersonal characteristics may or may not have enabled their own or other highly successful players' progress, provides some insights into how individual characteristics may assist in overcoming socio-ecological barriers.

9.4.1   Physical attributes and injuries

The lack of a definitive physical trait is perhaps not surprising given the small sample sizes that comprised the different cricket disciplines. However, previous studies have shown some physiological differences between the bowlers and batsmen.[317-319] The importance attributed to physical fitness identified by this cohort is probably related to the different requirements of the varying formats of the game,[482] and may assist in overcoming the mental fatigue associated with prolonged concentration in cricket.[483] Furthermore, cricketers have been found to have fitness levels comparable to other professional athletes such as rugby union, basketball and baseball.[317, 318]

The prevalence and type of injuries reported in this study are similar to those previously reported in cricket.[320] In addition, the impediment to cricket progression or even drop out, as a result of the length of time and determination needed to recover from particularly back injuries, has also been reported.[15, 16, 322, 324] Drop out from back injuries may be more prevalent among 'Black' players, who do not have access to or the financial means to pay for the relevant medical care. The age range of all bowlers' stress fractures in this study is later than reported in the literature.[323] However, the White bowlers may be injured earlier than the 'Black' bowlers because of an earlier exposure to high volumes of bowling,[322] as they have greater access to all different types of cricket, for example private coaching and greater quantity of competitive matches through school, club and representative level cricket.

9.4.2   Psychological characteristics

As previously recognised, all participants in this study believed that psychological characteristics played a positive role in progressing to and succeeding in elite sport.[115, 116] This is perhaps not surprising as cricket has often been described as a 'mental game,'[19] and consistency in different formats of the game requires specific characteristics.[332] The specific attributes mentioned in this study were similar to those that were found to contribute to Olympic success[117] and the development of cricket fast bowling and batting expertise.[15, 119]

While there were some examples of extrinsic motivation for playing cricket, the vast majority of players described intrinsic motivational factors such as passion, enjoyment, personal achievements and determination to succeed. Previous studies of young and elite cricketers have reported similar motivators.[14, 119, 175, 324] This suggests that intrinsic motivation may be a requirement to sustain the persistence and commitment to training and playing, despite the on-going setbacks, disappointments, expectations and sacrifices that are characteristic of high performance sport, but more specifically the unique nature of cricket.[19] On the other hand, for players from lower socio-economic communities, the realities of their circumstances may be motivation enough for them to persevere to try and earn an income to provide for themselves and their family.

Despite differing interpretations of the concept, mental toughness was the mental attribute most often cited in this study. This supports the findings that mental toughness is a key attribute of cricket performance and should form part of cricket talent development programmes.[118, 119] However, only some components (self-belief, motivation and perseverance) of mental toughness were found to discriminate between highly skilled and lesser skilled batsmen.[119] All of these were mentioned independently of mental toughness in this study, with positive self-belief being considered particularly important to successful performance.

The lack of self-belief seemed to affect a number of players. Injuries, inconsistent selection, fear of failure and particularly a lack of trust from significant individuals, mainly coaches, created a negative effect. In contrast, empowerment of athletes by coaches seems to enhance self-belief and confidence in high performance athletes.[276] It would appear that the self-belief of South African cricketers, particularly Black Africans, would benefit from coaching environments that were more empowering, fostered more decision making and offered more trust in and support of players. In addition, adapting mind-sets to recognise the potential of all players may contribute to developing positive self-belief in cricketers.

Considering the importance that psychological skills have been found to play in cricket performance and the findings in this study that most players believed that many of these skills could be learned, it would seem appropriate that CSA invest more time and resources in the development of players' mental skills. A 12-week long psychological educational programme

with U19 provincial cricketers was found to have a positive influence on player performance.[484] However, there should be further research to more definitively identify the precise nature of the skills that would contribute most effectively to the development of cricket expertise. Furthermore, as established by the socio-ecological model,[186] the influence of environmental factors on psychological attributes needs to be considered in designing relevant programmes.

9.5   Conclusion

This chapter has evaluated the main findings of this research, highlighting the influence of, the complexity of interactions between distal and proximal socio-ecological factors on the five main barriers and enablers of talent development in a diverse society. This relationship is summarised in Table 9.1. Access to opportunities and competition and holistic payer development are the most important barriers and enablers. These two factors are complemented by effective support networks, inclusive team environments and adaptive mind-sets. Furthermore, these barriers and enablers interact with individual player characteristics to determine the progress of the cricketers through the talent pathway from exposure to elite level.

This research has demonstrated the value of a socio-ecological approach to talent development. In the following chapter, the perceived effectiveness of an ethnic target intervention will be evaluated using this approach.

Table 9.1: Relationship between the socio-ecological factors and the barriers and enablers of talent development in South African cricketers

Socio-ecological factors	Talent development barriers and enablers				
	Access to opportunities & competition	Holistic player development	Effective support networks	Inclusive team environments	Adaptive mind-sets
South African society	√	√	√	√	√
Diverse communities	√	√	√	√	√
Place of birth and early development	√	√	√		√
Relative age effect	√	√			
Age started playing the game	√				
Mini cricket programme	√	√			
Role models	√		√		√
Television	√				√
Unstructured play	√	√			√
Multiple sports and specialisation		√			
Early – middle years transition	√	√	√		
U19 – senior transition	√	√	√		
Senior debuts	√	√			√
Remuneration and contracts	√		√	√	√
CSA Structures	√	√		√	
Relationships with administrators		√	√		
Family:					
Early influences	√		√		
Structures	√	√	√		
Socio-cultural	√	√	√		
Financial	√	√	√		
Tangible support	√	√	√		

Socio-ecological factors	Talent development barriers and enablers				
	Access to opportunities & competition	Holistic player development	Effective support networks	Inclusive team environments	Adaptive mind-sets
Emotional support		√	√		
Peers			√		
Schools and clubs:					
Type of school	√	√	√		
Bursaries	√	√			
Clubs	√	√			
Hubs	√	√	√		
Post school	√	√	√		
Coaches:					
Role	√	√	√		
Attributes/skills	√	√	√	√	√
Mentoring		√	√		
Senior teams:					
Cohesion	√	√	√	√	√
Effectiveness	√	√		√	√
Inclusivity		√		√	√

CHAPTER 10   PERCEIVED EFFECTIVENESS OF A TARGET

INTERVENTION

"Nobody would be happy if they thought they were picked because of their colour."
(Makhaya Ntini, former South African opening bowler)

10.1   Introduction

The preceding chapters have highlighted the complexity of the cricket talent development process in a diverse society undergoing transition. The influences within and between proximal and distal environments resulted in five main talent development barriers or enablers that interact with a player's intrapersonal characteristics and further contribute to his ability to progress to the elite level.

Since democracy in 1994, ethnic targets have been a part of the national discourse, as a means of increasing the representation of 'Black' players in South African sports teams (section 2.3.5). In October 2013, following a Transformation Indaba, and in response to the South African government's pressure to transform the Proteas team by increasing Black African representation, Cricket South Africa (CSA) implemented a revised target policy within senior provincial and franchise cricket. The prescribed target numbers are set out in Table 10.1.

Table 10.1: Target numbers for South African senior provincial and franchise cricket teams pre-October 2013 to end of 2017/2018 season[36]

		Pre October 2013 (n)	2013/14 season (n)	2014/15 season (n)	2015/16 season (n)	2016/17 and 2017/18 seasons (n)
Senior provincial teams	**'Black'**	50%	5	6	6	6
	Black African	1	2	3	3	3
Franchise teams	**'Black'**	4	5	5	6	6
	Black African	0	1	2	3	3

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[36] These numbers have been confirmed by CSA's Transformation Manager (personal communication, 17 April 2018).

The same qualitative, interview-based methodology as previously described in Chapter 3 was used to explore the perceived effectiveness of this target intervention on the development of cricket talent in South Africa. The results presented in this chapter integrate the views of the 14 participants (10 Black African players and 4 key informants) from study four, and the perceptions of the participants (White, Coloured and Indian players and key informants) in studies two and three, which were carried out during the same cricket season (2015/16) as study four.

A general assessment of the policy is presented first. This is followed by the perceived effectiveness of the intervention's influence on each of the five talent development outcomes, players' intrapersonal attributes and how it has affected South African cricketers' progress through the talent pathway. The results are then discussed with reference to the overall findings presented in this thesis and the limited literature in this area.

10.2   Overall assessment of policy

It was acknowledged by most participants that transformation of cricket is essential. However, players and key informants qualified this opinion by emphasising that it is not only about number of players in a team, but is also a multifaceted topic with no single definitive mechanism to achieve the desired results. Many of the participants believed that the target policy was a short-term solution to a complex problem. A few participants commented that introducing a new policy in 2013 was too late and that it could have been implemented more effectively sooner after democracy.

> *"The timing I think, it's a bit late to be starting now, it should have been done in '94 and I think we'd be away…you know it's 20 years since democracy." (P14)*

> *"I think it was accelerated 20 years too late in that sense…I think it's 20 years too late…it's only happened over the last 3 years." (KI1)*

All study participants commented on targets, and a number indicated that it was being widely discussed by the current professional and up and coming young players. While targets were an option, the overwhelming feeling was that effective, holistic, integrated and well-managed player development from grassroots upwards was a more sustainable means of transforming

the game. All participants agreed that targets had both positive and negative effects on all players involved in the game.

> *"It will provide you short term solutions in a sense that in a team you will see three Black [African] cricketers and that all looks good, but whether you are developing them for the next five or ten years; I don't think it's the most effective solution. So I would rather you have a look at the structures that you have around and you…utilise those structures to try and develop those products that you are looking for." (P3)*

> *"…What I have picked up, there are two sides of the story and I have just been speaking to some of the Black Africans around the country just to get their views. The other one was like, it is good for the guys to get opportunities and the other one that we discussed, is like a lot of players will be pushed into positions that they are probably not ready to get exposed.…" (P22)*

There were different opinions regarding at what stage in the pathway targets should be implemented. The vast majority of participants concurred that there should be targets during the middle years, i.e. age-group provincial representative levels (U13–U19) and not at Proteas level. The main reason put forward by various participants was that at international level your 'best' side, whatever the ethnic make-up, must play and therefore performance should be the only basis for selection. More than half the participants agreed with targets at the senior provincial level, but some felt that the numbers prescribed were too many. There was approximately a 50/50 agreement from Black African and Indian players and key informants, with targets at the franchise level. However, the majority of White and Coloured players disagreed with the policy at this phase in the pathway, because this was the final stage of preparation for international competition. A few White, Coloured and Indian players disagreed with targets completely but had resigned themselves to the reality of targets and that it was out of their control. A few participants felt that it was time to stop thinking in terms of ethnicity and move forward towards a more equitable situation.

> *"At franchise level, yes and no, because the quota system does give 'Black' players opportunities, but then again I don't think 'Black' players should be labelled a quota player, because that says you're not good enough to play but you playing because you 'Black'. It already gives a negative vibe to the player in themselves…." (P10)*

> *"I feel that the furthest the quotas system must go is at amateur level, in my amateur opinion. Like I do feel that once you get to your franchise cricket your best players must*

play, because that filters into your SA 'A' and your Proteas, you want to choose the best of the best." (P5)

"I reckon there shouldn't be a quota at all that's my opinion. I reckon players should play on merit, of which you've got good enough 'Black' players to play on merit at the moment, so...At any level." (P4)

"I completely hate it [targets], I completely hate it." (P24)

"When are we gonna get to a stage in this country where there's no more discrimination or no more quota system or no more...things should just be fair." (P6)

All Black African players and key informants agreed that the policy should continue for a number of years to enable the process to yield results. Some believed this would provide time for sufficient player development through the talent pathway. Others commented on the need for the players to be given time to adapt to the requirements of the game at the elite level. The length of time for continuation of the policy varied from two years to indefinitely. A variety of prerequisites were put forward for termination of the policy. These included merit selection of Black African players, a change in mind-set away from selecting teams based on adherence to targets, ethnicity no longer being a prerequisite for choosing teams and the acceptance of all cultures within all teams. Some of the White, Coloured and Indian players believed that the policy should only have a limited timeframe.

"We'll be expected to do this for as long as people don't do what they are expected to do. Until people have all bought into the concept, or people realize what transformation is about." (KI4)

"It's probably hard to put a time limit to that, because as I said for me, I am a great believer of things don't just happen overnight...but maybe after five years, we can start gauging. I think [to stop the targets after] two years, it would be very unfair." (P33)

10.3 Access to opportunities

As previously discussed in Chapter 9, participants agreed sufficient opportunities to play competitive matches was a pre-requisite, throughout the talent pathway, for successful performance and advancement to higher representative levels. The implementation of a target policy had reinforced these opinions. The majority of Black African and White players

put forward a lack of opportunities as a major reason for their peers giving up cricket. The reasons provided for this lack of opportunities are presented below.

> *"You only playing however many club games in a year, whereas the other guys who are your competitors at White schools are playing club cricket and school cricket, so they playing 30 games verses 15 games in a year. If you tally that over 5 years of cricket, it's 75 extra games of cricket, which is just 75 games of experience, 75 games of performance you know, 75 more chances to do something that you can reflect on somewhere in your life that you scored a hundred or took 5 wickets or whatever it is."* (KI15)

10.3.1 Black African and key informant perspectives

All the Black African players and key informants were positively encouraged that the introduction of the target policy was providing increasing opportunities to Black African cricketers to play in senior provincial and franchise teams. A number of them believed that this would not have happened without the introduction of the policy and that this forced focus was necessary to encourage a change in mind-sets.

> *"I think it was a great initiative, giving the opportunities to the African/'Black' players."* (P33)

> *"So I think it's been a positive shock."* (P28)

Along with more opportunities, including exposure to different formats of the game, the Black African players and key informants indicated that the quality of such opportunities was improving. They further stated that playing more matches and the extended playing time in the correct role, enabled them to gain valuable experience and better understand all aspects of their own game, as well as the requirements of playing at the elite level. Many of the Black Africans and key informants agreed that these benefits allowed players to improve their performances, which in time would give them a chance to compete for higher honours, such as the South African 'A' and Proteas teams. It was argued by several Black African players and key informants that this quality of opportunity needed to extend down the cricket development pathway to provincial U13 level so that the disadvantages, such as a lack of experience, currently being faced by Black African players at franchise level would be reduced.

"On a positive side you get more experience, you get time on the field to understand different aspects of the game and you learn how to affect the situations." (P21)

Two key informants believed that the rigorous monitoring of the quality of opportunity at the franchise level contributed to this improved opportunity. This monitoring, which was overseen by CSA, included reporting on number of balls bowled by the bowlers, number of balls faced by each batsman and at what stage of the match this occurred. Others felt that a gradual change in mind-sets of coaches and selectors may also be responsible for the improved quality of opportunities.

"The last couple of years, because it's been monitored so much better and we've got a lot more stats to prove it to you guys. We've seen a big change." (KI4)

The opinion of most Black African players and key informants was that targets had not changed the fact that more Black African bowlers were still getting opportunities to play compared to Black African batsmen. They put forward a number of possible reasons for this. The main reason was that batting is a more demanding technical and mental skill requiring a longer time, more dedicated coaching and better facilities to develop, which had not been addressed by targets. They also re-iterated the cost of batting equipment and lack of Black African batting role models as other reasons.

"We haven't seen enough Black African batters coming through. I don't think they are getting the good coaching, or the good guidance from the coaches. I would like to see more of those guys getting helped, to make sure that they perform at a high level. Normally technically, the coaches they are not very well equipped to make sure that we produce enough Black African batters." (P33)

"Black African batters, I still feel like batters get chucked in the deep end and yes, you're putting a Black African batter in as top five, but he's out of his depth, you can see that." (P31)

Finally, they suggested that the nature of bowling provides more chances to compensate for mistakes compared to batting. Bowlers bowl many balls during a match, therefore a few bad balls are less likely to affect their performance. On the other hand, one error by a batsman can result in him being dismissed and therefore no longer able to score runs for the team. However, in a match situation, two Black African players commented on how the trust and backing of the captain influences a bowler's quality of opportunity by determining number of

balls bowled and at what stage of the match. Once selected in the correct position, batsmen conversely are more able to control their own outcome in terms of technical and mental skill.

> *"So it's still for the bowler like limited opportunity, depending on the captain and how he sees you as a player or what he thinks of you, and whether he believes you good enough or not." (P43)*

10.3.2 White, Coloured and Indian perspectives

Approximately half the White, Coloured and Indian players agreed with giving Black African players opportunities so that they could obtain exposure, but they felt this would be preferable at the junior levels. Most of the White players were unhappy that the specific senior level Black African targets were limiting the playing opportunities of White and to a lesser extent Coloured and Indian players transitioning to the senior level and those already playing at that level. This view was supported by a number of the Coloured and Indian players. An alternative view to this was expressed by two key informants. One remarked that until 25 years ago Black African players, however talented, were not permitted to have opportunities and White players had all the advantages. The other key informant stressed that White and Coloured players were still making their international debuts subsequent to and despite the introduction of the policy. A number of the Coloured and Indian players admitted that they had benefited from increased opportunities due to the previous target policy focussing on 'Black' players as a combined group (prior to the introduction of Black African specific targets).

> *"Very good [White player name] cricketer went to the under 19 World Cup…. Then came back to amateur cricket in [province name] and just wasn't ever given an opportunity. He wasn't told why. Like he'd go and score runs at club level he was always…He had a semi-pro contract. And he never got, I don't think he ever got a good opportunity, he used to get a game here and there, but he was never backed consistently." (P16)*

> *"This is what I tell the guys. Is that you know, 25 years ago there were zero targets so you could be the best 'Black' cricketer in the country and you wouldn't get a game. So now, if there's a bit of frustration from a White cricketer's point of view, imagine being a 'Black' cricketer 25 years ago, you didn't get a go, no matter how good you were." (KI15)*

"So who has been the debutants in the Proteas side in the last 2 years? It hasn't been getting rid of the young White cricketers. The [White player name] has come through. A couple of years ago, it was [White player name] and then you've got [White player name] and then you've got [White player name]. So they are all getting those opportunities now still." (KI4)

"…So I would say I played two seasons…two seasons on luck…where the quota system was in place. I wasn't at the level I should have been, I knew I had the potential to get there, never doubted myself. But I wasn't at the level. I was positively affected. So that opportunity right there made me progress." (P12)

Coloured, White and Indian players felt that Black African players were getting more opportunities to improve, while they themselves were stagnating in their development and progress. A few commented that with opportunities anyone could achieve excellence and as one key informant acknowledged, this is what Coloured players had achieved through the earlier target policy. Furthermore, some of these players were concerned that good performances no longer mattered and providing opportunities was the only criterion for selection.

"Personally my experience when I lost my contract with the [franchise name], I was the leading, took the most wickets for [senior provincial team] in the 3 day competition. I was contracted under the [franchise name] and I still lost my contract there. That season that I lost my contract, I played one 4-day game, even though I was a contracted player. And my only reason that I was given was that this whole new Black African rule." (P27)

Many of the White, Coloured and Indian players commented on talented youngsters not pursing cricket as a career, and current senior players, who had previously been regularly selected and performing for teams being left out to accommodate, in their opinion, less competent Black African players. In addition, they confirmed that a number of White cricketers, at all levels, had either left or were considering leaving South Africa to explore opportunities in other countries. Furthermore, they cautioned that young White players would be lost to individual sports, studies and other jobs. On the whole, the White players came across as disgruntled by the perceived unfair treatment of White players.

"The parents are also getting fed up with it so that just…. We'll let them play a sport where there is no quota system like golf and tennis." (P18)

One White and one Indian player questioned the reason for providing opportunities at senior levels for Black African players who had enjoyed the same benefits in terms of schooling, coaching and facilities through the talent pathway, as their White, Coloured and Indian counterparts. Furthermore, a number of White, Coloured and Indian players reiterated that Coloured and Indian players had also been previously disadvantaged under the apartheid regime and were now being discriminated against again by being dropped from teams based on the "colour of their skin". They felt that it was unfair to have a policy specifically benefitting Black African players.

> *"And you start thinking like, if that's the case why should I play cricket, why should I be playing cricket if my colour is not right? Why all of a sudden because of my colour I can't play this game. So it's a thing that makes you, makes you question the whole system." (P36)*

> *"…Just come to practice the day before we fly to Paarl, because they didn't have enough players of colour. Everything like that, and that irritates me. That you make the team just because of your skin colour." (P26)*

> *"If you look at the 'Blacks' that are playing at the moment, they have all been a lot more fortunate throughout their whole lives than me. [Black African player name] has had a lot less worries than me. [Black African player name] has had a lot less worries than me, so I don't agree with them saying well we need to look after these okes[37], I think that's [*#@*]. And what? Why? Just to get more 'Black' people, and I don't understand that." (P9)*

> *"It's not like this generation…hasn't had the opportunity of going to good schools, cricketing schools, sporting schools…. So say for example four different races go to the same school, same talent, same education, same coaching throughout your schooling career, but now that you come to uh…a senior level, one race gets more opportunity or plays more or signs a contract or gets more game time than the others." (P6)*

10.3.3 All participants

In contrast to the differing opinions expressed above by players from the various ethnic groups and key informants, participants agreed on some of the disadvantages resulting from forced opportunities to meet targets. The majority of participants indicated that there were

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[37] Okes is a South African slang word for guys, men.

insufficient Black African players in the CSA talent pathway to meet the required targets. Some participants believed that this limited number of Black African players resulted in 'average' Black African players being selected to play. Others suggested that this caused Black African players to be 'rushed' into franchise teams before they were ready to compete at the elite level. A few participants were upset that targets forced coaches to persist with underperforming players. Some participants felt that the majority of players of all ethnic groups required sufficient time, at least two to three seasons, to establish themselves at the senior level.

> *"And at the same time, on the negative side, there's been some very, very average cricketers." (P21)*

> *"So yes, improvement, but also people are just shot up, when they not ready yet." (P31)*

> *"So some cricketers are thriving…and some obviously will struggle because it's a different level." (P10)*

10.3.4 Use of opportunities

A common opinion among participants was that along with being given quality opportunities to play, some Black African players maximised, while others misused their opportunities. It was stated that those who had used their opportunities had grown their game, been given extended runs, performed and were starting to achieve their ambitions. On the other hand, some participants suggested that some Black African players abused their opportunities by knowing that they had to play irrespective of performance, which resulted in a poor work ethic, a sense of entitlement, not pushing themselves, and being happy with merely getting a pay cheque. One key informant felt that this attitude was normal human behaviour.

> *"So I think that, that perhaps could also hamper progress that they [Black African] get into a comfort zone. And I think that's where mediocrity starts to creep in, that they only need to do enough, to sort of stay there, and there's no push to be better." (P11)*

> *"I come from an environment where you need to produce quality so if I see you as a 'Black' cricketer, I'm going to push you to the limit, I want to get the best out of you. I'm not here to pamper you…the level has gone bad, its dropped and we don't want to find ourselves in a situation, because we put in quotas, that people are taking easy*

routes and then, you know what, you have very, you have one or two cricketers that are not good enough." (KI11)

"And I suppose that happens in every race group, it's not a Black African thing, it's a human thing." (KI14)

The majority of Black African players acknowledged that they had benefited in some form from the policy. A few of them commented that they did not want to be treated differently from other players, except to be given equal opportunities that they felt had been denied to them previously. They continued to state that the policy was now providing Black African players with opportunities that White players had previously received as a result of the trust and belief shown in them from coaches.

"…my white counterparts also got the same kind of opportunity. The only difference is it wasn't given under a policy. The coach trusted them, and said you're going to play and we'll give you a fair run because we see something in you." (P28)

10.4   Holistic player development

The vast majority of participants perceived that not enough had been done in the past or was currently being done throughout the cricket talent pathway and structures to develop the skills and attributes of sufficient Black African players to enable them to meet the demands of performing at the elite level. There was a strong feeling from participants that the introduction of a target policy at the elite level, without addressing the development of the game from foundation through to senior level, would in the long term be unsustainable.

"So I have to question whether there's been enough development of facilities, and coaching structures, and Hubs, and equipment, and all of that. Has it gone into where it's needed to produce/ sustain those quotas at that level?" (KI2)

"So my definitive answer now is that quotas is enabling administrators to avoid doing proper development." (KI16)

The participants identified a number of ways in which this lack of past and current holistic player development had affected the successful realisation of the target intervention. These are discussed below.

10.4.1 Too few Black African players in the talent pathway

A few Black African and key informants and a number of the other players thought that the specific numbers prescribed by the policy, at the senior levels, were a major drawback to effective implementation. One of the reasons given was that the policy was announced four days before the start of the new season.[83] This increased the pressure on the few Black African players to perform and even if they were the best in their position, all Black African players tended to be 'labelled' as 'target' players, which had potential psychological effects on these players (section 10.8). A few participants acknowledged that the balance between the developmental process and the number of Black African players required by the new target policy was causing stress on the organisational system.

> *"I don't…I think there can be targets…there's just not enough players in the system for you know…to meet those targets, there's not enough, cos honestly if push comes to shove you have to literally take a player from a third division club to come and play franchise cricket that could be a situation you know. In the long term, cos there's not enough players in the system, that's what's been happening now…." (P12)*

> *"As for those many success stories, there are also those who are falling by the policy if I can call it that. That are just not good enough, because I believe we do not have the depth of Black African talent especially in our country yet, and that causes a lot of stress on the system and why I believe a lot of people are unhappy within the system." (KI14)*

10.4.2 Selection of teams

Many participants felt that selecting a balanced team posed the biggest challenge and that this was influenced by the depth of Black Africans in the talent pathway available for selection to either the senior provincial or franchise team in a particular provincial region. Furthermore, there was agreement that players needed to perform to be eligible for selection and not to "just make up numbers." Some participants commented that certain provinces did not have sufficient Black African players, while other provinces had an over-supply of quality Black African players. Possible reasons given for this were the strength of the developmental pathways created in a particular province and more Black African coaches at the senior levels in those regions. In addition, some participants indicated that selecting a less competent Black

African player just to meet the target was also unfair to players from other ethnic groups who were better but had to sit out.

> *"There are some players that are just not good enough then what do we do in that instance? If we don't have other players to replace him, because that's what we need to do then we keep on selecting those players and that's happened and that's not good for the player, it's not good for the system, it's not good for the player, it's not good for the other players in the team." (KI14)*

In squads with an over-supply of Black African players, particularly of the same discipline (e.g. seam bowlers), it was acknowledged by some Black African players and key informants that a deserving Black African player may not be selected as the team make-up can only accommodate a certain number of players per discipline. This then decreased the chance for these players to get the sufficient game time needed to progress. It was a fairly common comment that having a quality Black African batsman in the squad of players helped to balance the team.

> *"That for me is…the place where they failing, is they don't know how to balance their teams, now why?...because I can see it in our team where we'll carry an extra bowler, or we'll carry an extra batter, but you can see that it's not what they quite want, but I think the only way one can solve that is that as more African players come through." (P43)*

10.4.3 Quality of cricket

Some participants felt that the quality of cricket, particularly at franchise level, had decreased because of the forced selection of too many ill-prepared Black African players. Others felt that the standard had stayed the same as a result of the policy change. Two White and one Coloured player expressed concern that the decrease in quality had caused a loss in interest in cricket from the public and fewer spectators at domestic matches. Several key informants commented on the need to maintain excellent standards and bring players up to the benchmark required as opposed to lowering the benchmark.

> *"There is more than 6 players of colour that can play, but it doesn't happen very often, but somewhere along the line it's gotta stop, because it's killing South African cricket." (P1)*

"…we can't move those benchmarks to the left hand side we gotta bring the players up to the benchmarks." (KI4)

10.4.4 Coaching and individual player management

As previously discussed (section 7.4), the lack of sufficient and correct technical coaching in the middle years was a major reason for many 'Black' players, particularly Black Africans, not being able to perform at the elite level. They indicated that this then required senior level coaches to provide additional technical coaching, which they felt was not happening sufficiently to make the required improvements.

"What I find is you having to do a hell of a lot of coaching at a franchise level, which you wouldn't expect to have to do, but you have to because of the nature of the beast." (KI15)

"If you look at the Black Africans that play around the country, sometimes me as a player, it is embarrassing to see a 'Black' player, that he hasn't improved for the last three to four months, or even a year and then for me, when I speak personally to the player and ask him…who are you working with. [Player name] has been there for three years and he is getting all the opportunities, but there is not much more improvement happening, but for me…so you need someone to directly focus on putting more effort and focus to those players who they think are not good enough." (P33)

Some participants felt that the monitoring of and feedback to particularly Black African players at franchise level was insufficient to enable the player to understand his lack of improvement and progress. Furthermore, some key informants believed that there was a greater need to discuss performance criteria and standards with the players and develop plans to achieve these. A number of respondents felt that coaches at the amateur and franchise level were not devoting sufficient effort to bridging performance-related gaps particularly among Black African players. A lack of understanding by senior team management, and especially coaches, of players as unique individuals has previously been identified and discussed (section 9.3.3). However, the implementation of the target policy has further highlighted the specific and different challenges faced by Black African players as more of them enter the senior provincial and franchise teams.

"To be quite honest, I know that they have put people in place but I don't even interact with those people honestly." (P22)

Two key informants mentioned that CSA had recognised the inadequate monitoring and management of players by team managements and that it is in the process of designing a Player Performance Plan incorporating a detailed needs analysis. This plan, which would cover, on- and off-field factors to enable performance, was implemented throughout the CSA talent development pathway (U13 to National level) in July 2016.

10.5   Effective support networks

Support networks have previously been identified as an enabler in player talent development. Many of the participants acknowledged that there was a need to provide additional support networks for the increased number of players, who have less family and community support, entering the elite cricketing ranks as a result of the target policy.

10.5.1 Support Programmes

All participants acknowledged that programmes existed post-U19 level to support all players, but particularly Black African cricketers, who were perceived to be less prepared to compete at the senior level. These programmes were implemented to supplement the competencies recognised as lacking in these players, but required to achieve optimally on and off the cricket field. The participants commented that many of these programmes had been in place prior to the implementation of the target policy, but most participants were unaware of any new ones being established post implementation of the policy. The structure of these programmes seemed to differ between the provinces, with some participants describing more formalised structures, such as academies and high performance programmes, and others alluding to less formalised initiatives. Participants also indicated that the emphasis of the programmes varied with some paying more attention to life-skills and emotional support, while others focused more on playing skills.

> *"I think probably from under 19 we should have more players of colour in each and every union's academy so that those boys can be taught cricket skills at an academy level. I feel that the academy should be the graduation of players to step into the provincial…setups. So we need to bridge that gap with those academies for the under 24s." (KI6)*

Most participants re-confirmed the need for on-going mentoring, availability of role models and better functioning academies. Moreover, there was mention from some participants that specific camps should be conducted to up-skill players with perceived weaknesses in particular disciplines, such as batting.

> *"If they want to try and give them some sort of an advantage, who are the less fortunate players, rather run training camps and things that's just designed for them."* (P35)

In addition to the programmes implemented by CSA and its provincial affiliates, the South African Cricketers' Association (SACA) through its Player Plus programme, offered personal development, education and support programmes for contracted professional players to prepare them for life after cricket. Most of the participants believed that these services were beneficial, although many of the players felt they and their colleagues could utilise them better.

> *"I think SACA did a really good job in looking after players, for…life after cricket, which was I think really important, and players that are struggling, or who got injured."* (P42)

10.5.2 Remuneration and the role of agents

With respect to the effect of targets on financial rewards, some Black African players reported that their salaries had increased, a couple had decreased and some stayed the same. There was general agreement that the financial worth of Black African cricketers had increased since the introduction of the target policy as they were now in demand. Most participants said that there had been no improvements in non-financial rewards such as sponsorships. Some participants commented that this demand for scarce Black African resources created tensions within the team environment, because Black African players' earnings were perceived to be inequitable to their ability or seniority. Within the prescribed minimum and maximum earnings for franchise professionals, agreed between CSA and SACA, some participants reported that Black African players with limited experience were earning towards the top end, which was a similar amount to more experienced and senior White players.

> *"For a franchise to keep a Black African cricketer, he has to pay a bit more, so now maybe you getting one Black African cricketer and you getting another White counterpart, who is a guy who is maybe at the same level as the Black African cricketer,*

but financially, they are not able to earn the same. You get those kind of quarrels and I know for us, it was something that was an issue." (P3)

The majority of the Black African players and key informants mentioned that with the implementation of the policy, player agents had exploited the demand for Black African players. Very few Black African players reported that they had agents as they did not believe they added much value. There appeared to be a mistrust of the agents, and two key informants believed that SACA should be vetting agents better and advising players in this regard. Furthermore, a few of the participants questioned whether SACA has the best interests of all players at heart. As more Black African players enter the professional ranks as a result of the target policy, SACA may need to review their organisational make-up to ensure it is relevant to meet the expectations of players from all ethnic groups.

"With agents, I don't trust much." (P20)

"But there's also this perception right, that this SACA is very much a White body that is representative of the White players…So it's very important how SACA presents itself to all its members and I think particularly to the 'Black' members, because they are very sceptical of the union…." (P28)

10.6   Inclusive team environments

As previously described, team cohesion and team effectiveness both contribute to creating inclusive and supportive team environments that contribute to individual player and team performance (section 7.5). With the introduction of the target policy, the make-up of teams was changed in a short time period and all the participants had an opinion on how this had affected the team environments.

10.6.1 Team cohesion

A number of participants commented on the unhappiness experienced in teams due to the policy, which resulted in teams being selected not only on cricketing ability. Some Black African players felt uncomfortable knowing that they may only be selected because of the policy and not their ability. On the other hand, several White and Coloured players felt that they were being unfairly treated because they were left out of teams for Black African players who were perceived to be less competent.

> *"…white guys feel hard done by it, but then there is more pressure on quota players which makes them feel that they not good enough." (P5)*

While this discontent was not always overtly expressed, the players said that they sensed it from the body language and attitudes portrayed by both team-mates and team leadership. In addition, they mentioned that inconsistent reasons for selection decisions also contributed to this unease, leaving players confused as to their role and future position in the team. Two Coloured and two Black African players believed that coaches used the target system as an excuse for selection decisions as opposed to providing players with constructive and honest feedback. It was apparent that the target policy had created unnecessary divisions and exacerbated the previous cliques between players and that much of this could have been alleviated through more honest communications.

> *"If I was a White player as well and I know I am not playing, because a player is 'Black', I won't necessarily share a change room with that 'Black' player." (P33)*

> *"And you find out in our team the 'Black' people are always sitting down there and the White people are always at the back there, but we still have a chat…but in [province name] there's been a few – when I was there, there was a few unhealthy comments. …And you find that when people go to sleep they won't be sleeping at all. They wake up and there's no energy, there's no will to play that day. There has been some terrible things said." (P21)*

> *"I really just think people are moving in their own lanes and trying to go to the same destination, but they are in different lanes…but there isn't much of a very energetic, vibrant working culture." (P28)*

On the other hand, some participants felt welcome and comfortable in their team environment. It was noted by some that a critical mass of players from diverse ethnic groups assisted in this process. The ability of coaches to be able to speak a Black African language, pronounce players' names correctly and understand different cultures were also provided as effective examples of creating more cohesive teams. A few Black African players commented that they themselves could assist coaches and team mates to connect with one another by improved understanding of each other's backgrounds and circumstances

> *"I also found the fact that the coach was able to be multi-lingual. He could speak Zulu fluently, he could speak English fluently and I think he was able to understand*

Afrikaans. He was able to understand a majority of cultures or languages. So I think it's he was able to blend and mix that well." (P43)

"…When this thing [targets] was introduced and we had a couple of guys in the changing room, it was much better. You feel more comfortable and you feel welcome, but you can even still see the division in the changing room, it's still the way." (P20)

A common comment was that the performance of the team played a significant role in team cohesion. Players suggested that when teams performed well, the team environment was more accepting of players of varying cultures and abilities, but when the team was losing, the differences became more apparent. It would appear that this was closely linked to the perception of the quality of the 'target' players in the team that then enabled the team to perform and win.

"You have enough guys that's been part of the winning side to carry on the team dynamics." (P35)

"Just a natural thing that happens, but I always say that when you losing that's when you see the real characters of players and the team that comes out." (P23)

10.6.2 Team effectiveness

Many participants indicated that the target policy had created additional challenges in terms of team leadership, communications and understanding of players, which had affected team effectiveness.

Several participants questioned the commitment of team leadership to both managing the implementation of the target policy and the transition to more inclusive team environments. The majority of participants commented that while superficial discussions take place regarding cultural and/or ethnic differences and the tensions it may cause in teams, the difficult conversations were not taking place to properly address the issues. This may have been due to the complex nature of the topic, a perceived unwillingness or a lack of knowledge of how to address it. Many participants felt that it was necessary to engage fully in more meaningful conversations, however uncomfortable it might be for all stakeholders. They went on to question whether the majority of coaches had the necessary intrapersonal and inter-personal skills required to provide the leadership necessary to holistically develop players of all ethnic groups and mould diverse teams effectively, particularly when the complex issue of

targets was introduced. A couple of participants remarked on the synergistic role of other stakeholders such as provincial Chief Executives and CSA technical consultants in supporting the team leadership to develop transformed environments on and off the field. A few players mentioned that diverse leadership groups had been created to provide a bridge between the players and coach.

> *"As soon as they came in the leadership almost took a stance that the guys are good enough; don't look at the skin colour don't look at the policy, the guys that are here are talented young players. They are good enough. Given the right opportunity, given the right skills, given the right effort they will be just as good as anyone else." (KI14)*

Although poor communication within teams has previously been identified (section 7.5.3), the majority of participants re-iterated that with the implementation of the target policy, this was further highlighted and even more important. Some players reported that their coaches had held discussions - one-on-one, small group or with the whole team - to understand the concerns and needs of all players. Others mentioned the development of a shared vision and values to guide behaviours. Some players expressed concern that the tone of some of these communications and the lack of congruency between messages and actions created barriers to real inclusivity. There was also a feeling from some participants that there was a lack of honest and transparent communication about the target policy and its impact on all players' future prospects.

> *"I think he struggled to communicate to the guys, especially, because he's got a [language] background, so a lot of the African players struggled to kind of communicate in that regard." (P31)*

> *"Communication is poor." (P20)*

> *"I think that's critical that's the essence of everything, because if you can communicate that well so that everybody understands up front what it's about, and then from there onwards every communication that you do have must be consistent with what you said at the start of the season, which I don't think happens at times." (KI14)*

Some participants felt some interventions were contributing to more inclusive environments, but that there was a lack of consistency in their implementation. There was however agreement that there was still much work to be done to understand and accommodate

diverse cultures in South African cricket teams. Moreover, it was recognised as a process requiring time and energy from all stakeholders.

"I think we've moved away from a very alienated team environment." (KI14)

"…Until the culture of South African cricket changes to be able to accept all cultures is when…maybe they can think about of taking the wheels off, because at this point in time they don't accept all cultures and that's a human behaviour." (P43)

10.7 Adaptive mind-sets

Differing attitudes towards targets was identified as a strong theme, either directly or indirectly, during the interviews with all participants. In addition to these attitudes, many of the Black African players alluded to the perception that some White coaches, selectors, captains and players, despite targets, were still affected by a 'cultural blindness' that did not believe that Black African cricketers could successfully play the game at the elite level. These prejudices were echoed by a number of key informants. The legacy of the country's history was proposed by several participants as the major cause for these ongoing mind-sets of White stakeholders. Others put forward the thought that there is a misunderstanding of the concept and intention of targets and transformation. They based this on the assumption of White stakeholders that a player from the 'target group' was automatically not good enough. Furthermore, a few key informants and two 'Black' players blamed some elements of the media for perpetuating these mind-sets by continuing to refer to Black African players particularly as 'target' players.

"So for me I think it [target policy] has aided, because if we didn't implement it, I'm very, very sure that…most, maybe even 80% of the players that have come through would not have come through, because of the culture and the mind-set that is in South African cricket." (KI14)

"People just simply always find excuses not to pick players and it still happens in franchise cricket today." (KI12)

"Some guys are actually good enough to play, but because either their coach or the captain don't trust them, they don't want to play them, they are just playing them, because they have to play them." (P42)

"…the papers keep on calling you names…quota player…." (KI13)

"I think people are seeing how targets are affecting them rather than what the intention of targets are and…once your mind hasn't been opened to that it's…then that targets become the evil that I'm talking about." (KI14)

Targets seem to have perpetuated a 'numbers' mind-set among White, Coloured and Indian players. This was evidenced by comments made by many of these players relating to the number of places available in a team for each ethnic group. Some, mainly Coloured and Black African players, were concerned that coaches and selectors tended to replace a player from a particular ethnic group with another player from that same ethnic group and were not prepared to go beyond the minimum target requirement. This, they felt, created competition among players from the same ethnic group as opposed to competing to be the best in their position. A number of the Coloured players felt that they were always dropped to make way for the Black African players. Several players from all ethnic groups also acknowledged that it was a fairly natural instinct for individuals to choose a player with a similar cultural background to themselves. It would appear that this mechanistic manner of implementing targets tended to treat the players as a "box to tick" as opposed to considering the overall welfare of each player.

"And we always competing against each other so if we 5 coloured guys and only 3 can play at the moment. So you always competing against each other; you'll never find competing against a white guy…." (P32)

"The guidelines they have been prescribed to us and they are: five Whites, three Black African, and then three players of colour, that's the bottom line. And five White being the maximum, obviously. So, that's made it very tough." (P41)

"Even with good performances, it's not enough…When it comes to the make-up of the team the first people that they always drop is Coloured players." (P27)

10.8 Intrapersonal characteristics

The majority of participants commented on how the effects of targets described above were detrimental and would tend to have a negative psychological impact on many Black African players. Many participants felt that these effects would decrease confidence and self-belief among the Black African players and possibly adversely affect their ability to perform. They

further commented that this was further exacerbated in some cases by the player himself knowing that he is not good enough to perform at the elite level.

> *"…Do politicians or administrators actually take a step back and say…unless you've played, you know you've gone through that, do they actually realise that at the end of the day, it's…not doing any, any good to players." (KI11)*

> *"If you know you're not good enough, or if you don't feel quite good enough, and your results aren't showing that, then playing as a quota player can be damaging to a person's career, so I, again, depending on the different individuals and how strong you are as a person." (P42)*

> *"So you always doubt yourself you know you always take a mental knock every time that happens. It's like all these people saying you not good enough we dropping you, you always take the fall. So mentally that is a lot to take in and it breaks you down you know." (P23)*

There was a general perception from various players and key informants that these effects were managed differently by individual Black African players. Some felt that the mentally stronger players were better equipped to handle these factors. A number of Black African players believed that it was important that they attempt to adapt their thinking about the policy so that it did not affect their performance. One player in particular acknowledged that once he accepted that targets were out of his control, his performances improved. Some players discussed how more senior Black African players were used to guide and support new Black African players in all aspects of their game, but particularly in dealing with some of the mental aspects.

> *"Let me just play, I am good enough It doesn't matter about the quota. I am just going to be good enough and go and play and that is when my mind-set changed and I play my best cricket." (P20)*

Several White players perceived that having their careers hampered by receiving fewer opportunities to play had dampened their spirits and increased their self-doubt and fear of failure, because they were always "fighting" for their limited places in the team. About half the Coloured players and only one Indian player had the same feelings. Although they may have been negatively affected by the policy, some White and Coloured players commented on how it had encouraged them to work harder to perform and make sure they were the best

in their team role. A few of these players felt that each player had a personal responsibility to manage the change and not use it as an excuse. This was re-iterated by several key informants.

"You have to be one of the best 5, you know if you don't do well there's another guy waiting to come in who will do just as well. So there's a lot of fear of failure." (P30)

"I've made peace with the system…it's here to stay, it's no use fighting it. You just have to accept it and all of a sudden you can't compete with Coloured players you gotta compete with everyone in the side you gotta challenge everybody…If you start challenging everybody you can ask questions and then…they have to make a way for you in the side." (P29)

"There's a lot of cricketers out there that have an issue with the system, because of fact that they Coloured and they…and…if you not good enough you not good enough you not good enough. And hiding behind um…problems and hiding behind issues is…is not gonna get you moving forward, it's only gonna keep you where you at." (P17)

10.9 Effect of target policy on progress through the pathway

All players commented on the manner in which the new policy had affected their cricket progress since its implementation in October 2013.

10.9.1 Black African players

As expected, the numbers of Black African players have increased to meet the prescribed targets. While the policy was promoted as a 'target' policy, the majority of participants referred to it as a quota policy, and a few questioned its real intention.

"Because they really aren't targets, they are quotas. Because if the targets aren't met, well then, there's trouble." (KI2)

Most Black African players and key informants were certain that there were more Black African players progressing from U19 into senior levels as a result of the target policy. A concern expressed by a few Coloured and White players was the 'fast tracking', for non-cricket reasons, of Black African players through the system and skipping the senior provincial developmental level. They felt this was unfair to other players and prejudiced the Black African players who would be unable to perform if they were not fully prepared for the level of cricket required. This was supported by two key informants who were adamant about the importance

of working through the pathway, performing, competing and reflecting on learnings at all levels. One Black African player commented on limited new faces and that those being selected had been in the system and were likely to have progressed despite the policy.

"…sixty percent deserve to be there." (P21)

"We haven't seen many new faces, which is worrying." (P42)

Many Black African players and key informants felt that there was an increased desire for under 19 Black African players to consider playing the game at the senior level now. Reasons provided included the incentive of real opportunities to play and progress, financial rewards, the stability of contracts, and inspiration provided by role models now playing at the national level.

"They're playing cricket because now they can see that there are opportunities at the highest levels…So seeing that, more Black African cricketers are keen to stay in cricket." (P10)

10.9.2 Other players

On the other hand, a number of White, Coloured and Indian players were troubled that their peers, and in some cases themselves, were not progressing as anticipated, resulting in the loss of experienced players from the teams. Quite a few White players were annoyed that the sudden change in the 'playing field' had interrupted their and their colleagues' chosen cricket career leaving them with difficult decisions to make and possible loss of earnings. They felt that this was unfair as, from a historical perspective, there were many more competent White players already in the pathway compared to Black African players and Black African players were being drafted in to fulfil numbers without the necessary development.

"It takes away a lot of opportunity from guys who are on the verge, because they miss out…I'm not allowed to compete for my spot, so that's what frustrates me so much. So I've worked 13 years for this and to have someone who hasn't worked as hard as me just be given it on a plate." (P30)

10.9.3 Progress to Proteas level

Some Black African players and key informants commented that as the quantity and quality of Black African players increased at senior domestic level over time, as a result of targets,

there would be a natural progression of players selected on merit into the Proteas team. This supported the opinion of the majority of participants that targets should not be in place at national level. All the Black African players commented that they wanted to be in the Proteas team on merit and not as perceived 'target' players. These players further agreed that, at this stage, players of all ethnic groups were deserving of their place in the national team.

"In terms of Proteas I don't think it should happen there, if we force it there at a lower level, at National level the guys should be there on merit." (KI10)

Despite the above, two Black African players argued that transformation of the national cricket team might be hampered by the same inflexible mind-sets that had been experienced by Black African players at senior provincial and franchise level. They felt that the implementation of targets at this level may serve to encourage mind-set change as was happening at the senior provincial levels.

"The Proteas I believe have to transform and bring South Africa together otherwise they will keep sending the message out that they're divided. That it's only a white sport, because the majority that are playing are white. Obviously it will take longer. I'm not saying they must do it in a day but I think that needs to be a goal…but there needs to be a start where to actually start to start fast forward the process and once that is done, people will start to accept that this game is for all races, all cultures." (P43)

10.10 Discussion

The results of this study suggest that targets alone are not an effective intervention for developing cricket talent in a diverse society undergoing transition. They did not appear to have an influence on many of the barriers and enablers identified in the multi-level socio-ecological approach to talent development. Furthermore, the findings of this study concurred with the literature that transformation of cricket was both complex and multifaceted, thereby requiring more than a one-dimensional approach, such as targets, to ensure long-term sustainability.[31, 77, 80, 485] CSA itself has also recognised the need to address transformation throughout the system, requiring not only dynamic interventions, but also a "deep-seated" change in mind-sets by all stakeholders.[78, 486]

10.10.1 Opportunities

Although this study found that access to opportunities for Black African players had increased as a result of the revised target policy, such opportunities were only in relation to the numbers of players within representative teams (age group, senior provincial and franchise) and to a certain extent, the quality of opportunities at these levels. This increase, and its subsequent impact on progress through the talent pathway, was expected as the policy forced the selection of a minimum number of players and rigorous monitoring ensured that the players played a meaningful role in matches. The lack of previous holistic player development throughout the talent pathway,[50, 63] also found in this study, has contributed to the a dearth of Black African players at the elite level. This created challenges for coaches in terms of managing team dynamics and selections, which were not always in the best interests of the players. This would concur with previous authors' assertions that selection decisions consist of more than just a single criterion, [38, 268] in this instance ethnicity.

The impact of the target policy on Black African players was experienced at both the individual and team level. Furthermore, increased opportunities for Black African players resulted in decreased opportunities for players from the other ethnic groups, which affected their careers and caused discontent among the players, which further created a negative team environment. It would seem that in CSA's rush, under pressure from the South African Government, to implement the policy, it had 'put the cart before the horse', and failed to take these consequences into consideration or adequately address their impact.

Using player debut data from the open access ESPNcricinfo website, Table 10.2 provides some interesting insights into how increased opportunities at the elite level has translated into representation at Proteas level.[69] In the period since the introduction of the new policy until the end of the 2017/18 season (i.e. April 2018), more White players (15) have debuted at Proteas level than Black African (9) or Coloured/Indian (6) players, suggesting that there are still opportunities for quality White players. Of all the players who debuted in this period, 70% had played five or more matches in one format or ten or more matches in all formats, which provides some indication of consistency of performance. Therefore, despite the perceptions of decreased opportunities for White players, this is not represented in the numbers of players

that continue to make it at national level. Perhaps further discussions and honest dialogue is needed to clarify these perceptions.

Compared to the other ethnic groups, post October 2013, Black African players who have consistently played for the Proteas debuted after fewer years (3.8) playing first class cricket. This suggests that they are potentially being fast-tracked to meet the required Proteas targets set in 2016 (section 2.3.5). Additionally, it may be because there are fewer (three) quality Black African players in the franchise teams that are available for national selection, compared to five White players. The longer time that the other ethnic groups spent playing first class cricket may indicate that these players had debuted at this level quite some time ago. The small number of Coloured and Indian players debuting during this period may support the belief of these players that they are not being considered for selection in order to accommodate the Black African players.

Table 10.2: Player debuts for the Proteas between 2013/14 and 2017/18 season[69]

	Black African		Coloured		Indian		White		All players	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
Total new debuts	9	30	4	13	2	7	15	50	30	100
Consistency measured by playing ≥ 5 matches in one format or ≥ 10 matches in all 3 formats	5	24	4	19	2	10	10	48	21	100
Consistency as a % of total players making debut		56		100		100		67		70
Average years between first class and Proteas debut of those playing consistently	3.8		5.9		8.3		7.0		6.2	
Average years between first class and Proteas debut of all new debutants	5.9		5.9		8.3		7.2		6.7	

Furthermore, in the same period, an increasing number of White players, including some of those who have played for the Proteas, have made themselves unavailable for national

selection by pursuing their careers in England using the Kolpak agreement because they did not believe they had a future cricket career in South Africa, among other reasons.[487]

10.10.2 Holistic player development and support

This review of the target intervention confirmed that holistic player development was a prerequisite for effectively implementing a target policy. Despite differences of opinion among the ethnic groups, in terms of the need for the policy at different stages of the talent pathway, and its length of enforcement, the implementation challenges presented confirmed the need for holistic player development. It appeared that players were in many instances set up to fail by exposing them to high-level elite competition without the requisite skills gained through ongoing opportunities and coaching at all levels of development. Along with the need to develop technical skills, the increased number of matches and quality of opportunity provided to Black African players would assist in growing their tactical knowledge and mental strength by increasing their opportunities to reflect on their performances. The importance of cricket experience to decision-making in cricket has previously been suggested.[432]

Of particular importance was the need for the quality and quantity of technical coaching to be increased from the middle years upwards to assist in closing the performance gap identified in those players being exposed to elite cricket, as a result of targets, without the necessary development opportunities. The perceived lack of professional, interpersonal and intrapersonal coaching skills emphasised in this study and previously discussed (section 9.3.3), has not been addressed through a player target policy and CSA should consider enhancing these aspects of its coach education. Along with more effective coaching and the implementation of the Player Performance Plan to monitor the needs of each player in the talent pathway, additional support through programmes (e.g. batting camps, academies) and individuals (e.g. mentors and role models) has been shown to assist in the holistic development of players.[55, 184, 255, 289] These support networks would be particularly beneficial to players who do not have as much support from communities, family, and schools.

10.10.3 Inclusive team environments

Although a lack of inclusivity in senior team environments has previously been discussed (section 9.3.4), it is clear that the implementation of targets exacerbated the negative effect

on team cohesion experienced by players from all ethnic groups. The perceived lack of leadership in managing the transition to increased diversity in team composition, and communication around the implementation of the policy, as well as its impact on selection decisions affecting players in the short and long term, further impacted the effective functioning of team environments. It would appear that not enough has been done within these environments to mitigate the effects of the target policy on team cohesion and that team leadership needs additional interpersonal skills to manage increasingly diverse teams and assist all players in dealing with the negative factors associated with the target intervention.

10.10.4 *Intrapersonal impact*

In addition to the negative impact on team environments, this study has shown how the imposition of targets impacts the psychological attributes of players, which then affects their ability to develop their expertise and perform on the field.[15, 119, 488] While individual players are likely to manage the effects differently depending on attributes such as their metal strength,[489] the overall perception was that being labelled a 'target' player tended to have a negative psychological impact on the majority of the Black African players.

10.10.5 *Socio-ecological focus*

Ethnic targets have a narrow 'numbers' focus and are therefore unable to address other socio-ecological factors that affect opportunities to participate in and develop cricket skills.[31, 50, 80] For example, introduction to the game by family members, financial resources to buy equipment, access to facilities (at schools, clubs or Hubs) and coaching resources are not addressed by a targets intervention. CSA and its provincial affiliates cannot address some of these socio-ecological factors, such as socio-cultural diversity, economic inequalities and poor schooling and sports facilities for the majority of the population. However, the organisation has recognised the need to supplement the target policy with additional initiatives to provide additional access to opportunities and to support players through the talent development pathway. The majority of these have been introduced or enhanced post introduction of the target policy in 2013 and in part as a response to the initial findings of this thesis. These will be further discussed in Section 11.3.

Cricket South Africa has increased the number of players from disadvantaged communities who have received bursaries to attend well-resourced cricket schools. In addition, the Hubs and coaches in these communities are also assisting to grow the game at grassroots levels and make some difference to the quality of cricket participation in these areas. However, CSA has only budgeted for one additional Hub per annum between 2017 and 2020, which equates to approximately 400 (7%) additional players being afforded quality opportunities throughout the country over four years.[78] Although these initiatives will contribute to increasing 'Black' players in the talent pathway, without Government co-operation to improve facilities and resources at 'former model B' schools and clubs in the previous 'Black' communities, it seems unlikely that cricket participation will increase significantly in these areas in the short term.

The perceived inequalities in player remuneration may also need to be addressed by both CSA and SACA so as to avoid further discontent among players and the loss of players from the game or to other countries.[65] With respect to SACA specifically, the perceived concern by some players as to the relationship between SACA and the players may need to be investigated further. As more Black African players enter the professional ranks and 'Black' players constituent a greater proportion of contracted players compared to White players, SACA's own organisational structures may need to be reviewed to be more representative of the players it represents. This will enable it to better understand the diverse situations that affect players on and off the field. Currently SACA's operations team is 75% White, of which five of the eight members are White males. Sixty two percent of its personal development managers, who implement SACA's support programmes directly with the players are White, and its executive committee is 50% White.[490]

The findings of this intervention illuminated a deeper understanding of the varying paradigms through which the players from different ethnic groups and the key informants interpret the intention of targets. It further highlighted the impact that a divided South African society has had on the mind-sets of individual stakeholders in the game and to some extent specific groups. Of particular concern was the fixation on mechanistically managing the development of cricket talent based on the numbers required in a team rather than treating each cricketer as a person with specific characteristics and abilities. However, it could be argued that the policy itself perpetuated the attention given to the numbers, highlighting the narrow focus of such a policy. On the other hand, as put forward by some participants, without such a policy

the changes that have taken place in the cricket teams may not have happened in the absence of a "forced focus."

CHAPTER 11   CONCLUSION

"The batsman facing the ball does not merely represent his side. For that moment, to all intents and purposes, he is his side. This fundamental relation of The One and the Many, Individual and Social, Individual and Universal, leader and followers, representative and ranks, the part and the whole, is structurally imposed on the players of cricket." (C.L.R James, Trinidadian historian, journalist, socialist and cricket author)

11.1   Introduction

This concluding chapter summarises the key findings of the research presented in this thesis. Thereafter, the implications of the findings are discussed in broad terms with specific recommendations for, and application by South African cricket. The strengths, limitations and suggestions for future research are considered, followed by some personal reflection. The thesis culminates with some final thoughts.

11.2   Key findings

By understanding the influences of socio-ecological factors on the barriers and enablers of talent development, this thesis makes a unique contribution to the existing body of knowledge related to the process of acquiring cricketing expertise. The key findings are summarised below with reference to the socio-ecological framework shown in Figure 11.1.
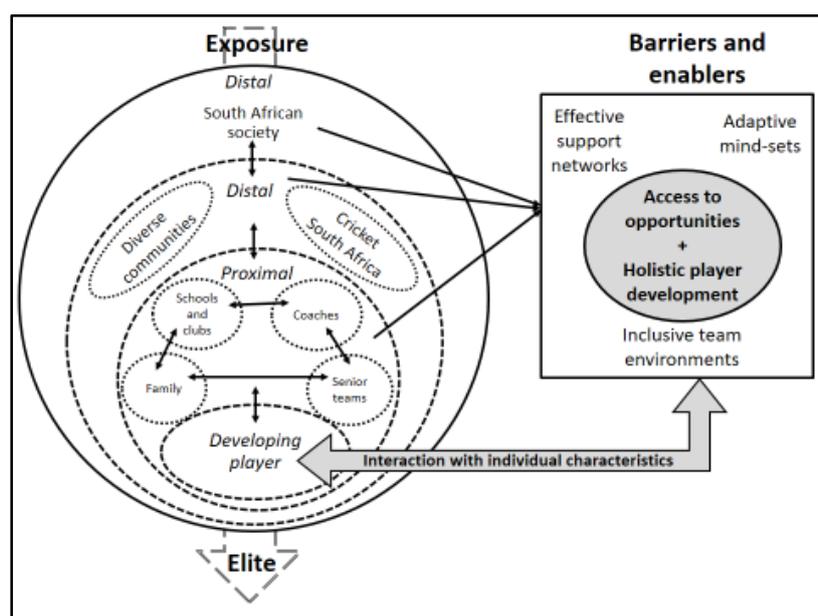
Figure 11.1: Socio-ecological framework of talent development in cricketers in a diverse society

All the players interviewed in this study progressed to the elite level. However, this was achieved through various access points into and routes through the pathway. Their progress was influenced by a multitude of socio-ecological factors that interacted within and across the distal and proximal environments in which each player developed. These influences can be encapsulated into five main inter-related components that act as either barriers or enablers to progress:

1) Access to opportunities and competition,

2) Holistic player development,

3) Effective support networks,

4) Inclusive team environments, and

5) Adaptive mind-sets.

In addition, these components interact with the player's intrapersonal attributes to further determine his ability to develop into an elite cricketer. Moreover, as the target study showed, any intervention to enhance cricket talent development is more likely to have an increased chance of success if a socio-ecological approach to implementation is followed. Therefore, the socio-ecological framework of talent development reinforces the idiosyncratic, non-linear, complex, multi-factorial and unpredictable acquisition of cricket expertise, particularly in diverse societies.

Progress through the pathway was achieved through varied access points into and routes through the pathway. All the players in this study eventually succeeded at the elite level, whether they were successful during the junior years or not. This provides support that early success in not a prerequisite for later success. On the other hand, the later debuts at the elite level of some players suggests that playing junior representative cricket may provide some advantage to progressing through the pathway quicker. No single route was followed, but a preferred trajectory was recognised.

11.2.1 Access to opportunities and competition

Access to opportunities throughout the pathway, from exposure to the elite level, was found to be the building block for cricketing progress and later success. These opportunities are mainly provided by family, mini-cricket development programmes, attendance at well-

resourced schools, admission to Cricket South Africa's (CSA) High Performance pathway and sufficient quality of opportunities to perform at the senior level. However, for the majority of potential cricketers in South Africa and other low-middle-income societies, these opportunities are less accessible due to a variety of socio-ecological constraints. Therefore, without active intervention at multiple levels of the socio-ecological framework, these players will continue to be excluded from the game.

11.2.2 Holistic player development

Along with sufficient opportunities, the holistic development of players' cricketing expertise was perceived to be the other core barrier or enabler to progress. Unstructured play and multiple sports participation, complemented by effective technical and tactical cricket coaching at the different stages of the pathway, creates the foundation on which cricketing success is built. Player-centred management and active mentoring further enable holistic player development. This necessitates having sufficient and appropriately trained coaches from diverse backgrounds who can build congruent relationships with all players based on an understanding of their needs, both on and off the field. A lack of commitment to the holistic development of all players has resulted in the slow progress of players, from some ethnic groups, transitioning to the highest levels of South African cricket.

11.2.3 Effective support networks

Despite varying levels of support, due to differing family structures, socio-cultural and financial circumstances, this cohort of players progressed because of the support provided by their families and significant other individuals from the cricket community and schools. Tangible and emotional support, particularly from parents, reinforce the participation and progress of cricketers. However, players from single parent, lower socio-economic communities are less likely to receive this support, thereby increasing the risk of exclusion.

In order to retain players within the system, support from within the cricket structures was found to be most important during the transition from U19 to senior level. Increased socio-economic and cultural challenges seem to exacerbate the already high level of player dropout during this stage.

11.2.4 Inclusive team environments

Senior team environments were perceived by Black African players to lack cohesion as a result of limited playing opportunities and off-field integration. In addition, team effectiveness was compromised by insufficient leadership skills, poor communications and a lack of understanding of the uniqueness of each player. Improved team cohesion and effectiveness, facilitated by emotionally intelligent and transformational team leadership, will create more inclusive team environments with the potential for enhanced individual and team performance. This will afford all players a sense of belonging and the opportunity to progress to higher levels.

11.2.5 Adaptive mind-sets

This research found that attitudes towards players from ethnic groups different to oneself, have been shaped by the country's historical social forces that will take time and dedicated effort to overcome. These mind-sets were revealed in various situations: the manner in which teams were selected, the amount of playing time afforded to some players, a lack of belief in the cricket abilities of Black African players by predominantly White coaches, ethnic-aligned cliques in teams, attitudes towards targets and transformation and a failure to recognise the impact of South Africa's complex inequalities on the development of all players. Therefore, for genuine integration to occur, there is a need for all stakeholders to adapt their mind-sets to eliminate racial bias and accept the diversity of talented cricketers playing the game in South Africa.

11.2.6 Intrapersonal attributes

A range of intrapersonal characteristics was identified by the players as contributing either positively or negatively to their cricket development and success. Although these attributes were fairly consistent across the ethnic groups, extrinsic motivators, less access to resources to manage injuries, and a decreased self-belief due to coach attitudes were most apparent among Black African players. Psychological attributes, particularly mental toughness, self-belief, perseverance, passion and hard work, were described as attributes the participants felt contributed to cricket success. As many of these attributes can be developed, appropriate

mental performance interventions seem likely to enhance these characteristics, which can then further enable players' progress to the elite level.

11.2.7 Target intervention

Despite providing opportunities to an increasing number of Black African players at the representative levels, and inspiring young players to pursue a career in cricket, the target policy has had a limited effect on the other barriers and enablers to talent development. The lack of holistic player development, throughout the pathway, for all those wishing to play cricket has resulted in an insufficient number of players from some ethnic groups at the elite level. Furthermore, it has had a negative impact on individual players from all ethnic groups, as well as exacerbating the limited inclusivity of team environments. Although CSA has introduced some complementary interventions to provide additional support to players, this research has shown that these can only have a limited impact, until such time that some of the wider socio-economic inequities that continue to plague South Africa are addressed.

11.3 Implications, recommendations and applications

This study has shown that a socio-ecological approach is necessary to establish comprehensive and effective interventions to address the barriers to progress faced by diverse communities. Furthermore, the inter-related nature of the barriers and enablers suggests that recommendations cannot be addressed in isolation from one another as there is likely to be overlap among the factors.

The findings have implications specifically for CSA, but also for other South African sporting codes that are grappling with similar challenges. Furthermore, sporting organisations in other countries in which athletes from low socio-economic and culturally diverse societies have experienced exclusion from sports participation may benefit from the findings of this research. The guidelines provided may assist other sports and countries to determine their own strategies, but specific recommendations would be unique to the circumstances of each country and sport.

During the course of this research, the findings and recommendations were regularly fed back to CSA, particularly after the completion of study one. These suggestions have helped to inform policies and practices to pragmatically optimise talent development across all players,

but with specific emphasis on players who had previously been excluded. Further, the recommendations may have enabled CSA to direct financial and human resources to the interventions that were most likely to have the greatest impact in achieving their objectives. While there is no direct evidence that the interventions implemented by CSA were as a result of this research alone, many of the changes have occurred subsequent to their commissioning of the research and the presentation of the findings and recommendations in 2013.

It is acknowledged that the barriers and enablers have been influenced by some distal and proximal factors beyond CSA's control, and therefore some may not have been implementable by CSA alone. However, these suggestions may have enabled CSA to form partnerships with other elements of society (government, communities, schools and clubs) to address the complex challenges being faced.

The recommendations made to CSA, with reference to how the organisation has or has not applied them are presented in Table 11.1.

Table 11.1: Recommendations and application of recommendations by Cricket South Africa

Area of impact	Recommendation (year made)	Rationale	CSA application (reference where applicable)
Organisational leadership	Setting of agreed performance standards with and on-going monitoring of adherence to such standards by all employees. (2013)	To improve leadership at all levels of the organisation through employee accountability for implementation in areas of responsibility.	All CSA employees now have annual performance reviews.
Organisational leadership	Reconciliation of LTAD model with CSA's talent pathway. (2018)	To provide a single talent framework for all stakeholders.	Not applicable (as recommendation only made as part of this thesis).
Access to opportunities	Negotiation of increased cricket screened on the national broadcaster. (2013)	To increase exposure of individuals from low-income communities to the game.	CSA has ensured that international cricket is aired on the national broadcaster (See note 1), although this does not always cover all matches.[491]
Access to opportunities	Continuation of mini-cricket development programme throughout the country. (2013)	To ensure increased exposure to and participation in the game at grass roots level.	This has continued and as of 2017, 2.5 million youngsters had been exposed to the game over the past 35 years.[64] (Section 9.2.4) In addition, the Hub and RPC programmes have been introduced to facilitate the transition of players to hardball cricket. (See notes 1 and 2)
Access to opportunities	Increase in bursaries to 'cricket schools', during the middle years, for talented players from low-income families. (2013)	Short-medium term solution to increase opportunities for Black African players in particular, until educational and cricket facilities in all communities are improved.	As of April 2018, there were 72 bursary holders at predominantly 'former model C' schools. (Section 9.3.2) CSA have also increased the number of schools around the Hubs and RPCs, from which identified players receive the available bursaries. (See note 1)

Area of impact	Recommendation (year made)	Rationale	CSA application (reference where applicable)
Access to opportunities	Subject to funding and partnership with government structures, increase the number of community-based Hubs and RPCs. (2018)	Although progress has been made in this regard, it would seem that the rate of increase is insufficient to have a meaningful impact on the number of players in the low-income communities. (Section 9.3.2)	Between 2016 and 2018 the number of Hubs and RPCs increased from 58 to 68. (See note 2). This is more than had been initially planned.
Access to opportunities	Improved functioning of the provincial academies and inclusion of an education component. (2013)	To provide sustainable opportunities for players post school. The inclusion of education will provide the players with non-cricket skills that can be utilised when they transition out of the game for different reasons: not making it to the franchise level, loss of contract, career-limiting injury or retirement.	There are now provincial academies in all the provinces.[78] Not aware of the perceived effectiveness of these academies and whether all players are undertaking some tertiary education. This is an opportunity for future research.
Access to opportunities	Assessment of the role of clubs in providing opportunities for players to develop their talent. (2013)	To provide an opportunity for late developers and those players not identified for academies to continue with their cricket development.	Interaction between clubs in the communities and the Hubs and RPCs takes place through the Hub and RPC management structures. (See note 2)
Access to opportunities	Ensure that senior provincial teams operate in a manner that benefits the development of all players and that having 50% of the players not paid does not affect the team environment. (2013)	As these teams include 50% of players that are paid and the others that are not, some players may be working and/or studying and therefore practice times need to take this into consideration; if not, it may perpetuate exclusion of some players.	CSA has conducted a review of the domestic cricket structures and recommendations have been made to strengthen the game at this level.[450] (Section 9.2.5) Senior provincial contracts introduced to include all players at this level with effect from 2018/19 season. (See note 1)

Area of impact	Recommendation (year made)	Rationale	CSA application (reference where applicable)
Access to opportunities	Consider increasing the number of franchise teams by one or two. (2013)	To increase opportunities for professional players.	Following CSA's review of domestic cricket and the recommendation by the panel of a seventh franchise, CSA's Council resolved to retain six franchises.[450] [486]
Access to opportunities	Monitor the playing time of all players at franchise level. (2013)	To ensure that all players are afforded sufficient quality of opportunity to contribute to the team and compete for higher honours.	A Quality of Opportunity dashboard has been designed and the number of games played, balls bowled, batting position etc. are monitored. This is reported on an annual basis to CSA's Board of Directors.[78]
Holistic player development	Identify, develop and adequate remunerate more 'Black,' and specifically, Black African coaches. This could also include a period of internship as well. (2013)	To ensure that there are sufficient coaches throughout the talent pathway and in all communities requiring coaching.	Coaching has been prioritised within CSA's transformation plans and specific targets set for the number of 'Black' coaches within the structures.[78] A large number of 'Black' coaches were appointed at the beginning of the 2017/18 season at various levels within the pathway. Salaries have been improved and coaches are now contracted for 12 months of the year.
Holistic player development	Enhanced focus on intrapersonal and interpersonal skills development of coaches. (2013)	These skills were identified as lacking in many coaches, yet essential for understanding, communicating and holistically developing players.	Senior provincial and franchise coaches as well as provincial coach education managers have attended a 2-day course to enhance their player management skills (leadership, business and finance, diversity and equity. (See notes 2 and 3)

Area of impact	Recommendation (year made)	Rationale	CSA application (reference where applicable)
			A new Black African Coach Education Manager was appointed at CSA, effective 1 May 2018.
Holistic player development	Implementation of a more all-encompassing (e.g. 360°) coach measurement system. (2013)	To encourage the coaches to holistically develop players and not only focus on win-loss records.	Performance agreements with coaches (senior provincial and franchise) have been designed and cover areas such as performance, player development, transformation, operation and stakeholder management.[78] It is understood that these agreements are currently being implemented.
Holistic player development	Monitor the effectiveness of the Hubs and RPCs. (2018)	To determine whether these structures are achieving their stated objectives and developing players to perform at the elite level.	Currently the Incentive Scorecard, player production to representative teams, structured monthly reports and random visits are used to monitor and evaluate the Hubs and RPCs. (See note 2) CSA has also agreed to a research study to determine the effectiveness of the Hubs. (See note 4)
Holistic player development	Implementation of individual player development plans for identified players in the talent pathway. (2013)	To encourage player-centred management covering all aspects of player development.	The Player Performance Plan and Player Development Plans (PDPs), based on player needs assessments are being implemented throughout CSA's High performance pathway.[78] (Sections 9.2.5 and 10.10.2)

Area of impact	Recommendation (year made)	Rationale	CSA application (reference where applicable)
Holistic player development	Implementation of a formalised mentoring programme for all players. (2013)	This will complement player development and provide additional life skills for players who have not had the same opportunities as their counterparts.	CSA has recognised the need for mentorship.[78] An ex senior Black African player has been appointed to mentor players.
Holistic player development	Monitoring and mentoring of bursary holders. (2013)	To ensure that the players develop in all intelligences: intellectual, emotional, social, cultural and cricket. To identify and solve any challenges as early as possible.	Some of the bursary holders are mentored through the Momentum 2 Excellence (M2E)[492] and Sunfoil Bursary Trust (See note 2) programme. Others may have a PDP through CSA's Player Performance Plan for talented players.[78] (Sections 9.2.5 and 10.4.4)
Holistic player development	Encourage players to spend some time overseas. (2018)	To enhance their cricket skills by playing in different conditions and to develop their life skills.	Not applicable (as recommendation only made as part of this thesis).
Effective support networks	Implementation of additional support programmes, for example life skills training, mentoring etc. (2013)	To assist players from communities in which the socio-economic conditions have limited development of these skills.	The SACA's Player Plus programme has been involved in providing these programmes to professionally contracted players.[493]
Effective support networks	Assist with transport and equipment costs. (2013)	To enable players to attend practice and matches and have the correct equipment.	A needs assessment for all players in CSA's High Performance Pathway was introduced in 2016.[78] Through this, specific player needs are identified and budget made available by CSA. There is a significant budget for transport and equipment relating to the Hubs and RPCs specifically. (See note 4)

Area of impact	Recommendation (year made)	Rationale	CSA application (reference where applicable)
Effective support networks	Provide access to nutrition and medical advice where necessary. (2018)	To ensure that players have the necessary advice to perform optimally.	Not applicable (as recommendation only made as part of this thesis). However, the player needs assessments do cover this aspect of player development.[78]
Effective support networks	Provide financial and contract advice. (2018)	To enable players without access to agents or other financial professionals to manage their affairs.	Not applicable (as recommendation only made as part of this thesis). However, SACA's Player Plus programme does have a financial module.[493] The effectiveness of this module should be evaluated.
Effective support networks	Ensure equitable remuneration. (2018)	To ensure that all players are treated fairly taking all aspects of remuneration into account, including experience and seniority.	Not applicable (as recommendation only made as part of this thesis).
Effective support networks	Encourage ex-players from all ethnic groups to actively contribute as role models. (2018)	To inspire young players to take up the game, as well as guide players as they enter the senior ranks.	Not applicable (as recommendation only made as part of this thesis).
Inclusive team environments	Promote empowering team environments through more transparent and honest communications. (2013)	This will allow players to feel more comfortable expressing themselves without fear of reprisal.	Not aware of any specific programmes.
Inclusive team environments	Educate players and team management in understanding, recognising and addressing institutional discrimination, positional 'stacking' and cultural and structural mind-sets and filters. (2013)	To allow players to feel that they belong within the team, understand one another better, and begin the process of a shared acculturation process.	Not aware of any specific programmes.

Area of impact	Recommendation (year made)	Rationale	CSA application (reference where applicable)
Inclusive team environments	Offer intrapersonal and interpersonal skills training for all players. (2018)	To enable players to contribute more meaningfully in team meetings and partake in solution-driven decision-making.	Not applicable (as recommendation only made as part of this thesis).
Adaptive mind-sets	Provide education programmes for all cricket stakeholders in understanding the differences, challenges and circumstances of all stakeholders. This should include the concept of 'White privilege'. (2018)	To begin to address the mind-sets created as a result of past segregation and injustices and start the process of adaption to a new society.	Not applicable (as recommendation only made as part of this thesis).
Personal attributes	Confirm the psychological attributes identified in this and other studies that contribute to cricketing success. Measure the level to which elite South African players possess such attributes. Developing the required attributes through psychological interventions. (2018)	Psychological characteristics have been identified as an important contributor to developing individual cricket talent.	Not applicable (as recommendation only made as part of this thesis). It is recognised that various franchise teams have had psychologists working with either the team or on an individual player basis.

Notes:

1. Personal communication with CSA's General Manager: Cricket, 1 June 2018
2. Personal communication with CSA's Cricket Services Manager, 15 June 2018
3. Personal communication with CSA's Coach Education Manager, 13 June 2018
4. Personal communication with CSA's Manager: Mass Participation, 8 February 2018

11.4   Strengths, limitations and suggested future research

There are a number of strengths and limitations of this thesis. One of the main strengths is the qualitative nature of the research that allowed for exploration of a complex topic that had not been previously well understood. This provided in-depth descriptions and detailed explanations through the lens of the cricket players' experiences throughout the talent pathway. This resulted in a proposed framework to better understand cricket talent development in a diverse society. The breadth of information shared by the participants and the transdisciplinary approach to the analysis and reporting enabled a wide range of factors to be incorporated into the multi-level socio-ecological framework. This provides more knowledge not only about the proximal environmental factors, but also about the distal ones. Furthermore, the interplay between the distal and proximal factors and their combined interaction with the individual player adds a more holistic approach to the talent development literature. While qualitative research is not generalisable to other contexts, the framework does provide an enhanced understanding of the barriers and enablers that may impact talent development in cricket and other sports in diverse societies. On the other hand, qualitative research does not provide causal relationships and therefore the specific mechanisms operating would need to be further investigated. This would be particularly relevant to the manner in which the relationship between the player and his proximal environments functions, as it is the proximal process that has the biggest influence on development.[186]

Another strength was that elite male players from all ethnic groups, representing all cricket disciplines and provinces, and spanning 774 years of cumulative playing experience were included in the research. While there may be some nuances between the different provinces, the findings provide a thorough perspective of cricket playing experiences from initial exposure to the game through to the elite level across the whole of South Africa. Female cricketers may have different experiences and this would be an area for future research.

Recall bias has previously been identified as a potential limitation of retrospective interviews,[494] and may have played a part in these interviews. All factual data, for example date and place of birth, were verified using the ESPNcricinfo website.[21] Furthermore, the complementary opinions of the key informants not only confirmed much of what the players

had shared, but also added to the understanding of the challenges from alternate perspectives.

While the purposive sampling used in the studies was important to provide the rich insight into the topic, it may have resulted in some sampling bias. However, the number and diversity of players interviewed and the data saturation obtained would most likely have mitigated against significant bias. In this regard, a particular limitation was that players who had dropped out and not progressed to the elite level were not included in the sampling criteria. Although many of the players interviewed spoke about these colleagues' experiences, the 'secondary' voice is a less reliable source of information. The unsuccessful players may have had different stories to share, and therefore this may be a specific source of information for future research.

The researcher as the primary instrument in qualitative research could be seen as both a strength and limitation. The researchers' prior knowledge of and interest in the topic through her previous involvement in different supportive cricketing roles may have hampered her ability to remain objective. However, the data source triangulation used to enhance the credibility of the data would have assisted to counteract this. Furthermore, the use of constant debriefing with her supervisors further helped to limit research bias. In contrast, her knowledge of the topic enabled the researcher to make specific, practical recommendations based on not only on the results of the research, but also on an understanding of the South African cricketing context. Another strength the researcher brought to the study was her knowledge of and experience in a wide range of disciplines that this research touched on (sport psychology, sociology, coaching and leadership development), thereby enhancing the transdisciplinary approach. The role of the researcher will be further addressed in the reflexivity section.

Another possible methodological limitation was the two-year period between the introduction of the ethnic target policy at the start of the 2013/14 cricket season and the assessment of its perceived effectiveness during the 2015/16 season. This period may have been too short for its implementation to have taken full effect. In the period (approximately two years) between the data collection and reporting phases of the research, CSA has introduced some additional interventions. Many of these have been discussed and were in response to the initial research findings. It is suggested that the effectiveness of these

interventions and the ongoing impact of the target policy should be further researched. This will provide insight into whether they are influencing the wider societal issues and specific barriers identified, which have contributed to the exclusion of many potential players from the game, so that genuine integration and transformation can occur.

As the main focus of the research was on the socio-ecological factors, only limited questions were asked regarding the players' opinions on the influence of intrapersonal factors on cricketing success. This therefore did not generate as much data as for the environmental factors. Given the importance ascribed to intrapersonal characteristics and particularly psychological attributes, future research should focus more extensively on this level of the framework. Having identified the key psychological characteristics deemed to contribute to cricketing success, a quantitative study to further investigate the level to which these attributes exist in South African cricketers would provide additional meaningful data. These results could then be used to develop interventions to enhance psychological attributes. Further studies could also determine whether there are differences in psychological attributes possessed by a player and the level of success he achieves.

The exploratory nature of the qualitative research provided an opportunity for the players and key informants to share their stories without predefined assumptions and hypotheses. This generated a broad overview of the socio-ecological factors influencing cricket talent development, particularly in diverse societies. It is suggested that future studies, both qualitative and quantitative, focus on identifying the more specific influences that each of these factors has on the developing player.

11.5 Reflexivity

The issue of reflexivity was introduced in the section on the role of the researcher (section 4.3). It is acknowledged that in qualitative research, the researcher is unlikely to remain objective and neutral.[375] Reflexivity is particularly important when undertaking cross cultural research as it enables the researcher to reflect on one's own self, and in relation to others.[495] This section has been written in the first person to acknowledge my personal experiences and feelings throughout the process.

I attempted to achieve a balanced approach throughout the entire process, from initiation of the research topic to reporting on the data.[390] However, since I came to the research with my own background, experiences, characteristics, beliefs, values and assumptions, it is important to acknowledge how I may have influenced the process through the choices that I made.[467]

Prior to commencing this research, I had been a player development manager and education consultant for the SACA. I had therefore been exposed to some of the challenges faced, particularly by the Black African players, as they transitioned into the franchise teams. In addition, during the first study, I was contracted as the mental performance coach with one of the franchises. Both of these roles influenced my decision to conduct the initial research on behalf of CSA, as I believed I could contribute to the lives of these and other players, through better understanding their cricketing experiences. My passion for the topic maintained my interest into the other studies, as I saw the value of the research into changing the South African cricket landscape, due to CSA's implementation of some of the original recommendations. I was, however, at all times, careful to balance my passion with the objectivity required of an academic researcher.

My cricketing roles could possibly have created some confusion in the minds of some players about the purpose of the research. To avoid any such confusion, I took particular care and time in explaining the research intention and the separation of my roles. For example, there were a couple of incidences during interviews in which a participant was anticipating an opinion from me to a particular comment. In these instances, I acknowledged their expectation and indicated that it was not my role to comment. For personal reasons, I resigned my position with the franchise team in 2014 before the interviews for studies two, three and commenced.

Although the interview guide questions were initially informed by the literature, my knowledge and experiences contributed to tailoring the questions to the South African cricket context and the perceived challenges faced by players. While this may have influenced the direction of the interview, there was sufficient flexibility in the interview process for the players to share their stories in their own unique way. This was evidenced by the different lengths of the interviews and the resulting transcripts. The majority of participants provided lengthy answers to most of the questions, while a few were more direct and succinct. Some

players needed to be gently interrupted and re-directed during their answers, and a few had to be probed to provide more detailed information.

The interview process was probably the time during which I may have had the most influence on the participants as a result of my different personal profile. All the participants treated me with great respect probably as a result of me being considerably older than most of them, as well as that I am a woman. I reciprocated this respect. I also tried to put them at ease and reduce the perceived power dynamic by dressing relatively informally (as most of them were), allowing them to choose a venue with which they were comfortable and talking about their current cricket pursuits prior to the interview starting. Another possible influence during the interview was the use of colloquial, 'slang' and youth language by many of the players, which may have led me to misunderstand the specific meaning that the participant had intended. However, when I did not understand the meaning of particular words, I asked for an explanation, while still maintaining the original words in the transcript so as to not lose the meaning that the player had intended. The majority of the participants appeared to openly share their opinions, which I noted from their criticisms and negative comments about the topics under discussion. A few players were more guarded in their comments, possibly as a result of their fear of reprisals from CSA should their comments not remain confidential. The precautions taken in this regard have been discussed under ethical considerations (section 4.5).

In terms of the ethnic difference between myself and most of the participants, I did not feel that this caused any specific resistance from the participants or affected their responses. This was probably due to my training as an executive coach and my previous cricket roles which had equipped me with the skills to listen empathetically and non-judgmentally. Furthermore, I have been fortunate to have interacted with individuals from all ethnic groups during the past 25 years of my working life and was involved in two specific projects relating to affirmative action and employment equity in the South African workplace. On the other hand, all the players had been part of multi-cultural cricket teams and so were to some degree comfortable in interacting with someone from a different ethnic group. I believe that I managed not to let my own assumptions compromise the interview or intimidate the players and this was borne out by the Black African players all agreeing to be re-interviewed three years later as part of study four.

The field notes that I wrote enabled me to reflect on my own thoughts and feelings after each interview and to draw conclusions about the players' experiences. These notes proved invaluable during the analysis and reporting phases as they enabled me to check that I had not misrepresented the player's 'voice.' The notes also reminded me of the non-verbal reactions of the players, which complemented the content of the transcripts and added to the richness of the descriptions.

During the analysis and reporting phases which overlapped with the data gathering phase, I made use of drawings, mind maps, matrices and frameworks to make sense of the data. These changed as the study progressed until all the data had been gathered and analysed. Living with the ambiguity and uncertainly of the ebbing and flowing of the process proved to be quite a challenge for me as an 'A' type individual. This thesis reflects not only the participants' views but also my interpretation of their views through the reflection process. I believe I have managed to reduce my personal bias to paint an accurate picture of the topic researched. I certainly now have a more holistic and realistic understanding of the challenges encountered in becoming an elite cricketer, as well as the obstacles that 'Black' cricketers have had to overcome to achieve their success despite not having the same opportunities as their peers.

11.6 Concluding remarks

This research has introduced a new framework to talent development demonstrating that cricket participation and performance are affected by the social, cultural, economic and environmental realities of a society. As South African society begins to normalise and the inequities of the past decrease, ethnicity should begin to play less of a role in a player's ability to progress. However, as ethnicity provided a 'mirror' for the barriers faced by players from diverse communities, this research has relevance in other societies dealing with contextual differences that impact on sporting development and performance.

Therefore, to manage players fairly is to treat them differently, but with equal attention and opportunity to develop their talent to its full potential.

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APPENDIX A: EXAMPLES OF SOUTH AFRICAN SCHOOLS' SPORTS FACILITIES

Examples of typical 'former model B secondary schools' in Khayelitsha township in the Western Cape Province

Esangweni Secondary School
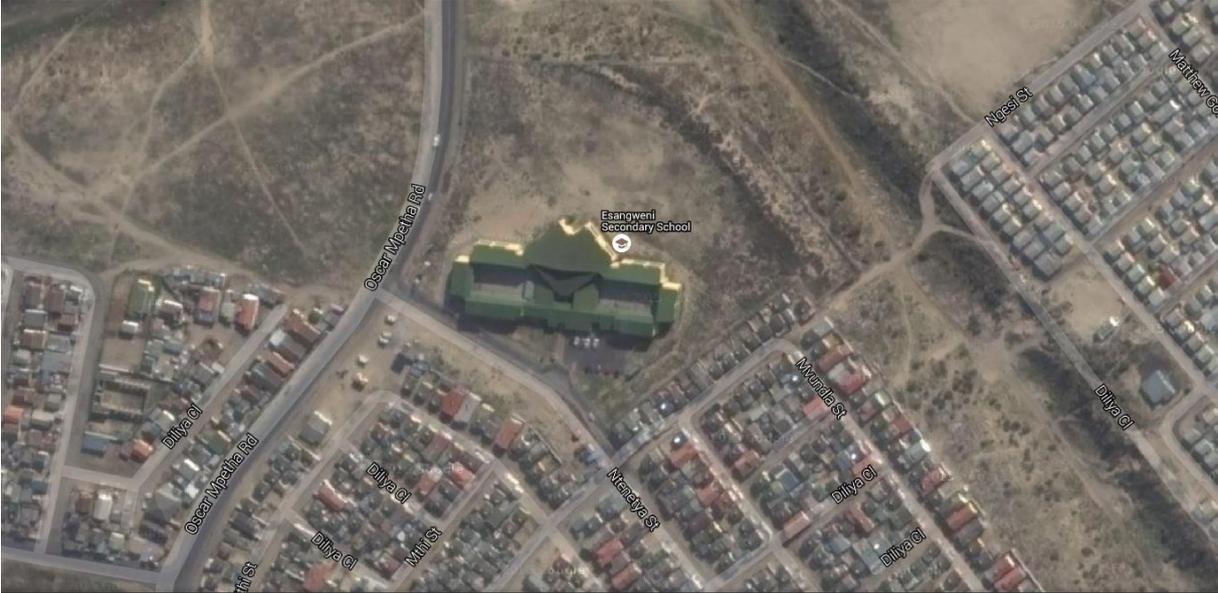
Siphamandla Secondary School
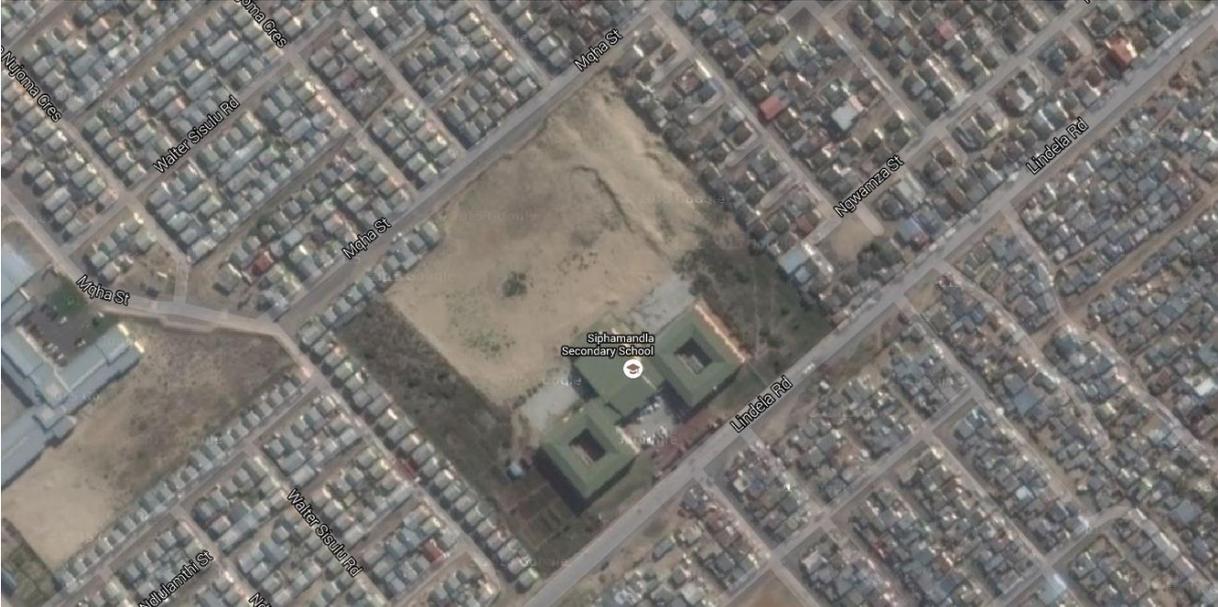
Example of typical 'former model C secondary school' in Wynberg suburb in the Western Cape Province

Wynberg Boys' High School
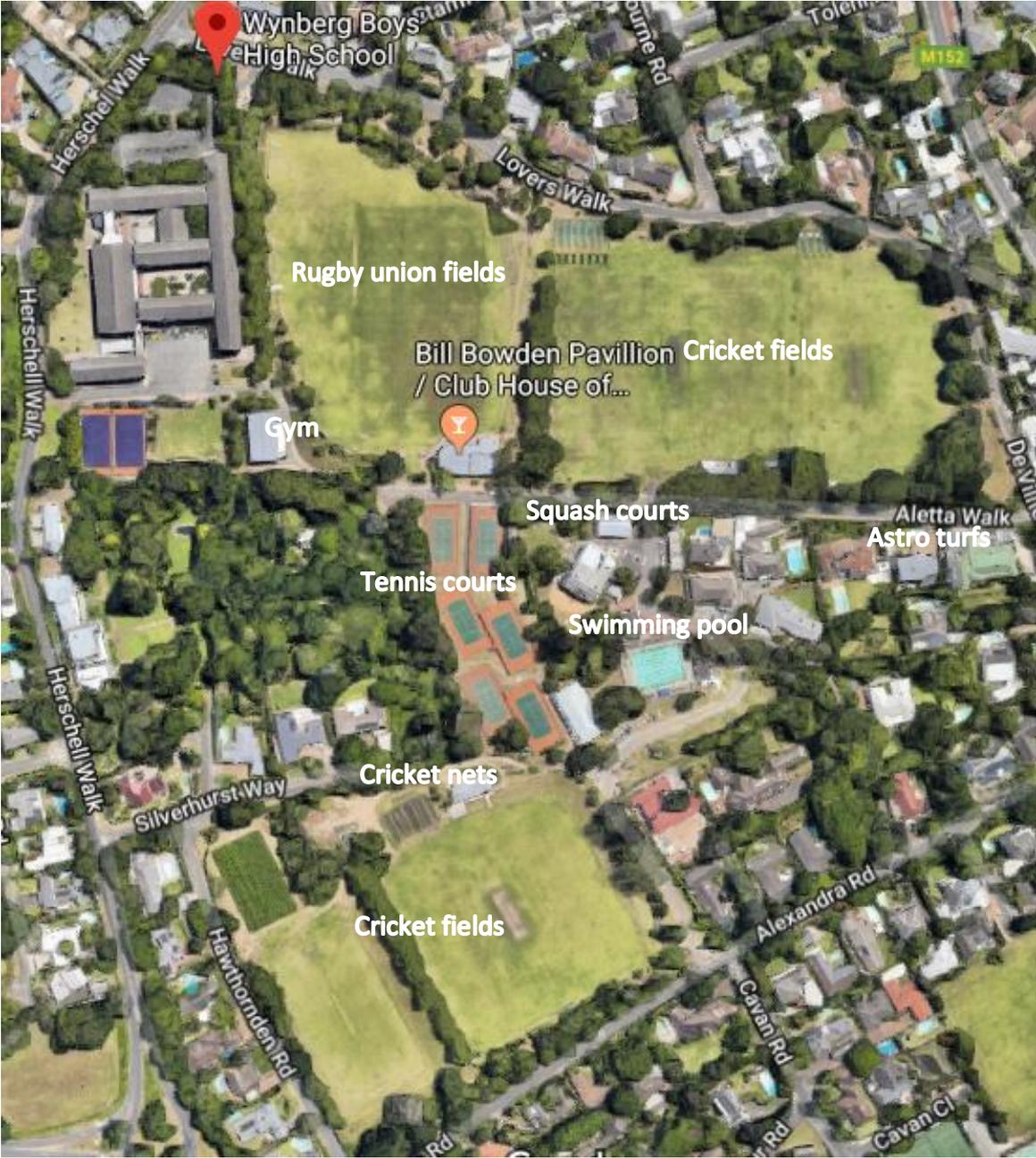
APPENDIX B: INFORMATION SHEETS

Information sheet: Study 1 – Players
A qualitative study to explore the low representation of elite Black African cricketers in SA

Dear player

The UCT/MRC Research Unit for Exercise Science and Sports Medicine is conducting a study, in collaboration with the Cape Peninsula University of Technology and Cricket South Africa. Cricket South Africa has identified the need to increase the number of Black African cricketers (especially batsmen) at franchise and national level, and this study is the first step towards helping to address this need. The aim of this study is to understand the experiences and perceptions of Black African cricketers in South Africa, and we would like to speak to you about your experiences. We will be interviewing players, coaches and administrators from a number of franchises around the country.

Being part of this study would involve taking part in a one-on-one, recorded interview for approximately an hour with a member of our research team, who is conducting this study as part of a postgraduate degree. The interview will be conducted in English and would take place at a time and venue convenient for you; and would last approximately one hour. The questions we would like to ask you are about how your cricket career started, some of your early experiences, how your career progressed, and what/who helped or was challenging during this time. We would like to hear your views on the low numbers of Black African players in the South Africa (relative to white players), and the factors you think could have affected these low numbers. There are no wrong or right answers to these questions; we are just interested to hear about your opinions and what you have experienced. Unfortunately, we are not able to offer any financial compensation for your time.

Your confidentiality will be maintained (by the research team); however, we are aware that some of your responses to these questions may be sensitive, and may point to a particular franchise or an individual within South African cricket. While we will not use your name or the name of your franchise (or region) when we report on the results (or in any verbal feedback given to Cricket SA), it may be possible for someone to identify you from your comments. We therefore understand that you may not want to respond to certain questions in the interview, and you are free to not answer certain questions if you feel uncomfortable. You are also free to stop the interview at any time, without giving a reason; your involvement in this study is voluntary.

What we learn from these interviews will help us to plan future studies and interventions that could ultimately increase the number of Black African cricketers in South Africa, so we would be very grateful to hear your views.

If you have any questions about the study, please feel free to contact Mary-Ann Dove (mary-ann.dove@uct.ac.za /083 302 5969 or Dr Catherine Draper (catherine.draper@uct.ac.za / 021 650 4570).
Should you have any queries regarding your rights and welfare as a research participant, please contact: Prof. Marc Blockman, Chairperson, Health Science Faculty Research Ethics Committee.
021 406 6492, E52-24 Groote Schuur Hospital Old Main Building, Observatory, 7925

Information sheet: Study 1 – Key informants
A qualitative study to explore the low representation of elite Black African cricketers in SA

Dear coach / administrator

The UCT/MRC Research Unit for Exercise Science and Sports Medicine is conducting a study, in collaboration with the Cape Peninsula University of Technology and Cricket South Africa. Cricket South Africa has identified the need to increase the number of Black African cricketers (especially batsmen) at franchise and national level, and this study is the first step towards helping to address this need. The aim of this study is to understand the experiences and perceptions of Black African cricketers in South Africa, and we would like to speak to you about your experiences as a coach / administrator. We will be interviewing players, coaches and administrators from a number of franchises around the country.

Being part of this study would involve taking part in a one-on-one, recorded interview for approximately an hour with a member of our research team, who is conducting this study as part of a postgraduate degree. The interview will be conducted in English and would take place at a time and venue convenient for you, and would last approximately one hour. The questions we would like to ask you are about your views on the career progression of Black African players in South Africa, and what you feel has helped or was challenging for Black African players during this time of progression. We would like to hear your views on the low numbers of Black African players in the South Africa (relative to white players), and the factors you think could have affected these low numbers. There are no wrong or right answers to these questions; we are just interested to hear about your opinions. Unfortunately, we are not able to offer any financial compensation for your time.

Your confidentiality will be maintained (by the research team); however, we are aware that some of your responses to these questions may be sensitive, and may point to a particular franchise or an individual within South African cricket. While we will not use your name or the name of your franchise (or region) when we report on the results, it may be possible for someone to identify you from your comments. We therefore understand that you may not want to respond to certain questions in the interview, and you are free to not answer certain questions if you feel uncomfortable. You are also free to stop the interview at any time, without giving a reason; your involvement in this study is voluntary.

What we learn from these interviews will help us to plan future studies and interventions that could ultimately increase the number of Black African cricketers in South Africa, so we would be very grateful to hear your views.

If you have any questions about the study, please feel free to contact Mary-Ann Dove (mary-ann.dove@uct.ac.za / 083 302 5969) or Dr Catherine Draper (catherine.draper@uct.ac.za / 021 650 4570).

Should you have any queries regarding your rights and welfare as a research participant, please contact: Prof. Marc Blockman, Chairperson, Health Science Faculty Research Ethics Committee.
021 406 6492, E52-24 Groote Schuur Hospital Old Main Building, Observatory, 7925

Information sheet: Study 2

An investigation into the barriers and enablers to progress to the elite level in South African cricket

Dear player

The Division of Exercise Science and Sports Medicine, Department of Human Biology at UCT is conducting a study, in collaboration with the Cape Peninsula University of Technology and Cricket South Africa. The aim of this study is to investigate the barriers and enablers to progress to the elite level as a cricketer in South Africa, and we would like to speak to you about your experiences. We will be interviewing players from a number of franchises around the country.

Being part of this study would involve taking part in a one-on-one, recorded interview for approximately an hour with a member of our research team, who is conducting this study as part of a postgraduate degree. The interview will be conducted in English and would take place at a time and venue convenient for you. The questions we would like to ask you are about how your cricket career started, some of your early experiences, how your career progressed, and what/who helped or was challenging during this time. We would also like to hear your views on the quota/target policy in South African cricket. There are no wrong or right answers to these questions; we are just interested to hear about your opinions and what you have experienced. Unfortunately, we are not able to offer any financial compensation for your time.

Your confidentiality will be maintained (by the research team); however, we are aware that some of your responses to these questions may be sensitive, and may point to a particular franchise or an individual within South African cricket. When feedback is given your name and franchise will not be given. Analysis of the interviews aims to highlight the more common barriers and enablers to progress in South African cricket. However, if you feel you do not want to respond to a particular question you are free not to answer that question. You are also free to stop the interview at any time, without giving a reason; your involvement in this study is voluntary.

What we learn from these interviews will help us to plan future studies and interventions that could ultimately improve the playing experiences for all players, so we would be very grateful to hear your views.

If you have any questions about the study, please feel free to contact Mary-Ann Dove (adove@mweb.co.za/083 302 5969 or Dr Catherine Draper (catherine.draper@uct.ac.za / 021 650 4570).

Should you have any queries regarding your rights and welfare as a research participant, please contact:

Prof. Marc Blockman, Chairperson, Health Science Faculty Research Ethics Committee
021 406 6492, E52-24 Groote Schuur Hospital Old Main Building, Observatory, 7925

Information sheet: Study 3

An investigation into the barriers and enablers to progress to the elite level in South African cricket

Dear player/administrator

The Division of Exercise and Sports Medicine, Department of Human Biology at UCT is conducting a study, in collaboration with the Cape Peninsula University of Technology and Cricket South Africa. The aim of this study is to investigate the barriers and enablers to progress to the elite level as a cricketer in South Africa, and we would like to speak to you about your experiences. We will be interviewing players and coach/administrator from a number of franchises around the country.

Being part of this study would involve taking part in a one-on-one, recorded interview for approximately an hour with a member of our research team, who is conducting this study as part of a postgraduate degree. The interview will be conducted in English and would take place at a time and venue convenient for you. The questions we would like to ask you are about how your cricket career started, some of your early experiences, how your career progressed, and what/who helped or was challenging during this time. We would also like to hear your views on the target policy in South African cricket. There are no wrong or right answers to these questions; we are just interested to hear about your opinions and what you have experienced. Unfortunately, we are not able to offer any financial compensation for your time.

Your confidentiality will be maintained throughout the process. We are aware that some of your responses to these questions may be sensitive and may point to a particular franchise or an individual within South African cricket. When feedback is given your name and franchise will not be given. Analysis of the interviews aims to highlight the more common barriers and enablers to progress in South African cricket. However, if you feel you do not want to respond to a particular question, you are free not to answer that question. You are also free to stop the interview at any time, without giving a reason; your involvement in this study is voluntary.

What we learn from these interviews will help us to plan future studies and interventions that could ultimately improve the playing experiences for all players, so we would be very grateful to hear your views.

If you have any questions about the study, please feel free to contact Mary-Ann Dove (adove@mweb.co.za/083 302 5969 or Dr Catherine Draper (catherine.draper@uct.ac.za / 021 650 4570).

Should you have any queries regarding your rights and welfare as a research participant, please contact:

Prof. Marc Blockman, Chairperson, Health Science Faculty Research Ethics Committee
021 406 6492, E52-24 Groote Schuur Hospital Old Main Building, Observatory, 7925

Information sheet: Study 4
An investigation into the barriers and enablers to progress to the elite level in South African cricket.
Dear player

The Division for Exercise Science and Sports Medicine, Department of Human Biology at UCT is conducting a further study, in collaboration with the Cape Peninsula University of Technology and Cricket South Africa. In October 2013, CSA introduced a Black African quota/target policy. The aim of this study is to explore the perceptions of Black African players and coaches/administrators to this policy and its implementation, and we would like to speak to you about your experiences with the policy during the past two seasons. We will be interviewing the same Black African players from a number of franchises around the country that we interviewed in the initial study that you took part in, as well as one of the coaches and one of the administrators previously interviewed.

Being part of this study would involve taking part in a one-on-one, recorded interview for approximately an hour, with a member of our research team, who is conducting this study as part of a postgraduate degree. The interview will be conducted in English and would take place at a time and venue convenient for you. The questions we would like to ask you are about your feelings regarding the Black African quota policy, the playing opportunities it has provided you with, your development during the past two seasons, the team environment of which you a part and any changes that have occurred in the macro environment during this time. There are no wrong or right answers to these questions; we are just interested to hear about your opinions and what you have experienced. Unfortunately, we are not able to offer any financial compensation for your time.

Your confidentiality will be maintained (by the research team); however, we are aware that some of your responses to these questions may be sensitive, and may point to a particular franchise or an individual within South African cricket. When feedback is given your name and franchise will not be given. However, if you feel you do not want to respond to a particular question you are free not to answer that question. You are also free to stop the interview at any time, without giving a reason; your involvement in this study is voluntary.

What we learn from these interviews will help us to provide feedback on how the Black African quota/target policy has been perceived by the players who should have benefited from such a policy and provide recommendations for enhancements that could ultimately improve playing experiences and   increase the number of Black African cricketers in South Africa, so we would be very grateful to hear your views.

If you have any questions about the study, please feel free to contact Mary-Ann Dove (adove@mweb.co.za /083 302 5969 or Dr Catherine Draper (catherine.draper@uct.ac.za / 021 650 4570).

Should you have any queries regarding your rights and welfare as a research participant, please contact:
Prof. Marc Blockman, Chairperson, Health Science Faculty Research Ethics Committee
021 406 6492, E52-24 Groote Schuur Hospital Old Main Building, Observatory, 7925

APPENDIX C: ETHICAL APPROVALS

ETHICAL APPROVAL: STUDY 1

UNIVERSITY OF CAPE TOWN

Faculty of Health Sciences
Faculty of Health Sciences Research Ethics Committee
Room E52-24 Groote Schuur Hospital Old Main Building
Observatory 7925
Telephone [021] 406 6338 • Facsimile [021] 406 6411
e-mail: sumayah.ariefdien@uct.ac.za

13 July 2012

HREC REF: 322/2012

Dr C Draper
ESSM
Human Biology
Rondebosch

Dear Dr Draper

PROJECT TITLE: A QUALITATIVE STUDY TO EXPLORE THE LOW REPRESENTATION OF ELITE BLACK AFRICAN CRICKETERS IN SOUTH AFRICA

Thank you for addressing the issues raised by the committee.

It is a pleasure to inform you that the Ethics Committee has formally approved the above-mentioned study.

Approval is granted for one year till the 28 July 2013.

Please submit a progress form, using the standardised Annual Report Form (FHS016), if the study continues beyond the approval period. Please submit a Standard Closure form (FHS010) if the study is completed within the approval period.

Please note that the ongoing ethical conduct of the study remains the responsibility of the principal investigator.

Please quote the REC. REF in all your correspondence.

Yours sincerely

PP

PROFESSOR M BLOCKMAN
CHAIRPERSON, HSF HUMAN ETHICS

Federal Wide Assurance Number: FWA00001637.
Institutional Review Board (IRB) number: IRB00001938

This serves to confirm that the University of Cape Town Research Ethics Committee complies to the Ethics Standards for Clinical Research with a new drug in patients, based on the Medical Research Council (MRC-SA),

ETHICAL APPROVAL: STUDY 2

UNIVERSITY OF CAPE TOWN

FACULTY OF HEALTH SCIENCES
Human Research Ethics Committee

Form FHS006: Protocol Amendment

HREC office use only (FWA00001637; IRB00001938)		
☑ Approved	☑ Type of review: Expedited	☐ Full committee
This serves as notification that all changes and documentation described below are approved.		
Signature Chairperson of the HREC	*[signature]*	Date	19/6/15

Note: All major amendments should include a **PI Synopsis** justifying the changes for the amendment (please see notice dated 23 April 2012)

Comments to PI from the HREC

Principal Investigator to complete the following:

1. Protocol information

Date (when submitting this form)	18th May 2015
HREC REF Number	322/2012
Protocol title	A qualitative study to explore the low representation of elite black African cricketers in South Africa
Protocol number (if applicable)	
Principal Investigator	Dr Catherine Draper
Department / Office Internal Mail Address	Division of Exercise Science and Sports Medicine (ESSM), Sports Science Institute of South Africa, Boundary Road, Newlands, 7700

1.1 Is this a major or a minor amendment? (see FHS006hlp) Major (tick box) Minor (tick box)	☐ Major	✓ Minor
1.2 Does this protocol receive US Federal funding?	☐ Yes	✓ No
1.3 If the amendment is a major amendment and receives US Federal Funding, does the amendment require full committee approval?	☐ Yes	☐ No

ETHICAL APPROVAL: STUDY 3

UNIVERSITY OF CAPE TOWN

FACULTY OF HEALTH SCIENCES
Human Research Ethics Committee

Form FHS006: Protocol Amendment

HREC office use only (FWA00001637; IRB00001938)

☑ Approved	☑ Type of review: Expedited	☐ Full committee

This serves as notification that all changes and documentation described below are approved.

Signature Chairperson of the HREC		Date	24/2/16

Note: All major amendments should include a PI Synopsis justifying the changes for the amendment (please see notice dated 23 April 2012)

Comments to PI from the HREC

Principal Investigator to complete the following:

1. Protocol information

Date (when submitting this form)	22nd February 2016
HREC REF Number	322/2012
Protocol title	A qualitative study to explore the low representation of elite black African cricketers in South Africa
Protocol number (if applicable)	
Principal Investigator	Dr Catherine Draper
Department / Office Internal Mail Address	Division of Exercise Science and Sports Medicine (ESSM), Sports Science Institute of South Africa, Boundary Road, Newlands, 7700

1.1 Is this a major or a minor amendment? (see FHS006hlo) Major (tick box) Minor (tick box)	☐ Major	✓ Minor
1.2 Does this protocol receive US Federal funding?	☐ Yes	✓ No
1.3 If the amendment is a major amendment and receives US Federal Funding, does the amendment require full committee approval?	☐ Yes	☐ No

HUMAN RESEARCH
ETHICS COMMITTEE

2 2 FEB 2016

HEALTH SCIENCES FACULTY
UNIVERSITY OF CAPE TOWN

26 March 2015   Page 1 of 3   FHS006

ETHICAL APPROVAL: STUDY 4

UNIVERSITY OF CAPE TOWN

FACULTY OF HEALTH SCIENCES
Human Research Ethics Committee

14 JUL 2015

HEALTH SCIENCES FACULTY
UNIVERSITY OF CAPE TOWN

Form FHS006: Protocol Amendment

HREC office use only (FWA00001637; IRB00001938)

☑ Approved	☑ Type of review: Expedited	☐ Full committee

This serves as notification that all changes and documentation described below are approved.

Signature Chairperson of the HREC	pp T Burgess	Date	14/07/2015

Note: All major amendments should include a PI **Synopsis** justifying the changes for the amendment (please see notice dated 23 April 2012)

Comments to PI from the HREC

Principal Investigator to complete the following:

1. Protocol information

Date (when submitting this form)	4th July 2015
HREC REF Number	322/2012
Protocol title	A qualitative study to explore the low representation of elite black African cricketers in South Africa
Protocol number (if applicable)	
Principal Investigator	Dr Catherine Draper
Department / Office Internal Mail Address	Division of Exercise Science and Sports Medicine (ESSM), Sports Science Institute of South Africa, Boundary Road, Newlands, 7700

1.1 Is this a major or a minor amendment? (see FHS006hlp) Major (tick box) Minor (tick box)	☐ Major	✓ Minor
1.2 Does this protocol receive US Federal funding?	☐ Yes	✓ No
1.3 If the amendment is a major amendment and receives US Federal Funding, does the amendment require full committee approval?	☐ Yes	☐ No

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28 March 2015   Page 1 of 3   FHS006

APPENDIX D: INTERVIEW GUIDE QUESTIONS

INTERVIEW GUIDE QUESTIONS: STUDY 1 – Players
A qualitative study to gain insights into the low representation of elite Black African cricketers in South Africa

1. **Demographic information**
   a. What is your age?
   b. At what age did you start playing cricket?
   c. How long have you been playing cricket professionally?
   d. What is your main role in the team – batsmen, bowler, wicket-keeper or all-rounder?
   e. What is the highest level of cricket that you have achieved?

2. **Early experiences**
   a. Tell me about how your cricketing career started (i.e. at school, as a child / teenager).
      • Who got you involved—mom, dad, sibling, friends?
      • Were you initially successful?
      • Did you play other sports? Which sports?
      • Did you play for a club while you were at school?
   b. Why did you choose cricket over other sports (e.g. soccer, rugby, hockey)?
      • What did you like about cricket?
   c. How would you describe the culture of cricket at your school?
   d. Is it possible to be successful as a cricketer by playing the game in the current club structures?
   e. What can you tell me about the coaching you received in these early years? What guidance did you receive?
   f. What kind of facilities did you have access to in these early years? What is the minimum you could make do with?

3. **Career progression**
   a. Tell me about how you progressed from school / club cricket to the elite / franchise level.
   b. What/who helped you to progress?
   c. What made it difficult for you to progress?
   d. Describe the follow up that is provided to players by the cricket environment as you progress from junior to senior levels.
   e. What have you observed about the progression of other Black African players in terms of how they have or haven't progressed?
   f. How do you think other 'Black' players' experiences (structures and barriers) differ between provinces?
   Possible factors to mention (that helped / hindered):
      • *Finances, e.g. bursary*
      • *Family support*
         o *Throughout your career how would you characterise your parents'/caregivers' involvement?*
      • *Community support*
      • *Role models (local, national, international)*
      • *Structured support programmes, e.g. Macsteel Maestros*
      • *Coaching (access to coaches and quality of coaching)*
         o *Can you recall anything specific that coaches did/didn't do to influence your progression?*
      • *Facilities (school, club, community)*
      • *Equipment*

- *Support from provincial and/or national structures*
- *Provincial differences*
- *Administration / management at club and/or provincial level*
- *Opportunities provided*
   g. Given your entire cricket career, what has been your greatest thrill relative to cricket?
   h. Given your entire cricket career, what has been your greatest disappointment?
   i. Within the team environment, how would you characterise the level of integration and team dynamics

4. **Personal Attributes and Skills**
   a. Why do you feel you were successful in cricket?
      - *Intrapersonal factors (e.g. motivation, ambition, discipline, work ethic)*
   b. What other factors could have made you more successful?
   c. What are your greatest physical attributes?
   d. What are your greatest psychological/mental attributes?
   e. Did you naturally have these attributes, or did you acquire them during your career?
   f. Throughout your career, how did you deal with setbacks and disappointments? What did you do to stay motivated?
   g. Throughout your career, how did you deal with all the success you achieved? Was there extra pressure and, if so, how did you deal with it?

5. **Representation of 'Black' players in South African cricket**
   a. What is your opinion of the representation of 'Black' players at the elite / franchise level?
   b. What do you think are the reasons for this low representation (if they agree that it is low)?
      - *Reasons could be similar to factors listed above*
   c. What is your impression of the differences between provinces in terms of 'Black' representation?
   d. How would you describe the culture/history of cricket in Black African communities in South Africa?
      - Alternative/competing sports
   e. How has TV coverage of cricket/lack thereof affected a culture of cricket in Black African communities
   f. Some research has shown that there are more 'Black' bowlers than 'Black' batsmen. What do you think could be the reason for low numbers of 'Black' batsmen?
   g. What is your opinion on setting quotas/targets?
      - At junior levels?
      - At franchise level?
   h. Do you think there should be quotas/targets in cricket at junior levels and/or franchise level?
   i. Are Black African cricketers who progress through the ranks able to compete under pressure?

6. **Conclusion**
   a. Do you perceive there to be a gap in performance of BA players between the junior and senior levels? If yes, at what age do you think this gap occurs?
   b. If resources were not an issue, what would you do to improve the situation of 'Black' players to perform at the elite / franchise level, and therefore increase the representation of 'Black' players in South African cricket?
   c. What has been the hardest thing about achieving the cricketing success you have?
   d. Is there anything else you would like to add that you feel we haven't covered?

INTERVIEW GUIDE QUESTIONS: STUDY 1 – Key informants
A qualitative study to gain insights into the low representation of elite Black African cricketers in South Africa

1. **Career progression of 'Black' players**
   a. What is your view of the progression of 'Black' players from school / club level, to elite / franchise level?
   b. How similar do you think their experiences are to white and coloured players?
   c. What/who do you think helps them to progress?
   d. What do you think makes it difficult for them to progress?
   e. Describe the follow up that is provided to 'Black' players by the cricket environment as they progress from junior to senior levels.
   f. How do you think 'Black' players' experiences (structures and barriers) differ between provinces?
   Possible factors to mention (that helped / hindered):
   - *Finances, e.g. bursary*
   - *Family support, particularly the role of parents/caregivers*
   - *Community support*
   - *Role models (local, national, international)*
   - *Structured support programmes, e.g. Macsteel Maestros*
   - *Coaching (access to coaches and quality of coaching)*
     - *What influence do coaches have on assisting the progression of Black African players?*
   - *Facilities (school, club, community)*
   - *Equipment*
   - *Support from provincial and/or national structures*
   - *Provincial differences*
   - *Administration / management at club and/or provincial level*

2. **Player Attributes and Skills**
   a. What personal attributes do you believe contribute to a successful cricketer?
   - *Intrapersonal factors (e.g. motivation, ambition, discipline, work ethic)*
   b. What are the most important physical attributes?
   c. What are the most important psychological/mental attributes?
   d. Do you believe these attributes are inborn or can they be acquired during the player's career?
   e. Describe the overall personal attributes (extroversion/introversion; aggressive/passive; type A/B) of the Black African batsmen that you have interacted with in your time as a coach/administrator.
   f. Describe the overall personal attributes (extroversion/introversion; aggressive/passive; type A/B) of the Black African bowlers that you have interacted with in your time as a coach/administrator.

3. **Representation of 'Black' players in South African cricket**
   a. What is your opinion of the representation of 'Black' players at the elite / franchise level?

b. What do you think are the reasons for this low representation (if they agree that it is low)?
   - *Reasons could be similar to factors listed above*
c. What is your impression of the differences between provinces in terms of representation?
d. How would you describe the culture/history of cricket in Black African communities in South Africa?
   - Alternative/competing sports
e. How has TV coverage of cricket/lack thereof affected a culture of cricket in Black African communities?
f. Some research has shown that there are more 'Black' bowlers than 'Black' batsmen. What do you think could be the reason for low numbers of 'Black' batsmen?
g. Do most Black African cricketers have a preference for bowling over batting? Why?
h. What is your opinion on setting quotas/targets?
   - At junior levels?
   - At franchise level?
i. Do you think there should be quotas/targets in cricket at junior levels and/or franchise level?
j. Are Black African cricketers who progress through the ranks able to compete under pressure?

4. Conclusion
   a. Do you perceive there to be a gap in performance of Black African players between the junior and senior levels? If yes, at what age do you think this gap occurs
   b. If resources were not an issue, what would you do to improve the situation of 'Black' players to perform at the elite / franchise level, and therefore increase the representation of 'Black' players in South African cricket?
   c. What are the greatest challenges that Black African cricketers need to face compared to their white and coloured/Indian team-mates.
   d. What, if any, additional pressures do Black African cricketers face?
   e. Is there anything else you would like to add that you feel we haven't covered?

INTERVIEW GUIDE QUESTIONS: STUDY 2

An investigation into the barriers and enablers to progress to the elite level in South African cricket

1. **Demographic information**
   a. What is your age?
   b. At what age did you start playing cricket?
   c. How long have you been playing cricket professionally?
   d. What is your main role in the team – batsmen, bowler, wicket-keeper or all-rounder?
   e. What is the highest level of cricket that you have achieved?

2. **Early experiences**
   a. Tell me about how your cricketing career started (i.e. at school, as a child / teenager).
      - Who got you involved —mom, dad, sibling, friends?
      - Were you initially successful?
      - Did you play other sports? Which sports?
      - Did you play for a club while you were at school?
   b. Why did you choose cricket over other sports (e.g. soccer, rugby, hockey)?
      - What did you like about cricket?
   c. How would you describe the culture of cricket at your school?
   d. Is it possible to be successful as a cricketer by playing the game in the current *school and* club structures?
   e. What can you tell me about the coaching you received in these early years? What guidance did you receive?
   f. What kind of facilities did you have access to in these early years? What is the minimum you could make do with?

3. **Career progression**
   a. Tell me about how you progressed from school / club cricket to the elite / franchise level.
   b. What/who helped you to progress?
   c. What made it difficult for you to progress?
   d. Describe the follow up that is provided to players by the cricket environment as you progress from junior to senior levels.
   e. What have you observed about the progression of other players in terms of how they have or haven't progressed?
   f. How do you think other players' experiences (structures and barriers) differ between provinces?
   Possible factors to mention (that helped / hindered):
      - *Finances, e.g. bursary*
      - *Family support*
         - *Throughout your career how would you characterise your parents'/caregivers' involvement?*
      - *Community support*
      - *Role models (local, national, international)*
      - *Structured support programmes, e.g. Macsteel Maestros*
      - *Coaching (access to coaches and quality of coaching)*
         - *Can you recall anything specific that coaches did/didn't do to influence your progression?*
      - *Facilities (school, club, community)*
      - *Equipment*

- *Support from provincial and/or national structures*
- *Provincial differences*
- *Administration / management at club and/or provincial level*
- *Opportunities provided*
    g. Given your entire cricket career, what has been your greatest thrill relative to cricket?
    h. Given your entire cricket career, what has been your greatest disappointment?
    i. Within the team environment, how would you characterise the level of integration and team dynamics

4. Personal Attributes and Skills
    a. Why do you feel you were successful in cricket?
- *Intrapersonal factors (e.g. motivation, ambition, discipline, work ethic)*

    b. What other factors could have made you more successful?
    c. What are your greatest physical attributes?
    d. What are your greatest psychological/mental attributes?
    e. Did you naturally have these attributes or did you acquire them during your career?
    f. Throughout your career, how did you deal with setbacks and disappointments? What did you do to stay motivated?
    g. Throughout your career, how did you deal with all the success you achieved? Was their extra pressure and, if so, how did you deal with it?

5. *Quotas/targets in South African cricket*
    a. What is your opinion on setting quotas/targets?
- At junior levels?
- At franchise level?

    b. Do you think there should be quotas/targets in cricket at junior levels and/or franchise level?
    c. Have quotas/targets in South African cricket affected your progress?

6. Conclusion
    a. What has been the hardest thing about achieving the cricketing success you have?
    b. Is there anything else you would like to add that you feel we haven't covered?

INTERVIEW GUIDE QUESTIONS: STUDY 3 – Players

An investigation into the barriers and enablers to progress to the elite level in South African cricket

1. **Demographic information**
   a. What ethnic group do you classify yourself as belonging to/identifying with?
   b. What is your age?
   c. At what age did you start playing cricket?
   d. How long have you been playing cricket professionally?
   e. What is your main role in the team – batsmen, bowler, wicket-keeper or all-rounder?
   f. What is the highest level of cricket that you have achieved?

2. **Early experiences**
   a. Tell me about how your cricketing career started (i.e. at school, as a child / teenager).
      - Who got you involved —mom, dad, sibling, friends?
      - Were you initially successful?
      - Did you play other sports? Which sports?
      - Did you play for a club while you were at school?
   b. Why did you choose cricket over other sports (e.g. soccer, rugby, hockey)?
      - What did you like about cricket?
   c. How would you describe the culture of cricket at your school?
   d. Is it possible to be successful as a cricketer by playing the game in the current school and club structures?
   e. What can you tell me about the coaching you received in these early years? What guidance did you receive?
   f. What kind of facilities did you have access to in these early years? What is the minimum you could make do with?

3. **Career progression**
   a. Tell me about how you progressed from school / club cricket to the elite / franchise level.
   b. What/who helped you to progress?
   c. What made it difficult for you to progress?
   d. Describe the follow up that is provided to players by the cricket environment as you progress from junior to senior levels.
   e. What have you observed about the progression of other Coloured/Indian players in terms of how they have or haven't progressed?
   f. How do you think other Coloured/Indian players' experiences (structures and barriers) differ between provinces?

   Possible factors to mention (that helped / hindered):
   - *Finances, e.g. bursary*
   - *Family support*
      - *Throughout your career how would you characterise your parents'/caregivers' involvement?*
   - *Community support*
   - *Role models (local, national, international)*
   - *Structured support programmes, e.g. Macsteel Maestros*
   - *Coaching (access to coaches and quality of coaching)*
      - *Can you recall anything specific that coaches did/didn't do to influence your progression?*
   - *Facilities (school, club, community)*

- *Equipment*
- *Support from provincial and/or national structures*
- *Provincial differences*
- *Administration / management at club and/or provincial level*
- *Opportunities provided*

g. Given your entire cricket career, what has been your greatest thrill relative to cricket?

h. Given your entire cricket career, what has been your greatest disappointment?

i. Within the team environment, how would you characterise the level of integration and team dynamics?

4. Personal Attributes and Skills

a. Why do you feel you were successful in cricket?
- *Intrapersonal factors (e.g. motivation, ambition, discipline, work ethic)*

b. What other factors could have made you more successful?

c. What are your greatest physical attributes?

d. What are your greatest psychological/mental attributes?

e. Did you naturally have these attributes or did you acquire them during your career?

f. Throughout your career, how did you deal with setbacks and disappointments? What did you do to stay motivated?

g. Throughout your career, how did you deal with all the success you achieved? Was their extra pressure and, if so, how did you deal with it?

5. Representation of Coloured (C)/Indian (I) players in SA cricket

a. What is your opinion of the representation of C/I players at the elite / franchise level?

b. What is your impression of the differences between provinces in terms of C/I representation?

c. How would you describe the culture/history of cricket in C/I communities in South Africa
- Alternative/competing sports

d. How has TV coverage of cricket/lack thereof affected a culture of cricket in C/I communities

e. Are C/I cricketers who progress through the ranks able to compete under pressure?

6. Targets in South African cricket

a. What is your opinion on setting targets?
- At junior levels?
- At franchise level?

b. Do you think there should be targets in cricket at junior levels and/or franchise level?

c. Have targets in South African cricket affected your progress?

7. Conclusion

a. Do you perceive there to be a gap in performance of C/I players between the junior and senior levels? If yes, at what age do you think this gap occurs?

b. What has been the hardest thing about achieving the cricketing success you have?

c. Is there anything else you would like to add that you feel we haven't covered?

INTERVIEW GUIDE QUESTIONS: STUDY 3 – Key informant
An investigation into the barriers and enablers to progress to the elite level in South African cricket

1. **Career progression of Coloured (C) and Indian (I) players**
   a. What is your view of the progression of C/I players from school / club level, to elite / franchise level?
   b. How similar do you think their experiences are to White and Black African players?
   c. What/who do you think help them to progress?
   d. What do you think makes it difficult for them to progress?
   e. Describe the follow up that is provided to C/I players by the cricket environment as they progress from junior to senior levels
   f. How do you think C/I players' experiences (structures and barriers) differ between provinces?
   Possible factors to mention (that helped / hindered):
   - *Finances, e.g. bursary*
   - *Family support, particularly the role of parents/caregivers*
   - *Community support*
   - *Role models (local, national, international)*
   - *Structured support programmes, e.g. Macsteel Maestros*
   - *Coaching (access to coaches and quality of coaching)*
     - *What influence do coaches have on assisting the progression of C/I players*
   - *Facilities (school, club, community)*
   - *Equipment*
   - *Support from provincial and/or national structures*
   - *Provincial differences*
   - *Administration / management at club and/or provincial level*

2. **Player Attributes and Skills**
   a. What personal attributes do you believe contribute to a successful cricketer
   - *Intrapersonal factors (e.g. motivation, ambition, discipline, work ethic)*
   b. What are the most important physical attributes?
   c. What are the most important psychological/mental attributes?
   d. Do you believe these attributes are inborn or can they be acquired during the player's career?
   e. Describe the overall personal attributes (extroversion/introversion; aggressive/passive; type A/B) of the C/I batsmen that you have interacted with in your time as a coach/administrator.
   f. Describe the overall personal attributes (extroversion/introversion; aggressive/passive; type A/B) of the C/I bowlers that you have interacted with in your time as a coach/administrator.

3. **Representation of Coloured and Indian players in South African cricket**
   a. What is your opinion of the representation of C/I players at the elite / franchise level?

b. What do you think are the reasons for this low representation (if they agree that it is low)?
   - *Reasons could be similar to factors listed above*
c. What is your impression of the differences between provinces in terms of representation?
d. How would you describe the culture/history of cricket in C/I communities in South Africa
   - Alternative/competing sports
e. How has TV coverage of cricket/lack thereof affected a culture of cricket in C/I communities?
f. Do C/I cricketers have a preference for either bowling or batting? If yes, what might the reason (s) for this be?
g. What is your opinion on the setting of targets?
   - At junior levels?
   - At franchise level?
h. Do you think there should be targets in cricket at junior levels and/or franchise level?
i. Are C/I cricketers who progress through the ranks able to compete under pressure?

4. Conclusion
a. Do you perceive there to be a gap in performance of C/I players between the junior and senior levels? If yes, at what age do you think this gap occurs?
b. What are the greatest challenges that C/I cricketers need to face compared to their white and Black African team-mates?
c. Is there anything else you would like to add that you feel we haven't covered

INTERVIEW GUIDE QUESTIONS: STUDY 4

An investigation into the barriers and enablers to progress to the elite level in South African cricket

Thank you for agreeing to chat again. Since we last met CSA has introduced a Black African target/quota policy which has been in place for two full seasons now and we want to find out how you feel this policy is working. Your opinions will be completely confidential and you are able to stop the interview at any time or choose not to answer a specific question.

1. **Overall policy perceptions**
   a. What are your thoughts on the target/quota policy?
   b. How successful do you believe the policy has been in increasing meaningful Black African player representation at the elite (amateur, franchise and national) levels? Has this been the same experience for batsmen and bowlers? If not, what differences have there been?
   c. For how long do you believe the policy should continue and what would have to happen for the policy to be terminated?

2. **Progression of Black African players**
   a. In your opinion, how has the quota policy affected the progression of Black African players from U19 to senior levels during this period?
   b. What effect has the policy had on the attitudes of Black African players towards the game and their desire to stay in the game after school?

3. **Opportunities**
   a. Given that there are now more Black African players being fielded by teams, how has this translated into the quality of playing time, i.e. number of overs bowled, batting position? Give me an example of an opportunity that you have experienced or are aware of
   b. How has your franchise implemented the policy in terms of selecting players? For example,
      - *Using the same players and giving them a number of opportunities to perform*
      - *Rotating players on a regular basis*
      - *Only choosing bowlers or batsmen*

4. **Player development and monitoring**
   a. Describe any programmes that you have experienced/are aware of that have been put in place to assist you improve and develop your physical, technical, tactical and mental capabilities. Are such programmes specific to Black African players or for the benefit of all franchise players
   b. If yes, who has been responsible for these programmes and what has been the buy-in to these programmes by your coaches and administrators?
   c. How are provincial and national administrators monitoring your progress and following up other Black African players in the pipeline?

5. **Team Environment**
   a. Describe the team environment and culture that you have been a part of during the past two years.
   b. Have this environment and mindsets changed during this time? If yes, how have they changed?

c. How has your team addressed issues of diversity, stereotyping, discrimination understanding and assimilation of different cultures, understanding of individual player needs?

d. What role, if any has your team leadership played in creating an empowering environment? Have all players benefited from this empowerment?

e. How have communications between team leadership and within the team contributed to the team environment and building trust? Give me some examples.

f. How has the policy impacted the psychological effect on Black African players in terms of labelling, ability to perform?

6. Macro Environment

a. Tell me about any initiatives that you are aware of that have been put in place to address some of the socio-economic issues that affect Black African players progressing. This may include: *direct financial support (excluding contracts), accommodation, transport, equipment, education, additional coaching, mentors etc.*

b. How has your financial situation been affected by this policy

c. How has the policy affected your lifestyle positively or negatively? This may include relocation, access to resources, sponsorship opportunities etc.

d. What role have player agents played in the contracting of Black African players?

e. Has SACA's Player Plus programme benefited you? If so, how?

f. What opportunities have you taken to act a role model for young players?

7. Conclusion

a. Other than quotas, what other policies or changes are you aware of that CSA or your franchise have implemented to increase Black African representation and development. *This may include changes to the structure and pipeline of South African cricket, the role and functioning of club cricket etc.*

b. Is there anything else that you would like to add that you feel we haven't covered?

APPENDIX E: CODE MANUAL 1

Socio-ecological factors in talent development
in cricket in a diverse society

Data Analysis Code Manual 1 – Study 1 (Black African)

	Description of code category	Code
	Demographics	Demographics
A	**Cultural/Societal Context**	
1	SA history	Culture: History
2	Culture of cricket in BA communities	Culture: BA Communities
3	Development of cricket in SA	Culture: Cric Dev
4	Provincial differences in culture (some provinces/regions are cricket areas/others not)	Culture: Prov. Diffs
5	Transformation	Culture: Transformation
6	Societal changes (length of game, malls, instant gratification etc.)	Culture: Soc Changes
7	Competing sports and activities	Culture: Sports
8	Role of TV coverage	Culture: TV
9	Societal pressures (peer, family, work etc.)	Culture: Soc Pressures
10	Class, white man's game	Culture: Class
B	**Early years (start to approx. U13)**	
1	Age started	Early: Age started
2	Who introduced you to game	Early: Introduced
3	Where grew up (region, province, rural, township, suburb)	Early: Grew up
4	Other sports played	Early: Other sports
5	Why cricket	Early: Why cricket
6	Where played (school, club or other)	Early: Where played
7	Cricket culture at school	Early: School culture
8	Role of "active development programme" (e.g. scouts, bakers mini, KFC programme)	Early: Development programme
9	Early coaching exposure	Early: coaching
10	Initial success/performance	Early: success
11	Access to and quality of facilities	Early: facilities
12	Key individuals who influenced you	Early: key individuals
13	Length of involvement in game (administrators only)	Early: Length of involvement
C	**Progression to senior level (high school to U19)**	
1	Description of progress, i.e. teams played for (their story)	Progression: Description
2	Perceived racial differences	Progression: Racial Diffs

	Enabling and inhibitory factors	
3	Financial (include personal situation and wider environment)	Progression: Financial +
4		Progression: Financial -
5	Support networks – family	Progression: SN family +
6		Progression: SN family -
7	Support networks – cricket	Progression: SN cricket +
8		Progression: SN cricket -
9	Support networks – other	Progression: SN other +
10		Progression: SN other -
11	Coaching (all aspects)	Progression: Coaching +
12		Progression: Coaching -
13	Facilities	Progression: Facilities +
14		Progression: Facilities -
15	Equipment	Progression: Equipment +
16		Progression: Equipment -
17	Administrative	Progression: Admin +
18		Progression: Admin -1
19	Logistical (transport, distances etc.)	Progression: Logistics +
20		Progression: Logistics -
21	Structural	Progression: Structural +
22		Progression: Structural -
23	Role models (cricket and others)	Progression: RM +
24		Progression: RM -
25	Intrapersonal (own attitude /responsibility etc.)	Progression: I/P +
26		Progression: I/P -
27	Educational (full spectrum of experience)	Progression: Education +
28		Progression: Education -
29	Cricket education (understanding/immersion in the game)	Progression: Criced +
30		Progression: Criced -
31	Social (family responsibilities, expectations)	Progression: Social +
32		Progression: Social -
D	**Senior Level Experiences: (U 19 and above)**	
1	Senior level debut (age and event)	Senior: Debut
2	Differing experiences across provinces	Senior: Prov Diffs
3	Franchise cricket (including amateur, emerging teams, contracts)	Senior: Franchise
4	Drop out (perceived numbers and reasons for)	Senior: Dropout
5	Follow up(may overlay with administrative factors in 3)	Senior: Follow up
6	Opportunities vs quality opportunities	Senior: Opportunities
7	Team environment	Senior: Environ
8	Remuneration (individual, amounts, discrepancies)	Senior: Remuneration

E	**Representation**	
1	Numbers (sufficient or not)	Representation: Nos
2	Reasons for low representation	Representation: Reasons
3	Provincial differences in representation levels	Representation: Prov. Diffs
4	Quotas/Targets (all aspects)	Representation: Quotas
5	Number vs quality of players included	Representation: Quality
6	Selection vs playing time	Representation: Playing time
7	Monitoring/Measuring	Representation: Measuring
F	**Batsmen vs Bowlers**	
1	Batsmen numbers (sufficient or not)	Batsmen: Nos
2	Reason for low representation of batsmen	Batsmen: Reasons
G	**Performance Gap(s)**	
1	Age/stage of career	Gaps: Stage
2	Reasons for gap	Gaps: Reasons
3	Solutions to overcome	Gaps: Solutions
H	**Player Attributes**	
1	Physical	Attributes: Physical
2	Psychological	Attributes: Psychological
3	Intrapersonal/Personality	Attributes: I/P
4	Dealing with success, failure and disappointment	Attributes: Coping
I	**Player Management**	
1	Whole person development	Management: Whole
2	Life skills	Management: Life skills
3	Mentorship	Management: Mentor
4	Sustainability	Management: Sustain
5	People and attributes	Management: Right People
J	**Institutional Structures (CSA and Provinces)**	
1	Leadership	Structures: Leadership
2	Relationships between CSA and provinces	Structures: Relationships
3	Accountability	Structures: Accountability
4	Agendas and politics	Structures: Agendas
5	Senior level structures – franchises, amateur teams, emerging provincial teams	Structures: Senior level
6	Partnerships outside of cricket	Structures: Partnerships
7	Academies	Structures: Academies
8	Regional "Hubs"/Centres of Excellence	Structures: Centre
9	Clubs	Structures: Clubs

10	Camps	Structure: Camps
11	Standards	Structure: Standards
K	**Player Pipeline (linked to LTPD stages)**	
1	Foundation – grow the base	Pipeline: Foundation
2	Identify and develop talent	Pipeline: Talent
3	Bursary schemes	Pipeline: Bursaries
4	Cricket schools (traditional)	Pipeline: Cricket Schools
5	Schools with facilities (but not being used)	Pipeline: School facilities
6	Township (schools and facilities provided)	Pipeline: Township
7	Rural (schools, facilities)	Pipeline: Rural
L	**Mind-set of stakeholders**	
1	Understanding of all players	Mind-set: Understanding
2	Communications (transparency, objective and honest)	Mind-set: Communications
3	Stereotyping and prejudices	Mind-set: Stereotyping
4	Assimilation of cultures	Mind-set: Assimilation
5	Backing and belief	Mind-set: Belief
6	Trust and respect	Mind-set: Trust
7	Belonging vs "foreign and fearful environments" to enhance performance	Mind-set: Belonging
8	Selection issues	Mind-set: Selection
9	Empowering environments	Mind-set: Empowering
10	Psychological effect on players	Mind-set: Psych effects
11	Self-belief	Mind-set: Self belief

APPENDIX F: COMPOSITE CODE MANUAL

Socio-ecological factors in talent development in cricket in a diverse society

Data Analysis Composite Code Manual
Studies 1, 2, 3 combined (All ethnic groups)

	Description of code category	Code
	Cultural/societal context	
A1	SA history	Culture: SA History
A2	Culture of cricket in communities	Culture: Communities
A3	Development of cricket in South Africa	Culture: Cric Dev
A4	Provincial differences in culture (some provinces/regions are cricket areas/others not)	Culture: Prov Diffs
A5	Transformation	Culture: Transformation
A6	Societal changes (length of game, malls, instant gratification etc.)	Culture: Soc Changes
A7	Competing sports and activities	Culture: Sports
A8	Role of TV coverage	Culture: TV
A9	Societal pressures (peer, family, work etc.)	Culture: Soc Pressures
A10	Class, white man's game	Culture: Class
	Early years (start to approx. U13)	
B1	Age started	Early: Age started
B2	Who introduced you to game	Early: Introduced
B3	Where grew up (region, province, rural, township, suburb)	Early: Grew up
B4	Other sports played	Early: Other sports
B5	Why cricket	Early: Why cricket
B6	Where played (school, club or other)	Early: Where played
B7	Cricket culture at school	Early: School culture
B8	Role of "active development programme" (e.g. scouts, bakers mini, KFC programme)	Early: Develop prog
B9	Early coaching exposure	Early: Coaching
B10	Initial success/performance	Early: Initial success
B11	Access to and quality of facilities	Early: Facilities
B12	Key individuals who influenced you	Early: Key individuals
B13	Length of Involvement in game (KI only)	Early: Length of involve
	Progression to senior level (high school to U19)	
C1	Description of progress, i.e. teams played for (their story)	Progression: Description
C2	Perceived racial differences	Progression: Racial diffs
C3	Financial (include personal situation and wider environment)	Progression: Financial+
C4		Progression: Financial-
C5	Support networks – family	Progression: SN family+
C6		Progression: SN family-

C7	Support networks – cricket community	Progression: SN cricket+
C8		Progression: SN cricket-
C9	Support networks – other people	Progression: SN other+
C10		Progression: SN other-
C11	Coaching (all aspects)	Progression: Coaching+
C12		Progression: Coaching-
C13	Facilities	Progression: Facilities+
C14		Progression: Facilities-
C15	Equipment	Progression: Equipment+
C16		Progression: Equipment-
C17	Administrative	Progression: Admin+
C18		Progression: Admin-
C19	Logistical (transport, distances etc.)	Progression: Logistics+
C20		Progression: Logistics-
C21	Structural	Progression: Structural+
C22		Progression: Structural-
C23	Role models (cricket and others)	Progression: RM+
C24		Progression: RM-
C25	Intrapersonal (own attitude /responsibility etc.)	Progression: I/P+
C26		Progression: I/P-
C27	Educational (full spectrum of experience)	Progression: SN family+
C28		Progression: SN family-
C29	Cricket education (understanding/immersion in the game)	Progression: Education+
C30		Progression: Education-
C31	Social (family responsibilities, expectations)	Progression: Social+
C32		Progression: Social-
C33	Ability to progress through club and/or school	Progression: Club vs school
C34	U19 – Senior description	Progression: U19 to senior
C35	Impact of overseas opportunities	Progression: Overseas
C36	Role of injuries in progress	Progression: Injury
C37	Importance of competition to progress	Progression: Competition
	Senior level experience (U19 and above)	
D1	Senior level debut (age and event)	Senior: Debut
D2	Differing experiences across provinces	Senior: Prov Diffs
D3	Franchise cricket (including amateur, emerging teams, contracts)	Senior: Franchise
D4	Drop out (perceived numbers and reasons for)	Senior: Drop Out
D5	Follow up(may overlay with admin factors in 3)	Senior: Follow Up
D6	Opportunities vs quality opportunities	Senior: Opportunities
D7	Team environment	Senior: Environ
D8	Remuneration (individual, amounts, discrepancies)	Senior: Remuneration

	Representation	
E1	Numbers (sufficient or not)	Representation: Nos
E2	Reasons for low representation	Representation: Reasons
E3	Provincial differences in representation levels	Representation: Prov. Diffs
E4	Quotas/Targets (all aspects)	Representation: Quotas
E5	Number vs quality of players included	Representation: Quality
E6	Selection vs playing time	Representation: Playing time
E7	Monitoring/Measuring	Representation: Measuring
	Batsmen vs bowlers	
F1	Batsmen numbers (sufficient or not)	Batsmen: Nos
F2	Reason for low representation of batsmen	Batsmen: Reasons
	Performance gap(s)	
G1	Age/stage of career	Gaps: Stage
G2	Reasons for gap and possible solutions	Gaps: Reasons
	Player attributes	
H1	Physical	Attributes: Physical
H2	Psychological	Attributes: Psychological
H3	Intrapersonal/Personality	Attributes: I/P
H4	Dealing with success, failure and disappointment	Attributes: Coping
H5	Additional attributes that may have had to bring success	Attributes: Additional
H6	Are the attributes set or can they be learned	Attributes: Nature vs nurture
	Player management	
I1	Whole person development	Management: Whole
I2	Life skills	Management: Life skills
I3	Mentorship	Management: Mentor
I4	Sustainability	Management: Sustain
I5	People and attributes	Management: Right people
	Institutional Structures (CSA and Provinces)	
J1	Leadership	Structures: Leadership
J2	Relationships between CSA and provinces	Structures: Relationships
J3	Accountability	Structures: Accountability
J4	Agendas and politics	Structures: Agendas
J5	Senior level structures – franchises, amateur teams, emerging provincial teams	Structures: Senior level
J6	Partnerships outside of cricket	Structures: Partnerships
J7	Academies	Structures: Academy
J8	Regional "Hubs"/Centres of Excellence	Structures: Centre
J9	Clubs	Structures: Clubs
J10	Camps	Structures: Camps

J11	Standards	Structures: Standards
J12	Universities role in the structures	Structures: Universities
	Player Pipeline (linked to LTPD stages)	
K1	Foundation – grow the base	Pipeline: Foundation
K2	Identify and develop talent	Pipeline: Talent
K3	Bursary schemes	Pipeline: Bursaries
K4	Cricket schools (traditional)	Pipeline: Cricket Schools
K5	Schools with facilities (but not being used)	Pipeline: School facilities
K6	Township (schools and facilities provided)	Pipeline: Township
K7	Rural (schools, facilities)	Pipeline: Rural
	Mind-set of stakeholders	
L1	Understanding of all players	Mind-set: Understanding
L2	Communications (transparency, objective and honest)	Mind-set: Communications
L3	Stereotyping and prejudices	Mind-set: Stereotyping
L4	Assimilation of cultures	Mind-set: Assimilation
L5	Backing and belief	Mind-set: Belief
L6	Trust and respect	Mind-set: Trust
L7	Belonging vs "foreign and fearful environments" to enhance performance	Mind-set: Belonging
L8	Selection issues	Mind-set: Selection
L9	Empowering environments	Mind-set: Empowering
L10	Psychological effect on players	Mind-set: Psych Effects
L11	Self-Belief	Mind-set: Self-belief
	Quotas	
M1	Level at which quotas should be in place or not	Quotas: Level
M2	Opinion on quotas	Quotas: Opinions
M3	Have quotas affected your progress	Quotas: Progress
	Personal and background information	Demographics

	Denotes code changes/additions from initial code book to composite code book

APPENDIX G: TARGET CODE MANUAL

Socio-ecological factors in talent development in cricketers in a diverse society

Data Analysis Target Code Manual – Study 4 (Target intervention)

	Description of code category	Code
	Assessment of Policy	
A1	Overall opinion of policy including advantages and disadvantages	Assessment: Overall opinion
A2	Understanding of transformation	Assessment: Transformation
A3	Intention of and reasons for policy	Assessment: Intention & reasons
A4	Success factors of policy	Assessment: S/Factors
A5	Impact on Players	Assessment: Player impact
A6	Impact on cricket quality	Assessment: Cricket Qual
A7	Players as people	Assessment: People
A8	Numbers achieved	Assessment: Nos
A9	Batsmen vs bowlers	Assessment: BvB
A10	Significance of opportunities	Assessment: Opps
	Implementation of Policy	
B1	Availability and capability of BA players	Implement: Availability
B2	Provincial differences	Implement: Prov. Diff
B3	Selection of Teams	Implement: Selection
B4	Quality of opportunities – playing time and rotation of players	Implement: Opps
B5	Batsmen vs bowlers	Implement: BvB
B6	Role of coaches and captains	Implement: Coaches
B7	Impact on non BA players	Implement: Non BA
B8	Requirements for successful implementation	Implement: Success
	Impact of Policy on Player Progression to Senior Levels	
C1	Assessment of and reasons for progression	Progression: Assess
C2	Role of CSA structures	Progression: CSA
C3	Use of and player responsibility for opportunities given	Progression: Resp for Opps
C4	Support required	Progression: Support
C5	Quality vs quantity of players	Progression: QvQ
	Psychological Effects of Policy on Players	
D1	Psychological effect of policy on players	Psych: Effects
	Termination of Policy	
E1	Length of time for policy's existence and criteria for termination	Termination: Length
E2	Sustainability and quality of SA cricket	Termination: Sustain

	Senior Player Development Programmes	
F1	Existing programmes (High performance, Academies, Camps, TAP, National academy)	Programmes: Existing
F2	Role of these programmes	Programmes: Role
F3	Structure/purpose of programmes	Programmes: Structure
F4	Link between CSA and provinces	Programmes: CSA v Prov
F5	Support Structures offered	Programmes: Support
F6	Education/tuition Link	Programmes: Education
F7	Mentors	Programmes: Mentors
F8	Success factors of programmes	Programmes: S/Factors
F9	Future requirements of programmes	Programmes: Future
	Monitoring of Players	
G1	Current assessment of monitoring and link to CSA pipeline	Monitoring: Current
G2	Future Plan: Success factors and Player Development Plan	Monitoring: Future
	Team Environments	
H1	Assessment of current team environments	TE: Assessment
H2	Enabling factors in developing cohesive team environments	TE: Enabling
H3	Limiting factors in developing cohesive team environments	TE: Limiting
H4	Nature of empowered environment	TE: Nature
H5	Differing cultures in team	TE: Culture
H6	Role of coach in building cohesive team environment	TE: Coach
	Management of Diversity	
I1	Current status in teams	Diversity: Current
I2	Responsibility and benefits of managing diversity	Diversity: Manage
I3	Difficult conversations to address issues	Diversity: Conversations
	Mind-sets	
J1	Of BA players	Mind-sets: BA players
J2	Level of change in past few years	Mind-sets: Change level
J3	Inter-racial comments	Mind-sets: Inter-racial comments
J4	Role in transforming cricket	Mind-sets: Transformation
J5	Leadership role in adapting mind-sets	Mind-sets: Leadership
	Communications	
K1	Between leadership and players	Comms: Leadership
K2	Within player group	Comms: Players
K3	Enabler in building connections/relationships	Comms: Connecting
K4	Nature, tone and messages portrayed through communications	Comms: Nature
	Leadership	
L1	Organisational leadership	Leadership: CSA
L2	Team leadership	Leadership: Team

	Coaches	
M1	Role in transformation of SA cricket	Coaches: Role
M2	Current skills/attributes	Coaches: Skills
M3	Developmental requirements	Coaches: Development
M4	Mind-sets of coaches	Coaches: Mind-sets
M5	Quality of coaches	Coaches: Quality
M6	Deployment of coaches	Coaches: Deployment
	Additional Changes to Enable Access	
N1	Foundation to U19 level	Changes: Foundation/U19
N2	Bridge between U19 and senior/amateur teams	Changes: U19/Senior
N3	Franchise requirements	Changes: Franchises
N4	Communities (township and rural areas) vs Privileged areas	Changes: Communities
N5	Societal changes and challenges	Changes: Society
N6	Other quotas	Changes: Quotas
	Addressing Socio-Economic (Macro) Environmental Factors	
O1	Current initiatives	SE: Current
O2	Understanding individual player needs	SE: Player needs
	Impact on Player Lifestyle	
P1	Impact of policy on pay levels	Lifestyle: Pay
P2	Factors related to pay levels	Lifestyle: Factors
P3	Sponsorships	Lifestyle: Sponsor
P4	Movement/relocation between franchises/provinces	Lifestyle: Relocation
	SACA Player Plus Programme	
Q1	Opinion and use of programme by players	SACA: Player+
Q2	Perception of SACA in general	SACA: Perception
	Agents	
R1	Opinion and value of player agents' role	Agents
	Player Involvement as Role Models	
S1	Player responsibility as role model for future generations	Role Models