

The psychological effects of the athlete-coach relationship
on performance: the lived experiences of
female university athletes

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ABSTRACT

Coaches have been found to have a remarkable influence on the physical and psychological development on their athletes and that their main responsibility is to help their athletes perform at their maximum level and reach goals that they could not attain on their own. Coaches are responsible for developing athletes' mental, physical, technical, and tactical abilities, and in addition to all of these responsibilities, they are also expected to win. The coach-athlete relationship can thus be regarded as the conveying of technical skills and mentoring from coach to athlete. Despite the responsibilities of a coach, the athlete-coach relationship is fundamental in the process of coaching because its nature is likely to determine the athlete's satisfaction, self-esteem and performance accomplishments.

The aim of this study was to investigate female university track and field athletes' lived experiences within the athlete-coach relationship to gather psychological effects relating to performance. The objectives were to explore the lived experiences of female university athletes within the athlete-coach relationship, investigate the psychological effects, and explore the impact it has on performance within the athlete-coach relationship. The researcher adopted the qualitative research method approach using the phenomenology design to explore and obtain a better understanding into the psychological effects of the athlete-coach relationship on an athletes' performance. Semi-structured interviews were used to gather data. Following the interviews, all data was analyzed using the 3+1C's conceptualized model as the theoretical framework. This model was used as it defines the coach-athlete relationship as a situation in which coaches and athletes' closeness, commitment, and complementarity are co-orientated. The 3+1C's model explored the athlete-coach relationship from the athlete's perspective which elicited positive and negative psychological and performance effects within the athlete-coach dyad. The research findings of this thesis it can be concluded that the behaviours of coaches have an influence on female athletes' psychological state as well as performance; and found that when coaches and athletes work together to achieve goals the relationship is more likely to be successful and the athlete is more likely to achieve goals. Furthermore it was concluded that affective emotional feelings of female University athletes are important in developing an effective athlete-coach relationship and facilitating positive psychological effects.

KEY WORDS

Athletics, female athletes, university athletics, athlete-coach relationship, 3+1C's, psychological effects, performance effects, phenomenology, closeness, commitment, complementarity, co-orientation.

DECLARATION

I hereby declare that “*the psychological effects of the athlete-coach relationship on performance: the lived experiences of female university athletes*” is my own work, that it has not been submitted before for any other degree in any other university, and that the sources I have used have been indicated and acknowledged as complete references.

Tarryn Vollenhoven

November 2018

Signed

Tarryn Vollenhoven



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DEDICATION

I would firstly like to dedicate this thesis to God for blessing me with the opportunity to do my Master's degree and for providing me with the help I needed to finish my thesis, with God all the difficulties I faced were surpassed. Also I would like to dedicate this thesis to my parents for their loving support and belief in me. Thank you for being the pillars in my life and for all your teachings and love, I appreciate you both and I hope I made you proud, I did it!



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Then big thank you to the participants of this study, for taking the time out to voluntarily be a part of this study, you all made this thesis possible by taking part in this study and revealed valuable information that will help more athlete-coach relationships.

A special thank you to a very special person in my life, Ashton Heldsinger, thank you for being the most supportive during the last stretch of this thesis, and for motivating me when I couldn't see the light at the end of the tunnel. Thank you for the late nights and input in my thesis. Your love and support has meant so much to me. The day has finally come, thank you for being you, now time to celebrate!

Michell Lucas, my friend who has been with me from beginning to end, thank you for the laughs through the tough times. The hard work as they say will always pay off. You have been an amazing friend through it all, I appreciate and thank you.

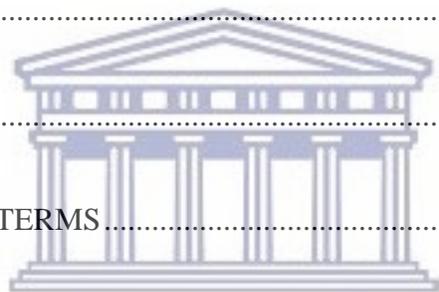
Lastly I would love to thank my family for always praying for me, guiding me, and supporting me no matter what, I love you guys, I hope I've made you proud.



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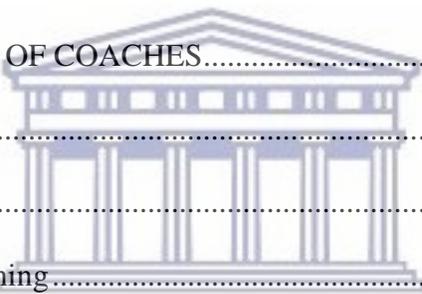
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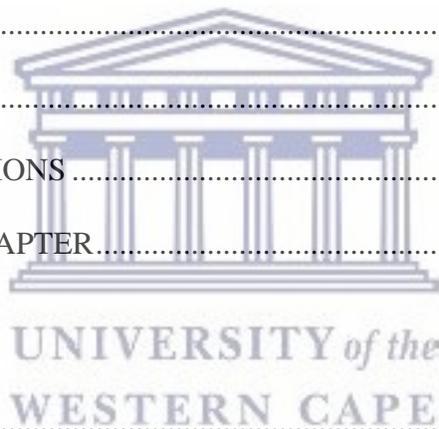
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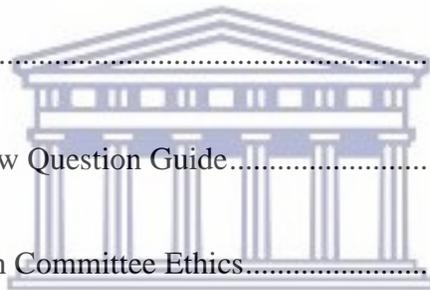
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INTERPRETATION OF KEY TERMS

Athletics refers primarily to track-and-field events that involve running, jumping or throwing (Roland, 2011). Athletics or ‘track and field’ is comprised of several disciplines with different physical, mechanical, technical, and psychological demands (Feddermann-Demont, et al, 2014)

Individual sport or independent sports reveals that athletes receive more personal instruction as they are largely competing as individuals whose performance is separated from their team members, so because athletes in independent sports receive more personal instruction from their coaches, it is understandable that they desire more of a democratic relationship of which includes support, feedback, and situational consideration (Navarre, 2011).

Participation in university sport is an important educational element in the broader educational experience of students, hence why much of the responsibility is placed on the coach to set the desired tone through policies and practices (Rezania & Gurney, 2014)

University/Student-Athletes are referred to as individuals whom are full-time students and participates in athletics (Washington, 2016)

Coaching is an art as well as a science because a coach has to assimilate a vast amount of information and scientific data about their sport, and translate it into practical coaching and training programs (Short & Short, 2005).

The success or failure of this process relies profoundly on the coach’s experience, availability of resources, knowledge of the event or sport, as well as their relationship with the athletes that they are coaching (Short & Short, 2005).

Coach-athlete relationship is an important part of the coaching process for it contributes to athlete motivation, satisfaction, self-esteem, sporting achievements and quality of life (Norman & French, 2013). The athlete-coach relationship has been defined as the setting where the coach and the athlete develop interdependent feelings, thoughts, and behaviors (Sandstrom, 2012)

A positive or effective coach-athlete relationship according to studies is one that is characterized by respect, belief, trust, shared knowledge and goals, care and mutual needs and expectations (Norman & French, 2013).

3+1C's Model was developed by Jowett (2007) as a conceptualization of the coach-athlete relationship based on a series of qualitative studies; this conceptualization refers to four constructs: closeness, commitment, complementarity, and co-orientation (Rhind, et al, 2012).

This model according to studies, argues that the quality of the relationship between a coach and an athlete is formed through these four key constructs (Rhind, et al, 2012).

Closeness is an interpersonal construct which represents coaches' and athletes' affective ties, such as liking, respecting, trusting, and appreciating each other (Jowett, 2009).

Commitment refers to a cognitive attachment and a long-term orientation toward one another (Jowett, 2009).

Complementarity reveals coaches' and athletes' behavioral transactions of cooperation, responsiveness, and affiliation (Jowett, 2009).

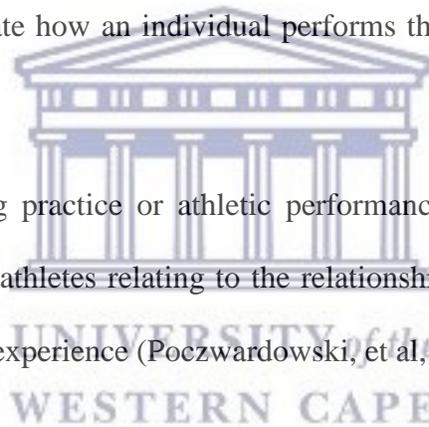
Co-orientation captures coaches' and athletes' inter-subjective experiences and inter-perceptions where coaches and athletes are capable to perceive their relationship from two

different perceptual perspectives, both of which can define the quality and, in turn, functions of the coach-athlete relationship (Jowett, 2009).

- **The direct perspective** reveals a relationship member's perception of personal feelings, thoughts, and behaviors relative to the other member for example; "I like my coach" (Jowett, 2009).
- **The meta-perspective** reveals a member's perception of how the other member in the relationship feels, thinks, and behaves toward him/her for example; "My coach likes me" (Jowett, 2009).

Psychological effects can dictate how an individual performs throughout competitions (Taylor, 2010).

Performance effects regarding practice or athletic performance during competitions may be profoundly impacted for some athletes relating to the relationship they have with their coaches which shapes their entire sport experience (Poczwardowski, et al, 2002).

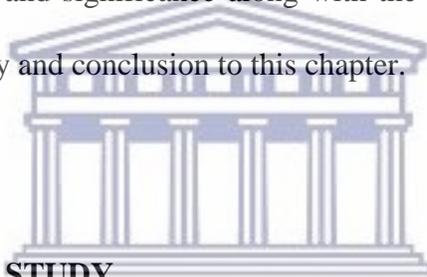


CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

1.1 INTRODUCTION

In this chapter an outline will be presented on the background of this study relating to the topic under investigation, as well as provide insight into the athlete-coach relationship and the approaches to this dyad, history of athletics, as well as statistics relating to the phenomenon and university athletics. The importance to this study as well as the aim and objectives is detailed. The study's problem statement and significance along with the research question of this study follows with an overall summary and conclusion to this chapter.



1.2 BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

Athletics is often used synonymously with any sporting activity due to sports being “athletic”, but in most cases, athletics refers primarily to track-and-field events that involve running, jumping or throwing (Roland, 2011). Athletics or ‘track and field’ is composed of several disciplines with different physical, mechanical, technical, and psychological demands (Feddermann-Demont, et al, 2014). Athletics is a global sport and the largest at the Summer Olympics Games, contributing about 20% of all participants (Timpka, et al, 2014). Athletics is now governed by the International Association of Athletics Federation (IAAF) (Timpka, et al, 2014). By 2011, nearly 50 outdoor and 25 indoor events fell under the IAAF's authority and ruled for both male and female competitions (Roland, 2011). Relating to performance and participation in individual sport compared to male and female, it is said that within the immense

majority of individual sports, the performance of women relative to men has amplified over time (Dupuy, 2010).

Evidence suggest that sport affects the social phenomenon which, in turn has an influence on all aspects of society and the lives of people and has become an integral part of life (Soheili, et al, 2013). In other words, sport has influenced people's daily lives, whether it's watching sport socially or actually participating in a sport. "*Competitive sport participation and the image of university sport are largely captured by the regional, national and/or international performances of elite athletes*" (Burnett, 2010, pp.15).

1.2.1 What do we know about the athlete-coach dyad?

Coaches are responsible for developing athletes' mental, physical, technical, and tactical abilities, and in addition to all of these responsibilities, they are also expected to win (Becker, 2009). The importance of coaching is thus self-evident especially as competition ascends and becomes tougher. Despite the responsibilities of a coach, the athlete-coach relationship is fundamental in the process of coaching because its nature is likely to determine the athlete's satisfaction, self-esteem and performance accomplishments (Jowett & Cockerill, 2003). The coach-athlete relationship plays an important role in providing happiness and welfare. It can provide sources of help during difficult times such as injury or burn out, during emotional crises such as disqualification from a major competition, and transitions for example career termination (Jowett & Clark-Carter, 2006).

The coach-athlete relationship can thus be regarded as the conveying of technical skills and mentoring from coach to athlete (Schinke & Tabakman, 2001). *“When coaches display a genuine interest in their players (not only as athletes but also as individuals), they establish relationships that often extend beyond the sport environment”* (Becker, 2009, pp.104). In a healthy coach-athlete relationship, both parties learn to co-ordinate their respective skills by appreciating each other's technical and disposition attributes (Schinke & Tabakman, 2001). Healthy or effective coaching is; *“that which results in either successful performance outcomes (measured in terms of either win-loss percentages or degree of self-perceived performance abilities) or positive psychological responses on the part of the athletes (e.g., high perceived ability, high self-esteem, an intrinsic motivational orientation, high level of sport enjoyment)”* (Becker, 2009, pp.94). Conversely, a lack of self and other reflectivity can promote a harmful relationship where both people experience and perpetuate psychological and affective damage within themselves and each other (Schinke & Tabakman, 2001). This was highlighted by Gearity and Murray (2011) relating to a study where Olympic athletes identified the coaching behaviors that had a detrimental effect on their performance such as; a negative attitude toward the coach, poor athlete-coach communication, a lack of trust within the athlete-coach relationship, a desire for more access to personal coaches, as well as a need for defining the coaches' roles more clearly.

According to Jowett and Clark-Carter (2006) an interpersonal relationship approach to sports coaching is important for two central reasons, one being because of the impact of coaching on individual athletes' performance and the second being because the positive dynamics of a large number of similar relationships combine to influence athletes, coaches and the sporting environment more broadly. They state that the coach-athlete relationship, like any other type of

relationship, has great psychological significance for the development and stability or change of the individuals involved. According to Rhind, et al, (2012), the coach-athlete relationship has been linked with a number of intrapersonal outcomes, they stated that relationship quality has been found to be positively correlated with psychological outcomes such as athletes' perceptions of their physical self-concept, their level of passion for sport, and their level of satisfaction (Rhind, et al, 2012). Recently, the athlete-coach relationship has attracted a growing interest or attention from researchers (Ward, 2014). This surge of research may be due to the recognition that the coach-athlete relationship is a crucial antecedent of athletes' optimal functioning (Lafrenière, et al, 2011). The athlete-coach relationship is instrumental in an athlete's development, that it can become a source of stress and distraction, especially for the athlete (Jowett & Cockerill, 2003).

The athlete-coach relationship has frequently been perceived as a complex nature, and thus the importance of establishing a positive athlete-coach relationship has been emphasised by the recent theoretical frameworks established such as; the 3+1C's conceptualization model (Jowett, 2007) as well as the coach-athlete relationship questionnaire (CART Q) (Ward, 2014). It was said that the frameworks provided suggests the significance of building a positive coach-athlete relationship, that it is a critical antecedent of athletes' optimal functioning, the way in which the coach and athletes interact on a daily basis are ways to highlight the importance of the coach-athlete relationship (Ward, 2014). However, there still remained a scope for research on the topic. The socio-emotional approach has been used to study the coach-athlete relationship and points to the emotional component resulting from the interaction between coach and athlete, which may have both positive and negative effects on the athlete (Serpa, 1995). This approach further deals with the mutual affective-emotional influences experienced by coach and athlete

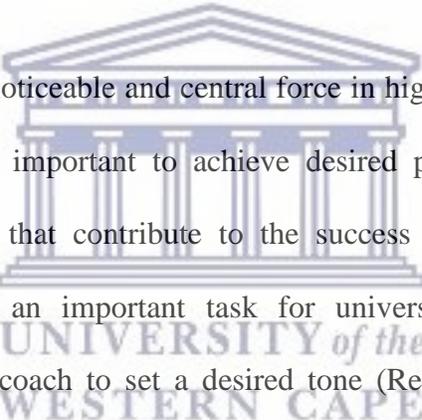
(Serpa, 1995). The athlete-coach relationship has shown to have great psychological significance for the members in the relationship (Sandstrom, 2012). In a recent study done on retired elite athletes, the perceived psychological effects (low mood, anger, low self-efficacy, low self-esteem, anxiety, sense of accomplishment), training effects (increased motivation, decreased motivation, reduced enjoyment, impaired focus, difficulty with skill acquisition), and performance effects (performance decrements, enhanced performance) were the experiences of the emotional abuse placed on these athletes' (Stirling & Kerr, 2013). Theoretical frameworks and empirical studies have pointed to coaches as sources for fostering character development in athletes, but less research has focused on the lived experience by coaches and players in defining what a coach does to influence character (Lupori, 2015). Evidence also suggests that coach-athlete relationships are rarely examined for their impact on women's sports and athlete well-being (Brake, 2012). There are evident gaps for future studies on the athlete-coach relationship such as; focusing on the lived experiences of athletes and/or coaches, or tapping into the psychological aspect within the athlete-coach relationship, as well as the effects thereof on well-being and performance and even focusing on a specific gender. This will provide a greater understanding of the coach-athlete relationship.

Effective athlete-coach relationships have shown to have a positive impact on the physiological health and sense of well-being of the athlete, however not all relationships are effective and there are also relationships that are associated with unequal power, deceit, abuse and exploitation (Sandstrom, 2012). By collecting data for this current study on female athletes', a background of sport psychology will be used to obtain their experiences and a better understanding of what these athlete's face in athletics. Due to the impact the coach can have on the athlete in the athlete-coach relationship there is a need for sufficient knowledge about this

relationship to make the athlete's sporting experience as enjoyable and rewarding as possible (Sandstrom, 2012).

According to Rhind, et al, (2012) this athlete-coach relationship is at the very heart of coaching and coaches who fail to acknowledge the importance of this, risk not developing their athletes to their full potential. *"The coach-athlete relationship is not an add-on to, or by-product of, the coaching process ... instead it is the foundation of coaching"* (Rhind, et al, 2012, pp.1).

1.2.2 Sport and Universities



Athletics has become a noticeable and central force in higher education. For Universities or any colleges involved, it is important to achieve desired performance goals. Thus, it is essential to understand factors that contribute to the success of student-athletes. Managing student-athlete expectations is an important task for universities in which much of the responsibility is placed on the coach to set a desired tone (Rezania and Gurney, 2014). *"To further understand the interpersonal dynamic between the coach and the player, it is important to understand the perceptions of the players with respect to effective coaching behaviours and practices. It is important to understand how players interpret coaching practices and how those practices affect student-athlete performance"* (Rezania and Gurney, 2014, 1-2).

The higher education institutions in South Africa provides a context for the 23 USSA (University Sport South Africa) affiliated institutions to critically position themselves for optimal delivery to the sport industry with particularity in terms of sport and elite athlete development (Burnett, 2010). The University of the Western Cape (UWC), as well as Stellenbosch University

(SU), is part of the 23 USSA affiliated institutions. UWC and SU was thus selected as the sample focus in this current study.

Evidence is illustrated below regarding universities in South Africa relating to overall sport participation, and according to gender. In Table 1.1 (Burnett, 2010) it shows overall high performance participation rates across universities in South Africa. Table 1.2 (Burnett, 2010) demonstrates a more detailed statistic of the overall exact figures of league participation based on gender in South African universities. This shows the ratio of female to male participation which illustrates the minority being females, mixed gender refers to mixed sport participation.



Table 1.1 (Burnett, 2010) overall high performance participation rates across Universities in South Africa

UNIVERSITY	NUMBER OF ATHLETES
UP	1267
UCT	934
UWC	929
UJ	891
UKZN	858
SU	649
UFC	560
NWU	548
NMMU	461
WITS	376
TUT	353
VUT	330
RU	310
CUT	220
UFH	200
CPUT	180
WSU	178
UNIVEN	175
UZULU	172
UL	160
DUT	130
MUT	126
UNISA	0

Table 1.2 (Burnett, 2010) overall league participation based on exact figures of gender

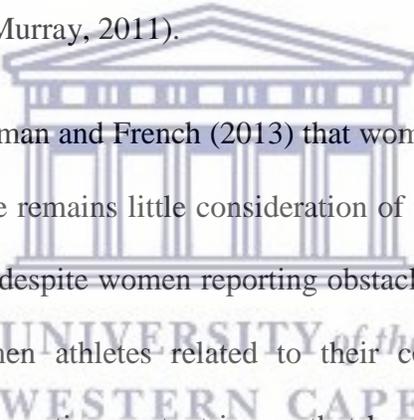
GENDER	NUMBER OF ATHLETES
Male	5857
Female	3343
Mixed	606

1.3 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

There are several potential factors within the athlete-coach relationship, which could potentially affect an athletes' psychological state, in turn affecting their performance. There have been positive as well as negative experiences reported according to the athlete-coach relationship for example it has been reported that coaches are often unable to reach their athletes due to personal shortcomings in communication, for example, impatience and the lack of understanding; this alone outlines the challenging interpersonal dynamic between coaches and athletes (Schinke & Tabakman, 2001). A positive coach-athlete relationship is one that is characterised by respect, belief, trust, shared knowledge and goals, care and mutual needs and expectations (Norman & French, 2013).

According to Navarre (2011), research has also not illustrated how coaches coach, communicate, and lead their male and female athletes in order to achieve productive coach-athlete relationships and enhance athletic performance. Navarre also stated that coaches may lack

the requisite education or relational ability to build relationships on pedagogical, developmental, as well as social levels (Navarre, 2011). The above factors relate to the quality of the athlete-coach relationship as well as showing the important role of coaches and the influence they may have on athletes according to their emotional tone, cognitive thoughts as well as behaviours and vice versa. An athletes' perception of their coach and the relationship has been shown to be a factor within the athlete-coach relationship, the way coaches treat their athletes' can influence their mental state and performance. Research have reported that athletes' have perceived coaches to be inhibiting their mental skills by coaches distracting athletes' causing them to lose focus, and inhibited athletes' by engendering self-doubt through harmful things they do, also by not encouraging them (Gearity and Murray, 2011).



It was also stated by Norman and French (2013) that women are recognized as a minority group within sport and that there remains little consideration of the meaning and experiences of coaching in the lives of women despite women reporting obstacles to successful participation in sport, that the voices of women athletes related to their coaching experiences are often overlooked. They state that the sporting context is one that has long been male dominated and consequently, coaching practices and methods have primarily been developed by male practitioners and often tailored towards a male participant base. Thus the problem of this study is to explore and understand female university level athletes regarding the psychological effects that exist within the athlete-coach relationship (Norman & French, 2013).

Understanding the positive or negative psychological effects and whether these athletes' performances are affected by the quality of the relationship can be explored by investigating athletes' perspectives regarding the emotional tone, cognitive thoughts, as well as behaviours within the relationship and the effects there of. This allows coaches to better understand how to

facilitate an effective athlete-coach relationship as well as better understand how athletes, feel, think and why they behave a certain way or how they perceive coaches to feel, think and the effects of certain behaviours conducted by coaches. This may also be useful to develop coaching strategies to promote positive coaching and effective athlete-coach relationships, especially amongst individual sport.

1.4 RESEARCH QUESTION

Relating to performance in athletics, what are university female athletes facing psychologically within the athlete-coach relationship?



1.5 AIM OF THE STUDY

The aim of this study is to investigate female university track and field athletes' lived experiences within the athlete-coach relationship in order to gather psychological effects relating to performance.

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1.6 OBJECTIVES

- i. To gather rich information pertaining to the interpersonal dynamics of the athlete-coach relationship by exploring participants personal lived experiences

- ii. Investigate the psychological effects experienced by female university athletes' within the athlete-coach relationship
- iii. Investigate the psychological influence the athlete-coach relationship has on female university athletes' athletic performances

1.7 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE PROBLEM

This study desires to unfold any negative or positive experiences of athletes' displayed within the athlete-coach relationship and whether their relationship was/is affected psychologically and/or regarding performance. The athlete-coach relationship as a whole relating to the emotional tone, cognitive thoughts or behavioural aspects experienced within the relationship may determine whether the psychological effects are positive and promoting, or negative and detrimental. This current study solely focuses on female athletes due to female athletes' voices often being overshadowed in terms of being heard or understood. There are also coaches who may be male or female, training a female athlete but struggle within their relationship, hence why this study is to gather a better understanding of female athletes and the best way for coaches to develop a relationship with this gender (females).

The reason for this study is also to understand the dynamic of the coach-athlete relationship and to gain insight on the psychological and performance effects of their experiences. Obtaining female athletes' perspective and views with regards to their personal experiences is a growing need especially for obtaining knowledge regarding relationships in sport (Sandstrom, 2012). It is crucial to understand athletes' to facilitate and strengthen the

relationship and promote positive effects. Coaches also need to understand athletes' in a holistic way in order to develop them to the best they can be. According to Norman and French (2013) an athlete's performance is contingent upon many situational and personal factors, thus the role of the coach in facilitating learning and development is highly significant. They continue to state that it is the responsibility of the coach to prepare and train athletes tactically, physically, technically, psychologically as well as take care of their personal and social well-being, thus, it is a varied and demanding role that requires coaches to understand their athletes and consequently, a role that is invested with a great deal of power (Norman & French, 2013).

This study will be beneficial for athletes and coaches to understand the effects of certain behaviours or actions in this interpersonal athlete-coach relationship. Due to exploring athletes' lived experiences, this study will gather information relating to ways coaches should handle their athletes, as well as for athletes to understand the dynamics of the dyad and the best ways to be treated by coaches. Evidence according to Norman and French (2013) suggests that focusing upon high performance level sport, such as University level sport, several studies have demonstrated the significance of the coach-athlete relationship regarding the impact upon athletic success. They continue to state that positive relationships between the coach and athlete at high performance level sport were athlete-centered, underpinned by shared knowledge, open communication, trust, mutual respect and clearly defined roles (Norman & French, 2013). They concluded in stating that the nature of this relationship was pivotal in athletic development and success (Norman & French, 2013).

“Studying the nature and content of the coach-athlete relationship as well as its functions would help discern what makes a coach-athlete relationship positive and successful. The generated knowledge will help design strategies for the development of effective, supportive, and

successful athletic relationships” (Jowett, 2009, 35). This study also allows female athletes to have a voice and to be heard by sharing their experiences.

1.8 OVERVIEW OF CHAPTERS

This study is first and foremost concerned with exploring the athlete-coach relationship and its dynamics, primarily investigating the psychological and performance effects thereof. The purpose of this thesis is to gather insight and understanding from student female track and field athletes and their perspectives of their relationships with their coaches at university level athletics. This allows female athletes to have a voice and share their experiences from their perspective. The following is a layout of chapters regarding this thesis:

Chapter One provides an outline of this study regarding its background with a brief overview on the history of athletics globally, university athletics and statistics within South Africa as well as an overview on the athlete-coach relationship. The statement of the problem is explained as well as the research question, research aims and objectives, followed by the significance of this present study. Lastly the definition of key terms are presented as well as an overview of all chapters within this study, followed by a conclusion to chapter one.

Chapter Two is a representation of literature, reviewing and defining information and concepts regarding the purpose of this study. The review of literature relates to the athlete-coach relationship, describing the role and influence coaches may have on athletes, and explaining leadership styles and coaching behaviours. Effective and

ineffective coaching is explained regarding the development of an athlete as well as various perceptions of the athlete-coach dyad relating to behaviours, gender, the quality of the relationship as well as the psychological and performance effects the relationship may have on the athlete. The review of literature also presents the various approaches taken to study the athlete-coach relationship as well as the importance thereof. This chapter lastly explains the theoretical framework used in this study and the significance thereof. The 3+1C's Model will be used to explore the athlete-coach relationship according to the perceptions of female university athletes and investigate the psychological and performances effects experienced within the relationship.

Chapter Three presents and describes the research methods used within this study. The design adopted in this study is qualitative, and the data collection methods and data analyses techniques are described relating to the design adopted. A description of the research sample is presented as well as the research setting used to collect data. The data collection process is explained in detail following the analysis of data. Trustworthiness, reflexivity as well as ethical considerations are detailed according to this study.

Chapter Four is a detailed description of the findings relating to this study. There are themes and sub-themes presented according to results. Each theme and emerging themes are defined and discussed according to findings and literature. This chapter displays results that were analysed according to data collected. Followed by a conclusion to findings and chapter

Chapter Five is a summary of findings within this study. Conclusions are made and presented with recommendations for further research which is offered by the researcher.

The researcher also provides an overview or a reflection of the qualitative research journey experienced, following the limitations of this study as well as concluding remarks. References and appendices follow this chapter.

1.9 CONCLUSION OF CHAPTER

This chapter presented information relating to this current study on the athlete-coach relationship. An outline was presented on information regarding athletics and sport in South African universities as well as the reasons for this particular study. Statistics was illustrated according to universities and sport participation relating to gender. A brief description of the athlete-coach dyad and what we know was explained regarding literature. A deeper look on this current study was shown with regards to the statement and significance of the problem along with the research question and its aims and objectives. This chapter gives readers an introduction to this current study.

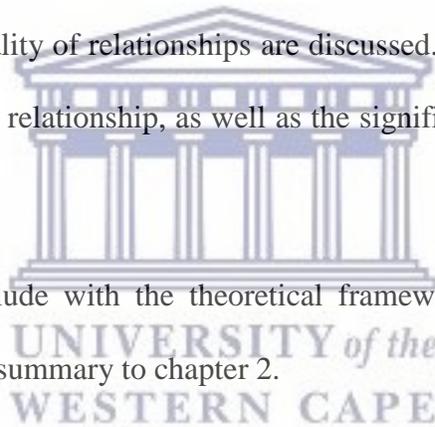
The following chapter provides a review of literature relating to the topic under investigation regarding the athlete-coach relationship, psychological and performance effects, coaching and the quality and perceptions of this relational dyad, also highlighting the theoretical framework, which will be used for this study.

CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

This chapter focuses on literature regarding the athlete-coach relationship. Insight on this relationship dyad is presented and discussed relating to coaches' influences on athletes within the relationship. The importance and the role of coaches with regards to leadership styles and behaviours are presented. An understanding of the differences between poor/ineffective coaching and effective coaching is presented with regards to the development of an athlete. Perceptions regarding behaviours within the athlete-coach relationship, gender, psychological state and performance, as well as the quality of relationships are discussed. Literature is also presented on approaches to the athlete-coach relationship, as well as the significance or importance thereof to this current study.

This chapter will conclude with the theoretical framework that will be used for this current study, and an overview summary to chapter 2.



2.1 THE INFLUENCE/ROLE OF COACHES

'Through sports athletes are thought to build admirable character traits such as discipline, hard work, sportsmanship, and teamwork. Additionally, there are moral character traits like honesty, integrity, respect for others, and fair play. Research suggests that coaches can and do influence these characteristics both positively and negatively' (Lupori, 2015, pp.3).

Maitland (2012) states that coaching is central to improving performance in sport and delivering social participation objectives, this includes the contribution that coaches make which is through facilitating skill acquisition, through the personal and social development of sport participants, as well as the role of coaching in delivering world-leading sport performances. Coaches thus play an important role in the development of student-athletes, undertaking the roles of teachers as well as mentors (Shipherd, et al, 2018). Coaches are in a position to impact athletes' physical and psychological development both in a positive and a negative way according to Maitland (2012). An example of this is that a coach has the potential to have a positive impact on an athlete's physical preparation or their psychological profile, alternatively, coaching can also be associated with negative outcomes such as instilling a lack of confidence, dissatisfaction, poor performance, burnout, and withdrawal from sport (Maitland, 2012). It is further stated that ineffective relationships may be characterized by conflict, misunderstanding, resentment and even abuse according to Maitland (2012). As a result, the nature of the athlete-coach relationship and coaching is thus important to focus research in this direction because according to Baldrige (2015) coaches all differ in personality, competencies, qualifications, communication skills, motivational structure, leadership behaviours, and so forth; this suggests that they would have different motivational and influential effects on every athlete that they coach. In relation, Yukhymenko-Lescroart, et al, (2014), stated that coaches who provide high levels of encouragement, support, and autonomy are more likely to foster positive psychological responses in their athletes and ultimately lead to higher levels of performance.

The following section will provide literature and evidence to coach leadership, effective coaching and ineffective coaching; attesting to the influence coaches may have on their athletes.

2.1.1 Coach leadership

According to Vella, Oades, et al, (2010), coach leadership is a process of influence that is dependent upon, and constituted by, the interpersonal relationship between coach and athlete. They quote that “While coaching is arguably constituted most notably by the teaching of sport-specific skills, coach leadership is also constituted by the ability of the coach to establish and maintain positive interpersonal relationships” (Vella, Oades, et al, 2010, pp.429). Intrapersonal knowledge includes self-awareness and reflection, both of which have been shown to influence the development of coaching and leadership (Vella, Oades, et al, 2010). To add to the definition, leadership can be defined as a process whereby an individual influences a group of individuals to achieve a common goal (Gesualdo, 2011). Leadership of a coach is thus evidently important within the athlete-coach relationship.

Detling (2001) discussed four types of leadership styles, they are as follows:

- The authoritarian leader is achievement-orientated, extremely confident, and procures a tough love attitude towards athletes and usually takes complete control in a dictator fashion.
- The behaviourist leader uses rewards and consequences to mould each athlete's behaviour into what the leader believes it should be (Detling, 2001).
- The humanistic leader is usually concerned with each athlete as an individual and this leader would attempt to get to know each athlete individually and how he or she is affected by his or her environment to subsequently help meet each athlete's needs (Detling, 2001).

- Lastly, the democratic leader allows athletes to be more involved in the decision making processes according to Detling (2001).

A coach would attempt to display one or a combination of these specific leadership styles, however, it is the athletes' perceptions of their coach's leadership style that ultimately determines the type of leader and the effectiveness of the coach (Detling, 2001). An investigation on coaching behaviour perceptions was conducted on 382 Canadian athletes (majority of whom were competing at elite level) and 66 of their coaches. It was found that 72% of the coaches believed that they had a positive coaching style; however only 32% of athletes indicated their coaches to be positive (Detling, 2001). Many coaches fail to realize that their athletes may desire leadership qualities that their coaches do not possess, it is said that athletes perceptions of an ideal coach may be entirely different to what the coach believes constitutes as an ideal leader (Detling, 2001). Norman and French (2013) directly states that athletes cannot reach high performance levels without direct support and guidance from their coaches. In addition, the leadership style of the coach emanates from the manner in which the coach communicates with his or her athletes (Detling, 2001). Hackett (2014) also stated that trust in leadership is an essential component for the optimal functioning of a team. According to Hackett, (2014) there are three features of leadership that highlight the importance of trust:

1. Leadership is a behavioural process.
2. Leadership is interpersonal in nature.
3. Leadership is aimed at influencing and motivating team members toward goals defined by the group.

The authors above described what a coach leader is expected to be, types of leadership traits and the qualities they should possess such as trust, being supportive and the importance of

communication, however Detling (2001) does mention that the way the athlete views the coach will determine how effective the coach actually is in terms of leadership. This displays the importance of an athletes' perspective. Often times a coach will engage in a behaviour for a specific reason, while an athlete perceives that same coach's behaviour to mean something completely different, thus the difference between coaches' and athletes' perceptions of leadership behaviours can in fact be detrimental to athletes' satisfaction with their coach as well as athletic performance (Detling, 2001).

2.1.2 Effective Coaching

“Coaching effectiveness stipulates that an effective coach engages in behaviours that are an application of integrated professional, interpersonal and intrapersonal knowledge. When applied, these knowledge bases bring about positive changes in the athlete outcomes of competence, confidence, connection and character” (Vella, Oades, et al, 2010, pp.427-428).

According to Wilman (2010) an integrative definition of coaching effectiveness and expertise includes coaches' intrapersonal knowledge such as ability for introspection and understanding of oneself, interpersonal knowledge such as interacting with others, and professional knowledge which is declarative knowledge of sport science, the sport itself and pedagogy. It is further stated that the consistent development of positive psychological, social, and behavioural outcomes for athletes has been defined as a central component of effective coaching (Vella & Perlman, 2014). Effective coaches should be good communicators, they should have a working knowledge of the learning processes, teaching methods, training principles, as well as assessment procedures associated with their sport (Short & Short, 2005).

An example of effective coaching was depicted in a study by Becker (2009) whom explored athlete experiences of great coaching in a variety of sports where she found six major dimensions that characterized these athletes' experiences of great coaching: coach attributes, the environment, the system, relationships, coaching actions, and influences. These athletes' had no uncertainty and knew exactly what to do and what to expect from their coaches who enabled the athletes' to focus on their coaches' actions and their own development and performance (Becker, 2009). This demonstrates that effective coaching behaviours can promote a good understanding between the athlete and coach (Jowett & Nezlek, 2011); the athlete-coach relationship may become stronger which could promote or facilitate the psychological state and enhance performance. Due to the coach being consistent in his/her attributes, management skills and carrying their part as a coach in maintaining the athlete-coach relationship, athletes' seem to feel more comfortable with the coach according to this study (Jowett & Nezlek, 2011). They are able to focus and concentrate better and there is a mutual respect and understanding of what has to be done, when, how and why (Jowett & Nezlek, 2011). As stated by Ferrari, et al, (2016) effective coaches usually help their athletes meet their needs by adapting their behaviours to various antecedents such as the level of competition, age, gender, ability, emotions, and perceptions of their athletes. Understanding one another in the coach-athlete relationship is evidently crucial because it may affect the relationship, which may lead to the athletes' feeling de-motivated due to the lack of understanding or due to various coaching behaviours.

“Effective coaches teach athletes skills and concepts related to the sport and they praise and provide positive feedback to athletes. Athletes prefer their coach to provide frequent amounts of these behaviors” (Gearity, 2009, pp.37). A healthy relationship between a coach and an athlete may have a positive impact on individuals (e.g., increased self-esteem and

satisfaction), as well as improve team dynamics (Shipherd, et al, 2018). In relation, Becker (2009) stated that athletes identified many abilities and attributes that made their coaches great, however it did not at all mean that they were perfect. In this study, one athlete discussed their coach not being fully developed in all areas, that their coaches sometimes lacked interpersonal, emotional, and/or management skills (Becker, 2009). It seems that not all coaches can be great coaches but it seems that they make the relationship work by implementing great coaching styles to facilitating the development of the athlete. Jowett and Shanmugam (2016) agreed that effective coaching is a fair, considerate, caring, and helping practice/process where the main focus is on maximizing athletes' potential, thus, Yust (2008) stated that a key component such as communication plays a critical role in the athletic setting, that the ability to communicate effectively is an essential skill in becoming a successful coach. Yust (2008) stated that coaches strive to motivate the athletes they work with to provide them with the necessary tools to train effectively and to ultimately improve performance. It was also mentioned by Yust (2008) that when the coach nurtures a positive coach-athlete relationship, it allows for effective and efficient communication to take place. "Effective and efficient communication is a central part of most successful individual and team performances" (Yust, 2008, pp.7). Jowett and Cramer (2010) stated that the way coaches communicate and interact with their athletes transmits cues of ability, effort, and future expectations for future success. In relation, Philippe, et al, (2011) stated that the performance enhancement and psychological well-being of athletes are in the centre of the coach-athlete relationship'. Coaches who provided positive and informational feedback which Holt (2013) expanded on found that improved athlete's competence, enjoyment and motivation, which was crucial for athletes continued participation and improved performances. The positive and informational feedback produced a stronger desire and effort in achieving challenging and

mastery experiences within athletes; therefore coaches play an important role in enhancing the lives of athletes (Holt, 2013).

In a study by Ostler (2014), it was found that the coach has remarkable influence on the physical and psychological development on their athletes and that their main responsibility is to help their athletes perform at their maximum level and reach goals that they could not attain on their own. Ostler (2014) also states that in order to meet this demand coaches have five defined roles namely; a teacher, where coaches use their knowledge and skills in training on physical, technical, an mental aspects. Second role would be an organizer, by planning and scheduling training and competitions. Third role is a competitor during competitions, such as getting involved with officials or interacting with athletes. Forth role as a learner, always learning and improving their abilities to help athletes perform well. Lastly as a friend/mentor, by becoming positive role models and providing support and counselling to their athletes. *“Successful coaches aim to improve their athlete’s lives both inside and outside the sport”* (Ostler, 2014, pp.20). According to Norman and French (2013) positive relationships between the coach and athlete at high performance level sport are athlete-centred, underpinned by shared knowledge, open communication, trust, mutual respect and clearly defined roles, that the nature of this relationship is pivotal in athletic development and success. Research reported women athletes who had remained in their sport and who described positive coaching experiences, described coach-athlete relationships that were built on encouragement, being listened to, friendship, fairness and knowledge of the sport (Norman & French, 2013). In relation, Jowett and Nezlek (2011), close relationships not only have the capability to help individuals cope with stressful events, but ‘also enable and equip individuals to prevent stressful events, for example, advice about appropriate strength training from a coach whom is trusted and respected may reduce the probability that an

athlete injures him/herself. In addition Coykendall (2014) part of being a good coach is being able to recognize problems with individual athletes and being able to address issues regardless if they are physical; technique, strength, on field performance, or whether it is psychological; motivation, confidence, and decision making. A coach must be able to recognize the individual learning styles of each athlete in order to be able to teach these athletes the proper techniques as well as the way of thinking (Coykendall, 2014). Studies suggest that when coaches consider athletes opinions in sport and acknowledge their feelings, athlete's motivation increases and thus also influencing sport performance (Holt, 2013). Results of Holt's (2013) study revealed that feelings of being loved, cared for, and valued was important regarding trust and the dynamic for understanding their athletes and their goals. Therefore, the involvement, warmth and support from interpersonal relationships could help athletes believe that they can achieve their goals (Holt, 2013).

An understanding of literature with regards to effective coaching and experiences thereof was discussed. Evidence states that certain components, or key elements and behaviours can produce an effective coach, which may result in facilitating the athlete and ultimately the relationship. To understand athletes' perspective and view of their coaches' effectiveness, their individual thoughts, feelings, as well as their experiences with their respective coaches and how it may affect their psychological state will be sought after. The following section will provide evidence relating to ineffective coaching.

2.1.3 Poor/Ineffective Coaching

“Poor coaching is a phenomenon that has received little attention in the research and literature on coaching. While no study has specifically examined poor coaching, what we know about poor coaching has been drawn from research on coaching in general or effective coaching that has also asked about poor performance or undesirable behaviors of coaches” (Gearity, 2009, pp. 38).

A negative athlete-coach relationship can lead to athletes experiencing adverse cognitive and affective states, as well as dysfunctional behavioural patterns both on and off the field (Shipherd, et al, 2018). A study that relates closely to this present study on higher education student athletes and investigating the psychological effects of the athlete-coach relationship and Gearity & Murray (2011) described the psychological effects of poor coaching reported by collegiate, professional and semi-professional athletes. Themes derived from this research found that athletes’ reported poor teaching by the coach, uncaring, unfair, inhibiting athlete’s mental skills, and athlete coping. The conclusion was that the two themes namely; inhibiting athlete’s mental skills and athlete coping, are related to several constructs in the sport psychology domain such as motivation, self-efficacy, focus and concentration, team cohesion, and stress and coping. Instruction on coping skills is warranted for athletes dealing with poor coaching (Gearity & Murray, 2011). As shown in research above, poor coaching can affect the athlete negatively in terms of the psychological effect. According to a study by Olusoga, Butt, and Maynard (2010), coach stressors, such as behaviour towards athletes (e.g., anger directed at athletes, less contact time with athletes, less time for feedback), has an influence on athletes and affects the athletes (e.g., athletes losing confidence, athletes getting angry/annoyed, athletes’ performances

affected). Coaches discussed becoming “too directive” when coaching and being “short with athletes” (Olusoga, Butt, & Maynard, 2010).

A study by Coykendall (2014) discusses the nature of athlete burnout. He states that burnout is often the precursor of drop out, that it is often a result of having a negative coach-athlete relationship as well as low motivation to continue participating (Coykendall, 2014). Burnout can be credited to the lack of accomplishments, exhaustion, as well as sport devaluation, which in turn means the sport is less important and becomes less of a priority to the athlete over time (Coykendall, 2014). He explains that it is not to say that athletes who do have a lot of accomplishments do not experience burnout, however those athletes who are lacking in accomplishments are more likely to become burnt out (Coykendall, 2014). The strength of the athlete-coach relationship can help the athlete get through troubling times such as burnout, injury, failure to qualify for a major competition, and or career termination (Coykendall, 2014). Feelings of being burnt out over a season could increase the likelihood of complete dropout, so educating young coaches with technical experience on the psychological aspect of coaching may help nurture positive coach-athlete relationships and a positive environment for all parties involved (Coykendall, 2014).

Lassiter (2002) stated that coaches must be educated in order to help themselves realize the direct and indirect impact their attitudes and behaviours have on their athletes. Research findings suggested that 75% of college female gymnasts who were told by their coaches that they were too heavy resorted to pathogenic weight-control behaviours (Lassiter, 2002). Joy, et al, (2015) mentioned that eating disorders, such as anorexia nervosa and bulimia nervosa, may have devastating effects on both the health and performance of athletes, and when compared to non-athletes, both female and male athletes are at higher risk of developing an eating disorder, this is

especially true for athletes participating in sports where low body weight or leanness confers a competitive advantage. Although according to Joy, et al, (2015) stating that females represent approximately 90% of those who seek medical care for an eating disorder, males can also be affected, it was also stated that eating disorders have wide-ranging health and performance consequences, including one of the highest mortality rates of any mental health condition. This demonstrates the impact of coach's words of communication or behaviours and how this can affect an athlete psychologically, which in turn can affect their actions or behaviours. Lassiter (2002) strongly states that coaches have a tremendous influence on the athletes they coach through both their words and actions. Coaches are required to instruct athletes on correct technique and communicate with their athletes to cultivate a learning environment to ensure positive learning results (Yust, 2008).

Results further revealed that athletes' experiences varied across an athlete's career (Stirling & Kerr, 2008). A study done in South Africa, Botswana, Namibia, and Zimbabwe by Tshube and Feltz (2015) found that one of the primary challenges faced by most elite athletes is the ability to manage their intense exclusive focus in sports and still build resilience and capacity to meet the many transitions and demands required in both elite performance as well as life. It was revealed that the conflict of sport and studies was evident in an athlete's career, particularly in the early stages of their careers in sport, it was also mentioned that there is no doubt that governments, sports federations, sports clubs, and sponsors have put pressure on athletes to excel at the international level more than ever in the history of sports, the pressure to succeed in sport may even lead athletes to dropping out of school to focus on sport (Tshube & Feltz, 2015). Another poor coaching experience is further demonstrated in a study done on emotional abuse by coaches which was conducted by Stirling and Kerr (2008). In this study, athletes' experiences in

sport revealed experiences of abuse and that athletes are not immune from experiences of physical, sexual, and emotional abuse. Distress was expressed as a result of their coaches' behaviours, including yelling, criticisms, throwing of objects in anger or frustration, and the "silent treatment" (Stirling & Kerr, 2008). An example of this emotional abuse, according to a subject within the research stated after her performance declined: "*there was so much pressure to do well that I just broke down . . . I was really upset . . . he was insane and I couldn't take it anymore.*" (Stirling & Kerr, 2008, pp. 98). A former student-athlete at the University of Illinois reported that he had been verbally and emotionally abused by his coach, by pressuring him to play while injured and then insulted and humiliated him for resisting (Roxas & Redinger, 2016). Roxas and Redinger (2016) went on to explain that abuse, especially verbal and emotional abuse, has to some extent been a part of the culture of college coaching, a culture where coaches hold remarkable power over student athletes' playing time, scholarship money, transfer opportunities, as well as the quality and the time of their day-to-day lives, making it difficult for such behavior to come to the attention of others (Roxas & Redinger, 2016). Tolerance for abusive coaching appears however to be diminishing as awareness is growing regarding harsh effects on performance and well-being (Roxas & Redinger, 2016).

'In competitive sport, especially at the elite level of intercollegiate athletics, coaches have power over athletes' lives far exceeding the mechanics of practicing and competing in a sport. A coach's power over athletes can extend to virtually all aspects of the athlete's life in such ways that clear boundaries are hard to delineate' (Brake, 2012, pp.405). According to a study on intercollegiate female athletes in the US, 20% of athletes reported experiencing behaviours from coaches that took the relationship in a non-instructional and potentially intimate direction, such as an invitation to dinner alone at a restaurant or calling the athlete a pet name,

2%, reported having been subjected to verbal or physical sexual advances by their coach (Brake, 2012). A similar study of female athletes in the U.K found 2.7% of the athletes reported being on the receiving end of sexual behaviours from a coach, pressurizing to have sex or contact with breast or genital area (Brake, 2012). In addition, recent research by Johansson, et al, (2016) mentioned that sexual relationships between coaches and athletes tend to be complex, complicated, and problematic because professional and private spheres intersect and role boundaries tend to be blurred, such relationships are intimately related to power dynamics and often result in ethical dilemmas. According to Brake (2012) research shows a serious problem for female athletes in sport, of particular significance to intercollegiate sports, findings in research is that the rate of coach-athlete sexual abuse is higher for elite female athletes than it is for athletes at lower, less competitive levels of sport. This is indeed a gendered problem at many levels however not entirely female, for example, in a study 8.5% of female athletes reported having been kissed on the mouth by a coach, 0% of male athletes reported such an experience (Brake, 2012). It was said that this type of athlete-coach relationship is set to harm athletes' well-being, jeopardize athletic careers and performance ability, disrupt team and peer dynamics, undermine gender equality in sport, as well as increase the risk of coaches sexually abusing athletes (Johansson, et al, 2016). In addition, in terms of coaches engaging in this behaviour, it is primarily male coaches who become sexually involved with athletes, however, that is not to say that female coaches have never had sexual relationships with athletes, or that male athletes are never the recipients of sexual advances by a coach (Brake, 2012). Thurston (2017) identified that athletes are not immune from experiences of physical, sexual, and emotional abuse from their coach, it was said that abusive or negative supervision by a head coach impacts the student-athlete and can lead to anxiety, depressive symptoms, and difficulty coping, in fact, the power

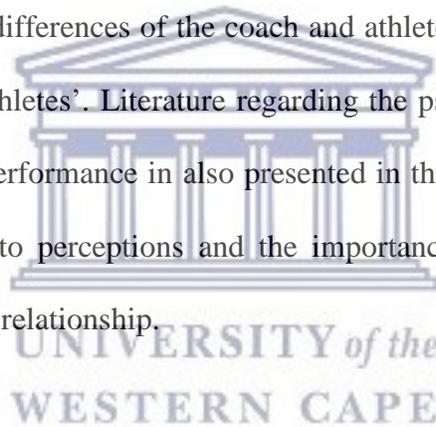
and influence of the head coach is considered one of the main risk factors in abusive relationships. Despite research on sexual abuse, it was also assumed that female athletes might report different experiences of emotional abuse than their male counterparts (Stirling & Kerr, 2008). With regards to the prevalence of emotional abuse of elite athletes by their coaches, studies found that shouting, belittling, threats, and humiliation were the most common forms of emotional abuse experienced, with more reported abusive behaviours once the athletes reached the elite level (Stirling & Kerr, 2008).

There seems to be a growing urge as to the experiences of athletes', the direction of proposed research stems to flow in the line of the athlete-coach relationship. To study more on the dynamics of the relationship as well as to understand and gain insight as to how top athletes experience these behaviours with the effects that follow. A study by Brown, et al, (2015) demonstrated that student-athletes experienced simultaneous transitions in athletic career (e.g., training and lifestyle expectations), academic career (e.g., course requirements), and psychological development (e.g., taking personal responsibility), as well as psychosocial development (e.g., change in coach). Further recommendation is made as to coping and how these athletes' deal with these effects is also something to consider. The importance of a coach was thus evident in literature, coaches should be aware of their influence on their athletes and for coaches to know the best ways to facilitate the growth of their athletes positively. The next section to this chapter will emphasize the perceptions within the athlete-coach relationship.

2.2 PERCEPTIONS OF THE ATHLETE-COACH RELATIONSHIP

The definition of perception according to Detling (2001, pp. 7) is “*one's personal view or interpretation of a behavior, an event, or a situation*”. Vella, Oades, et al, (2010) stated that the coach's behaviour would influence an athlete's perception of their coach, which in turn will impact their self-perceptions and beliefs, as well as their motivation, which in the end will influence the outcomes of an athlete's performance and behaviour. Literature and findings of perception of coaching behaviours, gender differences and the quality of the athlete-coach relationship is presented in this section, displaying the importance of understanding athletes.

Findings of perceptual differences of the coach and athlete are displayed as well as ideal coach behaviours desired by athletes'. Literature regarding the psychological state of an athlete and the correlation to athlete performance is also presented in this section. Over all this section provides insight with regards to perceptions and the importance to knowing more about the athlete within the athlete-coach relationship.



2.2.1 Perceptions of coaching behaviours

Detling (2001) mentioned that perceptions regarding the causes of behaviour have been found to diverge across gender and levels of sport. “*In essence, coaches tend to attribute their undesirable, or negative, behaviors to situational requirements, whereas athletes attribute those same behaviors to the coach's stable personal disposition*” (Detling, 2001, pp. 11). In relation, Krynski (2002) proposed that training and instruction behaviour was perceived as important by athletes at the university level and has the highest association with satisfaction. A study shown

in Detling's (2001) paper shows that there are differences among the athlete and coach with regards to perceptions of coaching behaviours, stating that coaches have more of a problem than they are aware of, that the image coaches have of themselves and the way they are being accepted by the athletes they coach is not necessarily an accurate one. Athletes' perceptions of coaching behaviours are often more accurate than coaches perceptions of their own behaviours, that these perceptual discrepancies may result in poor coach-athlete communication and thus negatively affecting the coach-athlete relationship (Detling, 2001).

Maintenance behaviours such as openness, positivity, support, and advice underpin relationship stability, positive perceptions of relationship satisfaction and interpersonal trust may support prolonged interaction, whereas high levels of conflict which is actual and perceived may play a role in relationship dissolution (Jackson, et al, 2011). A study conducted by Sterling and Kerr (2013) shows the perceived effects of emotional abuse experienced by retired elite athletes. Figure 2.1 shows these findings of athletes' perceived psychological, training and performance effects, which were categorized using raw data themes. This figure illustrates the importance of coaches' behaviours and how it may affect an athlete's well-being. The way the coach behaves can affect their athletes' psychological emotional state as well as their training and performance effects, which could produce positive and negative outcomes. This current study aligns closely with Sterling and Kerr's (2013), aiming to gather the psychological effects and how it may affect these athletes' performances.

Number of Athletes Citing Main Category	Main Categories	Sub-categories	Raw data themes with numbered participant tags
14	Psychological Effects	Low mood	Coach's comments were emotionally upsetting (1,2,3,4,6,7,8,9,11,12,13) Athletes are more happy without that behaviour (10)
		Anger	It made me angry (9,12,13) I would get frustrated (14)
		Low self-efficacy	Feeling not good enough for sport (3,4,6,8,11)
		Low self-esteem	Feeling not good enough for coach (5,8,9,10,11) Feelings of worthlessness (2,8,9,10,12)
		Poor body image	Coach's comments cause warped perception of yourself (12)
		Increased anxiety	Anxious going to practice (6,7,8) Anxious all the time (4)
		Sense of accomplishment	Proud to have endured coach abuse and still succeed (2) View success as more rewarding (2,8,12)
14	Training Effects	Increased motivation	Increased training effort due to fear of the coach (2,4,6,7,11,12) Increased effort to regain coach's approval (3,5,9,10,11,14) Coach's yelling shows he cares and promotes value of training (11) Anger at coach leads to decreased effort in training (2,13)
		Decreased motivation	Decreased motivation due to feelings of demoralization (3,8,9,11,14) You lose your personal boost to train (5)
		Reduced enjoyment	It made me dislike the sport (1,6,7,9) I quit several times (2,3) I wanted to leave the sport (5,7,8,12) I've seen other athletes quit because of the coach (1,5)
		Impaired focus	Coach's yelling was distracting (13)
		Difficulty with skill acquisition	I was afraid to perform new skills because of coach (6,7)
13	Performance Effects	Performance decrement	I could have done better without it (2,4,6,7,13) I shut down and you could see effect on performance (12) Coach's behaviours made me a better athlete (8,10,11)
		Enhanced performance	Coach produced successful performance (1,3,8,9,12,14)

Figure 2.1 Perceived effects of emotional abuse (Sterling & Kerr, 2013)

Coykendall (2014) proposed that every athlete's demands are unique much like every human being is unique and therefore each athlete might prefer different behaviours from their coaches. The strength of the coach-athlete relationship can be a direct result of the coach meeting

the athletes preferred and expected coaching behaviours (Coykendall, 2014). He states that positive behaviours are those behaviours that are supportive and emotionally composed, for example a coach recognizing an athlete's improvements in their physical appearance after coming back from training in the off-season (Coykendall, 2014). Whereas negative behaviours a coach may display are ones that are distractive and disruptive such as a coach mocking or teasing and making an athlete feel awkward when they are working out (Coykendall, 2014). He concludes that these positive and negative behaviours can drastically impact the kind of relationship athletes' may have with their coaches (Coykendall, 2014).

With regards to team and individual sport, Coykendall (2014) presents research that shows that team sports compared to individual sports demand different behaviours from coaches, based on the nature of different types of sport, one can predict that each sport code will require different styles of coaching. Team sport coaches incline to use post-game instruction, hustle and management behaviours than that of coaches from individual sports (Coykendall, 2014). Jowett and Meek (2000) stated that individual sports operate on a one-to-one basis whereby the coach deals with each athlete separately such as in athletics, gymnastics, and tennis, that in fact, coaches of individual sports appear to be more involved in all facets of athletes' lives. The dynamics within individual sports are much different than those in team sports (Jowett & Meek, 2000). In addition, Short and Short (2005) stated that athletes in individual sports also often feel closer and more committed to their coaches than do team players (Short & Short, 2014). In relation, Jowett and Meek (2000) revealed distinct coach-athlete relationship types in individual sports: the typical coach-athlete dyad, the married coach-athlete dyad, the family coach-athlete dyad, and the correspondence coach-athlete dyad where the coach would mail training programs to their athletes. These types of relationships was measured and analysed using the 3 Cs model in

order to understand and explain the nature of these relationships and the dynamics involved (Jowett & Meek, 2000). Research presents that there is a clear difference between team and individual sport, that individual is a one-to-one basis and that the relationship may be more defined. For this reason an individual sport (athletics) was chosen to obtain information on the dynamics and how these athletes at university level handle the relationship with regards to coaches' behaviours and positive or negative experiences within the dyad. Overall the research above shows the evident differences in behaviours and how it may affect an athlete with insight on what athletes' may prefer in terms of coaching behaviours. The following section will discuss research regarding the differences in gender with regards to the relationship dyad and this current study.



2.2.2 Gender perceptions

Female athletes may have a different experience than their male counterparts in the coach-athlete relationship that compared to males, female relationships are more confiding, intimate, and emotionally expressive (Stirling & Kerr, 2013). Stirling and Kerr (2013) mentioned that females have unique developmental characteristics as well as a greater reliance on relationships for identity formation and increased susceptibility to social messages.

“In the case of women athletes, certain practices are particularly effective such as frequent positive reinforcement, developing a personal relationship with the athlete, and learning in a variety of contexts through different formats” (Norman & French, 2013, pp. 6). In relation, Baldrige (2015) mentioned that females are more coachable when their coaches understand them as individuals, particularly looking at their personal motivations and goals.

Jowett and Nezelek (2011) found that female athlete's assumed greater similarity between their own and their coaches' commitment perceptions than did males, that female athletes may assume greater similarity to affirm self-mental representations and ultimately promote self-concept. Furthermore Jowett and Nezelek (2011) found that females perceived their relationships with their coaches to be more interdependent in terms of the 3Cs (closeness, commitment, complementarity), showing higher levels of closeness, commitment, and complementarity than their male counterparts did. They focused on coach-athlete gender combinations and suggested that same gender coach-athlete dyads may allow them greater interdependence and feel more satisfied with important outcomes such as training and performance (Jowett and Nezelek, 2011).

Coykendall (2014) stated that one of the major factors in improving the coach-athlete relationship is being able to realize the differences between male and female athletes with regards to preferences for certain coaching behaviours. In addition, a Kyrinski (2002) study has shown that female athlete leader preferences differentiate from men athletes' leader preferences. Research found that male athletes lean more towards preferring a coach who makes all the decisions and acts more as an authority figure, whereas females prefers a coach who is more inclusive in nature which allows the athlete to have an influence on decisions (Coykendall, 2014).

Research clearly presents evidence showing the differences between male and female athletes with regards to the athlete-coach relationship. Female athletes may require or desire different coaching styles, behaviours or approaches to being coached to develop positively than males would. Evidence suggests that gender be taken into consideration when doing research. This current study aims to gather information regarding female dynamics and their needs and wants and how they would perceive certain experiences. Further research may be done on males,

which could then be compared. The next section presents research on the psychological state of an athlete and whether this may affect performance.

2.2.3 Psychological state and athlete performance

There may be questions on whether the psychological state of an athlete may affect their performance, whether it may be positive or negative according to different experiences, and lastly whether an athlete's performance effects may be determined by their psychological state. In a related study, Caramanico (2011), determined that one's performance as an athlete is determined by both mental and physical skills, which she also states is both learned and innate. She states that if mental skills are not taught and employed, physical improvement will eventually plateau and/or drop off, and in addition to physiological factors which has the ability to negatively affect performance, there are several psychological factors that have similar negative effects on athletes such as anxiety, nerves, poor concentration, and self-doubt, and so forth (Caramanico, 2011). Relationships according to Holt (2013) are important for success in athletics, coaches, parents, significant others and peers are some of the most influential people who fulfil the basic psychological needs of relatedness, autonomy and competence. These three basic needs increase athlete motivation, which will increase self-efficacy, which will further increase motivation (Holt, 2013). If coaches develop or arm their athletes' effectively, both the physical capability and the mental skills can combat these varied physiological and psychological forces, otherwise, we will be doing athletes' a disservice by limiting their overall performance potential and other benefits that can come from athletics (Caramanico, 2011). It is important for athletes to understand their own emotional state and what they need to do in order to achieve optimal performance on a regular basis because different emotions have different effects on different athletes (Caramanico, 2011).

Seven emotions that are important to sports was suggested which are anger, anxiety, guilt, shame, relief, happiness, and pride (Caramanico, 2011). There are also studies relating emotional well-being and performance to self-efficacy. According to Holt (2013) self-efficacy is one's belief that he or she has the ability to perform their desired outcome in a specific situation. He continued by stating that self-efficacy is shaped by previous performances, vicarious experience, social persuasion, physiological states, emotional states and imaginable experiences. Emotional experiences such as subjective feelings and moods may influence one's self-efficacy and can be associated with fear or self-doubt, conversely, emotions can also be associated with being psyched up and ready for performances (Holt, 2013). With regards to certain emotions such as anxiety, it can be interpreted as lacking a skill to perform specific tasks according to Holt (2013). With regards to performance of an athlete, Holt (2013) states that self-efficacy can directly influence athletes by either enhancing or hindering their performances. Athletes with a high self-efficacy are more driven, have higher accomplishments, and persist longer at a task. Athletes with low self-efficacy avoid difficult tasks, have low commitment and are slow to comeback from setbacks or failure (Holt, 2013).

In terms of the development of an athlete, coaches may influence the efficacy of their athletes through direct appeal, inspirational messages, evaluative feedback, expectations and attributions (Holt, 2013). When specifically looking at the emotional states and the performance of athletes, a study on elite male and female soccer players revealed that they liked their pre-game speeches from their coaches because the speeches met their psychological and emotional needs, which these athletes perceived as producing a positive impact to their performance (Holt, 2013). These coaches were influencing emotions by creating a positive environment, which in turn led to strong performances and increased feelings of worth and self-efficacy, thus having a

perceived positive influence on performance (Holt, 2013). Studies suggests that coaches put their focus on further enhancing self-efficacy in order to gain more positive outcomes in performance, that coaches should also be aware of the influence their expectations and potential evaluation of performances have on their athlete's motivation and self-efficacy, as well as work on athletes confidence and creating a positive environment (Holt, 2013). Knowledge of emotions as they relate to optimal and sub-par performance is key for athletes because emotional control is very important to how an athlete performs (Caramanico, 2011). Exercises in visualization, breath control, relaxation, and self-talk are should be included in the training planned for athletes to develop emotional strength (Caramanico, 2011).

Literature has shown a strong relationship between the mental state of an athlete and performance. Evidence has also proven that athletes' performance effects may derive from an athletes' psychological state or effects thereof. The evidence above relates to the focus of this present study. The psychological effects of female athletes within the athlete-coach relationship will be revealed in this present study, which may reveal the impact on performance. The following section will discuss the perceptions of the quality of athlete-coach relationships and what makes an effective quality relationship.

2.2.4 Perceptions of relationship quality

The quality of the athlete-coach relationship is a crucial determinant of athletes' satisfaction, motivation and improved performance (Mageau & Vallerand, 2003). The quality of the coach shows significance relating to the effectiveness of the coach-athlete relationship, being committed and passionate to your athletes may improve the relationship between the coach and

athlete. Coaches who are passionate toward coaching could be contributing to high quality coach-athlete relationships given that they should be entirely devoted to their athletes (Lafrenière, et al, 2011). In addition, a study done on athletes' perceptions, it was stated that a group of constructs accounts for coach-athlete relationship quality, which are individuals' perceptions of commitment such as relationship persistence intentions, closeness such as strong affective bonds, and complementarity such as reciprocal and co-operative behaviours (Jackson, et al, 2011). Research generally show that the quality of the coach-athlete relationship is linked to athletes' perceptions of satisfaction with training and performance, coach-created motivational climate, achievement goals and intrinsic motivation, empathic accuracy, passion for sport, team cohesion, collective efficacy, physical self-concept, self-control and fear of failure, and interpersonal communication (Philippe, et al, 2011).

The perceptions of athletes and coaches may vary in terms of relationship quality and how they view a good quality athlete-coach relationship. An examination was done on how CrossFit athletes and coaches perceived the quality of the coach-athlete relationship, which was based on the 3+1C's model (Closeness, Commitment, Complementarity, and Co-orientation) (Flores, 2013). The subjects reported on their direct and meta-perceptions of relationship quality which was perceptions of satisfaction with training/instruction, performance, and personal treatment (Flores, 2013). Results showed that athletes and coaches did not differ on their perceptions of relationship quality with regards to the three satisfaction variables (Flores, 2013). Neither gender nor relationship duration had any significant effect on these athletes and coaches' perceptions. Athletes' meta-perceptions of the three Cs significantly predicted their perceptions of all three-satisfaction variables (Flores, 2013). The study done by Flores (2013) showed the significance of the quality of the relationship and how this affects an athletes' satisfaction in

performance and well-being. The quality of the athlete-coach relationship can be affected through various factors, these factors included physical factors in relation to performance, psychology in relation to motivation, social in relation to significant others and environmental in relation to culture (Soheli, et al, 2013). However, although several aspects influence the coach - athlete relationship, the psychological aspect is very important (Soheli, et al, 2013). Evidence proves how coaches' passion influences their athletes' perceptions of the quality of their relationship with their coach as well as how such a relationship affects athletes' subjective well-being (Lafrenière, et al, 2011). Obsessive passion is described as being conducive to higher ego-involvement in the passionate activity and when people are ego-involved in a task they are more likely to produce controlling behaviors toward other individuals (Lafrenière, et al, 2011). This may affect the quality of the athlete-coach relationship and the outcome may be positive or negative. Evidence suggest ways of addressing the quality of the athlete-coach relationship. Within the study of Rhind and Jowett (2009), maintenance strategies of the athlete-coach relationship quality were addressed. Ten American football coaches who received awards for facilitating their athletes' personal development emphasized the importance of communication such as, having an open line of communication with their athletes, having and giving clear expectations, and holding their players accountable (Rhind & Jowett, 2009). These American coaches refrained from using punishment or criticisms that was directed towards their athletes' characters or personalities, and rather showed that they cared, trusted, and respected their players as people (Rhind & Jowett, 2009). These enacted communicative acts aligned with the five primary relationship maintenance strategies labelled as positivity, openness, and assurance, these strategies was used by dating or engaged couples (Rhind & Jowett, 2009).

Positivity related to acting cheerful and upbeat when around the other person, openness related to the direct discussion of the relationship and disclosing what one wants from it, assurance referred to sending of messages that implies one's commitment to the relationship, and lastly social networks involved spending time together and interacting with mutual friends (Rhind & Jowett, 2009). No solid sport psychology research has been found addressing relationship maintenance within the athlete-coach relationship, however some research appears to address issues relating to maintenance strategies (Rhind & Jowett, 2009). Thus the aim of Rhind and Jowett (2009) study was to assess coaches and athletes perceptions of the strategies that might be used to maintain the quality of the coach-athlete relationship. Their results revealed seven higher order themes which were; conflict management, openness, motivation, positivity, advice, support, and social networks and it was proposed that these seven strategies represent the COMPASS model of maintenance strategies in the coach-athlete relationship (Rhind & Jowett, 2009). This model proposed that the use of these seven maintenance strategies would have a positive effect on the quality of the relationship, see figure 2.2 which illustrates the COMPASS framework for enhancing and maintaining the quality of the athlete-coach relationship (Rhind & Jowett, 2009). This could be a worthy strategy for coaches to use to facilitate their athletes' development positively or to combat any conflict within the relationship.

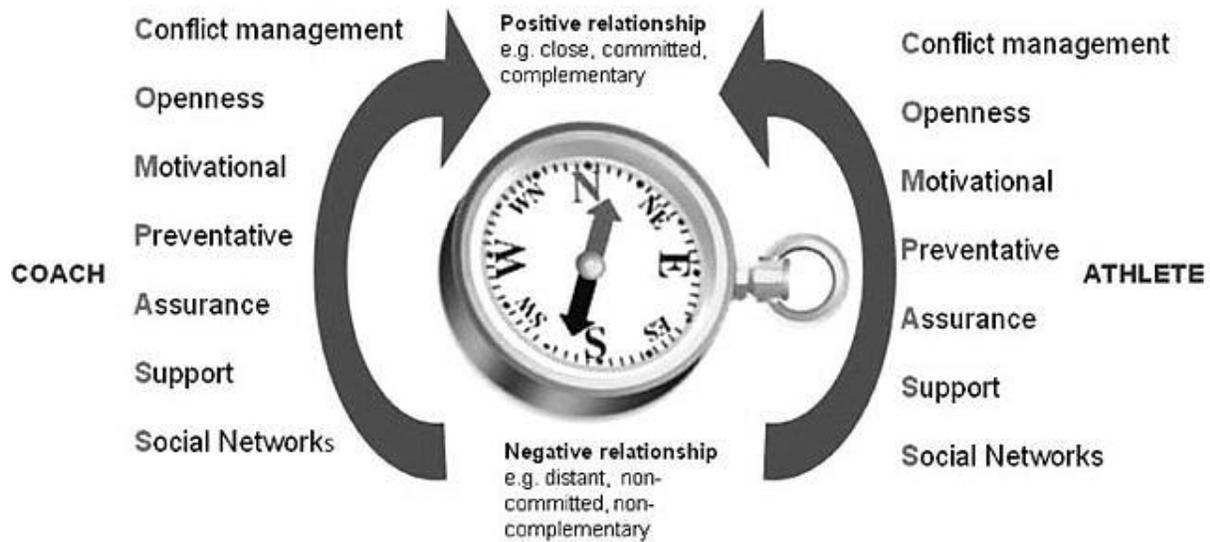


Figure 2.2 The COMPASS model of relationship maintenance in the coach-athlete relationship (Rhind & Jowett, 2009).

Qualitative research that focuses on describing what coaches and athletes experience and perceive should be studied followed by comparing these experiences and perceptions to uncover specific perceptual similarities and differences between coaches and athletes (Detling, 2001). This section set out to discuss perceptions and differences in preferred behaviours amongst gender, sport codes, as well as team and individual sport. Research also presented evidence relating to the psychological state of an athlete and how this may affect performance. By focusing on a specific gender, a specific sport code, as well as sport level, it will allow this current study to gain a greater understanding not only on the athlete-coach relationship but also on these specific variables. Detling (2001) stated that continued research across genders and sport levels is warranted and new methodologies should include qualitative inquiry designed to better understand coach-athlete perceptions and ultimately the relationship. The last section to be

followed sets out to discuss approaches to the athlete-coach relationship and the importance and significance to this current study.

2.3 APPROACHES TO THE ATHLETE-COACH RELATIONSHIP

Rhind and Jowett (2009) stated that significant strides have been made to understand the nature and role of interpersonal relationships in sport, Rhind and Jowett (2009) mentioned that research in this field has considered athlete-athlete, parent-athlete, and coach-athlete partnerships. The coach-athlete relationship has been defined as the situation in which coaches and athletes emotions, thoughts, and behaviours are mutually and causally inter-connected (Rhind & Jowett, 2009). This definition according to Rhind and Jowett (2009) highlights the bi-directional nature of such relationships where feelings, thoughts, and behaviours of the coach are both affected by, and also affect, the athlete and vice versa. This definition also supports the belief that the quality of the relationship is multi-dimensional, hence one needs to consider the affective members (Rhind & Jowett, 2009). With regards to research, particular attention has been placed on exploring the association between the quality of the relationship and a range of other variables including efficacy beliefs, satisfaction, closeness, and passion for coaching, the motivational climate and relationship maintenance (Maitland, 2012). Interpersonal relationships according to Poczwadowski, et al, (2005) are often complex, dynamic, multifaceted, and reciprocal, stating that studying these relationships requires a sound theoretical foundation and thoughtful selections of methods of inquiry. A series of conceptualizations has been used to study the athlete-coach relationship which is summarized in this section with a more detailed look on relational dyadic approaches which is the main focus of this current study.

Athlete-coach relationships as a phenomenon continues to remain a fairly new area of scientific inquiry, Pocwardowski, et al, (2005) discussed five fundamental approaches used to study sport relationships from a psychological perspective namely:

- Psychodynamics and personality-focused
- Behavioural
- Cognitive
- Social psychological, and
- Interactional

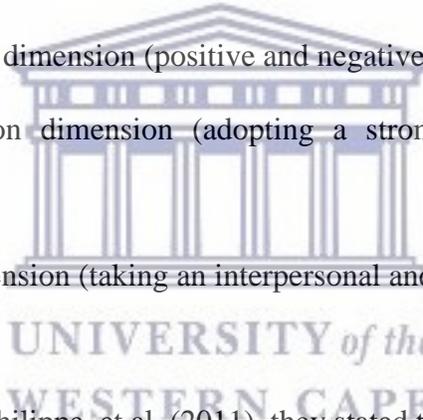
Each of which is associated with interpersonal behaviour, yet targeting different variables from the individual unit analysis. Conceptual and methodological models in the athlete-coach relationship research developed separately to further understand the interpersonal dynamics between athletes and coaches (Poczwardowski, et al, 2005).

Philippe, et al, (2011) mentioned that a key relationship in the sport domain is between coaches and their athlete, the relationship is influential in many athletes' lives and plays a significant role in athletes' social and athletic development. Harmonious coach-athlete relationships have shown to have a positive effect on athletes' performance, perceived satisfaction, and psychological well-being (Philippe, et al, 2011). Conceptual and empirical research has examined issues relating to coach leadership and coach behaviour, whereas less research attention has been placed on the nature of the interpersonal relationships between coaches and their athletes (Philippe, et al, 2011). Hence the reason for this present study on the interpersonal relationship from the athlete perspective. The following section will discuss relational dyadic approaches to the interpersonal athlete-coach relationship and how this approach relates to this current study.

2.3.1 Relational Dyadic Approach

A psychological approach in viewing the coach athlete relationship as a social interaction has been taken by a number of researchers and is considered a relational dyadic approach which attempts to place the relationship at the centre of the research (Maitland, 2012). Several models have been proposed or used to study the athlete-coach relationship over the years. Philippe, et al, (2011) discussed three contemporary models;

The first was a conceptual model was proposed to delineate important aspects of the athlete-coach relationship which are (Philippe, et al, 2011):

- 
- a) An acceptance-rejection dimension (positive and negative attitudes from both parties)
 - b) A dominance-submission dimension (adopting a strong or weak point toward one another)
 - c) A social-emotional dimension (taking an interpersonal and emotional stance towards each other)

However according to Philippe, et al, (2011), they stated that although the model attempts to explain the reciprocal behaviour between coaches and athletes, the limitation is the lack of explanation of when, how, and why these behaviours occur within the coach-athlete relationship.

The second model discussed identifies three phases in the development of the coach athlete relationship namely; (Philippe, et al, 2011).

- a) The pre-relational phase
- b) The transitions and conclusion phase
- c) The post-relational phase

This model postulates that the coach and the athlete influence one another on professional and personal levels (Philippe, et al, 2011).

The third model discussed is known as the 3+1 C's model which is a conceptual model and has gathered the most research momentum in the coach-athlete relationship (Philippe, et al, 2011), it recognizes the interdependent nature of the relationship which is conceptualized using four constructs; (Maitland, 2012).

1. closeness,
2. complementarity,
3. commitment, and
4. co-orientation

Philippe, et al, (2011) used the model of social relations for their study which shares a number of features with the models above, because this model integrates important aspects of interpersonal relationships such as power, affiliation, and co-operation (Philippe, et al, 2011). This model has three distinct dimensions in social relations namely; (1) the bond dimension, defined through sympathy and antipathy, (2) the power dimension, defined through authority and accountability, and (3) the co-operation dimension, defined through task distribution (Philippe, et al, 2011).

The above approaches shows the various dimensions and variables which has been studied and may be further pursued. The dynamics of the athlete-coach relationship shows readers how exciting and phenomenal this relationship actually is, how it may be studied and the importance of further research in this domain. Philippe, et al, (2011) proposed that the field of

interpersonal relationships in sport would benefit from applying diverse theoretical and conceptual models.

This approach, using specifically the 3+1C's conceptual model within this study will help coaches and athletes' understand the nature of the relationship, the effects of experiences, and ultimately how this relationship can be developed positively in order to obtain the best results and a long lasting effective athlete-coach relationship. The following section will further discuss in more detail the 3+1C's model as a theoretical framework and the significance there of to this current study.

2.4 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Theoretical frameworks provide authors with an opportunity to present a unique view of the phenomenon being studied (Anfara & Mertz, 2006). For the purposes of this study, 3+1C's Model (Jowett & Cockerill, 2002) was adopted. *“This model has been used as a lens through which the athlete-coach relationship has been studied. The coach-athlete relationship has been defined as the situation in which coaches' and athletes' feelings (closeness), thoughts (commitment), and behaviors (complementarity) are interconnected (co-orientation)”* (Olympiou, et al, 2008, pp.427). This led to the development of this conceptual model known as the 3+1C's model (Olympiou, 2008). This model according to Philippe, et al, (2011), defines the coach-athlete relationship as a situation in which coaches and athletes' closeness, commitment, and complementarity are co-orientated.

The 3+1C's Model started out with three C's by Jowett and Cockerill (2002) and then later adopted a fourth 'C'. The initial 3 C's refers to the relationship constructs of closeness, commitment, and complementarity (Miller, Franken, & Kiefer, 2007). The first is "*Closeness which refers to the emotional tone of the athlete-coach relationship and is found in their expressions of interpersonal liking and trust/respect for one another*" (miller, et al, 2007, pp 3). Olympiou, et al, (2008) states that closeness can be described as the affective ties of the relationship members. For the purposes of this study closeness will provide insight into understanding the relationship the athlete has with the coach in terms of feelings. According to Jowett and Meek (2000) sport psychology research has identified the importance of closeness or emotional connection between coaches and athletes in a slightly different way, for example, they believe that athletes require coaches and parents who value, support, help, and ultimately care about them which develops a personal dimension to coaching such as mentoring. The second refers to "*Commitment which is characterized as the coach's and athlete's long-term orientation toward their relationship, promoted and sustained by such accommodating behaviours as appreciating the other's sacrifices, communicating and understanding*" (Miller, et al, 2007, pp. 3). Commitment reveals the cognitive element of the relationship and defines coaches' and athletes' desire to continue the relationship in the future (Olympiou, 2008). For the purposes of this study, commitment will describe cognitive thoughts describing the coach's' commitment or investment within the relationship. The third, which is known as Complementarity, "*Complementarity is described as coaches' and athletes' actions that are co-operative. It entails feeling comfortable, competent and concerned when in the presence of the other person*" (miller, et al, 2007, pp. 3). In addition, Olympiou, et al, (2008) stated that complementarity captures the degree to which coaches' and athletes' affiliation emerges through what each relationship

member does in relation to the other such as during practice. Jowett and Meek (2000) suggested that a principle complementary act is co-operation whereby the two main issues of the relationship are negotiated in order to aid performance or contribute to which both members coordinate their efforts. Complementarity is operationalized as the type of interaction that the relationship perceives as co-operative and effective (Jowett & Meek, 2000). For the purposes of this study, addressing complementarity will provide insight into the level of comfort and competence within the athlete-coach relationship, revealing whether the athlete and coach complement one another with regards to interaction.

A major advantage that exemplifies the 3+1C's model of the coach-athlete relationship according to Olympiou, et al, (2008) is its emphasis on the bidirectional nature of the relationship which is manifested through the construct of co-orientation, which is the fourth C. *“Co-orientation is described as athletes' and coaches' shared knowledge and understanding”* (Miller, et al, 2007, pp.3). Co-orientation contains two sets of interpersonal perceptions namely; direct perceptions and meta-perceptions (Olympiou, et al, 2008). The direct perspective deals with how the athlete perceives the coach in terms of the 3 Cs for example; ‘I trust my coach’ (Jowett, 2005). *“The direct perceptions assess an athlete's (coach's) personal view of the relationship in terms of the 3 Cs, while meta-perceptions assess an athlete's (coach's) judgment of how the other thinks of the relationship in terms of the 3 Cs”* (Olympiou, et al, 2008, pp.427). Jowett and Meek (2000) stated that as the relationship develops, members are undergoing experiences of adaptation or adjustments from which a co-orientated view or a common ground is formed by understanding, negotiation, and agreement. Therefore through verbal communication, the athlete and coach may share each other's experiences through which a co-orientated view develops, it is said that co-orientation is operationalized as the coach and

athlete's verbal interactions with one another, this exact nature will be sought and addressed (Jowett & Meek, 2000). Using the Co-orientation Model in different dimensions it can play an important diagnostic role within the study by identifying ineffective or dysfunctional coach-athlete relationships by revealing the dyad's points of disagreement, misunderstanding or dissimilarity across the 3 Cs (Jowett, 2005). For the purpose of this study, the direct perception will be the main focus gathering athletes' perceptions of their coaches. Possible meta-perceptions may be derived when analysing data.

Jowett (2003) revealed that the 3 Cs have been utilized to investigate typical and atypical athlete-coach relationships, which focuses mainly on individual sports such as; athletics, swimming, and wrestling. Jowett (2003) provides descriptive information, which relates to the content, intensity, and significance of the 3 Cs. These findings reveal that feelings such as respect, trust and commitment relates to co-oriented views regarding values, practices, and performance goals, and that complementary behaviours are important aspects that affect athletic relationships positively (Jowett, 2003). However, Jowett (2003) states that negative feelings of closeness (feeling unattached, distant), relates to disoriented views (competing interests, conflicting goals, and lack of understanding), and non-complementary behaviours (incompatible roles, tasks, and support) which in the end affects athletic relationships negatively. Overall, evidence indicates that the 3 Cs are useful and suitable in describing the nature of the coach-athlete relationship which can identify both positive and negative relational issues (Jowett, 2003). This model is significant and may produce important information regarding this dyad. It demonstrates the importance to its members to co-orientate with each other according to the closeness of the relationship, the commitment, as well as how well these members interact with one another. It will explain the nature of the relationship and present where changes should be

made if any conflict or negative experiences are to be found. Jowett (2003) displays themes derived from her study as an example of how this model was used to categorise data according to closeness, co-orientation, and complementary, see Figure 2.3, 2.4, and 2.5.

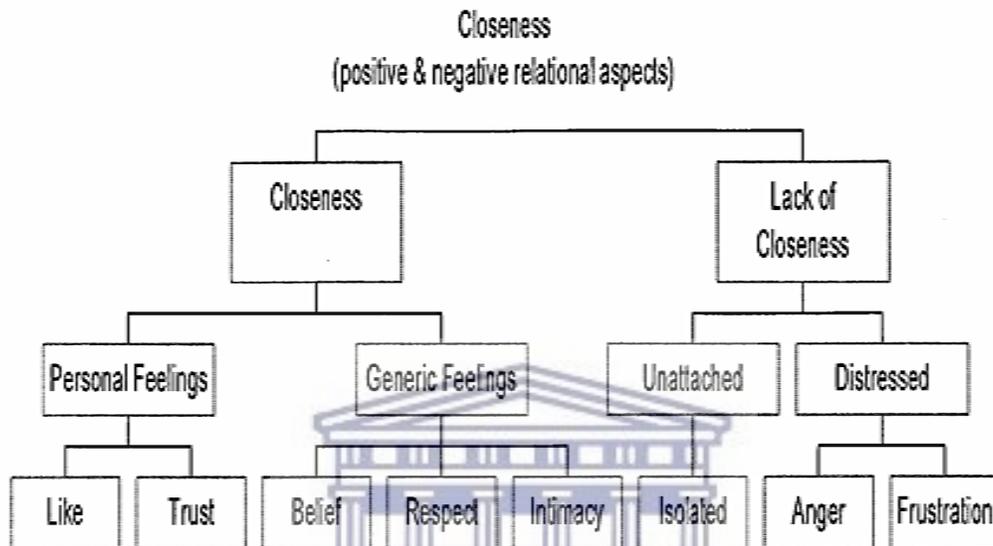


Figure 2.3 Hierarchy of data categories relating to Closeness (Jowett, 2003)

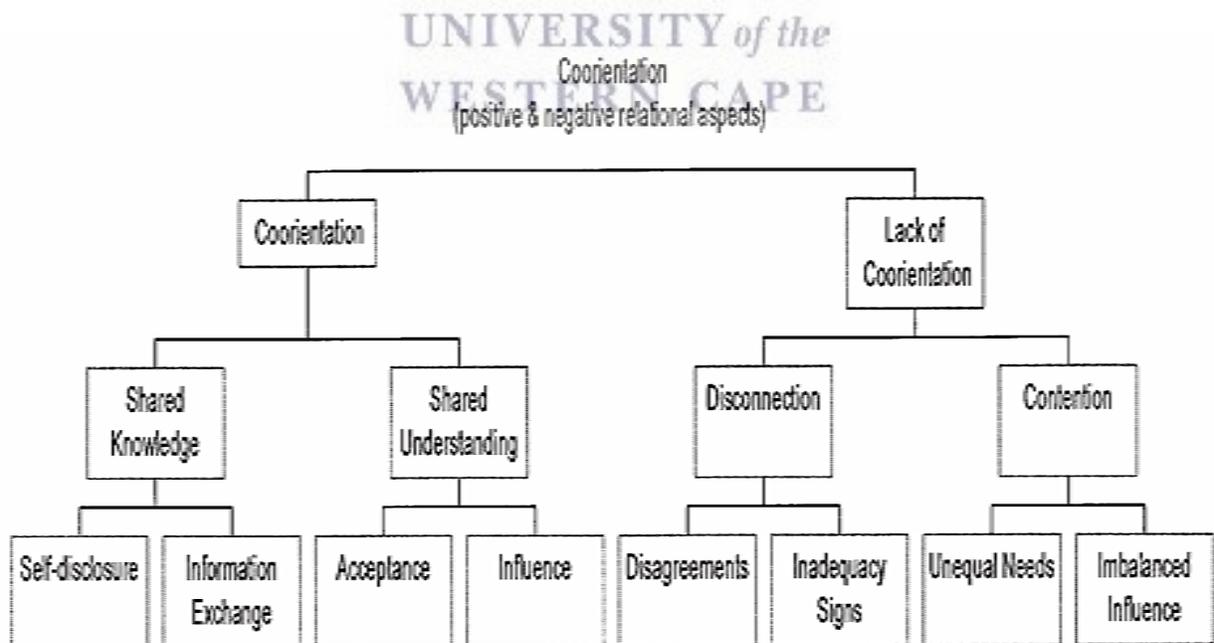


Figure 2.4 Hierarchy of data categories relating to Co-orientation (Jowett, 2003)

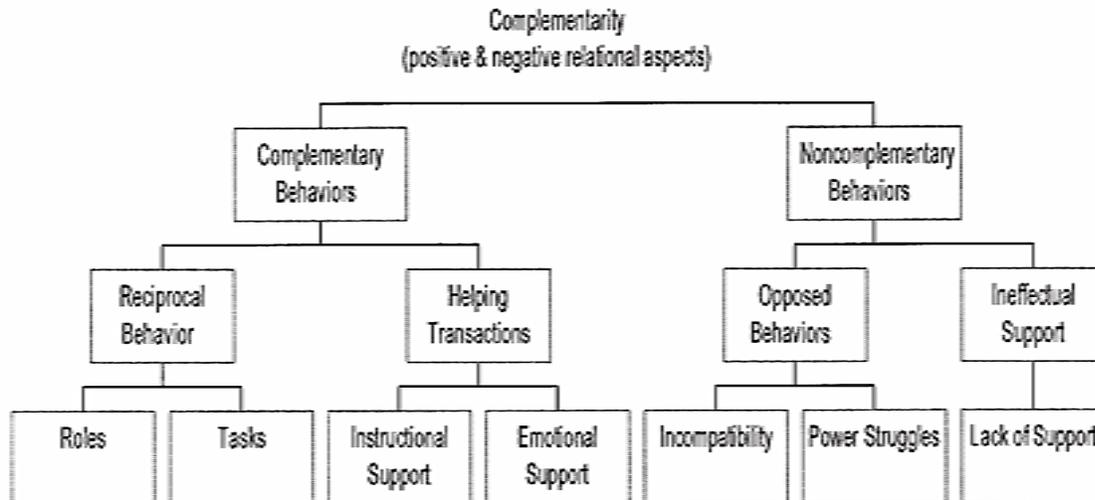


Figure 2.5 Hierarchy of data categories relating to Complementarity (Jowett, 2003)

Jowett (2003) stated that within the coach-athlete relationship, coaches' and athletes' emotions (Closeness), cognitions (Co-orientation), and behaviours (Complementarity) are interrelated. Research shows that the examination of the 3 Cs as interrelated aspects is important in uncovering the more complex and deeper nature of interpersonal athletic relationships (Jowett, 2003). In addition, Jowett (2003) stated that research is needed to examine the substantive nature of these critical linkages and whether positive associations between the 3 Cs lead to higher levels of satisfaction and performance accomplishments than negative associations do. The 3+1C's model will help set up a framework for identifying psychological experiences within the athlete-coach relationship and possible insights on the impact on performance. Using the 3+1C's model as a measurement allows us to relationally analyse coach-athlete dyads and to identify problem areas (Jowett, 2005).

2.5 CONCLUSION OF CHAPTER

This chapter explored the athlete-coach relationship by plunging into the experiences of athletes' in relation to the athlete-coach relationship. This highlighted the importance of this dyad and provided a significance and gap to studying female university track and field athletes' with regards to the psychological and performance effects.

This chapter discussed the role of a coach and the influences they may have on athletes according to coaches' leadership whilst exploring effective and ineffective relationship experiences. This proved the importance of a coach within the athlete-coach relationship. Discussions on the perceptions within the athlete-coach relationship were explored relating to the quality of the relationship, gender, behaviours, as well as discussing the correlation between psychological effects and performance. This revealed that there are perceptual differences and preferred behaviours required from every athlete with regards to their gender, and sport code. The quality of relationships and ways to make a relationship effective was discussed and it was evident that the mental state of an athlete can affect their performance negatively or positively. The athlete-coach relationship was further defined with regards to approaches, specifically exploring relational dyadic approaches. This highlighted the significance to this current study and ways future studies may be directed in. This was followed with the theoretical framework called the 3+1C's, which was chosen for this current study and was discussed in detail, providing examples of how it may be used and what could be measured using this specific theoretical model. A greater understanding was provided with regards to this theoretical framework.

With the above mentioned, there remains the gap to studying the psychological effects of the athlete-coach relationship on performance, understanding the lived experiences of female

university track and field athletes. These are specific variables that were narrowed down to obtain a greater qualitative understanding of females, athletics (individual sport), as well as the university level of sport. The purpose of this study is for coaches to understand female athletes and their dynamics relating to university level sport and ultimately showing the importance of understanding each athlete and how coaches can affect their psychological state, which will impact performance. This can also lead to furthering this current study and developing a protocol that may explain ways to positively develop athletes, or how to ultimately develop an effective athlete-coach relationship.



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CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

3.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents an outline of the methodological approach that was used in this study. This study investigated the psychological effects within the athlete-coach relationship and the performance effects by obtaining the lived experiences of female student athletes. In order to acquire deep, rich and meaningful insight into this phenomenon, a qualitative approach was adopted to explore the athlete-coach relationship, allowing female athletes to have a voice and share their lived experiences.

This chapter outlines the research design that was used in this study, followed by the selection of participants. The research setting is described and thereafter a detailed explanation of the data collection process. The data analysis process used for this study is also explained as well as an overview of the approaches used to ensure trustworthiness. The researcher's thoughts are then presented through reflexivity followed by ethical considerations for this study and ending off with a conclusion to this chapter.

3.2 RESEARCH DESIGN

The purpose of this study was to gain insight on the psychological effects of the athlete-coach relationship on performance from the perspectives of female student athletes. Thus a qualitative methodological approach was used to explore athletes' experiences to gain insight

into the study phenomenon. Qualitative research is characterized by its aims, which relate to understanding some aspect of social life, and its methods which generate words, rather than numbers, as data/units for analysis (Patton & Cochran, 2002). Qualitative research contributes to the literature in many disciplines by describing, interpreting, and generating theories about social interactions and individual experiences as they occur in natural, rather than experimental, situations (O'Brien, et al, 2014). It was also stated that qualitative research is pragmatic, interpretive, and grounded in the lived experiences of people (Marshall, & Rossman, 2014).

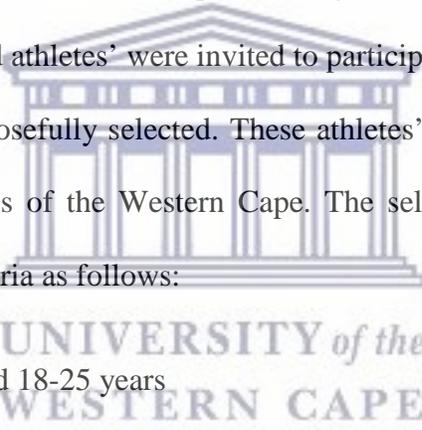
A phenomenological approach was used as a qualitative research method to gather and understand data from participants. Phenomenological approaches seek to explore, describe, and analyse the meaning of individual lived experiences for example; how they perceive or describe it, how they feel about it or judge it, or in essence remember or make sense of it or talk about it with others (Marshall, & Rossman, 2014). Phenomenological inquiry studies the meaning of lived experiences from an individual's own subjective perspective (Greenfield & Jensen, 2010). It is further said that the goal of phenomenological research is to focus the participants' or subjects lived experiences to a central meaning (Parrot, 2010). "*Phenomenological research begins with lived experience, the concreteness of life, and the unique. This is the essence which is explored*" (Parrott, 2010, pp.56). Therefore this method was the most appropriate for this study as it provided the researcher with insight into the lived experiences of female athletes' with regards to the athlete-coach relationship. A study focusing on individual lived experiences typically relies on in-depth interview strategies (Marshall, & Rossman, 2014).

Therefore by using a qualitative approach, it gave participants an opportunity to express their experiences in their words and from their own perspective. Hence why the purpose of qualitative research is to understand the perspectives or experiences of individuals or groups as

well as the contexts in which these perspectives or experiences are situated. Thus a qualitative approach was most appropriate for this study as it allowed the researcher to generate a greater level of understanding of the lived experiences of female university athletes regarding the psychological effects of the athlete-coach relationship and its impact on performance.

3.3 SELECTION AND DESCRIPTION OF PARTICIPANTS

Two tertiary education institutions were used in this study. Participants were identified by their coaches according to the selection criteria provided by the researcher. To this end, fourteen female University track and field athletes' were invited to participate in this study. Seven athletes from each institution were purposefully selected. These athletes' were selected to represent the cultural- historical demographics of the Western Cape. The selection of each participant was based on a certain sampling criteria as follows:

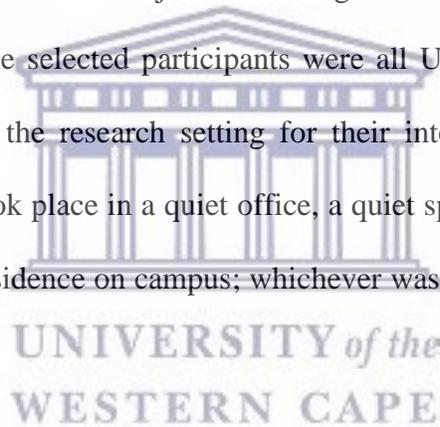
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- Only female athletes aged 18-25 years
 - Each participant needed to be a registered track or field athlete or both at the institution
 - Each athlete needed to be currently participating/competing in at least one track and field event.
 - Participants needed to have at least been coached at university level for more than three months.

For the selection of participants for this study, purposeful sampling was used in order to obtain the most effective information from participants who are closely linked to this study's topic. Purposeful sampling according to Palinkas, et al, (2015) is a technique extensively used in qualitative research for the identification and selection of information-rich cases for the most

effective use of limited resources, this involves identifying and selecting individuals or groups that are knowledgeable or experienced with the phenomenon of interest. This way the researcher was able to focus this study on a certain group of individuals whom were closer linked to obtaining an information-rich study.

3.4 RESEARCH SETTING

According to Creswell (1998) a research data collection setting is required to be both convenient for all the participants or subjects and to guarantee these participants complete privacy and confidentiality. The selected participants were all University student athletes so it was convenient for them that the research setting for their interviews be at their respective Universities. The interviews took place in a quiet office, a quiet sports field, campus grounds, or studio or in the participants' residence on campus; whichever was most convenient and desirable for the participants.



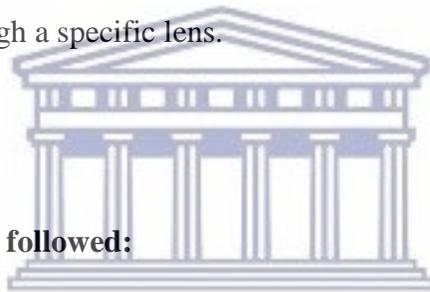
These settings created no interruptions, which could have caused implications for recording of data. The intention of the setting was to make participants feel more relaxed. As the researcher, travelling was done to these two institutions as well as a home situated in the southern suburbs of the Western Cape. This allowed less effort being made from participants. The research settings created a comfortable free of expression atmosphere which allowed them to open up about experiences and their viewpoints. All interviews that were conducted in these settings were successfully completed.

3.5 DATA COLLECTION

Approval was granted separately to conduct this study by each University, namely the Senate Research Committee with the registration number of 14/9/32 from University one (see Appendix D) and the Institutional Research and Planning Division from University two (see Appendix E). Once approval was given, the researcher contacted each institution's athletics department to discuss this study and its aims. Coaches from the athletics department at each University were contacted; a brief description of this study was explained along with the criteria for participants needed. Once participants were identified by coaches according to the selection, the researcher was then able to communicate directly with the athletes via email, chats and in person to invite them to participate in this study, what would be required of them, the benefits relating to participating, as well as answer any questions that arose. They were also informed that their participation was completely voluntary and that they may withdraw at any time without penalty, to explain this, an information sheet was provided to each participant (see Appendix A). Once each athlete agreed to participate voluntarily, and signed their consent (see Appendix B), discussions of collecting data with regards to time, dates, and settings took place, which was convenient for the athlete.

Data was collected using qualitative methods. In-depth semi-structured interviews (Appendix C) were conducted to collect data. The interview questions were developed by the researcher using the 3+1C's Model as a guide to obtain information relating to the dynamics of the athlete-coach relationship. This was used in order to guide the interview but at the same time allowing participants to dig deep into the phenomenon and elicit in-depth individual experiences. Advantages of a semi-structured interviews are that it is successful in enabling reciprocity between the participant and the interviewer, this enables the interviewer to improvise with

follow-up questions based on the response of the participant as well as allowing space for participants' individual verbal expressions (Pietila, et al, 2016). A set of core questions was used as a guideline to ensure that the information obtained was in line or relevant to the focus of this study which was to investigate the psychological effects of the athlete-coach relationship on performance. Probe questions were also used to steer deeper into experiences. The researcher used the 3+1C's Model when forming questions to gather information regarding relationship closeness, commitment between the athlete-coach relationship, complementary in the relationship as well as the similarity in the relationship through co-orientation. This was done to elicit specific responses with regards to these constructs so that the researcher could view the athlete-coach relationship through a specific lens.



The data collection steps were followed:

Phase 1: Obtaining Approval from institutions

The researcher was required to submit a research proposal of and ethics clearance for the study to each Institution's Ethics Research Committee to gain approval to conduct the study

Phase 2: Contacting Track and Field (Athletics) head coaches at the institutions

Once approval was granted the researcher made contact with the two respective Universities to discuss the research study and what was required of them and their athletes.

Phase 3: Contacting selected participants

The head coaches then gave the contact details of the selected participants according to the selection criteria submitted to the coaches. The researcher subsequently made contact with each athlete to discuss the study and obtain voluntary participation.

Phase 4: Setting time and place

Once voluntary participation was obtained from each participant, a time, date, and place to conduct the interview was discussed and set, convenient for each participant.

Phase 5: Meeting and briefing of interview

On the day of each interview, a brief explanation was given to remind the athlete about the study and what procedures were going to take place to collect the data. They were informed again that it was voluntary to participate and that they had an opportunity to withdraw at any time without penalty after which they were then handed a consent form which each participant signed with the permission to voice record the interview (See Appendix B) for a copy of the consent form. It was discussed with each athlete to be as open and honest as they can be, to express all their feelings and experiences, and lastly that this study or interview is about them. The researcher conveyed to each participant to be relaxed and comfortable and that if they had any questions or wanted the researcher to repeat any questions, that they may do so. Participants understood and questions were answered successfully.

Phase 6: Checking of equipment (reliability)

The interviews were administered using voice recorder software called *Audacity.ink* (Audacity®, the Free, Cross-Platform Sound Editor) with a portable microphone for clear voice recordings. A portable hand size voice recorder was also used as back up in case *Audacity.ink* failed to record. Equipment was then all set up to commence interviews once briefing of study was concluded. The researcher then conducted a test run of equipment to test the reliability and working condition of the recorder, software, and microphone. The researcher then asked the participant their name and they responded, this was recorded, and the sound was clear during playback, this meant that equipment used was in good working condition to commence with the interview. Once the test run was successful the researcher moved on to the next phase, the interview.

Phase 7: The interview (opening questions, probe questions, time)

The researcher again reminded each participant that they may ask the researcher to repeat or explain any question they did not understand. Once this was done, the researcher then started the recording process. The researcher started the interview with demographical questions to ease the athlete into the interview, allowing the participants to feel less anxious, stressed or uncomfortable. The demographical questions are also on the set of core/key questions, which was used as an interview guide (Appendix C). Once the demographical questions were completed, the researcher mentioned to the participant that core questions will now be asked and that participants should be as open and honest with the researcher. This was understood by participants and agreed to commence. The researcher then moved onto the core questions relating to the athlete-coach relationship.

Probe questions were posed to participants by the researcher when participants were struggling to understand the questions, or to elicit more information regarding the topic. The researcher aimed to attain a conversational dialogue between researcher and each participant relating to each topic brought up by the researcher. During the course of the questions and probing questions, a summary was given in the interviewer's own words of what the athlete's responses were to clarify certain responses or fully understand what the athlete was saying; this was to ensure that no words were interpreted the wrong way. Only one interview was conducted with each participant, which lasted 45-90 minutes.

Phase 8: Concluding the interview

Once the researcher knew that the interview was coming to an end, the participant was brought to a gradual return to the level of daily social interaction for example by saying: *"With this last few minutes..."* or *"In this final section of the interview..."* This was to ensure that the participant did not leave the interview feeling like they left unfinished business or did not express more important feelings, thoughts or experiences within the athlete-coach relationship. The interviewer also asked in concluding if there was anything else they would like to add or retract anything that was said, this was to elicit more information or the ability to retract information. The interviewer then thanked the athlete and stopped the recordings. Conversations then took place off the record about life, general aspirations and goals before going separate ways. This way it was not just an interview but also a real concern about these athlete's lives. The researcher's thoughts on this are elaborated upon in the reflective summary within this chapter.

3.6 DATA ANALYSIS

Following the interviews, voice recordings were played back and transcribed verbatim in English. For the purposes of this study, all transcripts were coded and analysed using a thematic analysis, this was used alongside the phenomenology approach to understand the phenomenon better. Thematic analysis according to Clarke and Braun (2006) is locating it in relation to other qualitative analytic methods that search for themes or patterns, as well as in relation to different epistemological and ontological position. The nature of reality was that the researcher experienced psychological and performance effects relating to the athlete-coach relationship. Thus the researcher's ontological position derived from positive and negative experiences relating to the athlete-coach relationship. The researcher's epistemological position was to gather deeper insight and knowledge about the athlete-coach relationship to understand what other athletes' lived experiences and effects are within their athlete-coach relationship. In order to have obtained a rich deep insight, data was analysed inductively, which allowed themes to emerge with regard to the lived experience of the athletes, meaning new information was found which allowed for a deeper understanding. Furthermore data was analysed deductively using the 3+1C's model to present data that was linked to the phenomenon.

Data was analysed using qualitative data analysis software *Atlas.ti*, version 8.0, with pre-determined themes, which was based on the theoretical framework. This enabled the researcher to collate and group codes.

All this was done in the following procedures:

1. Bracketing was done which was to listen to all tapes or read all transcripts repeatedly in order to extract the unique experiences of the participants.

2. Delineating units of meaning was conducted, where the researcher created a list of units by considering what was the most significant, for example; delineating units of meaning that related to this study were units such as experiences where athletes explained closeness such as respect or trust, or positive and negative behaviours that elicited psychological and performance effects.
3. The researcher clustered units in order to obtain themes, this is where all units were bracketed into themes and data was looked at historically. Theme examples are; Commitment, sub-themes are; desire, investment, and sacrificing.
4. Checking for common themes was done by looking for small detail across all interview data that mean the same thing.
5. A summary of each interview was established for the purpose of validity to check if data was captured correctly by sending transcripts back to participants to review.

The data was analysed through a phenomenological method where data was put into narrative summaries to express the lived experiences of the participants. These narrative summaries were then coded and grouped into themes. Analysis through phenomenology proceeds from the central assumption that there is an essence to an experience of those participating in the study, those who have had a similar experience are analysed as unique expressions and compared to identify the essence, thus the focus is on life as lived (Marshall, & Rossman, 2014).

The theoretical framework; 3+1C's Model was used as an interpretive lens and it allowed the researcher to use the four 'C's' as pre-determined themes (Closeness and Co-orientation, Commitment and Co-orientation, lastly Complementarity and Co-orientation). This allowed the researcher to group the narrative summaries, which then elicited emerging sub-themes under

each pre-determined theme. The theoretical framework was thus used in the analysis process to code, group, and present the data through pre-determined and emerging sub-themes. Data was then reviewed and compared to literature to formulate a discussion and draw up conclusions with regards to this present study.

3.7 TRUSTWORTHINESS

In qualitative research, trustworthiness is used in reference to the overall quality of a study, however, qualitative scholars continue to debate about how to measure and refer to validity and reliability of qualitative research (Parrott, 2010).

To verify data there are eight validation strategies as recommended by Creswell (2009). Four of these techniques were used in order to ensure the trustworthiness of the data collected in this study. The following strategies were adopted:

1. *Member checks* is concerned with internal validity which involves feeding findings of the analysis back to the participants to review and assess whether the findings reflect the issues from their perspective (Patton & Cochran, 2002). During the interviews conducted in this study, the researcher sporadically asked clarifying questions to the participant to ensure that the correct information was captured to ensure that there was no misinterpretation of information. In this study, all interview data was transcribed, repeatedly analysed and sent back to participants to review and determine accuracy of data. Participants were given two weeks (fourteen

days) to respond with any corrections to be made. No corrections needed to be made.

2. *Peer review or debriefing* is concerned with opportunities for scrutiny of the study or project by colleagues, peers and academics should be welcomed, as should any feedback offered to the researcher at any presentations for example; at conferences that are made over the duration of the study (Shenton, 2004). A postgraduate master's student, as well as two academic supervisors aided the researcher with reviewing and debriefing this current study or phenomenon under investigation. Advice, expertise and support was given to the researcher which also challenged the researcher in developing and identifying the core of this present study as well as identify any instances of biasness.
3. *Triangulation* which increases validity of findings, through deliberately seeking evidence from a wide range of sources and comparing findings from those different sources (Patton & Cochran, 2002). The researcher made use of various evidence and methods from an extensive range of sources. Findings were compared to evidence and also aided in the analyses process of grouping data for this current study.
4. *Clarify researcher bias* is the process where the researcher will bracket own experiences in order to understand those of the participants in the study (Creswell, 2009). The researcher maintained meticulous records of all interview data and documented the process of analysis. The researcher also bracketed own experiences or bias opinions during the data collection and

analysing phase. The researcher also reverted back to participants during the interviews to clarify whether the researcher interpreted what was said correctly, for example, the researcher probed questions such as: ‘*So what you’re saying is...*’ basically repeating what the participant said in other words. The participant would then agree, clarifying what was said. This was done in order to fully understand participants’ experiences without any bias views interrupting/corrupting the data, this ensured reliability and validity of data.

3.8 REFLEXIVITY

“Reflexivity is important in striving for objectivity and neutrality” (Parrott, 2010, pp. 63).

As a retired track and field Western Cape and University League athlete, the researcher sought the need to study female university track and field athletes due to their experiences as an athlete at university level competition. This study was addressing personal experiences and observations within the athlete-coach relationship endured by the researcher where poor athlete-coach relationships which exuded poor performance and poor psychological effects such as; lack of concentration, feeling uncomfortable amongst the coach and lack of trust and so forth to an extent performance lacked mental toughness to overcome the poor relationship, was experienced. Due to the researchers experience with past athlete-coach relationships, the need to know what other athletes are facing at university level completion; what their relationship with their coach is like; whether the relationship with their coach is affecting their performance; and if so in what way. To also understand their views or perspective of an effective athlete-coach relationship,

ultimately to understand female athletes better. To possibly gather whether there are similarities or differences with these athletes and what they face in the athlete-coach relationship. To understand how behaviours and actions within the relationship can determine the outcome of a great or bad relationship and how this may affect performance.

A reflexivity statement by the researcher: *“If I perhaps had an effective athlete-coach relationship at university level, I may have had a greater sense of motivation, belief, concentration, confidence and commitment, etc. This could have resulted in me performing better and wanting to further my track and field career. This is why I felt the need to study this phenomenon being the athlete-coach dyad in order to help athletes and coaches facilitate the best outcomes within the relationship and performance”*.

For the purposes of this study, the researcher set aside all bias views, as the researcher was aware that this could affect the interpretation and reporting of data. Throughout the research process a journal was kept to record the researcher’s thoughts, opinions, and perceptions with regards to the study, experiences and findings. The researcher aimed to be as objective as possible to enhance the reliability of the study and not influence the findings by being subjective. The researcher is also reporting this thesis in the third person as it allows for better reflexivity and objectivity. *“A reflexive journal improves the credibility of a qualitative researcher and enhances the trustworthiness of the study”* (Parrott, 2010, pp. 63).

3.9 ETHICS CONSIDERATIONS

Firstly permission to conduct research was obtained from the University of the Western Cape Research and Ethics Committee. Permission was then obtained by the Institutional Research and Planning Division of Stellenbosch University. Permission was also obtained from the two universities athletics department in order to use their athletes to conduct the research on. The participants was then informed by the researcher on the reason they were selected based on the sample criteria, the particular purpose of the study, what participation will require of them, what the data will be used for, also making the participants aware of voluntary participation and confidentiality. Participants had the right to withdraw from participation at any time with no penalty. Considerations needed to be made when data was collected, these were as follows:

- Informed Consent: Consent forms were issued out to all participants detailing all information about the study and whether they accept to be audio taped during the interview process. This needed to be signed before any data collection could follow. All participants signed a consent form.
- Confidentiality and Anonymity: The researcher informed participants that their identity with regards to this research will not be known outside this study. It was made known that their information will be safe and secure and that their identity will be protected. In terms of confidentiality, in no way has information been leaked out that could have potentially harmed the participants in any way nor did the researcher perform or conduct anything without the consent and permission of participants. All participants and coaches names were withheld in this study.
- Protecting participants from harm: Before the interview took place, participants were made aware of the specific phenomenon to be discussed to prepare them emotionally in

case they uncovered painful experiences. Participants were also made aware of the fact that participating in this study was completely voluntary and that if at any point they did not want to participate anymore, there were no implications to incur. The researcher was also alert for any signs of discomfort and was considerate when participants needed to take a break. Data was also stored safely in the possession of the researcher only, ensuring that no data would be exposed or destructed.

3.10 CONCLUSION OF CHAPTER

Chapter three provided insight into the methodology utilized in this study during the data collection and analysing phase. The research design and sampling procedures were explained as well as the steps that were taken to collect and analyse the data found. Reliability and validity was expressed through trustworthiness, reflexivity, and ethical considerations that were taken when conducting the study.

The following chapter represents the findings, which was collected and analysed. A discussion on these findings is presented by the researcher using the theoretical framework, which was utilized to give insight into the athlete-coach relationships.

CHAPTER 4

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

4.1 INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this study was to explore the lived experiences of female university track and field athletes by investigating the psychological effects of the athlete-coach relationship on performance from the perspective of athletes. The findings of this study are therefore presented qualitatively using narratives. Themes emerged according to athletes' responses with rich information extracted. The quality of the athlete coach relationship and the effects thereof are expressed through athletes' lived experiences.

Data was collected using semi-structured interview questions guided by a pre-selected theoretical framework/model as well as literature. Fourteen interviews were conducted with seven each from two universities in the Western Cape who are female university track and field athletes. Data is presented using Themes and sub-themes according to the 3+1Cs' Model (theoretical framework) by using a Matrix style table which displays the responses from athletes via quotations and how these themes interlink and cross reference one another. The findings also presented psychological and performance effects experienced by participants as well as interconnections between themes within the theoretical framework. This chapter will have the following presented; profile of participants, overview of the theoretical framework, and findings and discussion.

4.2 PROFILE OF PARTICIPANTS

Participants of this study comprised of fourteen female university track and field athletes, seven each from two universities in the Western Cape. These participants were chosen according to a set of criteria set by the researcher of which coaches at each university was requested to follow. A list of seven participants was then presented from each university and all fourteen participants voluntarily accepted to take part in this study. To protect the anonymity of participants, pseudonyms are used. Participants of this study are detailed in Table 4.1.

Table 4.1 University Track and Field participants'

Pseudonym	Gender	Age	Event	University
Ashton	Female	22	Shot put, hammer throw, discuss	University1
Kim	Female	23	Triple jump, long jump	University1
Serena	Female	20	400m, 800m	University1
Sarah	Female	24	100m, 200m	University1
Michell	Female	23	100m, 200m	University1
Janine	Female	22	200m, 400m	University1
Kelly	Female	21	200m, 400m	University1
Sasha	Female	23	800m, 1500m	University2
Keishia	Female	21	400m, 800m	University2
Jade	Female	24	100m, long jump	University2
Olivia	Female	22	Long jump, triple jump	University2
Kriston	Female	18	100m	University2
Nina	Female	22	200m, 400m	University2
Celeste	Female	22	100m, 200m	University2

4.3 OVERVIEW OF THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

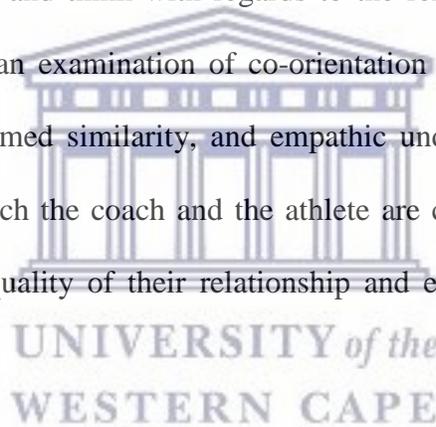
The theoretical framework used in this study is known as the 3+1C's model. This model according to Papaioannou, et al, (2014) is currently the most prevalent and widely investigated model of the coach-athlete dyad. They continue to state that this model provides an operational definition that can be used to systematically study coaches and athletes' feelings, thoughts, and behaviours through the constructs of closeness, commitment, complementarity, and co-orientation.

The coach-athlete relationship is defined or conceptualised as a social situation created by coaches and athletes through ways in which feelings, thoughts and behaviours are mutually and casually interdependent (Therwell, et al, 2016). The three psychological constructs that operationalize and measure the social situation according to the dyad are highlighted as follows;

Closeness is defined as the affective aspect of the coach-athlete relationship, it is reflected by mutual feelings of trust and appreciation, emotional caring, as well as interpersonal liking as a result of positive appraisals of coaches and athletes' relationship experiences (Thelwell, et al, 2016). Commitment refers to the cognitive aspect of the coach-athlete relationship, and this is reflected in coaches' and athletes' long-term orientation towards the relationship, as well as intentions or thoughts to maintain a close relationship with each other over time (Thelwell, et al. 2016). Complementarity represents the behavioural aspect of the coach-athlete relationship with regards to coaches' and athletes' levels of cooperation. These include corresponding behaviours and whether athletes and coaches are comfortable in each other's presence, as well as reciprocal behaviours which relates to roles and tasks and being able to direct and on the other hand execute them (Thelwell, et al, 2016). While the 3C's outline the

social situation coaches and athletes create, co-orientation is the + 1C of the coach-athlete relationship model that captures the interdependence of the 3C's (Thelwell, et al, 2016).

According to Papaioannou, et al, (2014), co-orientation represents the level of understanding and similarity between the athlete and coach with regards to closeness, commitment, and complementarity. They further state that it relates to the coach and athletes' interpersonal perspectives of which there are two types of perspectives; direct-perspective represents the coach and athlete's self-perceptions of how they feel, act, and think of their relationship, and the meta-perspective represents the coach and athlete's perceptions of how they believe their partners feel, act, and think with regards to the relationship. The combination of these perspectives creates for an examination of co-orientation from a number of dimensions namely; actual similarity, assumed similarity, and empathic understanding. These dimensions can describe the degree to which the coach and the athlete are co-oriented relating to the way they view or understand the quality of their relationship and each other (papaioannou, et al, 2014).



For the purpose of this study, data will be presented using the 3+1C's model, analysing the social situation of the athlete-coach relationship according to athletes' lived experiences. An outline of athletes' direct and meta-perspectives of their relationship are also presented thus creating an examination of assumed similarity as a dimension relating to the way the athlete views or understands the quality of their relationship with their respective coaches. According to Papaioannou, et al, (2014), this will provide valuable prognostic and diagnostic information to coaches and athletes, as well as to sport psychology consultants in understanding the relationship. The discussion which follows presents the findings and discussion based on the inductive analysis conducted on the findings through the lens of the 3+1C's model.

4.4 FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

This section presents the findings and discussion of the athlete-coach relationship from the perspective of the athlete. In order to understand findings, a brief summary of each construct of the theoretical framework is explained and thereafter findings will be presented according to each construct as well as sub-themes and emerging themes which will be elaborated and discussed in this chapter. Links between various themes will be highlighted and discussed using examples. An inductive thematic analysis was conducted on the data and the findings from individual interviews with female university track and field athletes relating to their lived experiences of the athlete-coach relationship and the perceived psychological effects on their performance. Pseudonyms are used in this study in order to protect the anonymity of athletes.

Jowett (2007) developed the 3+1C's conceptualization of the coach-athlete relationship based on numerous qualitative studies (Rhind, et al, 2012). This conceptualization refers to four constructs namely; closeness, commitment, complementarity, and co-orientation. These four constructs form the foundation of this study in presenting findings. This model argues that the quality of the dyad between a coach and an athlete is formed through these four key constructs (Rhind, et al, 2012). Below Rhind, et al, (2012) briefly explains these four constructs;

1. Closeness: Defined as the affective meaning that the coach and athlete assign to their relationship, for example; respect, trust, liking etc.
2. Commitment: The cognitive aspect which relates to the members' intentions to maintain the relationship now and in the future.

3. Complementarity: The behavioural aspect which refers to the relationship members' co-operative and corresponding behaviours of affiliation, for example; being responsive and friendly etc.
4. Co-orientation: Finally, the "+1" element of this conceptualization referred to as co-orientation which reflects the congruence of perceptions between two relationship members, namely, the coach and the athlete. Co-orientation highlights the degree in which relationship members' are perceptually interdependent. It was labelled the "+1" element because it runs through each of the other affective, cognitive, and behavioural elements. There are two types of perspectives; the direct-perspective refers to how the athlete perceives the quality of his/her relationship with the coach and in contrast the meta-perspective focuses on how the athlete believes his/her coach perceives the relationship.

The four constructs according to the 3+1C's model are presented in a matrix table below, showing an interlinking between these constructs, which also displays the sub-themes, as well as a presentation of raw quoted examples of athletes' experiences, see Table 4.2. Discussions of results according to each construct and sub-themes are then presented, elaborated and detailed. Emerging themes as well as effects of the athlete-coach relationship is also discussed eliciting cross-references and linking of findings.

Table 4.2 Raw data presented using the 3+1C's Model displayed in a Matrix Table

3+1C's		CO-ORIENTATION (+1C)	
CONSTRUCTS	SUB-THEMES	DIRECT-PERSPECTIVE	META-PERSPECTIVE
CLOSENESS (Personal & Generic feelings)	LIKABILITY & INTIMACY	'I never really liked him much' 'I can say we are pretty close like I can go to his place and go chill there'	'There is definitely that likeability there, from his side as well yes' 'He would come to my place because I mean we were friends before'
	TRUST	'I have known him for a while and when I started with him, I performed so I trust in the sense that his program works for me, his tactics work for me so I do trust him completely'	'There's a lot of things that he trusts me with'
	RESPECT	'So like I respect him a lot'	'I would say he definitely does respect, treats us all with respect he doesn't favour one athlete over another. He respects me as a female'
	BELIEF	'I believe in myself. He helps me to realise that I can be better than what I am at the moment and it makes me want to train harder for what I want to achieve'	'Sometimes I feel like he doesn't believe that I can achieve'

DESIRE

'I love athletics so much I don't think I would ever stop'

'Definitely, he has passion because he feels like he reached his peak and now he wants to develop other athletes and he has been very passionate and it shows basically how passionate he is because he even coaches school kids as well and they also doing very well'

RELATIONSHIP INVESTMENT

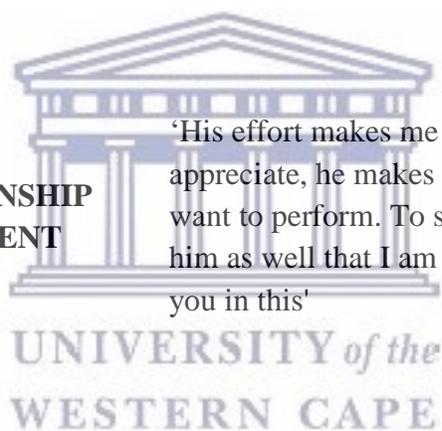
'His effort makes me like appreciate, he makes me want to perform. To show him as well that I am with you in this'

'I do feel he is positively invested and mostly just the way that he is here every single day for us and he works out a different program for each of us and comes to all our races and listens to us and have these conversations with us where we tell him what we want to achieve and he works out a plan for us to get there and when we do get there he celebrates with us'

SACRIFICE

'Most other students don't necessarily understand when I have to train twice a day sometimes for two hours or why I can't go out or why I have to go sleep at 10pm because I am so tired'

'He takes time out from his personal time to coach us and public holidays, weekends he takes us to the gym. I would say that he sacrifices a lot to be with us we don't even pay him'



MOTIVATION

'I was able to stand tall and be like you know okay, I am here and I am here to compete against you. You know I am not going to be in the background. So he allowed me to get to that point and also psychologically to be strong especially when it comes to training'

'He continuously encourages me to be the best that I can be'

SUPPORT

'Sometimes he looks like as sick as can be, like as sick as a dog and I am like okay coach what's up are you okay. So we are close like that'

'He has been coaching me for two years and in that two years a lot has happened like injuries and setbacks and failures etc and he has always been there to help out because that's the type of person he is'

UNDERSTANDING

'I understand the way he works now, I understand his tactics and everything'

'I feel that he understands when I go to him with something, my reasons behind it, and he always listens, he is always open to what we have to say'

ROLES & TASKS

'I would disagree with like the training session for example I would ask him, but why is he giving us so much in quantity when he wants the quality to be at a certain level. I would negotiate training with him sometimes'

'He is very set on what he wants to do however he wouldn't like just say no this is how things are, he considers what I say but he still sticks to what he knows best'

4.4.1 Closeness and Co-orientation

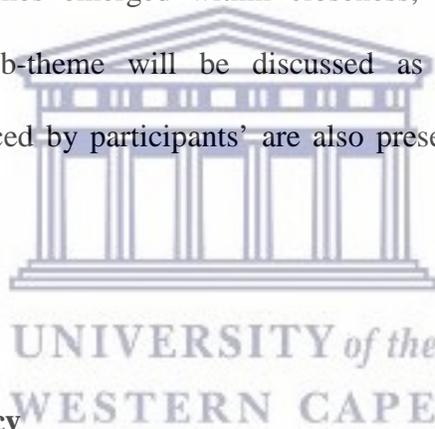
This section presents the theme of closeness and co-orientation as they pertain to the phenomenon described in this study. Closeness refers to the emotional tone of the athlete-coach relationship which is found in their expressions of interpersonal liking and trust/respect for one another (Miller, et al, 2007). According to Papaioannou and Hackfort (2014), the construct of co-orientation represents the level of understanding and similarity between the coach and athlete, in this case the concurrence of closeness.

The responses of participants revealed the direct-perspective of how the athlete feels towards the coach as well as the athletes' meta-perspective of how the athlete perceives the coach to feel towards them and these feelings according to Jowett and Cockerill (2003) appear to be influential in the development and effectiveness of the coach-athlete dyad. This also creates the dimension of assumed similarity. This is one dimension that can describe the degree to which the coach and the athlete are co-oriented relating to the way they view or understand the quality of their relationship (Papaioannou & Hackfort, 2014).

Participants expressed their emotional tone of likability and intimacy within their relationship with regards to the bond they share and how close they feel with their coaches, sharing their on and off the field bonding experiences. Participants also shared their experiences through direct-perspective responses of trust displayed or the lack thereof with their coaches, as well as their meta-perspective views on how they perceive their coach would respond about trusting them. Participants shared their experiences regarding respect within the athlete-coach relationship, expressing respect towards their coaches and their perceptions of their coaches respecting them. Participants finally expressed directly about the belief in themselves, the belief

in their coaches, as well as their meta-perspective responses regarding their coaches' belief in them. In essence what was found was the importance of having a close relationship with the coach that is not overstepping any boundaries but also close enough that allows athletes to feel comfortable, open, and respected. The participants psychological state reported to be positive when athletes have a closer relationship with their coach, however negative psychological effects were linked to having no bond with the coach, or not feeling respected which lead to participants not wanting to open up causing trust issues and ultimately affecting the relationship as well as performance.

The following sub-themes emerged within closeness; likability and intimacy, trust, respect, and belief. Each sub-theme will be discussed as findings are presented. The psychological effects experienced by participants' are also presented relating to the emotional tone of closeness.



4.4.1.1. Likability and Intimacy

This sub-theme elicits participants' experiences to liking their coaches, or displaying likability within their relationship relating to their bond and how close they feel with their coaches, sharing their on and off the field bonding experiences. Participants' personal and generic feelings of likability and intimacy revealed positive and negative responses. Participants also expressed the longing for an intimate bond with their coaches or not feeling likability within the relationship. Regarding participants' experiences, according to Sarah, she indicated that her relationship with her coach is very close, that they have a great bond. In addition, Sasha also stated that her coach and she share a close bond. However according to Serena and Kim, they

both expressed that they are not close with their respective coaches and that they do not feel like there is an intimate bond or likability within the relationship.

The following discussion elaborates on athletes' positive and negative experiences with regards to likability and intimacy within their relationships. Michell whom is a field event athlete shared her experiences about her present/current coach regarding their bond and likability which relates to her knowing her coach for a long time, this is what she shared:

“We are very close, he is like a second father basically so there are no uncomfortable feelings. I have never been uncomfortable around him. He (coach) feels like he knows me for so long and we quite comfortable together so I think it would have been different if he started coaching me at University level, I have been training with him since I was younger and him and I have a very good relationship” (Michell).

Michell, related to her coach as a father figure and also expressed that she has been training with him since she was younger and that it would have been different if she only started with him at university level. However, Keishia expressed that when she started athletics at University, meeting her coach she immediately got the feeling that she was welcomed by her coach and that he would support her in any situation. She stated that it took her only a month to be psychologically comfortable with him. Literature confirms this finding, according to Papaioannou and Hackfort (2014), whether an athlete and a coach stay in an athletic relationship for the long term is not the issue, it is about coaches and athletes investing time, energy, and effort if they want to enjoy the benefits of an effective relationship. Thus being said, coaches always have to put in the effort to maintain a strong and effective relationship from beginning to

end and according to Vella and Perlman (2014) coaches should acknowledge athletes' feelings and perspectives, and by this means demonstrate that the coach understands them as an individual with specific needs.

Participants also revealed the close relationship they share with their coaches outside of athletics. Sasha's expression refers to her two university coaches she currently has as family friends. In addition Nina also shared her bond and how close her and her family is with her coach and his family:

“So they are actually like my second home, my home away from home, so they are actually almost like my second mom and dad”. She continued to say: “We are very close, we're actually family friends also, so yes, my family is also friends with them so sometimes holidays we go away together” (Sasha).

Participant's responses revealed a mutual liking and an intimate bond with their coaches that goes beyond athletics, this is known as an atypical relationship. Papaioannou and Hackfort (2014) said that in a typical relationship, the athlete and coach have no other relation to each other outside of the sport, however, in an atypical relationship they share another bond, such as parent and child or husband and wife, it is suggested that in an atypical relationship coaches and athletes will have a stronger emotional connection and a greater degree of interdependence than a typical relationship. Also according to Colvin, et al, (2012) coaches and athletes who were identified as holding a closer relationship outside of sport seem to cooperate well during training. Thus coaches need to build close relationships with athletes on and off the field in order to facilitate a more positive and effective relationship.

On the other hand, Ashton mentioned that in the past, her previous coaches at university never stayed long, that her experiences of coaches leaving due to either not being able to fully commit or just due to other priorities, this made her very sceptical because she developed a guard when meeting a new coach with the thought of them leaving again. However, Ashton shared her experience of when she first met her current coach and how she felt getting to know her new coach, she stated that she now has a close relationship with him. This is what Ashton shared:

“I was introduced to him through our head coach, of which I was at first very nervous about it because of previous experiences but as we went along we like started getting to know each other and started building a relationship and I was at the time his only athlete. So I mean we had that you know where we could really bond” (Ashton).

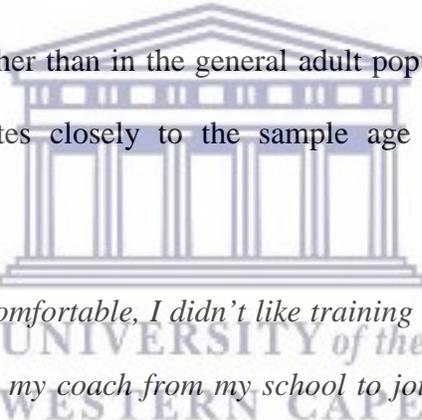
Ashton’s response reveals mutual liking according to her perspective which relates to the dimension of assumed similarity in co-orientation. It is also stated that co-orientation typically increases during the initial phase of relationships as individuals get to know each other (Papaioannou & Hackfort, 2014). It is found that within the initial phase of the athlete-coach relationship it is important to have mutual liking and intimacy to develop a closer relationship. Personality also seemed to be an influence in the athlete-coach relationship regarding likability through participant’s responses, this is what Keishia and Jade shared:

“Our training sessions are very entertaining, he is the funniest person I know and there is never a serious moment” (Keishia).

“He's more like jokey so he makes me feel more relaxed” (Jade).

This reveals that participants may feel more comfortable when coaches have a positive personality or energy that makes them feel relaxed and entertained, thus allowing participants to develop likability with their coaches and creating a close bond. In addition, Sandstrom (2012) stated that liking or likability is related to openly being able to share information. It was said in literature that athletes and coaches should be aware of how personality is likely to drive their behaviour and influence their interactions and perceptions (Papaioannou & Hackfort, 2014).

Though findings relate to positive responses and how to maintain a close relationship, this section will elaborate on the negative findings relating to liking and intimacy. One negative study revealed by Frazier (2017) stated that rates of mental health disorders among young adults aged 18-25 are significantly higher than in the general adult population and twice that of adults 50 years and older. This relates closely to the sample age being relevant. This is what participants shared:



“He made me feel uncomfortable, I didn’t like training with him and that’s the reason why I asked my coach from my school to join the University so the he can coach me again instead of that coach” (Ashton).

According to Papaioannou and Hackfort (2014), communication and getting to know one another could facilitate greatly perceived understanding and similarity, that it is important that coaches and athletes maximise their common ground, also that athletes should seek out a coach who is sensitive to their culture and adaptive to their views and needs. Ashton referred to one of her previous varsity coaches saying that she never really liked that coach, she continued to state that she felt psychologically uncomfortable with her coach which facilitated changing coaches.

Findings presented positive responses of having likability and intimacy on and off the field which promotes a stronger emotional connection and openness which interconnects with trusting one another in the dyad. It is said that athletes and their coaches can establish a meaningful relationship and become involved in all aspects of each other's lives within and out of the sport context (Woolliams, 2015). However participants' negative responses revealed a longing for an intimate bond, also having little to no likability within the relationship which does not foster openness or trust. This explains how diverse the athlete-coach relationship is regarding feelings of likability within the relationship and the affectionate intimate bonds these athletes' share with their coaches.

Coaches should be creating a positive environment of liking to develop an intimate bond with their athletes, in turn promoting a closer emotional relationship, facilitating the athletes' feelings and psychological state, which in turn can influence the athlete-coach relationship and performance. This can be done by getting to know one another through communication to develop common ground. It can also be said that participants need to seek coaches who are adaptive to their views and needs. Papaioannou and Hackfort (2014) stated that an athlete should look for a coach who has good interpersonal skills, such as the skill to make an athlete feel comfortable and relaxed as opposed to feel uneasy and stressed.

4.4.1.2. Trust

This sub-theme represents participants' experiences and responses regarding trust within their relationships. Studies according to the 3+1C's theoretical model found that the lack of trust

led to an increasing competitiveness in the relationship which made the members feel envy and other negative emotions toward each other (Sandstrom, 2012).

Participants' expressed being open to their coaches however experiencing barriers to trusting completely, on the other hand athletes also stated that they trust their coaches fully with athletics as well as in their personal life. Participants also revealed negative psychological effects such as disappointment, and frustration regarding trust within their relationships, however participants also shared experiences of positive psychological effects and confidence when having trust within the relationship. Participants' responses explain the effect trust has on the athlete-coach relationship as well as the effect it has on the athletes' mental state. The following responses are discussed and elaborated on regarding trust within the athlete-coach dyad.

An expressive response shared by Janine explains her experiences regarding her relationship and trust, her direct-perspective as well as her meta-perspective response relating to her perception of her coach trusting her is presented:

There are a lot of things that he trusts me with, that he does talk to me about whereas I am uncertain. I don't want to lie, there are certain things that I don't open up to him about, but I'm always there to listen to anything that he wants to say and if there's things that I don't understand, I tell him that this is not working for me. Why don't we do it this way? So I feel, I must say that there is quite a good relationship, it's just that from my side I'm not quite open yet with him because I feel like I need to break the barrier before I could fully trust him” (Janine).

Janine expressed her thoughts of how her coach talks to her openly, also her response brought out that her coach is understanding when she would mention that something is not working for her and then give a suggestion, stating that they have a good relationship in terms of understanding, interconnecting to complementarity, however she also stated that she does not fully trust her coach, that she is not quite open with him yet. Kelly mentioned a different expression:

“I trust his programme and everything, but if I tell him something it's like he is not trusting me” (Kelly).

Janine and Kelly's perceptions indicate that perhaps not all parties in the relationship may trust one another even if each party perceives to know. Janine who moved to the Western Cape to study and further her athletic career responded to why she may be hesitant in trusting her coach, she stated this:

“When I got here, there were a lot of things said from different people telling me about him, and you're starting to have doubts about that person, you're starting to think oh, what's going to happen with me? Will I have the same problems with him, you know? And then also with what other coaches are saying about him. When it comes to people undermining his capabilities, then as well you're as an athlete, you're starting to think oh, I made a wrong decision. So I think that's one of the reasons why I'm not really open with everything” (Janine).

The response of Janine reveals that the reputation of a coach presented to an athlete by other coaches or athletes can create trust issues/barriers within a relationship. According to West

(2016) it was stated that it is imperative that coaches provide their athletes with the proper skills, techniques, confidence, motivation, and sport persistence in order to maintain their highly favoured status quo, better known as their reputation. This indicates the importance of coaches' reputation among athletes and other coaches as seen evidently in Janine's response when she says *'When it comes to people undermining his capabilities, then as well you're as an athlete, you're starting to think oh, I made a wrong decision'*. In addition, Janine elaborated on trusting her coach:

"I don't trust him, I don't trust his capabilities, nothing. For me when I came here, I expected him to be my best friend as a coach. There are certain things where I should be talking to him about and certain things that I shouldn't be talking to him about, but at this moment there's nothing that I can say to him. So there is no trust" (Janine).

Kriston from University two, who is a sprinter also shared a similar experience to Janine as she expressed her feelings relating to why there is difficulty trusting her coach.

"I don't feel like I completely trust him. I started to think maybe I should change to another coach. I wouldn't say I was sad I was just like disappointed. Also when I train, like when we are done like it feels like I didn't train. So then I think like, I will still do more on my own and because it isn't enough. So that's maybe like why I do not trust. Not him but the program" (Kriston).

Kriston mentioned that she doesn't completely trust her coach especially regarding his abilities or programs in coaching her, similar to Janine's response. Jowett and Nezelek (2011)

mentioned that when the coach is being consistent in his/her attributes, management skills and carrying their part as a coach in maintaining the athlete-coach relationship, athletes' seem to feel more comfortable with the coach.

The perceptions of participants regarding trust display a lack of communication between the two parties in the relationship. The findings suggested that it is possible to not have mutual trust within the relationship, it was also found that the reputation of coaches is an important factor in allowing athletes to trust the coach. Lastly the abilities, skills and program planning of a coach is also an important factor that can create a lack of trust if it is not to the standard of the athlete. It is important for coaches to understand the perceptions of athletes by creating an open relationship for communication, to ultimately engage and build trust. This will help the coach understand the athlete more and develop a closer relationship. West (2016) mentioned that communication will increase the satisfaction of athletes' training and performance, physical self-concept, achievement goals, intrinsic motivation, and sustaining passion for the sport. West (2016) also states that clear and precise communication increases better understanding of the role of the player, developing skills, and building a trusting relationship.

With regards to positive experiences and responses regarding trust, Participants revealed mutual trust and openness within the relationship with regards to athletics and personal life. Participants confidently expressed the following:

“I feel that there is complete trust between us”. “He trusts me with information and the same vice versa with me as well. It’s clear as daylight if you and your coach are that close” (Ashton).

In addition, Michell shared the following:

“I would never leave him for another coach. When I started with him, I performed, so I trust in the sense that his program works for me, his tactics work for me, so I do trust him completely”. I can confide in him with things that doesn't concern athletics only, and he trusts, I feel like he has certain trust in me” (Michell).

This confirms West's (2016) statement that the communication between a coach and athlete increases the likelihood of developing feelings of closeness within the relationship and improving the athlete's perception of the coach.

Relating to all findings regarding trust, it was found that relationships may vary by having one party in the relationship trusting and the other experiencing barriers to trusting, however also that there can be mutual trust within the relationship from the perspective of the athlete. It was also found that the capabilities of the coach is important regarding the athlete trusting the coach's programs because it may lead the athlete to doubt the coach, and on the other hand trust the coach completely due to the programs showing effect in the athlete. Lastly it was found that not having trust within the relationship diminishes or prolongs closeness within the relationship, however when trust is evident in the relationship there is a positive effect on the athlete promoting a closer relationship with the coach.

According to Maitland (2012) coaches are in a position to not only impact athletes' physical development but also their psychological development both in a positive and a negative way. Vella and Perlman (2014) also confirmed that the consistent development of positive psychological, social, and behavioural outcomes for athletes has been defined as a central component of effective coaching. With this being said, coaches need to take opportunities in

creating a positive environment where athletes' can feel comfortable to trust the coach, as well as to make sure the athletes' perception of the coach is a positive one.

4.4.1.3. Respect

Athletes shared their experiences regarding respect within the relationship. According to Norman and French (2013) positive relationships between the athlete and coach at high performance level sport are athlete-centered, underpinned by shared knowledge, open communication, trust, mutual respect and clearly defined roles, stating that the nature of this relationship is pivotal in athletic development and success.

Participants' responses revealed positive and negative experiences regarding respect for one another in the relationship. It was found by participants' responses that when there is mutual respect it facilitates positive psychological experiences and feeling closer, whereas when there is a lack of respect such as belittling from either parties it facilitates negative psychological experiences such as frustration, discomfort or hurt. It was also evident the link between respect and trust. The following discussion elicits athletes' experiences and perspectives regarding respect within the athlete-coach relationship:

“I respect him a lot and he is like really respectful, I think vice versa respect comes from both sides” (Ashton).

In addition, participants shared similar responses to Ashton:

“I would never see us being disrespectful to each other” (Jade).

“He treats us equally, I don’t think it’s because I am female that he will treat me any different” (Michell).

“I would say he definitely does respect, treats us all with respect, he doesn't favour one athlete over another” (Olivia).

“He is respectful in all other aspects, social life, studies, everything” (Nina).

Ashton’s response reveals a mutual respect from her perspective in addition to Jade. Ashton also mentioned that her coach has never belittled her in anyway nor ever made her feel uncomfortable. Michell and Olivia in addition, expressed that their coach’s treats all with respect. Olivia and Michell revealed the importance of coaches treating athletes equally and with respect facilitating closeness. Nina, whom represented South Africa in athletics, also expressed that her coach respects her not only regarding her athletics but also her personal life. Participants elaborate more on their perspective of respect within the relationship and their experiences which revealed a positive outlook on the relationships:

“When I go with ideas to my coach, he never shoots me down. He always incorporates what I think because like if you tell someone they can't do something then obviously they are going to feel like you are shutting them down or you are not respecting what they feel and he (coach) has never done that. I feel like he listens to me even if my ideas are really off the path” (Keishia).

“He is very careful about how he approaches his female athletes’, he wouldn’t necessarily touch you because he would think you will feel uncomfortable, and if there is any sort of pain or injury he would send you to a physiotherapist and not deal with you himself” (Michell).

The above responses also show a connection between respect and complementarity behaviour, meaning that the coach’s behaviour can be perceived by the athlete as having respect for them. According to Jowett and Nezlek (2001) effective coaching behaviours can promote a good understanding between the athlete and coach and that the athlete-coach relationship may become stronger which could promote or facilitate the psychological state and enhance performance of the athlete. Literature thus proves that behaviours can have an effect on the athlete and cause the athlete to feel a certain way. In addition, Lassiter (2002) expressed that coaches should be educated in order to help themselves realize the direct and indirect impact their attitudes and behaviours have on their athletes.

Although there are positive experiences shared amongst participants, challenges with regards to respect are also demonstrated in the responses of participants. A discussion on this follows:

“Some aspects he is respectful. Some he's not because as a married man, you know, married, happy, family, kids and stuff like that, you can't say certain things, as much as you comfortable with the athletes, you can't come up to your athletes especially females and start throwing comments as ‘you look sexy’, ‘sexy bum’, and ‘I can't stop looking at your lips’. Now you start thinking, what are you trying? What's going on behind your mind as a

coach for you to say that to me? What do you think how am I feeling at this moment? Do you think I'm going to be able to come to training the following day?" (Janine).

A similar response to Janine about feeling uncomfortable and not respected was shared by Serena:

"Sometimes I feel like uncomfortable with him, especially with massaging etc because I'm not used to it, my old coach never did those things to us. For example like the other day I had to take off my training top and make my bra loose, like I felt so uncomfortable. We talked about it, and then I asked him if he cannot rather get a woman, that I will feel more comfortable with it, because it's a woman... He will also make jokes sometimes and then I will think is that a joke or not really a joke? Like he will call me his second wife etc and I don't like things like that" (Serena).

In addition, another experience by Serena and Sarah follows, describing their coach's lack of respect towards them not only emotionally but physically

One incident when he was at the office, I don't know if it was a joke or anything serious, but then he had to put on the alarm, so he said I must stand still, he's going to kiss me now, and I'm like what the hell? And he was holding on my arm and I was like um, what now, is he really going to do this, is it just a joke..." (Serena).

“With an ex-coach of mine, he was very flirtatious and he liked hanging, putting his arm around you and hugging you and going on with you and I didn't like that, because he would do that in front of everyone at the track. My training partners would like think weird things because my ex-coach had an intimate relationship with some of his athletes already, he would always want to be between the girls. There were times that I would just push him away and tell him not to do that but he wouldn't listen. With my current coach he's not like that at all. He's the total opposite of that, he is very respectful and there is nothing that he has done to make me feel uncomfortable or incompetent” (Sarah).

Responses revealed that even though athletes' can respect the coach, the athlete may still feel that the respect is not reciprocated towards them from their coach. This is why being respectful as a coach or coaching behaviours are so significantly important in developing effective close relationships; this again demonstrates a connection with respect and complementarity in terms of respectful behaviours. It explains that showing respect through complementarity behaviours can bring the relationship closer, especially when there is mutual respect. Lassiter (2002) also strongly mentioned that coaches have a tremendous influence on the athletes they coach through both their words and actions. Showing respect and understanding athletes is vital in creating a respectful and trustworthy relationship which helps develop that close relationship.

Participants experienced being disrespected through inappropriate words by their coach's in a sexual way or touching them inappropriately, also participants having to leave due to coach's being disrespectful, flirtatious and demanding, refusing to listen to them affecting

participants negatively. Athletes' responses also revealed a link between respect and trust, which in the end relates to closeness. The links are evident within the results of the participants'.

According to Brake (2012) studies reveal a serious problem for female athletes in sport, of particular significance to intercollegiate sports, findings in research show that the rate of coach-athlete sexual abuse is higher for elite female athletes than it is for athletes at lower, less competitive levels of sport. Roxas and Redinger (2016) also in fact stated that abuse in general, especially verbal and emotional abuse, has to some extent been a part of the culture of college coaching, a culture where coaches hold remarkable power over student athletes' playing time, scholarship money, transfer opportunities, as well as the quality and the time of their day-to-day lives, making it difficult for such behaviour to come to the attention of others, however they also mentioned that tolerance for abusive coaching appears to be diminishing as awareness is growing regarding harsh effects on performance and well-being.

Findings revealed coaches being respectful towards their athletes from the participants' perspective, as well as coaches being respected by athletes, showing a positive mutual respect within the relationship, however respecting one another also differed. Not all parties according to the perspective of the participant may respect one another equally. Lastly negative psychological effects elicited through coaches being disrespectful towards participants through emotional and physical inappropriate behaviours. It was thus found that having mutual respect facilitates a trustworthy and close relationship whereas the lack of respect facilitates negative psychological effects and creating barriers to trust, ultimately driving the relationship further apart. Detling (2001) states that coaches have more of a problem than they are aware of, that the image coaches have of themselves and the way they are being accepted by the athletes they coach is not necessarily an accurate one. Detling (2001) continued to state that athletes' perceptions of

coaching behaviours are often more accurate than coaches perceptions of their own behaviours, that these perceptual discrepancies may result in poor coach-athlete communication and thus negatively affecting the coach-athlete relationship.

4.4.1.4. Belief

This sub-theme is a discussion about belief within the athlete-coach relationship. Athletes expressed their direct perspective about belief in themselves, as well as their meta-perspective thoughts regarding their coaches' belief in them. Responses differed between athletes regarding belief which revealed positive and negative findings.

It was found that coaches believe in their athletes' abilities and talents, and according to participants it was also mentioned that when coaches believe in their athletes and motivate them to reach their potential or willing to do so much for them, that it makes athletes believe in themselves and motivates them to train harder. Also according to responses it makes participants feel good psychologically. However it was also revealed by responses that when coaches are not showing commitment to develop athletes, the perception by athletes is a lack of belief from coaches. It also facilitates negative psychological effects. It was also found that participants struggle to believe in themselves even though their coaches believe in them. Lastly there were connections found with belief and trust, with belief and commitment, as well as with belief and complementarity behaviours such as motivation. Results and discussions will follow according to athletes' responses, using literature to explain and understand the nature of the relationship based on feelings regarding belief.

Participants shared their experiences and perceptions on the topic of belief and any psychological effects experienced within the relationship. These are participant's responses:

“Like he believes in you so much and he's willing to do so much for you, it sort of makes you feel like you are something special, like there is potential. So like you're not just training for nothing, putting in all this effort for nothing, because if my coach can see that I'm good enough to make the Olympic team, or that I'm good enough to make a final at the Olympics, then obviously I am. It just makes you trust in your abilities more because he trusts you and in you, so why not, like he's willing to do so much for you, there's obviously something there, he wouldn't just do it” (Nina).

“He tells me that he sees more potential in me” (Michell)

Nina's response reveals the effect coaches can have on athletes' self-belief or self-esteem. Her coach's belief in her makes her believe in herself and her own abilities, motivating her to realize her potential within herself. In addition Michell stated that her coach believes in her potential as an athlete and conveys that to her and according to Holt (2013), in terms of the development of an athlete, coaches may influence the efficacy of their athletes through direct appeal, inspirational messages, evaluative feedback, expectations and attributions. A similar expression was shared by Sarah with regards to her coach's belief in her and how it affects her psychologically:

“He knows that I still have the ability to be good again, so he's trying to push me and I like that about him. It makes me feel good, because he believes in me and that's going to make me believe in myself. It helps me to

realise that I can be better than what I am at the moment and it makes me want to train harder for what I want to achieve” (Sarah).

Sarah’s direct and meta-perspective response revealed the psychological effects that her coach’s belief has on her. However not all responses were positive, Sasha’s response revealed that although coaches may believe in an athlete, the belief an athlete may have within themselves may still differ. This is what Sasha expressed:

“He actually thinks that I’m such a good athlete that he encourages me that I will win, that I can win SA’s, but then it doesn’t happen. So he actually motivates me because he thinks I’m the best, but then I come 2nd or 3rd, so it doesn’t break the trust, but sometimes I think he’s not always realistic, because he’s so excited. So like when i take part, I will not think that I can win when he says I can win” (Sasha).

Sasha’s response may also connect belief and trust. She expressed that her coach believes in her however also stated that she does not believe she can win when he says she can, which creates a barrier in trusting what her coach says. According to Holt (2013) self-efficacy, or the athletes’ belief within themselves that he or she has the ability to organize and perform the actions to produce a specific goal, can enhance or hinder performances. However on the other hand, the athlete may believe in themselves but the coach might not believe in them, this is the perception of the athlete:

“Sometimes I feel like he doesn’t believe that I can achieve, I don’t know, maybe like that’s just the way it is, but there are often times I feel like that

and then other days I feel like it's not like the coach has my love for athletics, and then I also feel like I cannot tell him that” (Kriston).

Kriston’s perception revealed that her coach’s lack of belief in her according to her experiences may be due to the coach’s desire in athletics, stating that her coach’s love for athletics differs to hers; this connects belief with commitment desire. She continued on to state that she cannot speak to him about it, connecting back to trust.

Coaches need to realize that they have the ability to influence athletes’ belief in themselves as well as their perception of the coach. According to Holt (2013), coaches can build confidence and self-efficacy (belief) through vicarious experiences as well as through verbal persuasion, Holt continues to state that verbal persuasion by coaches may quickly produce increased feelings of self-efficacy by enhancing beliefs through positive suggestions.

Findings reveals that when coaches show belief towards their athletes’ abilities and talents, and motivate them to reach their potential or willing to do so much for them, that it makes athletes believe in themselves and motivates them to train harder, which facilitates positive psychological effects. However when coaches are not showing commitment or desire to develop athletes, they perceive it as coaches not having belief in them as an athlete, it also facilitates negative psychological effects. It was also found that participants struggle to believe in themselves even though their coaches believe in them. Connections were also found with belief and trust, commitment, and complementarity behaviours such as motivation. Thus in order for an athlete to believe in themselves and facilitate positive outcomes physically and psychologically, coaches need to believe in their athletes so that athletes can trust and believe in what the coach is saying and this can be done by showing desire and being committed to the athlete demonstrating

belief in the athlete, as well as by motivating the athlete by making them believe in themselves. This will help bring the relationship closer, and Philippe, et al, (2011) stated that reciprocal feelings form an important dimension regarding the quality of the relationship and, in turn, highlight the intensity of the bonds between a coach and an athlete. Holt (2013) also stated that meaningful and supportive coach-athlete relationship impacts how an athlete believes in themselves as well as their ability to perform in their respective competitions.

4.4.2 Commitment and Co-orientation

This section presents the theme of commitment and co-orientation as they pertain to the phenomenon described in this study. Commitment refers to the cognitive aspect of the coach-athlete relationship, and this is reflected in coaches' and athletes' long-term orientation towards the relationship, as well as intentions or thoughts to maintain a close relationship with each other over time (Thelwell, et al, 2016). According to Papaioannou, et al, (2014), co-orientation represents the level of understanding and similarity between the athlete and coach with regards to closeness, commitment, and complementarity.

For the purpose of this study commitment provides insight into the athlete-coach relationship regarding athletes' long-term orientation towards athletics and their relationship as well as their perception and thoughts on whether they feel their coach is committed towards them and the relationship. Co-orientation was used to present athletes' direct and meta-perspectives relating to commitment and its sub-categories within their relationships. Responses revealed positive and negative experiences. Participants' expressed their lived experiences and thoughts relating to having desire towards their sporting career and the relationship, as well as their

cognitive thoughts and meta-perspective on their coach's desire within the relationship which revealed differences among participants' views. Experiences relating to investment within their athlete-coach relationship was explained through direct perspectives of their own investment views showing how committed they are as well as revealing their meta-perspectives on their coach's investment and the lack thereof in the relationship. Experiences relating to going the extra mile in the relationship revealed responses relating to the sacrifices participants make towards their sport and the relationship, as well as revealing their different meta-perspectives on their coach's sacrificing for them as well as coaches not going the extra mile.

The following sub-themes emerged within commitment; desire, relationship investment, and sacrifice. Responses related to these sub-themes revealed the perceived long-term orientation within the relationship. Each sub-theme is presented with findings relating to commitment and the psychological effects experienced, following a discussion to understand the nature thereof within their relationships.



4.4.2.1. Desire

For the purpose of this study this sub-theme emerged showing responses relating to the desire for long-term orientation within the relationship and athletics. In relation to desire, meta-perspective responses revealed that coaches are passionate and fully committed, they display interest and desire to developing athletes' positively. There is an acknowledgment of goals and dreams and coaches showing desire by their actions or behaviours to help athletes' achieve their goals, connecting to complementarity. Participants' direct perspective was that they have a love for the sport, the passion and desire is so big that some said they don't think they will ever stop.

However results also revealed that some coaches lack desire towards the athlete and within the relationship. Psychological effects surfaced through experiences, feeling disappointed and frustrated.

The following discussion elaborates on participants' experiences and perspectives relating to desire within the relationship. The following are direct-perspectives towards the sport and participants meta-perspective responses of their coach's desire:

"He is very passionate about athletics" (Michell).

"He is fully in it" (Ashton).

"I love athletics so much I don't think I would ever stop" (Keishia).

Direct and meta-perspective responses from athletes revealed differences within the findings relating to the desire of being committed to the sport and the relationship. The lived experiences of participants' are discussed more in detail regarding desire and the differences amongst relationships, also expressing the psychological effects experienced, the following are participants responses

"Sometimes it feels like he only wants to give attention when you do well, then he will get to like you, most of the coaches are like that and it feels sometimes disappointing, because it feels like he's not that into it like you are. Your coach must like think the way you do, and want the same for you similar to what you want for yourself" (Serena).

“I expect that if you're a coach and you really love what you're doing, it should come naturally especially if it's a passion, I expect that at least if you're not going to make it, let us know in advance, give us a programme ahead. I remember there was a couple of times with him that I had to constantly remind him on what is required of me to do on a daily basis. This for me became a frustration where I was like I'm done trying.” (Janine).

Responses reveal a lack of desire and passion from coaches due to participants' responses, in addition to Janine, this relates to coaches not showing up to training nor giving programs, also coaches choosing to be somewhere else instead, this is what Jade and Kristin responded:

“Sometimes I wouldn't even see her in the week and she wouldn't even talk to me during the week or ask me how is training going? Sometimes I even have to ask her like, listen, what do I need to do today?” (Jade).

“He is there, however if something comes up he will rather choose to do that or be there instead” (Kriston).

Response revealed negative psychological effects of disappointment and frustration regarding the lack of coach's desire. Evidence proves how coaches' passion influences their athletes' perceptions of the quality of their relationship with their coach as well as how such a relationship affects athletes' subjective well-being (Lafrenière, et al, 2011). Kriston in addition also stated that after training with her coach for the first month, only then did he ask her about her athletic history. It was thus stated by Sandstrom (2012) that commitment has been found to be a component that helps growth and development in the relationship, stating that good

commitment has shown to permit greater flexibility whereas lack of commitment is attributed with lack of support, negative feedback, lack of common goals and communication problems. Hence why desire is important with regards to commitment in order to develop growth within the relationship as well as facilitate an effective relationship and not negatively affect the athlete because it was also said by Sandstrom (2012) that the termination of a relationship has been associated with lower levels of commitment, meaning that athletes may decide to leave the coach due to the lack of desire shown from the coach. On the other hand positive experiences and thoughts were also expressed by participants:

“He’s very committed to our training, like on a Monday and Tuesday we have to train on our own, because he has other things that he has to do, so after, at night on those two days he would ask us how it went or if there was any problems, which I feel is a good thing for a coach to do, because it shows he has interest in what we are doing” (Sarah).

“I think she has played a huge role in my personal development as a person. In the same way she takes athletics step by step, she takes things step by step with me as a person and that is really beneficial for the relationship. She really cares about my development” (Celeste).

“Definitely, he has passion because he feels like he reached his peak in athletics and now he wants to develop other athletes’ and he has been very passionate and shows basically how passionate he is” (Olivia).

Responses shared by participants revealed that their coaches are interested in their development, playing a huge role in their lives and also that the coach’s interest and passion is

displayed through their actions which connects to complementarity behaviours, because according to Maitland (2012) a harmonious passion for coaching positively predicted autonomy-supportive behaviours towards the athlete, which in turn predicted a high quality coach-athlete relationship. Findings revealed the importance of coaches having desire towards their athletes' development and to foster an effective committed relationship. Negative psychological effects are prominent when there is a lack of desire displayed by coaches, whereas positive psychological effects are elicited when coaches show interest, passion and have the desire to be committed to the athlete and the relationship.

4.4.2.2. Relationship Investment

The sub-theme relationship investment emerged due to the lived experiences shared by participants' regarding commitment. For the purpose of this study, relationship investment relates to athletes' and coaches investing into their relationship from the athletes' perspective. Results revealed that coaches are invested not only in the athletic aspect of the relationship, but also in athletes' personal life. However negative results were found when participants mentioned that their coaches do not invest time and effort to improve or achieve goals, allowing these participants to feel disappointed and discouraged.

The following discussion elaborates on participants' lived experiences regarding investment as well as their cognitive thoughts on commitment within their relationships. Responses from participants revealed differences within their relationships relating to investment and being committed, this is what they shared:

“I do feel that he is positively invested and mostly just the way he is at training every single day for us, he works out a different program for each of us and comes to all our races, he listens to us and have these conversations with us where we tell him what we want to achieve and he works out a plan for us to get there, and when we do get there he celebrates with us” (Keishia).

“I would say yes he is invested definitely because when he took on the responsibility to coach he immediately drew up his own program, he changed things completely, he made it his own. He also shares articles with us, like if there is something interesting on Facebook about athletics he will tag us to read the article” (Olivia).

Findings reveal coaches investing in the athletes’ development and strengthening the athlete-coach relationship by showing that they are committed to the athlete. In addition, it was also revealed that there is a connection between investing and desire relating to commitment, see response below:

“I do think that he is completely invested. He already told me that he wants to see me next year. He says that he knows that I am going to be South African champion in especially my hammer throw. He even went as far as giving me extra books and things on technique and you know different types of weight training and things like that. So he is like truly committed to my development, he is also fully present at training. So he is fully in it” (Ashton).

Participants indicated by their responses that coaches are not only invested and interested in athletes' goals but also on improving their athletic ability by doing research and providing information and feedback to develop the athlete which facilitates an effective relationship. It was also revealed that coaches show relationship investment through their actions and behaviours; this connects to complementarity behaviours, meaning that athletes can perceive a coach to be invested by their behaviours of being committed, also that these behaviours can motivate the athlete to perform and show the coach that they are committed as well. A response by Olivia confirms the above, this is what Olivia said: *“His effort makes me appreciate, he makes me want to perform, to show him as well that I am with you in this”*. The last connection revealed was revealed by Ashton, showing that coaches having the desire to commit will promote coaches investing into the relationship and the development of the athlete.

With that being said, there were also negative experiences revealed and elaborated on the topic of relationship investment, this was participants responses:

“He is not always there because perhaps it's his passion but I don't think he is like 100% there all the time” (Kelly).

“My coach often does not come to training because she is more involved in the school. She coaches at another school so now I think we are more of a part time ‘thing’ for her that's why we only see her twice a week. So whenever she is not there we feel like disappointed and then thinking she probably just left us for them” (Kim).

In addition to the above, participants also shared negative experiences from previous coaches; an example of this is depicted in the following response:

“In the beginning I saw her 3 times a week, and she was always there. Then later on those sessions 3 times a week became less. There were times I saw her once a week. Sometimes I wouldn't even see her in the week and she wouldn't even talk to me during the week or ask me how training was going. I'm here trying to qualify for Olympics and she is just not part of that or trying to get me there. It felt like she was holding me back because I didn't put in as much as I could have. I need that someone to help me”
(Jade).

The findings reveal participants feeling disappointed due to coaches not fully investing in the relationship, a connection was also made to the passion/desire that coaches lack to commit causing the lack of investment in the relationship and development. In addition it was also found that athletes have expectations of coaches, this is what Janine said: *“I am expecting more coaching from him, but so far I have not seen anything yet”*. Participants also mentioned about their priorities being different with coaches, where the athlete wants to do well, however coaches are too busy with other work. However some participants’ indicated that they have understanding even though they want coaches to be more invested. This revealed a connection between commitment relationship investment and complementarity understanding. Previous relationship was also discussed where participants at one point had a good relationship with their previous coaches and the coach was invested in the beginning of their relationship, however that there was a shift of which unfortunately went downhill from there. Jade mentioned that her coach had other responsibilities of which her coach gets paid more for outside of athletics, thus why Jade felt that she couldn’t expect or demand more from her coach. Jade expressed that due it led her to changing coaches. It is thus said in literature that a high level of dedication for sport and

training is necessary for peak performance, that without a great degree of responsibility from both coaches and athletes, the relationship remains ineffective and no successes can be achieved (Trzaskoma-Bicsérdy, Bognár, et al, 2007).

The above responses from athletes' indicate the importance of being committed and investing into athletes' development, it could affect their psychological state which in turn could affect their performance. According to Caramanico (2011), if mental skills are not taught and employed, physical improvement will eventually plateau and/or drop off, and in addition to physiological factors which has the ability to negatively affect performance, there are several psychological factors that have similar negative effects on athletes such as anxiety, nerves, poor concentration, and self-doubt, and so forth. The perception due to responses is that coaches that are neither investing nor showing interest/desire towards their athletes could facilitate the athlete to drop the coach or worse the sport. Coaches need to realize the importance of relationship investment by committing to the athlete and the relationship in order to facilitate a positive effective relationship.



4.4.2.3. Sacrifice

This sub-theme emerged due to responses from participants, explaining the sacrifices their coaches make for them or their coaches going the extra mile, also revealing the sacrifices athletes make. However responses also indicated coaches only doing the bare minimum or not sacrificing at all. The results also presented the effect sacrificing may have on these athletes especially regarding their cognitive thoughts on commitment, as well as the psychological effects on the relationship and performance. Even though some participants mentioned that coaches

balance their time well, other participants mentioned that their coaches struggle to balance or find time for them, nor giving up anything for them' or receiving any extra effort beside the bare minimum, if any at all. The following elaborates on athletes' lived experiences regarding sacrificing within the relationship as well as their cognitive thoughts on commitment.

Responses from participants revealed differences within their relationships regarding sacrifice. The following are responses shared:

“He was really sick at one stage, and he never wanted to tell us because he didn't want us to get upset. In this time he always sent us a program when he couldn't be here. He even showed up here when he shouldn't have been here, he was so committed to watch us running a race that he wouldn't stay away even for his health. Also the way he comes on Saturdays and Sundays, bringing his family with, training us in his family time and so forth. So there is no one more committed. Nothing is ever too much struggle for him. So he goes the extra mile and more” (Keishia).

“Sometimes if I have a late class or my classes run late, he would come normal time as scheduled and he would be there waiting for me. There are days where he would even take me to the gym when I can't go by myself, so he does put in a lot of effort into my training sessions” (Ashton).

“He takes time out from his personal time to coach us even on public holidays, and weekends he takes us to the gym. I would say that he sacrifices a lot to be with us and we don't even pay him. I think that takes a lot of

sacrifice to come from your house to coach every single day six days a week it's a lot of sacrifice” (Michell).

In addition, Olivia also mentioned the psychological effect it has on her:

“It makes you feel more positive and it also makes you excited actually for the next season” (Olivia).

Keishia shared that her coach is more than just a coach, that her coach goes the extra mile even when sick. Showing that he really is committed to her by the sacrifices he makes, not only for competitions but for training as well during his personal time. Keishia also shared her direct-perspective of the sacrifices she herself makes, this is what she said: *“Most other students don't necessarily understand that I have to train twice a day sometimes for two hours or why I can't go out or why I have to go sleep at 10pm because I am so tired”*. Keishia indicates her sacrifices toward her athletic development and being there when needed by her coach to train. Ashton also stated that even when she is late for training due to her classes, her coach will wait for her and that he does put in effort into her training sessions. Michell's response stated that her coach is not getting paid for coaching her that her coach is truly passionate and committed by sacrificing even money to see his athletes succeed and develop to the best they can be. Again the connection is evident in responses through desire and sacrifice, when coaches have the desire and passion, it facilitates sacrificing time and money for the athlete and relationship.

Olivia in addition also stated how her coach being committed and sacrificing for her affects her psychologically in a positive way. It is thus important for athletes to understand their own emotional state and what they need to do in order to achieve optimal performance on a regular basis because different emotions have different effects on different athletes (Caramanico,

2011). However there were also negative responses shared from participants regarding sacrificing, below is an example by Serena:

“He doesn't give a lot up for us, and because he is coaching us while his working. So no one is getting extra from him, like his family they still see him the same time, because he's coaching us during his working time. So there is nothing he is really giving up for us” (Serena).

Serena indicated that her coach is not giving up anything for her or the team, no one is receiving extra from him. She continued to mention that her coach trains them in his working time, so he is not really giving up anything for her and her fellow athletes. In relation Janine also mentioned that her coach does try to sacrifice and be committed however that he is struggling to balance everything out, stating that he gets involved in so many things that he gets stuck with having too much on his plate. It was stated by Woolimans (2015) that the delivery of poor coaching or an absence of coaching will have a detrimental effect on participation numbers and will lead to poor sporting experiences

Responses from athletes indicate that when coaches are sacrificing their time for their athletes' it has a positive effect, it also shows a connection between commitment and complementarity due to behaviours of commitment and sacrificing which in turn is perceived by the athlete to believe that their coach is committed, this facilitates an effective relationship to achieve success. Responses also revealed that despite working a full time job, the coach can find the balance and still be committed to their athletes by sacrificing the time and going the extra mile to show their athletes that despite working, that they are still committed to them. A long-term orientation toward an interdependent relationship appear to be important within the

coaching process, research has demonstrated an association between the number of coaching sessions received by the athlete and better quality coaching relationships, also that commitment is shown to be associated with better performances and higher levels of satisfaction (Jowett, Kanakoglou, et al, 2012).

4.4.3 Complementarity and Co-orientation

This section presents the theme of complementarity such as behaviours, as well as the co-orientation responses from participants pertaining to the phenomenon described. Complementarity according to Thelwell, et al, (2016), represents the behavioural aspect of the coach-athlete relationship with regards to coaches' and athletes' levels of cooperation, these include corresponding behaviours and whether athletes and coaches are comfortable in each other's presence, as well as reciprocal behaviours which relates to roles and tasks and being able to direct and on the other hand execute them. It was also stated that complementarity captures the degree to which coaches' and athletes' affiliation emerges through what each relationship member does in relation to the other, such as during practice (Olympiou, et al, 2008). In terms of co-orientation the direct perspective assess an athlete's personal view of the relationship in terms of the 3 Cs, while meta-perceptions or perspectives assess an athlete's judgment of how the other or coach thinks of the relationship in terms of the 3 Cs (Olympiou, et al, 2008).

The following sub-themes emerged within complementarity; motivation, support, understanding, and roles and tasks. Participants' experiences revealed responses relating to motivation within the athlete-coach dyad due to behavioural aspects of motivating the athlete and the lack thereof displayed as well as the effects. Participants direct perspectives explained the

support they have for their coach's within the relationship as well as their meta-perspective of their coach's support for them which showed differences among participants' responses. The athlete-coach relationship was explored through experiences of athletes relating to understanding, participants' responses revealed their perspectives on whether they understand their coach as well as their views on their coach understanding them. Results also revealed experiences on authority and acceptance of roles and following through of tasks given.

The following sub-themes is presented with findings regarding complementarity and the psychological effects experienced to understand the nature of the athlete-coach relationship regarding complementarity.

4.4.3.1 Motivation

According to Wilkerson, et al, (2014) successful student athletes are motivated by their coaches, parents, as well as their own selves. For the purpose of this study, this sub-theme emerged presenting responses from participants that relates to motivation experienced within the relationship due to behavioural aspects.

Participants revealed that their coaches are always encouraging them to be the best they can be and to never give up no matter what. It was also found that coaches not only motivate participants in athletics but also in their personal life. Direct perspectives revealed that participants are always trying to stay self-motivated even when down, which actually makes them stronger. The psychological effects revealed participants feeling more positive, confident and focused, as well as increasing mental toughness. Responses also revealed improvements in

performance, doing personal bests in events. However it was also found that negative feedback from coaches, breaking the participants down, or telling them they won't do well in competitions, also saying if the participant competes, the coach will not coach her anymore. This led participants to not finish their event or actually drop out of event due to feeling psychologically hurt and betrayed, demotivated, frustrated and just negative emotionally.

The following discussion elaborates on athletes' experiences and perspectives relating to motivation within the athlete-coach dyad. These are the meta-perspectives of participants regarding their coaches:

"He is very motivating and very encouraging" (Michell).

"He just keeps on motivating me and even my personal life and if something happens he just tells you to look forward" (Keishia).

In addition, participants direct perspectives regarding motivation:

"I think I am more self-driven, self-motivated towards training, however not always, not all the time, most of the time." (Kim).

"I always find ways to build myself mentally. I always try different tactics and stuff like that, and some of the things that break me make me even stronger, so I could say that I am getting there" (Janine).

Responses above relate to positive motivational experiences and perspectives where participants mention that their coaches are motivators, as well as responses from participants relating to being self-motivated. In what manner coaches motivate is often dependent on the

athlete's perception of their relationship with their coach and this perception can affect an athlete's motivation to compete (Wilkerson, et al, 2014). In relation, Holt (2013) mentioned that motivation is a driving force behind the success of an athlete.

Responses allowed insight into these participants' perspectives of their coaches and themselves regarding motivation within themselves and their relationships. The lived experiences of participants are presented and discussed more in detail relating to motivation. The psychological effects experienced are also presented within the findings. These are participants lived experiences:

“Psychologically it helped me a lot, especially when it comes to competitions, and actually concentrate on my event and also my performance. He allowed me to get to that point and also psychologically to be strong and to be more confident in what I do especially when it comes to athletics” (Ashton).

“I think he definitely did influence my performance positively because when he is very encouraging, it affects our relationship in a very positive way, it strengthens our relationship basically. He would also encourage me personally, for example; he wants me to complete my studies as well” (Michell).

In relation to participants being motivated by their coaches and feeling motivated themselves, Kelly describes the way it makes her feel when her coach continually motivates her:

“I feel good when I know that okay I can do it and I feel good about it. There are even days when I feel I don't want to train or I want to quit athletics, then he will always say but don't, you still have potential or don't give up, you have gone through a lot” (Kelly).

The following responses explain how participants' coaches do not demotivate participants or focus on winning:

“He is very good at encouraging all athletes in our training group. He doesn't try and break you down by what you are doing in your training. If he had to tell you why are you letting her win you, or you must run faster, I would feel negative towards training I wouldn't want to come to training, however he doesn't do that, he helps us to do better in what we are doing” (Sarah).

“I think what's also maybe good psychologically regarding my confidence is that he's not focused on performance, like in terms of what placing I get, he's only focused on personal best. So if you come last in your race, but it's your personal best, he will be so excited about it. So it took a lot of pressure off from all of us as his athletes” (Sasha).

Participants shared experiences regarding how their coaches motivate them and how psychologically it makes them feel positive and confident. It was stated that coaches can enhance an athlete's motivation and competence to gain positive outcomes in performance, enjoyment, self-esteem as well as ability, also that positive and informational feedback from coaches is significantly related to the perceptions of competence, enjoyment and intrinsic motivation of

athletes (Holt, 2013). Intrinsic motivation is based on inherent satisfactions that an athlete enjoys without feeling the pressure of a possible consequence, or the natural human tendency to enjoy what they are doing (Baldrige, 2015). It was also found that coaches motivate their athletes and have the same goals as the athlete which allows them to work better together. Literature confirms this because athletes react best to coaches with similar personality traits and similar motivational orientations to theirs (Baldrige, 2015). Participants also mentioned that the motivation of their coaches allows them to keep going and pushing forward and according to Holt (2013) an improved relationship due to effective coaching behaviours leads to positive outcomes for athletes and this includes better performances, more enjoyment, a higher perceived ability, increased confidence and greater self-efficacy in athletes. In addition, positive behaviours displayed by coaches are those behaviours that are supportive and emotionally composed such as a coach recognizing an athlete's improvements in their physical appearance after coming back from training in the off-season (Coykendall, 2014).

It was also stated by participants that their coaches provide positive feedback and focus on personal best instead of winning. Coaches who provide positive and informational feedback not only improves an athlete's competence, enjoyment and motivation, but is also crucial for athletes continued participation and improved performances, thus creating a stronger desire and effort in achieving challenging and mastery experiences in athletes (Holt, 2013). Sasha stated that psychologically it is good for her confidence when her coach focuses on her personal best because this according to Sasha takes the pressure off her as an athlete. An aspect of the relationship an athlete has with his or her coach is dependent on whether or not the coach uses a model of perfectionism of which is strongly related to athlete dropout, if coaches focus so much

on being “perfect” an athlete will dwell on their faults instead of their successes (Coykendall, 2014).

Although the above experiences seem to be stirring in the positive direction, there were also negative responses from participants that allow us to see the diverse athlete-coach relationships and how different each relationship may be or how these athletes perceive a certain action or behaviour to affect their views of their coach and relationship. The following are participant’s negative experiences relating to motivation:

“I was selected for the team for world champs and I was feeling ready, my injury was gone, and she said no, I can’t go. I said but what if I really feel that I am ready, she said then I am not going to coach you anymore. That was quite a sore spot. I felt betrayed and felt she didn’t want the best for me, she was restricting me from my passion completely and I didn’t think that was necessary. I was very frustrated. They then went away to world champs and then I was like, now I am going to prove myself, so I trained very hard when they were gone. I don’t think I have ever trained that hard and it was actually very good. When they came back I was in very good shape. I wanted to prove her wrong” (Celeste).

“I told myself that it's fine, whether I have a good relationship with him or I don't have a relationship with him, if I have a reason behind what I'm doing then I can be able to conquer it. So for me it was like I don't really need him. I can do this on my own, but at the same time I need that person that will

guide me, that will be there to show me a way, so that's one of the reasons why he's there, so it's just one of the things” (Janine).

Jade mentioned that it frustrated her because at the end of every year she tells herself she is going to put in everything and that she is motivated at the beginning of each year, however that it only last for two weeks and then she can't anymore. Jade stated that it's the role of a coach to motivate your athlete and to work with her. When coaches consider athletes opinions in sport and acknowledge their feelings, athlete's motivation increases and thus also influence sport performance (Holt, 2013). It was also found that participants experienced negative feedback with regards to participants being forced not to compete or coaches saying they were not ready, even coaches threatening participants that they will leave if the participant competes, this demotivated participants. Literature states that when coaches believe certain athletes will perform poorly, they are likely to send messages of mistrust, emphasize mistakes and ignore the successes of these athletes, these behaviours of coaches will thus weaken an athletes' confidence in their ability, thwarting their need for competence and, in turn, their motivation (Mageau, et al, 2003). In addition Holt (2013) mentioned that if an athlete's interpersonal relationship is affecting their self-efficacy and motivation in a negative way, then performance may suffer. However Celeste stated that yes she felt like her coach was restricting her from her passion which resulted in her being psychologically frustrated, but that it actually motivated her to prove to herself and her coach. This revealed that athletes can take negative feedback and turn it into motivation to perform. However having positive side effects relating to abusive coaching behaviour does not make abuse acceptable, however some athletes may be able to cope with abusive coaching and still have some positive outcomes (Roxas & Ridlinger, 2016). Participants are however self-driven and motivated to achieve despite the hurt or frustration due to the lack of interest or

motivation from coaches, it is said that individuals whose motivation are self-determined, or are intrinsically motivated, will behave in a way that relates to their own values (Holt, 2013). In addition, coaches, parents, as well as teachers can enhance one's intrinsic motivation by respecting one's independence, building autonomy, providing support, and by giving advice (Baldrige, 2015).

It was also found that coaches are not always present at events or training which demotivates participants and it does state in literature that when coaches are perceived as involved and supportive, athletes' attain a higher positive form of motivation (Holt, 2013). Also it was found that participants experienced coaches distracting rather than motivating them, this demotivates the athlete making them loss focus and according to literature negative behaviours that coaches can exhibit are ones that are "distractive and disruptive" for example, a coach ridiculing and making an athlete feel awkward when he or she is working out (Coykendall, 2014). However Janine stated that she knows when to put a stop to him and already knows when to ignore him so that her coach can focus.



According to Roxas and Ridinger (2016), there has been a lack of specific emphasis on the relationships of coaching behaviours to student-athlete well-being even though that research has related coaching behaviours to a wide range of outcome measures, including intrinsic motivation and psychological well-being. In order to deal with every athlete a coach must realize the different ways to motivate on both competition day and during practice settings, understanding the unique attributes every athlete processes, how their behaviours may affect athlete burnout, and how to best develop leadership amongst their athletes (Coykendaal, 2014).



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4.4.3.2 Support

A study conducted by Ward (2014) showed that Athletes believed that relationships can be maintained through having coaches making frequent contact with their athletes and having them for emotional support for both in and outside the sporting context. Thus for the purpose of this study, this sub-theme emerged presenting responses from participants that relates to support experienced within the relationship in terms of complementarity behaviours.

Participants mentioned that their coaches are always there when they need them, that they can rely on their coaches at any time. It was also revealed that coaches are supportive through injuries, setbacks, failures and personal well-being. It was also found that coaches are also supportive outside athletics and that participants are able to talk to their coaches when needing advice or support. Thus an interconnection is formed between closeness (trust) and complementarity (support). This according to participants makes them feel psychologically more positive knowing that their coach supports them as an athlete on and off the field. It was also revealed that even though the relationship has its faults, that their coaches are still supportive. The following presented are athletes lived experiences as well as the psychological effects describing the impact support has on these participants.

The following discussion will elaborate on athletes' experiences and perspectives regarding support within the relationship. These are the meta-perspective responses from athletes regarding their coaches:

“He has been coaching me for two years and in that two years a lot has happened like injuries and setbacks and failures etc, and he has always been there to help out because that's the type of person he is” (Kelly).

“He's always there. Like 24/7 he will be there. So I can talk to him any time” (Jade).

“I went through quite a few things in these few years, three years and he has always been the one that I went to for advice” (Keishia).

“He is always looking out for my personal well-being” (Michell).

Kelly the 400m athlete stated that she has been coached for two years and that her coach has always been supportive and helped her out through injuries, setbacks and failures. Jade and Keishia in addition to having support from their coaches, it was mentioned that they can also talk to their coaches and asking for advice, that their coaches are always there for them. Michell added on and shared that her coach is always looking out for her personal well-being, meaning that not only is her coach supportive in athletics but also her personal life and well-being. It is stated that coaches need to show that they care for their athletes and athletes should be able to contact their coaches at any time and place (Ward, 2014). Responses also show a connection between trust and support, it may be said that when coaches are supportive it allows athletes to be more open and trusting of the coach.

The lived experiences of these athletes are presented and discussed more in detail relating to support. The differences in responses amongst athletes are also presented along with the psychological effects experienced which presented the diversity within athlete-coach relationships. These are the lived experiences shared by participants:

“I can always like rely on him, like he gets me to the airport, he will be there to pick me up from the airport, he will take my things like when I have

to leave, he also never lets us walk home, like he always drops us off first. If we need to be somewhere, he will come and pick me up to take me there. So if I really needed him, I trust that he will always be there for me” (Nina).

“Overall she has played a big role in my personal development and has been there for me. It makes me feel empowered because she has interest in my personal development. Regarding athletic, she has supported me. When I was injured, she called after I have been to the doctor, or knowing when I have to go to the doctor etc. She also communicated to the doctor to know what’s going on and how she could incorporate things to start getting me back on the track” (Celeste).

Participants were asked to elaborate on their experiences regarding support within their relationships. Findings revealed coaches showing support not only in athletics but also personal life. Nina also stated that if she really needs him, that she trusts that he will always be there for her. This again shows the connection between trust and support, in other words when coaches show supportive behaviours it draws athletes closer and allows them to be open. An effective coach tends to use positive, autonomy-building strategies to nurture a supportive relationship with an athlete or amongst the team, to teach specific strategies for the transfer of skills from sport to life, as well as to nurture athlete development using a challenging but supportive approach (Roxas & Ridinger, 2016). Celeste also stated that her coach being supportive makes her feel empowered for the fact that her coach is interested in her personal development especially after injuries. Positive behaviours displayed from a coach are known as being supportive and emotionally composed, such as a coach recognizing an athlete’s improvements in their physical appearance after coming back from training in the off-season (Coykendall, 2014).

In addition, the way coaches and athletes interact, relate to one another, and communicate with each other can have a substantial impact upon the success of the athlete (Coykendall, 2014). Thus supportive behaviours displayed from coaches can facilitate a closer relationship with positive psychological effects and promote an effective athlete-coach relationship thus improving performance.

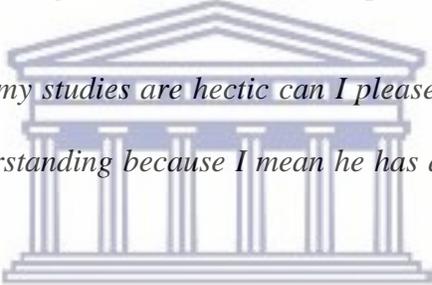
4.4.3.3 Understanding

Effective relationships are characterized by emphatic understanding, which captures how a relationship member can understand the other member's feelings, thoughts, and behaviours (Sandstrom, 2012). For the purpose of this study, this sub-theme emerged presenting responses from participants that relates to understanding within their relationships and their lived experiences. Psychological effects are also presented describing the effect understanding can have on athletes.

It was found that coaches understand when participants have a busy schedule, with studies, and injuries. It was also found that coaches understand and know their athletes well and when to push them hard. Participants said that their coaches are considerate and understanding and listens to them when they share anything with their coaches which actually allows the athletes to open up which interconnects closeness (trust) and complementarity (understanding). It was also found that coaches understand not only athletic related concerns, but also within these participants personal life. However some participants also revealed negative responses relating to understanding, participants stated that when something is wrong or they are injured, in pain, or going through something, that it is ignored by the coach and not understood, still pushing them to

train hard or forcing to compete when ill. Participants also revealed experiences with previous coaches stating that what previous coaches lacked was understanding athletes, especially in terms of goals, thus coaches not showing commitment to achieve goals. This connects the lack of understanding (complementarity) causing the lack of commitment, thus participants leaving coach.

The following discussion elaborates on athletes' experiences and perspectives relating to understanding displayed from their coaches and whether they understand their coaches. The direct and meta-perspectives of co-orientation responses are displayed. These are participants' positive expressions of understanding within their relationships:



“I could tell him that my studies are hectic can I please take a break from training, so he is understanding because I mean he has also been a student before” (Olivia).

“Like the things that happen to me at home, it gets a lot into my athletics, that's one of the reasons why I wanted to give up. My mother and I do not get along well. She is always verbal abusing me, so then I wanted to stop athletics, However my coach started to understand my circumstances and he tried to motivate me, so I think he understands where I come from and he tries to work it in with the training. Sometimes he will say okay no, we'll go easy today or so, so he understands” (Serena).

“I think we have a good understanding, like if I have to tell him we're doing a programme and I tell him okay my hamstring is not feeling so good, then he would tell me okay, you can do the 80m, but do it slower. So he

understands that there is a problem, but he won't push me to go faster if he knows something could happen to me. I think it's a mutual thing between us because if I don't feel comfortable with something or I don't think we can, we raise our opinions to him, most of the times he considers what we are saying” (Sarah).

In addition, Sarah continued by comparing her previous coach to her current coach:

“I think my ex-coach, like if you would tell him something is wrong, he just basically would just ignore you, you must just go on with your training and not understand” (Sarah).

Participants shared their positive lived experiences regarding their relationship with their coaches and understanding. It was found that coaches display understanding through injuries, when athletes’ cannot make training, as well as in athletes’ personal lives. It was stated that coaches and athletes should be equipped with understanding of the role, significance, and substance of the dyadic relationship, as well as with knowledge of relational, communication, and interpersonal skills, because it is vital as the relationships they are forming with their clients (Jowett, Kanakoglou, & Passmore, 2012). It was also found that coaches listen and considers athletes opinions and that there are mutual understanding within relationships

Serena opened up and mentioned that her mother and she do not get along well at home, that she is verbal abusing Serena at home. Serena stated that it gets involved with her athletics and that it is one of the reasons Serena wanted to give up and stop athletics. However, Serena stated that her coach started to understand her circumstances and understand where she comes from. She stated that her coach tries to motivate her and tries to work with it in training. This

reveals a connection between trust, understanding, and motivation, meaning that when coaches show understanding, athletes feel comfortable to open up, which also motivates the athlete to push at training. Sarah on the other hand compared her previous coach to her current coach, stating that her previous coach lacked understanding and always ignored her opinions and wouldn't consider, this promoted Sarah to leave and stated that her current coach shows understanding. There are also participants whom cannot understand their coaches or feel misunderstood. The following are examples of this:

“I wouldn't say complete understanding, because like he is a male. So when it's like that time of the month (menstrual cycle), like he doesn't understand, I don't have like that relationship with him where I can tell him it's that time of the month. So like he doesn't know and I don't think he knows it could be that, but like he doesn't ask me what's wrong when training. Like I don't understand always like how he does things” (Kriston).

“When they told me that I'm in the team for the African Games and that it's going to be in Congo in September, I said I'm not ready. However as much as he is my coach he could see that I've been having problems with injuries and that I haven't yet adapted to his programme and everything like that, I needed a bit of time, you know. So I thought it's quite a good decision to probably hear it from him first before I could make that decision, but for him it was, why do you do that? Can't you just go there for fun, for experience? Or you're losing a lot of money. You understand things like that, so no there was no understanding. I think we normally get along for like a week or two and then go back again” (Janine).

The responses above from athletes were expressions and experiences of feeling misunderstood or difficulty in understanding their coaches. Kriston stated according to her perception that there isn't complete understanding due to the fact that her coach is male. Kriston stated this because when she is on her menstrual cycle she stated that he does not understand, she says that she does not have a relationship with her coach where she can openly speak to him about her menstrual cycle. This connects trust with understanding showing that the lack of communication creates a lack of understanding perceived by the participant. In addition to Kriston, Janine also mentioned that her coach lack understanding also that she struggles to understand how her coach thinks or does things, also stating that they might get along but that it never usually lasts.

Communication is thus important in understanding one another in the athlete-coach relationship, it is however found that coaches of individual sports may have greater empathic accuracy compared to coaches of team sports suggesting that coaches of individual sports may have a greater cognitive understanding of their athletes than coaches of team sports (Navarre, 2011). In addition, significant others allow for an innate closeness through communication, which thus enables the athlete's relationship to be a positive influence on motivation as well as performance (Holt, 2013).

4.4.3.4 Roles and Tasks

For the purpose of this study, this sub-theme emerged presenting responses from participants that relate to the roles of the coach and athlete within the relationship as well as the delegated tasks and how the dyad is co-orientated regarding authority.

The findings presented are athletes lived experiences regarding roles and tasks within the relationship. The psychological effects are also presented which describes the effect different roles and tasks may have on these athletes. Participants referred to their coach as knowing better in terms of roles. In terms of tasks given, some participants were able to have coaches physically demonstrate certain techniques or drills. It was also found that coaches delegate tasks to athletes when they are not able to be with at training, athletes are then tested the next day to make sure that they have done the tasks or programs given. However it was also revealed that some coaches handle things differently with their athletes.

The following discussion elaborates on athletes' experiences and their direct and meta-perspectives relating to roles and tasks within the relationship:

“He is my coach, so obviously I know that he knows better” (Keishia)

“With him it was ‘we’re all adults’ that was his words to me. That we’re all individuals, do your thing I’ll do my thing” (Janine)

“We fight a lot but that’s because we are very opinionated” (Michell)

Regarding roles and tasks, the brief responses show diversity within the relationships. Keishia stated that she knows that her coach knows better because he is her coach after all. On the other hand Janine mentioned that her coach told her that they are all adults and individuals, that they should do their own thing and so will he. Lastly Michell mentioned that her coach and her fight a lot, however that it’s because they are both very opinionated. According to research at the elite level of intercollegiate athletics, coaches have the power over student-athletes’ lives that far exceeds the mechanics of practicing and competing in a sport, a coach’s power over their

athletes can extend to virtually all aspects of a student-athlete's life, in such ways that clear boundaries are hard to delineate (Brake & Nelson, 2012). The following discussion are responses from athletes' that are more in depth as they shared their experiences and perspectives regarding power/authority relating to roles and delegation of tasks, these are the responses of athletes':

“He works with me towards my goals. He said he works for me, so it makes it easier if you work with him and then well, if you work together and not like okay I'm the boss and you do what I say. Well he's open to anything. He said if I see something, then I should share it with him so I should also do my part of research and if I pick something up that works, or if I see something then we can try it and if it works and then we stick with it.”

(Jade).

In addition to participants stating that coaches are in mutual agreement to working together with their athletes and not being the only one in control, below Ashton mentioned how she delegates tasks to her coach:

“I actually got my coach to the point of him actually physically showing me what to do in training. I would take the shot putt and let him show me what to do, it really does work. So I have got him to that point. Also if I have an idea or if I want to do something or try something in a certain way, he will allow me to do it and vice versa. Like if he gives me advice I will try it, but no he is not like ‘I know the best’, he is willing to learn from me as well.”

(Ashton).

“Sometimes the next day when we come to training, he will test you to see if you did the previous program, because he will ask you how did it go, what did you feel when you were doing that, your times and things like that. If you give him the wrong times, he will know because the previous week he would have taken your times and then this week you give a totally different one”
(Sarah).

The above response by Sarah shows that the coach delegates task and actually tests her and other athletes which coach also mean that her coach wants to make sure that he gets to improved physical results. Below a response by Sasha explains her task-orientated coach and his wife whom is Sasha’s assistant coach is more people orientated

“You know I think sometimes he's very task orientated. So like he says something like straightforward, so I think sometimes he can offend people, because if someone ask him something, he will just put it straight, but then his wife is more people orientated. So they are like the perfect combination, so I know to which one I must go if I want to talk about certain things”
(Sasha).

In addition to Sasha this is what Michell similarly expressed:

“I would negotiate training with him sometimes and sometimes he wouldn't agree and sometimes he would agree. I think he does take it into consideration but he is very set on what he wants to do but he will consider

my negotiating with him. He wouldn't like just say no this is how things are, he considers what I say but he still sticks to what he knows best" (Michell).

Athletes were asked to elaborate on the roles and tasks within their relationship. Athletes shared their lived experiences explaining power roles and delegation of tasks. Research has confirmed that, for many athletes, their identity and sense of self is seen through their participation in sport and therefore, coaches should take great care in their athlete-coach relationships and respect the power and effect they can have on the personal development of their athletes (Navarre, 2011). In addition, according to Jowett and Shanmugam (2016) within the athlete-coach relationship, the coach is usually the experienced one and the athlete is commonly the inexperienced one whom requires the encouragement to take on new challenges, and the support and guidance to deal with challenges in the face of adversity. With that being said, Jowett and Shanmugam (2016) also mentioned that the coach's effective execution of his or her role (how does the coach coach?) as well as experience, reputation, and qualifications, may be far more important for athletes than his/her coach's personality and its manifestations (what is a coach's personality?) especially when it comes to evaluating the quality of the relationship. It was also revealed that coaches are also willing to learn from their athletes and allow them to take charge and work together as a team to achieve goals and vice versa. Every so often an athlete's opinion comes secondary to coaching, however in order to create a more coachable climate, coaches must be willing to give their athletes a voice, because a respectable coach must be able to trust their athletes' opinions and allow themselves to be vulnerable to transferring authority or delegating tasks to their athletes and other coaching staff (Spring, 2015).

It was also found that participants are not able to speak to their training partners at competitions, only at training, because at competitions they are enemies and that their coaches

watch their every move. This however to participants is a bit tough for them to handle, but they also mentioned that they understand because they know their coach knows best and keeps them psychologically focussed on event. This elicits and interconnection between understanding and roles and tasks within complementarity behaviours. Jowett and Shanmugam (2016) mentioned that athletes, specifically female athletes, may also feel that as subordinates that their role is to follow, understand and accept coaches' instructions, opinions and feedback. The few negative responses revealed that both parties are opinionated and end up fighting a lot and struggling to agree on certain tasks. A participant also mentioned that her coach mentioned to her that her and fellow athletes should do their own thing and so will he, which psychologically hurt and demotivated the participant which she then felt that she will have to take on the role of a coach as well and do it for herself, stating that her coach is just there. It is thus important for coaches to understand their roles and be open to allowing athletes at University to work together with them and share knowledge to facilitate a more effective and successful relationship. The coach leadership role includes support, instruction, and guidance, and as such, positions coaches as a major influence on their athletes.

4.5 CHAPTER CONCLUSION

This chapter presented a discussion of the participants lived experiences of the athlete-coach relationship and the psychological effects relating to performance. Each finding was discussed in order to provide insight into the phenomenon of the athlete-coach relationship from the perspective of the athlete within closeness, commitment, and complementarity and presenting responses through co-orientation using direct and meta-perspectives of participants.

Responses from participants showed that all C's are inter-connected showing how important the interpersonal athlete-coach relationship is in having an effective relationship. With regards to closeness it was evident that it is important for coaches to develop a bond and foundation with athletes' that allows the relationship to be close in and out of sport, also facilitating better cognitive thoughts and complementarity behaviours. Commitment was found to be an important factor in athletes' cognitive thoughts of the relationship, it is thus important for coaches to have the desire in developing the athlete and constantly making sure that they are sacrificing and investing time in the athletes which will help in the development of the athlete as well as facilitating long-term commitment. Showing commitment was also found to connect to facilitating closeness and complementarity behaviours. With regards to complementarity, reciprocal behaviours was found to have a positive effect on the athlete, when athletes and coaches are communicating well demonstrating understanding, showing the athlete support, and motivating the athlete, it was found to improve performance and facilitate a closer relationship and it was connected to commitment. Being committed will elicit positive complementarity behaviours, ultimately promoting a successful athlete-coach relationship and representing the mutual interconnections that are present in the athlete and coach relationship.

The next chapter provides a summary of the findings which were discussed in this chapter, conclusions are then drawn from findings and recommendations for further research are presented.

CHAPTER 5

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 INTRODUCTION

The purpose and focus of this study was guided by the research question which was relating to performance in athletics and what female athletes face psychologically within the athlete-coach relationship. This study thesis is composed of five chapters.

Chapter One is comprised of a study background, introduction, as well as the motivation, aim, and objectives of this study. Chapter Two is a review of literature provided by the researcher which explored the athlete-coach relationship and its approaches and significance to study, whilst highlighting the quality and behaviours within the athlete-coach relationship, the role and influence of coaches along with leadership styles, following with effective and ineffective coaching. The positive and negative perceptions of emotional, psychological and performance effects was explored by athletes, ending off with an outline of the theoretical framework that was adopted in this study. Chapter Three is a detailed description of the adopted methodological considerations and approaches for this study, as well as the research design used. The selected approach used for this study was the qualitative approach method, this allowed the researcher to explore the lived experiences of female university athletes with regards to the athlete-coach relationship whilst investigating the psychological and performance effects thereof. Within Chapter Four, findings of this study's investigation are presented and discussed using the 3+1C's Model (Jowett, 2007) as a lens to interpret the findings of this study. An outline of

significant findings are presented for each theme with literature to substantiate findings, offering conclusions and recommendations with regards to the athlete-coach relationship.

The researcher made use of the qualitative approach and compiled interview questions (See Appendix B) relating to exploring the athlete-coach relationship and investigate psychological and performance effects. The 3+1C's Model by Jowett (2007) was used as a theoretical framework to guide the interview questions in order to obtain rich data. This study incorporated the 3C's (closeness, commitment, and complementarity) and interlinked the fourth C (co-orientation) with each of the 3C's. The three predetermined themes were as follows; closeness and co-orientation, commitment and co-orientation, and complementarity and co-orientation. Several themes became evident when exploring the relationship of which each was discussed, e.g. intimacy and likability within the the relationship from the athletes' perspective with regards to closeness, sacrifice and relationship investment displayed from coaches as perceived by athletes with regards to commitment, and understanding and supportive behaviours displayed by coaches perceived by athletes according to complementarity. These predetermined and sub-themes presented the lived experiences of female university track and field athletes and elicited psychological and performance effects along with discussions.

Chapter five will conclude the findings based on the data presented in Chapter Four according to Jowett's (2007) 3+1C's Model. When drawing conclusions it highlights the credibility of findings (Wise, 2011).

This study proposed a research question after the review of literature. Objectives of this study was then set out and explored to answer this study's research question. This is the research question of the study:

- Relating to performance in athletics, what are university female athletes facing psychologically within the athlete-coach relationship?

A thematic analysis was conducted to explore the nature of the data collected from participants by conducting semi-structured interviews, as well as to draw conclusions from data collected. The aim of this study was to investigate female university track and field athletes' lived experiences within the athlete-coach relationship in order to gather psychological effects relating to performance. The following objectives was developed in order to achieve the aim of this study, this was identified in Chapter One:

- To gather rich information pertaining to the interpersonal dynamics of the athlete-coach relationship by exploring participants personal lived experiences
- Investigate the psychological effects experienced by female university athletes' within the athlete-coach relationship
- Investigate the psychological influence the athlete-coach relationship has on female university athletes' athletic performances

The theoretical framework (3+1C's Model) was used in this chapter to present the summary of findings in order to allow the reader to gain insight into the athlete-coach relationship which relates to female university track and field athletes, and also understanding the psychological and performance effects that this dyad can incur.

5.2 SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

The participants of this study shared their lived experiences with regards to the athlete and coach relationship according to their perspective as an athlete. Their experiences was related to Closeness, Commitment, and Complementarity by linking each with Co-orientation (direct perspective and meta-perspective responses), this is the 3+1C's Model by Jowett (2007) that was used to gain insight into the interpersonal relationship. This specific model argues that the quality of the relationship between an athlete and a coach is formed through these four key constructs (Rhind, et.al, 2012). This allowed for responses relating to psychological effects as well as performance effects experienced within the athlete-coach relationship.

Results revealed the importance of closeness as defined in terms of the emotional tone athletes perceive to have with their coaches, commitment as perceived by athletes in terms of a partnership that is thought to be a lasting dyad, as well as willing and motivating, and complementarity behaviours in terms of understanding, roles and tasks, and support that athletes experienced from their coaches. Moreover, the reveal of assumed similarity (co-orientation) with regards to the athlete feeling co-orientated with their coach in the way they view the relationship (self-perception). The female track and field university athletes contributed tremendously to this study.

5.2.1 Closeness and Co-orientation

This theme underlined lived experiences relating to the affective meanings or feelings that the athlete assigned to the relationship. Closeness refers to the emotional tone of the athlete-

coach relationship which is found in their expressions of interpersonal liking and trust/respect for one another (Miller, et al, 2007). In addition, literature revealed that affective closeness was thought of as the foundation of the sporting partnership (Jowett & Shanmugam, 2016). For the purpose of this study, closeness and co-orientation was linked to represent data according to the theoretical framework.

Experiences with regards to closeness provided insight into understanding the relationship or the bond the athlete has with the coach in terms of their own personal and generic feelings eliciting psychological effects. These feelings according to Jowett and Cockerill (2003) appear to be influential in the development and effectiveness of the coach–athlete dyad. Participants were asked about their experiences and feelings relating to likability and intimacy, trust, belief, and respect within their athlete-coach relationship.

In terms of affective closeness and co-orientation, responses from participants revealed positive and negative experiences and feelings. In relation to likability and intimacy, participants revealed that they have a great bond and likability within the relationship, however some participants also revealed that there is no likability nor an intimate bond within the dyad. With the relationship, participants referred to their coaches as fatherly/motherly figures in their life, one participant revealed that she knows her university coach from a young age hence why she refers to her coach as a fatherly figure. However according to Papaioannou and Hackfort (2014), they stated that whether an athlete and a coach stay in an athletic relationship for ten years or not is not the issue, it is about coaches and athletes investing time, energy, and effort if they want to enjoy the benefits of an effective relationship. For example, one participant mentioned that she immediately liked her coach with the initial meeting and felt psychologically comfortable with her coach within the first month of training. It was also stated that co-orientation typically

increases during the initial phase of relationships as individuals get to know each other (Papaioannou & Hackfort, 2014). In addition participants also revealed their meta-perspective of their coaches, stating that there is likability from the coach's side as well, also revealing that the personality of the coach plays a role, participants mentioned that a friendly and open coach made them feel psychologically more comfortable. Thus athletes and coaches should be aware of how personality is likely to drive their behaviour and influence their interactions and perceptions (Papaioannou & Hackfort, 2014).

Participants also revealed that their coaches are family friends, describing their off the field relationship. Some participants shared that their coaches are welcomed in their homes and considered as a family friend. These responses make it known that the intimacy bonds some of these participants share with their coaches are close on and off the field showing the affective close ties they share. To support this, Colvin, et al, (2012) stated that coaches and athletes who were identified as holding a closer relationship outside of sport seem to cooperate well during training. In relation, Papaioannou and Hackfort (2014) said that in a typical athlete-coach relationship, the athlete and coach have no other relation to each other outside of the sport, however, in an atypical relationship they share another bond, such as parent and child or husband and wife, thus in an atypical relationship coaches and athletes will have a stronger emotional connection and a greater degree of interdependence than a typical relationship. Even though atypical relationships can build a stronger emotional connection, it can also lead to the blurring of the relationship, decreasing its effectiveness as stated by Papaioannou and Hackfort (2014). Sandstrom (2012) referred to liking or likability related to openly being able to share information. Some participants stated that they are close but not too close in a wrong way, however other participants mentioned that they are able to talk to their coach but do not feel a

close bond. In addition participants also revealed that their coach is not a good coach, also sharing past experiences that they never really liked their previous coaches and how it made them psychologically uncomfortable, this prompted the participants to eventually move to another coach. It was thus stated that athletes should look for coaches who has good interpersonal skills, such as the skill to make an athlete feel comfortable and relaxed as opposed to feel uneasy and stressed (Papaioannou & Hackfort, 2014).

In relation to trust within the athlete-coach relationship participants' revealed positive and negative experiences. Participants expressed their direct perspectives of feeling open with their coaches however also experiencing barriers to trusting them fully, on the other hand participants also stated that they trust their coaches fully with athletics as well as in their personal life outside of athletics. Participants also revealed feelings of disappointment, and frustration regarding trust within the relationship, however participants also shared feelings of positivity and confidence as an effect to having trust within the relationship. For athletes, trust would seem to enable them to feel safe and confident enough to open up and disclose information about their needs, goals (Jowett, Kanakoglou, et al, 2012). Participants also revealed their meta-perspective responses stating that even though they feel they trust their coach, that they feel their coach does not trust them. This indicated that parties involved within the relationship may not have the same views of one another regarding trust. Participants also mentioned that they do not trust their coaches at all, that the reputation of their coach, their skills and capabilities, as well as experiences with them caused trust issues for participants. It was stated by West (2016) that it is important that coaches provide their athletes with the proper skills, techniques, confidence, motivation, and sport persistence to maintain their reputation. In relation Jowett and Nezelek (2011) mentioned that when the coach is being consistent in his/her attributes, management skills

and carrying their part as a coach in maintaining the athlete-coach relationship, athletes' seem to feel more comfortable with the coach. It was revealed by responses that lack of communication or being open could also be a factor with regards to trust. West (2016) also states that clear and precise communication increases better understanding of the role of the player, developing skills, and building a trusting relationship. It was also revealed that participants felt psychologically disappointed within the relationship due to experiences where trust was broken. Negative experiences revealed that participants left coaches due to the lack of trust within their coaches. According to Maitland (2012) coaches are in a position to not only impact athletes' physical development but also their psychological development both in a positive and a negative. Vella and Perlman (2014) also confirmed that the consistent development of positive psychological, social, and behavioural outcomes for athletes has been defined as a central component of effective coaching. On the other hand, positive direct perspectives revealed that participants felt that they can trust their coaches completely in athletics as well as personally. Participants meta-perspectives of their coaches revealed that they feel that their coaches trust them completely, also that their coaches share everything with them.

In terms of respect, participants' direct and meta-perspectives revealed positive and negative experiences and feelings. Some participants revealed having mutual respect within their relationships, never experiencing any disrespect or uncomfortable. Participants shared that they have never been belittled by their coach. Results also revealed that some coaches display equal respect amongst all athletes. Some participants mentioned that they feel respected by their coach due to respecting their studies, when they are sick or not feeling well, as well as in their personal or social life. However some participants also stated feeling left out, singled out, belittled, and psychologically frustrated and uncomfortable due to experiences with their coach which for

some caused them to leave their coaches. There were also differences between direct and meta-perspectives, stating they respect their coach, however not feeling respected. According to Stirling and Kerr (2008) studies revealed that shouting, belittling, threats, and humiliation were the most common forms of emotional abuse experienced by athletes especially at high levels of competition. Lassiter (2002) also strongly mentioned that coaches have a tremendous influence on the athletes they coach through both their words and actions. A participant revealed that even though she felt disrespected by her previous coach, she never said anything, even when she did, that he would not listen, making her feel very uncomfortable. Participants also brought to attention coaches being flirtatious, sexual in the way they verbally speak to their athletes, through physically holding, or massaging in a way where participants felt uncomfortable. In relation, Brake (2012) revealed a serious problem for female athletes in sport, of particular significance to intercollegiate sports, findings in research show that the rate of coach-athlete sexual abuse is higher for elite female athletes than it is for athletes at lower, less competitive levels of sport. Roxas and Redinger (2016) also in fact stated that abuse in general, especially verbal and emotional abuse, has to some extent been a part of the culture of college coaching, a culture where coaches hold remarkable power over student athletes' playing time, scholarship money, transfer opportunities, as well as the quality and the time of their day-to-day lives, making it difficult for such behaviour to come to the attention of others, however they also mentioned that tolerance for abusive coaching appears to be diminishing as awareness is growing regarding harsh effects on performance and well-being.

In terms of belief within the athlete-coach relationship, results showed similar positive feelings from participants in terms of their direct and meta-perspective responses, however it was also evident that there were also differences and negative feelings relating to belief within the

athlete-coach relationship. Participants revealed that their coach's belief in them makes them believe in themselves, increasing their self-belief in their abilities as well as their self-esteem where participants feel psychologically confident due to their coach's belief in them. Participants also stated that it motivates them to work harder when their coach believes in their talent. According to Holt (2013), in terms of the development of an athlete, coaches may influence the efficacy of their athletes, coaches can build confidence and self-efficacy (belief) through vicarious experiences as well as through verbal persuasion, Holt continues to state that verbal persuasion by coaches may quickly produce increased feelings of self-efficacy by enhancing beliefs through positive suggestions. However there were also responses that revealed that even though participants know that their coach's believe in them, however that the belief in themselves can differ. Participants mentioned that performance disappointments create the lack of belief within themselves despite their coach's belief in them. Holt (2013) also stated that self-efficacy, or the athletes' belief within themselves that he or she has the ability to organize and perform the actions to produce a specific goal, can enhance or hinder performances. Results also revealed that some participants felt the lack of belief from their coaches that it may also be due to the lack of desire shown from coaches which differs from the participants love for the sport. Participants mentioned that it's also hard to share this with their coach due to not being able to be open, relating to trust. It was also revealed by participants that experiencing people not believing in them, telling their coaches not to waste their time because there is no potential, however that their coaches did believe in them no matter what was said. Philippe, et al, (2011) stated that reciprocal feelings form an important dimension regarding the quality of the relationship and, in turn, highlight the intensity of the bonds between a coach and an athlete. Holt (2013) also stated

that meaningful and supportive coach-athlete relationship impacts how an athlete believes in themselves as well as their ability to perform in their respective competitions.

5.2.2 Commitment and Co-orientation

Commitment was found to be related to the cognitive aspect of the coach-athlete relationship, it is reflected in coaches' and athletes' long-term orientation towards the relationship, as well as the intentions or thoughts to maintain a close relationship with each other over time (Thelwell, et al, 2016). This theme underlined responses related to the willingness and desire to commit, displaying sacrifice and how athletes view their relationship, as well as the athletes' perspective on their coach's cognitive thoughts on being committed to them as an athlete in their sport career. Thus co-orientation was linked to commitment due to gathering athletes' direct and meta-perspective responses.

Participants were asked about their experiences and cognitive thoughts relating to commitment such as; desire, investment, and sacrifice. Responses revealed the perceived long-term orientation within the relationship along with the psychological effects.

In terms of cognitive thoughts and assuming similarity through co-orientation, results presented positive and negative experiences related to commitment. In relation to desire, meta-perspective responses revealed that coaches are passionate and fully committed, they display interest and desire to developing athletes' positively. There is an acknowledgment of goals and dreams and coaching showing desire by their actions or behaviours (complementarity) to help athletes' achieve their goals. According to Maitland (2012) a harmonious passion for coaching

positively predicted autonomy-supportive behaviour towards the athlete, which in turn predicted a high quality coach-athlete relationship. Participants direct perspective was that they have a love for the sport, the passion and desire is so big that some said they don't think they will ever stop. However results also revealed that some coaches lack desire within the relationship. Psychological effects surfaced through experiences, feeling disappointed or frustrated. Responses revealed not feeling like they are on the same page with regards to desire, or only showing interest when participants are doing well. Participants revealed that their expectations are not being met, feeling like they are the only one in the relationship with desire to succeed in the sport or be committed to the relationship. It was mentioned that the lack of desire is displayed through not picking up on certain things, or new ways to improve in the sport, or being too busy with other endeavours showing a decrease in desire. Some participants even stated that they feel like they are done trying with their coach to show interest or be committed to succeed in the sport or the relationship. It was stated that coaches' passion influences their athletes' perceptions of the quality of their relationship with their coach as well as how such a relationship affects athletes' subjective well-being (Lafrenière, et al, 2011).

In relation to investing in the athlete or the relationship, results revealed that coaches are invested not only in the athletic aspect of the relationship, but also in athletes' personal life. Participants revealed why they feel their coach is invested and it was found that it is shown through their coach's actions such as ensuring that their athletes are doing the proper training, communicating when needing to step up or improve, and taking on the responsibility as a coach. Participants direct perspective showed that they appreciate when coaches are invested in them because this allows them to feel motivated to perform (complementarity) and show that they too are invested (commitment). It was also revealed that coaches who have the belief (closeness) in

their athletes, are more likely to be invested (commitment) in their athletes. Mutual investment was found to exist with participants experiences of working together and investing in the relationship to improve not only performance, but also the quality of the relationship. However negative results was found when participants mentioned that their coaches do not invest time and effort to improve or achieve goals, allowing these participants to feel disappointed and discouraged. Participants revealed that they often train on their own, coaches not showing up at events or training. It was also found that some coaches have bigger groups of athletes that they train and participants feeling like they receiving little attention, longing to be the only athlete. Participants mentioned that coaches show desire however not being completely invested, leaving the participant to do everything despite meeting had about goals and dreams. In relation some coaches were also invested in the beginning however after participants were injured, a decrease in investment was displayed. It was also stated that coaches are getting paid more outside of athletics, hence why participants feel that they cannot expect or demand more from their coach's even though their coach lacks investment, this lead to dropping coach for another. It is important for athletes to understand their own emotional state and what they need to do in order to achieve optimal performance on a regular basis because different emotions have different effects on different athletes (Caramanico, 2011).

Lastly in terms of sacrificing, or going the extra mile, it was found that coaches sacrifice their time for athletics and personal life of participants. It was revealed that coaches sacrifice for their athletes even when being sick, during their own personal time, travelling with athletes' for competitions, and even waiting for athletes at training when they are late. Participants direct perspectives revealed that they sacrifice training twice a day, not being able to go out, sleeping early due to being tired with training, competitions and studies. Participants experiences revealed

that some of their coaches do not even get paid for training them, showing passion or desire and sacrificing to see their athletes succeed. It was also found that there are coaches who have full time jobs outside of athletics and yet still sacrificing time and managing time well to show that they are committed to their athletes. Athletes revealed that when their coaches sacrifice time for them, they feel psychologically positive and excited to perform for them. However results also revealed negativity within relationships relating to sacrifice. Even though some participants mentioned that coaches balance their time well, other participants mentioned that their coaches struggle to balance or find time for them, not giving up anything for their athletes or receiving any extra effort beside the bare minimum, if any at all.

5.2.3 Complementarity and Co-orientation

It is said that complementarity according to Thelwell, et al, (2016), represents the behavioural aspect of the athlete-coach relationship in relation to coaches' and athletes' levels of cooperation, these include corresponding behaviours and whether athletes and coaches are comfortable in each other's presence, as well as reciprocal behaviours which relates to roles and tasks and being able to direct and on the other hand execute them. This theme underlined responses related the behavioural aspect of the relationship, describing the level of co-operation within the relationship between the athlete and coach according to the athletes lived experiences and their direct and meta-perspective. Findings regarding behaviours and the psychological effects experienced was revealed which allowed for understand the nature of the athlete-coach relationship regarding complementarity. Participants were asked about their experiences with

their coach's relating to complementarity behaviours, this elicited responses relating to motivation, support, understanding, as well as roles and tasks.

In terms of the behavioural aspect of the athlete-coach relationship, results revealed positive and negative behaviours with differences in how it affects participants. In terms of motivation according to Wilkerson, et al, (2014) successful student athletes are motivated by their coaches, parents, as well as their own selves. Participants revealed that their coaches are always encouraging them to be the best they can be and to never give up no matter what. It was also found through responses that coaches not only motivate participants in athletics but also in their personal life, and that the motivation influences their performance in a positive way. Results reveal that coaches also motivate through injury and that some coaches do not even know that they are good motivators according to participants' responses. Direct perspectives revealed that participants are always trying to stay self-motivated even when down, which actually makes them stronger. It was also mentioned that participants feel motivated when results show, knowing that the sacrifice was worth it which also strengthens their relationships. The psychological effects revealed participants feeling more positive, confident and focused, as well as increasing mental toughness. Responses also revealed improvements in performance, doing personal bests in events. Motivation according to Holt (2013) is a driving force behind the success of an athlete, in addition the manner in which coaches motivate is often dependent on the athlete's perception of their relationship with their coach and this perception can affect an athlete's motivation to compete (Wilkerson, et al, 2014). Some participants responded stating that their coaches also give positive and constructive feedback and not break them down, also to focus on personal best rather than to place on the podium, taking the pressure off participants which motivates participants and creates them to think positively, feeling good psychologically.

Literature states that positive and informational feedback from coaches is significantly related to the perceptions of competence, enjoyment and intrinsic motivation of athletes (Holt, 2013), it is also found that intrinsic motivation is based on inherent satisfactions that an athlete enjoys without feeling the pressure of a possible consequence, or the natural human tendency to enjoy what they are doing (Baldrige, 2015).

However negative responses were also revealed such as; negative feedback from coaches, breaking the participants down, or telling them they won't do well in competitions, also saying if the participant competes, the coach will not coach her anymore. This led participants to not finish their event or actually drop out of event due to feeling psychologically hurt and betrayed, demotivated, frustrated and just negative emotionally. When coaches believe certain athletes will perform poorly, they are likely to send messages of mistrust, emphasize mistakes and ignore the successes of these athletes, these behaviours of coaches will thus weaken an athletes' confidence in their ability, thwarting their need for competence and, in turn, their motivation (Mageau, et al, 2003). However it was also found that even through negative feedback, one participant was actually motivated to prove to the coach that they are capable and in good shape. Having positive side effects relating to abusive coaching behaviour does not make abuse acceptable, however some athletes may be able to cope with abusive coaching and still have some positive outcomes (Roxas & Ridlinger, 2016). Another participant also mentioned that even though her coach is not a good motivator or that their relationship is not good, that she can self-motivate herself and do it on her own despite her crying and feeling sad due to the relationship. In order to deal with every athlete a coach must realize the different ways to motivate on both competition day and during practice settings, understanding the unique attributes every athlete processes, how their

behaviours may affect athlete burnout, and how to best develop leadership amongst their athletes (Coykendaal, 2014).

In terms of support displayed within the relationship, participants mentioned that their coaches are always there when they need them, that they can rely on their coaches at any time. Coaches need to show that they care for their athletes and athletes should be able to contact their coaches at any time and place (Ward, 2014). It was also revealed that coaches are supportive through injuries, setbacks, failures and personal well-being. It was also found that coaches are also supportive outside athletics and that participants are able to talk to their coaches when needing advice or support. Thus an interconnection is formed between closeness (trust) and complementarity (support). This according to participants makes them feel psychologically more positive knowing that their coach supports them as an athlete on and off the field. A study by Ward (2014) showed that Athletes believed that relationships can be maintained through having coaches making frequent contact with their athletes and having them for emotional support for both in and outside the sporting context. However there was also a reveal that even though the relationship is not on good terms, however that their coach still supports the participant. Positive behaviours displayed from a coach are known as being supportive and emotionally composed, such as a coach recognizing an athlete's improvements in their physical appearance after coming back from training in the off-season (Coykendall, 2014). In addition, effective coaches tend to use positive, autonomy-building strategies to nurture supportive relationships with athletes or amongst the team, to teach specific strategies for the transfer of skills from sport to life, as well as to nurture athlete development using a challenging but supportive approach (Roxas & Ridinger, 2016).

In terms of understanding, some participants meta-perspective responses was that their coaches are understanding within the relationship, it was mentioned that coaches understand when participants have a busy schedule, with studies, and injuries. It was also found that coaches understand and know their athletes well and when to push them hard. Participants said that their coaches are considerate and understanding and listens to them when they share anything with their coaches and actually allows the athletes to open up which interconnects closeness (trust) and complementarity (understanding). It was also found that coaches understand not only athletic related concerns, but also within these participants personal life, or negative circumstances back home, and because the coach is understanding, it motivates them to keep going, thus interconnecting sub-themes motivation and understanding within complementarity behaviours. Effective relationships are characterized by emphatic understanding, which captures how a relationship member can understand the other member's feelings, thoughts, and behaviours (Sandstrom, 2012). Mutual understanding was mentioned by participants, some stating that both parties are have personalities where they don't get offended easily, while other participants mentioned that even though they have a stubborn personality which frustrates the coach, that there is understanding within the relationship due to communication which actually draws them closer in the relationship despite any misunderstandings. It was revealed by participants that understanding within the relationship increased once performance improved. Direct perspectives from participants revealed that they understand their coaches when busy or not able to give full attention even when they themselves are frustrated, stating that it's a two-way relationship and that understanding is important from both parties.

However some participants also revealed negative responses relating to understanding, for example; participants stated that when something is wrong or they are injured, in pain, or

going through something, that it is ignored by the coach and not understanding them and still push them to train hard or forcing to compete when ill. Participants also revealed experiences was previous coaches stating that there were no personality clashes, no disagreements, and having a good relationship, however what the coaches lacked was understanding the athletes in terms of goals, thus coaches not showing commitment to achieve goals. This interconnects the lack of understanding (complementarity) with commitment, thus participants leaving coach. It was found that there is no complete understanding within relationships, not always agreeing, coaches struggling to understand personal life or studies, thus putting pressure on participants and psychologically feeling discouraged. Participants also said that they are not sure if their coach understands them because they are not able to openly communicate with their coach, interconnecting lack of closeness and understanding (complementarity), also direct perspectives mentioning that they do not understand their coach and the way they do things, which makes them psychologically uncomfortable. Lastly it was found that coaches do not understand that they are females and have womanly related concerns and cycles, stating that male coaches does not understand these things and that participants are not open to discuss or disclose such personal concerns due to lack of communication, and lack of understanding or showing concern, thus interconnecting closeness (trust) and complementarity (understanding).

Lastly in terms of roles and tasks, participants referred to their coach as knowing better in terms of roles. Jowett and Shanmugam (2016) discussed that within the athlete-coach relationship, the coach is usually the experienced one and the athlete is commonly the inexperienced one whom requires the encouragement to take on new challenges, and the support and guidance to deal with challenges in the face of adversity. With that being said, Jowett and Shanmugam (2016) also mentioned that the coach's effective execution of his or her role (how

does the coach coach?) as well as experience, reputation, and qualifications, may be far more important for athletes than his/her coach's personality and its manifestations (what is a coach's personality?) especially when it comes to evaluating the quality of the relationship. It was also revealed that coaches are also willing to learn from their athletes and allow them to take charge and work together as a team to achieve goals and vice versa. Every so often an athlete's opinion comes secondary to coaching, however in order to create a more coachable climate, coaches must be willing to give their athletes a voice, because a respectable coach must be able to trust their athletes' opinions and allow themselves to be vulnerable to transferring authority or delegating tasks to their athletes and other coaching staff (Spring, 2015). In terms of tasks given, some participants were able to have coaches physically demonstrate certain techniques or drills. It was also found that coaches delegate tasks to athletes when they are not able to be with at training, athletes are then tested the next day to make sure that they have done the tasks or programs given. However it was also revealed that some coaches handle things differently with their athletes, some participants mentioned that they are not able to speak to their training partners at competitions, only at training, because at competitions they are enemies and that their coaches watch their every move. This however to participants is a bit tough for them to handle, but they also mentioned that they understand because they know their coach knows best and keeps them psychologically focussed on event. This elicits and interconnection between understanding and roles and tasks within complementarity behaviours. Jowett and Shanmugam (2016) mentioned that athletes, specifically female athletes, may also feel that as subordinates that their role is to follow, understand and accept coaches' instructions, opinions and feedback.

The few negative responses revealed that both parties are opinionated and end up fighting a lot and struggling to agree on certain tasks. A participant also mentioned that her coach

mentioned to her that her and fellow athletes should do their own thing and so will he, which psychologically hurt and demotivated the participant which she then felt that she will have to take on the role of a coach as well and do it for herself, stating that her coach is just there. Another element that was found in responses was that some participants prefer male coaches due to feeling like male coaches are less complicated and much more task orientated, however it was also mentioned that coaches are too task orientated and very straightforward and offensive which does not sit well with other participants. It was also stated that in the athlete-coach relationship, if we assume that athletes take up a subordinate role being empathically accurate with their coach may promote a sense of empowerment, which can be useful for both the athlete as well as the coach (Jowett & Shanmugam, 2016).



5.3 CONCLUSIONS RELATED TO THE RESEARCH FINDINGS

This study was set out to examine the research question: Relating to performance in athletics, what are university female athletes facing psychologically within the athlete-coach relationship?

From the findings it can be concluded that:

- Closeness and Co-orientation
 1. Affective emotional feelings of female University athletes are important in developing an effective athlete-coach relationship and facilitating positive psychological effects

2. Having positive personal and generic feelings promote a closer relationship and improve performance, whereas having negative personal and generic feelings creates a disconnection in the relationship and may affect performance negatively.
 3. Closeness showed a connection to both commitment and complementarity, showing the interdependent nature of the constructs.
- Commitment and Co-orientation
 1. Cognitive thoughts of female University athletes are important in developing an effective athlete-coach relationship and facilitating positive psychological effects
 2. When coaches show commitment it is associated with positive psychological effects and improved performances, whereas when coaches lack desire, sacrificing, and relationship investment, it is associated with negative psychological effects and diminish performance improvements.
 3. Commitment is connected to closeness and complementarity and work interdependently together.
 - Complementarity and Co-orientation
 1. Behaviours of coaches have an influence on female athletes' psychological state as well as performance. It is important that there are reciprocal behaviours displayed within the athlete-coach relationship to facilitate an effect relationship
 2. When coaches and athletes work together to achieve goals the relationship is more likely to be successful and the athlete is more likely to achieve goals.
 3. Athletes' accepted the leading roles of coaches while recognizing that they too can assume a leading role. Both coaches and athletes reported to take on leading and following roles when needed which enhances cooperation.

4. Complementarity is connected to closeness and commitment, meaning that behaviours are connected to affective feelings and cognitive thoughts.

5.4 RECOMMENDATIONS

The following recommendations are being made based on the findings with regards to the importance of the athlete-coach relationship and the psychological and performance effects of University track and field athletes. Below are recommendations for coaches' practices and for further research.



5.4.1 Recommendations for coaching practices

Developing relationships is what coaches should constantly maintain. It will take problem solving, understanding, respect, and trust on both ends of the relationship, however, the coach can lead the way in creating an effective relationship. Coaches can assist in developing a strong relationship with their athletes which in turn can facilitate successful outcomes, the recommendations to coaches are to use the COMPASS model, and the use of these seven maintenance strategies would have a positive effect on the quality of the relationship, as defined by Jowett's 3+ 1C's conceptualization. Sport psychology consultants, coaches, and athletes may use the COMPASS model to help maintain effective working partnerships. Below are the seven strategies by Rhind and Jowett (2010):

1. Conflict management: Reflects expectations, consequences of unmet expectations, as well as cooperation in the discussion of conflict.
2. Openness: Related to the disclosure of one's feelings
3. Motivational: Defined as individuals' motivation to work with athletes/coaches
4. Positivity: Adapting one's behaviours to suit the preferences of the athlete to ensure that the partnership is effective and successful.
5. Advice: defined as giving one's opinions on problems encountered by the coach or the athlete, as well as giving and receiving feedback in a positive and open way.
6. Support: Is defined as showing that one was committed to the coach-athlete relationship and available for the coach/athlete in terms of both sport related and personal issues.
7. Social Networks: It was defined as spending social time with the coach/athlete as well as mutual friends, and involved interactions that took place away from the track, field, or court.



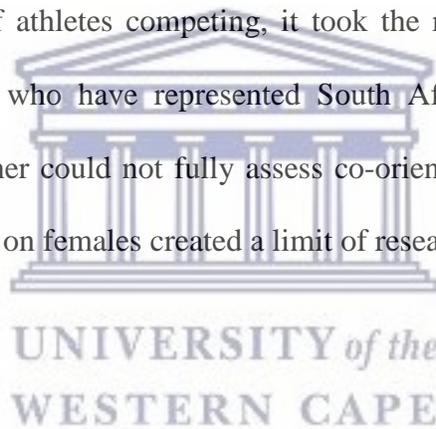
5.4.2 Recommendations for further research

- There is a growing need for further research of the athlete-coach relationship, especially in the South Africa, this will help athletes and coaches to gain insight into creating effective relationship and developing athletes.
- It is recommended to further research on both male and female athletes to make comparisons, as well as to study more universities and elite level sport where the relationship is very important.

- It is recommended to not only gather more qualitative findings on the athlete-coach relationship, but to also quantitatively study the athlete-coach relationship in South Africa.
- Further research is recommended in studying all dimensions of co-orientation by gathering data from both the athlete and coaches to get a better understanding of the athlete-coach relationship.

5.6 STUDY LIMITATIONS

Due to high demand of athletes competing, it took the researcher very long to collect data, especially from athletes who have represented South Africa at competitions. Another limitation was that the researcher could not fully assess co-orientation due to only focusing on athletes, and also only focusing on females created a limit of research findings.



5.7 STUDY CONCLUSION

This study revealed that there are positive and negative psychological effects experienced within the athlete coach relationship that can affect athlete performance at University level competitions. This relates to closeness, commitment, complementarity and co-orientation that are interdependent of each other and presented the importance of coaches in the athlete-coach relationship on the mental and physical state of the athlete. The results of this study provided insight into the phenomenon known as the athlete-coach relationship in individual sport which was found to be more important than in team sports due to the one on one nature. The findings

also offered recommendations to practice and further research. The results and findings of this study can be useful and utilized by all sport departments of individual and team sport, all coaches in sport, athletes, and the athletics departments at universities to understand the nature of the athlete-coach relationship and equip themselves more when approaching an athlete-coach relationship.

In conclusion, this study provides insight into the psychological effects of the athlete-coach relationship on performance of female university track and field athletes in the Western Cape, South Africa. The aim is to create awareness of the importance of the athlete-coach relationship in developing successful athletes in South Africa.



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UNIVERSITY OF THE WESTERN CAPE

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E-mail: bandrews@uwc.ac.za

Project Title: The psychological effects of the athlete-coach relationship on performance: The lived experiences of female university athletes

What is this study about?

This is a qualitative research project being conducted by Tarryn Vollenhoven at the University of the Western Cape. We are inviting you to participate in this research project because you are a female track and field athlete who is currently being coached at University level athletics. The purpose of this research project is to investigate female track and field athletes' lived experiences of the athlete-coach relationship in order to determine the psychological effect on performance.

What will I be asked to do if I agree to participate?

You will be asked to participate in an interview to discuss the topic researched. The interviews will take place at neutral venues at suitable time slots suggested by you. Interviews will take approximately 60 to 90 minutes and all data will be collected with recordings with your permission and transcribed. Data will be kept confidential and you will remain anonymous. Your participation in this study will contribute to improved athlete-coach relationships and well developed University athletes'.

Would my participation in this study be kept confidential?

Your personal information will be kept confidential. To help protect your confidentiality, your name will not be included on any data collected to secure your identity. Passwords will be placed on all transcripts or data forms which will be stored safely in locked filing cabinets or computer files. Only the researcher will have access to passwords to protect your identity and data. If we write a report or article about this research project, your identity will be protected.

What are the risks of this research?

There may be some risks from participating in this research study. The risks of participation may include ways or things that could cause the subject to feel uncomfortable such as questions that could lead to sensitive issues. The subject will then have the right to disclose information or move to the next question. Withdrawal from participation will be granted if the subject wishes to do so. Further there are no other known risks associated with participating in this research study.

What are the benefits of this research?

This research is not designed to help you personally, but the results may help the investigator learn more about the dynamic relationship between the athlete and coach as well as understand the psychological effects female athletes' face and how performance may be affected. We hope that, in the future, other people as well as coaches might benefit from this study through improved understanding of female athletes' and their perspective in terms of developing and facilitating a positive athlete-coach relationship.

Do I have to be in this research and may I stop participating at any time?

Your participation in this research is completely voluntary, however participating means you will be completely honest at all times. You may choose not to take part at all, if you do participate, you may stop participating at any time. If you decide not to participate in this study or if you stop participating at any time, you will not be penalized or lose any benefits to which you otherwise qualify.

What if I have questions?

This research is being conducted by Tarryn Vollenhoven from the Sport Recreation and Exercise Science Department at the University of the Western Cape. If you have any questions about the research study itself, please contact me (Tarryn Vollenhoven) at: 076 184 8584 or email me at tarrynv25@gmail.com.

Should you have any questions regarding this study and your rights as a research participant or if you wish to report any problems you have experienced related to the study, please contact:

Supervisor: Dr Barry Andrews

Head of Department: Prof. A. Travill

University of the Western Cape

Private Bag X17

Bellville 7535

021-959 2350

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Dean of the Faculty of Community and Health Sciences: Prof. J. Frantz

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This research has been approved by the University of the Western Cape's Senate Research Committee and Ethics Committee.



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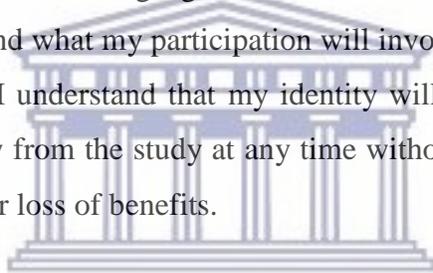
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E-mail: bandrews@uwc.ac.za

Title of Research Project: The psychological effects of the athlete-coach relationship on performance: The lived experiences of female university athletes

The study has been described to me in language that I understand. My questions about the study have been answered. I understand what my participation will involve and I agree to participate of my own choice and free will. I understand that my identity will not be disclosed to anyone. I understand that I may withdraw from the study at any time without giving a reason and without fear of negative consequences or loss of benefits.



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I agree to be audio-taped during my participation in this study.

I do not agree to be audio-taped during my participation in this study.

I agree to be video recorded during my participation in this study

I do not agree to be video recorded during my participation in this study

Participant's name.....

Participant's signature.....

Date



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Demographical/Background questions

1. What is your full name?
2. How old are you?
3. How long have you been doing athletics?
4. What track and field events do you participate in?
5. What university do you represent for athletics?
6. How long have you been coached at university level?

Interview questions

1. What are your experiences as an athlete being coached at university level?
2. What is your relationship with your coach like in terms of closeness?
3. Has there been any experience where your trust was broken by your coach?
4. In terms of respect, do you feel like your coach is respectful?
5. Do you feel like your coach is invested in the positive development as an athlete?
6. What are your experiences in terms of commitment and sacrificing displayed from your coach?
7. Do you feel like there is an understanding between your coach and yourself?
8. Have there been any experiences of bad communication skills displayed from your coach?
9. Are there any experiences where you felt uncomfortable or incompetent around your coach?
10. What are your psychological experiences within the relationship?
11. What is your performance experiences being coached at university level?
12. Has there been any experience of performance dropping due to your relationship between you coach and yourself?



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OFFICE OF THE DEAN
DEPARTMENT OF RESEARCH DEVELOPMENT

14 November 2014

To Whom It May Concern

I hereby certify that the Senate Research Committee of the University of the Western Cape approved the methodology and ethics of the following research project by:

Ms T Vollenhoven (SRES)

Research Project:

The psychological effects of the athlete-coach relationship on performance: the live experiences of female university athletes.

Registration no:

14/9/32

Any amendments, extension or other modifications to the protocol must be submitted to the Ethics Committee for approval.

The Committee must be informed of any serious adverse event and/or termination of the study.

Ms Patricia Josias
Research Ethics Committee Officer University of the Western Cape

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A place of quality,
a place to grow, from hope
to action through knowledge

APPENDIX E: Institutional Research and Planning Permission



UNIVERSITEIT □ STELLENBOSCH □ UNIVERSITY

jou kennisvenoot □ your knowledge partner

10 March 2015

Ms Tarryn Vollenhoven
Sport Recreation and Exercise Science Department
University of the Western Cape

Dear Ms Vollenhoven

Concerning research project: *The physiological effects of the athlete-coach relationship on performance: The lived experiences of female university athletes*

The researcher has institutional permission to proceed with this project as stipulated in the institutional permission application. This permission is granted on the following conditions:

- The researcher must obtain permission from the Senior Director: Sport, Stellenbosch University, before commencing with data collection.
- Participation is voluntary.
- Persons may not be coerced into participation.
- Persons who choose to participate must be informed of the purpose of the research, all the aspects of their participation, their role in the research and their rights as participants. Participants must consent to participation. The researcher may not proceed until she is confident that all the before mentioned has been established and recorded.
- Persons who choose not to participate may not be penalized as a result of non-participation.
- Participants may withdraw their participation at any time, and without consequence.
- Data must be collected in a way that ensures the anonymity of all participants.
- The data must be responsibly and suitably protected.
- The use of the collected data may not be extended beyond the purpose of this study.
- Individuals may not be identified in the report(s) or publication(s) of the results of the study.
- The privacy of individuals must be respected and protected.
- The researcher must conduct her research within the provisions of the Protection of Personal Information Act, 2013.

Best wishes,

Prof Ian Cloete
Senior Director: Institutional Research and Planning



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