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A day in the life of a government sport promotion officer in the Northern Province of the new South Africa

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Mvuzo Mbebe has had a few scraps in his time as a sports administrator. Yet, on the eve of the NSC's amalgamation with the sports department, he remains determined to see sport become inclusive of all South Africans, writes **LINDA RULASHE**



Sports Minister Steve 'Tshwete's 'we are gatvol' speech this week, in which he deplored the absence of black players in the national cricket and rugby sides, indicates that drastic action to accelerate transformation in sport may be on the cards, writes **LINDA RULASHE.**

ASA against 'Springboks'

32 pro boxers test positive, careers ending

"...TURN GAME? ... Suspended former Northern Province West Region (NPWR) president, Reuben Mogashoa, may soon be back in the admin game.

A day in the life of a Government Sport Promotion Officer in the Northern Province of the new South Africa

Submitted by

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A research report submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements of Master of Education degree at the **University of the Witwatersrand**, Johannesburg.

1999

Abstract

The Department of Sport and Recreation (DSR) once commented, with concern, on the public's illiteracy on the role played by sport in society. The DSR has thus committed itself to bridge the gap that exists between perceptions and reality about the role of sport. The activities of the Government Sport Promotion Officers (GSPOs), who are the subjects of this study, are mandated by the White Paper, which is the official government policy on Sport and Recreation in South Africa.

This study looked at how GSPOs still managed to go about their activities in sport promotion in the Northern Province, despite all the unfavourable conditions under which they work. The study aimed at developing a model that will help GSPOs to define their role in sport promotion, within the context of the role that sport plays in society. It is hoped that this model will also enable them to equip themselves well to meet the challenges of the rapidly changing South Africa.

An ethnographic approach within a qualitative framework was used to study thirteen GSPOs in the Department of Education, Arts, Culture and Sports in the Northern Province. The GSPOs were interviewed and observed between 1997 and 1998. Questionnaires were also used to find out what the sporting public's perceptions were, concerning sport promotion in the Northern Province.

GSPOs are adults who work with other adults in sport promotion. The study looked at the implications that adult education has on their work. Thus, adult education theories such as, self-directed learning, experiential learning and transformative learning, formed part of this study.

The study suggests that the indifferent and confusing management systems under which GSPOs work, do contribute to their lack of confidence, and insight on policy issues. The study also suggests that GSPOs have the potential to do well even under situations where resources are not available. The study also suggests that, despite all the unfavourable

conditions under which they work, there are factors within their work that made them continue to do their work tirelessly. Some of the factors are, the flexible hours that they work, and the benefits of extensive traveling and the economic and social benefits that go with it.

The study also suggests that while GSPOs blame management for their lack of delivery, they also do not take enough initiatives to improve their situation. They seem to accept the status quo. This situation casts doubts as to whether anything will change with the way they work, once management issues, promotions and working conditions are addressed.

Key Words

Adult education
Ethnography
Experiential learning
Northern Province
Qualitative research
Self directed learning
South Africa
Sport promotion
Transformative learning

DECLARATION

I declare that this report is my own, unaided work. This report is being submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree **M. Ed.** (Adult Education) at **The University of the Witwatersrand**, Johannesburg. It has not been submitted for any degree or examination to any other university.



Phillip Ndlovu

30 day of June , 1999.

To my mother

Eselinah Ndlovu

with sincere thanks

for the love and trust that I "can make it anywhere"

the thought that kept me going

during the writing of this report

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Acronyms

DET	: Department of Education and Training
DSR	: Department of Sport and Recreation
EL	: Experiential Learning
FANTTA	: Far Northern Transvaal Tennis Association
GSPO	: Government Sport Promotion Officer
LOC	: Local Organising Committee
MEC	: Member of the Executive Council
NOCSA	: National Olympic Committee of South Africa
NOPRUSSA	: Northern Province United School Sport Association
NOTUSSA	: Northern Transvaal United School Sport Association
NP	: Northern Province
NQF	: National Qualifications Framework
NSC	: National Sports Council
RSD	: Rural Sport Development
SAC	: Sport Against Crime
SACOS	: South African Council of Sport
SAFA	: South African Football Association
SASSU	: South African Students Sport Union
SCORE	: Sports Coaches Outreach
SISA	: Sport Information and Science Agency
TLC	: Transitional Local Council
USSASA	: United School Sport Association of South Africa

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 The problem

For many South Africans, sport remains an integral part of society. As the face of the South African society changed, so did sport. It is within the context of South Africa's newly found democracy that the role of sport in among other things, normalisation of society, unity, reconstruction and reconciliation, needs to be explored. Government Sport Promotion Officers (GSPOs) as delivery tools of the government are, one lens through which the performance of the South African government can be viewed. Thus the new role of the GSPOs goes beyond sport promotion, as it also addresses national objectives most of which are aimed at redressing South Africa's past injustices of apartheid. It remains the government's priority to enforce, among other things, redress, unity, transformation and reconciliation. Sport as an integral part of society, is one means through which the above objectives can be achieved.

Whether or not sport is a unifier or a divider of society is still a debatable issue. The sometimes-conflicting perceptions about sport's ability to unify people of different population groups pose so many challenges for GSPOs.

South Africa's past history has shown how sport was effectively used to support the policies of apartheid. South Africa's past injustices did not affect the whole country in the same proportion. The Northern Province, ninety two percent of which is rural (SISA, 1995: 9), is home for about 9 million people, ninety five percent of whom live in rural areas. 1.5 million of these people take part in sport (SISA, 1995: 11). The majority has few or no sport facilities, yet they are expected to achieve the same level of performance in sport as those who have an abundance of sport facilities. The best sport facilities are only in the former white areas. Thus, the majority of the sporting public in the Northern Province has to be

content with a few unstandardised and dilapidated sports grounds, or has to travel to the metropolis to get better facilities. No wonder that the former Provincial Member of the Executive Council (MEC) for Education in the Northern Province once commented that the Northern Province was "for all purposes and intention, bound and meant to remain at the lowest level of development" (Motsoaledi, 1997: 3).

Within the new democracy, sport is still used by the government to achieve some of its objectives, such as, for example, the eradication of divisions based on race, which is an attempt to reverse the past injustices of apartheid. It is this changing role of sport that poses so many challenges for GSPOs in South Africa, particularly in the Northern Province where the effects of apartheid are more prevalent.

The functioning of GSPOs is twofold. On one hand, GSPOs are the delivery organs of the state, which is their employer, and on the other hand, they are members of civil society, which they are supposed to serve. The sometimes-conflicting objectives of the state and civil society (the sporting public in particular), often put intense pressure on the day to day activities of GSPOs. Thus, GSPOs are at times expected to look beyond sport promotion in an attempt to reconcile these conflicting expectations by both the government and civil society. How GSPOs succeed in "getting the nation to play" (National Department of Sport and Recreation's motto), is fundamental to this study.

Funding of sport projects is also one of the problems faced by GSPOs in the Northern Province. Sport in the Northern Province is under the Department of Education, Arts, Culture and Sport. Problems such as lack of classrooms at schools, high matriculation failure rates, lack of water and electricity in most communities in the Northern Province are taken as top priority as far as government funding is concerned. This situation leaves sport with little funding.

There are fourteen GSPOs (including the researcher) in the six Department of Education regions of the Northern Province. These officers are unevenly distributed in these six regions. Looking at the vastness of the Northern Province, fourteen GSPOs are not in any way enough for the whole Province. An effort to hire more GSPOs has since been suspended due to a recent call by the MEC for Education, Arts, Culture and Sport, to suspend all spending, except on essential services such as, for example, salaries.

The change in government saw the merging of seven former government structures in the Northern Province. This merger marked the beginning of a new identity for the people of the Northern Province. Thus the day-to-day activities of the GSPOs in the Northern Province, should also be seen as a catalyst of the unification process and hence the achievement of a common identity for the people of the Northern Province. Also fundamental to this study, is the question of how GSPOs contend with difficulties in their endeavour to achieve this common identity through sport.

1.2 Justification of the study

Given the present transformation process within most structures of the South African society, the role that sport can play, such as transformation, is often undermined. The GSPOs' daily activities are but one perspective through which the failure or the success of the present Government's objectives, such as redress, unity, reconstruction and reconciliation, can be viewed. What GSPOs do on a daily basis in their work must also be looked at in terms of how their work impacts on national objectives of the government. The Northern Province is no exception to this process, especially when one looks at the extent of damage caused by the previous policies of apartheid regarding sport development. Thus, the role that sport has to play in, for example, the normalisation of society, can no longer be ignored.

No research seems to have been conducted on the work of GSPOs. Thus, what GSPOs go through in the promotion of sport remains unknown, yet sport is highly regarded as one of the most important role players in the democratisation and normalisation of society in the new South Africa. The presence of high ranking political figures such as the President of South Africa and his cabinet ministers at major sport events such as rugby and soccer, shows how serious some politicians are in using sport to address political problems. Thus, the GSPOs' success in "getting the nation to play" also contributes to the promotion of South Africa's newly found democracy. A study that can inform and enhance their career to serve he Northern Province better is hence, of importance.

GSPOs in the Northern Province are adults and their job involves interaction with other adults such as coaches, sport administrators and trainers. They have their own understanding about themselves, their situation and their experiences that are often different from those of their employers, the sporting public and researchers. Sometimes GSPOs lack interactive ways of conceptualising their own situation. Thus, a study such as this one can help them to define their role in, among other things, building the nation through sport.

Coaches, sport administrators and other role players in sport do not just take what is given. They construct their own meaning based on what their social experiences are, and what they themselves are capable of learning on their own. Thus, the interaction between GSPOs and all stakeholders in sport needs to take these social experiences, which serve as a base for their construction of meaning, into consideration. This study thus, looked into the job of GSPOs within the context of adult education learning theories such as experiential learning, self-directed learning and transformative learning. These theories explore how adults use their own experience to learn new concepts, take charge of their own learning, and how they break away from possible biases formed from experiences in order to accommodate new knowledge.

1.3 Research aims and possible outcomes

This report is aimed at the following:

- to help GSPOs to define their role in sport promotion so as to equip themselves well in meeting the challenges of the rapidly changing South African society;
- to formulate a model that will help GSPOs in the Northern Province to best define their role in the promotion of sport, which will further enhance the achievement of national objectives such as, the normalisation of society, redress, reconstruction and reconciliation;
- To formulate a model that will help the Northern Province Government and its organs to consider implementation when they draw up sport policies;
- To formulate a model that will help in generating critical thinking around the role that GSPOs in the Northern Province can play in nation building; and
- To formulate a model that will serve as a base from which other provinces in the new South Africa can embark on further research regarding how sport can be effectively used to build the nation.

1.4 Research questions

The fundamental question underlying this study is:

Given all the problems and demanding conditions under which GSPOs work in the Northern Province of the new South Africa, and the crucial role that sport should play in the normalisation of society, how do Government Sport Promotion Officers (GSPOs) contend with these difficulties in their day-to-day activities in sport promotion?

Accompanying this question are the following sub-questions:

- to what extent are GSPOs involved in issues of policy?

- do sport programmes in the Northern Province promote the sport objectives of the province?
- how do other role players in sport in the Northern Province perceive sports promotion as executed by GSPOs?

1.5 Research methods

This study made use of the ethnographic approach within a qualitatative framework. Though by definition (Rist in Anderson, 1990:148) this approach involves participant observation, other techniques such as the following were used:

- non - participant observation;
- interviews; and
- questionnaires.

1.6 Scope, limitations and assumptions

1.6.1 Scope

The study was confined to the Northern Province of the new South Africa, excluding the Bushbuckridge/Mapulaneng region, which is presently in the Northern Province, but its community wants to be incorporated into the Mpumalanga Province.

Only thirteen of the nineteen staff members of the Sport Directorate formed part of this study. The Sport Director, Deputy Director and the Assistant Director, all based at head office in Pietersburg were excluded from this study as they form the top management of the Sport Directorate. Three Deputy Directors stationed in the regions, were also excluded from this research for the same reason. This study was also conducted within the scope of the subjectivity of the whole research process as the researcher, a GSPO himself, is, in this process also involved in researching his own experiences.

1.6.2 Limitations

Besides the time constraints which limited this study the following limitations were also experienced:

- As mentioned above, the fact that the researcher is also a GSPO, brings about the question of the objectivity of the whole research process. Here we have a situation where the researcher is investigating himself.
- The findings of this study may not necessarily apply to government sport promotion officers in other provinces as it was only confined to the Northern Province.
- Though permission was granted to conduct the research, other GSPOs initially refused to be observed, interviewed and to write their own diaries. Some of them cited reasons such as that the study was not going to help them directly, as it was a personal endeavour by the researcher to use them, pass his Masters degree, get promoted and leave them where they have been for years.
- The financial crisis currently hitting the province, especially in the Department of Education, Arts, Culture and Sports, is not a good climate for any study. During times like these, respondents tend to exaggerate their responses, that is, either over-criticising the government and its structures or refraining from any comment that may put them in trouble.
- GSPOs observed became a bit uncomfortable the longer the researcher stayed with them, hence, after the first two observations the researcher reviewed the process, and decided to conduct his observation either in the mornings or in the afternoons.
- Distances between officers where GSPOs are stationed made it difficult for the researcher to reach the subjects. Thus, some of the subjects were also observed during sport tournaments. Such days can be very hectic or are without any activity depending on the job allocated to that sport officer on that day. Some officers were observed during some of the visits that the researcher made while co-ordinating a project called "Rural Sport Development". As a result, observation of some GSPOs had to be rescheduled. Some interviews were

done on the telephone hence denying the researcher valuable observation such as facial expressions and other body gestures that may indicate feelings of rejection, anger and disappointment.

1.6.3 Assumptions

The following are assumptions underlying this study:

- The subjects under investigation, that is, GSPOs, are social beings whose daily activities in sport promotion are guided by the socio-cultural environment in which they interact with other social beings. Thus, what they do in the execution of their job is dependent on how they conceptualise their own situation.
- Sport is a useful tool for the achievement of other national issues such as crime prevention, building a healthy nation and contributing to the country's welfare.
- Sport is never apolitical. Sport provision by government may have political agendas such as the use of sport to unify different population groups, to enhance redress and to promote nation building. GSPOs, on the other hand, do not necessarily hold the same agendas.
- People's perceptions are neither wrong nor right. They are but interpretations of reality. Thus, GSPOs under investigation are assumed to have their own perceptions about their work, the sporting public, and about themselves.

1.7 Outline of the remainder of the study.

The objective of the next chapter (chapter 2) is to review the literature on:

- the national policy on sport, which is depicted in The National Department of Sport and Recreation's White Paper;
- the role that sport can, and should play as contended by most sports writers and sports personalities in South Africa;

- sport within the Northern Province context, which will focus on the work of GSPOs in the Northern Province, and how these GSPOs interact with the sporting public and other role players in sport; and
- the influence that adult education theories such as transformative learning, experiential learning, and self-directed learning, have on sports promotion.

Chapter 3 deals with the research design. In this chapter, the ethnographic approach within a qualitative paradigm will be discussed in full. This discussion will include research tools such as participant and nonparticipant observation, interviews and questionnaires as well as their advantages and disadvantages. How the information gathered was analysed and presented, will also be presented in this chapter. The researcher also acknowledges the subjectivity of the whole research process, as he is, also engaged in the investigation of his own experiences. Thus, steps taken to counter-act these weaknesses will also be described in this chapter.

Chapter 4 discusses the findings of the research with the view of addressing the main question and its sub-questions.

Chapter 5 deals with the discussion of the findings cited in chapter 4. It is hoped that through this discussion, what GSPOs do in sport promotion, and what they are expected to do by their employer, the sporting public and the society in which they live will be reconciled. This chapter also puts more emphasis on how GSPOs construct their own conceptions about what they do vis-à-vis the sporting public's perception of what they are supposed to do. It is these conceptions that bring about reconciliation between policy formulation and its implementation. The chapter also discusses problems and errors committed in the entire research process, and what was done to counter-act these problems. Future research recommendations also form part of this chapter. Finally, the chapter suggests topics for further research.


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CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 *Introduction*

In the light of all the changes South Africa has faced since the general elections in 1994, and the fact that South Africa has, since then, re-entered the international sport arena at an alarming rate, South Africans, and more particularly the sport loving South Africans, are having to prepare sports organisations to face the challenges that accompany re-entry into the global sports arena. For South Africa to survive this challenge, and achieve success, it has to relinquish a broad range of traditional practices, approaches and competencies. Such practices include the undemocratic processes in sport policy formation and traditional sponsorship tendencies (National Sport Council, 1996: 4) which only favour elite sports whose participants are predominantly whites. The indifference that exists in sports circles with regards to sport development programmes, and the lack of clarity with regards to how these development programmes operate (Rulashe, 1998: 7), particularly in the rural areas (National Sport Council, 1996: 16), is also a cause for concern.

Those involved in sport are thus called upon to make meaningful contributions to this mammoth challenge. The government is seen by many as one institution that should lead the pack in this challenge. The fact that Sport and Recreation is the "27th Government Department" (National Sport Council, 1996: 16), is cause for concern. The importance of the government's role is also emphasised by the envisaged formation of the Sport Commission, which will ensure direct government intervention in sport matters (Mthembu, 1998: 28; South Africa, 1998: 9).

The role that the government should play in the transformation of sport is twofold:

- First, in the South African context, where sport has been used as an instrument of political wars, it is not always possible to completely free

sport from politics. In the Apartheid era, some race groups benefited from the political system of the day. This state of affairs is more prevalent in the Northern Province which comprises of a population of about 5.4 million, ninety five percent of which are blacks (Central Statistics). The majority of these blacks live in the rural areas. Though sport is played in these rural areas, sport facilities are non-existent. The metropolitan areas of, to mention a few, Pietersburg, Phalaborwa and Tzaneen, boast modern sports facilities such as rugby fields, squash courts and gymnasiums. The political system responsible, that is, the apartheid system, has changed, but the legacy remains. It is thus in the new government's interest that the imbalances that exist between the advantaged and the disadvantaged should be addressed (South Africa, 1998: 2). While politicians sit in parliament and make policies to address these problems, the Government Sport Promotion Officers (GSPOs) are charged with the daunting task of monitoring the implementation. How GSPOs succeed in this mammoth task of reversing the past injustices in sport mirrors the new government's seriousness in building the nation.

- Second, sport can influence other spheres of society such as health, education, law and order and the economy, and thus "extends beyond the confines of participation" (South Africa, 1998: 3). Having noted this role, the government has embarked on sport campaigns such as, to mention a few, "Sport Against Crime" and "Wellness Day" celebrations.

Given the role that the government can and should play in the transformation of sport and hence the whole society in this country, this chapter examines the perceived functions of sport and the philosophical debates around it. Literature dealing with sport promotion in the Northern Province will also be looked at critically. This will help to locate the role that GSPOs can and have to play in the normalisation of the South African society.

Sport Promotion in the Northern Province is run in accordance with the mandate of the National Department of Sport and Recreation (DSR) which comes in the form of a White Paper. The White Paper will also be looked at critically in this chapter.

GSPOs are members of society, hence what they do in their daily activities impacts on the society in which they live. Thus, how their work influences society and how society influences what they do in their work as GSPOs will be looked at critically. It is hoped that this will help in getting a better view of what their role should actually be in achieving the objectives of the government as stipulated in the White Paper.

GSPOs are also adults whose actions are influenced by what they have learnt and experienced in their lives. Thus, what they do in their work, and the role that sport plays in society must be looked at within an adult education framework. Literature on adult education theories such as self-directed learning, transformative learning and experiential learning will thus be looked at critically.

There seems to be no literature on the activities of GSPOs. Literature about "a day in the life " of a student nurse, South Africa and a Victorian servant will thus be looked at critically. From this literature, some aspects, which have a bearing on this study, will be identified.

In conclusion, this chapter will look at how the literature review, despite the lack of studies in "a day in the life of a Government Sport Promotion Officer", has benefited this study.

2.2 Functions of sport

2.2.1 Fact or fiction?

"In cabinet, I have had an uphill struggle to take sport to the top of the agenda among the many other priorities because of the general illiteracy when it comes to sport and recreational issues". Steve Tshwete: Minister of the Department of Sport and Recreation (DSR) in South Africa (National Sport Council, 1996: 23).

Despite the "general illiteracy" that exists in society and in government about the impact that sport has in the lives of people, sport remains an integral part of society. Ignorance, or "illiteracy", as Tshwete calls it, of the role that sport plays in the lives of people is unforgivable if one is to consider the public nature of sport. It is even more unforgivable when such ignorance, is in cabinet.

One of the major functions that sport is said to perform in South Africa, is that it unites people of different cultures, races and denominations (South Africa-Northern Province, 1997: 1). South Africa's past is that of a divided nation. It is within this context that sport is seen as a tool that "has helped to reconcile a nation which was not so long ago divided by Caspirs, Buffels and that nine-letter word" (*Apartheid)* (National Sport Council, 1996: 4). In some sections of the South African communities, the fact that people of different origins come together and begin to find one another in the sports fields on a daily basis, is said to be a proof that "sport transcends racial, ethnic, linguistic and cultural differences" (National Sport Council, 1996: 25). The success stories of the Rugby World Cup and the African Cup of Nations, both staged in South Africa in 1995 and 1996 respectively, are quoted as testimony to the unifying role of sport.

Despite all these success stories, South African sport history remains a complex one. As people begin to unite on sports fields and elsewhere, certain questions are raised. Among others, are the following:

- despite the successes of the national rugby and the soccer teams, do national teams' composition reflects the demographics of the South African population?
- to what extent do sports men and women in the remote parts of South Africa, that is, rural areas and farm communities, enjoy the benefits of sport by, for example, exercising their democratic right to participate in sports activities of their choice?

In sport, the unification process is a daunting and sensitive one. In sport circles in South Africa the so-called "Madiba Magic", is known for making national teams win both inside and outside the boundaries of South Africa. It is this magic that is also perceived as an opium that will melt all our differences and cement the unity that almost everyone in the country is said to be striving for. Once this unity is achieved, it is hoped that it will mark the birth of the real famous "Rainbow nation".

Sport in South Africa, is also said to perform other functions such as the following:

- to project "South Africa's non-racial identity" to the world (National Sport Council, 1996 : 4);
- to make "everlasting friendships" amongst all participants and fans alike (Stander, 1998: 4);
- to act as a tool for crime prevention through projects such as "Sport Against Crime" (SAC). This project is an awareness campaign aimed at eliminating criminal activities by the youth. In this project, prominent sports personalities are used to campaign against crime, making use of physical appearances at sports projects, and through the media (South Africa, 1996: 34);
- to contribute to a healthy lifestyle and thus save the government's Health Budget, millions of rands (South Africa, 1998: 3). Sports health campaigns

such as "Wellness Day" celebrations, funded by the DSR, are cited as examples.

- sport is also said to extend beyond participation and thus can be felt in other issues of national importance such as nation building (National Sport Council, 1996: 4), reconciliation, reconstruction, education and the economy. This notion concurs with the DSR's priorities as laid down in the DSR's White Paper (South Africa, 1998: 5-22). These priorities are said to contribute towards the National Government's Growth, Employment and Redistribution (GEAR) strategy and to the Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP) (South Africa, 1996: 7-8).

For Thomas (1983: 21), sports people come to know and learn about the people themselves and the world on the sports field, hence sport is perceived as a medium of acquiring knowledge.

Sport is by no means a perfect institution. Thus, the functions mentioned above are not without their controversies. The following are some of the debates about the role that sport plays, and should play in shaping the lives of people, especially within the context of a changing South Africa. As these issues are debated, new knowledge is acquired.

2.2.2 The will to win

Expectations of managers, coaches, parents and fans sometimes put so much pressure on most athletes. In professional sport, the rewards, most of which are financial, are so huge that sport can no longer be looked at in its traditional sense of recreation. Sport has become "business" (South Africa-Northern Province, 1997: 1). The athletes would do anything possible to enhance their performance. They thus train hard and even go to the extent of taking illegal drugs to help them win at all cost. Expressions such as, "winning is everything, no one remembers a runner-up" (National Sport

Council, 1996: 193), are sometimes responsible for athletes' irresponsible behaviour. The taking of illegal drugs to enhance their performance and the bribing of match officials to help them win, are some of the most common irresponsible behaviours found amongst athletes.

The will to win by athletes also often puts them and their followers in violent behaviour, despite the belief that sport is some kind of a "safe diversion from violent behaviour" (Cashmore, 1990: 73). Fights between players, fans and officials are very common, especially in spectator-sport such as soccer and rugby.

Sport is also said to play a role in the prevention of crime (National Sport Council, 1996: 23). Yet, it is in big events such as soccer and rugby finals that prominent and respected sports officials are engaged in bribes and drug deals amounting to thousands of Rands. The Motimele Commission, which is currently investigating the South African Football Association (SAFA), is coming out with revelations of illegal deals within South African football (City Press, 13/12/1998). High-ranking officials in South Africa's most popular sport are implicated in this commission. While sport may succeed in taking "the children away from the streets" (National Sport Council, 1996: 23), there is no guarantee that the same children will completely be saved from organised crime, characterised by bribes and fraud in sport.

Though some people claim that sport may be used to unify people of different origins and backgrounds, sport can sometimes cement the divisions between these people. In what McPherson, et al (1989: 24) call the "reinforcement thesis", they contend that sport reinforces social inequalities. It is alleged in this notion, that "people in sport bring their self-interests and prejudice-supporting beliefs and values (for example, against blacks, the disabled, women, or older people) with them when they come to the sport domain", and hence allow beliefs, norms and values that support inequalities to persist. Women may not, for instance, be given opportunities to take up decision-making positions in certain sports structures dominated by men, for example, rugby

and cricket. This discrimination is often based on physical factors rather than on social and psychological factors (Cashmore, 1990: 93). As long as these social inequalities persist, sport people are likely to remain more divided for some time to come.

2.2.3 Sport: Play or work?

Considering the fact that many people are employed by sports bodies in South Africa and around the world, sport may qualify as "work". "Sport is a business for us all" writes Ndhambi, the Chief Director of Sport, Arts and Culture in the Northern Province of the new South Africa (South Africa-Northern Province, 1997: 1). One can only wonder whether Ndhambi had it in mind that as long as sport is "business", it was likely to be "shaped by capitalist interest", and could therefore be "produced, packaged and sold like any other commodity on the market for mass consumption and enormous profits" (Cashmore, quoting Hargreaves, 1990: 70). It is possibly the reason why Kretchmar (in Thomas, 1983: 21), contended that "it is more correct to say ... that one works sport, not plays sport".

Some writers see "sport as a preparation for work" (Cashmore, 1990: 72) yet for some, sport is a means through which people get away from work or as a form of "national pastime" (McPherson et al, 1989: 287). Some sport people start "playing" sport as a form of recreation. In the process, they often find themselves winning and this is where the "business" of sport for these people and others begins. Once the "business" begins, sport is said to become the "prison of measured time" (Cashmore, 1990: 70) and hence "removes all bodily freedom ... and every playful impulse" (Cashmore, 1990: 70-71). Despite the formal nature of administration of sport, sport, to the majority of the South African society is still characterised by the notion of "play" hence it is still considered "a plaything" (National Sport Council, 1996: 23).

2.2.4 Sport and the emancipation of the "minorities"[1]

Sport, it is claimed, sometimes also serves as a form of an emancipation tool for the oppressed and disadvantaged. The achievements of Mike Tyson in boxing and John Barnes in soccer are given as examples. For these minorities, achievement in sport is a way of elevating their status and thus getting the recognition that they would otherwise not have been accorded. While this situation may look like a good venture, it is often at the expense of other pursuits. This is in line with what Cashmore wrote (1990: 91):

> "The danger is, most black young men invest so much energy in sport that little is left for other pursuits. By the time their dreams fade, for others much earlier, they are left with few, if any, career alternatives".

Cashmore (1990: 93), takes it further when he contends that "sport conceals deep inequalities and for all the positive benefits it yields, it remains a source of hope and ambition for blacks only as long as those inequalities remain".

2.2.5 "Sport for all" – Realistic or idealistic?

If the achievements of the South African national teams domestically and internationally is anything to go by, South African sport "has achieved more than other spheres of our society" (National Sport Council, 1996: 4). Despite these achievements, "currently ... national teams do not reflect the racial demographics of South Africa" (South Africa, 1998: 20). This state of affairs raises doubts about the successes of the development programmes of, for example, cricket and rugby. The development programme of cricket has been hailed as the most successful one when compared to programmes of other sport activities (National Sport Council, 1996: 23). Yet, the face of the cricket national team still does not portray the demographics of South African society.

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[1]Blacks, women, the disabled and all other groups who are in minority in decision-making positions in sports structures.

While changing the face of the national teams may remain a good idealistic wish, one must also note that the face of teams is not only determined by the good efforts of sports administrators, such as good development programmes. A number of factors are at play. To mention a few, societal values and norms, the historical aspects and origin of the game and the myths and perceptions that people hold about the game. Just think of a situation where all the black children in Soweto were to play "jukskei" with its history embedded in the famous Afrikaner history of the Great Trek (National Sport Council, 1996: 116). It is not suggested here that this is impossible. What it means is that, at least for now, it would cause some kind of a sensation. For those who were disadvantaged in the past, until such time that South African national teams, particularly those sport activities formerly played by whites, begin to show a change of face by fielding players of colour, there is no way that sport can be recognised as a contributor to nation-building. Tshwete puts it this way:

> "Once a team reflects the demographics of the country, then the team becomes our team, an agent of reconciliation and the unification of our people" (National Sport Council, 1996: 25).

There is also a general perception (myth?) in South African sport that certain sport activities are meant for certain race groups. These perceptions are not without their history. Unfortunately, such a history in South Africa, is that of an unacceptable system of government. It is in this system that people were brainwashed into believing that they were only good at certain sport activities and not at others, and that is possibly the reason why some national teams in South Africa are still predominantly white or predominantly black. That is most probably the reason why the White Paper stipulates that "development programmes should be aimed at the previously disadvantaged. This will ensure that the previously disadvantaged also have access to sport activities of their choice" (South Africa, 1998: 20), and it is hoped that the concept of "sport for all" will be realised.

2.3 Sport Promotion in South Africa

Government sport promotion in South Africa is governed by the National Department of Sport and Recreation's (DSR's) White Paper on Sport and Recreation which, is an official document of the government. This document sets out the objectives of the Department of Sport and Recreation. The objectives are as follows:

- increasing the level of participation in sport and recreation activities;
- raising sport's profile in the face of conflicting priorities;
- maximising the probability of success in major events; and
- placing sport in the forefront of efforts to reduce crime (South Africa, 1996: 1).

In order to realise these objectives, the DSR has set for itself eight priorities which are laid down in the White Paper (South Africa, 1998: 5-22). It is hoped that these priorities will help in the realisation of the DSR's "getting the nation to play" motto. The responsibility of the DSR is the formulation of policy, provision and delivery of sport in the country. To achieve this task, the DSR has sought for partnerships with sport macro bodies such as the National Sport Council (NSC), the National Olympic Council of South Africa (NOCSA) and the National Sports Federations, who serve as its delivery wings.

While the government is determined to make sure that sport is played by all, there are issues that cannot be ignored if sport and what it stands for is to succeed. Some of the issues are:

- the imbalances between the advantaged and the disadvantaged;
- the general illiteracy of the general public about the role of sport in society;
- the lack of "strategic vision and policy for the development of sport" (South Africa, 1998: 2); and
- budgetary constraints.

Despite the fact that the DSR makes policy, it does not have statutory authority to enforce whatever law it deems appropriate. It thus only relies on "the good will of its agents to discharge its mandate" (South Africa, 1998: 9). To address this problem, the government has come up with the Sports Commission and the Sports and Recreation bills. It is hoped, that these bills will give statutory power to the government to intervene in sports matters whenever it is necessary (Rulashe, 1998: 7).

One of the most important responsibilities of the DSR is, according to the White Paper (South Africa, 1998: 14), to develop sport. This responsibility is covered in "Priority Three" of the White Paper (South Africa, 1998: 14) and it reads:

> "To develop the human resource potential required for the effective management of sport and recreation in South Africa".

One of the reasons for this priority's importance is that the majority of the people have little or no technical know how of sport, be it in management, coaching or officiating. Thus, the DSR has set out to take "an audit of the existing resources" (South Africa, 1998: 14), which will inform the strategies that may be taken to empower the sporting public. The DSR, and its agents, are also on a drive to recruit volunteers and to set up an accreditation system which will be "in line with the National Qualifications Framework (NQF)" (South Africa, 1998: 15).

Despite all the good intentions of the DSR regarding sports promotion, some teething problems are still experienced. Some of them are:

- the DSR's responsibility is the provision and promotion of sport. The DSR presently does not have the authority to intervene in problems in sport. Some sport bodies, most of whom have benefited from the apartheid system, make use of this loophole to maintain the status quo and thus keep these sport bodies for particular race groups;
- there is little or no truly unified and representative structures at all levels within a number of sport structures especially in the Provinces;
- there is still a lack of joint planning among stakeholders. As a result, scarce

resources are wasted.

- while the government is said to be the provider, there is still no clarity with regards to who should provide for sport in school and tertiary institutions between the DSR and the Department of Education ministries (South Africa, 1996: 10);
- the fact that the DSR is "last in the budgetary queue" of the government budget makes it a challenging task for the DSR to perform (South Africa, 1996 : 5). It is for this reason that the government has sought partnerships with the business sector. It was reported in the White Paper (South Africa, 1998: 11) that in 1997 the private sector contributed R600 million to sport compared to the government's R43 million.

In conclusion, the sport system in South Africa is based on the co-operative partnership between the National, Provincial and Local Governments, the National Federations, the macro bodies and the business sector. If sport promotion is to succeed, policies and programmes need to be co-ordinated by all these stakeholders. The following section will look at the Provincial Sport and Recreation Department's role in sports promotion and how the GSPOs fit within the structure.

2.4 Sport Promotion in the Northern Province of the new South Africa

The Sport Directorate of the Northern Province operates under the Chief Directorate of the Special Community Services within the Department of Education. According to Sport-Link (South Africa-Northern Province, 1997: 2), it is "the youngest and smallest unit within the Department of Education, Arts, Culture and Sport". The Provincial Sport Directorate has also formed partnerships with the three regional structures of the NSC, provincial sports federations, the provincial region of the United School Sports Association of South Africa (USSASA), the provincial wing of the South African Students Sports Union (SASSU) and the international volunteer groups such as Sport Coaches Outreach (SCORE) and the American Peace Corps, in

the promotion of sport. This relationship is based on the Directorate's motto which is, "Us all in the interest of Sport and Recreation" (South Africa-Northern Province, 1997: 2).

Figure 2.1 below shows the organogram of the Northern Province Chief Directorate of Special Community Services. The Directorates of Arts and Culture, and Library and Heritage, are not fully shown in this organogram because the organogram is only aimed at showing all the ranks in the Sport and Recreation Directorate.

It is of importance to note that the Regional Deputy Directors operate like the Chief Director. They have three Sub-Directorates to run. They thus, have to report to the Regional Director (not shown in the organogram), the Chief Director and the three Directors of the components that form this Chief Directorate. Their ranks are equal to the Sports Deputy Directors at head office, yet their functions differ considerably.

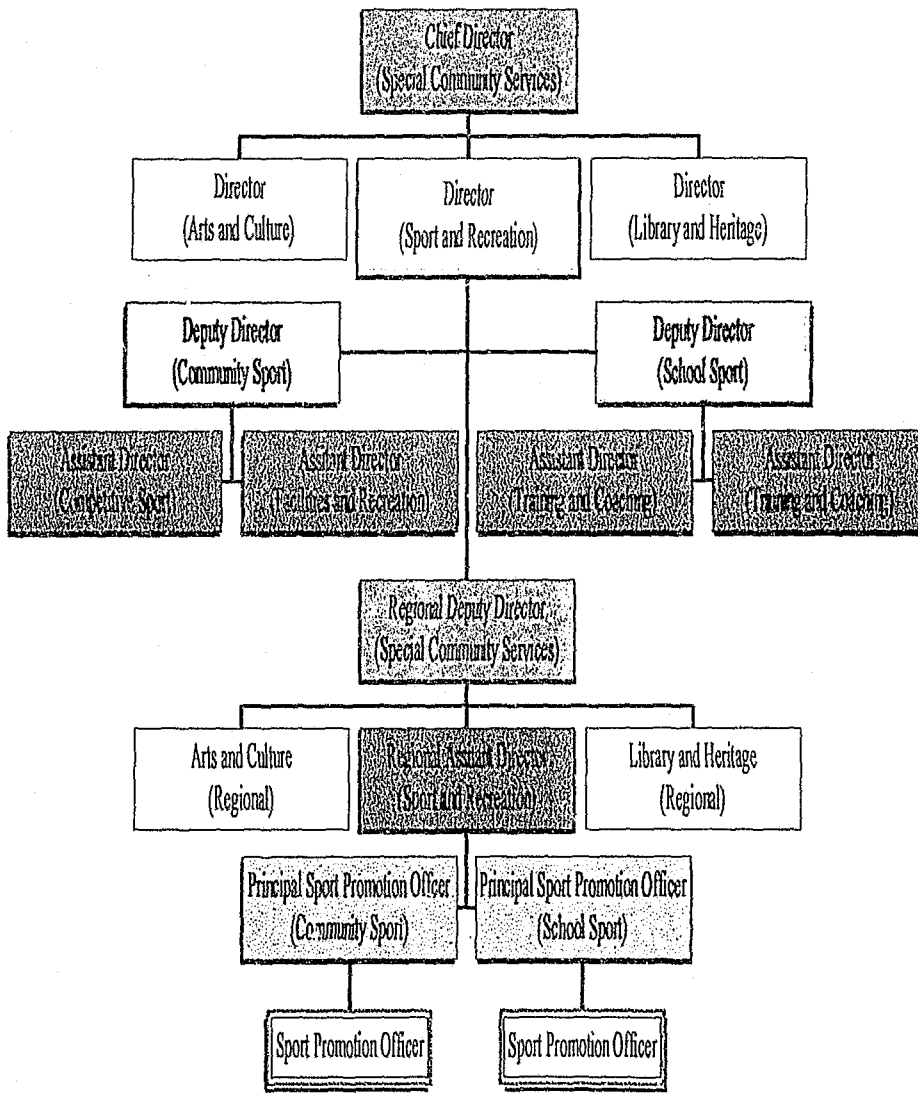
According to Morare (South Africa-Northern Province, 1997: 2), the Director of Sport and Recreation in the Northern Province, the Directorate faces three challenges in the provision of sport. The challenges are:

- to fund sport at an amateur level in order to develop future champions;
- to promote and monitor integration of sport organisations and thus avoid duplication of similar sports associations divided according to racial lines; and
- to provide sports facilities to the needy most of whom are in the rural areas.

The good intentions of the Sport Directorate is however, marred by the problems faced by the Provincial Department of Education. Some of the problems are the high grade 12 failure rate, lack of classrooms, maladministration, poor financial management (Moholoa, 1998: 9) and racial and ethnic tensions (Northern Review, 20/3/1998).

Figure 2.1

NORTHERN PROVINCE SPECIAL COMMUNITY SERVICES CHIEF DIRECTORATE ORGANOGRAM (adapted from the "job description" document).



The latest development in the Northern Province is that the Chief Directorate of Special Community Services, under which the Sport Directorate falls, has been removed from the Department of Education. The Chief Directorate now has its own Member of the Executive Council (MEC) despite the fact that it also falls under the Department of the Premier. It is not yet clear whether this Chief Directorate is a department on its own or a Chief Directorate within the Department of the Premier. The latter seems unusual, as it will mean that we have a department within a department. Nothing has been finalised yet, administratively. Once everything is finalised regarding the transition, it is hoped that the issues about whether it is a department or a Chief Directorate will be cleared.

The following section will look at who GSPOs are, who they think they are, and how they influence and are influenced by the society in which they live.

2.5 The Government Sport Promotion Officer (GSPO) in the Northern Province.

GSPOs are government employees charged with the task of seeing to it that the White Paper's mandate is carried out. This implies that they monitor the provision of sport throughout the whole province. Clearly, this is not a small task as at times they find themselves faced with issues which directly impact negatively on sport. Some of the issues are:

- lack of integration in some sport activities (South Africa-Northern Province, 1997: 2);
- lack of facilities, especially in the rural areas (South Africa-Northern Province, 1997: 2);
- racial tensions (Northern Review, 20/3/1998); and
- lack of recognition of the minorities, that is, women, the disabled and blacks.

In trying to address these issues, GSPOs also get involved in, among other things, the interpretation of these issues, the extent to which they are capable of addressing these issues, and the extent to which, they are or are not involved in the development of

their job description. The GSPOs' success in facing these challenges can help sport play its meaningful role in the Northern Province.

2.6 Sport and society

Society plays a role in how people conceptualise sport. Greendorfer (1995: 69) contends that socialisation into or away from sport begins when one is still a child. Rewards and punishment are part of the experiences that will later influence the lives of children when they grow up. The learning does not necessarily take the form of a conscious process. Some grown-ups impart certain skills to their children without being aware. In what Greendorfer (1995: 70) calls the "social learning paradigm", he contends that socialisation into or away from sports is based on "personal attributes, socialising agents and socialising situations". These are said to be responsible for the formation of perceptions about sport at an early age.

In the Northern Province where the majority of the people come from the rural areas where traditional life is still rife, sport promotion is sometimes in conflict with traditional cultures of these communities. These cultures have been the source of social conflict, particularly between men and women, for years. The male dominated world of sport has, through these cultures, come up with myths which, were aimed at discriminating women in sport. Among some of the myths was that sport was "harmful to the female reproductive system and a threat to child bearing" (McPherson et al, 1989: 220). It is this and other myths that often resulted in women moving out of sport as soon as they got married, or as soon as they wanted to have children. It is no wonder that, currently, there are fewer women in decision-making positions in sport in the Northern Province. Maybe the provincial "Women and Sport Movement" had this in mind when they formulated their vision. Their vision reads, "just as sport has much to offer South African women, South African women have much to offer to sport" (South Africa-Northern Province, 1997: 11).

2.7 Sport, society and adult education learning theories

Sport is a learning institution. By its physical nature, it offers life long learning based on outcomes. When the new democracy dawned, South Africa's re-admission into the international sport arena meant that South Africa was faced with the challenging task of re-educating its sports people within the dictates of the new democratic order. This is one challenge most sport loving South Africans face with a lot of frustration, anger and uncertainty.

Learning in sport is based on outcomes. For athletes to master certain skills, they must learn by doing, and it's only when they have mastered the skills of that particular activity that one can say that so and so is, for example, a good cricket player. The learning may be direct or indirect. An athlete, coach or administrator can directly learn the skills, rules and strategies of a particular game. Athletes can learn how to live a healthy lifestyle (National Sport Council, 1996: 24). They can also learn how to work as a team, dealing with being a role model, dealing with being a loser and the fame and ridicule that go with them.

Sport in the Northern Province (NP) has the following sport development programmes:

- Sport Pioneers: A NSC sport programme for prospective trainers, aimed at developing sport skills for young children.
- Rural Sport Development: A National DSR project aimed at developing sport in the rural areas.
- Sport Coaches Outreach (SCORE): A volunteer programme aimed at developing Physical Education and sport activities at schools and in the rural communities.
- Sport leader course: A capacity building project offered by the Provincial NSC, aimed at the development of sport leaders, be it in coaching, technical officiating or administration.

The Provincial DSR, through the GSPOs, is the co-ordinator and monitor of all the above programmes (South Africa, 1998: 7).

GSPOs are adults who often have to deal with other adults in the execution of their duties. The programmes above are offered on a train-a-trainer basis. Adults are thus, trained to go and train other adults and children in different sports skills. It is thus of importance that adult education principles are considered for these sport programmes to succeed. Some of the adult education learning principles that should be considered in the running of these programmes are:

- the tutor and the learner are equal partners in the learning process. (Ensor, 1995: 22);
- though the tutor/facilitator has "a major role to play in influencing learner achievement" (Knowles, quoted in Ensor, 1995: 11), the needs of the learner must be recognised, and thus what should be learned should be negotiated;
- learning should encourage self-reflection; and
- learners' experiences should also be considered.

It is thus within this context that GSPOs should understand adult education learning theories such as self-direction, experiential learning and transformative learning in order to make sense of their job description.

The nature of GSPOs' work is multi-faceted. First, they sometimes take the role of a trainer, educator and facilitator, to mention a few. To be able to operate in these roles successfully, they must be able to analyse the needs of the different sport stakeholders, meet their needs, and be able to evaluate and assess whether these needs have been met or not. Second, they must foster life long learning for themselves and their constituencies. They, thus have to be multi-skilled so as to meet the vast and varied demands of their job. They must also be able to help their constituencies to break away from all sorts of unquestioned beliefs, norms and values such as, for instance, prejudice against women, the disabled and other minorities. How GSPOs

address the above challenges needs to be looked at within the context of the adult education theories described below.

The conceptions people have about sport are social constructions. Such constructions are part of people's experiences. Through certain rewards and punishment, young boys and girls are socialised into what may be considered as an acceptable or unacceptable behaviour (Greendorfer, 1991: 69). It is such experiences which later form beliefs, norms and values of people's lives. Though such experiences may sometimes form fixed beliefs, when adults use and reflect on these experiences, knowledge is enhanced and these experiences are transformed into valuable knowledge. This is what Jackson and Caffarella (1994: 5) call experiential learning which, they contend, "simply means learning from experience".

Sometimes learning from experience is problematic because of the difficulty in breaking away from what one has, through the years, accepted to be the only truth. According to McPherson (1989: 220), women were considered as weak, hence it was alleged that they could not take part in strenuous sport activities such as long distance running, rugby, soccer and boxing. Medical practitioners, researchers and educators supported this belief. It is such teachings that may later restrict people from learning about new conceptions in sport. In what Mezirow (1991) calls "transformative dimensions of learning", he shows how adults break out of the learning boundaries set by society.

The purpose of adult education, or any kind of education is to make the subject a continuing "inner directed", self – operating learner. (Kidd in Brockett and Hiemstra, 1991: 9). Sport by its very nature involves some kind of self-direction. Think of young children who are taught how to play tennis. First, they have to be taught the different grips of a racquet which, they may associate with whatever experience about grips of, for example, a bread knife or a toothbrush. From this experience, they will spend hours on their own in the tennis court practising to master the grip and other

techniques of tennis. Most of what goes on after that first lesson is self tea .hing where the learners take the initiative in developing their own learning and thus take control of their own learning. It is this kind of learning that has implications for GSPOs.

In any society, education is a way of life. For Candy (1991: 425) education's aims are individual fulfillment and societal transformation. It is within this framework that people engage in an "interactive relationship between new ideas, experiences and insights and existing frames of reference, where each interacts with and mutually modifies the other, that learning takes place" (Candy, 1991: 295). This learning may be in sport or any aspect of society. To what extent GSPOs understand this "interaction" in learning, determines how successful they will be in realising the objectives of the government. Thus, educating society on the role that sport can play in addressing most national issues such as crime, unity and reconciliation, becomes the daunting task of GSPOs, despite all problems associated with it.

The following is thus a short description of how education, adult education in particular, affects sport promotion. Self-directed learning, transformative learning and experiential learning will thus be looked at as different but complementary forms of learning, which form the basis of how long term benefits can be realized in sport promotion.

2.7.1 Sport Promotion and self-directed learning

Kidd (in Brockett and Hiemstra, 1991: 9) contends that "the purpose of adult education, or any kind of education is to make the subject a continuing 'inner-directed self-operating learner' ". This notion does not exclude some consideration of expert knowledge from some outside source. This is particularly so in sport where sport coaches, technical officials and administrators have varied expertise in the different sporting activities that they are involved in.

Various conceptions are held as to what constitutes self-direction in learning. Self-direction in this context will mean that one takes responsibility and control of what one is learning. This learning has direct implications for GSPOs as they go about work as mandated by the White Paper of the national DSR. As mentioned earlier, the responsibility of the DSR is, "the development of government policy and the provision and delivery of sport and recreation" (South Africa, 1996: 3). At the level at which the GSPOs operate, one wonders whether any GSPO knows what the government policy is, regarding sport. One concept in the White Paper (1998) stands out very clearly, and that is the motto of the national DSR. It reads thus, "Getting the nation to play". It is not only in "getting the nation to play" that government policy rests. It also rests on other issues such as addressing the imbalances about resources, unity and giving everyone an opportunity to exercise choice in what sporting activity to take part in. Now, the big question is whether the GSPO, operating at a level where there is lack of "information" (Sports and Recreation Directorate-Northern Province, 1997a. item b.1) and no staff development programmes, will be able to look at those concepts analytically. Thus, some kind of critical thinking which, is the basis of self-direction is required for GSPOs to be able to execute their duties with insight.

The National DSR White paper mentions four objectives which Tshwete, alleges, gave rise to the "getting the nation to play" theme (South Africa, 1998: 1). The objectives are:

- increasing the levels of participation in sport and recreation activities;
- raising sport's profile in the face of conflicting interest;
- maximising the probability of success in major events; and
- placing sport in the forefront of efforts to reduce the levels of crime.

These objectives set the pace for sport promotion in South Africa and indeed, in the Northern Province.

Tshwete (South Africa, 1998: 1) also sees these objectives as "transformative". Transformation in a South African context is a complex concept, especially in sport

where the majority of the people were barred by law from taking part in certain sport activities in certain areas. While the government calls for redress it is at the same time calling for reconciliation which may not of necessity be achieved through the same means. For some, redress may mean taking away from the "haves" and giving to the "have-nots" of this country, which may breed tensions and conflicts, which go against reconciliation. To understand such dynamics of the terms used in a changing society like South Africa, GSPOs are supposed to have certain analytic skills. These skills will help them to be self-reliant, autonomous and self-confident.

Combs (in Candy, 1991: 4) contends that "the world we live in demands self-starting, self-directing citizens capable of independent action". In order to realize the DSR's objectives, GSPOs need to have the ability to learn on their own.

Self-direction, in this context as mentioned earlier, does not mean some kind of solitary learning. It takes into consideration some external influence such as the "material and social environment" (Candy, 1991: 310). Candy goes on to acknowledge the importance of "contact with other people for most forms of learning". The social environment in which these people are brought up in most cases, influences people's behaviour. Their experiences and what those experiences mean to them guide most of what constitutes their beliefs, norms and values. Thus, Jarvis (in Candy, 1991: 310) contends that as individuals grow they "become in part, a reflection of the sum total of experiences" they have in society. However, societal behaviour is not static. It changes with time. It is through self-direction that people are called upon to be aware of the complex and rapid changes around them (Candy, 19991: 59), to reflect on personal meaning and shared understanding, and to think critically and thus be able to challenge the status quo. Hammond and Collins (1991: 14), in what they call "critical self directed learning" contend that in self-directed learning, learners are "encouraged to see themselves as social actors with power to influence events positively". Boud (in Hammond and Collins, 1991: 14) also contends that it is through self-direction in learning that one becomes "aware of the common

sense beliefs and rules of thumb that inform (one's) thoughts and actions". It is, he continues, this awareness that promotes "personal growth".

If GSPOs can be empowered they will be able to attain personal growth, and they will also be able to assess which sport programmes are suitable for whom and thus be able to challenge learner beliefs and assumptions as they reflect on what those programmes are aimed at.

2.7.2 Sport Promotion and Experiential Learning (EL).

"Life can only be understood backwards but it must be lived forwards" (Kiergaard in Jackson and Caffarella, 1994: 1).

This thinking puts greater impotance on the merits of experience. What people really learn from experience is a debatable issue. Jackson and Caffarella (1994: 5) see experiential learning (EL) as simply "learning from experience." In this context, EL will be looked at in terms of people acknowledging the limitations of their experiences. This acknowledgement will enable them to emancipate themselves from the subjective biases and stereotypes that come with experience. From this notion, people can learn from what people know, and be able to make sense of what is happening in their lives and thus be able to make a meaningful contribution to society.

To be able, to understand why people do or do not do things, in a particular order, one has to know what experiences, those people have been through in their lives. One should also consider what meanings they constructed from those experiences. It is thus of importance that whatever sport programme is offered, such a programme should incorporate ways which will help people to "reflect on their own experiences" (Jackson and Caffarella, 1994: 1). Thus, experiential learning, in this context should be looked at within the context of people's ability to make use of their unique backgrounds, experiences, social affiliation and contexts of their lives, to acquire new

knowledge. In experiential learning (EL), adults are also encouraged to reflect on those experiences and thus be able to assess whether to "modify, transfer, and reintegrate what these experiences mean in terms of their values and beliefs..." (Jackson and Caffarella, 1994: 31)

Boydell (1976: 19-20) on the other hand, sees EL as "meaningful discovery" involving "sorting things out... by restructuring ... perceptions of what is happening". "Sorting out" here is likely to mean "making sense" of experience, as contended by other proponents of this theory such as Jackson and Caffarella (1994).

In sport, biases and beliefs aimed at disadvantaging women and other minorities need to be challenged. If such challenges are to be successful, instructors, trainers and indeed GSPOs need to "confront their own ... behaviours and beliefs about race, social class, and gender influence..." (Jackson and Caffarella, 1994: 34). They also, need not only refer to their own experiences, but also reflect on their own experiences. It is within this reflection that GSPOs will be able to re-conceptualise their role as facilitators of change. Thus, sport programmes and activities should not only be aimed at meeting the objectives of the government. They must also be aimed at producing mature responsible sport people who are self-reflecting critical thinkers and good facilitators of change. These are the people who will not only transform society, but also liberate society from the limitations of "culture and biography" (Mezirow 1991: 119).

2.7.3 Sport and transformative learning

It is sometimes difficult to break out of "successful" experiences, especially in sport where certain tactics have been proved, to be successful for years. In what Mezirow (1991) calls transformative learning, he looks at "oppressive ideologies, habits of perception and psychological distractions". He shows how certain assumptions

gained from experience can prevent adults from "abstract thinking and self-reflection" which are of crucial importance to acquiring new knowledge.

It is only when people exercise their freedom to negotiate meanings, purposes and values, critically, instead of passively accepting the social realities defined by others (Mezirow, 1991: 3), that transformation of society can really take place. The objectives of the government can be however attractive, as long as people are not able to make good sense of them, the objectives are doomed to failure. It is thus crucial for GSPOs to first transform themselves by reflecting on some of the taken for granted ideologies which limit their acquisition of new knowledge. By becoming aware of their limitations, they can learn how to deal with them.

While it's a good thing to be able to "negotiate meanings, purposes, and values critically, reflectively and rationally instead of passively accepting the social realities defined by others" (Mezirow, 1991: 3), for GSPOs it remains a dicey situation. First, they are not involved in the development of the policies whose objectives they have to realise. Second, government has certain bureaucratic structures which sees to the implementation of policy. It is these bureaucratic structures, which are responsible for the drawing of the GSPOs, job description. Thus, GSPOs are only expected to deliver sports promotion according to certain set standards.

GSPOs are rational beings. They have their own beliefs, norms, values and assumptions. When they meet some aspect of their work, what is important is not what happens to them but "how they interpret and explain" what happens to them (Mezirow, 1991: Xiii). Such interpretations may be based on false assumptions and experiences gained in life. It is within this context that GSPOs' reactions regarding their job should be understood. Rather than being perceived as ignorant, incompetent and irrational, they should be perceived as individuals who have been denied what constitutes their work and should thus be helped to breakaway from their naïve

experiences. This will help them to develop critical thinking and be able to "help their employers develop creative strategies for dealing with change" (Mezirow, 1991: 195).

2.8 Other Related Literature

As indicated earlier on, there seems to be no literature on the job of GSPOs in the Northern Province. Other literature, which looks into "a day" in the lives of other practitioners, will thus be looked at in this section. Such a literature includes the works of:

- Bengu, M. " A match between theory and practice – a typical working day of a student nurse."
- Davidoff, L. and Hawthorn, R. " A day in the life of a Victorian servant."
- Thornley, B and Hall, C. " A day in the life of South Africa."

Though the above studies have nothing to do with GSPOs, the methods used in these studies have a bearing on the study whose literature is reviewed here. Table 2.1 below shows a summary of this literature.

Mabel Bengu (1995) conducted a study on "a typical working day in the life of a student nurse in an urban hospital". In this study, she investigated the gap that exists between theory, that is, what student nurses learn in class and what they actually do in practice in the hospital wards. She thus embarked on a study that was aimed at reconciling theory and practice in the nursing profession.

Davidoff and Hawthorn's (1974) "A day in the life of a Victorian Servant" is a fictitious novel based on earlier writers who presumably, might have conducted some studies on Victorian servants. Methods employed are anybody's guess. One can only assume that these earlier writers might have conducted some close observation, looking at the detailed account of a Victorian's day in this novel.

"A day in the life of South Africa" (1992) is a photographic account of what South Africa went through on the 26th May 1982. Hall and Thornley who are, by no means, experts in the world of publishing compiled this book. The compilation of this book was aimed at two things:

- to capture the activities of South Africans in pictures on a single day; and
- to raise funds for the South African National Council for the Blind.

The book contains pictures taken all over South Africa from 00h00 to 24h00. A photographic competition was organised to collect these pictures.

Bengu (1997) only used diaries as a research tool. Feelings and opinions were recorded in these diaries. From these recordings, how the nurses conceptualised their situation as student nurses was brought out. Fears, hopes and expectations of these student nurses are also identified in this study. These are the same features that appear in Davidoff and Hawthorn's (1974: 12) "Victorian servant". Like the student nurses, the Victorian servant had fears, hopes and expectations in her work. The activities in the "day in the life of South Africa" also held certain uncertainties, such as, for instance, what perception of South Africa did those South Africans in the pictures have of themselves and of South Africa.

What is evident in the above literature is that what happens in a day in one's life is contextually bound. Student nurses could only perceive their situation within the framework dictated to them by the nursing profession and so was the Victorian servant whose work life also played a role in her social life. Table 2.1 below shows a summary of the literature discussed above.

Similarly, the GSPOs in this study are also looked at in terms of how context influences their day-to-day thinking about their job, how they perform and how they think of themselves in the execution of their work.

Table 2.1 Summary of other related literature

Author & Book	Methods employed	Sources of information	Salient features & comments
Bengu, M (1995) A match between theory and practice -- a typical working day of a student nurse	Diaries	Student nurses	- through these diary recordings one could see how student nurses bring their social life into their job, for example thinking about an appointment with a boyfriend; - student nurses also had certain fears, hopes and expectations in their job; - the researcher had to promise anonymity of her subjects as well as getting permission for such an investigation; - they perceived themselves differently from the perception that their seniors had about them.
Davidoff & Hawthorn A day in the life of a Victorian Servant	A fictitious novel: possibly observation by earlier writers	Earlier writers	- Victorian servants also had their fears, hopes and expectations; - their social life was influenced by that of their masters; - how they perceived themselves and their situation was in most cases not necessarily the same as how they were perceived by their masters.
Thornley & Hall A day in the life of South Africa	- Photography - The media - Observation	Participation in the competition	- through the pictures it is evident that South Africa's day starts long before the sun has risen; - it is ironic that the book was meant to raise funds for the people who will never be able to see it, that is, the blind; - not all pictures were published due to lack of space, thus, the book only portrays a small portion of what really goes on in the day of South Africa.

2.9 Conclusion

Views on the role that government should play in the promotion of sport are still divergent. While some contend that sport should have nothing to do with politics, others feel that, given the history of South African politics, no sport issues should be left to chance. Thus, this chapter has tried to look at the role that sport plays in shaping society within the context of a rapidly changing South Africa. The sports mandate contained in the DSR's White Paper was also looked at with a view of looking at how it affects the Northern Province's sport promotion. GSPOs are members of society. How their activities influence and are influenced by society also formed part of this review. GSPOs who are also adults are sometimes involved with other adults in the promotion of sports. Thus, adult education learning theories such as self-directed learning, transformative learning and experiential learning were also looked at with a view of showing the important role that these learning theories have in the promotion of sports.

Other literature reviewed in this chapter were those of "a day in the life" of other practitioners. Though this literature is not related to this study, its review helped in a number of ways. To mention a few:

- methods used in this literature have relevance to this study;
- identification of how subjects conceptualise their own situation; and
- ethical issues involved in humans as subjects.

Successful sport promotion in the Northern Province, does not only depend on the efforts of GSPOs and its agents, but also depends on how all stakeholders in sport, and society in the Northern Province perceive the concept of sport promotion and how it touches their lives.



CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH DESIGN

3.1 Introduction

In the researcher's view, the ethnographic approach within a qualitative research framework is best suited for this study. Ethnographic approach with its emphasis on participant observation was used to study the Government Sport Promotion Officers (GSPOs) in the Department of Education, Arts, Culture and Sport in the Northern Province of the New South Africa. This chapter will thus cover research aims, methodological approach, research techniques such as interviews and questionnaires and the researcher as participant and non-participant observer.

3.2 Methodological approach

As indicated in the introduction of this chapter, an ethnographic approach within a qualitative framework was used in this study. This approach helped the researcher in "developing an understanding of individuals (in this case, GSPOs) in their natural state, taking into account the relevant context" (Borg et al, 1995: 94). An ethnographic approach also allowed the researcher, who is a colleague of the subjects being researched, to combine his experiences, and those of his colleagues through participant observation coupled with other helpful techniques such as interviews and questionnaires.

3.3 Ethnographic methodology

3.3.1 Definition

List (in Anderson, 1990: 148) defines ethnographic research approach as a "research technique of direct observation of human activity and interaction in an ongoing and naturalistic setting". By definition, this method involves participant observation (Burgess, 1985: 37). Schumacher and Macmillan (1993: 37) also contend that an ethnographic approach relies on participant observation. They go on to add interviews and content analysis as some of the techniques that an ethnographer uses to get first hand information from the subjects being studied.

In Hymes's words, (in Burgess 1985: 43) ethnography is "a way of discovering what is the case". Subjects that are humans have their own realities that are socially constructed. Thus, meanings that they ascribe to events, people or objects in their daily lives depend on how they construct their own realities (Schumacher and Macmillan 1993: 406). In order to get to understand how people make sense of their lives, ethnographers need to understand these people's thoughts and meanings, feelings, beliefs and actions "as they occur in their natural context" (Schumacher 1993: 406). Thus, ethnomethodologists are more interested in the often taken for granted context in which their subjects live. Cohen and Manion (1994: 31) sum it up by saying "ethnomethodology is concerned with how people make sense of their everyday world".

3.3.2 Appropriateness of the method

This method is most appropriate for this study because through participant observation the researcher was able to understand what GSPOs, in the Northern Province of the new South Africa, go through in their daily activities. The researcher was also able to get more insight into the impact that sport has on national issues such

as nation-building, reconciliation and the normalisation of the South African society. An ethnographic approach also allowed the researcher to take part in the GSPOs' activities, which helped him to understand how they made sense of their work. This also helped him to understand how their work influences their lives as social beings. One other reason why this method was appropriate for this study is that it allowed the researcher to triangulate, that is, to use other techniques to complement observation. Techniques such as interviews and questionnaires were also accommodated in this study.

3.3.3 Research questions

Ethnographic methodology is not meant to test or formulate any general law. Ethnomethodologists are only interested in studying the ways in which meaning is made of particular phenomena in specific settings (Bailey, 1978: 18). Through discovering and cataloguing of the taken for granted rules, ethnomethodologists can discover how people make sense of their own situation. This is likely to differ from time to time and from place to place, hence making generalisation of such findings impossible. It is within this context that this study, rather than generate any general law, was aimed at looking at how GSPOs in the Northern Province cope in their day to day activities.

The main question in this study is, "given all the problems and demanding conditions under which GSPOs work in the Northern Province of the new South Africa, and the crucial role that sport should play in the normalisation of society, how do they cope in their daily activities in sport promotion?"

Other questions accompanying the main question are:

- to what extent are GSPOs involved in issues of policy?
- do sport programmes in the Northern Province promote the Province's sport objectives?

- how do other role players in sport in the Northern Province perceive sport promotion as executed by the GSPOs?

3.3.4 Techniques

Participant observation, interviews and questionnaires were used in this study. Initially the researcher had included the diaries as a research tool. This tool was later abandoned as the subjects failed to hand in their diary recordings. The forms designed by the researcher in which GSPOs could record their activities for a twenty four hour day were often said to have been misplaced, left at home or office, or lost. More copies were given to the subjects and these, unfortunately, also suffered the same fate. The following is a discussion of each tool used in the study.

3.4 Discussion of research tools

3.4.1 Observation

Mitchell and Jolley (1992: 424) define observation as "simply watching behaviour". This tool is the most important tool in ethnographic research. Human activity and interaction are observed directly on "an ongoing and naturalistic setting" (Rist in Anderson, 1990: 148). Observation enables one to get a "comprehensive in-depth picture of behaviour (including non-verbal behaviour) in a particular setting".

The use of observation has, according to Mitchell and Jolley (1992: 424), two problems. The first problem is that subjects are likely to change their behaviour when they realise that they are being watched. The second is that researchers are human beings, with their own experiences and hence biases. Thus, researchers' personalities and motives may affect what they actually observe. Despite these problems, this tool still helped the researcher to paint a more accurate "picture" (Fraenkel and Wallen, 1990: 377) of human behaviour, in this case, GSPOs in the Northern Province.

Thirteen GSPOs in the Northern Province were observed in a period of six months, that is, from March to August 1998. Tables 3.1a and 3.1b show details of the GSPOs who were observed. These tables also show that the officers are unevenly distributed in the six Education Department regions of the Northern Province.

Table 3.1a Summary of details of Government Sport Promotion Officers (GSPOs) observed and interviewed.

Home language	Sex	Marital status	Academic qualifications	Professional qualifications
1. Xitsonga : 5	1. Male : 8	1. Single : 4	1. Matric : 8	1. Education : 5
2. Sepedi : 3	2. Female : 5	2. Married : 8	2. 1st degree: 5	2. Physical Education : 2
3. Isindebele : 1		3. Divorced : 1		3. Social work : 2
3 Setswana : 2				4. Sport Management : 1
4 Tshivenda : 2				

Distances from where the researcher is based, that is, Mankweng Area Office in Region 2, also known as Central Region, to the subjects, was a problem. The problem was however solved when the researcher was given responsibility for the co-ordination of a National Department of Sport and Recreation (DSR) project named Rural Sport Development (RSD). The researcher was thus, required to travel to the identified rural communities to prepare for "sport le ..." workshops. It is during these trips to these communities that the researcher also visited his subjects for observation.

Table 3.1b Regions where GSPOs are stationed. (according to the Department of Education regions)

Regions	Number of GSPOs
1. Region 1 (Western)	2
1. Region 2 (Central)	4
2. Region 3 (Northern)	2
3. Region 4 (North Eastern)	3
4. Region 5 (South Eastern)	1
5. Region 6 (Southern)	1
TOTAL	**13**

In order to get consistency in observing subjects' behaviour, observation was conducted at the subjects' offices and during staff meetings and sports events. Each of these locations of observation will be discussed below.

- **In their offices**

The initial plan was to observe the subjects for the whole day. This plan meant that the subjects would be observed from 08:00 to 16:30. After the first two observations, this plan had to be revised. Subjects soon became tired of being followed for the whole day. The duration was reduced to observation either in the mornings or in the afternoons. Three of the five subjects who were observed in their offices preferred to be observed in the mornings. Two of these five had to be observed again during

sports events because on the day that these two were observed in their offices, they were relocating to another office in the block nearby.

Observation of GSPOs also included the observation of the appearance of their offices. Different features of these offices such as, the size of the office, presence of sport posters, suitability of the furniture, availability and type of the telephone(s) used, and the number of people sharing the office, were observed. Due to distances that the researcher had to travel after each observation, most field notes were written up at home.

- **In sports events and meetings**

GSPOs are field workers who spend most of their working time with different sports people at sports events. Observing them in their offices only would have denied the observer some valuable information on what the day of a GSPO really looked like. Thus, GSPOs were also observed in sports events and meetings. Seven GSPOs, including the two that were observed in their offices, were observed in four sports events shown in table 3.2a below.

Table 3.2a Observation details in sports events.

EVENT	DATE	NO. OF GSPOs	VENUE
ElektroWise Sub-Juniors USSASA Athletics Championship	3-4 April 1998	1	Pietersburg stadium
Northern Province Aerobics Competition	23 May 1998	2	Seshego

The launching of the Provincial DSR newsletter	25 may 1998	2	Pietersburg
Opening of the Ngwaritsi Makhudu-Thamaga Sports Centre	29 August 1998	2	Schonoord

The choice of the above events for the purposes of this research was based on the attendance of GSPOs at these events. In each sport event, the researcher chose to observe the first one or two officers that he met. In the next sport event the same process was followed. In the case where the same officer observed in the previous event fell amongst the first one or two, the researcher would move on with the process until he met an officer who had not been observed.

The Northern Province Sport Directorate normally holds one staff meeting per month. In the six months that the researcher was to observe his subjects, two meetings were chosen. The following is how these two meetings were chosen. The researcher asked a colleague to choose his two favourite numbers between one and six. The colleague chose three and four. Meetings that were to be held on the third and fourth month after the process of observation had started were targeted for observation. In these two meetings only three GSPOs were observed (see table 3.2b).

Table 3.2b Observation details in staff meetings

DATE	NO OF GSPOs	VENUE
6 May 1998	1	Head office – Pietersburg
10 June 1998	2	Head Office – Pietersburg

Due to the intense work involved in observing, on those two meetings, the researcher's contribution to the deliberations was minimal. Also, there was not much time for note taking, thus notes were completed after these meetings.

~ **The social context of observation**

Government Sports Promotion Officers (GSPOs) do not live in isolation. They have families, they go to church, they go for shopping and they take part in other societal activities such as weddings and funerals. It will thus be naive for any researcher to go and observe members of a community without first looking at its socio-cultural context. This is in line with what Bailey (1990: 284) wrote about ethnomethodology :

"Ethnomethodology sees the social structure as something that is continuously generated by societal members' continual process of interpretation. We never stop trying to make sense of our world and to explain what is happening."

It is therefore within this context that the researcher set out to observe GSPOs within their socio-cultural context. How they made sense of their work also formed the basis for this observation. The researcher conducted an informal small-scale analysis of the cultures of all thirteen officers and that of their communities. This analysis could not be documented as it was based on informal interviews and the researcher's experiences with the cultures of the Northern Province.

The dominant cultures in the Northern Province are those of the Bapedi, mostly in the central part of the Province, the Vatsonga/Machangana, mostly in the Northern and the Eastern parts of the Province, the Vavhenda, mostly in the Northern part of the Province, and the Amandebele, mostly in the Southern part of the Province.

The analysis of the sports officers suggests two main categories. These two categories ranged from the highly conservative Vavhenda to the highly outspoken Bapedi. These categories are by no means proven, and thus cannot be used against, or in favour of any particular ethnic group in the Northern Province. They are merely the researcher's categorisation based on his experiences and conversations he had with friends and colleagues. It is this cultural analysis that helped the researcher not to tread on his subjects' beliefs, norms and values.

GSPOs have their own interpretations of themselves, the communities they interact with and their work. These interpretations are not necessarily, the same as those of their employers and the communities that they serve. The socio-cultural context of the GSPOs had to be considered before they could be observed. This consideration helped in the gaining of entry and the establishment of rapport with the GSPOs.

- **Gaining entry**

Access to GSPOs did not give many problems to the researcher. This was because of the fact that the researcher is also a GSPO. Permission from the Chief Director was asked for and it was granted. The fact that the researcher had just come from a study leave, also helped him in legitimising himself for the research. The researcher also explained to each GSPO what the purpose of the research was.

~ **Establishing rapport**

Re-socialisation of the researcher into his subjects' culture was of utmost importance to this study. For the researcher, gaining rapport was made easier by the fact that he was observing his colleagues who knew him well. The researcher's understanding of the Northern Province's languages, customs and cultures, also made it easier for his subjects to trust him.

~ **Observing and recording of data**

As indicated earlier, observation of the GSPOs was done in their offices, during meetings and during sports events. It was not possible to take down notes every time the researcher observed a particular behaviour. The researcher heeded the call by Bailey (1978: 259) in which he advises researchers not to "jot conspicuously" as it may cause the subjects to change their behaviour. The researcher thus relied on his memory to compile his notes at home after each observation. The researcher designed a form based on Leyland's five components of field notes (Bailey, 1978: 259). The form only covers three of the components, which are:

* running description;
* previously forgotten happenings that are now recalled; and
* personal impressions and feelings.

The recording of "personal impressions and feelings" was aimed at checking the researcher's bias in his observation. He thus became his own research subject. (Bailey, 1978: 260).

Despite the fact that data recording, and data analysis (next section) are discussed separately, it must be noted that in ethnographic enquiry, both data collection and data analysis may take place simultaneously.

~ **Data analysis**

GSPOs are governed by their job description, which is based on the White Paper of the National DSR. To analyse what was observed, the researcher had to make his own taxonomies of the different GSPOs. He classified them under the headings:

- those who conformed to their job description.
- those that did not conform to their job description.

~ **Advantages and disadvantages of observation**

*** Advantages**

Fraenkel and Wallen, (1990: 377) contends that "by going out into the world and observing things as they occur, we are (usually) better able to obtain a more accurate picture". The use of observation in this research benefited this research in the following ways:

- the observer was able to "discern ongoing behaviour as it occurs" (Cohen and Manion, 1994: 110), which enabled him to write notes on what he considered important for his research.
- observation took place in the natural setting of the GSPOs. Thus, the set-up was not restrictive. Subjects were able to continue with their day to day activities without having to, I believe, alter any of their schedules to suit the observer.
- observation of the subjects took six months. This duration helped the observer to establish better relationships with his subjects. Even those who at first did not like being watched in their activities soon got used to it. At the end of the observation, there was much more improved rapport between the subjects and the observer.
- two GSPOs were observed more than once, and this enabled the researcher to pick up "chance" occurrences from accustomed happenings (Barley, 1978: 250),

thus, giving the observer relevant information regarding the daily activities of the GSPOs in the Northern Province.

*** Disadvantages**

Despite all the strengths mentioned above, this method also had its weaknesses. The discussion below deals with these weaknesses.

Observation of subjects involved a face to face situation between subjects and the observer. This situation did not go well with some GSPOs. They questioned the promise of anonymity given by the observer. At first most of them refused to be observed. It is only when the researcher promised them that no names would be used in the report that they allowed the researcher to observe them. Thus, observation forms only had code-names, such as "SPO 10".

The face to face situation in observation made GSPOs uncomfortable. They tended to change some of the "unofficial" activities that they would normally do in the absence of the observer such as, for example, a friend popping in anytime for tea. The researcher thus, had to reassure them that some of these "unofficial" activities formed part of the observation process because sport officers did not live in a vacuum.

Successful observation involves taking down notes. This note taking had the disadvantage of taking much of the observer's time when done during the observation process, and it also changed the behaviour of the subjects. To counteract these weaknesses the observer had to jot down what he considered to be the main ideas of the observation, and resorted to writing full notes at home. In certain settings it was virtually impossible to take notes as the observer was also a participant, for example, at sport events.

One other weakness of this technique was the fact that the researcher was the only observer. Sometimes during observation, he would suffer from what Fraenkel (1990: 320) calls the "observer bias". Thus, interviews were also used to clarify some aspects of the observation that appeared ambiguous.

The researcher, a GSPO himself, had to guard himself against what Burgess (1985: 177) calls the "familiarity trap". This is a situation where during observation, everything observed seems familiar because the observer believes that everybody seems to know what he has observed hence there would be nothing to record. The observer had to try to make what looked familiar look strange (Burgess, 1985: 177). He recorded everything he saw, including the taken for granted things.

The observer is familiar with his subjects who are his colleagues. The danger here was that the observer sometimes got carried away with the observation process at the expense of the observation process itself. He sometimes found himself in what Cohen and Manion (1994: 111) and Burgess (1985: 219), call "going native", which is defined as a "state of mind where through emphatic identification with the subjects, the demands of the research project itself fails to be met" (Burgess, 1985: 219).

Observation of GSPOs took place at their own different settings. Though trends were established, it was difficult to generalise whatever seemed to be the same kind of behaviour by different GSPOs. The observer thus had to ask for clarity to confirm whether the behaviour of one officer was indeed the same as that of the other.

Long periods of observation such as six months had the following weakness in this research:

- during this period of observation some GSPOs were absorbed into new ranks because of the absorption process of public servants in the Northern Province. Thus inconsistencies of certain behaviours of some officers, were observed. These inconsistencies threatened the reliability of the observation process. The

researcher thus had to acknowledge that a change in context of the officers' environment may affect behaviour. He thus had to update his observation methods by, for example, asking for clarification regarding what he perceived as an inconsistent behaviour.

3.4.2 Interviews

Cohen and Manion (1994: 271) quote Cannel and Kahn in defining interviews:

"*a two person conversation initiated by the interviewer for the specific purpose of obtaining research relevant information and focused by him on content specified by research objectives of systematic description, prediction or explanation*".

Cohen and Manion (1994: 271) also contend that for interviews to succeed, they have to be aimed at "obtaining research-relevant information".

The rationale for using interview in this study was:

- to supplement observation, for example, clarification of some behaviour which seemed ambiguous;
- that it allowed for in-depth information through probing and careful questioning;
- since this study was conducted within a qualitative paradigm, interviews helped in the collection of more qualitative data;

Interviews in this study took the form of both structured and unstructured interviews. All thirteen interviewed officers refused to be tape recorded during the interviews. In the structured interviews, questions were prepared beforehand and responses to the questions were recorded on the empty spaces provided next to the questions. These questions were first piloted by conducting interviews with three GSPOs chosen randomly. At the end of each structured interview, subjects were requested to comment on their responses to the interviews. This process was aimed at eliminating

the researcher's bias and or subjectivity. Unstructured interviews were conducted during observations. They were used to clarify observed behaviour that seemed ambiguous.

Interviews benefited this study in the following ways:

- the response rate was one hundred percent;
- the interviewer could clarify questions that seemed unclear or ambiguous;
- the interviewer could probe for more specific answers where he thought the answers given were too general;
- interviews provided the researcher with access to what the subjects know, like or dislike and what their attitudes and beliefs were (Cohen & Manion, 1994: 372) regarding their work; and
- it was used for triangulation.

Despite all the above strengths, the following setbacks were experienced during the interviews:

- Interviewer bias: the interviewer often misunderstood some responses. He thus had to ask respondents to comment on their responses after each interview. The subjects were, hence given a chance to amend whatever they thought did not agree with their responses.
- Some questions in the interview schedule were open-ended. Some respondents were tempted to give more information than was needed. The interviewer thus, had problems with the recording of such responses. He had to pick up only what he considered relevant to the research for recording.
- Lack of anonymity: interviews, in this study, lacked anonymity. The interviewer knew exactly the person he was interviewing. The subjects were, at first uncomfortable with this set up. It is only after they were promised that their names would not be used in the report that they became free to give what the researcher considers, to be genuine answers to supposedly, sensitive questions.

Cohen and Manion (1994: 275) contend that "no matter how hard an interviewer may try to be systematic and objective, the constraints of everyday life will be a part of whatever interpersonal transactions she (he) initiates". Thus factors such as the degree of trust between the interviewer and the interviewee, the level of sensitivity of the question, and the interpretation of the questions by the respondents, need to be taken into consideration if the interview is to succeed. The interviewer thus had to acknowledge that inconsistencies in some responses might have been as a result of the different constraints of everyday life and not as a result of the error in the questions posed.

To analyse the data from interviews, certain categories of the responses were made. Similar or near similar responses were identified and grouped together to form categories. Opposite responses to the same question were also identified and categorised. These categories served to identify consistencies and inconsistencies of the responses.

3.4.3 Questionnaires

The National DSR's White Paper (South Africa, 1998: 8) stipulates that the "core business of the National Sports Council (NSC) and its provincial affiliates, is the execution of the participation/development of sports mandate". The provincial NSC's (three of them) form the delivery wing of the Provincial DSR. Whatever mandate the GSPO receives, ultimately has to be delivered to the sports people through these structures. It is thus within this context that opinions about GSPOs had to be sought from the three NSCs and their affiliates, that is, the different sports federations in the province.

Before questionnaires were sent out to all identified respondents, they were first piloted. Ten members of the local school sports structure (Mankweng Area office),

were chosen randomly for the piloting of the questionnaires. The questionnaires were changed three times as a result of this process.

Questionnaires were then sent to the three NSC's in the Province. Other questionnaires were sent to the provincial sport federations, including the provincial school sport organisation, that is, the Northern Province United School Sport Association (NOPRUSSA). Out of a total of 30 questionnaires sent to the different provincial sport bodies, only 21 were returned. See table 3.3 for details.

Table 3.3 Details of questionnaire respondents

Sport Structure	Number sent	Number returned
3 Provincial NSCs	3	2
Teachers Organisations	2	2
Transitional Local Councils	8	5
Sports Federations	13	8
Women and Sport	2	2
Sport for the Disabled	2	2
TOTAL	**30**	**21**

The questionnaires were accompanied by an introduction, which clearly stated the purpose of the research. As a form of an incentive, the introductory portion informed the respondents that the research would help improve sport promotion in the Province. Three categories of questions were asked in the questionnaires, and these are:

- personal details;

- an adapted[1] version of the Likert scale type of questions; and
- open-ended questions.

The use of questionnaires in this study provided the study with the following advantages:

- anonymity - respondents were able to give their responses on their own in the absence of the researcher. This situation allowed them to respond to what may have been considered to be sensitive questions.
- all respondents were faced with the same wording of the questionnaire and thus the analysis of their responses was enhanced

The following weaknesses were however, experienced with the use of questionnaires in this study:

- the fact that questionnaires were completed in the absence of the researcher, denied the researcher certain behavioural patterns of the respondents, which includes gestures and facial expressions which can give more insight into what is being researched.
- in the absence of the researcher, the questionnaires' wording can mean different things to different respondents, as was experienced during the piloting of the questionnaires. Though ambiguity was eliminated, there can be no guarantee that some words in the questionnaire may not be interpreted differently by different respondents.
- the response rate was at first poor. Different respondents had to be approached more than once to persuade them to complete and return the questionnaires.
- all questionnaires were hand delivered. Travelling costs for the researcher was a problem. He thus had to wait for the respondents to come to the capital city of the

[1]One response in the Likert scale is that respondents have a choice of a "neutral" or a "do not know" response. The researcher has done away with this response in order to persuade respondents to at least agree or disagree.

Northern Province, Pietersburg, for their meetings as most of them use the city as their headquarters.

3.5 Validity and Reliability

"Validity refers to the appropriateness, meaningfulness and usefulness of the inferences researchers make based on the data they collect, while reliability refers to the consistency of these inferences over time" (Fraenkel and Wallen, 1990: 379). Validity thus calls for research instruments to measure the concept it is supposed to measure, and such a measurement should at least be accurate (Bailey, 1978: 68). For reliability the instruments should measure whatever it is supposed to measure consistently.

In this ethnographic study, qualitative techniques of data collection and analysis were used. For this reason, problems associated with qualitative data collection and analysis, such as bias and subjectivity, could not be completely avoided. Such biases and subjectivity include the following:

- that the researcher is a colleague of the subjects and is well known to his subjects.
- that the researcher is also subjected to all the assumed pressures that his subjects are subjected to.

To increase the validity of the techniques used in this study, questionnaires and interview questions had to be subjected to a number of tests, such as piloting them, before they were used. Triangulation, that is, the use of more than one technique in research, was also used to increase the validity of the instruments used. In addition, a wide range of people within the sporting public, was involved in the study hence enhancing the reliability of the research techniques.

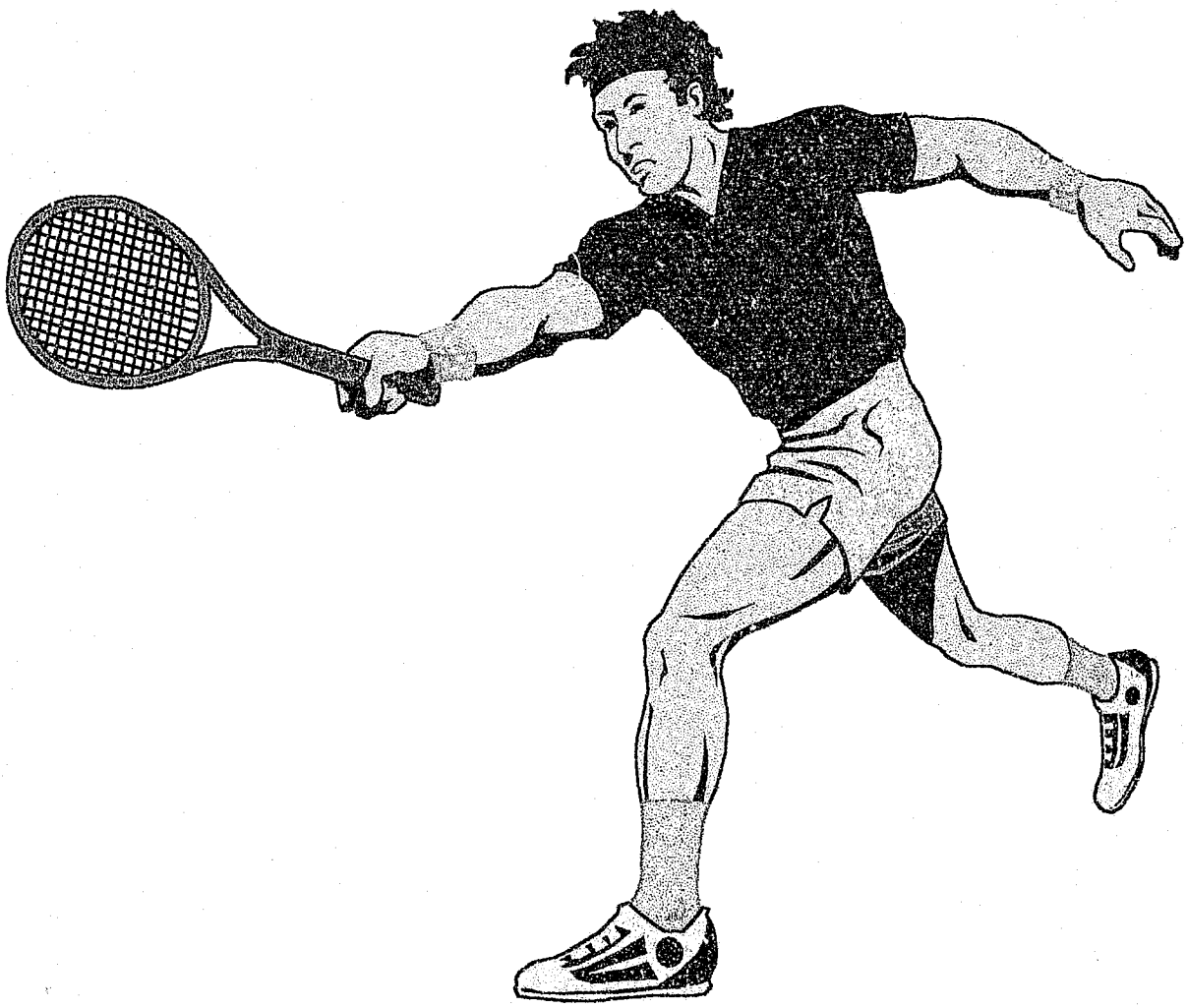
3.6 Conclusion

Sport in South Africa presents unique opportunities for research. This is especially so if one looks at it within the context of South Africa's newly found democracy. Sport has been used, and is still used, both in South Africa and internationally, as a tool to address socio-economic problems associated with any new democracy. It is within this context that the choice and use of research methods in a study such as this one needed careful consideration.

Activities of GSPOs are diverse and complex, when one takes into consideration the formal nature of sport vis-a`-vis the notion of 'play'. Thus, the use of the methods described above had to consider such diversities in order to come out with good results. Despite the complexity, it was still possible to combine interviews, questionnaires and observation to come out with qualitative data.

The diversity in cultural, social and political contexts in which GSPOs work, called for flexibility in the choice of the methods employed in this study. It must however be noted that "ethnographic studies depend on being accepted by the community" (Burgess, 1985: 57) one wishes to study. Thus, the success of the methods used also depended on the rapport that the researcher had established with his subjects.

In conclusion, methodology in any research is a complex concept. Complex in the sense that not all details of methods and techniques used can be documented. It is hoped that the discussion above has covered what the researcher would consider as a fair amount of details as far as the methodology used in this study is concerned. The following section, that is, chapter 4, discusses all findings that were obtained as a result of the above methodology.



CHAPTER 4

RESULTS

4.1 Introduction

This chapter is aimed at giving the results which emerged from interviews and observation of thirteen Government Sport Promotion Officers (GSPOs). It also covers responses from questionnaires filled in by twenty-one different members of sport federations and other role players in sport in the Northern Province. It is thus divided into three main sections, which are:

- the background to the results, which covers:
  * who the researcher is,
  * who the researched are, and
  * what motivated the researcher;
- the results which cover the findings which emerged from interviews, observation and questionnaires; and
- what was learnt by the researcher from the research process.

In this study, the researcher, a GSPO himself, is also the researched. While the researcher was in the process of researching his subjects, he was also researching himself. This is not to say that the findings of this research only reflect researcher's bias. What it is aimed to say is that, what he observed and heard was partly influenced by his experiences, beliefs, values and assumptions. Despite all the problems associated with researcher bias, and the subjective nature of this research, the researcher tried at all times to maintain his objective stance wherever possible. It is thus within this subjective context that the findings of this research are presented here.

4.2 The background

The researcher, a GSPO himself, is also the subject of this research. As he went about interviewing, observing and analysing the context, in which his subjects

operated, he was also, unconsciously finding out about himself. Thus, this section covers who the researcher is, who his subjects are, and what motivated him to do this research.

In trying to understand who the researcher is, it is important to look at what motivated the researcher's choice of this topic and his subjects. Other than the academic benefits of being awarded with a Master of Education degree, the researcher was also motivated to do this research by the low standards of the Northern Province's athletes. Despite all efforts, by different stakeholders in sport, to unite athletes of different races, provincial and national teams still do not represent the demographics of the South African population. The selection of national teams to represent South Africa in international events still shows a racial bias, especially in team sport such as rugby and cricket. The problem is even worse when one looks at sport activities formerly played by whites such as swimming and motor racing where people of other colours other than whites, do not feature even in provincial teams. By engaging in the study the researcher hoped to find ways and means through which, the government and other stakeholders in sport can improve the participation rate, performance and unity in sport in the Northern Province.

The state of sport in South Africa, and more particularly in the Northern Province, also played a motivational role in this research. As political, economic and cultural systems change, so do sport systems. The fear and uncertainty that come with change, bring about conflicting perceptions among role players. Thus, role players, formulate conflicting objectives, for example, objectives based on whether sport should be business or just play.

One other motivation for this research was that, for the researcher, sport is one institution he hates to love. While sport is associated with all the good things such as good health and economic viability, one notes with despair, how sport is used by greedy people to fulfil their egos. Sport is so highly commercialised that athletes have become objects to be displayed on counters and windows for sale.

The will to win at all costs which results in athletes taking illegal drugs to enhance their performance, match fixing and bribing of match officials, are also some of the things that taint the image of sport. Sport, thus, loses its recreational objective, which is characterised by the notion of "play". Despite this dark image of sport, one cannot imagine a Northern Province, or any other place in the world, without some kind of sport, be it for recreational or for competitive reasons.

The researcher was introduced to sport at a very late stage in life while he was at a tertiary institution. This may have been because of the fact that he grew up in a family whose religious beliefs actually forbade sport or any recreational activity. When he was introduced to sport, it was within the context of a divided nation. His experience as an executive member of the then Far Northern Transvaal Tennis Association (FANTTA), an affiliate of the South African Congress of Sport (SACOS), an organisation known for its slogan, "no normal sport in abnormal society", developed a yearning to unite sport at all levels. He was thus involved in trying to unite school sport in the then Far Northern Transvaal, which was divided into ethnic and race groupings in the late eighties and the early nineties. This venture failed. When he was appointed as an Area Sport co-ordinator for the then Department of Education and Training (DET) in 1994, he and other sport activists revived the unity process. This gave rise to a unified school sport body in the Northern Province which was then named the Northern Transvaal United School Sports Association (NOTUSSA). This name has since been changed to the Northern Province School Sports Association (NOPRUSSA).

The researched are the thirteen GSPOs whose background is quite varied. They were formerly employed by the different government structures within the boundaries of the old Far Northern Transvaal, which, included the homelands of Venda, Gazankulu and Lebowa. They therefore, represent all ethnic groups within the Northern Province. Other government structures such as the former House of Assembly (Whites), Representatives (Coloureds) and Delegates (Indians), are not represented in this sample as they had their own format of sport promotion during

the Apartheid years. Due to the GSPOs' different backgrounds, they represent diverse perceptions concerning sports promotion in the Northern Province.

4.3 Results

This section is aimed at giving an overview of responses that came as a result of interviews, observation and questionnaires. It is divided into four main sections, which are:

- responses from interviews;
- observation;
- responses from questionnaires; and
- reconciliation of results from all three tools.

4.3.1 Interviews

As indicated earlier, all thirteen GSPOs refused to be audio taped during interviews. An interview schedule was prepared beforehand. Despite the fact that specific questions were asked, respondents were often tempted to give long explanations to these questions. Some of these responses were not relevant. As a result, some flexibility was allowed during these interviews, though the researcher only took down what he considered as relevant answers to questions being asked.

The interview schedule comprised three sections, which are:

- how GSPOs rate their managers and staff of the offices where they are stationed, as far as sport was concerned;
- issues related to their job as sport promotion officers; and
- the role that sport should play in nation building, reconciliation and reconstruction.

- **How GSPOs rated their managers**

All GSPOs confirmed that they had work schedules. A summary of their

responses is shown in table 4.1a below. This table also shows how GSPOs rated their managers and staff concerning the general management of their seniors and the attitude of staff members towards sport respectively.

Table 4.1a GSPOs' responses on general management and attitudes of staff members.

A *1.Any work schedule?*	Yes	: 13 GSPOs
	No	: 0 GSPOs
	Weekly	: 13 GSPOs
	Weekly & monthly	: 01 GSPO
	Weekly & yearly	: 01 GSPO

B. RATINGS	0-3(poor)	4-6(average)	7-10(good)
2. General office management.	6 responses	6 responses	1 response
3. Sport knowledge of manager.	6 responses	5 responses	2 responses
4. Attitude of staff on sport.	1 response	6 responses	6 responses

GSPOs did not seem to have much confidence in their managers, be it at head office, regional offices or area offices. Twelve GSPOs rated them as between poor and average. Only one GSPO felt that his manager, a regional director, had good management skills, despite the fact that his assistants did not support him. As far as sport knowledge of these managers was concerned, only two GSPOs rated them as good, while the rest rated them as between poor and average.

GSPOs were also asked to give a response on how other members of staff in the offices where they work, perceived sport. Out of thirteen GSPOs, only one reported that other members of staff where he worked did not have a good attitude towards sport. The rest rated them from average to good. Some GSPOs even claimed that some members of staff, whose work was not sport, even helped them after working hours and during weekends in some sport duties.

GSPOs were also asked to respond to questions relating to issues about their work. These issues were based on what they liked the most, what they regretted the most in their work, and what they would like to see happen to make their work more effective. The following is a discussion of these responses.

- **What GSPOs enjoyed the most in their job**

This is one section where all GSPOs had very little or nothing to say. Most were tempted to discuss things they did not like about their work in their responses to this question. These responses were thus taken as responses to the next question which was on their regrets and things they did not like in their work. Table 4.2 below gives a summary of the GSPOs' responses.

Table 4.1b GSPOs' responses to interview questions

DESCRIPTION	RESPONSES
*What *GSPOs enjoy in their work* ***Acronym:** GSPOs: Government Sport Promotion Officers	• Organising courses/ projects/ programmes (3 responses) • Coordinating/ planning sport activities (2 responses) • Helping and working with people to organise sport (2 responses) • No longer enjoy anything/ no interest in sport promotion anymore (3 responses)

Three GSPOs claimed that there was nothing to enjoy in their work. One of them also claimed that if it were not for the salary that he earns every month, he would have left the Sport Directorate a long time ago. The majority of the GSPOs claimed that they enjoyed working with people. Thus, planning, co-ordinating, and organising of programmes and courses were their favourite activities.

- **What GSPOs regretted the most in their work**

Lack of support and appreciation by the sport management of the GSPOs' efforts, and poor working conditions, dominated the GSPOs regrets in their work. Table 4.1c below gives a summary of the GSPOs' regrets in their work.

Table 4.1c GSPOs' responses concerning their regrets

Description	Responses
GSPOs' regrets in their work	• There is a lot of administrative work (3 responses) • Poor working conditions, for example, lack of government transport, poor communication and long working hours without remuneration (3 responses) • Unclear line function (1 response) • Seniors not supportive and appreciative of the GSPOs' efforts and sacrifices in their work (4 responses) • Sport is not a priority in the Department of Education in the *NP and in government (2 responses) • The sport management (Directorate) does not consult with GSPOs sufficiently in decision making (1 response) • Lack of manpower (3 responses) • No regrets (1 response) • Lost interest in sport promotion because of poor working conditions (2 responses) ***Acronyms:** NP : Northern Province GSPO: Government Sport Promotion Officer

Management, that is, the Chief Director, the Director and the Deputy Director, were blamed for the poor working conditions that GSPOs reported that they worked under. Management was also blamed for its lack of planning. GSPOs claimed that management was more reactionary than proactive. They claimed that management only called for urgent staff meetings when there was a programme from the National DSR, or if there was something demanded by their seniors, otherwise staff meetings were very scarce. It was also claimed that in the case where staff meetings were held for planning, such plans would not be followed up. Most GSPOs thus felt they were taken for a ride, because only decisions that were taken at head office by management were implemented.

GSPOs also claimed that the line function between management and their subordinates was not clearly laid out. They were confused as to whom they should approach concerning issues such as subsistence claims, transport and other administration problems. These complaints were even worse for GSPOs working at the regions and area offices. What confused them the most was the fact that they were accountable to two or three seniors, that is, the Regional Director and the Sports Director and/or the Chief Director. These three seniors often worked in

isolation with each not properly informing the other about what GSPOs' activities really are. They gave an example where each senior would request for the same report from one GSPO.

> *"Once I have given a report to my immediate senior, I take it he will give it to the other seniors."*

The above is how one GSPO understands the line function to be. They also claimed that this problem was worsened by the fact that Regional Directors are on the same rank as the Sports Director at head office. Thus any information that came from the Sports Director was often disregarded by the Regional Directors because he was not accountable to the Sports Director but to the Chief Director.

One other thing that GSPOs blamed on management was the fact that despite all their sacrifices, that is, working over time and over the weekends under strenuous conditions, their efforts were often not recognised and appreciated by their seniors. They claimed that despite numerous reports and recommendations they have made to management to enhance their performance, nothing was done. They wondered if management ever read their reports.

Communication between sports management and GSPOs was said to be poor. GSPOs claimed that, members of the sport management always attended workshops, and that the outcomes of such workshops would never be communicated to them, as if such workshops were for their own personal development only. As indicated earlier, communication between management at head office and regional management was reported as poor or non-existent. This situation was said to strain working relationship between GSPOs and their regional managers.

GSPOs also reported that getting government transport to help them with their sports errands was often problematic. This situation was said to be more prevalent in the regions where GSPOs were expected to use pool cars. It was claimed that in most cases such cars were used by officials with "more serious matters" to attend

to, such as, for example, school examinations and collecting of teachers' cheques from head office. Unfortunately, sport was never considered a "serious matter" in the Department of Education in the Northern Province. They also reported that even when transport was available, many conditions were attached to the vehicle. Some of the conditions mentioned are:

- that one needs a permit to use the car after official working hours and during the weekends;
- that one should not carry unauthorised goods in the vehicle. What constitutes "unauthorised goods" was often confusing as GSPOs often carry goods such as equipment and food. Depending on the traffic official inspecting the GSPO, food in a government car may be declared "unauthorised goods".
- that all government cars should not exceed 1 500km per month unless a special permission was granted.

Most GSPOs claimed that they would be much better with subsidised cars that had no such restrictions. A number of GSPOs complained about doing a lot of administration work. This includes the balancing of government car log sheets, writing submissions and filling in of forms when one wanted to make a telephone call. They claimed that administration clerks should do these, because GSPOs were supposed to do mainly fieldwork.

As indicated earlier, the Sports Directorate operates under the Department of Education, Arts, Culture and Sport. GSPOs complained that most of their seniors were educators who did not think sport was important. For these GSPOs, it was not very pleasant to work under such seniors. It was claimed that for these educators, sport was just "play". With so many problems that the Department of Education in the province was experiencing, such as the high Matriculation failure rate, shortage of classrooms and lack of discipline at schools, sport was made to take a back seat.

All GSPOs reported that they were under - staffed. They would hence be happy to see the government employing more sports promotion officers.

It was interesting to note that GSPOs also needed promotions badly. They had previously, expressed some discontent when Physical Education teachers from colleges of education which were recently closed down, were supposed to be re-deployed to the Sports Directorate. The majority of the GSPOs felt that these teachers were likely to occupy senior posts such as Assistant Director, which GSPOs had earlier applied for. These teachers already had higher qualifications and higher salaries to enable them to be absorbed into these positions without any financial implication to the government.

- **What changes they would like to see**

Changes that GSPOs reported they would like to see are categorised into five groups. These groups are:

- on management issues;
- on operational issues;
- on resources;
- on administration issues; and
- other issues.

Table 4.1d below summarises the changes that GSPOs think would enhance sport promotion in the Northern Province.

Table 4.1d GSPOs' responses regarding changes they would like to see

Description	Responses
Changes that GSPOs would like to see	• To have their own offices (4 responses) • To have direct line telephones (4 responses) • To improve communication between regional managers and sport managers, and between sport managers and *GSPOs (3 responses) • To improve the attitudes of regional managers towards GSPOs (2 responses) • To have GSPOs' immediate seniors or managers who are sport people (2 responses) • To have their own Department of Sport and Recreation in the *NP (1 response) • To have a more practical job description (1 response) • To have their own computers (1 response) • To forge links with *TLCs in sport promotion, not only in sport facilities (1 response) • To have a less confusing organogram (2 responses) • To have more manpower (5 responses) • To get rid of, or reshuffle the whole management staff at head office (3 responses) • To spend more money on provincial sport development programmes and not on funding provincial teams to national tournaments (1 response) ***Acronyms:** NP : Northern Province TLC : Transitional Local Council GSPO: Government Sport Promotion Officer

~ **Management issues**

GSPOs blamed the organisational structure of the Sports Directorate for the poor conditions under which they worked. They claimed that the fact that at regions and area offices they had to report to Regional Directors and Area Managers, who are not sport people, made it difficult for them to work effectively. They claimed that all six Regional Directors' appointments were based on qualifications in education and not in sport. Thus, these managers prioritised educational issues at the disadvantage of sport issues.

GSPOs also claimed that the relationship between the Regional Directors and the Sports Director at head office was poor due to the lack of clarity of the line function between regions and head office on sport issues. GSPOs thus felt that they were always caught in the squabbles between Regional Directors and the

Sports Director, because Regional Directors would sometimes refuse to take a request from the Sport Director. What came out clearly, was that the two parties were not on good talking terms. Three of the six regions have Deputy Directors responsible for sports, arts and culture. In these regions, GSPOs did not have to report to the Regional Director. Despite this line function, problems around logistics were still experienced because sport was not considered a priority. GSPOs thus highlighted the fact that it would be better if the Sport Directorate could be on its own.

The alleged poor relationship between the regions and head office was claimed to be the cause for the poor attitudes of some Regional Directors towards sport issues. One GSPO claimed that he was treated like a "step-child" in his region.

GSPOs in the Northern Province are charged with the responsibility of co-ordinating school sport and community sport. GSPOs claimed that since their managers were educators, it was sometimes difficult to allow GSPOs to give service to community sport. Sometimes education regional boundaries clashed with community sport boundaries which, are based on National Sport Council (NSC) boundaries. Thus, it was reported that GSPOs were not allowed to cross education boundaries to give service to NSC structures outside a particular education region. Some GSPOs felt that the Sport Director was reluctant to solve these issues because these issues did not affect them directly. Some GSPOs thus felt that the whole management, that is, from the Chief Director to the Assistant Director at head office should either be "fired", "reshuffled" or be "replaced".

GSPOs also claimed that as much as there was a poor relationship between the sport management at head office and the management at regional offices, there was also poor communication between head office management and GSPOs at regions. They blamed management for the lack of consultation on issues that seriously affected their work. GSPOs also claimed that there was also poor communication amongst themselves as GSPOs. Thus, progress of projects and programmes allocated to some of them (the few who were lucky to have them)

was not shared amongst all GSPOs. GSPOs were only called in to help with logistics, such as, transport, arrangement of venues and the distribution of documents. They claimed that it was rare for one GSPO to consult other GSPOs in the initial planning of a particular project. Thus, GSPOs claimed that management should help in establishing participative management where all GSPOs should participate in the development and planning of projects. One GSPO expressed his dissatisfaction:

> *"Go tla bjang management ole 'busy' while di-juniara tsa bona dile 'relaxed'?"*
>
> (How come is management so busy while their juniors are so relaxed?)

~ **Operational issues**

GSPOs claimed that the operations of the Sport Directorate were badly structured. They claimed that the Sport Directorate of the Northern Province hardly had sport projects of their own. The only projects they had were those of the National DSR which are "rural sport", Sport Information and Science Agency's (SISA's) "talent identification programme" and "women and sport". GSPOs thus, recommended that the Sport Directorate should have it's own projects.

GSPOs also reported that the Sport Directorate strategies on sport development should change. They alleged that most development programmes only developed individuals and not the communities. They thus would like to see a revision on sport development strategies to make these programmes to benefit all communities. This could be done by, for example keeping a database for all people trained in all the different fields of sport.

One other issue that GSPOs thought must be changed was the funding of sport structures in the province. They claimed that money was wasted on taking provincial teams to national events. Some of the teams they fund were not of a good standard. They thus recommended that more money should be spent on the

development of these teams, as sending them to national tournaments only discouraged them rather than encouraged them. They also called for what they called "joint budgeting" strategy. This was described as a situation where all stakeholders in sport would be called in to take part in budgetary issues.

~ **Resources**

Lack of resources was one of the complaints that GSPOs claimed was responsible for the hard conditions under which they worked. On top of the list was the shortage of direct line telephones. Their telephones were connected to a switchboard. GSPOs claimed that switchboard operators were often impossible. Booked calls would take long to be processed and this wasted a lot of time because telephones were the most effective means of communicating with sports people whom they served. GSPOs also expressed dissatisfaction on why cellular phones were given to the Directors who are in most cases office-bound. GSPOs thus, felt that they were the ones who should be supplied with cellular phones by the government because their work was mainly fieldwork. Other resources mentioned were that all GSPOs were supposed to have their own offices, equipped with computers, printers and fax machines.

GSPOs felt that a Sport and Recreation Department should be established. This response came before the Department of Sport, Arts and Culture was established late in 1998. It was alleged that this move would help enhance sport in the province because people employed in this Department will be sport, people who know how sport issues should be handled.

~ **Administration issues**

The issue of the lack of manpower again featured prominently in the GSPOs responses. They felt that the lack of manpower forced them to work overtime which, they were not paid for. They also would be happy to have sport administration personnel who would be in charge of all their administration

matters. They also claimed that they would be happy to have their own sport budget, which will be administered, independently of other sections, such as, for example, Education, Arts and Culture. They cited an example where, in the Department of Education, there was an over-spending. This over-spending affected the sports budget as well, though the sport budget was not yet over spent.

~ **Other issues**

Other issues that GSPOs felt should be attended to, included staff development, building confidence of sport and non-sport enthusiasts on sport promotion in the Northern Province, and the marketing of sport to become priority number one, both in the Department of Education and in the Provincial Government. One GSPO was so disgruntled with sport promotion in the province that he said that he was no longer doing his job with love and passion, but only did it because of the salary attached to it.

- **Means of communication**

GSPOs are in constant contact with sports people in the Province. The means of communication mentioned during the interviews are as indicated in table 4.1e below.

Table 4.1e GSPOs' communication tools

Description	Responses	
Means of communication	• Telephone • Fax • Personal visits • Circulars	(13 responses) (10 responses) (6 responses) (3 responses)

- **The role of sport in nation-building, reconciliation and reconstruction**

All GSPOs responded positively to a question on whether sport had a role to play on nation building, reconciliation and reconstruction. Some, however expressed

dismay at why people were so ignorant of the role played by sport on these issues. They also claimed that sport could unite people of different races and ethnic groups. They were however surprised at how certain members of certain race groups, particularly whites, still refused to unite their sport structures with those of their black counterparts. They claimed that it was this kind of behaviour, which made reconciliation impossible.

GSPOs also claimed that most sport projects were aimed at blacks only. They believed that for unity and reconciliation, sport projects such as the Sport Pioneers, should be directed to all race groups in the province. For a summary of these and other responses, see table 4.1f below.

Table 4.1f Summary of responses on the role of sport in nation building, reconciliation and reconstruction

Description	Responses
The role of sport in nation building, reconciliation and reconstruction.	• The promotion of unity amongst all races (10 responses) • The development of rural communities through sport ... (2 responses) • The training of people of all race groups to become sport professionals (2 responses) • Bridging the gap between the previously disadvantaged and previously advantaged in sport (1 response) • The promotion of physical fitness, social stability and recreation (1 response) • Bringing different cultures together (1 response) • Helping communities reconcile by building confidence in one another (1 response)

- **Other comments**

This section of the questionnaire was aimed at covering some issues not covered in the questions that were asked. The responses to this section are thus covered in table 4.1g below.

Table 4.1g Other comments

Description	Responses
Any other comment	• Recommend that all stakeholders in sport in the *NP should be involved in financial planning and reviewing of the financial state of the sport budget • Sport should be priority # one in government • GSPOs should do more fieldwork • There should be a "Bosberaad" for all role-players in sport in the NP for joint decision making • Sport programmes in the NP only benefit individuals and not the whole ("NP") community • The Provincial Premier should take the leading role in supporting all Provincial teams, and not only one "soccer" team. ***Acronyms:** NP: Northern Province

4.3.2 Observation

As indicated in Chapter 3, GSPOs were uncomfortable at the initial stages of the observation. A number of GSPOs stopped most of the things they would do in the absence of the observer. Some of them even cancelled trips they had to make, thus, according to them, giving the observer a chance to observe them in their offices. Since this kind of behaviour was going to limit observation, the researcher decided to extend observation to some staff meetings and sport events. This section thus covers:

* the general appearance of the GSPOs' offices and their activities;
* observations at staff meetings; and
* observation during sport events.

- **The general appearance of GSPOs' offices and their activities**

Table 4.2a below shows how the researcher rated the GSPOs' offices based on the general appearance and the sport relevance of the decorations in these offices. On

the general appearance, the researcher based his ratings on whether the offices had all the requirements of an office, such as office furniture and other office equipment. For sport relevance, the exercise required a careful observation of pictures, charts, ornaments and other materials that formed part of these offices.

Table 4.2a Researcher's rating of GSPOs' offices

Researcher's rating of the following on a scale of 1 to 10.	• GSPOs' office appearance: **0-3(poor)** : 4. **4-6(average)** : 7. **7-10(good)** : 2. • Sport relevance of office decorations, e.g. photos, charts, ornaments, etc. **0-3(poor)** : 4. **4-6(average)** : 6. **7-10(good)** : 3.

All offices observed looked generally good. The following is the summary of how the researcher rated these offices.

These offices were well equipped with relevant office furniture. On the average, the GSPOs' offices were of medium size. GSPOs and other members of staff who were not sport officers shared two of these offices. Three GSPOs share one office at head office. All the offices that were observed were decorated with relevant sport posters. (See table 4.2a above for the ratings).

All GSPOs had no computers and no fax machines in their offices, although all these GSPOs had access to fax machines (see table 4.2b, item 2). Telephones in these offices were extensions and outgoing calls could only be made through the switchboard. Only two GSPOs sharing an office with their Deputy Director had a direct line telephone. One GSPO had a direct incoming line, and for outgoing calls, she had to go through the switchboard.

Table 4.2b Observation details of GSPOs' offices

1. General Appearance	
• Size :	Small (between 12 & 16 sq. m) : 2 Medium (between 16 & 24 sq. m) : 8 Large (between 24 & 30 sq. m) : 1
• Posters :	Relevant : 9 offices Irrelevant : 2 offices
• Furniture :	Relevant : 11 offices
2. Communication tools	
• Telephones	Direct line (incoming & outgoing) : 1 office Direct line (incoming only) : 1 office Via switchboard : 12 offices
• Computers	None
• Faxes	All 13 officers have access to 14 fax machines.
• Other	2 GSPOs share offices with people who are not GSPOs in 1 small and 1 medium-sized offices.
3. Number of people in each office:	1 person : 6 offices 2 persons : 3 offices 3 persons : 2 offices

Table 4.3 below shows a summary of observed GSPOs' activities. It must be noted that only GSPOs observed at that particular time and place formed part of the description in the table below. This implies that if one GSPO was observed in, for example, a meeting, then the description in the table will only refer to that GSPO, and not those who were not observed in that meeting.

Table 4.3 Observation of GSPOs' activities – analysis

Description	Frequency/number of GSPOs
• Doing activities not related to sport promotion, for example, driving sport officials to a sport event, and driving trucks carrying tables and chairs to a sport function.	5 GSPOs
• Telephone calls: personal	4 calls per day[1] per GSPO
Official	15 calls per day per GSPO
• Visitors: private	9 visitors per day per GSPO
Official	4 visitors per day per GSPO
• Booked calls: Delayed by switchboard operators.	2 GSPOs affected
Processed immediately	1 GSPO affected
No calls to cellular telephones	2 GSPOs affected
• Proactive GSPOs: (those who planned ahead and also anticipated problems and how to deal with them) – based on observations in meetings and in the offices.	1 GSPO
• Reactive GSPOs: (those who wait for issues to be raised and then react) – based on observations in the offices and during meetings.	2 GSPOs
• Confidence to challenge issues – based on observations during meetings.	1 GSPO
• GSPOs' human relations – based on how they answered telephone calls, received visitors, and general communication with people:	
- Good	7 GSPOs
- Needs improvement	2 GSPOs
- Not sure	4 GSPOs

Activities of five GSPOs observed in their offices were minimal. Only routine kind of activities was observed. These included receiving incoming calls and making outgoing calls. What the researcher found remarkable was how an incoming call generated other calls that the officers had to make. Calls made through the switchboard would take between five to fifteen minutes to be

[1] A day shall mean the duration that the GSPO was observed.

processed. More often switchboard operators had to be reminded of calls booked, just to make sure one's call was not forgotten. Switchboard operators did not seem to have the decency to call back officers concerned to tell them that the numbers booked were engaged or unavailable at that time. In two regions, GSPOs were not allowed to make calls to cellular telephones. Once such a telephone call was made, it was considered a private telephone call that, the officer concerned had to pay for.

Offices of sport officers are very busy with people coming in and out for this and that. For those who were observed in the mornings, people who came to visit were friends and colleagues. The number of sport people who visited these officers in the morning was small, when compared to those who visited in the afternoon. Sports people who visited these officers mainly came to be helped logistically. The help they needed included, among other things, requests for transport to meetings or sport events, requests for a fax, telephone, photocopies and requests for information on some sport activities.

One other observation was that one GSPOs introduced his visitors to the researcher and made it clear that the researcher was there to observe him. The researcher wondered as to what that meant to the visitors. He felt like he was being portrayed as some kind of an inspector. For this reason, visitors never stayed more than necessary, giving a message that it was a day when the GSPO did not want any disturbance as he was being observed. This situation did not seem to pose problems to some visitors who possibly, were casual visitors who only came in for a small chat.

From conversations held with GSPOs, GSPOs at the regional and area offices are also expected to do other duties such as, delivering circulars at schools and the monitoring of examinations at schools, especially during matriculation exams. When observed GSPOs were called in by their seniors to come and assist on some of those matters, one GSPO refused to be followed by the observer. The

researcher thus relied only on the information he could gather on activities in the GSPO's office.

Observations during meetings

In meetings, GSPOs were mainly observed on two activities, which were:

* reactionary participation, (this is a situation where GSPOs being observed only react to issues being raised, rather than come up with issues by themselves); and
* proactive participation, (a situation where GSPOs come up with issues for discussion).

The two of the three GSPOs observed in two staff meetings participated fully in the meetings. One GSPO only responded when she was requested to do so, for example, when she was expected to give a report on her activities. Table 4.3 above shows a summary of the observed GSPOs' participation in the meetings.

For those who participated fully in those meetings, their participation was mainly reactionary. The participation included a reaction on, for instance, circulars that, for example, limited all drivers of state vehicles to drive only 1 500km per month and circulars that informed officers of the department's budgetary constraints and hence the budget's suspension. The officers' reactions showed some frustration, as they believed they were doing so much for the government and the government was giving nothing in return. The government, especially the Department of Education was blamed for its insensitivity towards the plight of the GSPOs.

Only one GSPO gave thought to future programmes and how in the future some aspects of their work could be handled. She also gave plans regarding the budget, the Sport Directorate's objectives, and how these could be realised.

- **Observations at sports events**

Government Sports Promotion Officers (GSPOs) observed in this category showed a lot of enthusiasm in their work. One GSPO was observed at an athletics event for primary schools sponsored by ElektroWise. Sports events such as the ElektroWise USSASA Juniors Championships are organised by the athletics committee of NOPRUSSA. Some GSPOs were also co-opted into this committee. The rest were allocated duties. Duties ranged from looking after visiting teams' accommodation, food and how they travel from where they were accommodated to the stadium. This is, according to the job description of the GSPOs, by no means the job of the GSPOs. The GSPO observed was however, obliged to do these duties without complaints. The only observed motivating factor was that the GSPO was allocated with a government vehicle that he could also use for his own errands.

It was also observed that there still existed a division between GSPOs and members of the federations they served. The GSPO who was observed during this event was not invited to the diff. .ent functions which, are normally held during these events. He was also not considered for meals served during the games. On one occasion the researcher gate-crushed into a hall where members of the local organising committee (LOC) were having some tea and snacks. He joined them and some members were not amused. One of them remarked in Sepedi jokingly:

"DSR e ja ka rena, ne?"

(The DSR only survives because of us).

The researcher got the message, but he, nevertheless continued to have the snacks with them.

A chat with the observed officer revealed that he was dissatisfied with the fact that there were no meals and no over time claims for him. His main concern was that no one seemed to appreciate the good work he was doing for the province. How good the good work was, will be addressed in chapter 5.

Two GSPOs were observed at the Northern Province Aerobics Championship. Both GSPOs' main task was the transportation of the officials who had come to officiate in the championship. On arrival, other duties were allocated to them. These GSPOs did not seem to worry about the kind of work assigned to them on this particular day. One of them was assigned to control the crowd in order to give participants more space on the stage to perform. Other duties assigned to this GSPO were, the distribution of Coca cola T-shirts and water bottles, helping with the provision of chairs and tables, the hanging of banners, the erection of the stage and the provision of his government vehicle to do some errands which helped in the running of the day. The second officer was also charged with assisting the adjudicators and looking after important guests. The latter seemed to be a prestigious work for the officer because of the importance of the guests she was interacting with. The government vehicles that these officers were using for the day were also used as storage for uniforms and other articles that were used by participants and other officials. Thus, these GSPOs were required from time to time to go to the vehicles either to fetch or to put something away. The GSPO who was in charge of the guests did not seem to enjoy this work as it often clashed with the attention she had to give to the guests, such as providing them with refreshments and information on the progress of the day. She ultimately decided to give the key to her vehicle to help those who wanted anything from the vehicle.

The impression that the researcher got from this observation was that GSPOs were in most cases engaged in activities that were not in their job description. That seemed to be the work of any GSPO in the Northern Province. For a person who is familiar with GSPOs in the Province, that would be considered as a normal routine for the GSPOs. From what the researcher could gather for these GSPOs, they personally knew that there seemed to be something wrong with what they were doing. In the absence of any other thing that they could do, what they were doing seemed to be the right thing to do. One side of the story was that GSPOs seemed to enjoy working with people. Thus, they never questioned whatever they were assigned to do, as long as it benefited the people they worked with.

Two GSPOs were observed at the launching of the Sport Directorate's newsletter named Sport-Link. The two GSPOs were also assigned with some duties on this day. One of the observed officer was charged with the responsibility of welcoming the guests. She was thus stationed at the entrance of Mayor's parlour. Her duties were to decorate important guests with flowers as they came in. There was very little activity, until when the M.E.C. for Education in the Province came in with his entourage of friends and bodyguards. The observed GSPO worked with two other collegues who helped in the ushering of these guests. After they have been decorated, she was supposed to usher them to their seats. The researcher's impression on this observation was that the subject seemed to enjoy what she was doing. The subject was also observed helping in serving the meals at the end of the formal session.

The other GSPO observed on this day was charged with checking for uninvited guests. This did not seem to be much of a big issue because the Mayor's parlour's entrance is heavily guarded by security guards. He was observed working hand in hand with the security guards checking on the list for names of guests. On two occasions he was observed leaving the security guards with the list of guests while he went for a break. Once the programme started, he left the entrance, as there was nothing much to be done. When he was asked later about how he enjoyed his work that evening, his response was that he was happy it was over. The impression the researcher got from this observation was that this GSPO found it hard to refuse duties assigned to him, whether he enjoyed them, or not.

Two GSPOs were observed at the opening of the Ngwaritsi Makhudu-Thamaga sports centre. This was a day full of activity for all GSPOs. One of the observed GSPO's duties included the transporting of refreshments to the place where important guests were going to have their lunch. He also helped with crowd control during the ceremony and during lunch. There were too many people to be fed, hence the long queues had to be strictly controlled. He was also observed with a water pipe trying to water the ground in order to eliminate dust caused by

passing vehicles. His other duty was to connect the public address system that was to be used during the opening ceremony. Though these activities were nothing new to the researcher, he wondered at the diversity of the GSPOs' work as he observed his subjects. He also wondered at how, despite all the complaints GSPOs reported that they worked under they were still available to help where ever they were needed.

The other observed GSPO's duty on this day was to drive a truck that was used to transport chairs and tables for the ceremony. He was also observed driving the same truck to go and fetch fire wood during the day. There was very little activity during the day. At the end of the ceremony, he helped in the loading of the chairs and tables onto the truck. He did not seem to have problems with driving this truck. When asked how he felt about driving the truck, he said that in the absence of a licensed driver, he would always be available to help.

4.3.3 Questionnaires

"The overall responsibility for policy, provision and delivery of sport and recreation resides with the Department of Sport and Recreation" (South Africa, 1998: 2).

GSPOs are the delivery tools of the DSR whose responsibility is stated above. They thus work with the public, particularly the sporting public in collaboration with their agents, that is, sport federations and the NSC, in order to meet the government's responsibility.

It is also of importance to note that the DSR only has the "responsibility" and not the "authority" to promote sport and recreation in South Africa. This situation is due to the fact that "unlike other government national departments the DSR has no Statutory Act" (South Africa, 1998: 9). It is thus within this context that questionnaires were sent out to provincial federations, the NSC and other structures with interest in sport. These questionnaires were aimed at finding out

what sport stakeholders' perceptions were regarding the work of the GSPO in the Northern Province.

GSPOs do not work in isolation. Thus, what other stakeholders perceive them to be, influences their daily activities. It is through these stakeholders that GSPOs are able to carry out their responsibilities as outlined in the DSR White Paper (South Africa, 1998). It is within this background that questionnaires were used to triangulate results from the interviews and observation.

Questions in the questionnaires were grouped into three sections, which are:

* background information of the respondents;
* the general information section in which the respondents were to respond to questions on a revised Likert-scale; and
* open-ended questions.

From the first section, which required the respondents' background information, ninety six percent of the respondents were males. A demonstration that men still occupied decision making positions in most organisations. The respondents' ages ranged from the mid-thirties to the late forties, eighty percent of which were in their forties.

Questions on the second section of the questionnaires were based on five aspects. The aspects were:

- issues about the GSPOs, which cover the conditions under which they work, their abilities and their failure or success in sport promotion;
- the GSPOs' activities which include their sport programmes, the performance of the Northern Province athletes and the impact that sport has on unity;
- the state of the relationship between the GSPOs and their agents, which are, the NSC and the Provincial federations;
- the Provincial Department of Education's success or failure in the promotion of sport; and

- how attractive the work of the GSPO was to the respondents.

Sixty five percent of the respondents agreed that GSPOs were working under strenuous conditions and that they were doing their best despite these demanding conditions. The same percentage of the respondents also agreed that GSPOs had a role to play in nation building. Sixty five percent of the respondents also strongly confirmed the GSPOs' failure to implement policies aimed at sports development in the Northern Province.

Respondents were skeptical of the success rate of sport development in the Northern Province. They strongly felt that these sport development programmes have failed to get "the nation to play" as prescribed by the National DSR's motto. Ninety five percent of the respondents agreed that GSPOs had a role to play in the enhancement of the Northern Province's athletes' performance, which was currently very low. All respondents confirmed that sport in the Northern Province failed to unite people of different races.

The declining of service provision in sport was put on the shoulders of the Department of Education under which the Sport Directorate falls. Eighty percent of the responses ranged from "agree" to "strongly agree" concerning the Department of Education's failure to contribute to efficient sports promotion in the Northern Province.

All respondents strongly confirmed that the relationship between GSPOs and their agents, which are, the provincial NSCs, provincial federations, and the clubs was poor. Despite this poor relationship, fifty percent still found the work of a GSPO attractive, as they agreed that they would like to become GSPOs one day.

The third section of the questionnaire comprised open-ended questions. It is in this section that more information was gathered from the respondents. In response to a question on how respondents communicated with their local GSPOs, all

respondents reported that it was, in most cases, by personal contact and telephone. Only one respondent could contact the GSPOs by fax.

- **The role of the Provincial DSR and the role of the GSPOs**

The role that the provincial DSR is supposed to play is as stated in the National DSR's White Paper: "the development of sport policy and the provision of sport and recreation". In their responses, respondents highlighted the need for the Sport Directorate to redress past injustices of apartheid by having a sufficient budget to:

- provide sport facilities and equipment to the disadvantaged communities such as the rural areas;
- improve and develop existing facilities in the rural areas.

One other concern that respondents felt was the responsibility of the Sport Directorate, was the integration of sport bodies in the Northern Province. The feeling was that most sport bodies in the province were not yet united, and this state of affairs did not contribute much to the integration of the whole society in the Northern Province. Though it was felt that the above was the responsibility of the Sport Directorate which is a government organ, they felt that government was not supposed to interfere in the running of the sport programmes by sport federations. The respondents also touched on the fact that development programmes in sport should be aimed at the grassroots, which will ensure mass participation in sport. Respondents also raised a concern that sport people in the Northern Province were not clear about the objectives of the Sport Directorate. They thus contended that the Provincial Sport Directorate's objectives were neither well defined nor well communicated to the sporting public. This situation, they claimed, made it difficult for them to work hand in hand with the Sports Directorate in the promotion of sport.

The role that GSPOs should play is based on the role that the whole Sport Directorate should play as discussed above. Again, the "provisioning of sport and recreation" at grassroots level dominated the responses. They felt that young

children, especially those at lower primary schools should be targeted for development.

One other aspect mentioned was that GSPOs should also help in the development of human resources. This development includes, the provision of courses, workshops and clinics aimed at developing future sport administrators, technical officials and athletes. Other respondents felt that GSPOs should also help in the coordination of sport by helping in the formation of clubs and teams. GSPOs must also help in the coordination of the relationship between community sport and school sport, two structures which, they felt should be seen as complementing each other rather than as competitors.

- **Qualities that GSPOs must have**

For the GSPOs to be able to execute the above functions well, certain qualities are essential. Respondents were asked to give qualities that a GSPO should have in order to be more efficient in sport promotion. The responses covered a wide spectrum of qualities though most of them were based on sound management skills with more emphasis on good human relations, communication skills and leadership skills.

The following are the qualities that respondents felt GSPOs should have in order to promote sport more efficiently:

- the love for sport and a commitment to it;
- the will to succeed in sport promotion;
- each GSPO should be an expert in at least one sporting code;
- GSPOs should serve as examples in what ever they do;
- GSPOs should be able to initiate projects and be pro-active in these projects;
- GSPOs should have a general knowledge of sport;
- GSPOs should be open-minded to enable themselves to be perceptive to new ideas;

- GSPOs should be accommodative and accessible to the public;
- they should be good administrators;
- they should be capable of involving all stakeholders in decision-making.

- **Stakeholders in sport**

Often, some stakeholders in sport are left out when decisions about sport issues are taken. The results are often disastrous as projects fail to take-off or take a tumble immediately after take-off. Respondents were thus asked to list all stakeholders in sport that they thought were important. The following is a list of all stakeholders mentioned in their responses:

- the National Sports Council (NSC);
- the provincial school sports bodies, such as, the Northern Province United School Sport Association (NOPRUSSA), for primary and high schools, and the South African Students Sports Union (SASSU) for tertiary students;
- the disabled sport bodies, for example the Paralympics;
- Provincial Sport Federations;
- Communities;
- Transitional Local Councils (TLCs);
- Education Authorities;
- Church Leaders; and
- the private sector.

The private sector, communities and the NSC dominated the responses, with sport federations, TLCs, school and tertiary sports following.

- **GSPOs role in nation building, reconstruction and reconciliation**

The following question was not well understood by respondents as some did not respond. For some of those who responded, the response did not answer the question. The question was:

"To what extent do you think government sports promotion officers (GSPOs) fulfill the national objectives of national building, reconstruction and reconciliation through sports promotion?"

For those who responded to this question (sixty percent of the respondents), all of them concurred that GSPOs only fulfilled these national objectives to a little or no extent. GSPOs were blamed for being office-bound yet they were expected to be doing fieldwork especially in the rural communities. Respondents also blamed GSPOs for the slow pace of social integration. They contended that though the use of present sports facilities was open to all, these facilities were still inaccessible as they were in formerly white areas. Transport to these areas was too costly and thus, these facilities can only be accessed by a few privileged individuals. For these reasons, GSPOs were not seen as contributing to "nation building, reconstruction and reconciliation".

- **Should sports and politics mix?**

This was one question that brought out rather surprising responses. The researcher's guess was that possibly these responses were triggered by the mention of the word "politics". One will note that in a South African context where the word "politics" was previously associated with, among other things, the Apartheid government, detention without trial, banning of political organisations, and the armed struggle, the word was bound to evoke some interest where ever it is mentioned. Ninety percent of the respondents gave the following reasons for sport and politics to stay apart:

- the provision of sport should be aimed at everybody. If politics interferes with sport, only certain groups belonging to dominant political parties will gain from the provision of sport;
- if sport and politics were to mix, sport bodies would be dominated by certain dominant political parties, and decision-making positions would only be held by members of those dominant groups. Thus apolitical members would lose interest and leave sport;

- political conflicts may also interfere with sport administration, hence making it difficult for people from different political parties to play together, either as teammates or as opponents.
- sport is a social activity and not a political arena.

Respondents who felt that sport and politics should mix contended that sport, just like politics, was a way of life, and thus there was no way that the two could be separated. They also alleged that it was the political system of the day that dictated the route that sport should take.

Despite the responses above, respondents did not seem to mind the role that should be played by, for example, the TLCs and GSPOs whose mandate was mainly political. This indicated the complexity of the South African society whose beliefs, norms and values are imbedded in their dark past. This point will be revisited in chapter 5.

- **General issues on sport promotion in the Northern Province**

In this last section of the questionnaire, respondents were asked to comment on any other issues not raised by the questions in the questionnaire. Responses to this section were grouped into three sections. The three sections are:

- about the Sport Directorate;
- resources; and
- what is expected from the GSPOs and their seniors.

- **About the Sport Directorate (management)**

Respondents showed total lack of confidence in the management of sport in the Northern Province. Some felt that management of the Sport Directorate had no vision and was thus incapable of giving direction in order to revive the work of the GSPOs. Some of the respondents felt that the whole management, that is, the Chief Director, the Director, his deputy and assistant should be "booted out".

Some felt that whole management needs "total overall and review" (possibly meaning that the whole management staff should be replaced by other capable people).

~ **Resources**

Government transport for GSPOs has since been stopped by the Department of Education due to financial constraints in the Province. Respondents thus felt that GSPOs should be provided with state vehicles to be able to give service to the communities better. Respondents also felt that the government should invest in sport, and that sport development projects needed financing from the government.

~ **What is expected from GSPOs and their management**

Most of the points mentioned in this section were those mentioned in the section on the role that GSPOs should play in the promotion of sport. Those not covered previously will be discussed below. The following were raised:

- communities, sport structures and all relevant stakeholders in sport should be involved in the planning and budgeting for sport projects.
- Sport Academies should be established for capacity building which would enhance mass participation in sport. It was also claimed that these Academies will also enhance athletes' performance, and thus enable them to match both national and international standards of competition.
- GSPOs should have a thorough knowledge of sport development and the social dynamics around it to enable them to cope well with problems that go with sport development.
- GSPOs must facilitate communication between different sports bodies and their members so that they can foster unity.
- GSPOs must serve as role models in sport, hence what they do should serve as an example for the sport people of the Northern Province.

To conclude this chapter, it is imperative that the main question and the sub-questions underlying this study should be looked at again. The main questions is:

> "Given all the problems and demanding conditions under which Government Sport Promotion Officers (GSPOs) work in the Northern Province of the New South Africa, and the crucial role that sport should play in the normalisation of society, how do they contend with these difficulties in their day-to-day activities in sports promotion?"

Accompanying this question are the following sub-questions:

- To what extent are Government Sport Promotion Officers (GSPOs) involved in issues of policy?
- Do sport programmes in the Northern Province promote the sport objectives of the province?
- How do other role players in sport in the Northern Province perceive sport promotion as executed by the GSPOs?

The National DSR's responsibility is, as indicated earlier, the development of sport policy and the provision of sport and recreation. The Provincial Sport and Recreation Directo ate has the same responsibility to carry out. In trying to carry out this responsibility there are issues that need to be addressed. Some of the issues are, redressing the imbalances caused by the past system, integration of the divided sport structures, and addressing gender issues. For these issues to be addressed the government needs to come out with a clear, well-defined policy whose implementation rests with the Provincial Sports and Recreation Directorate. The GSPO as a delivery wing of the provincial government has this task to carry out.

Before one addresses the question of how GSPOs cope with difficulties in their work, one needs to look at the question of whether they really cope or not.

Whether they really cope or not has two dimensions. First, coping should be looked at in the sense of being successful in planned programmes and other activities as stipulated in their job description (provided such a job description is well defined and GSPOs know exactly what is expected of them). Secondly, coping should be looked at in the sense of being able to go about one's activities, irrespective of whether such activities are successful or not.

GSPOs in the Northern Province do not seem to know what exactly is expected of them. This situation may be due to a number of factors. Some of the factors are: the GSPOs' inability to interpret sport policy, the confused structural framework in which they work, poor communication between all sport stakeholders and poor management. In most cases, they find themselves in programmes in which they were not involved when these projects were planned. All they have to do is assist in whatever they are requested to do. This is one situation that disempowers them. There are also times when they do other odd jobs that are sport related, but not prescribed by their job description. It thus, becomes difficult to measure whatever success is due to them. Most of them find themselves doing anything at their disposal to avoid being immobilised. They also claimed that it was rather difficult to plan when one does not have resources. For most or all of them, they only cope in the sense of being able to go about their activities, if any, without really looking at how far such activities meet the objectives of the Provincial Sport Directorate.

~ **To what extent are GSPOs involved in issues of policy?**

Before one looks at GSPOs' involvement on policy issues, one needs to look carefully at the job description of the GSPOs. Nowhere in their job description is the word "policy" mentioned. All the GSPOs have to do is "organise", "coordinate", "facilitate", "provide", "encourage", "liaise" and "monitor" a number of issues pertaining to sports promotion. They also have to "write reports" of their activities. The Sports Director, on the other hand is tasked with the formulation of "sport and recreation policy for the Province", and he has to do this in consultation with all role players. (Sport and Recreation Directorate, pp. 1 and

7). It is not very clear whether GSPOs are regarded as role players or not. From the interviews and observation conducted, it was found that GSPOs rarely had anything to do with policy. Thus, GSPOs found it difficult to assess whether what they do does realise the objectives of the government as laid out in the policy, or not. What they know is that as GSPOs, they have to "coordinate", "organise", "facilitate" and "monitor" all sporting activities in the Northern Province. GSPOs often talk about these terms freely. Whether they really understand what these terms mean in terms of their work, is another problem.

One other function of the Sports Director is to "evaluate the performance of the Directorate against its objectives". (Sport and Recreation Directorate, p. 1). The performance of the Sport Directorate is based on the performance of GSPOs. GSPOs on the other hand are always complaining that their hard work is often not recognised by their seniors. If this is the case, one wonders how the Sports Director gets to measure the performance of his subordinates and thus of the Directorate.

~ **Do sport programmes in the Northern Province promote the Province's sport objectives?**

The mission statement of the Sport and Recreation Directorate in the Northern Province is, "to contribute to the well-being of all the people of the Northern Province through sport".

Sport programmes in the Northern Province are only aimed at certain communities. To mention a few examples, the Sport Pioneers is aimed at introducing young children to sport. Pre-Primary and primary school teachers are trained to do this work. All teachers trained in this project are blacks, and this situation has raised concerns in certain quarters of the Northern Province community. The responses from the questionnaires suggested that to speed up social integration , all race groups should be involved in projects such as the Sport Pioneers. Thus, according to these responses, if these programmes are to achieve social integration and unity in the

Northern Province, then, all race groups should be involved. Programmes such as the Sport Pioneers, Rural Sport Development and the provision of facilities project, are deliberately aimed at redress and thus at the previously disadvantaged. Thus, such programmes do promote the Province's objectives, not in a general sense, but within the context of a changing South Africa where the majority of its people, mostly blacks, were disadvantaged in many ways by the Apartheid system.

~ **How do other role players in sport in the Northern Province perceive sport promotion as executed by the Government Sport Promotion Officers (GSPOs)?**

Other stakeholders in sport in the Northern Province see sport in the province as badly managed hence making it difficult for GSPOs to execute their duties properly. They also blamed the lack of a workable sport structure within the Department of Education. The confusion over who should run school sport and who should run community sport was to blame for the lack of delivery of the Sport Directorate. They thus recommended that, rather than see these two components as competitors, the two should be seen as complementary components of sport promotion. They also blamed the GSPOs' lack of professionalism in their work. Some respondents ascribed this to poor management within the Department of Education, which was held responsible for the GSPOs' development. Some respondents even recommended the dismissal of the whole management, ranging from the Sports Director to the head of the Department of Education, that is, the Superintendent General. Lack of resources was also named as one of the factors responsible for the GSPOs' inefficiency. They alleged that the government did not take sport and the role that sport plays in the normalisation of society seriously. For most of these stakeholders, sport promotion, or rather the work of the GSPOs, can be more effective if GSPOs are developed to become effective managers. The government was also called upon to show its commitment to sport and what sport stands for.

4.4 Reconciliation of results

The following are issues that were confirmed by the three tools used in this study, that is, interviews, questionnaires and observation:

- GSPOs' working conditions are a cause for concern. They work long hours, and over the weekends without being compensated, due to the financial constraints the Department of Education is currently experiencing. Their bad working conditions are worsened by the alleged poor management strategies within the Sport Directorate which, is characterised by poor communication, poor human relations, unclear policy objectives and the confusing line function. GSPOs remain undeveloped hence, they are unable to meet the challenges of change. No capacity building or staff development programmes are made available to them.
- Grass roots development in sport is seen as a priority in the Northern Province (NP). Despite the fact that GSPOs also regard grass roots sport development as a priority, their efforts are hindered by lack of resources such as government transport, financial resources and human resources.
- The division that allegedly exists between GSPOs and their agents, that is, the NSC and provincial sport federations, is also a cause for concern. Concerned respondents felt that the two should cooperate with each other to make sure that everyone in the NP is afforded a chance to play sport.

Despite all the alleged problems mentioned above, GSPOs still manage to go about their daily business as if the situation under which they work was conducive. From what the researcher could gather, some GSPOs seem to love sport. Some GSPOs contended that sport has been their way of life such that even if they were to leave their work, they would always come back. For some, the situation is not as bad as it is portrayed in this study. For this group, when conditions worsen, they keep hoping that with time, things will get better. They are thus, content with sitting and doing nothing when there is neither transport nor money to provide services to the sporting community, as long they can shift the

blame on the government. For some, the situation is unbearable. They felt that they were immobilised, and could not develop themselves within their work. GSPOs still hope for promotions despite their ineffectiveness in their work. It is hoped that these promotions will possibly empower them to be more effective in their work.

The discussion above described the activities of the GSPOs in the Northern Province. In a study of this nature, the role of the researcher is to share "the sentiments of people in social situations" (Bruyn, 1966: 14). How do GSPOs interpret their own situation, that is, what do these activities mean to them? The next chapter, that is, chapter 5, addresses this question and also discusses the findings cited above.



CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSION OF RESULTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

As indicated in chapter 1, the aim of the study is mainly to help Government Sport Promotion Officers (GSPOs) to better define their role in sport promotion, and thus, enhance their ability to meet the challenges of the rapidly changing South African society. Once they have defined their role, they will be able to help address national issues such as, for example, nation building, reconstruction and reconciliation.

Due to its public and social nature, sport remains a complex institution. Thus, the study was also aimed at the formulation of a model that will help in generating critical thinking about the role that sport could play in society. It is this notion of critical thinking that will further help the government, particularly the Northern Province government, in considering implementation when sport policies are drawn. The aim of this chapter is to look at the implications that the results discussed in chapter 4 have for GSPOs, the government and the sporting public in the Northern Province.

This chapter will look at how the methods in this study helped in realising the objectives of this study. The chapter will also cover the government's policy on sport, the role that sport should play to address government objectives, the GSPO as a rational being, implications for adult education, recommendations for further research and the very latest developments in the Sports and Recreation Directorate.

5.2 Reflection on research design

The research methodology chosen for this study was the ethnographic approach within a qualitative framework. Despite this method's emphasis on participant observation, other techniques such as interviews, questionnaires and non-participant observation were used for triangulation.

The success of this methodology depended much on the objectivity of the researcher. No matter how hard the researcher tried to be as objective as possible, the fact that he is also a GSPO, made it difficult for him to always distance himself from the whole research process. At times, attitudes that he held about his colleagues, who are his subjects in this study, would interfere with the research process. How the researcher observed and interviewed his subjects was in most cases based on perceptions that he already held about his subjects. It was these perceptions that actually helped him to gain rapport with his subjects as he knew how and when to observe and interview them. It also helped him to be sensitive to situations where the subjects were not comfortable during observations and interviews. So, while subjectivity could not be avoided at all times, it is important to note that in qualitative research, it is naive to claim and strive for objectivity at all times. Acknowledging subjectivity in any qualitative study is objective enough for validity and reliability of the results. Though Hymes (in Burgess, 1985: 43) contends that ethnography is a "way of discovering what is the case," what is the "case" is normally defined within the context of researchers' own subjective biases. These subjective biases are not necessarily private entities, because they are based on socio-cultural influences of the society in which researchers live.

For the researcher, researching his own colleagues was not a simple task. At times, the researcher was never certain whether the responses from interviews with his subjects would yield desired results or not. His relationship with his subjects, which is highly informal, was also responsible for casual responses and discussions beyond what was required. This really needed analytic skills from the researcher to enable him to extract desired information from the so many issues

that were raised during the interviews. It is this aspect of this study that raised some concern concerning whether the interview questions would ultimately produce the desired result. It was interesting to note that some of the responses that the researcher had considered irrelevant, actually displayed certain character traits of the GSPOs such as, for example, self-confidence and self-reflection. It is within this background that questions such as the following should be raised:

- who are these GSPOs in the Northern Province, and
- who do they think they are?

These questions will be looked at later in this chapter.

It was indicated earlier in chapter 3 that diary recording, as a research technique was abandoned due to a lack of response from GSPOs. From what the researcher could gather, most GSPOs were not used to the habit of documenting their activities. The fact that in most cases deadlines in handing in of monthly reports (if ever they were requested) and quarterly reports were never met (Sports and Recreation Directorate-Northern Province, 1997c: item 8.1), confirms the difficulty that GSPOs have in documenting their activities. Some GSPOs felt that the research was not going to benefit them in any way, and as a result, it was a waste of time. This shows how less concerned some of them are, regarding further knowledge about sport. The fact that staff development was only mentioned by a few as important for enhancing their work, is testimony to the GSPOs lack of the quest for further knowledge. Understandably, this state of affairs confirms the poor working conditions under which they work. The discussion above does not mean that GSPOs are less interested in self-academic development. Actually, some of them are registered with different institutions in the country to enhance their knowledge of sport and other fields such as, for example, development.

It took some time before valuable information could be gathered by observation due to the discomfort that GSPOs displayed during observation. There were times when the researcher had wished to observe GSPOs without informing them. The researcher believed that this could have produced information that is more

reliable. This could not be done because in any qualitative research, ethical considerations supercede the quest for more objective results when one is dealing with human beings. It was only through the use of other tools such as interviews that a more accurate picture of the GSPOs' activities could be formed.

Out of the twenty-two questionnaires, three respondents were women. This situation confirms the lack of representativity of women in the different structures within the sporting community. Maybe, it would have been wiser for the researcher to have given some questionnaires to women members irrespective of whether such women held any position in those organisations or not. At times, researchers have to be sensitive to the different divisions within society before embarking on any research. This will ensure that their sample is as representative as possible, even if it means bending some rules of acceptable research methodologies.

The questionnaire was first piloted before it was sent to the respondents. As a result, it was changed three times. Despite all the piloting, one question still did not yield the relevant answers from some respondents. Responses to this question showed a lack of understanding. Maybe a translation of the questionnaires into the indigenous languages of the Northern Province could have yielded much better results.

The use of triangulation greatly benefited this study. The different techniques used for data collection complemented one another well. Issues not well understood from one technique could easily be confirmed by the other technique. Thus, questionnaires, for example could "verify, deepen and even contradict emerging themes and perceptions from observation" (Smythe, 1996: 61). Thus, validity of the research process was enhanced, which further enhanced the realisation of the research's objectives.

5.3 Government policy and the role of sport in normalising society

Government policy in sport is aimed at the transformation of society within the context of the democratic changes in South Africa. Thus, sport policy in South Africa ensures that South African sport systems are respected worldwide, portrays South African values, binds the nation together by ensuring participation opportunities for all, and ensures choice and thus enables athletes to attain the highest levels of achievement and performance. These objectives can only be achieved through unified and fully democratised sports structures at all levels in South Africa.

The White Paper of the DSR is a document in which government policy regarding sport is detailed. The Sport Directorate of the Northern Province, and hence the activities of the GSPOs, are also governed by the same document. Different stakeholders in sport, such as the NSC, NOCSA, PARALYMPICS(national sport body for the disabled), and the national and provincial federations took part in drawing up this document.

It is of importance to note that the document was drawn within the context of a society whose history is that of an undemocratic and hence unacceptable system of government, based on divisions along racial lines. The White Paper was thus, aimed at redressing the past injustices of the Apartheid government. GSPOs whose functions are to monitor policy implementation and the provision of sport, should thus be seen as important agents in the transformation of society, particularly the Northern Province society. It is for this reason that GSPOs need to know and interpret policy well in order to contribute effectively in this transformation. They also have to be critical thinkers who will not only know the contents of the policy, but also be able to reflect on its contents.

What came out clearly in this study was that GSPOs' job description did not put much emphasis on the importance of policy and its interpretation in the activities of the GSPOs. Whether this omission was a deliberate act of the Sport Directorate

to exclude GSPOs from policy issues remains unclear. On the other hand, GSPOs remain undisturbed by their exclusion from direct involvement in policy issues, yet they are still expected to monitor policy effectively.

One of the objectives of the government in sport promotion is to unite people at all levels. In sport, unity can mean different things to different people. For some people, when blacks and whites belong to the same club, and watch a rugby final match together at Ellis Park Stadium, Johannesburg, there is unity. For these people, what happens to the different race groups after the match, is immaterial. It is within this diverse interpretation of concepts in policy that GSPOs in the NP are required to be multi-skilled, self reliant and critical thinkers. This will enable them to be able to inquire into who formulates policy, when, for whom, and whether such policies are implementable or not.

According to the White Paper (South Africa, 1998: 23), government policy should not be seen as a "destination," but as a "start of a journey". But a "journey" where all the people of South Africa can have equitable access to sport and recreation and ample opportunities for their talents to be unearthed. It is this "journey" that will see the DSR transformed to the envisaged National Sport Commission. It is hoped that the National Sport Commission will have more power to deal with sport issues more effectively and decisively than its predecessors, that is, the DSR and the NSC. The absence of the GSPOs, be it at provincial or at national level in issues of policy, needs a revision. This revision is of particular importance to the Northern Province where sport promotion is overburdened by a number of anomalies within the government administration. Some of the anomalies are, the alleged confused management systems, vast land (ninety percent of which is rural), sport illiteracy of high ranking government officials who holds power with regards to the funding of sport activities, the alleged mismanagement of government funds, and poor administration, particularly in the Department of Education (Northern Review, 20/03/98).

With more pressure on national and provincial teams to include more players of colour in, for example, rugby and cricket, the National Sport Commission is likely to be seen as the interference of politics in sport matters. The apartheid government, though it claimed non-interference in sport matters, used the same tactics to maintain divisions in all aspects of the South African society. It may also be argued that the two situations cannot be compared to each other due to the different context in which each on of them operated. The argument can be based on the fact that the Apartheid system, for example, represented an unacceptable system of government in which people were discriminated against simply because of their colour, religion or race. Thus, interference of government in today's sport issues should be seen differently in the sense that today's system is aimed at a just society whose interests are based on democratic principles. The meaning of democracy in a complex society such as South Africa is very unlikely to remain static. Thus, government involvement, (or is it interference?) in sport should be kept in check. Whatever power the National Sport Commission will be endowed with, should not supersede the autonomy that sport federations presently enjoy. Sport federations and bodies should also be checked against abusing their autonomy by, for example, drawing constitutions that still maintain divisions, be it racial, sexual or according to class. This analogy calls for certain qualities for the GSPOs.

For GSPOs in the NP to deal with these complexities effectively, they need to be developed not only in sport administration, but, in the development of critical thinking skills. It is these skills that will help them to see beyond what is presented to them, because that is what policy analysis and implementation is about, especially in sport because of its public nature. This should be particularly so in the Northern Province because this province was "for all purposes and intention, bound and meant to remain at the lowest level of development" (Motsoaledi, 1997: 3).

5.4 Government Sport Promotion Officers: Identity crisis

This section looks at GSPOs, that is, who they are, how they perceive their own situation and how their identities influence their work. The section will also look at GSPOs as rational beings, who have to be content with delivery in the face of lack of financial and human resources. How they deal with constraints and the alleged lack of recognition for the job well done, will also be looked at.

GSPOs are rational beings who are capable of resistance, compliance and indifference in response to different challenges in their daily duties. Before one looks at their response to different situations in their work situation, one needs to look at who they are, and how they perceive their own situation.

GSPOs in the Northern Province are civil servants with varied backgrounds concerning what sport promotion really entails. This is particularly so due to the different government structures in which they were employed before the new democratic dispensation. Despite the low salaries they receive, they have access to a number of benefits within the government service. They have access to state vehicles, they are entitled to subsistence claims when they work odd hours. They also enjoy travelling around the country to attend prestigious world class sport events where they enjoy good hotel accommodation and good meals. It is in these sport events that they get a chance to interact with important sport personalities, a chance to be with friends and a chance to know and be known by people. They also get sport apparel free of charge. All these and other benefits, enhance their social life and general knowledge. Fellow civil servants of the same rank envy them because they think GSPOs' working conditions are far much better than theirs. Yet, GSPOs complain that their working conditions are poor, their salaries very low and that they work odd hours without compensation. (Sports Directorate-Northern Province, 1997b).

GSPOs do all kinds of odd jobs. Some of the things that they do are not related to sport promotion. They sometimes drive their seniors to meetings, collect and deliver documents, and also help with other Department of Education administration work. This situation is more prevalent at regional and area Education offices where most GSPOs are stationed. In certain circumstances their seniors compliment them for

doing such odd jobs, which says something about management systems in government in the Northern Province, an issue which will not be pursued in this study. Though some GSPOs complain about doing such odd jobs, they continue doing them nevertheless.

GSPOs think of themselves as obedient civil servants who are working hard to earn a living. With all the benefits mentioned above, they are able to ignore all the unfavourable conditions under which they work. When called upon to do duties, they feel obliged to comply even when it is under unbearable conditions such as having to drive for long hours to go and attend a meeting or taking someone to such a meeting.

Some GSPOs are family persons who sometimes experience role conflict. They have two roles to play, that is, that of a family man and that of work. These two roles rarely meet. Thus, GSPOs sometimes have to sacrifice the family for work.
Some GSPOs are very popular with friends for various reasons. For some, the fact that they are in most cases in possession of government vehicles, they are sometimes tempted to take risks and use these state vehicles for their own private errands. Despite the risks involved, GSPOs still do it and thus experience "trouble-pleasure" situations. This is a situation where despite the consequences of what one does, the act is perceived as so enjoyable that the culprit thinks it is worth the risk. For some, such a behaviour becomes a habit that may not be easy to do away with at a later stage.

What GSPOs perceive themselves to be and how they are perceived by, for example their seniors and the sporting public, do not necessarily meet. For most members of the sporting public, GSPOs are only good if they can share with them whatever benefits they can get from their work. One wonders how many friends within and outside the sporting public were lost by the GSPOs because of the moratorium on subsistence claims and the grounding of government vehicles in the NP (NP Departmental circular no. 64/97). The grounding of state vehicles is a major blow for almost all GSPOs. As the researcher inquired about what each of the GSPOs was doing, the response he got was, "what can one do in the absence of transport" (meaning state vehicles), as if state vehicles were the only resources that one can use in sport promotion.

Most GSPOs in the Northern Province are administratively under-skilled. The way they, for example write their reports, proposals, business plans and staff meeting minutes, is cause for concern. Yet, they hope to get promotions to ranks such as sport "Assistant Director" and "Deputy Director", which call for more responsibility and efficiency. How they hope to cope in these ranks depends entirely on what they are capable of doing, and how they reflect on themselves on what they do in their daily activities.

Judging from the observation of the GSPOs, most of the complaints that they raised are genuine. The researcher observed how these GSPOs had problems with, for example, making outgoing calls. They also reported on how they found it difficult to understand the organisational structure, and hence the line function of the Sport Directorate. What kept them going was the love they had for their work. The researcher's impression on this state of affairs was that there were other issues that motivated them to continue under such trying conditions. Even in the absence of incentives such as subsistence and transport (S and T) claims, GSPOs were still prepared to go on with their work. One wonders, for how long will they be pushed (or are they pushing themselves?) to the limit. Factors beyond their love for their work may be responsible for their perseverance in their work. The economic factors such the high unemployment rate, the flexible hours that they work, and other benefits that they enjoy, could be some of these factors. Well, maybe that is the reason they claim to love their work so much.

5.5 Sport promotion and its implication for adult education

As indicated earlier in this study, sport is a learning institution. By its public nature and the way it is so commercialised, sport lends itself to a process of continuous learning. With much publicity and commercialisation of sport, a large amount of information is "made available by the mass media, thus making it almost impossible to avoid learning and knowing something about the world of sport" (McPherson et al, 1989: 2).

GSPOs are adults who interact with other adults in the promotion of sport. It is during these interactions that people begin to know each other, begin to share information

about sport and possibly the latest information about sport and other aspects of the people's lives. The sharing or learning of new information cannot happen in isolation. People bring their own experiences into the learning process, which helps them to construct new meanings to otherwise taken-as-true concepts.

It is the responsibility of any education system to produce adults who will "be able to look for deeper meanings and underlying patterns of social behaviour in sport" (McPherson et al, 1989: 2). GSPOs as models and agents of change need to be able to reflect on their own situation. This reflection will help them to develop themselves into self-reliant critical thinkers. Rather than complain about their seniors and working conditions, they will be able to assess different situations in their work. It is this assessment that will help them to look for ways and means that will enhance their performance. It will also, further help them to reflect on the poor conditions under which they work and to reflect on policy and its implications on their work.

With so much publicity and commercialisation of sport, different skills in sport promotion are required. GSPOs in the Northern Province with their limited knowledge obviously cannot match the national standards, which require, among other things, expertise, critical thinking, self-reliance and self-reflection, with regards to sport promotion.

Knowledge acquisition entails critical thinking, which forms the basis for most adult learning models such as self-directed learning. Thus, sport programmes aimed at the development of sport people should be looked at more critically, as they may have been designed to suit communities foreign to the Northern Province. Some kind of reflection can help GSPOs to look beyond these programmes in order to address questions such as, who designs these programmes and for whom. This may help these programmes to produce not just sport practitioners but self-reliant critical thinkers who will free themselves from the bondage of divisions based on race, social class and gender.

The role that sport can play in the broader aspects of society is quite debatable. The DSR's White Paper, for example, sees sport as an instrument that "can play an enormous part in redressing gender inequalities and discrimination against the

disabled and the minorities" (South Africa, 1998: 3). McPherson et al, (1989: 25) in what they call the "Resistance Thesis", also contend that sport may also "operate as a vehicle for broader social change". Yet at times, sport reinforces social inequalities, and thus maintains the status quo. Mezirow's (1991) transformative learning is an attempt to help societies to break away from what has, through the years of experience, become accepted norms and beliefs. It is this kind of learning that has implications for GSPOs in the Northern Province. GSPOs have their way of doing things based on their experiences. It is sometimes difficult for them to venture into new ways of doing things. Thus, GSPOs need to be provided with programmes that will help them to seriously reflect on what they are used to which at times appears to them as a norm. This will help them to break away from these norms and give way to more challenging practices. They will thus, become active role models, who will help other sport practitioners to also reflect on sport issues on a continuous basis.

5.6 Recommendations for further development and research

The public nature of sport and how sports practitioners conduct their daily activities provide a number of opportunities for further development and research.

One of the findings of this study is that management strategies of the Northern Province, particularly those within the Department of Education, contributed to the GSPOs' failure to perform well. Thus, management systems within government need scrutiny. There seems to be a very faint line that divides administration and politics in government management systems. The administrators in government often blame politicians for interfering in administration matters. Politicians on the other hand often blame administrators for maladministration, inefficiency and fraudulent behaviour. An interesting inquiry could be made on, what programmes can help to reconcile the two in order to enhance government performance at all levels of management. With better management strategies, sport promotion can also be enhanced.

Sport programmes in the Northern Province such as, for example, the "Sport Pioneers" and "Rural Sports Development", are aimed at the development of "human resource potential required for the effective management of sport and recreation..." (South Africa, 1998: 14). The success of these programmes may be difficult to

measure in the short term. Still, it may be interesting to evaluate their success even in the short term in order to help government to assess the impact that they have on society, rather than continue wasting money on these programmes that may not even be desirable. Such an evaluation may also help the government to develop even better strategies on how these programmes can be run.

Poor working conditions of the GSPOs in the Northern Province have been blamed for the ineffectiveness of GSPOs in sport promotion. Studies may be conducted to assess whether improved working conditions of GSPOs correlates with improved sport promotion and the benefits that it yields.

Blacks and other disadvantaged minorities, such as women and the disabled, are the most disadvantaged when it comes to sport participation. The introduction of Physical Education in school curricula is seen by government, as a means through which sport can be developed at grass root level for all races. Currently, schools that were previously for blacks are under-resourced. It will be interesting to make an inquiry into the feasibility of the introduction of Physical Education in these schools considering the backlog that the Department of Education has as far as resources are concerned.

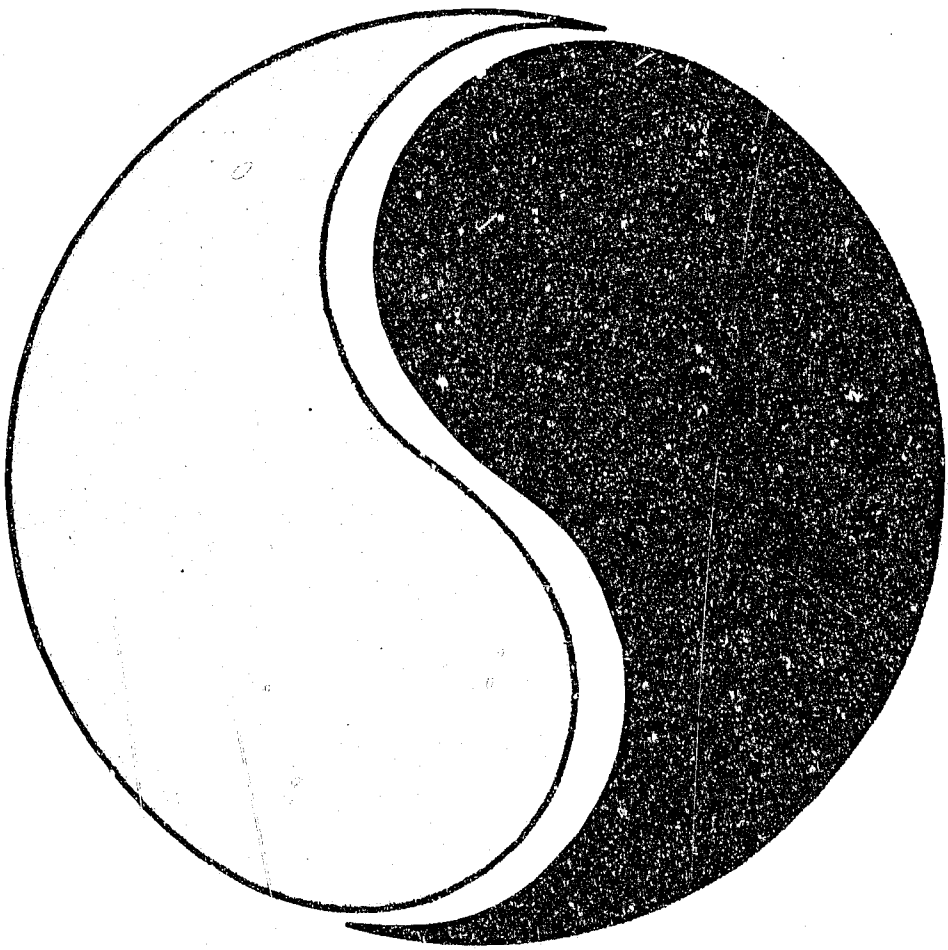
According to the White Paper (South Africa, 1998: 9-10), the "DSR has no statutory Act which empowers it to also have the authority and not just the responsibility for the promotion of sport...in South Africa". The envisaged South African Sports Commission which was due to have started functioning in April 1999, is aimed at addressing the above. The Sport and Recreation Act, from which the Sport Commission's activities will be based, will give the Commission the right to intervene in all sports matters in the country. An evaluation of how such a commission will impact on the autonomy of sports bodies will undoubtedly influence how national sports bodies develop their policies within the context of a changing South Africa.

Sport is a social institution in the sense that different sport activities have rules and regulations that govern them within a particular social context. People of a particular society have a particular way in which a particular activity is played. Sometimes players and sports administrators are so hooked onto the rules and regulations that

once challenged they feel the existence of the game is threatened. On the other hand, most modern sport programmes are aimed at producing critical thinkers who should be able to look beyond the rules and regulations. This is likely to threaten the status of rules, which form the basis of any competitive game. Studies may be conducted to find out how sport can be run within the rules and regulations, yet still be used as means through which the majority of sports practitioners can be emancipated from these unquestioned rules and practices.

5.7 Conclusion

In conclusion, the researcher would like to mention some of the very latest developments in the Sports and Recreation Directorate. When this report was completed, one GSPO had already left the Directorate for the private sector. As indicated earlier in this report, the Chief Directorate of Special Community Services under which the Sports Directorate falls, has since become a Department. The new Department has come out with a new structure, which does not accommodate the three Regional Deputy Directors (see the old organogram on page 25). No decision has been taken yet regarding their future in the government service. One of them has taken an early retirement with effect from June 1999.



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APPENDIX 1

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS TO THE GOVERNMENT SPORT PROMOTION OFFICERS.

SPORT OFFICER NO. .....

1. Do you have any work schedule? If yes, is it daily, weekly or monthly?
2. How would you rate the overall management of the whole office where you are stationed on a scale of 1 to 10?
3. How would you rate the sport knowledge of your immediate manager on a scale of 1 to 10?
4. How would you rate how the other members of your staff perceive sport on a scale of 1 to 10?
5. What do you enjoy the most in your job as a government sport promotion officer?
6. What are your main regrets/dissatisfaction in your job as a government sport promotion officer?
7. Are there any changes you would recommend in the short and long term in the office where you are stationed and in the Province as a whole?
8. How do you communicate with members of sport committees?
9. Any other comment/suggestion regarding sport promotion in the Province?
10. Researcher's ratings (on a scale of 1 to 10):

- Office appearance:
- sport relevance of office decorations, e.g. photos, charts, ornaments, etc.

11. What role do you think sport should play in nation building, reconciliation, and reconstruction?

APPENDIX 2

SPORT AND RECREATION

DIRECTORATE

MISSION STATEMENT

TO CONTRIBUTE TO THE WELL-BEING OF ALL THE PEOPLE OF THE NORTHERN PROVINCE THROUGH SPORT

JOB DISCRIPTION FOR VARIOUS POST LEVELS

1. DIRECTOR: SPORT AND RECREATION

JOB DISCRIPTION

1.1 In consultation with all the role players, formulate a Sport and Recreation policy for the Province.

1.2 See to the development of Sport and Recreation activities within the Province e.g. Sports facilities, mass participation, technical development, sports academies etc.

1.3 Report to the Chief Director on all issued relating to Sport and Recreation.

1.4 Develop and work towards a mission of the Directorate of Sport and Recreation.

1.5 Guide and supervise the Deputy Directors.

1.6 Liaise with the National Department of Sport and Recreation.

1.7 Liaise with the Private Sector in as far as Sport and Recreation issues are concerned.

1.8 Represent the Department in national and international sport and recreation conferences, seminars, workshops, meetings, tournaments etc.

1.9 Draw long and short term plans for the Directorate.

1.10 Evaluate the performance of the Directorate against its objectives.

1.11 Preside over the activities of the Provincial Sports Forum.

1.12 See to the execution of the principles of the WHITE PAPER on Sport and Recreation.

1.13 Encourage involvement of the private sector in development of Sport and Recreation.

1.14 Liaise with the NSC structures in all matters relating to Sport and Recreation.

1.15 Liaise with local authorities in as far as Sports and Recreation facilities are concerned.

1.16 Initiate staff management programmes in order to improve performance.

2. DEPUTY DIRECTOR: (COMMUNITY SPORTS)

JOB DISCRIPTION

1. See to the implementation of Community Sports policy.

2. Report to the Director on all issues relating to Sport and Recreation.

3 Supervise the work of the Assistant Directors.

4. Co-ordinates the activities of community sports and recreation.

5. See to the erection and maintenance of Sport and Recreation facilities.

6. Liaise with the local authorities and Sports Councils in as far as Sport and Recreation facilities are concerned.

7. Seeing to it that sports programmes are put into place.

8. Seeing to it that school sports programmes and community sports programmes are complementary.

9. Monitor development and unity in Sport and Recreation.

10. Attend Sports projects meetings.

3. **ASSISTANT DIRECTOR: (COMMUNITY SPORTS)**

COMPETITIVE SPORTS: JOB DISCRIPTION

1. Report to the Deputy Director on the activities of competitions sports.

2. Liaise sports associations.

3. Co-ordinate the activities of competitive sports.

4. Monitor and report on the activities of the Sports Academies.

5. Implementation of sports development programmes.

6. Liaise with the National Sports Council structures within the Province.

7. Provide support service to the Provincial teams.

8. Co-ordinate Provincial and inter-provincial tournaments in collaboration with the NSC structures.

9. Co-ordinate sports coaching and clinics programmes.

4. **ASSISTANT DIRECTOR:(COMMUNITY SPORTS)**

FACILITIES AND RECREATION: JOB DISCRIPTION

1. Report to the Deputy Director on all issues relating Sport and Recreation facilities and recreation.
2. See to the increase of mass participation in recreational activities.
3. Implementation "SPORTS FOR ALL" projects.
4. Liaise with Recreation South Africa.
5. Liaise with local authorities and Sports Councils in as for recreational facilities are concerned.
6. See to the maintenance and up-keep of recreational facilities.
7. Supervise the work of the Principal Sport Promotion Officers.
8. See to the execution of the decisions of Sports Forum in as far as facilities are concerned.

5. **DEPUTY DIRECTOR: (SCHOOL SPORTS)**

JOB DISCRIPTION

1. See to the implementation of school sports policy.
2. Report to the Director on all issues relating to school sports.
3. Co-ordinate school sports activities.
4. Liaise with Provincial school sports associations.
5. Liaise with tertiary sport associations.
6. Supervise the work of the Assistant Director.
7. Liaise with the Private Sector in as far as school sports issues are concerned.
8. Monitor development and unity in school and tertiary sports.

4/.....

6. **ASSISTANT DIRECTOR:(SCHOOL SPORTS)**

TRAINING ANC COACHING: JOB DISCRIPTION

1. Report to the Deputy Director on training and coaching programmes.
2. Initiate and co-ordinate training and coaching programmes for school and tertiary sports.
3. Liaise with school and tertiary sports associations in as far training and coaching is concerned.
4. Liaise with sports institutions dealing with sports training and coaching.
5. Initiate sports training programmes for sports organisers.
6. See to it that there is co-ordination in the work of the Assistant Directors.

7. **ASSISTANT DIRECTOR: (SCHOOL SPORTS)**

TRAINING AND COACHING: JOB DISCRIPTION

1. Report to the Deputy Director on training and coaching programmes.
2. Initiate and co-ordinate training and coaching programmes for school and tertiary sports.
3. Liaise with school and tertiary sports associations in as far training and coaching is concerned.
4. Liaise with sports institutions dealing with sports training and coaching.
5. Initiate sports training programmes for sports organisers.
6. See to it that there is co-ordination in the work of the Assistant Directors.

SPECIAL COMMUNITY SERVICES

9. REGIONAL DEPUTY DIRECTOR

JOB DISCRIPTION

1. Co-ordination of special community services in the Region.
2. Report to line function directors in respect of activities in the Region.
3. Supervise the work of the Assistant Directors.
4. Liaise with the Regional stakeholders of the division e.g. Regional Authorities, Regional NSC Structures, Regional Library Associations etc.
5. Liaise with the Private Sector in as far as issues relating to the division are concerned.
6. Implementation of the policy of the division at regional level.
7. See to it that support service is rendered for the division.
8. Build a team out of the members of the division.

10. REGIONAL ASSISTANT DIRECTOR

JOB DISCRIPTION

1. Take charge of sport and recreation activities in the Region.
2. Co-ordinate both school and community sports activities in the Region.
3. Liaise with regional sports organisation within the Region.
4. Report to the Regional Deputy Director on all issues relating to sports and recreation.
5. Liaise with local authorities in as far as sports facilities are concerned.
6. Implementation of sports and recreation policies within the region.
7. Bring innovations into sport and recreation in the Region.
8. Supervise the wok of Principal Sport Promotion Officers.

6/.....

11. PRINCIPAL SPORT PROMOTION OFFICER:(COMMUNITY SPORTS)

JOB DISCRIPTION

1. Report to the Assistant Director on all issues relating to community sports.
2. Supervise the work of sports promotion officers within the region.
3. See to the implementation of the sports and recreation programmes within the region.
4. Facilitate and promote participation and performance in sport and recreation activities.
5. Liaise with community based sports and recreation structures within the region.
6. Promote good communication amongst role players within the sports movement.
7. See to it that there is co-odination of sports programmes within the Region.

12. PRINCIPAL SPORT PROMOTION OFFICER(SCHOOL SPORTS)

JOB DISCRIPTION

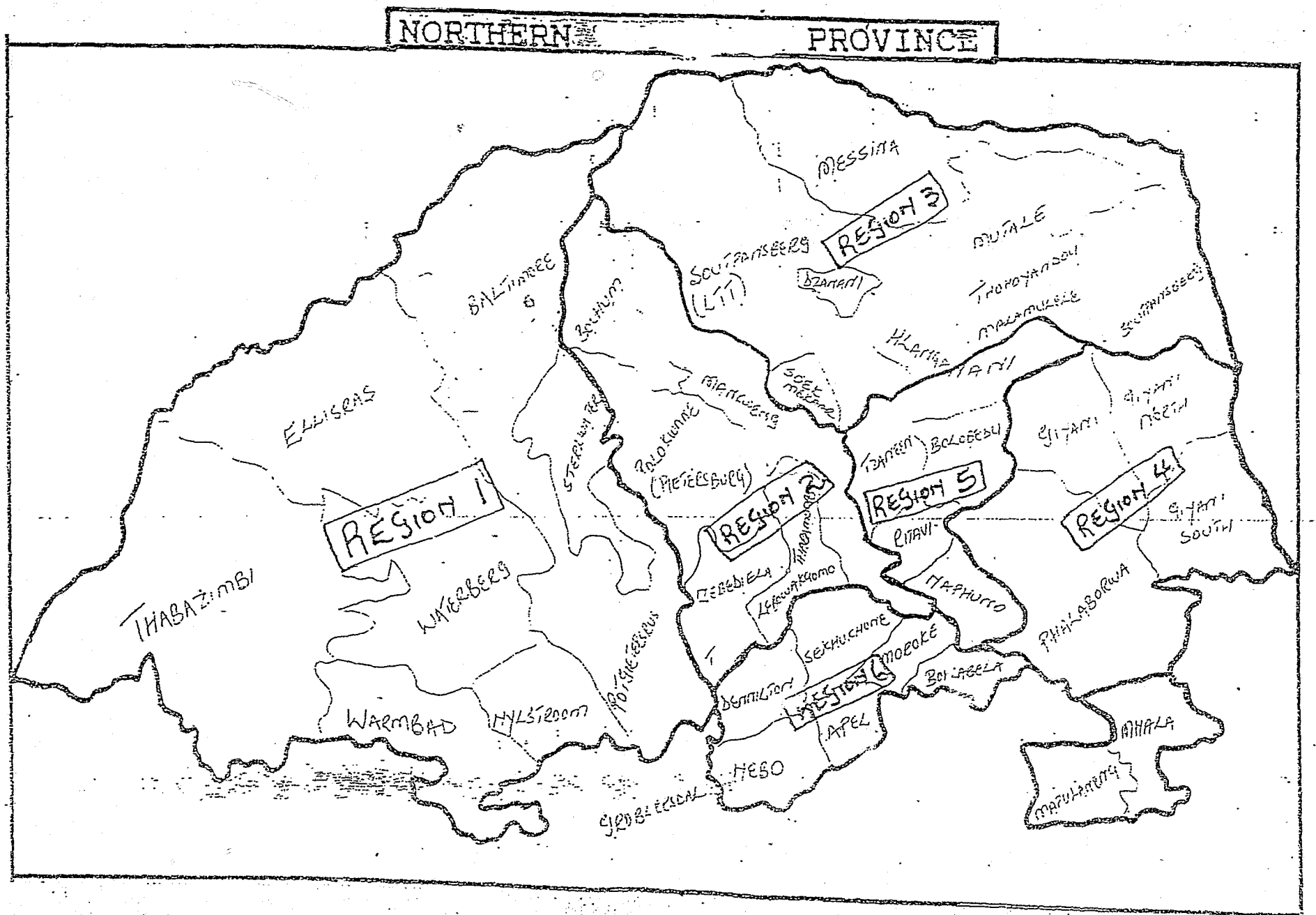
1. Report to the Assistant Director on all issues relating to school and tertiary sports.
2. Supervise the work of sports promotion officer within the region.
3. See to the implementation of the school sports programmes within the region.
4. Facilitate and promote participation and performance in school sports activities.
5. Liaise with school sports organisations within the region.
6. Promote good communication amongst role players of school sports
7. Liaise with other regions in as far as school sports activities are concerned.
8. Liaise with Private Sector in as far as school sports is concerned.

SPORT PROMOTION OFFICER

JO DISCRIPTION

1. Organise, facilitate and encourage participation in sport and recreation activities.
2. Provide logistic support for sport and recreational activities at local level.
3. Encourage the formation of sports associations for various sports codes at local level.
4. Organise training for sports officials at local level.
5. Organise and encourage sports and recreation meetings for the promotion of participation at local level.
6. Liaise with sports institution with the aim of creating support service for sports codes.
7. Monitor sports development programmes.
8. Write reports on all sports and recreation activities at local level for the Principal Sport Promotion Officer.
9. Liaise with other Sport Promotion officers.

APPENDIX 3


NORTHERN PROVINCE
REGION 1
REGION 2
REGION 3
REGION 4
REGION 5
MESSINA
SOUTPANSBERG
(LIT)
DZANANI
MUTALE
THOHOYANDOU
MAKAHULELE
SOUTPANSBERG
BALTIMORE
ELLISRAS
STERKWATER
RAMOKGOPA
SOEKMEKAAR
MOKOPANE
(PIETERSBURG)
SEBAYENG
MOTETEMA
MAKUSHANE
MAHWELERENG
MOTSHEPHIRI
GIYANI
GIYANI
NDENGEZI
GIYANI
SOUTH
BOLOBEDU
TZANEEN
LETSITELE
MARULENG
MAPHUTO
PHALABORWA
MOLEMOLE
SEKHUKHUNE
DENDRON
LEBOWAKGOMO
LEBOWAKGOMO
LEPELLE
NKUMPI
MOPANI
SOUTH
BOLOBEDU
EAST
LETSITELE
LEPEL
HLANGANANI
MAPULANENG
THABAZIMBI
WATERBERG
WARMBAD
NYLSTROOM
MOTSHEPHIRI
HEBO
SIBASA
MALAMULELE
MAKHADO
MUSINA
THULAMELA
VHEMBE
DISTRICT
MUNICIPALITY
MAKHADO
MUNICIPALITY
MUSINA
MUNICIPALITY
THULAMELA
MUNICIPALITY

APPENDIX 4

UNIVERSITY OF THE WITWATERSRAND - JO'BURG

QUESTIONNAIRE

My name is Phillip Ndlovu, a government sports promotion officer based at Mankweng area office of the Northern Province. I am involved in a study (Supervised by Wits University) about the effectiveness of the government sports promotion officer in the Northern Province of the New South Africa. Please assist me by completing and returning this questionnaire. The information is valuable as it will help the government sports promotion officer serve you better. Feel free to respond in a language of your choice. There is no need to sign your name, as your responses will be treated as confidential.

A. Background Information

1. Gender: (Male/Female) .....
2. Age in years: .....
3. Which sport organisation do you belong to?: .....

B. General Information

For each of the statement below cross (X) the box which indicates the extent to which you agree or disagree:

	Strongly Agree	*Agree*	*Disagree*	*Strongly Disagree*
4. Government sports promotion officers in the Northern Province are doing their best to promote sport under difficult conditions.				
5. Government sports promotion officers in the Northern Province play a role in "Nation Building.".				
6. Government Sports Promotion Officers are failing to implement policies aimed at sports development for the Northern Province population.				
7. Sports development programmes run by government sports promotion officers in the Northern Province, have failed in "getting the nation to play" (national sports mission statement).				
8. There is a poor working relationship between the government sports promotion officers and sports organisations in the Northern Province.				
9. The Northern Province Education Department is not able to contribute to efficient sports promotion in the Northern Province.				
10. Government sports promotion officers have a role to play in the performance of the Northern Province sports persons in national sports events.				
11. Sport has failed in unifying people of different races in the Northern Province.				
12. I would, one day, like to be a government sports promotion officer.				

C. OPEN-ENDED QUESTIONS

1. What method of communication do you use to communicate with your local sports promotion officer(s):
   - ~~ Telephone .....
   - ~~ Fax .....
   - ~~ In person .....
   - ~~ Any other (state) .....
   .....

2. What role do you think sports promotion officer(s) should play in your area?
   .....
   .....
   .....

3. What qualities do you think government sports officers should have in order to promote sport more effectively?
   .....
   .....
   .....

4. What role do you think the Department of Sports and Recreation in the Northern Province should play in sport promotion?
   .....
   .....
   .....

5. Which other stakeholders in sport should play a role in making the job of government sports promotion officers more effective?
   .....
   .....

6. To what extent do you think government sports promotion officers fulfil the national objectives of nation building, reconstruction and reconciliation through sports promotion?
   .....
   .....
   .....

7. Do you think sport and politics should mix? .....

Why ?.....

.....

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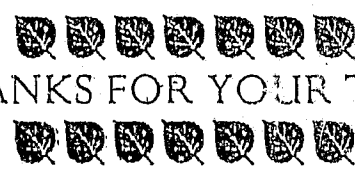
8. Any other comment on sport promotion in the Northern Province?

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Author Ndlovu P
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